

## Obituary.

Mrs. CURRIE died at the residence of her son in Puslinch township, at the advanced age of 82 years. She was a native of Argyleshire, Scotland, and came to Canada nearly sixty years ago. After residing in Toronto about seven years she removed to Puslinch township, where she has since resided. Her husband died in 1877. Six sons and a daughter survive her. Three of her sons are Presbyterian clergymen, Neil is a minister in Wisconsin, Donald is minister at Wallaceburg, and John is minister at Belmont; two are farmers in their native township, and one is a farmer in Dakota. Mrs. Currie's life in a rare degree manifested the fruit of the Spirit, her superior mind being singularly cultured by intimate communion with the Master. As a true mother she was intensely devoted to the highest interests of her family. The remains were interred in the Crown cemetery, her five sons who were present at her death, and a nephew, were the pall-bearers. The funeral services were conducted by her pastor, the Rev. W. Robertson.

## Correspondence.

Editor PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW:

SIR,—In the mission report just printed I find an omission that I should like to have noted, i.e., under Sabbath scholars at Indore only 569 are given. This is the number in our schools for boys only. I supposed the ladies would report their own and so did not give them, whilst they probably expected all would be reported together. This accounts for our comparatively small returns this year in this department.

Yours truly,

J. WILKIE,  
Canadian Mission College, Indore, India.  
May 22, 1895.

## Religious Periodicals and Sociology—A Criticism.

Editor PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW:

SIR,—In your issue of last week I was more than a little surprised at your flattering reference to Benjamin Kidd's "Social Evolution." You say, "There are various aspects of evolution which have been set forth during recent years, by their respective admirers, but none have exceeded in interest, in our judgment, or in importance, that form of it called social evolution. Its best and latest exponent is Mr. Alexander (Benjamin) Kidd, whose admirable work is now sold, in paper covers, for the low price of thirty five cents. Every thoughtful man should read and ponder this book, especially in the light of the social and political movements of the present time." This paragraph would lead the unsuspecting reader to suppose that Mr. Kidd had made a substantial contribution toward the solution of this great problem, and that, therefore, any man who wants to get the "best and latest" should own this "admirable work." As a student of Sociology, I may say that I have read Mr. Kidd's book and I am quite at a loss to know wherein you can find a sufficient basis on which to rest such a complimentary reference.

The fact of the matter is that the man who wants to sail on the high seas of sociological investigation, with Mr. Kidd as captain of the vessel, must be prepared to ignore chart, compass, polar star and all lines of logical and ethical latitude and longitude, and to sail in a circle, drift with the wind or lie in the "trough of the sea" as the necessities of a mere theory may dictate.

I am quite certain that Mr. Kidd throws no light on the true solution of the social problem; that his outlook is misty; that his logic is faulty and the ethical and religious tone of his book, as a whole, anything but satisfactory from a Christian point of view. The masses are waiting anxiously and asking the leaders of sociological thought what they must do. It is not right when the children ask bread to give them a stone. It is greatly to be regretted that religious periodicals, which have such an excellent opportunity to flood this dark region of sociology with heavenly light, should not only fail to give any direct assistance toward a satisfactory

solution of the difficulty, but that they should commend to their readers books which are only calculated to perplex and mystify, to excite good hopes only to disappoint and mock the yearning soul.

It is only a few months since I noticed, in another religious paper of your city, which visits my study weekly, a very complimentary reference to a lately published book in which the author, among other subjects, devoted considerable space to the social question. I happened to have read the book shortly before the appearance of this complimentary notice. In the greater part of the chapter devoted to the social question, there was scarcely a page that was not fairly bristling with contradictions and fallacies. Worse than this, out of another section of the book in which the author entered the theological arena, I selected another passage and placed it side by side with a vicious paragraph from an address by the notorious Ingersoll, and the two passages were so literally alike that it would puzzle Ingersoll himself to tell which was his own.

I have watched the religious papers for the last four years with considerable care and am bound to say that I do not know of a single one that can be taken as a safe guide by the man who is anxiously waiting and praying for light on this most important problem of to-day. It is as vain to look for Christian Sociology in our religious weeklies as to look for Christian politics in our secular dailies.

S. S. CRAIG.

The Manse, Oakville, May 25.

## Literary Notes.

JOHN THOMSON, OF DUNNINGTON, PASTOR AND PAINTER. A Memoir, with a Catalogue of his Paintings, and a Critical Review of his Works. By William Laird, F.S.A. Edinburgh: A. Elliott, 1895.

To those of our readers who are familiar with Scottish art, the name of the subject of this memoir is well known. He was one of the masters of landscape painting and his works possess great beauty and sweetness. Visitors to the National Gallery in Edinburgh, will remember his picture of Aberlady Bay where his powers are shown to great advantage. He was born at Dailly, in Ayrshire, in 1778, and died in 1840. His ancestry was essentially ecclesiastical, for his great-grandfather, grandfather, and father were all ministers of the Church of Scotland. His inclinations all lay towards music and painting, but he yielded to the family desire and entered the Church. He succeeded his father as minister of Dailly, and the advice given him at his induction by the minister who officiated, was at least original. "First keep ye the fear o' God; second, keep ye your feet on the crown of the causeway, and third, do your duty, sir, and ne'er spied what folks say o' ye." His biographer tells us that his preaching was more of "the moderate moral type than fervently evangelical." One sermon, at least, seems to have been preserved, and appears to have done repeated duty from 1810 till 1822. It was from the favourite text of moderate divines, "Let your moderation be known to all men." When the painting and fiddling and the social literary life of the neighbouring city of Edinburgh left no time for a new sermon, one of the sons of the manse was sent to look out an old one and "the boys having a partiality for short discourses, carefully selected those having this desirable qualification, a few of which came to be known as favourites on this account." The descriptions and incidents of ecclesiastical life given by the biographer under the regime of moderation, render this volume a suitable comparison to the memoir of Carlyle of Inveresk. A curious incident comes to light in this biography. It appears that Sir Walter Scott was ordained an elder of Dunnington parish when he had joined the Episcopal church and had his children baptized by an Episcopal minister. Lockhart, the biographer of Scott, draws the veil over this rather discreditable transaction, but the fact is, nevertheless, that on March 12, 1806, at a meeting of the Dunnington session, held in Edinburgh, he was nominated as elder, and on the 20th of the same month he was ordained in Dunnington church. He

sat in the General Assembly of that year as commissioner and also represented Dunnington parish in the Presbytery of Edinburgh and the Synod of Lothian and Tweeddale. Three other Edinburgh lawyers, having no connection with Dunnington, were elected and ordained elders along with Scott. The biographer of Mr. Thomson, suggests as a reason for this extraordinary and scandalous proceeding, that young Scotch lawyers, being anxious to advertise themselves, sometimes sought to obtain, in the way, an opportunity of airing themselves on the floor of the General Assembly. In this case the interest of the Church seems to have been sacrificed to the professional advancement of a literary friend.

C.

CHRIST AND HIS FRIENDS. A Series of Revival Sermons by Louis Albert Banks, D.D., Pastor Hanson Place M E Church, Brooklyn, N.Y. Cloth, 12mo, 352 pp, gilt top \$1.50, New York, London, and Toronto: Funk & Wagnalls Company.

If a tree is to be judged by its fruits, these sermons by the pastor of perhaps the largest church in Methodism are to be adjudged a success. One of the most marked revivals attended their delivery. The volume contains the entire series of 31 sermons, the texts for all of them being taken in St. John's Gospel. Like all successful revival discourses, these are simple direct, devoid of rhetorical artifice, abounding in illustrations and incidents, and glowing with spiritual fervor. Another characteristic is their brevity, their delivery taking, we judge, about 20 minutes each on an average. They are of the very first class of such discourses. Free from extravagance and fanaticism, in perfect good taste, dwelling upon the essentials of religious faith, their power has not been lost in transference to the printed page, and as a book of general devotional reading the collection is to be highly commended.

THE STORY OF THE STARS. Simply Told for General Readers, by George F. Chambers, F.R.A.S., author of "A Handbook of Descriptive and Practical Astronomy," etc. 16mo, boards, illustrated, 30 cents. New York, D. Appleton & Co.

This is the first volume in a popular series entitled "The Library of the Useful Stories," written in clear, concise language by recognized authorities, and presenting the leading and latest facts of science, history, etc. The present volume furnishes an outline of the science of astronomy which will be found to be of great value by those who wish a general survey of modern astronomy presented in a comparatively brief space.

THE DIVINE UNITY OF SCRIPTURE, by the late Adolph Saphir, D.D. Toronto: Fleming H. Revell Co. Cloth, \$1.25.

Dr. Saphir was a profound scholar of the Bible, as his many well-known volumes testify. His "Christ and the Scriptures" is one of the most valuable books, and has been widely read with keen relish. So may we speak of his other books, "Lectures on Hebrews," "Conversion, Illustrated by Examples recorded in the Scrip.," "Our Life Day, Thoughts on John ix. 4," "Christ Crucified, Lectures on I. Cor. 2," "Lectures on the Lord's Prayer," etc., etc. This volume, "The Divine Unity of Scripture," is his last work. It is composed of sixteen lectures, which are "in some respects, the most important of all his writings, as they give in connected form, his matured views of the relation of the two great divisions of the Bible." As we read it we discover at once that Dr. Saphir is a great teacher. He is full of matter. He is simple in style. He is rich in exposition. He who desires to learn more of God's word may sit at the feet of a master in Israel in reading this volume. The mountain heights to which he carries us gives extensive and satisfying views. Every one who studies this volume will have nobler conceptions of God's Word, and a higher esteem of God's Word, and a more thankful spirit for God's Word than ever he had before. This book is a treasure for a Bible student.