

The Wesleyan.

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NOTE AND COMMENT.

Faithful attendance on class meetings renders backsliding almost impossible. Young converts, bear this in mind. Begin rightly.—*Our Church.*

Our people were poorly fed who all left the Sunday-school and prayer-meeting to hear a two-hour's harangue on baptism, and then all went home mad.—*Ed.*

President Andrew White says that the abuse of fellow students, the insulting of professors, and the attempts by classes to discipline the Faculty, have been driven out of college life by the public press.

This, on an exchange, is worth thinking about: "Think of a member of the Church paying \$145 a year for tobacco and 66 cents for Church Extension; and another of the same Church, paying \$191 for tobacco and \$1 for Missions!"

Said a friend to another the other day, "I thought Deacon—was a leading man in your Church?" "O, no," was the reply, "he never was a leader, he was a driver. He always said, 'Go,' never, 'Come.'" In this incident we find food for thought.—*Watch Tower.*

But be it known all the world around that non-backslidden, truly-saved, living Methodists need no prayer book, other than God's own book. A prayer book in the Methodist Church would be as much out of place as a spelling book among the angels.—*Christian Witness.*

Moody says there is in London such a thing as sanctified wealth, which is a rare commodity in America. The reason is that in London there are families acclimatized to wealth. They can breathe it without choking. In America nearly all the rich men were born poor.—*Visitor.*

Of thirty-five persons to whom Dr. George E. Ellis once propounded the question, "Have you read the Bible through?" thirty four answered decidedly, "No," and the other "thought his mother put him through it when a child." What would be your answer to that question, reader?—*Christian Index.*

Coleridge finely said, "The Bible without the Spirit is a sun-dial by moonlight." The saying is just as true of preachers whose sermons are only moral essays. They may cast faint shadows on the dial-plate; but they can not tell the time of day. They do not meet the deepest wants of souls.—*Christian Intelligencer.*

Look both ways. Fatal railroad accidents often occur from a failure to do this before attempting to cross the track. So swift and dangerous are the agencies of evil, that the soul can hardly take a single step in safety without looking in all directions. Danger avoided in one direction may put us in the way of it from another.—*Western Ad.*

Look through the news items of the morning paper, and you will rarely miss a murder or maiming. The reporter often adds, "Liquor did it." Some citizen, maddened by drink, takes life or wounds, and goes to the gallows or the penitentiary. The bar-room keeper, whose liquid fire crazed his neighbor, wrought the ruin, pocketed the blood money, and set again his death-trap.—*Richmond Ad.*

There are not a few ladies who are sometimes perplexed as to what they shall do with their jewelry. To wear it all is impossible. The articles are too numerous. We would recommend them to forward what they can dispense with to the Mission House, in imitation of those Irish ladies who are sending their brooches to Dr. Flennig Stevenson for the funds of the Presbyterian Foreign Mission.—*Methodist.*

Church newspapers are much scandalized by the conduct of bishops' sons. It was sufficiently shocking that Canon Wilberforce should fraternize with Mr. Spurgeon. But it seems that Bishop Mackarness's hopeful (the vicar of Aylesbury) has, per saltum, over-leaped even that. He has actually gone so far as to read one of the lessons in the Dissenting chapel of the cemetery at the burial of a Wesleyan preacher.—*London Methodist.*

The bishops of the Church of England must have these dice when they deserve well, as they so often do. On the extension of the franchise they did what would have been thought impossible twenty-five years ago. In the House of Lords both archbishops, with a dozen bishops, stood up to advocate the extension of the franchise, and only one cast his vote on the conservative side. That shows that the Church thinks it can trust the common people.—*Independent.*

The General Conference of the M. E. Church, North, did a wise thing in ordering the Agent to prepare Church certificates in books with stubs attached, so that pastors can keep a record of all church letters they may give. An improvement can be made by an additional letter to be forwarded to the pastor of the charge where the departing members expect to make their homes, informing him of their coming and commending them to his pastoral care.—*Texas Ad.*

Those who have to address children should be very careful how they frame their questions. A well-known American Baptist, Dr. P. S. Henson, at the recent children's day service in his church, was complimenting the little people on their faithfulness in recording his morning texts, Sabbath by Sabbath, and took occasion to say incidentally that he believed the text was the best part of his sermons. Suddenness turning to the cloud of young faces above him, he said, "Don't you think so, children?" and straightway a chorus of children's voices shouted back a respectful but vociferous "Yes, sir!"—*Ed.*

True, in our female colleges, the programme reads "readings," and the foot note says, "the medal is awarded to the best 'reader' in the class, and sometimes the young lady so far respects the printed programme as to hold a book of manuscript in her left hand, but she declaims all the same. We would not underrate the value of declamation, but we would emphasize the opinion that unless there comes over our colleges and schools a radical reform in this respect, we shall seldom again be charmed in the family circle or in the public assembly with the exquisite pleasure of good reading.—*Wesleyan Ad.*

In an article in a recent number of the *Christian at Work* the Rev. Dr. Daniel Curry states the Methodist position in regard to infant baptism in one strong clear sentence: "The child's title to baptism—the Christian seal to the covenant of salvation—is not that he is regenerate nor that he is a believer, but that Christ has died for him, and that he is among those for whom the provisions of eternal salvation have been made, and which will become effectual unconditionally in those who never arrive at a state of free personal self-determination or away from Christ, and in respect to all others on the conditions of their faith and obedience."

Our machinery, then, has been enlarged and improved. What about the motive power? Machinery, costly, bright, extensive, and ingenious, may be so much lumber. It may stand cold and still. Joints of brass, nerves of iron, blood of inventive thought will not suffice. Power is wanted. Have we that? The success of our forefathers did not depend on eloquent sermons, skilful exegesis, learned, oratorical, or popular deliverances, although many of the early Methodist preachers would compare favourably on these points with some of their modern critics, but their highest results were secured by the gift, the presence, the power of the Holy Spirit of God.—*Meth. Recorder.*

Bishop Hurst writes to the N. Y. Advocate: "A remarkable concession has been granted our Church in Bavaria. Here we have been persecuted, but the tide is now turned. Our Methodist Episcopal Church in that country has been granted the right of a private Church, which means that it is as legitimate a Church as that of the State. Among other novel features in this, our ministers are now required by King Ludwig's express order to catechise all the children under our jurisdiction, and to make regular reports, on blanks provided for the purpose, to the Department of Public Worship. This is such a near approach to making us a State Church that it would take a good searcher with a strong lamp to find out the difference."

One of our district courts has decided that grab-bags at Church-fairs are gambling devices. But who of our "Sociable" brethren and sisters will believe it unless they are served with a summons to attend court? And so the law is interpreting our gospel for us. Our courts are telling the Churches that they are violating not only human law, but also the spirit and letter of their Bibles. It is not only a "sanctimonious" pulpit that is now thundering away at these Church gamblers, but our St. Paul, deliberate judges on the bench. St. Paul was well, once more, cry out: "Set them to judge who are the least esteemed in the Church. I speak this to your shame." But what will be the effect of this?—*Christian Standard.*

BISHOP SIMPSON.

What was the secret of Bishop Simpson's power? is asked a thousand times, and no man can answer, save in a general way. He was an honest man, and showed an honest soul to his hearers. He had a purpose, evidently, whenever he spoke and he moved directly toward that purpose. Four things combined in him—a fine manly physical form, erect and commanding but singularly free from all stiffness or affectation, a clear, sharp incisive mind, a poetic and sympathetic heart, and a soul sanctified by Divine grace and devoted to the cause of the Master. But all these do not reveal the source of his power. Other men have had all these and lacked eloquence. That came largely from his perfect and transparent sincerity, his calm and quiet earnestness, self-assured and joined to love of truth and humanity.

He had, I think, in a higher degree than any other man I ever heard of—except it may have been Thomas Corwin, and in him it was largely dramatic—that may be called the power of "Vision," as the older rhetoricians term it. Every word he spoke appeared to him to be a picture—or better still, was a live force—and brought to his mind something real to be seen. I have heard many of the great orators of the age, and no one had in so remarkable a degree the power to see for himself his descriptions and compel others to see them. Who that heard him in that sermon on "The Waters of Life," will ever forget the little stream that trickled from the east door of the temple, and flowed away to be a river, a sea, and ocean, carrying healing, fertility, joy, life along with it? Did you mark the Bishop's eye as he followed the quiet flow of that water, and could you for a moment doubt but that he saw it? Who ever heard him preach of The Stone Cut out of the Mountain, and did not actually see the stone? I have heard it more than once, the last time where were at least twenty German skeptics. As the Bishop looked towards where they were sitting and deliberately proceeded to speak of the image of the golden head, the silver shoulders and chest, the brazen body—and started in astonishment crying out—"See! See! A stone is coming from yonder mountain! No hand has hewn it! It moves—it flies without wings! It grows—it smites the image and it crumbles!" Every man of them actually dodged as if he saw the stone coming. The effect was overwhelming. One of them next day told me that such a man preaching twice in that way would make a believer of him, so sincere, so simple in his faith and with such attractive power.

Shakespeare says the poet sees things which other men do not and bodies them forth in shapes of words. The orator sees things that others do not and believes them and persuades men to believe and do them. It was this perfect belief in things eternal, this clear vision of his own mind that made Bishop Simpson the foremost orator of the world.

Then accompanying this realizing imagination was the most remarkable fertility to find and bring from every quarter pertinent illustrations. Science, art, history, business, common life and duty, every one afforded to him material which he wove into his sermons as so many threads of gold, making them shine and attracting men's hearts. How aptly does he use the simplicity and motherly pride of his own mother, to describe the blessedness of a call to preach the gospel! And what soul does not feel its power. Again he describes a noble, rich and wise young man preparing a room in his fine mansion for her whom he is soon to make his bride and bring to his home. These are things of every day life and Bishop Simpson could use them as no one else ever did. They made all men feel as if they were akin, and by these

illustrations, made so real, he drew hearts to God and religion.—*Rev. R. Allen in Cented Ad.*

WISE WORDS.

On taking the chair of the English Conference, the Rev. Dr. Greeves, the President elect, said: "I believe that my predecessors in this office have sometimes spoken words of counsel as to the outlook that there is before our connexion. I shall not attempt to do that. If I have any thoughts about that, it is a little fear lest we should allow the great interest we take in revivalistic services to interfere with the diligent, effective, and hopeful discharge of our ordinary pastorate. I think there is some danger lest we should allow our people almost exclusively to look to these special arrangements for the extension of the word of God. I believe if we are faithful to our duty, not simply as evangelists, but as pastors and teachers, we may gather continually from the families of our people greater accessions to our numbers. A very distinguished predecessor of mine—Mr. Garrett—in his opening address gave us as the keynote of the year, 'A revival in every circuit.' If I could give one it would be, 'Salvation in every house.' I remember when I was a boy the way in which the older preachers put their hands upon my shoulders and gave me their blessing—Dr. Newton, for example, did this in a way I shall never forget—and I think if we can blend with our continued and increased efforts for the outlying masses a tender care for the children of our people it will greatly promote our spiritual prosperity. You have called me to this position. I must now ask you to sustain me in it by your prayers. I know that to preside over your deliberations is not a work of great difficulty if one is modestly distrustful of himself and always disposed to believe in you. My friend Mr. Garrett said he had never presided at anything more difficult than a Sunday-school teachers' meeting. I think that the man who can manage that can manage to preside almost anywhere else. I have found in my experience that difficulties diminish as we rise in the scale of meetings, and that those that seem the most simple cost us the most trouble. But when I look forward to the year and think of the responsibilities that weigh upon your President, when I think how that already since my election I have had invitations for about ten Sundays out of the fifty two I am sure you will feel that I need your support in reference to this responsibility. I would like (to come to the beat traditions of the Church) to carry into the homes of our people and into all my official relations with them the purest and holiest spirit; and I ask your prayers. I remember how earnestly they were implored by Dr. Osborn—the Nestor of our Connexion—who surely needed our sympathy in this office less than any one. I remember with what eloquent pathos Mr. Garrett pleaded for them, and how my distinguished predecessor asked for them. I cannot plead as they did, but I need your prayers all the more. You will not deny me, I am sure, that choicest perquisite of the Presidential office. . . . I shall not detain you further. I should like you to go home saying, 'The President did not waste our time by needless words; and I should like each one of you to be able to add, 'Neither did I.'"

In your religious life do not imitate the old lady who, seeing the sign, "Not Safe," on a bridge she had just crossed, turned about and recrossed to the side from which she originally came; but rather thank God for deliverance, and go forward. Do not stand and try to realize the temptation escaped until you find yourself again in its power.

WHAT DEATH DOES.

It does not affect the moral character; it extends its force upon the body, but works no radical or real change in the soul. It has no power whatever to revolutionize the moral nature—to make it better or worse. In itself it can neither make a good man better nor a bad man worse. It can transfer, but cannot transform. "He that is righteous, let him be righteous still. He that is filthy, let him be filthy, at death and after. 'filthy still.'" Each person now living carries in himself at this and every moment the essential element of either heaven or hell. By the essential elements we mean, in both cases, those moral qualities, those dispositions and affections of soul, which fit it for the one or for the other. Were all at this moment snatched from time into eternity, such are their moral characters that they would instantly drop into their appropriate places. What a thin partition separates the saint on earth from the saint in heaven—the sinner in time from the sinner in eternity.

Death is but the door-keeper. He lifts the latch and lets the Christian through into the bliss of the blissful. Death lops off the body and manumits the imprisoned spirit.

It dissolves the Christian from this sinful state and his sinful surroundings, takes him away from all the hindrances of earth, and supplies him with all the helps of heaven. It delivers him from "this body of death." It is not the judge to acquit or condemn; only the jailer to release. It puts the justified beyond the confines of sin and sense; gives them absence from the body and presence with the Lord, but has nothing more that it can do. It is God's porter to lift up the "gates" at his bidding, and let the "son of glory" come in. Why, then, should the Christian fear the wing that translates him from the state of the justified to that of the glorified? "Death is yours."

I OUGHT TO HAVE ANTICIPATED THIS.

A few days have passed over the grave of a noble young man, from whose lips fell these words. He had well represented the enterprise of life insurance, but neglected his soul. When the physician informed him that his sudden and severe illness was fatal and his time on earth very brief, he said with the deliberation of a deep and awful conviction, "I ought to have anticipated this; but now it is too late."

The words thrilled the hearts of those that loved him and watched the ebbing life. Yes, he ought to have anticipated the possibility of such a hurried departure from the scenes of probation. O what a burden of consciousness, folly and guilt and peril extorted that confession from the dying man! The number of those who have the anguish of such an awakening to the stuporous failure of a human soul for eternity, the judgment-day can alone reveal. Forever will the dreadful ought weigh down the lost spirit—the severest part of hell.—*Am. Messenger.*

OUTSIDE WORKERS.

A thought for them to reflect upon: "Is Mr. Hayes a Christian?" I asked a friend.

"No, he is an outside worker, like myself."

"Outside worker! What do you mean by that?"

"O, Hayes and I have classes in the Sunday-school, because some of the Christians want to go home and get a warm dinner, and they can do no better than take us for teachers. Then we sing in the choir, and sometimes, to help along, sing in the prayer-meeting. We give something towards the minister's salary, etc. I don't know how they could get along," continued my friend, half-jokingly, "if it were not for a few outside workers."

"Outside of what?"

"Why, outside of the church." "Why not come inside?" "O, I'm not a Christian. I can't do that. I think I can do as much where I am."

"Do! that is not the first thing. It is to what is right. Why not be a Christian? then you can do from love?"

"O, I don't know. I cannot yet. I mean to sometime."

"When?" "You shake your head. Ah, my friend, do not stay outside too long. Some foolish virgins tried that, and they never got inside of the door. It was shut, and they had to stay outside forever."

Beware, lest you be left outside of heaven.—*Advance.*

A SECOND PROBATION.

If the ungodly are given a second probation, why not a third? There is no reason that we can think of in favor of a second probation that will not hold good for a third or a fourth. Certainly the impenitent sinner would reason thus. He would put aside the second offer of life, and wait for the third. "I rejected the crucified Jesus, and resisted the calls of mercy and the importunities of love in the former state, and now the offer is renewed. I will continue in sin. The offer will be continued. The mercy of God is boundless."

Why should any one desire a second probation? Are they so in love with sin that they want to hug its body of death through this life? Are not the misery and death which it produces in this life sufficient to induce the soul to seek a divorce here? Are not the manifestations of God's goodness in this world enough to win us to his service? Does the Saviour lifted up before our eyes and dying for our sins, attract so feebly that we would delay embracing his love, and the salvation he offers till after death? Let us not deceive ourselves. God is not mocked. Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.—*Holston Meth.*

The following are the impressions of an American invalid on following, through the telephone in his sick chamber, public worship at a distant place: "I first heard, he states, 'the footsteps of people entering the church, then the rustling of dresses, afterwards the moving of fans and the taking of books from the boxes. On a sudden the organ pealed forth, and the sound so familiar drew tears from my eyes as though it came down from heaven. When the hymn began I found it in my book, and without fear of disturbing anyone with my poor worn voice, I sang it through with the greatest joy. In like manner I followed the lesson in my own Bible. Nobody can imagine the solemn effect of the Word of God coming thus on the wings of electricity. I seemed to be in the immediate presence of God. In the same way I followed the prayer, underlining each petition with a final amen, while, when the minister prayed for the sick and the sorrowful, he seemed to be interceding directly for me."

Our forefathers had clocks put on the outside of churches that they might not be late in getting to service; we put the clocks inside of the churches lest we be late in getting out.—*Rev. H. A. Tupper.*

As when the bird lies, new evidence is within its reach that the air will bear it up, so, when the soul becomes Christian, new evidence is within its reach that God is, and that he rewards those who diligently seek him.—*Joseph Cook.*

One by one come the desolate days. It is only to-day that toucheth thee. Look straight before thee! Some guiding rays shine down on thy path. Go on with praise in the light that thou canst see.—*Washington Gladden.*