

The Wesleyan.

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NOTES AND COMMENTS.

We are told that some merchants in Cork say they made more out of Messrs. Moody and Sankey's meetings than by the Industrial Exhibition, in consequence of old debts which had been paid after Mr. Moody's appeals to make restitution.—*The Christian.*

Dr. Vincent advises that parental authority be used in the matter of studying Sunday-school lessons at home, as is done to compel attention to arithmetic and grammar. At any rate, the lesson should be studied and then committed to memory.

Bishop Hargrove, in the introduction to his sermon in Macon, Ga., a few weeks ago, said: "Whenever God has written an obituary of any of his servants, he has made it short. O that we all had bible sense.—*Wesleyan Advocate.*"

The farmer who every year abandons a part of his land that he has reaped by bad farming, and takes in new ground to cultivate, is as wise as the pastor who depends on revival recruits to make up for members lost by lack of faithful pastoral oversight.—*Nashville Adv.*

It is the power of God in the gospel that gives it its strength and makes it a blessing, and that power is communicated through those who use the truth as teachers of their fellow-men. As a rule, it is proper to say that in proportion as the gospel has its control in the soul of him who preaches it will it affect the hearts and lives of others.—*United Presbyterian.*

It is *The Church Times* (English High) which has a notice of "Wayside Springs," by Dr. Theodore L. Cuyler, an "American Dissenter of some sort." It says that "not a few of the chapters might easily be made into very useful sermons by putting some distinctive Church doctrine into them, and omitting the unsound parts."—*Independent.*

A Wesleyan minister the other day spoke words of sympathy and encouragement at a Unitarian meeting. Well and good, if he made clear the testimony which he is bound to bear concerning the person and work of Jesus Christ. If he did not, he will probably live to see his mistake. We admire liberty and breadth of thought, but the breadth that is boundless has no charms for us.—*London Methodist.*

The winter is a better season for Sunday school work than the summer, especially in the country. In the summer the days are long and the nights are short, and those who work through the long, hot days have but little time or inclination to study Sunday-school lessons. In the winter the days are short and the nights long, and the time between dark and bed-time cannot be better occupied by our young people than in the study of God's word.—*Holston Meth.*

The worshippers of Emerson (says the *Watchman*) had their sensibilities dreadfully roused by Mr. Matthew Arnold's estimate of the god of their idolatry. They had only applause for his irreverent handling of the Bible, but when he made Emerson any thing less than divine, flawless, absolute, as philosopher, poet, seer, they pronounced him wrong-headed, blind, prejudiced, and all the rest. They can settle their own account with the English critic. We have no suggestions to offer.

The *Scandinavian* says that in Norway suicides are comparatively rare, seventy-two in a million. This is thought to be due to the progress in the temperance which removes the large emigration. This is supposed to account for the small ratio, seventeen to a million, in Ireland. The larger ratio of two hundred and sixty-two to a million in Denmark may be partly due to the arrangement by which the old peasants retire and live upon yearly payments from their children, a plan not promotive of content.

It is said that the necessity for the administration of the ordinances of baptism and the sacrament of the Lord's supper to Christian women immersed in sin was by heathen custom, and those husbands are yet heathen, as pressing on the Indian missionary forces that the Calcutta conferences of missionaries of all societies, held in November last, seriously contemplated recommending the ordination of women Bible readers, that those "ordained in prison" might have the "ordinance of the Lord's house."—*N. Y. Adv.*

A good story is told of the Hindu scholar M.oomdar, whose visit to the United States is making quite a sensation. He speaks with great fluency

English of remarkable purity, and on being asked how he acquired such a style, he replied: "I learned my English from your best classics; you Americans learn yours from your servants. The mother who gives her children over to the care of an uneducated nurse during their most impressionable years, expecting that they will grow up able to speak pure English, is likely to be sadly disappointed some fine day."

Some more enduring monument than stone is needed, if we would live in the world's memory.—*The New York Tribune* says: "The sandstone statue of William Penn presented to Fairmount park, Philadelphia, by Mr. John Walsh is wearing away so fast that in a few years more it will represent almost any departed worthy as faithfully as the famous Quaker. Several weeks ago the rim of William's hat fell off and though it was skillfully replaced its tenure is uncertain. The sculpture which the elements are thus demolishing is sixteen feet high, and when first carved it was fine as well as imposing."

The late Professor Sophocles was once approached by a visitor of the Shapira genus, who had some manuscripts alleged to be autographs of some of the early Fathers of the Church. The venerable Greek exposed the pretensions of several without losing his composure; but when at last the original manuscript of the Athanasian Creed, in the writing of St. Athanasius (?), was produced, he called his visitor's attention to a large club in the corner of the room, and pointed significantly toward the door, by which the terrified man made his escape with some precipitation.—*N. Y. Paper.*

The *London Christian Commonwealth* makes the following statement:—"It is stated that when Dr. Benson, now Archbishop of Antwerp, was Bishop of Truro, he was responsible for what took place in the Divinity School, where it was the custom to receive private confession, and to grant individual absolution. Many of Doctor Benson's Truro students are said to have confessed before Canon Mason (who has just come to London), Canon Harvey, Whittaker, (son of the late Provost of Trinity College, Toronto), and Wilkinson—who were under Dr. Benson's direct control—always made the sign of the cross at the recitation of the Creed, and practised genuflection before the altar."

Mariner's Bethel, with old-fashioned spirit, is meeting its current expenses in dependence upon God and the people without resort to the doubtful means which, alas! have become too general. Church Festivals, Fairs, Oyster Suppers, and Lectures have been repudiated, and the result is all the money needed to meet heavy interest and all other demands, with over \$1,000 in hand toward the liquidation of principal debt. The pastor, Cummins, reports this with joy beaming from his face, and furthermore, that sinners are getting converted all the time. Verily, this is a safe line on which to travel.—*Phil. Cor. of N. Y. Adv.*

People who have not been on long sea voyages can form very little idea of the shifts to which ritually superstitious folks are put in the performance of their rites on board ship. The devotees of the Papacy are reduced to the necessity of using a piano for their High Altar; and we have heard recently of an Episcopal clergyman of the English Church feeling the dire necessity of so exactly bowing to the East that a compass had to figure in the paraphernalia of worship! What a commentary upon the declaration of the Master—"God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship Him in spirit and in truth."—*Rel. Intelligencer.*

The following paragraph from a contemporary casts a painfully lurid light on one dark phase of our social life:—"In connection with the suicide a few days ago of a young woman, a large number of persons came to view the body to identify it as their daughter, and no fewer than three did so identify it; but the fact, nevertheless, is unpleasantly suggestive of the number of young women who must be at present wandering out of sight of their parents, and sufficiently unhappy in the opinion of the latter, to commit suicide."—"Ontario London," *Times* compilation. "Ontario London," *Times* compilation. The many who are far removed from the ranks of the very poor, but whose lives are sadder and whose future is even darker than that of the unhappy starvelings over whom Society has lately been abdicating its corrective tear.—*The Christian.*

In the dark cloud of a great sorrow the beautiful bow of God's promise is often seen as we look up.

THE MISSIONARY PRAYER-MEETING.

At a recent meeting of the M. E. Missionary Committee, by whose invitation a large number of Presiding Elders were present, Gen. Clinton B. Fiske said:

My duty in connection with the American Missionary Society led me, not long since, to visit New England. The subject of missions came up, and the contributions of the Congregational church for missions; and I asked a celebrated man in the American board what was, after all, the great secret of their success in collecting money. Said he: "It is the monthly missionary prayer-meeting. We undertook to have our people in the spirit of a missionary revival all the time, and we were a long time in getting them into it." My thought about all these things is that sterner work, more thorough preaching about it, something that shall lead the whole church to a spiritual sacrifice, and then the battle is won. I believe we shall all come out of this meeting immensely encouraged to go ahead. I believe all these districts will be better for this meeting, and that an influence will go out to the whole church that will tell very largely upon the success of our missionary society the coming year. I feel drawn to give an utterance from the pen on another subject. It sometimes seems as if the preachers do not appreciate the intense power and inspiration there is in this missionary work. They preach about a great variety of subjects, in a learned and labored way, that may be well enough in themselves; but I often think how much easier and better it would be, and how much more helpful to the people, if they would present to us the great movements of our church and of other churches in this work of capturing the world. In the days of the great war the secular papers made everything give way to news from the front. We ought to be as wise in our generation as the children of this world. Every preacher who will himself full of this world-embracing and world-conquering theme, put his soul into it and empty it red-hot upon his people, will be certain to have interested and instructed and earnest hearers. Fill the racks with this kind of provender, and the sheep will always be found there. I cannot resist the conviction that it is a shame to be a pastor of a church and to be able, on the shortest notice, to preach on temperance, or on passing events, and not to be able to preach on the great matter of saving the world. It is a big mistake for a preacher or for a layman to think that everything must be kept at home, and that we ought not to do anything for anybody except ourselves. This is not the spirit of the Gospel, and brings only dry rot and death. It goes from the preacher to the officials, and from the officials to the rank and file of the membership, until everybody in the church believes that everything is to be kept home; and then the pastor's support suffers as much as the collections that were feared. There is money enough in the church; we have ability, and all we need is availability. We laymen bring our families to the church and put our children under the training of our pastors, and we have the right to expect that our children will be developed into broad and generous men and women; that they will understand that the church is to conquer this world in the near future. We want them broadened and deepened in their characters and in their natures, until they shall be fit to associate with the citizens of heaven. We do not want our pastor to send them up to heaven on any commutative tickets in such a way that they will there be classed with the dwarfs and pigmies, but we want them to make honorable records for us in the higher circles.

The late Professor Sophocles was once approached by a visitor of the Shapira genus, who had some manuscripts alleged to be autographs of some of the early Fathers of the Church. The venerable Greek exposed the pretensions of several without losing his composure; but when at last the original manuscript of the Athanasian Creed, in the writing of St. Athanasius (?), was produced, he called his visitor's attention to a large club in the corner of the room, and pointed significantly toward the door, by which the terrified man made his escape with some precipitation.—*N. Y. Paper.*

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THE TEST OF A CENTURY.

"Christianity Triumphant: Infidelity an Inglorious Failure," was the subject of the Rev. Dr. John P. Newman's morning sermon at the Madison Avenue Congregational church. The preacher said:—"Infidelity has failed to hold its own. Take a hundred years. This is fair. Let us appeal to the records and ascertain what is the historic expression of those times.—French atheism and English deism had flooded two continents with the writings of Voltaire and other infidels, and in thirteen years 6,000,000 copies of their works were sold. A reaction had taken place against the church which had been allied with political oppression. There was a universal shout for liberty and America responded. The founders of this republic were not against Christianity, but against a political church. Yet there were many prominent infidels, at whose head was Thomas Paine, a man of great power. Infidel clubs were organized throughout the country. Duelling was a national vice and a duelist was elected Vice-President of the United States. Profanity, intemperance and Sabbath desecration held high carnival. These are the children of infidelity. It may be said that infidelity had control of the American colleges. Yale, Princeton, and William and Mary's were filled with students who loved to be called by their classmates—Voltaire, Diderot, and D'Alembert. But infidelity has not held its own. The colleges of this country are to-day in the hands of Christians. Out of 14,000 Harvard graduates within the last ten years only two were sceptics, one an atheist, and one an agnostic. Eighty-three years ago there were but twelve denominational colleges, and now there are 312, the property of which is estimated at \$69,000. Within the last seven years Princeton has realized \$14,000,000. In the last thirty years out of 31,000 college students, 25,000 were in Christian colleges. Infidelity has not a single college, though it has sought to capture some that are Christian. Christian literature has taken the place of that which a hundred years ago was infidel. The receipts of religious publication houses in the last ten years was \$43,000. People will give their money for Christianity. In 1882 the Presbyterians gave \$10,500,000, the Methodists 17,000,000 for the faith. For home and foreign missions our people gave in ten years \$56,000,000, and in twenty years, from 1860 to 1880, they gave for missions and religious books, \$163,000,000. In the last ten years 4,000,000 communicants have been added to the Christian churches of this country. Infidelity has failed to organize noble charities, failed to reform the vicious and to answer the great arguments for Christianity.—*N. Y. Herald.*

There is too much of unreality in the life that surrounds us,—a vast amount of pretension, show and sham, covering a too limited proportion of real genuine piety, grace and godliness. W. F. Bainbridge, speaking of his travels in China, says: "Nearly six hundred miles up the Yang tsu Kiang, a Chinese officer heard that a high mandarin was coming along on our beat, and he prepared to display a military force equal to the rations he was drawing. Through my glass I counted twenty real soldiers, and nearly two hundred coats and hats stuck on poles!" This was in China;—How is it elsewhere? What shall we say of the Church? Here are genuine, devoted Christian soldiers—a few, but oh, what hosts of "poles with hats on!" Here are soldiers who count but do not fight; who draw rations but do not defeat foes. Here is a society or board of officers composed of twenty or thirty men; two or three of them are workers, and the rest are "hats stuck on poles." Would that we could see more reality; there would then be less call for pretence; less dress parade and sham fight, and more actual warfare against the world, the flesh and the devil. We have real foes; let us see to it that we are real soldiers—good soldiers of the Lord Jesus Christ, clad in the whole armor of God, ready to resist unto blood, striving against sin.

A HINT TO THE SEEKER.

In times of awakening some penitents remain a long time in the ranks of the seekers. They are slow, dull learners in the school of faith. In some cases this is caused by the lack of light; the simplicity of faith is something they do not clearly comprehend. Such penitents need special personal instruction. But with most slow-moving seekers the real difficulty is the lack, not of light, but of earnestness. They are not seeking Christ with all their hearts. They do not possess that agony of desire which moves the soul to cast itself in self-despair upon Christ. Their type may be seen in a farmer, who when touched by the Spirit of God, mourned over his sins, but found no comfort. One day, while sitting before the fire with a sad countenance, and musing on his condition, he suddenly looked toward his believing wife and asked, "What must I do to become a Christian?" The good woman at once recalled the fact that not long before her husband having lost a bank-note in his barn, had said, "I will search for it till I find it." Alluding to this remark, she now replied, "You must seek for pardon as you sought for the bank-note." He saw the point, threw his whole soul into his seeking, and speedily found the waiting Christ. It is always thus. Really earnest seekers, who have been taught the way of faith, soon find Him who is already seeking them as a shepherd seeks a straying sheep. "Seek and ye shall find."—*Zion's Herald.*

PLAIN PREACHING.

"If," said the eloquent Addison Alexander, "you know what it is to be aroused by a heavy crash from a pleasant dream, what will it be when the long dream of life is dissolved by the blast of the great trumpet of God? It is related by a man who was on board of a steamer that blew up, that when the explosion occurred he was fast asleep. His first sensation was a pleasant one, as though he had been lying through the air. He opened his eyes and he was in the sea! May there not be something like this in the sensation of the sinner who dies with his soul asleep, and awakens himself amid the roar of a lashing tempest upon the ocean of God's wrath?" This is tremendous preaching; would to God that we heard more of it from the pulpit of our day! Never was it more needed; for multitudes are rocked to slumber at the mast-head by the opiate of unbelief. Some doubt the inspiration of God's Word, and

are not disturbed by its threatenings; some doubt the existence of a hell. Some are lulling their consciences to sleep by lying promises of future repentance. Some are so absorbed in the money-making or pleasure-seeking of this life that they have shut their eyes to the idea of eternity. I care not, my impenitent friend, what may be the cause of your slumber, or what may be the anodyne that Satan has used to drug you. Sin is a mocker. You are under its spell. You do not realize your terrible guilt in rejecting the Saviour, or your terrible danger in risking a "wrath to come." You cannot sleep much longer. Death will soon loose your frail held on shroud or spar, and hurl you off, as from mast-head into the bottomless deep! When you awake it will be too late; it will be an awakening to shame and remorse and everlasting contempt.—*Dr. T. L. Cuyler.*

VARIETIES OF EXPERIENCE.

No two men feel exactly alike, although they may have precisely the same kind of feeling. They may be moved by the same joy or the same sorrow, and yet in one joy and sorrow alike find vent in tears, while the other, whether joyous or sorrowful, is impassive as marble. Our mistake is to confound emotion with its cause, and to value the tears which flow down the cheeks of the penitent more than the penitence which draws them from their fountain. Many a deeply contrite sinner has grieved and mourned over his hardness of heart, and coveted the tears which flowed freely from the eyes of persons much less penitent than himself, while in reality his heart was not hard at all. Many refuse to believe and accept God's simple promises, because they can not be persuaded that they are sufficiently contrite, and thus they are cheated out of blessings to which they are clearly entitled.

Emotional frames count for very little with the Almighty. Hannah shed no tear, uttered no cry, breathed no sigh, and yet her whole soul was drawn out after God in mighty faith and prayer. God cares more for faith than tears, and has more regard for truth in the inward parts than rapture upon the countenance. Many of the very best people in the world have an unruined experience for years together. They have the peace which flows like a river, the joy which is unutterable, and the love which sweetens and brightens everything it touches, and yet they seem to live in absolute quietness, and breathe an atmosphere of absolute calm. God has made them so. We cannot imitate them, and should not try. Much less should we try to borrow that which is exceptional, and which we have the least reason to expect that God will give us. It is a common observation among experienced Christians that no believer at the outset finds the frame of mind which he fancies for himself. If he decides to be a quiet Christian he will probably turn out to be more or less boisterous. If he craves tempestuous emotional feeling, he is usually left without any outward manifestation whatever. God may come in the tempest, in the earthquake, in the fire, or in the still small voice; but it is not for mortal man to say which it shall be. It is for us to wait in perfect submission for whatever manifestation God may see fit to give us. Our hearts are to be in His keeping, and whether He enters the lowly heart-temple in the glory which Isaiah saw, or comes like the meek dove which John saw, it is for us to rejoice and be glad at His coming. But we should not crave visible tokens, or wonderful experiences. If the Holy One drops softly down into our hearts like the dove upon the Master, surely it is enough for the disciple to be as his Lord.—*Indian Witness.*

HATS ON POLES.

There is a society or board of officers composed of twenty or thirty men; two or three of them are workers, and the rest are "hats stuck on poles." Would that we could see more reality; there would then be less call for pretence; less dress parade and sham fight, and more actual warfare against the world, the flesh and the devil. We have real foes; let us see to it that we are real soldiers—good soldiers of the Lord Jesus Christ, clad in the whole armor of God, ready to resist unto blood, striving against sin.

THE POWER TO DO GREAT THINGS.

The power to do great things generally arises from the willingness to do small things.

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