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[Vol. I.]

Poetry.

PILGRIMAGE.

And confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

Cheerful, O Lord! at thy command,
I bind my sandals on;
I take my pilgrim's staff in hand,
And go to seek the better land,
The way Thy feet have gone.

I oft shall think, when on my way
Some bitter grief I meet;
"This path hath echoed with His moan,
And every rude and flinty stone,
Hath bruised His blessed feet."

Painting and sad along the road,
Thou layest on my head
The hands they fastened to the tree
The hands that paid the price for me,
The hands that brake the bread.

Thou whisperest some pleasant word,
I catch the much-loved tone;
I feel Thee near, my gracious Lord!
I know thou keepest watch and ward,
And all my grief is gone.

From every mountain's rugged peak,
The far-off land I know;
And from its fields of fadeless bloom,
Come breezes laden with perfume,
And fan my weary brow.

There peaceful hills and holy vales
Sleep in eternal day;
While rivers, deep and silent, glide
Twixt meads and groves on either side,
Through which the blessed stray.

There He abides, who is in Heaven,
The loveliest and the best;
His face, when shall I gaze upon!
Or share with the beloved John
The pillow of His breast!

THE PREACHING FOR THE TIMES.

There is an uneasy feeling abroad, as if the pulpit was losing its legitimate power—as if preaching was in danger of being pushed to one side by this busy crowding generation as of no practical use; and very ludicrous, if not lamentable, methods are resorted to in order to restore its power to the pulpit and its efficiency to the preaching. Unusual subjects are advertised, eccentricities of speech and of manner are adopted; comic stories and funny sayings are heard, liturgical modes of worship are used; and, in certain cases, all the devices of ecclesiastical millinery are brought into play.

Now, will these and such like methods make the pulpit more effectual in its proper work? The answer to this question is involved in the answer to another. What is the proper work of the pulpit?

What is the object of preaching? Is it merely to draw a crowd—a laughing, wondering crowd? This is easily done. Make a fool of yourself, and the people will run to see you do it. Trick yourself out in as many colors as the clown of the circus wears, and they will come to see how you look. Resort to gimcracks and claptrap, and the mob will rush to hear and see you with the same motives that they crowd to witness the gibberings of a monkey, and the antics of a buffoon. If the church is as good as a play, they will go to the church—but only for a while. In the end they will prefer the real article to your shabby imitation, the genuine circus to your spurious copy. But is this mere getting together of a crowd success? Suppose by stamping and shouting, and laughing and crying, and dressing up, and letting down; by preaching on unusual subjects, or giving your sermons striking titles, you fill the pews, and crowd the aisles—what then? What have you accomplished?

The means must be suited to the end. What is the object of preaching? It is the conversion of sinners, the edification of saints, the building up of the church of God, a living temple on earth. This I insist, is the end of preaching, and this end has not changed through centuries. It is the same now, as when Peter preached the first sermon on the day of Pentecost, the same now as when Paul wrote that wonderful epistle to the Romans. The casting out of all sin, the bringing in of all righteousness, this is the purpose, the sole purpose of the preaching of the gospel of Christ. Whatever does not tend to further this end, is a total failure, even though it crowd the house for a while.

Now in this age, which is all agape after novelty, there is danger that, in running after the new, we lose sight of that which is ever the same. Sin remains the same stubborn fact with which we have to contend. Our flashing telegraphs and interesting railroads and ocean steamships may have revolutionized business and international relations, but they have not changed the great fact of sin. The march of discovery, and the triumphs of science have not brought earth any nearer heaven. It is as true now as ever that man is without God in this world.

Then, the remedy is the same, the minister is still a minister of the cross; the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ is the same old but ever new Gospel, the gospel that speaks of sin and atonement and the new birth, the gospel that has a Triune God and a divine Saviour, and the dying sacrifice for sin, and the renewing and sanctifying Holy Spirit in it. This is the gospel which we must preach now, if sinners are to be saved, and the world converted to Christ. "Preaching for the times!" Pshaw. Wherein do these times differ from the times that have gone before? There is the same old

devil, the same old evil heart of unbelief, the same unquiet conscience, the same God, the same hell, the same gospel.

The disease is the same, the remedy must be the same; and when men have tired of claptrap, and laughed at oddities, and fallen asleep beneath our fine-spun sentiment, and left us to discourse on science to empty pews—let the minister come Sabbath after Sabbath into the pulpit with this same old, but ever new Gospel, let him preach it as if he believed it; let him go to the work of saving souls as the physician goes to the work of saving life—let him preach this Gospel, feeling that it is the very thing which these dying sinners need; preach, not because a sermon is expected of him, but because he has something which he must say; preach Christ, constrained by the love of Christ, and sinners will flock to hear him, not to be amused, but because he speaks to their souls, and what he says meets their profoundest practical wants, and, as the blessed result, souls will be saved, and the church of God be edified.

The truth is, we are too much afraid, in this age of scientific progress and active thinking, of preaching the simple, undiluted gospel of Christ. As a recent writer well puts it: "The difficulty is that, in our worldly wisdom, we have too often mistaken man, emasculated the gospel, and distrusted God. Mistaken man, thinking him a fool or a puppet, to be interested in sleight-of-hand performances, rather than a being once made in God's image, and having still intense and earnest gazing upward toward the skies, and ceaseless, though undefined longings for something better; emasculated the gospel, vainly imagining that which appeals to the lower and perishing instincts mightier than that which reaches down after that which is enduring and God-like in man; distrusted God, in that we have wanted confidence in that way of bearing life to men which he has declared to be the embodiment of his highest wisdom."

Still there is a variable quantity in preaching. The gospel is the invariable quantity, inasmuch as God's character and law, man's character and relation to God, and the nature of sin remain ever the same, and in arriving at any correct theory on this subject we must hold fast to this distinction between the variable and invariable quantity in preaching. The body is the same; but not the clothes which wrap it about; and a man would make himself ridiculous should he dress in the fashions of the eighteenth century. He should not cut off an arm or a leg in order to be in the fashion, neither need he go about in tights or knee buckles in order to preserve the integrity of his preaching. So in preaching. We should preach another and a mutilated gospel; we should not become lecturers, ministering only to the popular rage for novelty and amusement; we should be preachers of the gospel, the whole gospel and nothing but the gospel; but let us not preach as if we lived two hundred years ago, preach it as standing in the middle of the nineteenth century.

Were this article intended to be exhaustive, I should here enquire. What are the fashions of the day? What are the characteristic tendencies of the age in which we live? But to do this would require more space than can now be spared me. There are a few very obvious thoughts, and on these I will just touch, presenting as an answer to the question: What is the best mode of preaching for the times? It is involved in an answer to the question: What preaching does any congregation need? For, generally, that preaching which is good for my flock, is equally good for some other flock. But to our hints.

1. Preaching should be in the popular language of the day. Preach the old doctrines, but preach them in a current phraseology. To clothe the gospel in the style of the seventeenth or eighteenth century would be sillier and worse than clothing the body in the fashions of that age. The style of Edwards or Hopkins is scarcely intelligible to the mass of hearers now, and equally objectionable is the custom of using theological terms in preaching. Preach to men about sin, atonement, regeneration, the divine decrees, the work of the spirit, etc., but preach these doctrines in language which is used in the street, in the shop in the family.

2. Be short. The age is in too great a hurry for long sermons. People now-a-days cannot stop to listen to them. Preach the everlasting gospel, but do not preach everlasting sermons.

3. Be specific. Preach the whole gospel, but do not try to preach it all in one sermon. Saying a little about every thing, is saying nothing to the purpose about anything, and it is easier to think out and deliver specific sermons than sermons that touch and go on everything inasmuch as the mind moves from particulars to general. Be specific. Preach about one thing, so that people in a hurry may have patience to listen, and carry away something with them.

4. Be practical. This is an intensely utilitarian age. Men will not listen to abstruse speculations and fine-spun theories. Preaching that meets no living want, will not, in these days of practical inventions in science, and practical questions in politics and social life, call out and hold together a congregation. Bring the gospel home to the conscience; apply it to the life. Preach, not about mankind, but to the men and women that sit before you.

5. Be in earnest. These are earnest times and this an earnest people. We were terribly in earnest in our late civil war, and have not got over it yet. There is an intense earnestness pervading business and politics, science

and philology, and the pulpit must be in earnest too. The people who come panting from the race in the world, will not listen to the dreams of a half asleep ministry in the church.

6. Be vivid and fresh. Present old truths in new forms. Do not preach always the same sermon, only changing the text. Make the truth not only impressive but attractive. The water of life is none the less the water of life even though drunken from a golden goblet. I believe illustrations give vividness to pulpit discourse. They arouse and fix attention, and what is still better, they make all nature preachers of the everlasting gospel. Such preaching will be a power with man. In the end, the distilling dew will, from morn to morn, speak to him of the silence, the energy, the invigorating contact, and the wide reaching influence of God's proclaimed message; and the fading leaf, sweeping across the sky, while it speaks to him of his own withering life, will tell him of accumulated work, an imperishable monument left behind for the coming generations.

Rev. J. A. Ross.

WORK FOR YOUNG WOMEN.

A lady writes in the Christian at Work: Oliver Wendell Holmes makes in one of his works a remark to this effect, that many American women would become crazy, if they had no piano on which to pour out the longing and unrest which often possesses them. This is probably exaggerated; but, if so, it is an exaggeration of a state of things which does really exist. How many women bear continually the burden of an unoccupied, aimless life, a life which seems to afford no channels in which the force and warmth of their natures can flow. Especially if this true of young ladies who have finished the usual course of study, and have not yet been called to a definite place in the world's work. At least so it seems to them, and I should like, as a sympathizing friend, to say a few words to them.

I am not one of you now, for God has kindly given me the holy and delightful work of a wife and a mother to do for him. But it is not very long since I was in your position, and felt, as I am sure many of you do, that I had no work to do. But I soon learned that that is not true. God gives "to every man in his work," and it is a work for him. It is not always easy for you to find it; but if we really long to work for him, ask him fervently and in faith, "Lord what wilt thou have me to do?" and as surely as Paul received an answer to his prayers, surely will you. If you live in the city there is no lack of work all around you, lying ready to your hand. Can you not take a class in an Industrial School on week days, and have one in a Mission school or in the Sabbath school of your church on Sunday? Can you not visit the poor and the suffering? A few hours of every day is little indeed to give to him who gave himself for you. You have but to join one of the many organizations for work within your reach, to find plenty to occupy hand and heart.

And you who live where there are no such organizations—can you not begin a work for yourself? Do you not know of any whose poverty you can help, whose suffering you can alleviate? If you have nothing else to give, give sympathy. That you must have if you are truly Christ's, and one word of your blessed Master may prove a richer gift than treasures of gold and silver. In order first to find work and then faithfully do it, fill yourself with thoughts of Jesus and his love. Study his character, his life of unwearied self-denial and work and suffering for you: think of him now pleading for you with the Father that he will not cut down the unfruitful tree; think how he loves you, how he yearns over you, and how he grieves over those perishing ones, whom a word from you, with his blessing might turn to him and heaven. Can you let him see you idle, unearning?

HOW TO BE MISERABLE.

Sit by the window and look over the way to your neighbor's excellent mansion, which he has recently built and paid for, and fitted out, and say:

"Oh, that I were a rich man!"

Get angry with your neighbor, and think you have not a friend in the world. Shed a tear or two, and take a walk in the burial-ground, continually saying to yourself:

"When shall I be buried here?"

Sign a note for a friend, and never forget your kindness, and every hour in the day whisper to yourself—"I wonder if he will ever pay that note!"

Think everybody means to cheat you. Closely examine every bill you take, and doubt its being genuine until you have put your neighbor to a great deal of trouble. Put confidence in nobody, and believe every man you trade with to be a rogue.

Never accommodate if you can possibly help it.

Never visit the sick or afflicted, and never give a farthing to assist the poor.

Buy as cheap as you can and screw down to the lowest mill. Grind the faces and hearts of the unfortunate.

Brood over your misfortunes, your lack of talents, and believe that at no distant day you will come to want. Let the work-house be ever in your mind, with all the horrors of distress and poverty.

Follow these receipts strictly, and you will be miserable to your heart's content—if we may so speak—sick at heart and at variance with the world. Nothing will cheer or encourage you, nothing will throw a gleam of sunshine or a ray of warmth into your heart.

THE BEST RICHES.

Not long since a gentleman took an acquaintance upon the top of his house to show him the extent of his possessions.

Waving his hands about, he said:

"There, that is my estate."

Then, pointing to a great distance on one side—

"Do you see that farm?"

"Yes."

"Well, that is mine."

Pointing again to the other side—

"Do you see that house?"

"Yes."

"That also belongs to me."

Then said his friend:

"Do you see that little village out yonder?"

"Yes."

"Well, there lives a poor woman in that village who can say more than all this."

"Ay, what can she say?"

"Why, she can say, 'Christ is mine!'"

He looked confounded, and said no more.

THE WESLEYS AND THEIR HYMNS.

BY ISABELLA BIRD.

PART II.

The Wesleyan hymns were contemporary with the rise and progress of Methodism under the leadership of John and Charles Wesley. They were the product of a great religious upheaving. Unlike the hymns of Watts and Doddridge, which were the studied productions of literary men in retirement and leisure, the hymns of the Wesleys were thrown off under the inspiration of the moment, in circumstances of intense action and excitement. The Non-conformist hymns were written in a time of universal religious declension. They read sometimes like elegiac strains on the burial of vital Christianity. They were put forth when the Gospel, locked up in the technical phrases of the dogmatic theology of the Puritans, had almost ceased to be a power in the land, and when the pious. The hymns of the Wesleys were written in the great Methodist revival, and before the burst of spring had subsided into the glorious luxuriance of summer. They are hymns of birth, not of burial, and of a nation "born in a day." They are the hymns of a Gospel liberated, of the Rock re-asserted, of the descent of the Comforter, of the Pentecost of the land. They are the utterances of an emancipated Christianity, of a fully enlightened faith. They are hymns of the light and of day, soaring upward at once, on the pinions of a victorious faith. They are the monument and the expression of the best day that ever dawned for England. They throbbled with the pulse of the Great Awakening. They are the spiritual autobiography of the leaders of the true English Reformation.

The Wesleyan hymns may be regarded as the work of Charles Wesley, though they bear throughout the impress of the severe taste and vigorously applied pruning-knife of John. John, however, wrote a few original hymns, and, after his visit to the Moravian settlements, where he first learned the power of hymn singing, he made some very successful translations from Gerhard, Tersteegen, Zinzendorf, and other evangelical German hymnists. Among the best known of these are the imitation of Bernard's famous hymn, "O sacred head once wounded," "Thou hidden love of God, whose height," "Commit thou all thy griefs," and the soul-stirring hymn, in which the recovered Gospel was bound up, "Jesus, Thy blood and righteousness." Among his original hymns, none is known so well as, "Ho, every one that thirsts draw nigh," but the less known one, "How happy is the pilgrim's lot!" is, perhaps, the first in poetic merit. There are many touching associations connected with this hymn, which has a great power of commending itself to the sad and friendless. A simpleton, by repute an idiot, became enlightened on the subject of saving faith, and for many years itinerated over the north of England, a simple but successful preacher of the Gospel. He sang this hymn at every hearth which gave him a night's shelter, and died repeating the last half of the last verse:

"Now let the pilgrim's journey end:
Now, O my Saviour, Brother, Friend,
Restore me to thy breast!"

Charles Wesley's poetry is the richest, though the least explored region of English hymnody. Though he has enriched every hymn-book of every Christian denomination by his verse, this most prolific, most powerful, and most poetical of hymn-writers is comparatively unknown. "The glorious reproach of Methodism" still attaches to his name; Dissenters and Presbyterians distrust the great Arminian poet; Churchmen sing his hymns in ignorance

or distaste of their authorship. In England, he is almost solely known by 626 of his hymns published in the "Collection of Hymns for the Use of the People called Methodists," put forth by his brother John in 1779. The various Methodist collections in the United States contain about 800 of his hymns, and not more than 100 of the whole are known outside the pale of the Methodist societies. These are scattered throughout innumerable collections in England and America; and, except in a few compilations, the authors name is not attached. So little is this great poet studied, that thousands of persons have a general appreciation of him, who are unaware that he is the composer of about 7,000 hymns, 4,000 of which were published during his lifetime, and are to be found in thirty-one separate publications put forth between 1740 and 1785. Few of these have been reprinted, and only about a ninth of his hymns are accessible to any but the curious.

It is not on record that Charles Wesley showed any precocious poetical talent, or, indeed, that he wrote any hymns at all, until he was twenty-nine. On his return, gloomy and dissatisfied, from his mission to Georgia, his religious disquietude broke forth into the famous hymn for midnight, "Fain would I leave the world below," part of which, altered to a more hopeful tone, still stands in the English Methodist Hymn-book. A few as defective followed, and then he appears to have hung his harp on the willows for nearly a year. It was not till May 21, 1738, the date, as he believed, as his passing from death unto life, that he took it down, and the full tide of gladness burst forth in the hymn, "Where shall my wondering soul begin?" To his brother, at the same time, he addressed the lines beginning, "What morn on thee with sweeter ray," entitled "Congratulation to a Friend on Believing in Christ," and a year later, "For the Anniversary of One's Conversion," he wrote the justly popular hymn, "O for a thousand tongues to sing," which strikes the key-note of the Methodist hymnody, and is the first hymn in the Methodist collection. It was a tide of song that never ebbed—a stream whose source was that well of water which springeth up unto everlasting life. From the hour in which he said for the first time, "My Beloved is mine, and I am his," until the day, half a century later, when, with the "swellings of Jordan" about his feet, he dictated the lines, "bright with the same faith and hope," "In age and feebleness extreme," his facility of poetic expression never failed. No man who has written so much ever wrote so well.

Like his brother, he was a man of strong individuality; he took nothing second-hand, and his style of thought and language is distinctively his own. He was a man of strong mind as well as strong emotions; a poet by nature; intensely spiritually-minded; his soul more open to impressions from the spiritual than from the material world. In fact, with him the seen only suggested the unseen. He presented a rare combination of the true reformer's fire with tenderness and sensitibilities seldom equalled. He had renounced self, and was with it all that most men prize. His objects in life were personal holiness and successful evangelism. Highly cultured and exquisitely refined, his hymns with all their singular vigour have a finish about them which is surprising, considering the circumstances under which they were written. The hymn, "O Thou who camest from above," 311, in an example. The appropriate and sustained imagery which the poet uses to illustrate the varied thought introduced, and the singular unity of the whole, are worthy of the first of our British classical writers. He was the most laborious of evangelists, the most locomotive of itinerant preachers. His hymns were composed on horseback, and jotted down as the animal jogged quietly along; in rambles by the sea-side, at all times, and in all surroundings. Whatever revision his hymns underwent was owing to the severe taste of his brother. Yet under these disadvantageous circumstances his verses, though of very various merits, rarely sink below a high literary standard. His rhymes never halt, and are never forced; he never descends to doggerel, and if he offends the taste of any, it is not by irreverent familiarity, sensuousness, or vulgarity. We must remember that he was emotional and excitable, and lived in a time of high religious pressure, and, above all, that his intense spirituality carried him aloft habitually into regions wherein most men never or rarely tread.

The Wesleyan hymns are most poetical; their peripatetic composition, their autobiographical cast, their lofty spirituality, their intense life and practicality, and their high poetic merit, place them by themselves. Charles Wesley, like his brother John, was an intense believer. Both were naturally religious; both had a singular capacity for receiving spiritual truth. Of this intense belief the Methodist hymns were the offspring, no less than the Methodist preaching. No man ever realized more fully than the poet the destructive nature of sin; no man ever gave more absolute credence to the declaration, "The soul that sinneth it shall die." It was "knowing the terrors of the Lord," that he "persuaded men." It was with an earnestness and directness arising from his own strong convictions that he occasionally cast aside poetic refinements, and apostrophized his hearers with singular plainness of speech.

Along with Luther and other Reformers, the Wesleys believed in a personal devil. Life to them was not a mere tournament, but a real battle with the great adversary of man. The principalities and powers of darkness, marshalled by the prince of the power of the air,

were no myths of an apostle's dream, but terrible realities; they stood prepared to fight unto the death with the world, the flesh, and the devil. How C. Wesley fought and conquered is written in his hymns. "The 10 poems of victory burst from his own heart. That wonderful hymn, "Come, O thou traveller unknown" which many critics consider the finest in our language, and which Watts thought was worth all that he himself had ever written, is of this cast; so is, "Thee, Jesus, Thee, the sinner's friend," with many others.

The popularity of Wesley's hymns among the Methodists is greatly increased by the circumstances of their composition, and the associations connected with them. With marvellous facility he wove every incident into poetic meditation, and "had a psalm" for every occasion of his long career. On going down to preach among the Newcastle colliers, the fires with which he saw them surrounded suggested the stirring hymn, "See how great a flame aspires!"

In the great pit at Gwennap, where the seats of turf rose tier above tier like an ancient amphitheatre, the poet preached to 10,000 persons with a larger effusion of the Spirit than had ever before attended his ministry, and writes afterwards, "Seventy years of sufferings were overpaid by one such opportunity. I expressed the gratitude of my heart in the following thanksgiving, "All thanks be to God, who scatters abroad," a hymn so jubilant in word and measure as to produce unbounded enthusiasm whenever it is sung. It was amidst the lonely grandeur of the Land's End that he wrote the sublime hymn, "Thou God of glorious majesty," and on the same mysterious spot, "Come, Divine Immanuel, come."

In no hymns are C. Wesley's intense beliefs more apparent than in his funeral and judgment hymns. So long as a witness within ourselves testifies of a world to come, and men die, and mourners stand round open graves, so long will these retain their popularity and power. Perhaps it is not too much to say that the judgment hymn, "Thou God of glorious majesty," ranks in this class next to the *Dies Irae*, though its popularity will never be so great as that of "Lo, He comes with clouds descending," three stanzas of which are by C. Wesley. John Wesley was right in assigning a very high place to his brother's funeral hymns. They are songs, not derges; thanksgivings for "the good fight foughten well," for the emancipation of the spirit, for the everlasting life. Fitting strains are they wherewith to escort the good soldier to the grave, to comfort mourners, and stimulate the living to holiness and zeal.

Alike above and under ground, on sea and land, in fishing-boats, fore-castes, mines, and coal-pits, Wesley's hymns on Death, Judgment, and Heaven, are preaching the Gospel to the poor, and teaching men to live in the light of the future. His hymns on heaven have sometimes produced a thrilling effect on those who heard them for the first time. Some years ago, the recital of one of them by the counsel in a murder case tried at Exeter, as having been the last words of a murdered girl, melted the judge, the bar, the jury, and the audience into tears. In the judgment hymns, C. Wesley uses the prospect of this "tremendous day" as the most powerful of all incentives to holiness.

"Nothing is worth a thought beneath,
But how I may escape the death
That never, never dies;
How make my own election sure,
And when I fall on earth, secure
A mansion in the skies!"

This is the great question which humanity asks, and to it the Wesleys spent their lives in replying. There is hardly a hymn by Charles Wesley which does not contain the answer, stated with more or less of detail. And just because he was so real, and so thoroughly in earnest, his hymns will live for evermore. He did not care to adapt God's truth to man's reason or man's inclination, but he stood up between the living and the dead, with the tables of Sinai in one hand, pardon of Calvary in the other, and assailed an arrogant scepticism and an icy formalism with these old-fashioned weapons, history tells us how successfully. There is nothing apologetic or faltering in any line he ever wrote.

Within the limits of a single paper, it is impossible to point out in detail the less known beauties of the Methodist hymnody. Many of C. Wesley's hymns are familiar to us all.

His strains of triumph are linked for ever with our memories of Christmas, Easter-tide, and Ascension Day; and the Church's expectation of the Second Advent finds its highest expression in the magnificent hymn, "Head of the Church triumphant." "Jesus, lover of my soul" is as often the earliest language of the spirit's needs, as it is the latest of its trust. Though no hymn is more widely known and loved, the term "popular" seems nearly as out of place when applied to it as to the twenty-third Psalm, for we have altered it into the ears of our beloved on the margin of the river of death; and with its pathetic prayers upon their lips, they have passed over to the brighter side. His death and funeral hymns have cheered mourners in every land. "Hark, a voice divides the sky," has been to thousands the first dawn of hope over the dark waters of bereavement. There is no joy, however ecstatic—no repentance, however agonizing—no dread, however terrible—no hope, however ardent—to which C. Wesley has not given expression.

The Church of England closed her pulpits against the living preacher. By a happy retribution, the undying voice of the dead poet sounds alike through her steeple and her lowliest temples; and his magnificent anthem, "Hark, the herald angels sing," the most popular Christmas hymn in the world, finds a place at the end of the Prayer Book. His Easter hymn, "Christ the Lord is risen today. Hallelujah!" appropriately opens the morning service on Easter-day; and his Ascension hymn, "Hail the day that sees Him rise"—the finest in our language—leads the praises of worshippers on ascension-day. It is not enough that the church from which he was driven should now hear his voice; but all

churches, orthodox and heterodox, accord him an honoured place; and the hymns sung by the eleven millions of people, who it is estimated form the Methodist societies of our day, are his, with comparatively few exceptions.

Neither in death nor life was any national honour awarded to the post of Methodism. But what avails the wreath of bay or stately burial to him for whom angels have long since woven the amaranth, and whom "the Holy Church throughout all the world" has embalmed in her everlasting remembrance?

The Daily Recorder.

TORONTO, SATURDAY, MAY 29, 1890.

OUR SUPERANNATED MINISTERS.—We call the attention of our readers to the article now being published in the *Recorder*, in reference to the claims of Superannuated Ministers. The article in question is from the pen of one of our leading laymen; but as he did not wish his name to appear as the author, we gladly give it a place in our editorial columns. The article, though somewhat lengthy, will repay a careful perusal.

WESLEYAN HOME MISSIONS.—We have to hand the Thirteenth Report of this important Society. It fills a pamphlet of 120 pages. Its illustrations of the baptized heathenism of Christian lands should stimulate zeal in this important department of Christian work; while the success it records proves that labour in this field will be rewarded with a rich harvest of fruit.

THE STATIONING COMMITTEE was in Session during the whole of yesterday. The real work of "Stationing the Preachers" has not yet commenced, the time having been occupied so far in considering recommendations for the alteration of Circuit boundaries.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL CONCERT at Adelaide Street Church last night, was a very pleasant and successful affair. The attendance, owing to the unfavorable state of the weather, was not very large; but the children, under the effective leadership of Mr. Coates, acquitted themselves admirably. Mr. George Harper presided at the melodeon, and greatly aided the little folk in the effective rendering of the different pieces.

FUEL.—For those who can afford it, the summer season is by far the most advantageous time for laying in their stock of winter fuel. Our friend, Mr. John Greer, one of our most active and energetic Methodists, will supply the city ministers and churches, and private individuals with fuel, as reasonably as any house in the city. He has two coal and wood yards, one near the Queen Street Wesleyan Church, the other corner of Adelaide and Nelson Streets. See advertisement. Give him a call before purchasing elsewhere.

OCEAN TELEGRAPH.—There will soon be three cables between Europe and America, a new French line being in course of construction. The rate of charges will probably be materially lessened by competition.

LIFE ASSURANCE.

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SUPERANNATED MINISTERS AND THEIR CLAIMS ON THE CHURCH.

We resume to-day our remarks on this important subject. In yesterday's article we spoke of the Ministers' Work. We now ask,—"What is their reward?" God has ordered it, that a reward greater than any human being can bestow awaits his devoted servants. While "they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament: they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever," "he which converteth a sinner from the error of his ways shall save a soul from death, and hide a multitude of sins"—a reward before which all rewards merely earthly sink into insignificance; but this reward is reserved. "For what is our hope or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? for ye are our glory and our joy." The thought that he is doing his Master's work—that his Master's promises are sure and steadfast—and that in heaven those to whom he has been made the minister of good will be his glory and his crown, sustains the servants of God amid many trials and difficulties.

But God has laid upon his people the care of providing for his servants. Not only are they to be "esteemed very highly for their works, sake," not only are they to be remembered as those that have the rule over you, not only are the rulers "that rule well to be counted worthy of double honor, especially they that labor in the word and doctrine," but the Lord has ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel. "Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things, live of the things of the temple, and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar?" But he adds, "I have used none of these things, neither have I written these things that it should be so done unto me, for it were better for me to die than that any man should make my glorying void." If his language was, "I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel, yea, ye yourselves know that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me;" if for the space of three years he ceased not to warn every one, night and day, with tears; if here the reward he sought was, that when he preached the gospel he might make the gospel of Christ without charge, who could with so much propriety ask, "Who geth a warfare any time at his own charges?" And again, "If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we reap your carnal things?"

"But what," says one, "has all this to do with Superannuated Ministers?" Much every way. Ministers, like other men, become worn out by disease or age, or both. Let us inquire whether their income, while in the active work, is such as to enable them to make suitable provision for their support should they become superannuated? And if not, let us see what provision the Church makes for its superannuated ministers.

Their income, what is it? The minimum allowance for a married man on our domestic Missions is now \$500 per annum; two years ago it was \$400. Small as the present allowance is, do they always get it? We have many kind-hearted friends throughout our entire work, who always receive their ministers cheerfully; get them a meal, take care of their horses, make them welcome to their home,—but who, with all this kindness and largeness of heart, have never reflected how painfully a deficiency of \$50 or \$100 in the salary of their minister, at the end of the year, may perplex their minds and disturb their arrangements; never seem to realize that their minister is as anxious to discharge every obligation as they are; and that his inability to do so must be most embarrassing.

Kind friends—we say it again—who think that some surprise party, where the minister receives something he really does not want, leaves him their debtor, though still short of his promised allowance. We have seen much lately of these surprise or donation parties, as they are called. We have no doubt that in some instances friends do over and above what they have engaged to pay their minister—present them with some substantial proof of their attachment; but we fear, in a far greater number of instances, all this

display of liberality is merely as a set-off against a deficient allowance. The minister is waited upon, for example, and presented with an address, and a purse containing say \$40 or \$50, and his wife with a dress or a shawl, or some other thing, it matters not what; and then there are thanks, and all are in good humour. This is all very well; but has the minister received his salary in full? If not, call the whole thing by some other name, but let it be by a right name.

We are not referring to districts where, amid their struggles, friends cheerfully give of their limited means for the support of the Gospel. We refer more to our rich, well settled districts, where well-to-do farmers, in connection with our Church, have their money at interest,—and yet in many such districts we have just such gatherings, where, at the end of the year, the minister, even with these donation parties, finds himself from \$30 to \$50 behind! These things ought not so to be. Here ministers are themselves much to blame. A promise to pay a minister's salary in FULL is a solemn and a binding contract, and no congregation who can do it ought to be allowed to leave it undone, without being faithfully warned; and indeed if congregations trifle in this particular, all the preaching of the pastor will do them but little good.

And yet, with this uncertain income, a minister is expected to preach as though the provision made for his family enabled him to devote his entire time to the Church—to preach as one could who had nothing to do but to study, and to visit as though study were unnecessary; and to be careful to give no offence to any of his flock, if he is anxious to be invited back for the second year. Of some ministers,—hard-working, laborious, and devoted men,—congregations tire before the end of the first year. Either their preaching does not suit, or they do not go among the people, or they are extravagant. Or if they have no fault to find with the minister, they have with his wife or family, and so the matter goes, and they part, only to find in the next minister,—who, by the way, had all the qualities they looked for, and was just the man they wanted,—as many faults, if not more, than in his predecessor. And there are just such circuits, whose members, through long years, have never been able to discover that the fault is in themselves, and not in the devoted men who have laboured among them.

And then some find their way to the larger towns, and to city circuits, where they meet with difficulties, in some instances even greater than in country circuits. They are expected to be scholarly men, eloquent men, devoted men, men who are at home in revivals, under whom the church will prosper, not only spiritually, but in its finances. In cities, where they are expected to dress in keeping with their position, where they are called upon almost daily for aid, and are expected to respond; and what do we find them receiving? A few, perhaps, receive \$1400 per annum, few more than \$1200, the majority \$1000 or under. Deduct rent, taxes, and fuel, and they will have little over \$800 for the support of themselves and their families. And is this always promptly paid? We think not, often, very often, have their minds to be pained by offensive remarks at quarterly meetings, in reference to their own incomes. How much, in such cases, even in our cities, can our ministers lay by, either for sickness or old age, should it please God to lengthen out their days? It requires but little reasoning to show that the income of our ministers, as a rule, is not more than is needed for their present support, and that with the exercise of strict economy; and it could as easily be shown that many of them, at least, have abilities which would enable them to stand high among either the commercial or professional men of the Dominion; while thousands of mechanics are enabled to make provision for themselves and families, far beyond what is in their power to do.

The man whose note is in the bank, knows that he is expected to pay it when it becomes due. He pays it, or his credit is damaged; but quarterly boards see no inconvenience in allowing unpaid balances of the minister's salary to stand over from quarter to quarter, and in some instances allow him to leave his circuit with these balances unsettled. And all this from the hands of men for whose good he is labouring, doing all that he can to promote the good of their bodies and souls.

Some may fancy this picture over drawn. It is true nevertheless. It is an old disease, and has been, and still is, the cause of much spiritual poverty, and we commend to the consideration of all these quarterly boards whose ministers suffer from unpaid balances, to the following extract from the Annual Address of the Conference in the year 1835.

"You will be pleased to learn that the deficiencies of the preachers are far less the year past than in the year preceding. Several circuits that were deficient the former year, have paid the estimated allowances of the preachers the last year, but on some others there is still a painful deficiency, and we fear a criminal neglect. How much better for several to share the burden than for one to bear the whole of it. How much more reasonable and just for a number of individuals to contribute something additional, than for an individual preacher to suffer the loss of a considerable portion of all his living. He that is unjust in that which is least, is unjust also in much. We hope, brethren, this reproach will henceforth be wiped from every circuit."

In 1842, we have in the Annual Address of

that year, this same paragraph, and although in this respect matters are now much improved, yet in many circuits we have reason painfully to know that this evil still exists. We could cite instances, nay, we could give names of honorable brethren whose abilities qualify them for positions of responsibility and befitting emolument in any secular position in any of our towns and cities, who have labored faithfully and zealously, and received for their support just about what a porter would receive in a respectable establishment; who have parted with their libraries, and with small investments, secured by much economy and prudence, and all because the church which could support them, and ought to support them, did not support them adequately. One might say, Why did they not leave the work. They felt that necessity was laid upon them. They could cash say, "Yes, wee is me if I preach not the gospel."

We know of one who, in his present sphere of labor, is spending in excess of his allowances, the little earnings of twenty-seven years. Another, who, coming to a city circuit, spent all he had saved in his former circuit; and another who, in a country circuit, because he was not a popular man with the majority, they gave him such a salary as they deemed would drive him away; but no, he stuck to his post and did his work, although at the expense and loss of his own means. All these, and others that we know, are prudent, economical, judicious men, and we very much fear that there are many who could tell the same tale.

And as years leave their impression on the man, as the hair becomes silver, the imagination less playful, not the same fire in preaching, perhaps, as he had twenty years before, nor the same buoyancy of spirits, circuits are ready to reject the man, who but a few years before they would have had in preference to any other. And their cry is, He is getting old, we want a younger man; let him superannuate; and the objectors are not unfrequently those who were led to Christ by the faithful man they reject. We can well understand that peculiar circumstances connected with some congregations may render a young man desirable, or even necessary, but as a rule our people are too ready to reject men when a little advanced in life, forgetful that one whose life has been devoted to God's service, brings with him as years increase, at least up to a point where mental and physical powers are preserved, a maturity of judgment, a depth of piety, and a knowledge of God's ways, not generally found in younger men. "Righteousness exalteth a nation;" in like manner it exalts the individual.

The man who opens roads through a new country is a public benefactor; the trader who brings his wares to the new settlement, not only adds to his own means, but contributes to the general good; he who brings the words of life to its bowers, and leads the settler to Christ, does more for him than any other human being can do; and to whom his life has been devoted he should be most loved and longest remembered.

How many noble, devoted, and heroic men, the pioneers of Methodism ordained to preach the word of life amid such suffering and endurance in what were the desolate settlements of Canada, now the sites of our busy cities, brought the message of the cross, and were made the ministers of good to the fathers of those who, now in affluent circumstances, fill prominent positions in our country, while they whose mission it was to preach the Gospel under these circumstances, passed through life amid many difficulties incident to these days, and like Case, the father of our Indian missions sleep in some obscure grave yard without a stone to mark their resting place.

Let them superannuate!

How often is this heard from those who do least and think least about the superannuated fund?—who are so far ignorant of the fund and its claims, as neither to know the number of superannuated men nor the amount provided for their support; but who seem to have certain vague notions that the moment a man is superannuated he enters the land of Goshen. For all such, the best course would be to place them for three months (that would be enough) upon the allowances of our superannuated men, and they would for all time to come be able better to sympathize with the most deserving and the worst paid men in connection with the Church.

(To be Continued.)

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