

# The Provincial Wesleyan

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## GOOD INTENTIONS REWARDED.

The Substance of a Sermon by the Rev. Henry Holmes, of Pictou.

(From the Methodist Recorder.)

"And it was in the heart of David, my father to build an house for the Lord God of Israel," &c.—1 Kings viii. 17, 19.

Very memorable, in the history of the Jewish people, was the event in connection with which these words were uttered—viz., the solemn dedication of Solomon's Temple to the service and worship of Jehovah. Never had such an amount of treasure been lavished on a place of worship, and never did a people contribute more willingly of their substance than did the Jews for the building of their beautiful house of prayer. At that time Solomon occupied the very highest pinnacle of earthly power and glory. As a king he occupied the foremost position among the monarchs of the earth. The nation over which he ruled was favoured with unprecedented peace and prosperity, his wisdom and the splendour of his court were the wonder of all nations; and now was added to his political greatness the honor of being the promoter of a work which was destined to exert a most beneficial influence on the Jewish nation.

We may form some conception of the satisfaction and joy which filled the heart of Solomon while he viewed that glorious pile which had been reared under his immediate direction, and was now ready to receive the august symbols of Jehovah's presence. But Solomon did not proclaim for himself the credit of having originated that pious work, but ingeniously confessed that that was due to his sainted father; he designed to build the Temple, and had made large and costly provision for the accomplishment of his purpose, but, while his good intention was acknowledged and warmly approved by God, he was not permitted personally to perform the work, but was assured that his son, who should succeed him in the throne, should execute the godly purpose which he had so fondly cherished in his heart.

The words of our text, when considered in connection with the circumstances under which they were spoken, suggest to us some important practical lessons, to a few of which we invite serious attention.

1. We should consider it an honor to be allowed to render any service to the Almighty. Great and varied were the achievements which characterized the reign of Solomon, and many were the remarkable qualities which he was endowed, which caused his fame to spread through all lands; but that which contributed more than anything else to render his reign illustrious, (especially in Jewish esteem) was the building of the Temple. We may gather from expressions used by Solomon in the course of that solemn dedication service, that he felt that, in being permitted to promote that great and holy work, a greater honor was conferred upon him than any that belonged merely to his kingly position; he felt that that work brought him into an intimate association with Jehovah; God was deeply interested in the work.

God is infinitely great and glorious, and man cannot work in harmony with Him without thereby being ennobled. If men of noble birth and princely fortune esteem it an enhancement of their inherited dignity to be allowed to serve their sovereign, much more should we account it an honor to be engaged in the service of the King of kings. St. Paul seems to have been much affected by this view of his work. Amid all the ignominy, toil, and suffering through which he passed, this thought appears to have cheered and stimulated him. Speaking of himself and his fellow-labourers, he says, "We are workers together with God." What a blessed thought! We are associated with the Triune God in doing good! Alas, how faint are our conceptions of the honor which such an association with the Divine Being implies! If our views on this point were more just, we should not be so disinclined to engage in God's service as we often are, nor so heartless in the work which we do attempt to perform.

God's offer of service to us by all means implies that our co-operation is indispensable to the carrying out of his plans—that he has no other agency at his command which is adapted to the accomplishment of his purposes. Countless beings, almost infinitely superior to us in purity, wisdom, and power, stand before his throne, ready to obey his behests, who account their highest bliss to be so employed; and doubtless, if God had seen it good, he could have engaged their lofty powers, in the interests of mankind, in a manner more general and more sensible than that which now characterizes their ministry to the human race. But it is God's will that man should be the minister of good to his fellow men. Some persons deprecate and shun the more lowly and obscure parts of God's service as though they supposed that such employment was devoid of honour, or that some forms of labour, such as teaching little children to love Jesus, were somewhat too humble for their gifts to be expended on; but really all God's work is honorable, and such as angels (if they might) would gladly be engaged in.

2. Good men are frequently unable to render to God all the service that they desire to render.

After David had taken Jerusalem and had made it the metropolis of his kingdom, he brought there the ark of God, which had for some time remained in the house of Obed Edom, and placed it in a tabernacle in the city of David. He had for many years been engaged in fierce wars with surrounding foes, but now he enjoyed a season of repose, for "God had given him rest from all his enemies." But one cause of dissatisfaction remained to him. Perhaps, in coming to his house from the tabernacle where he reverently placed the ark of God, he was struck with the contrast there was between the magnificent character of his own dwelling and the mere tent in which the ark of God rested. It may be that he had never before been so impressed with the impropriety of such a state of things. His pious soul revolted against such impropriety. Calling to him his prophet Nathan he said, "See now! I dwell in an house of cedar, but the ark of God dwelleth within curtains." And no doubt he proceeded to tell the prophet what he was resolved to do. Nathan warmly approved his purpose, but was afterwards sent by God to inform

David that it was not his will that he should build the temple; his life had been spent among the sanguinary scenes of war, and it was not the will of God that the temple, which was to be the symbol of peace between God and man, should be built by one who had "been a man of war, and had shed much blood." Therefore, while God warmly commended the good intention of David, He withheld his permission.

As in the case of David, so it is with many good men now: many such have it in their hearts to do much for God, which circumstances render them unable to accomplish.

Affliction is a frequent cause of inability. Many of God's most precious jewels are in the fire: in the hearts of such there glows many an ardent desire to do good, and to glorify God by active service.

Poverty, again, is often a hindrance. Many of God's poor people are rich in faith and charity. Grace produces the same kind of fruit in all who have it, whatever be the particular conditions of their life. And doubtless the longing of many a poor Christian swells with a longing to become a blessing to his fellows, but the labours under an inability to carry out his holy purpose.

The pressure of secular duties is another hindrance to directly religious work. Of course it is not the will of God that men should neglect the necessary duties which Providence has devolved upon them, for the purpose of spending a larger portion of their time in specially religious work. Political, commercial, and domestic duties must be performed by some men. And there are some men who are specially adapted to fill certain posts, the duties of which impose a constant burden on their occupants, and demand the application of the whole of their time and strength. Surely it is not God's will that such men should recede those positions that their time may be devoted to the spiritual interests of mankind. We do not but that many men who are so occupied long for the privilege of serving God in spheres of godly work; but their other duties forbid their so doing; yet, if their hearts are right, their secular work is consecrated and acceptable to God, and in it they are serving God.

3. Every sincere desire to render service to God is accepted by Him, though the ability to perform the desired good be absent. David truly purposed to build the temple, and though he did not carry out his intention, God accepted the will for the deed. The temple was virtually built in the divine esteem as soon as David had formed the holy determination. Hence God said, "Thou didst will that it was in thy heart." David's purpose to build the temple was of more value to God than the actual temple, for gold, silver, cedar-wood, and all the most costly and precious things are, in themselves, of no value to God. The love to God which prompts men to consecrate their substance to his service, that is of priceless value in his esteem. How much comfort may this thought afford to poor and afflicted Christians who mourn over their inability to do for God all that their hearts desire! The will to do good is more than the doing. And let it be remembered that, if God esteems it as equivalent to a holy work, so God regards an evil purpose as equal to an evil action. A man may fail to execute a wicked work which he had deliberately planned, by circumstances which he would have overruled if he could, and may then endeavour to reconcile himself to the disappointment by the reflection that he would not have the wicked thing to repent of. But thus art deceived, O foolish wicked man! For as soon as God saw the evil purpose settled in thy mind, He said, "Thou didst evil that it was in thy heart to do it." As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he.

4. Our subject may suggest to us one view of our responsibility which we are apt to overlook. How highly culpable Solomon would have been if he had not built the temple! God had specially assigned the work to him. His sainted father, with his dying breath, had charged him to "be strong and do the work;" moreover, he had also provided a most valuable portion of the requisite material for building and beautifying the temple. If, therefore, Solomon had disregarded alike the command of God and the charge of his father, and had applied the consecrated treasure to personal uses, he would have been verily guilty. So it is with us as regards our own salvation and the work of the Church. We are the heritors of an immense treasure of light and Gospel privileges which have been secured to us at the expense of the toil, suffering, and blood of holy men of past ages. "Other men have laboured, and we have entered into their labours." A variety of Christian institutions and enterprises have been commenced by good men of their support and extension. And we may rest assured that if we neglect or shrink our duty God will not hold us guiltless.

From the Western Christian Advocate.

### REVIVALS 'S. SCIENTIFIC SKEPTICISM.

Scientific investigation was never more active, nor more successful, than now. With equal boldness and ability men are assailing all mysteries, and are steadily pushing back the boundaries of the unknown. It is even asserted that all facts are susceptible of scientific tests, and that assumed facts which do not welcome these tests, and are not vindicated by them, are not facts at all, but only assumptions.

Applying this idea to Christianity, men who claim to be sincere seekers after truth, but who undoubtedly believe that Christianity cannot be submitted to scientific tests, are proposing to submit it to scientific tests. If it responds to these tests, then scientific men will admit that there are forces which science has heretofore failed to recognize; if not, then the whole system shall be abandoned as a baseless dream of enthusiasts.

In this state of things many friends of Christianity, and among them many of its most enlightened advocates, are experiencing a measure of alarm, and are instinctively turning to the schools which Christianity has established, to find men who will be able to cope with these scientific adversaries in their own field. The alarm is not entirely without reason, because

the age is, in a sense, and to a certain degree, scientific, and listens with open ears to what scientists only say. They, therefore, have power over it, and may turn some from the truth.

It is safe to assert, however, that Christianity has its safe defenders, scientists as well as laymen; men who know quite as much about the crania of apes as Darwin knows, and are as familiar with protoplasm as Huxley, and who reach very different conclusions. Attack provokes defence, and scientific assault will suffer scientific repulse.

We confess, however, that our hope for the vindication of Christianity rests mainly upon another foundation. It is a system, not of science, but of morals and religion. Its mission is, not directly to make men wise in the ordinary sense of that word, but to make men holy. This is its avowed and distinctive purpose; its teachings all look to this result; its methods keep directly to this point. These are the fruits which the author of it has taught the world to look for, and this is the authorized test by which to try the system. If it could be vindicated by the profoundest scientific tests which the learning of the age could apply to it, and should after all stand in the world a resultless victim, a beautiful tree without fruit, it would be open to the charge of total failure. Men would look at it and say, "The institution seems perfect in itself; history attests its antiquity, and science its perfection; but where are its results?" And on looking into it, and finding it full of promises of purifying power on society, they would say, "This system is false in its main feature; it fails to fulfill its own chief promise." And on making this discovery, they would turn away from it.

We are much more concerned, therefore, about the constant exercise of the regenerating power of Christianity than we are about the skeptical attacks which a certain school of scientists are now making upon it. Christianity suffered vastly less, a hundred years ago, from the attacks of Paine and the French infidels than from the corrupt lives of its own avowed advocates. It received higher vindication from the Wesleyan Reformation than from the Church of Christ may be all ages with its vigor. So long as it does its purifying work, no scientific attacks can seriously harm it. The shout of those redeemed at its altars has more pathos and more logic than all the clamors of skepticism. The lives of those who are lifted up and transformed and purified by it, are an argument in its favor which no scientific doubt can rob of its convincing power. The appeal which this argument addresses to the conscience is resistless.

Our great concern, therefore, is, not in these days of scientific skepticism and learned doubt, the Church of Christ may be all ages with its vigor. So long as it does its purifying work, no scientific attacks can seriously harm it. The shout of those redeemed at its altars has more pathos and more logic than all the clamors of skepticism. The lives of those who are lifted up and transformed and purified by it, are an argument in its favor which no scientific doubt can rob of its convincing power. The appeal which this argument addresses to the conscience is resistless.

### THE HEAVENLY BEAUTY.

BY REV. R. H. HOWARD.

It is related of a certain lady in moderate circumstances, who yet was in the habit of attending a certain fashionable church, that she was not unfrequently annoyed and mortified because of her own plain features and not specially stylish method of dress. As there were few attendants at the same church not a few more lavishly in person and more richly attired than herself, her Sabbath, strange as it may appear, were often spent in real misery because of this bitter struggle on her part with envy and unsatisfied pride.

One Sunday she was about entering the church a poor deformed girl pulled her by the dress, pleadingly asking at the same time, "Ma'am, can I go in there?" The lady hesitated. Such a sight was to her look upon her back was so crooked, her face so sallow, her clothes so poor! But there was such an air about her that she could not resist, and she said, "Yes, my dear, you may; come and go right along in with me." And she took the poor forlorn-looking child by the hand and led her into the church and into her own pew. Ah, but what a look of delight now came over that wondering child's face as she gazed around that grand old church, and took in one object of interest after another. This was evidently a new experience to her, and she was drinking in influences whose impress would never fade away. The lady who had introduced the poor thing to this new scene at once conceived a strange interest in her, and felt more than repaid for the slight sacrifice she had made.

But the music seemed to be the chief charm to this little unfortunate. She sat and listened as if hardly knowing whether she was in the body or out of the body. Nay, you would have hardly known now that fact, so radiant with rapture, for the same that looked up so pleadingly and piteously a moment ago. For the second hymn the choir sang the one beginning, "And must this body die, to a wonderful sweet tune." The lady, however, as was her wont, was so much occupied in watching and envying another lady who had just come in, and who was uncommonly attractive both in feature and attire, that she had quite forgotten both the child and her devotions; when she again felt a vigorous pull at her dress, and heard the little creature at her side in a whisper exclaim, "O listen! listen, ma'am!"

The big tears were rolling down her cheeks. They were singing, "Arrayed in glorious grace, Shall these vile bodies shine, And every shape, and every face, Be heavenly and divine."

In amazement the lady looked down upon the poor little deformed girl beside her. Could it be possible that she understood those words, and was so deeply touched by the thought they contained—the idea that her poor little "vile

body" should yet be "arrayed in glorious grace" or was simply the sweetest that had so affected her? As soon, therefore, as the sermon was ended, and the service was over, the lady turned to the child and asked, "Did you like the hymn very much, my dear?"

"O yes," said she quietly, "O yes, very much indeed."

"Will you tell me why?" continued the lady, as kindly and as sympathetically as she could.

"O!" said she turning and pointing to the lovely woman near by of whom mention has already been made, "you see ma'am, I'm going to look as beautiful as she up there."

"In heaven do you mean?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"And are you hoping to go there?"

"Fixing her large eyes full on the inquirer's face, and with a voice thrilling with emotion, she replied, "And didn't the Lord Jesus, ma'am, die for just such poor crooked ones as me?"

In a little more than a year from that time that same little deformed thing had fallen asleep. So early had she exchanged her crooked shape and was little face for one all "heavenly and divine." In the mean time, what an unspeakable comfort to that crushed and sensitive spirit evidently had been our glorious hope of one day rising to where,

Arrayed in glorious grace, Shall these vile bodies shine, And every shape, and every face, Be heavenly and divine.

But the proud, envious, worldly-minded woman, who had been taught a wholesome lesson, and from that time forth, as often tempted to yield to her characteristically setting sin, and to pray selfishly for earthly preferment, the recollection of that once pale face, lighted up with blissful hope of the coming transformation, would rebuke and put to flight her unholy temper, and inspire in its stead a desire, an earnest, fervent aspiration after that beauty, that matchless loveliness, that peace, and those alone can know who shall "have part in the first resurrection."—*Christian Advocate.*

## THE STATISTICS OF PRAYER.

I venture to think that such an enquiry, conducted upon principles rightly applicable to the case, might lead to results different from those on which Mr. Galton seems to count, and from which no Christian need shrink. Why should we shrink from acknowledging that a vast portion of the prayer offered up in a Christian land for hundreds of years been of the unprofitable order? Why should we fear to own that the same formula may be said or sung, or dropped, or mumbled, for fifty years, in the same pulpit, at a stated wage, without having had any effect whatever, in the heaven above or in the earth below, except to promote the solemnity of the so-called worshippers? Why should we hesitate to acknowledge that not a few of the most eloquent prayers addressed—as it has been well phrased—to dazzling congregations in New York, London or Boston, never get above the gilt, but finally sink under which they are buried? All this may be granted, and yet it may be maintained that no instance may be found by Mr. Galton or any other man in the records of the past in which sincere, fervent, faithful prayer was demonstrably effectual. That soldier of Cromwell who was heard praying aloud in the night before the battle of Dunbar—fought in the gray of dawn—Mr. Galton sure that he was not answered? Those prayers of Luther over his Bible in the agony of his soul, which preceded the Reformation—were they unheeded in heaven? After all, however, we shall find that this is a matter of doubtful statistical handling in any shape.—*Peter Bayne, M.A., in the Boston Watchman and Reflector.*

## MINISTRIAL POWER.

The clergy are too ready to rely upon every thing, rather than on the substantial claims of their message. One party take to gay dresses, banners, and processions; another to penny readings, political lectures, and concerts. They change from one thing to another, day by day, and the result is only a weary waste of their own time, and the creation of a certain amount of social feeling which they are equally produced without the supernatural aid of the Church and religion. Religious truths, if they are what they are believed to be, can need all this trivial machinery to recommend them; and religious convictions, which are to be of any value, must be produced and sustained by more simple and permanent means. If we may judge by the history of the Church, both in early and modern times, a man of truly religious feeling needs nothing but a room and a Bible to bring about the greatest results. The one thing essential to the power of the permanent truth of the Christian religion, and a devotion to these alone. The personal example and the public teaching of religion are, in our opinion, the least to be diverted from these to novel devices and elastic webs the better.—*London Times.*

## THE AIM OF THE PULPIT.

From the Central Christian Advocate.

It preaching had no other end than to make a reputation for scholarship, notes and written discourses would have their place. But the aim of the pulpit should be to save souls. It needs earnestness and directness, and the inspiration of the congregation, and the immediate aid of the Holy Spirit. While the preachers of all other denominations are freeing themselves from the bondage of reading sermons and preaching from notes, we are adopting their cast-off garments. We are wondering why the pulpit has not the power and influence that it had years ago. But men of genius and consecration, as Spurgeon, Beecher, Simpson, Talmage, and every man of power, insist on freedom from all such pulpit trappings. If the whole soul is intent on preaching Christ, who shall not fall from want of pulpit power. We will rely more on the thought and feeling evoked by the Spirit, and have greater success.

## HINTS TO YOUNG CONVERTS.

1. Consecrate yourself to Christ completely. Time, talents, opportunities, powers of body and mind, are all to be given to Him.
2. The grand daily question of life is to be, "Lord what wilt thou have me to do?" The smallest as well as the greatest matters are to be settled by it.
3. Never pick and choose among the commandments of God.
4. To learn duty, read the precepts of the Bible in the light of an earnest piety.
5. Never let mere want of feeling hinder from following out a plain path of duty. If duty calls, follow and let feeling alone.
6. Never be afraid or ashamed to say "No," if duty requires.
7. Hold up your light bravely, though it be small.
8. Let nothing hinder daily reading of the Bible with prayer.
9. Do not examine too closely your own heart and motives. It is like a child, pulling a plant by the roots, in order to see whether it is growing. Rather place your soul where the beams of the Sun of Righteousness, and the dew of the Holy Spirit, may fall upon it daily, and you will grow in grace inevitably.
10. Speak to the impement of Christ and his salvation. Remember the care, the prayers, and the effort bestowed upon you. But remember, too, that the life is more powerful than mere words.

## MODERN PREACHING.

From Scribner's Monthly.

The typical modern preacher mingles with him. He goes into the world of business—into its career, its trials, its great temptations, its sorrows, its dangers and disasters—and learns the character and needs of the men he meets there. He sits in the humble dwelling of the laborer, and reads the wants of laborer; he finds there, in workshops, in social assemblies, in schools, among men, women and children, wherever they live, or meet for labor or for pleasure, his presence is familiar. Human life is the book he reads preparatory to his pulpit labors; and without the faithful reading of this book, he has no fitting preparation for the discharge of his sacred duty as a preacher or knows of the divine life, if he has not an equal knowledge of the human, his message will be a barren one.

## WESLEY AND THE ENGLISH CHURCH.

Our contemporary, the *Church Herald*, recently published a letter of John Wesley, which it alleged was never published before, in which he strongly insists on the Methodist never leaving the Church of England, and is equally severe on the Calvinistic teachers of the day. He tells those who object to the ungodly lives of the clergy, as a reason why they should not go to hear them, that, notwithstanding this, they would be less likely to be injured or misled by their preaching, than by the unscriptural Calvinism they would hear in other churches. Our Episcopalian friends are never done reminding the Methodists that it was Wesley's advice that they should not leave the Church of England. We have frequently replied to this allegation; but a few words on this point may not be altogether superfluous.

Our Episcopalian friends need not trouble themselves to multiply proofs of Mr. Wesley's attachment to the English Church, or that he advised the Methodists not to separate from the Church. All intelligent Methodists will freely admit all this. But at the same time, they will repudiate the claim that John Wesley was an inflexible pope, from any of whose opinions it is a mortal sin to dissent. If there are any such persons, of course they cannot defend any departure from Wesley's opinion.

But for our own part, we claim to be in a far better position to judge of the expediency or inexpediency of separation, than the Church of England, than Mr. Wesley could be. True, he said that if the Methodists left the Church of England God would forsake them; but history has shown that he was wrong. The greatest successes of Wesleyan Methodism in England, and of Methodism in the United States, were achieved after the death of Wesley. It is certainly a weak argument to quote, as an inflexible prophecy, an opinion, which time has amply proved to be wrong. There can now be little doubt, that the delay of Mr. Wesley to give Methodism an independent organization operated unfavorably to its progress. On this question, the method of argument pursued by Episcopalsians is open to grave objection. They generally quote as an expression of Wesley against separation as unquestionable, and ignore and overlook everything on the other side. One would think, to hear these one-sided statements, that up to the time of Wesley's death, he and all the Methodists were in full communion with the English Church, and that after his death there was some general disruption and secession.

Neither of these assumptions is true. Many of the Methodists never belonged to the Church of England, and therefore could not leave it. John Wesley himself was disowned by the Church as a minister; and, except the fact that he was ordained by the Bishop of London and never was formally expelled, he had little claim to be called "a minister of the Church of England." He completely broke away from submission to its authority. He organized societies which had no organic connection with the Church, and over which it had not the slightest control. He ordained men to administer the sacraments, where he deemed it necessary, and made legal provision for the independent existence of the Methodist body after his death. He obtained a superintendency for English Methodism, and organized an independent Methodist Church in America. In the face of all this, how can it be maintained that during the life of Wesley, Methodism remained connected with the Church of England? The connection was a sentiment; the independence was a fact.

Notwithstanding all Mr. Wesley's advice against leaving the Church of England, Methodism was organically and practically independent of every other Church at the time

of his death, only so far as individual members of the Methodist societies claimed to be members of the Church of England, which many continued to do long after his death. There was no disruption, no secession. The question of leaving the Church was not the question of the hour. The only change was the conceding of the sacraments to many more congregations than had this privilege before. But even this made no practical change in the relations of Methodism to the Established Church. The course of the Methodists after Wesley's death was the natural development of the policy inaugurated by Mr. Wesley himself. As early as 1755 the question of separation and independence was debated in the Conference for three days, and the conclusion arrived at was, that whether it was lawful or not, it was not expedient to separate from the Church. Of those who argued in favor of independence, Wesley himself admitted that though he did not "fluctuate, yet he could not answer the arguments." He afterwards wrote, "I have no fear about this matter, I only fear the preachers or the people's love, not the Church, but the love of God and inward or outward holiness." "Church or no Church," he again says, "we must attend to the work of saving souls." As to the advice given in the letter in the *Herald*, we entirely dissent from the opinion expressed by Wesley. We should decidedly prefer the ministry of a godly and devout Calvinist to that of an ungodly Arminian who was a stranger to the power of spiritual religion. But for that matter, one would not now escape from Calvinistic theology by attending the service of the Church of England. The "commercial" view of the statement is generally presented in the pulpits of what are called the Evangelical clergy of the Established Church.

No impartial and competent observer of the past can so hesitate to decide that without complete and independent church organization Methodism could never have become the great spiritual power which it has been during the present century. The Irish Primitive Methodists who have tried the experiment of remaining connected with the Established Church, have lived a feeble and unprogressive life, and are now breaking up altogether. If the formation of an independent denomination by the Methodists be considered a crime, it should be remembered by our Episcopalian friends that the main responsibility for this must rest with the Established Church, who repeatedly repelled all Methodist overtures for union.

## THE WESLEYAN MISSIONARY SOCIETY'S REPORT.

The Annual Report of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society, although making its appearance this year somewhat later than usual, owing to circumstances which Mr. Boyce explained at the conference, is a publication of great interest, and will amply repay a careful perusal. The following epitome of its contents, with the addition of a few other items, was prepared for a series of missionary meetings which are being held this autumn in an extensive circuit in the provinces, and it is here published with the hope that it will not only interest many readers who may not have access to the sources from which the information is drawn, but also prove helpful to brethren who are making arrangements for their public meetings.

The Wesleyan Missionary Society still continues to occupy a prominent position among the foremost of the noble institutions of the present age which have for their object the spread of the Gospel throughout the world. It is, indeed, more comprehensive in its range than many other kindred associations. Whilst some societies confine their evangelical efforts to separate and distinct departments of the great work, this embraces all classes of men, in all countries who stand in need of the Gospel, without respect to complexion, language, or condition. It is, in fact, a society for Pagans and Mohammedans; for Jews and Gentiles; for continents and islands; for heathen lands, properly so called, and for the destitute settlers in our colonial possessions. Both with regard to the success of the missionaries in their unwaried efforts to win souls to Christ, and in the liberal manner in which the funds of the institution have been supported, the past has been a year of marked progress.

The following "birds-eye" view of the work of the Society will illustrate and verify this statement.

The Society's work in Europe is still carried on in Ireland, France, Switzerland, Germany, Italy, Spain, and Portugal, where the missionaries have been toiling during the past year amid many difficulties, but with cheering tokens of success. The most remarkable event which has occurred in this section of the work is the establishment of a Methodist mission in Rome—an event which, if it had been predicted a few years ago, would have been thought the wildest and most unlikely that could possibly have been imagined. When the "Eternal City" was entered and taken possession of as the legitimate capital of Italy, the temporal power of the Pope was doomed, and religious liberty being avowed as the adopted policy of the new ruling powers, the way was opened for the proclamation of the pure and simple Gospel of Christ to the people of Rome. Of this privilege the Wesleyan Missionary Society was prompt to avail itself, having already several stations in other parts of Italy. A temporary place of worship was immediately fitted up and opened, and the blessing of God attended the labours of the missionaries. Precious souls were won for Christ, and some of the first fruits of the mission were already safely housed in contraband, and more than half that amount by the inhabitants of Fiji. At the same time much remains to be done for the instruction and Christian training of tens of thousands of people just emerging from the darkness of heathenism, as well as for the spread of the Gospel in some parts of Polynesia which have never yet been visited by the missionaries, to say nothing of the claims of the demoralized Europeans, who are flocking to the shores of some of the islands.

In INDIA AND CHINA the missionaries have to contend with deeply-rooted prejudices and systems of paganism which have stood for ages. But even here the foundations of idolatry seem to be giving way; and those who are of best to judge are of opinion that the time is not far distant when the spread of Western science and literature, the promotion of sound Christian education, and a faithfully-preached Gospel will result in the entire overthrow of idolatry, and the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth, and every system opposed to the Gospel, and when Christianity shall everywhere prevail and triumph. In Ceylon and some parts of continental India, gracious revivals of religion have been experienced, and many native converts have been called to the work of the Christian ministry.

In the whole there is abundant cause for encouragement, and the success of the past is such as may stimulate us to renewed exertions, to increased liberality, and more fervent prayer. The following is a summary of the statistics of the Wesleyan Missionary Society as far as ascertained:—

Central or Principal Stations,	531
Chapels and other Preaching Places,	6,241
Ministers and Assistant Missionaries,	1,071
Church members and Probationers,	154,029
Scholars in the Mission Schools,	264,649
Printing Presses,	7

The total income of the Parent Society from all sources for the past year amounted to the sum of £3,187 5s. 10d., which it is hoped will be entirely renewed during the present year.—*Methodist Recorder.*





