

UNITED METHODIST

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With which is incorporated the "Free Methodist," founded 1856.

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STANDARDS (2)

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"The Sound of a Trumpet."

CHARLES WESLEY, in a well-known hymn, expressed a fervent desire for a trumpet voice. It is the voice the Church should covet and cultivate. The trumpet note is clear, certain and triumphant. It knows nothing of doubt, hesitation, failure, or defeat. It calls to conflict, but conflict that is certain of victory. It has no uncertain sound. There is a Hebrew legend that Lucifer, son of the morning, who was exiled from heaven, when asked what most he missed of the heavenly life, replied, "I miss most the sound of the trumpets." That is what we miss in the Church to-day.

There are many things worthy and beautiful in our churches. There are faithful souls who fill their urns where heaven's pure waters rise, and carry everywhere the fragrance of holy living. There are earnest souls who, constrained by the love of Christ, seek to serve their church in many ways and joy over every new life won to follow their Lord. But for the most part we must fain confess we do not hear the trumpet notes of joy and triumph. We turn back to the Acts of the Apostles and hear with a thrill the heartening note, "There were added unto the Lord daily such as were being saved."

The trumpets sound with clarion clearness and inspiring music. We catch the joyful sound again as we recall the toils and triumphs of the early Methodists. But we listen in vain for the exhilarating note to-day. The glorious music is unheard. We are more familiar with the sigh of anxious struggle, the gloom of depression, the fear of failure. Our speech drips dreary discouragement. We emphasize our fears and our failures. An earnest Christian worker was urged, some time since, to attend a special meeting, because a leading local minister was going to speak on "Why the Free Churches Fail." He replied, "I should be much more inclined to go if he would tell us how to succeed." Precisely! We offer no inducement to attend our gatherings when we talk of failure. Our Methodist forefathers always proclaimed the Gospel, as the supreme, the exclusive remedy for the ills of life. Religion was to them "the sovereign balm for all our wounds, a cordial for our fears." To men conscious of some great need and longing for fuller, happier life, they said, "O let me commend my Saviour to you." They were sure that in Jesus they would find complete satisfaction.

To-day we find some people expressing the strange idea that religion, instead of being a remedy for human ills, is itself in need of salvation from the corruptions of the age, and calling for some drastic action to ensure its future safety. Has not this gone far enough? It is time to change the note. It can only result in deeper disappointment—in more dismal depression. It is bad for ourselves. We infect ourselves with discouragement. We induce the feeling that our efforts are futile, that "the struggle nought availeth, the labour and the wounds are vain." It is bad for others.

Professor Aldous Huxley, in one of his studies, declares "that the medical man can cast down an anxious soul with a word, and condemn it to years of worry and fear by a single hesitating sentence." Would not that statement be just as true if we wrote "Christian preacher" for "medical man"? If he doubts, if he hesitates, and is uncertain, may not a chill and a blight fall on his hearers? This doubt of religious power, this fear of its future, this talk of failure is very likely to depress anxious souls and perpetuate worry and fear. We recall another sentence about the medical man: "There is no drug as powerful as hope. The slightest sign of pessimism on the face, or in the words, of a doctor can cost his patient his life." It is not a cheerful

thought that our lack of certainty and hope may have had injurious effects upon the spiritual life of our fellows. Is it not time to end this talk of failure? Granted there is much to discourage and even to depress, but ought we not to resist the temptation to repeat the fears that darken and the doubts that daunt? Resist it in the spirit of Asaph: "If I sought to say this, behold, I should offend against the generation of Thy children."

In one of his sermons Dr. Gossip says "The Epistles make it plain that the apostles could have had their startling headlines. What is wrong with the Church? They preferred to noise abroad the marvellous things Christ was accomplishing." Cannot we do that? Cannot we leave criticism to those who "delight to bark and bite," while we concentrate upon the glorious task of proclaiming the glad tidings of "the great and good Physician who is able now our souls to save"?

To quote Dr. Gossip again "If we would ring out more of the good news about Jesus Christ and less of the bad news about the Church, we should do greatly better. And why should we not? Jesus is still accomplishing wonders for us, breaking set habits, pulling down strongholds, building up better things, just as certainly to-day as ever in the past." Is not that true? We may not see the miracle of the changed life as often as we desire, but, thank God, we do see it. The dungeon still flames with light, the chains are still being broken, and souls still leap in glad freedom. Young hearts are still catching the spell of Jesus and following Him to beautiful life and beneficent service. Jesus is still taking hold of stained, marred lives and, before our wondering eyes, making them pure and lovely. Cannot we tell that? Mr. Hugh Redwood has spoken of it in his book, and thousands rush to read it. The world is hungry for the message of Jesus. Some time ago a company of students for the ministry invited a learned man to speak to them. They expected a recondite utterance. He spoke to them as an earnest Christian, and urged them to remember when they preached that the unspoken desire of the men and women before them was, "Tell me the old, old story of Jesus and His love." It is true still. "We would see Jesus," is yet the great cry of the heart. And the promise is, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me."

And if we cannot tell of "conversions," have we not an experience of His grace that we can tell? Some of us have travelled far. Long years are behind us. Years that tell the story of our weakness and folly, our sorrow and sin; but, praise God, tell, too, the brighter story of a grace that never failed us nor forsook us. We can tell of a great Companion Who has travelled with us along every rugged, perilous, uphill road. We can testify that there has been always a Shoulder for our burden and a Hand to help. These are the glad affirmations, the glorious certainties that we can proclaim, and which others, fellow pilgrims along the difficult way, will rejoice to hear.

We have our problems. The Church has had them in every generation. But our problems are not greater than the first disciples faced. The problem of Rome was at least as dark and threatening and obstinate as any we have to face to-day. Matthew Arnold has told us of that "deep weariness and sated lust that made human life a hell." Paul knew all its blackness, but he did not despair. He knew that the Gospel he proclaimed was the "power of God unto salvation," and could cleanse and change even Rome. Nor is there anything worse in the conditions of our time than the conditions the early Methodists faced, and, by the preaching of the Gospel, changed. We need faith, hope,

courage. Faith in the Gospel we have to proclaim, and in the redeeming power of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Faith in the resources at our command, hope in our fellows, and courage to proclaim the evangel of the grace of God. Let us hear, and heed, the voice that comes from the Holy Word: "Up to the high hills, O herald of happiness to Sion! Raise your voice loudly, O herald of happiness to Jerusalem, raise it fearlessly, and tell the towns of Judah, Here is your God! Here is the Eternal coming in power, maintaining mightily His cause."

R. H. LITTLE.

"Broadcasting Compassion."

THIS is the title of the Annual Report of the South-East London Mission, recently issued. Most of our readers will know that this is one of the Home Mission centres of the Primitive Methodist Church, and was founded some thirty years ago by the late Rev. James Flanagan. This mission is evidently doing a magnificent work in this densely crowded part of London. It is a veritable centre of light, comfort and healing to the people of the neighbourhood.

The report is written by the Rev. George Kendall, O.B.E., and by an ingenious analogy, the writer shows how the mission is "broadcasting" compassion and helpfulness to the many thousands in the adjoining neighbourhoods. The "broadcasting stations," "the children's hour," "the weather forecast" "the week's good cause," "the silent fellowship," are all used to set forth and illustrate the far-reaching influence of this great mission.

Writing of the "weather forecast," the author says that "it may not affect you much, as you sit in a cosy room in front of a bright fire, but think of the suffering of the men whose only home is a lodging-house, or whose bed is a seat on the Thames Embankment." "No hungry man is ever turned away from the mission, and by an arrangement with a reliable lodging-house, the mission gives a bed to many men who otherwise would sleep out in the cold." This is one of the many good causes of which Mr. Kendall writes. The mission stands for whole-hearted and sacrificial service for 365 days in the year. Above £6,000 has been spent on social work. The Sisters (and there are ten of them) have visited 5,000 homes during the year; 2,000 sick cases have been relieved; 17,300 cases have been helped with hospital letters, clothing, food and medical supplies, and 2,000 cases have been helped by the Poor Man's Lawyer. More than fifty religious meetings are held in the mission every week. In addition to the Headquarters at St. George's Hall there are branch missions at Walworth, Rotherhithe and Deptford.

It is impossible in a brief notice to even summarize the great work which is being done at this great mission centre, and we strongly advise every lover of Home Missions to procure a copy of this charming report for himself. The superintendent is the Rev. J. E. Gilbert, St. George's Hall, Old Kent Road, and we doubt not that he will cheerfully send a copy to any interested in this great religious and philanthropic agency. W. D. L.

Britain, India and Europe.

SPEAKING at a missionary luncheon for business men at the Memorial Hall last week, Major Evelyn Wrench, editor of the "Spectator," declared that "the only real solution of all our difficulties is to apply Christian principles—the principles of the Sermon on the Mount—to the matters of every-day life." Major Wrench's special subject was "Can Great Britain get out of Europe?" but by way of preface he stressed the present fateful position in regard to India. The point really at issue here is whether we are prepared, as the British Commonwealth of Nations, to enter into partnership with India on a basis of equality. Something is called for that will capture the imagination of the Indian people. "Do we mean what we say in regard to Dominion status? Of course, there must be a period of transition covering a period of years, but the point is: Are we prepared to say to a people of a different colour that they will be accepted as co-equal partners with ourselves in the British Commonwealth? If so, I feel that the future of that Commonwealth is assured; but, if not, then I can but feel very grave concern as to its future."

As to Europe, it had to be admitted that the pendulum had swung towards nationalism. Unquestionably patriotism could go too far. To love one's country it was not necessary to hate every other. Trade must be mutual. It was quite impossible to sell and not buy—to shut ourselves up behind tariff walls. Great Britain has one foot in the old world and the other in the new, and it is for her to play the rôle of interpreter. "I have found that on the Continent our country is regarded with tremendous respect because of its progressive ideas. I believe that in the various European lands there is a great body of forward-looking people. Somehow or other machinery must be devised for mutual consideration in regard to trade, for no one nation can live to itself alone."

H. J. C.

THE C.S.S.M. Diary for 1932, containing sixteen pages of road maps at 1s. 6d., post free, and two gramophone records of choruses at 2s. 6d. each, by post 2s. 9d., and a one-page commentary on the books of the Bible, are of particular interest, in addition to their seasonable offers of Christmas cards, books, gifts, etc. Readers should write for catalogue to C.S.S.M., 5, Wigmore Street, London, W.1, mentioning this paper.

Honouring an Old Shebbearian

AMONG the United Methodists of South Wales no names are held in higher esteem than those of Mr. and Mrs. A. T. Gaze, of Cardiff. It was therefore with great satisfaction and delight that the news was received of the signal honour done, to their son, Councillor Reginald T. Gaze, in his recent election as Mayor and Chief Magistrate of the ancient and loyal borough of Tewkesbury.

As old Bible Christians, we are proud of the fact that Councillor Gaze was educated at our Shebbear College, and has paid many public tributes to the sound education, and the moral and spiritual training which he thus secured. Since leaving school he has had a distinguished career. Early in the war he volunteered for service, and after being engaged in important guard duties at the Tower of London and elsewhere, was drafted overseas, where he served as a lieutenant in the Honourable Artillery Company. While in France he had the honour of being selected as a member of a special guard upon the occasion of the King's visit to Sir Douglas Haig at his headquarters at Monteaux.

Returning to England, Coun. Gaze settled in Tewkesbury, where he has become a leading agriculturist. He has made Tewkesbury prominent by his success with his herd of Friesian cattle, which is fast becoming famous. Both he and Mrs. Gaze have also actively associated themselves with religious work and in various social undertakings. For some years Councillor Gaze has been a most devoted and useful member of the Town Council, and now, at the early age of 41, he has been raised to the civic chair, one of the youngest councillors ever appointed to that high office.

The ceremony of electing the new mayor was attended by a large number of distinguished persons. Among the invited guests were his father and mother, Mr. and Mrs. A. T. Gaze, of Cardiff, and his brother, Mr. A. T. Gaze, jun. At a largely attended mayoral banquet, striking tributes were paid to the great services he had rendered to the borough, as also to his quiet dignity, and to the strength and manliness of his character, and confidence was expressed that he would worthily maintain the prestige of this ancient and exalted office.

THE December issue of the "Woman's Magazine" (R.T.S.) might well serve as a model for the ideal Christmas number. From cover to cover it revels in the season's joy, and every page breathes the spirit of Yuletide. The very titles tell the time of year—"Santa Claus in Kensington Gardens," "The Tramp and the Waits," "Those Presents," "Can Mistletoe Think?" "They Presented unto Him Gifts," "Curious Christmas Customs," and so on. These are a few of the things which meet the eye. Berta Ruck has a good story on "The Ring in the Pudding," and Gwendolyn St. Aubyn is full of wisdom in "All About Christmas." Lily Watson writes in the most delightful manner on "The Message of Christmastide." These are but some of the seasonable features of the "Woman's Magazine" Christmas number, which, with their accompanying illustrations in colour or black-and-white, form a volume which will most certainly add to the general happiness of this happy month.

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Ourselves and Others.

TO OUR CORRESPONDENTS.

It will be a great convenience if correspondents will send items of "news" and other Editorial communications not later than Monday of each week, otherwise no guarantee can be given that they will appear in next issue. Address:

The Editorial Office,
"United Methodist,"
12 Farringdon Avenue,
London, E.C.4.

ILLNESS OF REV. E. CATO.

Only a few days ago our esteemed friend, Rev. E. Cato, had consented to step into the breach created by the death of Rev. T. Smith, in the Stockport Circuit, and serve the churches of that section till next Conference, when suddenly, on Tuesday, whilst writing a letter, he was taken ill. The deep sympathy of many friends will be awakened by this news. We pray that Brother Cato will soon be restored.

LADY LANE MISSION, LEEDS.

While not claiming that the mission is on so large a scale, or that it accomplishes such a prodigious work as some of the well-known Home Mission centres of Methodism, it is nevertheless doing a much-needed work in the immediate neighbourhood and adjoining districts—a work which is appreciated, and which is attested "by signs following." It has been well served in recent years by such men as Rev. G. Hooper, J. Tunncliffe Shaw, and now by Rev. W. D. Lister—all well qualified for such work. A bazaar is being held this week to raise £500, which if successful will much encourage and help.

PERSONAL.

U.M. SANDWICH-MAN.

OUR minister, the Rev. J. L. Powell, of Newton Abbot, recently paraded the principal streets carrying sandwich-boards in order to draw attention to a special service.

Mr. F. C. Phillips, secretary of the Falmouth and Penryn Circuit has been appointed president of the Falmouth and Penryn Free Church Council. Mr. Phillips is also Trust secretary to the Berkeley Vale Church.

REV. LESLIE WEATHERHEAD, M.A.

In a report of the Rev. Leslie Weatherhead's service of Wesley's Chapel last week, it was inadvertently stated that Mr. Weatherhead was ministering at Oxford Place, Leeds, in succession to Rev. Samuel Chadwick, instead of Brunswick Church, Leeds, in succession to Rev. A. E. Whitham.

Booklets.

Courage. By J. M. Barrie. The Rectorial Address delivered at St. Andrews University, May, 1922. Let Nothing You Dismay. By May Byron.

These are choice little booklets, pocket size. Ninepence each (Hodder and Stoughton) and very helpful as a Christmas gift to friends.

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Advertisements should reach the Publishing Office not later than first post on Tuesday morning.

"The United Methodist" will be forwarded, post free, for one year to any address in the United Kingdom, the British Dominions, or Foreign Countries, for 11s. per annum, payable in advance.

The Editor is always glad to consider manuscripts. If stamps are enclosed, every effort will be made to ensure the return of MSS. not used.

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Notes and Comments.

Manchuria.

The speech by Sir John Simon in the House of Commons, a few nights ago, was particularly welcome. He did, what Foreign Secretaries often forget to do, he gave a simple and intelligible account of a situation which to many had been obscure. He spoke in reply to a question by Mr. Lansbury; and it was a satisfaction to remember, that, as Sir Thomas Inskip a day or two earlier had done, so he paid a tribute to the fairness, the ability, and the restraint with which the Leader of the Opposition had so far discharged his difficult task. We should like to have had an assurance concerning the dispute, which Sir John was not able to give. It is gratifying to know, however, that the League of Nations is working hard at its difficult task; and that M. Briand has devoted his great abilities to the search for a peaceful solution of the problem with unremitting earnestness. But the scene of the trouble is a long way off; while the problem is one which has been hardening, and at the same time giving considerable irritation for years. It is too early to apportion the blame; and the facts do not warrant any one in saying that it is solely the fault, either of China or Japan, while the other nation is without blame. It seldom helps in a situation of this sort, to attempt a judgment as to which is the sinner and which the sinned against. The fighting has grown out of the infirmities of two nations, each exasperated with the follies and faults of the other.

The Story.

The story as it was told by Sir John Simon is much as follows. Twenty years ago, when the Russo-Japanese War ended, Japan succeeded to certain Russian rights in Manchuria. Among such rights is the control and ownership of a railway which runs through Manchuria, and Manchuria is a part of China. With the railway Japan has possession also of a strip of land on either side. On this land, Japan has a right, which she has not hesitated to exercise, of placing troops, and generally taking whatever steps she cared to take, both for the assertion of her rights and the protection of her property. The charge which Japan makes is, that China has a number of bandits, who have molested, and even broken the railway just north of Mukden. On the other hand, the Chinese represent the Japanese as placing troops where they have no right to be—an action which amounts to invasion on the part of a foreign power, and justifies war. Anyone can see that here we have subject for endless argument. Japan declares herself ready to listen to reason. China is loud in her profession to be the most reasonable power in the universe. The League of Nations has a difficult task; and if, for the moment, the League fails to do all we should wish to see, it surely is a matter for thankfulness, that there is a League, and that America, who comes in under the terms of the Kellogg Pact, is working with the League, to clear up the points which are now obscure, and present the terms of a settlement which both nations will gratefully accept.

The Abandoned Sport.

The decision of the Duchy of Cornwall not to allow dog-racing at the Oval, gave the greatest satisfaction to a large num-

ber of people. It is instructive now to look back upon the correspondence which appeared in the papers. If anyone wished to discover how little can be said in favour of this modern sport, he need do no more than read the letters of its supporters. The most childish reasons were given for allowing dog-racing. No one argued that, as a sport, it was worth a moment's consideration: the larger part urged that it should be permitted at the Oval, that it might be kept out of Kennington generally. "If you don't allow it to take place at the Oval under sharp restrictions, then it will be held elsewhere in the borough without such restrictions. And think what that would mean!" That is surely a sufficient condemnation of Dog-racing as such. A lesson which lies upon the surface of this episode is the power of public opinion, when it is reinforced by moral earnestness. A large number of people hated the idea; and they said so. Their protest could not be disregarded. The Churches have much to learn in the matter of protest. We have too readily taken up for denunciation some cause which has no grave moral implications, but is often a subject of dislike merely. The result is, that when we have been called upon to oppose some serious evil, we approach the task with half-spent energies: and we launch our protest upon a public, in whose ears the echoes of our last feeble objection are still ringing.

Quarterly Meetings.

Within a few days our people will gather in Quarterly Meetings, with Christmas approaching. We are not indifferent to present-day difficulties; and there is something almost ungracious in appeals for money just now. We plead, however, for a few minutes, in each Quar-

terly Meeting, to be given to the New Area Fund. We have done marvellously in many circuits; and the enterprise as a whole is one of which we have no reason to be ashamed. In many localities the friends have taken up the three shillings a member scheme, and have completed the collection. There are others, however, who have not been able to comply with the Conference request. Obviously the scheme must close within a short time now: and we are most anxious that each circuit shall do its very best at this latest moment. Conference requested that a special effort of some kind should be made in all our Churches: and we have confidence in our people loyally observing this resolution. Once more, may we ask treasurers, both Circuit and District, not to delay a single day in returning money, however small the amount, to the proper authorities. Mr. Bert Jones, J.P., Lynton, Blythe Bridge, Stoke-on-Trent, is the General Treasurer. He will never disclose all the perplexities which have arisen through people promising to the Central Fund, at the Conference, and then paying their amounts, without any intimation, to the Circuit Treasurer. Happily, such difficulties can be overcome; and it has been well worth while to raise so worthy a sum for an object which cannot be contemplated without a feeling of deep concern and even dismay. What *will* happen if these new areas are neglected for another five years?

A Book of To-day.

The Four Gospels in the Light of To-Day. By Edith Ratcliffe. (Williams and Norgate, Ltd.; 7s. 6d. net.)

This is the title of a book to which it is a pleasure to refer. There must be a large number of people intensely interested in the results of Biblical scholarship, who have no time for the detailed and documented volumes in which such results are commonly reported: what they need is a book which does not presuppose either a knowledge of Greek and Hebrew or unlimited leisure. The misfortune is that too often the volumes which are intelligible and within the range of the busy man, are fundamentalist or dogmatic to an unreasonable degree. Here then is a book which can be cordially commended. The authoress is modest but well-informed. She does not affect to have dug and delved in all the soil: she places before the reader treasures which have been made available by other hands. The time has come now when all who preach should have a general knowledge of the settled results of inquiry as to the origin and composition of the four Gospels. We can think of no guide more easy to follow and more to be trusted than this work. Even advanced students will find many things stated in so clear and fresh a manner as to make them grateful to have their minds refreshed. The author is more than a lover of scholarship: she is a lover of the Gospels: and her original and heartfelt appreciation of their power and beauty give to her book an added value.

Wesley and Newman.

Dr. Percy Gardner, in his latest volume, "The Interpretation of Religious Experience" (Williams and Norgate, 6s. net) devotes a page or two to a comparison between Wesley and Newman. For a full and adequate treatment of this fascinating study we should turn to an illuminating essay by Dr. J. Scott Lidgett in his "God, Christ and the Church." But Dr. Gardner is always interesting. And, indeed, his book, to which we now refer, is full of wise sayings and the garnered wisdom of one who confesses to that rare possession, a good deal of leisure. We fail to find the strong and aggressive note of his earlier works. The pleasant amber of the sun of autumn days seems to rest upon the pages. Of Wesley and Newman he says both were "astounding personalities," both "devoted, almost fanatical adherents of the English Church" during the best part of their lives, and both indeed "practically outside that Church." Newman, who spoke ungenerously of the Church of his birth, was "in many ways the first of the Modernists." Wesley was "not altogether consistent," for he appointed bishops "for his followers in America." The English Church "could not have retained Newman," but what of Wesley? Was it a calamity that he was allowed to go? The historian thinks so, and Dr. Gardner thinks so too, quite evidently. But the bounds of the English Church are narrow and "Wesley was so autocratic that he would listen to no terms." What terms we should like to know were ever proposed to Wesley by any authority of the English Church, which he could have accepted without stifling his conscience and ending his work? Dr. Gardner says that, "roughly speaking," Methodism is the national religion of America. But America has a "bewildering multitude of sects." And why is this? For Dr. Gardner's theory we must refer readers to his volume. R. P.

Women's Work in the Home Churches.

Evangelistic Missions.

If we have not quite so many missions to report we are glad to report on the quality of those which are being held. At Bridges, in the Bodmin Circuit, Sister Elsie conducted a very successful mission. The services were of a quiet order, but the influence was deep, and several people quietly testified to their determination to start a better life. The congregations which gathered night after night were large, indeed, people assembled around the church half an hour before the service time, and the church, which is not a small one, has been filled night after night.

At Weston Hills, in the Spalding Circuit, Sister Ruth was requested for a return visit. Last year, when the Sister opened her first service, she had four people for her congregation, but this year a congregation that filled the chapel greeted her, and it was pleasing to find that the results of last year have been well garnered, and that the church is experiencing a period of progress and vitality.

Though the missions are fewer, we think we can detect a deepening influence at work in our churches. Evangelistic work has, of course, many sides, and it is a fact calling for gratitude that we are not without indications that the young people on the fringe of our churches are looking more wistfully towards Christ, and are in a more inquiring mood for the things of the Spirit. A mission in a church just now may prove a real harvest time, and we shall be very glad to arrange for a Sister to conduct a mission in any of our churches.

We also have one or two Sisters open for appointments in stationed work. No circuit could do a greater service to some of their struggling churches, and no man could make a finer gift than to arrange for the appointment of a Sister of the People at a church in some struggling neighbourhood. All information will be given on application to the Warden, the Rev. R. W. Gair, The Deaconess Institute, 25 Bolingbroke Grove, Wandsworth Common, S.W.11.

Falmouth and Penryn.—A circuit rally was recently held in Wesley Chapel, Falmouth (kindly lent by the trustees). Rev. Leonard B. Dalby, of Plymouth, preached and lectured. Proceeds, £27.

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A Trip to Atlanta and Back.

THERE was much that was exhilarating about a voyage across the Atlantic in the company of about five and twenty friends bound for the same place. One feels much more at home, even in mid-Atlantic, when personal friends rather than unfamiliar shipmates are within easy reach at all hours of the day. Fortunately we experienced no violent storms, though some of the party with sensitive interiors had to succumb occasionally when "rocked in the cradle of the deep."

Those who were thrilled at the thought of crossing the ocean for the first time had all their thrills realised as the ship ploughed through the waters, and occasionally encountered a shoal of porpoises bounding along by its side as if bent upon racing her. Sunshine and moonlight varied the beauty of "a life on the ocean wave." The former made deck-tennis, quoits and shovel-board interesting substitutes for golf, hockey and football to the more active spirits amongst us; the latter accounted for a number of interesting anecdotes and episodes such as have been associated with moon-struck heroes and heroines since time was.

But the greatest of all thrills came when we were once inside the Gulf of St. Lawrence and fully entered upon our 900-miles journey up that mighty river to Montreal. Then our ship (the "Alaunia") was steady all the way, and the weakest navigator became brave. What a panorama we had! To those of us who had seen it before it presented new charms and far more glorious, for autumn tints were everywhere to be seen in all their beautiful splendour. Old England can give us a fine display, but Canada, with its maples, dogwood and multitudinous trees of various shades of colour from flaming red, through browns and yellows of all degrees to the greens of the perennial pines, presents a picture which not only dazzles the eye but impresses the soul with its radiance. Only a poet like Milton, Cowper or Wordsworth can adequately express what is felt when one beholds such scenery. We had a good view of the Falls of Montmorency, and on passing Quebec we saw clearly the Heights of Abraham and Wolfe's Cove.

At Montreal we visited the great church of Notre Dame and saw its magnificent altar and pulpit, as well as its side chapels. We drove in a horse-cab through the grounds of McGill University to the summit of Mount Royal, where we had a glorious view of the whole city and the St. Lawrence river. At St. Joseph's Oratory we saw the pilgrims painfully climbing the steps on their knees, praying for the cure of cripples, whose crutches could be seen by hundreds within the shrine. An afternoon motor tour made us acquainted with the beauties of West Mount and the older but interesting quarters of the French portion of the city, with its quaint approaches to the various old-fashioned houses.

A day's journey through delightful landscapes and along the shores of Lake Ontario brought us to Toronto, where relatives from Michigan met us and helped us in their car to visit friends who had gone from this country to that beautiful city. We drove through the grounds of the university, noting its colleges and Parliament buildings. The next day we were taken by car to Niagara Falls, a journey of ninety-three miles, past many holiday camps with neat wooden huts, the most curious of all being a honeymoon camp with huts set up in the trees. At Niagara we put on a complete outer shell of waterproof clothing and fishermen's boots and went through the tunnels right under the Canadian Falls. There you get the full effect of the majesty of that huge mass of water roaring overhead as you look out through the openings at four points. Two of these enable the visitor to get a close-up view of the falls from the side, where they are most impressive. Here it is that one becomes awestruck at the wonder of it all.

After this rich experience we drove for twenty miles to Buffalo, along a park-like route by the side of a river, with the evening sunlight spreading its glory through the autumn leaves. As we went to rest that night we felt that we had passed through one of the grandest days in our tour.

Next morning we began our day's journey to New York over the picturesque Lackawanna Railroad, and were met by cousins who entertained us at Maplewood, a pretty township a few miles from the great city. This was a joyous taste of "home from home." Sight-seeing in New York included the Empire Building, 1,248 feet high, with an elevator to the top and a view over and beyond the great harbour; the Riverside Drive and Columbia University, the Battery, Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island, the Roxy Cinema, shops and stores of vast extent with every variety of commodity.

Washington, with all its delights and courteous reception of the party on its way to Atlanta, was our next stopping-place. How we revelled in the charms of the Congressional Library, the Lincoln Monument, the Capitol, the view of the Potomac river from the Washington Monument and Mount Vernon, the home of the great general. The wonderful marble, open-air auditorium at Arlington should be noted also, and General Lee's house near by. These give a grand view of the city of Washington itself from the heights on which they stand.

A rail journey of eighteen hours, during the first part of which we were tucked away in a Pullman sleeping car, brought us to Atlanta, in Georgia. We had travelled through hundreds of miles of cotton and maize fields. In some the negroes were gathering and baling the cotton, collecting the maize cobs. It was a new and interesting sight for all of us.

Our reception at Atlanta was an exceedingly cordial one. Courtesy cars were placed at our disposal, and the overseas delegates to the Ecumenical Methodist Conference were billeted in the largest hotels in the city.

The sessions of Conference were held in the Wesley Memorial Church, which has double galleries and seats about 2,500 people. This was filled each day with the delegates on the floor and visitors in the galleries.

The evening meetings were held in the City Auditorium, and were attended by full audiences of from five to six thousand people. The city is a great Methodist centre, with African churches and colleges for the coloured people and fine representative buildings belonging to the Southern Methodist Episcopal Church. The negro pageant, "Heaven-bound," must be dealt with later.

Between the sessions we had opportunities for visiting the home of Joel Chandler Harris ("Uncle Remus"), now called "The Wren's Nest." This brought to mind his stories of Brer Fox and Brer Rabbit, which so greatly delighted children of the last generation. One afternoon all of us were taken in courtesy cars sixteen miles out of the city to Stone Mountain, a great mass of rock 1,000 feet high and seven miles round at the base. On one side enormous figures are being carved, representing General Lee and other leaders of the Confederate Army in the Civil War.

We also saw the great Cyclorama at Grant's Park, upon the walls of which is painted a full description of the Battle of Atlanta, and in the trench beneath lie the remains of guns, weapons and clothing strewn upon the battlefield.

On the return journey to New York two of us had the privilege of a visit to Richmond, in Virginia, where we were introduced by Bishop Collins-Denny to Governor Pollard at the Capitol. We also enjoyed a tour of the city and saw the University of Virginia.

We sailed from New York in the "Aquitania" on October 28th, and arrived at Southampton on November 4th, after a very pleasant voyage across the Atlantic. We were a party of over a hundred on the return journey, as some of the boats had been cancelled which had taken parties of delegates on the outward voyage. This, however, contributed to a wider fellowship, which was greatly enjoyed by all.

G. P. DYMOND.

"African Adventurers."*

MISS JEAN KENYON MACKENZIE'S "African Adventurers" may be unassuming, both in size and price, but it is a book of some importance. Entertaining to anyone who likes a well-written story, it has special value for those interested in native Africa. It has caught the Africans' mode of expression, and in doing so reflects something of that which is supposed to lie at "the back of the black man's mind."

No person could be better qualified to make this record than Miss Mackenzie, for she is an accomplished writer and has intimate knowledge of the people with whom she deals. The scene of the book is laid in the Cameroon country, on the west coast of Africa, and the characters introduced are mostly members of the Bulu tribe, one of the many branches of the Bantu people.

The story of Livingstone, as told by Assam, gives a vivid picture of the famous missionary as seen through native eyes. It is written as though translated direct from the Bulu language, a language which, says Miss Mackenzie in her preface, "is truly a good language, pleasant to hear and pleasant to speak."

*"African Adventurers," by Jean Kenyon Mackenzie. (R.T.S., 2s.)

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The Passing of Rev. H. J. Pickett.

MANY of the readers of the UNITED METHODIST will have heard with profound regret of the death of Rev. H. J. Pickett. He was well known outside the Primitive Methodist Church, and among his own people he was ranked with the greatest of their preachers. He prepared his sermons with the utmost care, and delivered them with a vigour and a naturalness that made them most effective. He chose great themes and brought them home to the common life.

For two terms of five years each he was Principal of Hartley College, and the second period brought him into intimate relations with the men of our own College. He lectured on Homiletics and Pastoral Theology, and his wide experience made him a valued guide for those whom he used to address as "Brethren." But it was his personality that impressed them most deeply. A man of high honour and with a lofty ideal of the ministry, he was also abounding in sympathy and charity. He was ever a gentleman and ever a brother. And though his modesty would have shrunk aghast from any suggestion that he was a saint, those who came near to him could not but feel that there was in him much of saintly quality.

My colleagues, Mr. Brewis and Mr. Hirst, wish to be associated with me in paying tribute to Mr. Pickett. We have worked with him for eight years and have found him an ideal colleague. In all things he was considerate and brotherly; and he was most generous in his appreciation of the work of others. He gave always of his best and without thought of reward. We would fain have kept him with us; but in his last illness it became clear that if he survived he would never be able to preach again. An idle life he would have found intolerable: so it is better far that he has entered into the life that is life indeed.

GEO. G. HORNBY.

Hatherleigh United Methodist Singing Festival.

THE second annual festival took place at the Manor Hall, Hatherleigh, on Wednesday last, November 25th, and was again a great success. The attendance throughout the day was even larger than the previous year. The hymn tunes selected were "Simeon," "Penylan," "Sagina," "Aberystwyth," "Rimington," "Sovereignty," "Dowlsland Castle," and the hymn, "I heard the voice of Jesus say," to the tune, "Drink to me only with thine eyes." The anthem selected was Ch. Gounod's "Send out thy Light." A great congregation had assembled, when Rev. R. James, of Shebbear, gave out the first hymn, and it was felt at the commencement that we were in for a good time. Madam Gerry, of Plymouth, rendered a beautiful solo, and Miss Francis, of North Tawton, contributed a violin solo with great taste, a duet by the Rev. and Mrs. James and a short address by the Rev. J. Leaver. Tea was afterwards provided, which was largely patronized.

In the evening the great praise meeting was held, when the packed hall presented a fine sight. On the platform was a choir of 140 voices, answering the baton of Mr. Lane, of Hatherleigh, who conducted in fine style, and had his choir well in hand. Contributions were made to the programme as follows: Winkleigh anthem; Bedford, solo; Exbourne, male voice contributions; North Tawton, anthem; Hatherleigh, a double quartette. Each item was splendidly rendered and well received. Madam Gerry, Miss Francis, Rev. and Mrs. James also contributed items. The last item was the rendering of the anthem, "Send out thy Light," by the massed choir. The treasurer, Mr. J. E. Hawkins, Soland, in moving a comprehensive vote of thanks, made special mention of several friends who had helped to make the day a great success. The great meeting was brought to a close by the singing of the doxology to the "Alleluia" hymn tune.

Fighting "The Trade" at Ashton.

REV. C. A. DAVIS (U.M.) moved a resolution urging the Ashton-under-Lyne and Dukinfield magistrates to refuse extra facilities for sale of intoxicating drink on Whit-Friday, when the annual Sunday School procession is held. The occasion was a great rally of temperance workers, and the resolution backed up the action of representatives of the Free Church Council, Sunday School Union and temperance bodies in trying to secure the closing of licensed houses on this day of Christian witness. The Rector of Ashton, who was unable to attend, associated himself with the resolution, which was unanimously and enthusiastically carried. The rally was the culmination of a temperance crusade in Ashton. Lady Barlow, Dr. Courtenay C. Weeks and others took part.

Methodist Union Rally at Dukinfield.

SIR THOMAS ROWBOTHAM presided over a Methodist rally, held in Foundry Street P. M. Church, Dukinfield. He was supported by Rev. B. V. Richardson (W.), C. A. Davis (U.), and A. H. Clulow, B.A., B.D. (P.). A united choir rendered special music. The Rev. J. T. Brewis, B.A., B.D., Principal of the U.M. College, drew attention to the trend of modern ideas for unity throughout the world, and said that Methodist Union would provide a most effective instrument of Christian service. He believed it would improve the morale of the people called Methodists, and make them in every way better equipped for the tasks that lay ahead. Sir Thomas Rowbotham made a strong appeal for co-operation, so that, acting in a brotherly way, the Methodist people might achieve unity of heart and soul.

President's Visits.

Brighton.

The Bristol Road Church, Brighton, was favoured by a visit from the President (Rev. J. Ford Reed), a former minister of the church, on the occasion of the 58th anniversary on November 15th. The President preached helpful sermons on the Sunday and on Monday afternoon gave an interesting account of his visit to America and his experience among the Negro Methodists. After tea there was an informal talk, in which the President, Revs. W. H. Holtby and E. S. Williamson (Primitive Methodists); Rev. H. A. Eytton Jones (Vicar of St. George's), Revs. Henry Smith, J. Foulger, W. Richardson and J. E. Leonard took part. An organ recital followed by Mr. E. E. Richardson, the vocalist being Mr. Clifford Broadbridge. At the public meeting Mr. Charles Smith presided, supported by Rev. W. Richardson and Rev. J. E. Leonard. The President referred to the great services rendered to United Methodism in Brighton by the late Rev. S. B. Lane some 35 years ago, and said, "We still have many things left from those days. We have a fine spirit, a pleasant and kindly fellowship. Though you may have your fears, your serious doubts, I beg you to believe that there is always a future for the right spirit. If the right spirit actuates the community it is all right—it is going to revive. Keep your hearts up. There are many disappointments in the experience of the Christian community, but there are some most hopeful things. I am specially interested in the promise of religious revival among the young people now stepping into manhood and womanhood. The day of the Church, so far from ebbing, is on the flood-tide again." The choir rendered good service at the Sunday services and the public meeting. It was a great joy to many old members of the Church to greet their former minister and to the President to meet old friends.

Newport, I.W.

We commenced the month with our annual bazaar. Thanks to previous endeavours (over a number of years), which have resulted in the elimination of the debt, our necessity was not so great this year. On November 4th Alderman Millgate, J.P., presided, and Mrs. C. E. Paterson, wife of the Vicar of Holy Trinity, Cowes, was the opener. Mr. Paterson, who is chaplain to the R.Y.S. and chairman of the Cowes U.D.C., was present, as well as local ministers and leaders. Miss Ivie Winter, of Bembridge, was the soloist. On Thursday the children, trained by Miss Gill-Martin, opened the bazaar. The Mayor of Newport, Councillor Mrs. Elizabeth R. Chandler, presided, and Mrs. A. J. Snellgrove received the children's gifts. The proceeds, amounting to £119, were divided between missionary, trust and church funds.

The bazaar over, we entered upon an evangelistic crusade, led by Rev. D. G. Elwood, of Burton-on-

Trent. Attendance for the first few nights was thinned by heavy downpours of rain. However, Mr. Elwood pursued his way, and obtained many decisions among the elder scholars of the Sunday School, as well as pledges of re-consecration. His winsome personality and human and telling appeals won our grateful appreciation. The last Sunday saw half a dozen from our young men's class as disciples. At the closing service at Quay Street, and the final one in the Medina Hall Picture House, the spiritual atmosphere was especially evident. Mr. Elwood gave the address in the picture house, and Mr. and Mrs. Rex Tyler sang very effectively "Steal away to Jesus" and "Just as I am." There were two open confessions. The building was full, with a keenly interested audience. Our hearty thanks are due to Mr. Elwood for his presence among us.

The following week-end, November 22nd and 23rd, we were privileged to receive a visit from the President of the Conference, Rev. J. Ford Reed, for our church anniversary. The President took the Sunday services, and on Monday conducted Divine worship, spoke at a tea-table conference at which greetings were expressed by a number of local Methodist ministers, and spoke at the evening meeting, presided over by Mr. G. P. Taylor, of St. Helens. The attendance was most encouraging, and there was a fine spirit. The services of Sunday evening and Monday night will be memorable. The President rejoiced our hearts by his powerful ministry and encouraged the church in its witness. The Quay Street choir rendered excellent service, and its conductor, Mr. W. C. Bartlett, who is also trust treasurer, presented such a statement that made everyone who has had a share in its achievement deeply grateful.

A Vicar at Lady Lane.

THE men's club fellowship was favoured the other night with a visit from the Rev. D. P. Robins, Vicar of St. George's Church, Leeds. Mr. Robins is the vicar of the church of "crypt" fame, an account of which was published in a recent issue of THE UNITED METHODIST. Before taking Holy Orders Mr. Robins was an aeroplane pilot. He is a most brotherly man, unconventional, and hits straight from the shoulder. He forcefully reminds one of "Woodbine Willie." The address he gave will long be remembered. It was a powerful appeal for consecration to Christ. He said he believed that our civilisation was tottering, and nothing could save it but Christianity. There was a crowded audience, and the men literally hung upon his fiery, eloquent words. He has promised to pay another visit. If we are not mistaken, Mr. Robins will go a long way in the Church of England. He is pre-eminently a "man's man," and has learned the secret of attracting and influencing "the man in the street." And he puts "first things first."

For Boys and Girls.

SAFETY FIRST.

THE owner of an engineering works, having advertised for "a steady, sober, industrious man to act as chauffeur," four men applied for the position. They were invited into the office, on the walls of which were photographs of varied parts of machinery—wheels, cylinders, cranks, etc. Over the fireplace there hung a picture which seemed strangely out of place amongst the mechanical parts. It was a sketch of a huge bank of rock which jutted out into the sea. On the right hand of the picture a road ran round the edge, and below the waves of the sea dashed and splashed their surf. The gentleman called the attention of the applicants for the post to this picture, and said: "This sketch is drawn to a scale of an inch to a hundred yards. The road measures five inches, and is therefore five hundred yards long. From the highest point of the road to the sea is ten inches, and the drop into the sea is one thousand yards." Then, turning to the first man, he said:

"How near could you drive a car to the edge of this precipice?"

The man answered: "I think I could drive within a yard of the edge."

Addressing the next man, the owner of the works asked how near he could drive to the fringe of the precipice, and the man replied: "Sir, I think I could manage to steer a car safely up the hill and keep within nine inches of the edge all the way."

The third man was then asked how near he could drive to the edge, and he said: "During the war I drove a car for an officer in France and Flanders. I dodged bullets and bombs and shells, and I steered my car through shell-holes and deep chasms, and I was never brought to a standstill. I could drive a car along that cliff edge and skirt all along the edge of the precipice, and I should arrive safely at the summit."

The gentleman then turned to the fourth man and asked him if he could equal the feat of the third man. He replied:

"I should never dream of driving a car up the hill alongside that precipice, because I should be on the wrong side of the road."

"But what if you were coming down the hill?" enquired the gentleman.

"In that case," answered the man warmly, "as I believe in safety first I should keep as far away as ever I could from the edge of that precipice."

"Then you are the man for me," responded the gentleman. "The position is yours. When can you start?"

Now, boys and girls, there are some habits and actions which are as dangerous as precipices, and the advice of people who know is "practise" safety first. Keep as far away from them as possible, and, if you have difficulty in doing this, ask Jesus to help you, and He will never fail you.

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With the Young People's and Temperance Committee at Normacot.

NORMACOT—according to the direction of your approach—is practically the beginning or the end of the country in which "the Potteries" are situated. Normacot is on the fringe of a region of giant inkpots that send forth dense clouds of smoke and cover the whole of the "Five Towns" (and some more) with a pall of darkness, beginning or ending, as you please, at Longton, the circuit town in which Normacot has the most beautiful of our local churches.

Longton—anciently "Lane End," and to the more irreverent "Neck End"—was a Conference town of the old M.N.C. Frequently our Zion Church furnished the chief magistrate. The last Mayor of Longton was a United Methodist. At Normacot we met. The committee could be accommodated in the choir stalls—fit place for so harmonious a band of enthusiasts for youth. The president was busy elsewhere, so Rev. T. A. Jefferies took the chair. We were sorry to miss a few friends through pressure of duties. Miss Blumer had not been absent before in ten years of devoted service. Mr. James Maclaurin, life and soul of many a committee and many a conference, was laid aside. To these, and to our young friend Miss Betty Baker, formerly a demonstrator, but now ill, we sent kindly greetings. It was our deep sorrow to yield to Mr. Maclaurin's wish that he should be relieved of the treasurer'ship. His service has called forth our gratitude to God for the gift of such a great soul in such a work, but we must yield to the inevitable. For the present we are asking our financial secretary, Mr. Fred Ogden, J.P., to serve. Mr. F. W. Booth, of whose genius and geniality we could write columns, was appointed secretary to the meeting. Revs. G. Langley (circuit superintendent) and J. G. Williams (the Normacot minister) were given seats in the meeting.

Twice, to our amazement, we learned that there are United Methodists who do not know "whether there be any" Young People's and Temperance Committee, nor what it is nor what it is about. Such is fame! The Y.P. Committee used to be accused of being too vocal.

There is always meat in the secretary's report of his work, and in what our demonstrators have to tell us of theirs. They are travelling all over the denomination, and they are influencing other denominations. We have a staff to rejoice over, and everywhere they are working hard and bringing new life and new hope to schools. Their passion is not for method—make no mistake. It is for Christ and the child, and they are truly consecrated to their job.

Our department co-operates, too, in all sorts of good work for youth with other organisations dealing with every phase of activity in Sunday School work and welfare. Our temperance secretary, Rev. A. Brown, is getting into his stride. He gave us a good report. In particular, he wants increased membership of the Active Service Order and the League of Abstinents. He leads up to a fine discussion on the need for action in reference to gambling. Especially is the committee concerned about the unhealthy publicity given to sweepstakes by the Press.

The Social Welfare Committee, of which Mr. Urwin is the secretary, has got a concern about unemployment, which it feels must be faced as a moral problem; about Peace and Disarmament—it will issue special literature in connection with the Day of Prayer for Disarmament; about filthy books and films. It wants more help in its great warfare.

We are rejoiced to learn that 235 students went to our Summer Schools—150 through the new affiliation scheme. Our Holiday Homes provided happy fellowship, too, for many of our people. We have carried through our schools and homes this year without any financial loss. The Fellowship of Service and the Summer Schools Association report steady growth.

Our finances are normal at the moment. They will be rosy if all our schools will contribute a penny per scholar, and we can get more personal subscribers. Like everybody else, we are handicapped by lack of funds, but our financial secretary is an optimist—just the man for such a post in these days.

More entries have come in for our examinations. Last year also we had an increase. We shall hold examinations again next year, which will be announced in due course. Miss Baker's booklet for candidates has been well taken up.

Normacot (and the Potteries) made a big thing of our meetings. The church had Mr. Capsey for a week-end in connection with its twenty-first anniversary celebrations, and on the Wednesday held a great public meeting, to which the lady Lord Mayor (Alderman Miss Farmer, J.P.) came on her own initiative, and gave us a hearty civic welcome. Mr. Harold Holt, a member of the committee, presided, and we were treated to fine addresses by Revs. C. E. Penrose and A. G. Barker. Our Normacot choir served us excellently. Another well-attended meeting was held on the Burslem side, at Longport, presided over by Mr. F. Ogden, J.P., and addressed by Revs. T. A. Jefferies and E. C. Urwin.

Space fails to speak adequately in praise of our Normacot friends as entertainers of angels (unawares). They rose to the occasion magnificently. Rev. H. Stanley Collins (Wesleyan) brought Methodist greetings at luncheon on Wednesday. The organising skill of Mr. Booth—who worked out all our trains for us and looked after all manner of incidentals—is a proverb. The names of many kind friends will linger with us, and their kindness will be thought of many a time. Our thanks were bespoken by Rev. S. E. Harper and Mr. George Elsom. Mr. Beresford and Revs. G. Langley and J. G. Williams replied. May Normacot flourish!

J. D. C.

Three Delegates, & What They Saw in America.

OUR adventures really began at New York. We had marked out a course which we hoped would yield a full measure of profit at the lowest possible expense; and when we found we could get only three dollars eighty for our pound we more rigidly made economy our watchword. Our choice of hotel, diet and method of travelling were all cut to the lower measure with some loss of comfort maybe, but no loss of enjoyment. Occasionally we felt like three Micawbers, but mostly like three Mark Tapleys, and often, by the way we were received and introduced, like three wise men from the east. In the Y.M.C.A. at New York a very large American said to two of us: "I guess you've come over here for a Conference?" We guessed we had, and told him where. He then said, "Don't you think that the Lambeth proposals regarding birth control have had a great deal to do with the debt problem and the present financial crisis?" "Well," replied one of the two, "all things are related, and if any two things are related, why not any other two? There is a connection, you know, between the Arctic seal and the African elephant, not apparent perhaps, but it's there somewhere; the job is finding it." It should not be supposed that all Americans who spoke to us were on that level. Still, we did meet a few who exercised our eyebrows for us by their sudden and unexpected questions. It may be true to say that a great many Americans do, as a matter of course, what in England is not done, and what is also not done by a great many Americans. The Englishman in America needs to put a wise control on his tongue. He will be tempted many times to say something snappy and smart, and even devastating, afterwards to feel

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Next Thursday, Dec. 10th.

MANY SEASONABLE FEATURES.

Price Twopence.

with regret that in so doing he has let loose that which fosters harmful misunderstanding. For example, on the last day in New York, just before we sailed for home, one of us was suddenly accosted by a very aggressive American, who said, "Travelling?—Where to?—Oh, you're English, are you?—Well, America will certainly do England a lot of good if she cancels the debts." The reply was sharp, forceful, dignified, and sledge-hammerish, heavy with truth no doubt, but on reflection, better to have been left unsaid.

We had set out under the guidance of the Phelps-Stokes Trust to see as much as we could of the educational work among the negroes. We went first to Washington, where we spent two full days. There we visited Howard University which, like most other negro training institutions, was privately founded. Many are now receiving Government aid, having forced themselves forward to recognition by the merit of their attainments. At Howard we found a very capable and enthusiastic staff, all coloured, and most of them had fought their way up out of the very humble circumstances. Knowing as we did something of the African as we had seen him in Africa in the far bush village, and in the higher advanced life of Freetown; and having believed in the possibility of his advancement to far higher levels, it was a great satisfaction to find him here reaching those levels. Negro education in America has gone very far indeed, and negro attainment is such that white Americans themselves who know what is happening are freely admitting that a line marking an essential difference between the mental capabilities of the negro and the white can no longer be drawn. That admission is significant. We visited also the Department of Agriculture, and there learned of the far-reaching help that is being given to negro farmers in the Southern States. The work done is very thorough, covering all that is involved in successful farming and happy home and village life. We left Washington by the night boat, sailing down the Potomac and Chesapeake Bay to Old Point Comfort, in Virginia, a distance of 180 miles. There was something rather uncanny about this strange journey. Perhaps the most memorable part of it was the dollar and a quarter dinner served to us by a highly-polished negro. One of the courses was the popular local dish, fried chicken. Perhaps the batter made it look bigger than it really was, but it was certainly half a chicken each we had, set in a complete rockery of vegetables. This, with all else that made up our money's worth, made our watchword of economy look ridiculous. It was a good dinner to sleep on, though, in a cabin little bigger than a cupboard. We arrived at Old Point Comfort about seven on Sunday morning, and were driven to the Hampton Institute, where we were to be received as guests until Wednesday. There are about 1,200 negro students at Hampton, under white supervision, all receiving some kind of vocational training—farming, building, engineering, printing, almost everything, the women being schooled in household management, and in all the professions and occupations open to them. The extent and thoroughness of the organization is amazing. We were most kindly entertained by members of the staff, who invited us to their homes. We were impressed by the tone of Hampton. The church service on Sunday morning, and the great meet-

ing in the Ogden Hall at night revealed a spirit of reverence and devotion, marked by strong and deep emotion creating an atmosphere noticeably different from that so often found where white people are gathered together. Will the negro also in time become hard, sophisticated, unresponsive? Following Hampton we had a day at Richmond. It was on the way to Richmond that one of us had a conversation with a charming Virginian lady. She was one of the old stock, and proud of the fine old English customs still cherished in the old Virginian families, into the sanctity of which Prohibition had most unwarrantably trespassed. The trouble is not just where she placed it. A book published last year, "A Searchlight on America," by James Truslow Adams, an American, has a chapter on "Our Lawless Heritage," and another on "Hoover and Law Observance." Mr. Adams does not hesitate to say, that supreme above all other evils in America is the lack of respect for law. Hamilton, Washington, Lincoln, strove with all their might and main to establish America in the truth, that without law and respect for law, involving the surrender of a sufficient measure of individual sovereignty, there could be no real liberty. But it is abundantly evident to-day in America that there has been a serious and widespread sliding away from the principle that made America a nation: there are far too many people in America deluding themselves that the way to keep liberty is to ignore law. A lady said to the writer of this article, "You are law-ridden in England: we have liberty in America." What a delusion! We were driven out to a country school near Richmond, where some two hundred negro children are receiving the same kind of training we had seen in its higher stages at Hampton. Next morning we were in Atlanta, having travelled through the night. During the Conference we had many opportunities of pursuing our study of negro educational activities. We visited Atlanta University, where, in the various colleges for men and women, we found students receiving a similar training to that given at Howard. We were fortunate in hearing Dr. Mott address a large gathering of students, who sang the Negro National Hymn—moving, searching, terrible. Surely the man who wrote it was drugged by his own passion, which took his pen and wrote for him without let or hindrance. It is too long to quote, but it contains lines like these:

"God of our weary years,
God of our silent tears—"

We found time at the end of the Conference to run down to the famous institution founded by Booker Washington at Tuskegee, in Alabama. The training at Tuskegee is almost identical with that given at Hampton. The distinctive feature at Tuskegee lies in the fact that there is not a single white person to be found there. The negroes of America have good reason to be proud of Tuskegee, and of Dr. Moton, its President, whose restrained writings on the negro problem have won for him universal respect. It is not the purpose of this article to say much about the Conference at Atlanta. Half the number of papers might have meant a much higher level of quality, and knocked a bit of the hardness and restlessness out of the atmosphere. The writer's coat-tail was vigorously pulled one morning by a very severe-looking old lady, who said, "You Britishers are standing in a block against us on this colour question. Now I love the negro, but he's black." My! How she said it! From that, one might go on to say much about that terrible colour problem, and how it affected the Conference. No wonder the atmosphere was tense—like a thunderstorm about to break. On the way back to New York the train broke in two, and cast its tail like a lizard. We were in the tail, and consequently have a tale to tell to children as well as grown-ups. And to children we have also the rare story to tell of how we visited the home of "Uncle Remus" at Atlanta, and saw the room in which he wrote those wonderful stories of Brer Rabbit, Brer Fox and the "yuther creeters."

E. C.

Births, Marriages, Deaths.

REPORTS of Marriages, etc., intended for the Editor, MUST be accompanied by a prepaid notice for advertisement columns.

DEATH.

GOUGH.—On November 26th, 1931, Mary Elizabeth Gough, of Farcroft Avenue U.M. Church, Handsworth, passed peacefully away. Aged 85 years.

IN MEMORIAM.

BENNETT.—In tender and ever-loving remembrance of Sarah Grace Bennett, who was called Home on December 3rd, 1930.

To live in the hearts of those we love is not to die.

FOTHERGILL.—In unfading and loving memory of Rev. H. Fothergill, who passed to Higher Service, November 26th, 1911.

GODFREY.—In ever-loving memory of John, the dearly-loved husband of Emma Godfrey, who entered into rest, December 6th, 1920.

The memory of the just is blessed.

RAINE.—In ever-loving memory of Foster Raine, C.F., who passed to the higher service, December 6th, 1918.

The memory of the just is blessed.

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The Passing of Mr. W. S. Skelton, J.P.

MEMORIAL ADDRESS.*

By Rev. G. W. POTTER.

It would be quite impossible for me to detail all the ways in which Mr. Skelton served his fellow men. His interests were so wide and so varied.

As a magistrate, as a member of the City Council, and of various social organizations, as an employer, as a musician, on Hospital and Relief Committees, and in many other ways, he proved himself as one who loved his fellow man, and so as one who was not unworthy to be counted a follower of Jesus Christ. Indeed, I feel that any attempt to estimate the man and his work must begin with his religion, for that determined everything. Words written by the late Geo. Russell, of Matthew Arnold, seem to be particularly appropriate in speaking of our friend: "His nature was essentially religious. He was loyal to truth as he knew it, loved the light and sought it earnestly, and by his daily and hourly practice gave sweet and winning illustration of his own doctrine, that conduct is three-fourths of human life." "Self-denial was the law of his life, yet the word never crossed his lips. He revelled in doing kindness." "He leaves a figure of unblemished integrity, purity, loftiness of purpose, and inflexible resolution to do right, as of a man living consciously under his Maker's eye."

Mr. Skelton was deeply and sincerely religious. He had no use for the shibboleths of religion. He was a man of few words, but he was instant in action. He had strong convictions, but he knew the difference between a prejudice and a principle. He hated sentimentality and all other forms of insincerity, yet he was a man of much tenderness: he loved and was beloved of little children. He did not easily make friends and he never lost one. He abhorred war and all forms of controversy. Yet he never turned aside from a struggle when his convictions made it necessary. He was never deterred from the course he felt to be right by the fact that it might be unpopular. But he was always tolerant of the opinions of others and very sensitive about their feelings. Earnest and whole-hearted, he was yet never extreme. He had the saving grace of humour which kept him from incongruity of thought and behaviour. Nobody could ever doubt that he was a Christian. Yet he never talked about religion. Prayer meant much to him. Yet I doubt if any of you ever heard him pray in public. But I know that he never started his day's work without a short pause at his desk, with bowed head, for prayer, and that he never took the chair at any sort of meeting without a similar preparation. Those who sat under his presidency were conscious of that preparedness, though they might not trace it back to its source.

He loved to come to Church and to join in public worship. He had much of the Quaker in him, but he loved the singing in our services. He always found something in the preacher's prayers or address for which he would offer thanks. For nearly forty years he was hon. choirmaster of this church. He disclaimed any musical knowledge or ability, yet there is no doubt that the high reputation of South Street Church Choir was largely due to his influence. It was his proud reflection that, throughout the years of his official connection with it, no trouble entered South Street by way of the choir. For many years he trained the children for the Sunday School anniversary and they loved him. He was a leader of the church and a trustee. It was largely through his initiative that we were able to secure this estate. Convinced of the only way to save South Street, the church of his father, which he loved greatly, he worked eagerly for the completion of this building, at the opening of which he presided, proud to have beside him his life-long friend, Mr. Joseph Ward. Some of you will remember the emotion with which he spoke. That was one of the greatest days of his life, for he felt that the old Church had been saved and that its work would be continued and developed. He could have no worthier monument. This church and school will perpetuate his memory, for they embody so much of his personality. In connection with the South Street Circuit he held the chief offices, and every church found in him a ready and generous helper.

Though he was a Methodist by conviction he was sympathetic towards all other branches of the Christian Church, and there are few churches, or, indeed, few religious or benevolent organizations which did not benefit from his gifts.

Of his public work it is impossible to say much here. Suffice it to say that to every task he gave his best. He had high ideals of citizenship which he embodied in a life of devoted service.

As a master he was greatly beloved. He knew every person employed at Sheaf Bank Works. During his illness I was often stopped by anxious workmen who inquired, "How is Mr. William?" He was very distressed by the problem of unemployment. He entered into the sufferings of the people who were out of work. He made a very real effort to understand the situation. He served on various Commissions and attended many conferences with the hope of finding some way of bringing about more prosperous conditions. Profit sharing, consultation of the workers regarding management, and other attempts to bring about and maintain friendly co-operation between workers and masters, show his fine spirit and aim. It has been recorded that when the great fire raged which destroyed his works, his great concern was not about his own loss but about the danger to the homes in the neighbourhood, and later about

those who would be temporarily without a means of livelihood. Those who knew him were not surprised that he turned a deaf ear to those who advised him to retire and leave the works in ruin. His sense of responsibility made that course impossible. He must find employment whatever it cost. And there are very few people who realize how much that action has cost him. Yet I don't believe he really regretted it. Economic conditions thwarted him, but he was glad that he had done his best.

He was proud of the Musical Union and its great conductor, Sir Henry Coward. He gave much time to the business side of its life and was chairman of its Council to the day of his death.

He was a conspicuous figure in the denominational life of the United Methodist Church, which conferred upon him the highest honours open to a layman in recognition of his generosity and devotion. He was Treasurer of the Connexional Fund for many years, Secretary of Conference in 1911, Treasurer of the Publishing House to 1914, and of the Custodian Trustees, and he served on every important Connexional Committee.

It is amazing how he managed to get it all in. Yet he was never hurried, neither was he ever too busy to find time for some act of kindness or personal help to a person in difficulty.

He will be greatly missed in many realms. But we shall miss him most as a friend. He was never fussy, but he was always genial. He made friends by his friendliness and he kept them by his loyalty.

If we had asked him how best we might please and honour him he would have said, by following the example of Him who was my ideal and by vying with each other in the attempt to establish and develop the work in which he rejoiced. God has called him to higher service. He has left us an example. We must continue his work, challenged by his faithful zeal and inspired by his fine example.

To his dear ones our hearts go out in tender sympathy as we pray that they may be divinely sustained and comforted.

Home Missionary Committee.

THE Home Missionary Committee met at Ladywood, Birmingham, on November 26th and 27th last. Here we preached our trial sermon, many years ago now. Here we were orally examined, with our own father as District chairman. Memory was very active.

It was a pleasure to meet the men, some of whom we had not seen for many years. The list of absentees this year, however, was a long one. We missed the President and the ex-President, and elected the Rev. C. Stedford as our chairman, in which capacity he was courteous, kindly and correct.

At the first session, held on Thursday evening, Rev. F. Barrett presented his evangelistic report and Rev. R. W. Gair the report of the Deaconess Institute. Fewer missions have been held this year than last year, partly due to the fact that in some areas we have united with Wesleyan and Primitive Methodist friends in the holding of special missions and services. It was inspiring to hear of the good work done by our students at Manchester, last year at Normanton and this year at Stapleford, and also of the times of refreshing which Huddersfield had experienced by the visit of Oxford and Cambridge undergraduates. Probably they will be in Huddersfield again next January. Our deaconesses have done, and are doing, a great and gracious work in our churches. Twenty missions to be conducted by deaconesses are already arranged for this winter. Much success has attended their recent mission work, and the warden stated that the problem now was: "How to relate such success to the present position of our denomination, with its declining numbers." The needs of the hour, it was felt, were evangelism and shepherding. The conversation which followed was sustained at a very high level. One felt it was good to be there. But one must not attempt to detail it; any such attempt would spoil it as a fragrant and a precious memory. As Mr. Mallinson gave his simple testimony to the work of grace in his life, we felt as he spoke that we were "in heavenly places." It was a never-to-be-forgotten session, in which many of the brethren took part.

And then away to the Wesleyan Hall, where a conversation was in progress, presided over by Mr. J. P. Bridgewater; where, too, we met our hosts and hostesses, and, having to leave early with them, could do no more than cast longing glances at the beautifully arranged and heavily laden refreshment tables, and envy our more fortunate friends who would remain.

And so back again the following morning to much business. The agenda, which left something to the imagination, was little by little made to reveal some sad and difficult cases. Messages of sympathy were sent to ministers who had broken down in health; circuits, in difficulties for this or any other reason, had their cases sympathetically considered; new ventures were explained, and where commended helped; rash ventures were deprecated; old offenders (churches and circuits who are not fulfilling their promises to the Home Mission or Chapel Fund) were dealt with, but not too summarily. Every case received careful consideration.

Over the luncheon tables in the schoolroom thanks were wittily expressed by Rev. F. Barrett to the friends at Birmingham for the preparations made and the kindness shown, special mention being made of Rev. and Mrs. Charles Whitely and Rev. and Mrs. A. Lee. This was seconded by the Rev. C. Stedford and carried unanimously.

One question remains to be asked and answered definitely: "Are we working any or all of our departmental officers too hard?" An answer is an emphatic "Yes."

W. T. N.

Meditation.

For the Second Sunday in Advent.

By Rev. E. E. REDMAN.

THE Light, . . . For every man.

The time draws near when we celebrate the anniversary of the coming of our Lord into the world. Was it the greatest event in the world's history? I leave that to others to decide. The only other in competition with it is Calvary. Which is the greater, who can say? But Calvary would have been impossible without the Incarnation. Well, so we think, but to say positively what is possible, and what is not, is beyond finite minds.

Each Christmas I like to fix on a portion of Scripture dealing with a special phase of the birth of Christ. This year my portion is the Prologue of St. John, and particularly the words: "That was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." The coming of Jesus was the coming of light, and it is light for every man.

Like many more, I have been reading Sir James Jeans' book on "The Mysterious Universe," and what he says about light is a fitting introduction to the prologue. The tendency of science is to reduce everything that exists in the universe to light. Sir James says: "The tendency of modern physics is to resolve the whole material universe into waves, and nothing but waves. The waves are of two kinds. Bottled-up waves, which we know as matter, and unbottled waves, which we call radiation, or light. If the annihilation of matter occurs, the process is merely that of unbottling imprisoned wave energy and setting it free to travel through space. This concept reduces the whole universe to a world of light, potential or existent, so that the whole story of its creation can be told, with perfect accuracy and completeness, in six words: 'God said Let there be light.' This brings us to the threshold of the Bible. That is, as far as science can go." He does venture to make some remarks about the Creator, but in doing so he steps out of the realm of physics into a higher realm. He says: "The Great Architect appears as a pure mathematician." Also: "That the universe is a world of pure thought." And, later: "We discover that the universe shows evidence of a designing and controlling power which has something in common with the individual mind."

All this is very interesting. It is more, it is amazing. After reading Jeans, and perusing John 1, it seems as if the universe was a great picture, and Jesus steps out of the canvas as the hidden mind science dimly sees. In St. John He is the Logos. The Word. A word is the expression of thought, and Jesus is the expression of the thought of God. In Him the designing, controlling mind is revealed. He, too, is light. He says I am the Light of the World. To know of what matter is made is of interest, but not of great moment. But to know the mind of the Creator for moral, intelligent beings like ourselves is of vital importance. Socrates said, long ago, that "The knowledge of your own souls is more important than the knowledge of the stars." That is the light Jesus brings. How wonderful that the infinite becomes finite, the hidden revealed. And when we see God He, too, is light, and in Him is no speck of darkness.

While it is well for us to notice the place light holds in the material and spiritual realm, we need clearly to understand that it is in the spiritual realm we think of Jesus taking the supreme place. There He is the light, the true light. Other lights have appeared in the night of the past, and have shed their beams upon the spiritual darkness of this world, but when Jesus came He superseded them all. They are like the stars that fade before the rising sun. They were broken lights. He is the perfect light, the Master Light of all our seeing.

That light was the true light, which lighteth every man coming into the world. He is the universal light. The light for every one. A question arises: Does it refer to the past as well as the future? Or does it refer to the future only? The light of our Lord may have been reflected in the past more than we know, as the light of the sun is reflected by the moon and the planets, but the reference seems to be to the future. There is another reading of this passage: "That was the true light which lighteth every man by coming into the world." Light has come. It is for every creature. It has to be distributed. It has come for that purpose. The great commission to the disciples was: "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature." The birth of Christ was the birth of missions. All Christians should be light-givers as well as light-receivers. Christ has something to give to every man so every man needs Christ.

The coming of Christ was the coming of blessings. We know the benefits that come from the light of the sun. It is the world's regenerator as well as the world's illuminator. The coming of the warm days of spring awakens the dead earth to new life, and produces beauty and fruitfulness everywhere. So it is with the coming of Jesus. He is the world's spiritual regenerator as well as the world's spiritual illuminator. Burne-Jones painted a picture, entitled "The Star of Bethlehem," which illustrates this. He shows how Christ at His coming brought a glow of warmth and love into the world. In the foreground of the picture is Mary with the Child on her knee, while the Magi approach with their gifts. Beyond the circle where the Christ-child sits it is bleak wintertide. Trees are bare, the ground is white with snow, and all is chill and desolate. But around the place where Jesus sits spring has broken out, the snow has disappeared, tender flowers are putting forth their delicate petals, and there is a sound of rejoicing and the promise of abundance of life.

Light is life. Our Lord said "I am come that they might have life. Wherever He went flowers burst around Him. Lives long dead in trespasses and sins, or hardened by cruelty or oppression, grew soft and pure and good.

*Notes of an address given at Psalter Lane Church, Sheffield, Sunday, November 22nd.

Great Methodist Union Demonstrations at Camelford & Wadebridge

ENTHUSIASTIC Methodists gathered from a wide area on Wednesday last to join in great Methodist Demonstrations at Camelford and Wadebridge. It was a memorable occasion, as we were honoured by a special visit of the Secretaries of the Union Committees: the Rev. Henry Smith and Rev. E. Aldom French, together with the Revs. R. Pyke and G. Vernon (chairman of the Wesleyan District).

During the afternoon conferences were held in Camelford, Fore Street U.M. Church, and in Wadebridge Wesleyan Church. At Camelford the Rev. G. B. Brown (superintendent minister U.M.) presided, supported by Revs. D. N. Heap and F. Ritson. Helpful addresses were given by the Rev. Henry Smith and the Rev. G. Vernon, the latter dealing with a number of questions concerning the forthcoming Union. A similar meeting was held at Wadebridge. The Rev. W. L. Bennett (W.M.) was in the chair, supported by Revs. J. Hannah and M. Harvey. Stirring speeches were delivered by the Rev. E. Aldom French and Rev. R. Pyke, after which the meeting was thrown open for discussion. Tea was served afterwards in the Wesleyan school-room.

Both churches were crowded for the Demonstrations in the evening. Old Methodist tunes were sung and a fine spiritual tone pervaded the gatherings. Alderman V. E. Menhinick, J.P., took the chair at Camelford.

In the course of an excellent address, the Rev. R. Pyke said that we were present to rejoice; to take stock; and to consider what our programme was. It was a time when we could not afford to relax our efforts, as the great welter of darkness and chaos in the world was a challenge to the Church of Jesus Christ. The speaker proceeded to outline the conditions at home and abroad—conditions which called upon Methodists to take their stand and to offer their witness. People of judgment and experience should come together in good will and ask, "How can we best further the work of God in our neighbourhood?" Some scheme should be thought about that will make the greatest possible impact upon men locally. No arbitrary fiat could resort to mean expedients. It was a question of local statesmanship. Mr. Pyke referred to the pressing needs of the new areas. "One of the first things that Methodists will have to do," he declared, "will be to form some common plan by means of which we shall be able to take the Gospel to these people or else they will lapse into a state of utter disregard for spiritual things. No other Free Church, apart from Methodism, has the organization to do this." He suggested that, first of all, we must preserve or create in our churches a type of service which will regard that old three-fold group of virtues which philosophers used to describe as beauty, truth and goodness. Goodness, however, was even more important than Beauty or Truth—without it all else would fail. The deepest impressions were those made by simple souls who were just good. The saints were God's testimony that he was in his Church. Continuing, Mr. Pyke urged that we should preserve a wise and persuasive evangelism. While we may not be able to say exactly what men said thirty years ago, that did not mean that we could have to lapse into a society for the promulgation of ethics. He concluded by stressing the need for a careful and organized system of visitation. "We should bring our resources together," he said, "that every three or four villages should have a man set apart to take charge and visit." The power to drive our machinery was adequate, but the heart of Methodism would only abide true as Methodist people testified to their God. The address was a clear and penetrating analysis of the present situation.

It is impossible to reproduce in print the humour and sparkling asides that characterized the address of the Rev. E. Aldom French. His message was challenging and full of optimism. "We are uniting," he told us, "because our Churches hold a common gospel and that must lead to a common fellowship." There was no justification for refusing Union except where Union could repel the Gospel. "We must unite to face the aboriginal evils of a new world. Union will be worthwhile if thereby we can make a more effective contribution to the Kingdom of God. Adaptation to the times is necessary or the Church would perish. Mr. French referred to the success of the United Canadian Church and pleaded that we in this country should get back to the first principles of Methodism. The most wonderful thing in the religious world to-day was the recovery of the idea of Grace. Dr. Moffatt's latest work on the subject was mentioned together with the stress laid on it by the Barthian movement in Germany. Then in a graphic way the speaker went on to describe how the men in our Universities were turning to Christ. He concluded with a powerful appeal for men to dedicate their lives to the service of the Master. "The Church going to succeed," he declared, "when we get to that point when we don't mind what happens to ourselves, when everything depends upon what happens to others. Methodist Union is to call for a great dedication, and the Church that seeks Christ will rise with a might that nothing can resist." Mr. French was loudly applauded for his informative and stimulating speech. The Rev. Henry Smith said that Union was not only a great historic fact but a miracle of grace. Unity was anointing influence; a holy, consecrating, fructifying thing. Step by step they had been led, and he believed it with a largeness of mind and outlook Methodist Union would be a great success.

It was a day of rich experience, the memory of which I do not easily forget. We went home from the meetings feeling that God had been present, and that progress had been made. Thus inspired we shall now be better fitted to face those local problems that await attention.

F. R.

Thompson Memorial Hall, Sunderland.

In the monthly "Messenger" there is an interesting letter by the Pastor Rev. F. E. Watts who took charge of this important centre of the work at the last Conference. He speaks of the impressions made upon him during the few months of his pastorate to the present time. The size of the evening congregation has impressed him above anything else, and he fittingly points the responsibility that rests, not only upon himself as pastor, but upon every member of the church to make the Sunday services as spiritually effective as possible by their regular presence and spiritual interest.

The Bible Class thirty-third anniversary is fixed for Sunday, December 13th, when the Rev. A. C. George, a former pastor is to conduct the services, morning, evening and afternoon. Mr. George's four years' ministry there is remembered with much appreciation, for he won his way to the hearts of the people in an exceptional degree, and many now connected with the church owe their conversion and inspiration in Christian service to his example and work.

"The Messenger" also contains an article by Mr. T. R. Blumer, who was the founder of this successful Bible Class thirty-three years ago, and we have pleasure in giving our readers the benefit of Mr. Blumer's statement.

"I have before me a copy of the first annual report of our Bible Class, in which it states:-

"On Sunday, December 11th, 1898, a meeting was held, when twenty-three young men were present. Mr. T. R. Blumer occupied the chair and briefly stated that he was desirous of forming a Bible Class for young men, and gave a rough outline of how same would be conducted. It was then unanimously resolved to form such a class, to be held each Sunday afternoon at a quarter past two, to be open to any young man over 18 years of age."

After thirty-three years of steady plodding work we have to-day a membership of 750, with an average attendance of nearly 340 men. We have our sister organisation—the Women's Bible Class—with 450 members and an average attendance of 201. From these two organisations there have sprung up a church with 446 members and a Sunday School with 600 scholars and over 100 teachers. To-day we have former Bible Class members in many parts of the world, and many others who are scattered in different parts of England. There are men and women who received blessing and help in our classes who are now members and workers in other churches of our town.

As we ponder over these facts we cry out: "Not unto us, O Lord—not unto us—but to Thy Holy Name be all the praise and all the glory." We have only been very unworthy "instruments" in God's hands. Great, unspeakably great, has been our joy, and great is our praise and thankfulness to God. I desire, very definitely and sincerely, to acknowledge the immeasurable help that has been rendered to our work by former colleagues and associates. Without a shadow of doubt, God called and raised up men who were specially gifted for the task, and they bore the brunt and burden of the work. After thirty-three years of our Bible Class life we lovingly and sincerely pay this tribute to their personal life and influence and their whole-hearted loving comradeship.

Our form of service remains the same to-day as it was when the class was first formed. Simplicity, sincerity, and reverence have been our constant aim. One of the striking features that characterise our meetings is perhaps best described by the word "Atmosphere." There is some unseen mysterious power about our meetings that grips men, and they find strength, comfort, and growing desires for God and better things. Surely the truth is—they discover God.

The year we are closing has been a very difficult period. A large proportion of our men have worked little or none; a great number are on the dole. We are perhaps passing through a period of more genuine

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gloom than living men have ever known. Unemployment, unrest, and distress are in our very midst, and the dark, heavy clouds still hang over us. It has been ours to minister to our men, and we are sure the only message that meets their needs is the eternal truth that God still lives, still reigns, and still loves. It has been well and wisely said that we may not be able to see or understand or trace God's ways, but we know and must believe that He is still merciful, gracious, and full of compassion. Yes, and the fact is that troubled men and women are finding courage, grit, peace and assurance through a loving faith in Jesus Christ.

We have in connection with our class a good proportion of young men. Every year a batch of our senior male scholars join us from the Sunday School, as well as other youths from different parts of the town. These recruits are our special care and thought. We do not retain all who come to us, but we have a splendid band of youths who are full of promise. We rely upon these as our future workers.

By visitation, by personal influence, and by birthday letters we endeavour to keep in touch with our men. Our lay worker, Mr. R. D. Hodson, is untiring in his devotion in visiting their homes, and in addition we have about fifty members whom we call "Visitors." These are the "eyes" of our class, and help us enormously.

Of course there is a dark and discouraging side to our work. Every year there is a number we have reluctantly to remove from our register, but no name is removed until every effort has been made to induce them to attend the class. The growing slackness of Sabbath observance, the lack of Christian influence in the home, the increasing tendency to make Sunday a day of pleasure—these and many other present-day tendencies are forces working against us.

The keen depression in trade and the consequent unemployment have very materially affected our weekly income. This year has been the poorest financial record for very many years. We are down in all our collections, while our expenses continue the same.

We rely upon our anniversary services to meet our large deficiency. All through the past years our friends have never failed or disappointed us. Will you once again help us according to your ability? If you cannot be with us, any contribution, however small or however large, will be thankfully received at 4 Esplanade West. We feel we can appeal to all classes for support."

Letters to the Editor.

[The Editor does not hold himself responsible for expressions of opinion by Correspondents. All contributions to these columns must be brief.]

Missionary Money.

To the Editor of THE UNITED METHODIST.

DEAR SIR,—In the Annual Report the Rev. C. Stedford says: "Last year the bank overdraft cost £608, an amount sufficient to maintain two missionaries. Much of this might be saved if friends would pay their contribution at the beginning of the year, instead of at the end. For the same reason, churches and circuits are urged to forward missionary money raised as early as possible, instead of holding it, as too many do until the close of the year." A case in point came to my notice a few days ago, when our junior minister called for the proceeds of the missionary meeting and said: "We have a circuit overdraft, and we pay all missionary money into the circuit account in the bank until the end of the year." This may be done without thought, but if it is done in many circuits it is a serious matter. There is a bit of "self" about it too. Yours truly,

A UNITED METHODIST.

Dumping.

To the Editor of THE UNITED METHODIST.

DEAR SIR,—The comments of "R. P." on the vexed question of dumping are so misleading that I hope you will allow a reply thereto. In view of the alarm and increasing activity in the ranks of Free Traders, together with the constant and effective pressure being made on the Government by Protectionists, I cannot understand how "R. P." can truthfully say that "Free Traders are ceasing to expound their creed," or "That Protectionists agree to accept the mild measures of restrictions against dumping." To those who have studied the question of Free Trade the "obvious absurdity" is that intelligent people can be so easily deceived by the plausible reasons given for anti-dumping measures. The hoary fallacy of cheap labour dates back to the time of Cobden and Bright. In the early days it was slave labour; then it changed to prison labour, later to sweated labour, and now to cheap labour under bad conditions. "The bark frequently changes, but it is the same dog" (this remark also applies to the ever-changing names given to Protection). The reply is the same to-day as in the early days: (1) Cheap labour does not necessarily mean cheap goods, generally it results in quite the opposite. (2) If we were to prohibit all imports produced by cheap labour, the raw materials for exports would have to be taxed, but even the most rabid Protectionist does not demand this. (3) Goods are not "poured into our country" by the foreigner; they are purchased abroad and imported by English tradesmen. (4) Why tax foreign and let in free similar Empire goods; both enter into competition with home manufacturers. The manufacturers will certainly benefit by the tax. It is equally certain that "the general well being of the working class" can never be secured by compelling them to pay more for the things they buy. Neither can trade generally benefit from artificial interference with a willing seller and willing buyer. The Board of Trade returns conclusively prove that when imports are highest employment is at its best. This one fact alone completely reveals the absurdity of the contention that by reducing imports you can improve home trade. J. PETERS.

The World of Books: Writers and Readers.

Two of the most interesting books that have just come to hand are from Mr. John Masefield, our Poet Laureate. A month ago he gave a lecture on "Poetry" at the Queen's Hall, London, and already his publishers, Messrs. Heinemanns, have issued it in volume form: *Poetry*, by John Masefield. (3s. 6d.)

The lecture is a poet's confession of faith, not only in the supremacy of his art, that it is not simply one of the chief ways of conversing with Paradise, as Blake claimed, but that it is supreme in its origin and inspiration. Mr. Masefield boldly adopts Milton's great words at the commencement of his lecture, "That wherever poetic powers are found, they are the directly inspired gift of God, not often bestowed, but always to some in every nation."

This is surely something for which Christian men may feel thankful, that in this day of literary negation and what Robert Buchanan called "Fleshly poetry," our chief poet should declare himself a firm believer in God and that no true poetry can appear only among men who believe in a spiritual order of the universe. (Page 9.)

On page 3, the Laureate, in the most intimate way, speaks of the leading of the Divine Hand, and offers his invocation, as did John Milton at the commencement of "Paradise Lost":

"O Spirit of all Light, lighten me,
That I may show the brightness, that men may love it."

Whoever reads this book will find the poet's prayer answered, and on the last page an ascription of thanksgiving and praise to Him from whom great poetry flows, as light from the Source of Light, even that King from whom comes our knowledge of the kingly, in whose wisdom we advance, under whose majesty we move, and in whose beauty we may come to dwell.

From this high spiritual standpoint, Mr. Masefield deals with the four supreme poets, Homer, Aeschylus, Dante and Shakespeare; and shows that no others have such delight in life's abundance, nor such sense of the depth of its mystery.

Previous to the lecture volume, Messrs. Heinemanns sent out a full-sized volume of the Laureate's poems, bearing the title, *Mimie Maylow's Story*, and other tales and scenes. (8s. 6d.)

This is a book of 250 pages and gives us thirteen long poems in Mr. Masefield's favourite flowing narrative style, in which he wrote "The Everlasting Mercy" and the other similar works that made him, perhaps, the most popular poet of our day.

One of the longest and, I think, best poems in this book and my favourite, because it has to do with Cornwall and the Arthurian legends, is "Tristan's Singing."

It tells the story of Isolde's unfaithfulness to her lover, Tristan, and how he spent a whole year communing with the spirit of nature and composing a poem that he knew would win him back his lady-love, once she read his inspired lines. And the happy sequel justifies his faith, for Isolde returns to his side, saying:

"O Tristan, I have come again. . . .
Forget that we have wrought each other wrong.
We are as one as western wind and rain.
Forget my cruelty and teach your song;
And let us sing together, you and I,
And be away together in the sky."

It is a pleasure to commend these two books from the Poet Laureate's pen. Readers, thinking of buying Christmas presents, would do well to remember them, for they are in every way very suitable for such a purpose.

Speaking of Christmas presents reminds me of two booklets, in gold wrappers, from the Epworth Press, 6d. each, intended as Christmas cards.

One of them is by Rev. J. H. Bodgener, *The Child with the Strange Hands*. The other is by Rev. Leslie Weatherhead, the popular Leeds minister, *Every Man's Hour of Destiny*.

They are square booklets, with 24 pages, very effectively got up, and both of them splendidly written. They ought to have a large circulation, for they are eminently calculated to do much good. The Wesleyan Bookroom are to be congratulated on their production.

T. W. SLATER.

ATTRACTIVE pictures, delightful stories in prose or verse, and perfect print, are the ingredients which make the December number of "Little Dots" such a feast of joy for young readers. There is also a strong flavour of Christmas about it all. The Story of Fairy-Tale Street, after a year's run, concludes in the current issue, and every one will be glad to learn that the Queen awarded the first prize to Topsy Turvey.

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Departed Friends.

Miss Joan Chapman, Leicester.

THERE was a large company of friends present in our St. Paul's Church, Leicester, on November 24th, when the funeral service of Miss Joan Chapman, the youngest daughter of the Rev. T. J. Truscott Chapman and Mrs. Chapman took place. Those taking part in the service were the Rev. H. Gilbert Lowe, Pastor H. J. Argall and Rev. H. W. Edwards (Wesleyan). Pastor H. J. Argall gave an address and referred to Joan's smile and patience, and he also conducted the service at the graveside. Mr. Golland, the church organist, played Chopin's "Funeral March" as the mourners left the church, and the choir was also present. Two of Joan's favourite hymns were sung, "Stand up, stand up for Jesus" and "At even ere the sun was set." There was a large number of beautiful floral tributes, both from the churches and friends, and there was a contingent of nurses present from the hospital, where Joan was a great favourite.

Miss Annie Eliza Chew, Birmingham.

It is with sorrow that we record the death on November 21st of Miss Annie Eliza Chew, second daughter of the late Rev. Richard Chew. The news of her passing will stir the waters of memory for many, especially among those who had associations with the United Methodist Free Churches. The Rev. Richard Chew exerted a wide and very fruitful influence in his lifetime, and attained to high and honourable positions in the Connexion. Twice he was elected President of the Annual Assembly. He died at Sheffield on Good Friday, 1895, being at the time in the active ministry with forty-eight years of active service to his credit. A fitting memorial to his life and work is "The Richard Chew Prize," which was founded by resolution of the Annual Assembly and is competed for annually by the senior students of our Theological College. The Conference also ordered the publication of a biography of Mr. Chew. This was written by the Rev. Edward Booden, and remains as a permanent record of his character and service. Mrs. Chew survived her husband several years. Eventually their daughters removed to Birmingham and settled in Erdington, becoming connected with Gravelly Hill Church. Miss Alice Chew, the eldest, died in 1925. And now Miss Annie has passed on. For some months she had been in rather poor health, but the last phase of her illness developed with unexpected rapidity. The funeral took place on November 25th, the Rev. Cuthbert Ellison officiating. The place of interment was the Witton Cemetery, Birmingham. Two sisters of the deceased, Miss Eleanor Chew and Miss Mary Chew, remain to mourn her loss.

Mrs. C. A. Farrar, Pendleton.

The Bethesda Church, Pendleton, has sustained a very great loss by the passing of Charlotte Annie Farrar, the dearly-loved wife of the late Joseph Wilkinson Farrar. For over fifty years she has been a most loyal and devoted member of the above church, evincing a loving regard and deep reverence for it. Though prevented by illness at various times from attending the services on the Sabbath, it was ever in her thoughts, and her hands were ever busy making some gift for a needy member or preparing something for a sale of work at her own or neighbouring church. Of a kindly, sympathetic nature, she shed a gracious influence all around, and will be greatly missed. Along with many others, the writer feels he has lost a dear friend, but the memory of her will be fragrant. Many of our ministers of the old M.N.C. days will remember her as a gracious hostess. The interment took place at Elland on November 23rd. May the Divine presence comfort and bless those who have so lovingly tended her.

Miss Roberts, Exeter.

ANOTHER of the members of Providence, Exeter, has passed into "the great Beyond." Miss Florence Bessie Roberts, a sister of the late Mrs. Stentiford, whose death we reported in June last, and daughter of Mr. George Roberts. Miss Roberts passed away on November 27th. She had not been privileged to worship in the sanctuary for some years, owing to affliction which rendered her helpless, but her interest in "Providence" was lifelong. The sympathy of all friends will be extended to Mr. Roberts in the loss of the second daughter in less than six months.

Women's Missionary Auxiliary

All items for this column to be sent to the Publication Secretary, Mrs. J. B. Brooks, B.Litt., 3, Laisteridge Lane, Bradford, Yorks.

PRAYER TOPIC for the week beginning December 6th: Chinese Loyalty to Christ in Chao Tong. Rev. W. H. Hudspeth. Pages in Report, 53-56.

A special autumn rally of the W.M.A. has been held in connection with the Torrion Road, Hither Green branch. This was marked by the visit of Mrs. Henderson, the president of the council, who addressed a large, representative gathering. Mrs. Bodey, London District president, took the chair. Mrs. Henderson inspired all by her earnest, heart-to-heart talk and encouraging personal experiences. Her message will be long remembered, and must result in greater enthusiasm for our missionary cause. Over the tea-table, greetings were brought by the secretaries of our Lee, Plumstead, Deptford and Forest Hill branches, to which Mrs. Henderson graciously replied. We at Hither Green are very grateful for the privilege of such a visit.

Newcastle-upon-Tyne.—The autumn District meeting was held in the Scotswood Church on October 21st. Mrs. Banks, an ex-president of the District, presided over

the large company of over one hundred. Rev. Kenneth May, of China, gave a very interesting and instructive address on "Tales of the Road." His story of his experiences in journeying from place to place in China, the dangers to be encountered from brigands and the general discomforts of travel in the country, profoundly impressed his listeners and helped them to realise that their service for the overseas, however great, were incomparable to the great sacrifices of those who represented them on the field abroad. Solos added to the helpfulness of the meeting. Tea followed, kindly provided by the friends of the Scotswood Church.

Glyncorrwg, Port Talbot.—A few of the ladies of our Glyncorrwg Church have been urging for some time past the claims of missionary work, and, as a result of their endeavours, on Wednesday, November 11th, a branch of the W.M.A. was inaugurated. The occasion was a particularly happy one. Mrs. C. Davies, who with her husband, Dr. Caleb Davies, spent thirteen years with the Wesleyan Missionary Society in India, was largely responsible for the success of the gathering. Lady Chas. Bird and Mrs. Howells, of Cardiff, paid a special visit to Glyncorrwg and spoke of the work of the Auxiliary, and Mrs. Davies spoke briefly of her work in India. The friends unanimously decided to form a branch, and elected the following officers: President, Mrs. C. Davies; secretary, Mrs. R. Dixon; treasurer, Mrs. M. Jones. Thirty-three members enrolled. After the meeting the friends adjourned to the vestry for tea, and thus concluded a happy and memorable day.

Bristol and South Wales District.—The annual effort was held on Nov. 14th in our Eastville Church. The afternoon session was presided over by Mrs. Alfred Dowling (District president), ably supported by Mrs. Thomas Butler (ex-president). The speaker was Miss Abercrombie (Shanghai), and her subject "The Dawn of Hope." This title was the name given to a home in Shanghai for fallen women and girls. The speaker interested her hearers in a marked degree as she unfolded the various methods adopted in dealing with the inmates, and the many lives that had been reclaimed and the good accomplished through the work and example of a few noble women. Mrs. Butler spoke in glowing terms of Miss Abercrombie's work, saying she had seen the home, and a very large share of the good result was due to the latter's work and influence. Mrs. Dowling next received purses from the branches, amounting to over £30. The Rev. F. Husband (District missionary secretary) gave a short address, and two solos were ably rendered by one of the Eastville friends. Tea was then served. Mrs. Marsh (president of the Primitive Methodist W.M.A.) took the chair at the evening meeting. The speaker was Mrs. Turnbull, who spoke on "The Lord's Work in Western Canada," where she, with her husband, had laboured for more than twenty years. Miss Ena Mills favoured us with a recital and song. Mrs. Bennett thanked the friends for their kindly help.

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(7) Faithful Unto Death.

By REV. A. F. VINEY.

(International Sunday School Lesson for Sunday, December 13th, 1931.)

SCRIPTURE: ACTS XXVIII. 11-31; 2 TIM. IV. 7-18.

GOLDEN TEXT: 2 TIM. IV. 7.

(For notes on text, see Century Bible: Acts.)

THE last two verses of Acts are among the most tantalising in the New Testament. What happened at the end of the two years? Some think that St. Paul was released and resumed his work, and so hold that there was a second imprisonment during which the Pastoral Epistles were written. Others take it that St. Paul perished at the end of the two years. The latter view is more likely, since it is incredible that, if Luke knew of a release and further ministry, he should not have recorded it however briefly at the end of the Acts. But that St. Paul suffered martyrdom at Rome at some time is beyond all doubt. On this view (that St. Paul died at the end of the two years) the Pastoral Epistles are usually regarded as later productions of a disciple, but containing scraps of St. Paul's letters—such as that contained in the second reading to-day. This literary procedure was not very unusual in the early Church.

St. Paul and his Friends.

The service of Jesus Christ has rich rewards in itself, but St. Paul's life shows how rich it can be also in earthly friendships. The early Christians were earnest workers and carried Christ's message with them wherever they went. So that, after a while, St. Paul would not be surprised to find Christians in unexpected places. Such came to meet him on his way to Rome, having heard of his coming. Recount the voyage from Malta, probably in a grain ship bearing grain for Rome, and the landing at Puteoli, the Liverpool of Rome. How glad St. Paul would be to find in that great seaport some friends of Christ. Previously unknown to one another, how friendly they were because of their common bond with Jesus Christ. After seven days with these new friends (a concession allowed by the centurion), there came the march by land to Rome. But this was lightened by more friends. To a little town, the Market of Appius, forty-three miles from Rome, and again to a little place known as the Three Taverns, thirty-three miles from the city, more disciples came to meet him: "whom when Paul saw, he thanked God, and took courage." For St. Paul was very human, and friendliness meant much to him. His Epistles abound in references to fellow-workers and friends, "men that have been a comfort unto me." That is a certain wealth for all who sincerely try to keep company with Christ. They enter a new family—"the household of the faith."

The Ceaseless Service.

One day St. Paul arrived at Rome, unnoticed except by a few officials and the despised Christian band. Christ's greatest messenger had come to the Eternal City. True, he was a prisoner; but that did not mean for him that he had no work to do. Perhaps he had now received his family inheritance so that he had means to avail himself of the privilege of hiring his own dwelling, always, of course, under military guard. (cf. vv. 16 and 30). Without delay he began to do what he could for his Master, and as usual began with the Jews (see vv. 17 and 23). They were not very responsive, but St. Paul never gave up for lack of opportunity. How simple, but eloquent is the last verse of the Acts—"preaching . . . and teaching the things concerning Jesus Christ with all boldness." If the Epistle to the Philippians belongs to this two years, then in Phil. i. 12-14 we have a picture of the wonderful ministry he continued to fulfil even with his chains. It may well have been a time of intense misery, being in enforced and continuous company with coarse and brutal pagan soldiers, but the two years were made glorious by patient service. Thus did St. Paul "bear witness at Rome" in lowly ways, and at last before the great Caesar.

Triumphant End.

The story of Christ's first martyr, Stephen, is told in the New Testament. Paul's death would be quite different. The one was at the hands of a mob, the other would be an execution by Roman soldiers. We have no hint of the scene, but we can imagine it—the steadily tramping soldiers with the Apostle among them. Perhaps he was a little bent now, a little aged, for he had borne hunger, cold, stoning and prison, with ceaseless toil, through many years—for Christ's sake! He would be thinking, not of these pagans, nor of those relentless Jews of other days, but of that road to Damascus and the shining light and the kindly word "I am Jesus." He would remember the Friendship he had accepted and the promise he had made. Men had sometimes forsaken him. Christ had never forsaken him. So with a stalwart soul and a gallant spirit, St. Paul departed to be with Christ. He had fought a good fight, he had kept the faith. The work St. Paul began is not finished yet, and there are always places in that noble service. There is one for each of us. It may be far away, or it may be just where we are now. We shall find it without mistake, if in our willingness we say, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"

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Aspects of Jesus.

(12) His Use of Humour.

By REV. FRANK E. WATTS.

(C.E. Topic for December 13th, 1931.)

SCRIPTURE READINGS: MATT. V. 34-48; LUKE IV. 22.

DOUBTLESS some C.E. leaders will possess a copy of the text-book on which this series of topics is based. The chapter we are concerned with this week is headed: "Why was Jesus a Humourist?" The writer of the present article cannot endorse it with any heartiness unless very strong emphasis is laid on the explanatory note: "This title is not to be taken in any extreme, popular entertainment sense. It is used simply as of 'one who displays humour in writing or speaking' (F. and W. N. S. Dictionary)." Even then he feels the use of the word "humourist" is unwise. In its general use it denotes a "triviality" utterly foreign to Jesus.

With this reservation we may turn to a consideration of the true place of humour in His recorded teaching.

I.—What is Humour?

The dictionary definitions vary greatly. One of the best is that of Webster's New International Dictionary, viz.: "The mental faculty of discovering, experiencing or appreciating ludicrous or absurdly incongruous elements in ideas, situations, happenings or acts; droll imagination or its expression;—distinguished from wit as less purely intellectual, and having more kindly sympathy with human nature and as often blended with pathos." Turning to authors we may cite two: (1) "Humour in its first analysis, is a perception of the incongruous" (J. R. Lowell) and (2) "I should call humour . . . a mixture of love and wit" (Thackeray). Another important aspect of humour emphasized by one authority is: "Humour makes a man ashamed of his follies without exciting his resentment."

The two main points are: appreciation of the incongruous and a kindly motive.

II.—Christ's Use of Humour.

Perhaps the best known and at the same time the most helpful treatment of this subject is the third chapter in Dr. T. R. Glover's book, "The Jesus of History." He says: "It is only familiarity that has blinded us to the 'charm' the people found in His speech, to the gaiety and playfulness that light up His lessons." The instances he gives are: (1) Luke x. 6: "A son of peace: what a beautiful expression; what a beautiful idea too, that the unheeded Peace! comes back and blesses the heart that wished it, as if courteous and kind words never went unrewarded." (2) Matt. vi. 29. The phrase, "Solomon in all his glory" (compared with that of the lily) before it became hackneyed by common quotation. (3) More amusing still is the episode of the Pharisee's drinking operations. So careful of the outside of the cup, elaborately so indeed, and quite careless as to the interior. Then there is the Pharisee straining at a gnat and swallowing a camel! Dr. Glover asks: "How many of us have ever pictured the process and the series of sensations, as the long hairy neck slid down the throat of the Pharisee—all that amplitude of loose-hung anatomy—the hump—two humps—both of them slid down—and he never noticed—and the legs—all of them—with the whole outfit of knees and big padded feet (Matt. xxiii. 24, 25). It is the mixture of sheer realism with absurdity that makes the irony and gives it its force. Did no one smile at the story? A modern teacher would have said in our jargon, that the Pharisee had 'no sense of proportion,' and no one would have thought the remark worth remembering."

Another writer says: "The Sermon on the Mount was not meant to be read as one reads an Act of Parliament." Yet that is how it has often been understood, with sheer Western literalness. Is there not an element of playfulness—as well as high spiritual teaching—in the "hard sayings" such as: "If any man shall sue thee at the law and take away your coat, let him have your cloak also"? Remember the Jew wore just two garments! Consider the others—the "second mile," for instance—in this same light of playfulness, yet hiding a deep truth.

Is there no humour beneath the pathos of "the blind leading the blind and both falling into the ditch"? No fun in the children frolicking in the market-place: no irony in the reference to the games of weddings and funerals, and to the small-mindedness of the men and women addressed? What, too, of the candle lit and put out of sight and of pearls among the swine?

All these instances illustrate the two main points mentioned above: there is the sense of the incongruous and also there is the motive of kindness and sympathy.

III.—The Value of Humour.

No one seems more hopeless in this world than the man who "has no sense of humour." Delightful incongruities abound and he is blind to them all. He may even face one and ask in all solemnity: "What does it mean?" The sense of humour and the incongruities

on which it plays are both so inwrought into the world and normal human nature, that we believe them to be of God. They have real value. In what ways? We think of the humour of Jesus as used (1) to arrest attention; (2) that He might the better reach His fellows who would respond to its winsome appeal; (3) as an invaluable aid to memory, and (4) in order to ease the burden and lighten the anxiety of His own teaching and spirit.

In ordinary life a "flash of humour" has often saved a situation. Think of church business meetings where there is tension, and discussion is becoming acrimonious! Then comes the humorous reference and the meeting dissolves in laughter! Abraham Lincoln once said to the members of his Cabinet at a time of supreme responsibility: "Gentlemen, why don't you laugh? With the fearful strain that is upon me night and day, if I did not laugh I should die; and you need the medicine as much as I." Pure, true humour is a medicine for the mind and soul and our Master used it with wondrous skill and love.

"Gambling."

THE officers and teachers of our Patricroft Church (Manchester Fourth Circuit) recently held a "Group" discussion on the subject of "Gambling." In view of the present widespread interest in sweepstakes, the conclusions reached on this occasion are considered of great importance. As a result of the discussion a circular has been sent to all the parents of our scholars, embodying the considered judgment of those present. In addition the circular has been read at one of the Sunday services and in the Sunday School. The following is a summary of the resolutions agreed on:

(1) That in our opinion the Christian Church ought not to entertain the idea of holding raffles.

(2) That it is undesirable that draw tickets and sweepstakes should be promoted for raising funds to support hospitals.

(3) That public opinion should be more thoroughly roused against the insidious evil of betting in all its forms, and that young people should be protected against the pernicious practice.

(4) We believe gambling to be morally injurious, and that sport at all times should be indulged in for its own sake and not for gain.

News of Our Churches.

MINISTERIAL ARRANGEMENTS.

Lea, C. Boulton, has accepted the unanimous invitation of the Portsmouth Circuit to become superintendent minister after next Conference, but will remain at Powerscourt Road Church.

Pastor W. Griffith Ware has accepted the invitation of the Mount Tabor Church, Sheffield, to continue as pastor till Conference, 1934.

Anniversaries.

Bideford.—The church anniversary services, held on November 22nd, were anticipated with special pleasure, inasmuch as the special preacher was Rev. Wm. C. Jackson (President-designate). Crowded congregations attended both services. The choir rendered special anthems. On Monday evening a public tea was followed by a great united meeting, held at the Bridge Street Wesleyan Church, where the church anniversary services were also being commemorated. His Worship the Mayor (Councillor T. Burton, J.P.) presided. The principal speakers were Rev. Wm. C. Jackson, B.A. (United Methodist) and Rev. C. C. Craggs (Wesleyan), of Exeter. Considering the inclement weather, a fine congregation listened to two great addresses, each speaker emphasising the special need of prayer in our church life of to-day. A cordial vote of thanks was accorded the speakers by the Rev. E. Jenkins (U.M.), and supported by Rev. H. Middlewood (Wesleyan).

Huddersfield, Lindley (Zion).—The chapel anniversary services were held on November 15th. Preacher, Rev. Frank Hanesworth (pastor). Selections from the Whitsuntide hymns were sung at both services, Madame Enid Smith being the soloist at the evening service. In the afternoon selections from "The Messiah" were given by an augmented choir of over a hundred voices, under the conductorship of Mr. David Beaumont. The principals were Madame Marie Pownall, Miss Elsie Jackson, Messrs. Ernest Taylor and Jack Clayton. Mr. Ernest Cooper, F.R.C.O., presided at the organ, and gave an organ recital prior to the evening service. At the mid-week lecture held on Wednesday a portrait of the late Mr. Crosland Woodhouse was presented to the school by Mr. Stanley Woodhouse, on behalf of Mrs. Woodhouse and the family. Mr. John Schofield, the oldest honorary member, received the portrait on behalf of the school. Mr. Woodhouse had a life-long connection with Zion, and was an ardent worker for

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the Sunday School as long as he was physically able to do the work. The portrait, which reveals Mr. Woodhouse in one of his happiest moods, will be hung on the wall of the assembly room of the school along with other portraits of distinguished Zion workers. Mr. Fred. Dyson, the senior superintendent, presided over the meeting, and words of appreciation were spoken on behalf of the school by Mr. Tom Moore, superintendent, and Mr. G. W. Fox, treasurer.

Sheffield (Mount Tabor).—Successful anniversary services in connection with the Christian Endeavour society were held on November 15. Preachers, Pastors W. Griffith Ware and F. E. Darvill. Pastor Ware presided over a very large gathering on the Monday, when the Rev. W. H. Folley, M.M. (Primitive Methodist) was the speaker. Responses were given by a number of other societies in the city. Rev. W. E. Pilkington (Wesleyan) gave a stirring address on the Thursday. The whole services were an inspiration.

Barnsley (Blucher Street).—The anniversary of the Women's Meeting was eagerly anticipated, the women taking entire charge of the Sunday's services. Sister Elizabeth was the special preacher, and received a hearty welcome on her return visit. During the afternoon the women's choir rendered the cantata, "The Gentle Shepherd." On Monday a public tea was followed by a great rally of sisterhoods, representatives from about sixteen attending. Mrs. A. E. Ashworth, who has been pianist at the Women's Meeting for many years, presided. Solos were rendered by Mrs. T. B. Reed and Miss Moxon, and the Rev. T. B. Reed gave an inspiring address. Miss Ashworth was organist at all the services.

Bazaars.

Workop (Potter Street).—On November 19th and 20th the annual bazaar was held, and a very satisfactory result reached in spite of the very depressing conditions in the area. On the first day the opening ceremony was performed by Mr. Harry Bryars, of Sheffield, with Dr. T. C. Garratt in the chair. Mrs. A. Brown, of Workop, rendered two solos. Mr. H. A. Pierpont (bazaar treasurer) presented the financial report. On the second day Mrs. Dewick presided. The openers on this occasion were scholars of the Sunday School who, under the capable training of Miss Dorothy Hardisty, A.L.C.M., presented "The Dolls' Wedding." This little sketch was admirably performed and great credit is due to all concerned. Mrs. Ostick, of Retford, received the children's purses. Large companies gathered on both days, and a very happy and harmonious spirit prevailed. Proceeds, £116.

Birmingham (Rocky Lane).—A three days' "Blue Bird" bazaar was held in the large hall. There were excellent attendances, considering the days were very wet. On the first day Mrs. E. Allso (mother of one of our students for the ministry) opened the bazaar. Mr. Jesse Edwards presided, the Rev. F. L. Buxton and Messrs. Josiah Austin and Herbert White taking part. On the second day Mr. Laurence W. Hart presided, Mrs. W. B. Johnson, of Wilnecote, declaring the bazaar open, Miss Floss G. Taylor, Mr. John Senior and others taking part. On the third day Miss Morley (Wesleyan Sisterhood) took the chair, when Mrs. E. Benson Perkins, of the Wesleyan Central Hall, opened the bazaar. This was Women's Own Day, when the presidents and women attended from various societies. Mrs. Buxton welcomed this great audience of women, as did also Mrs. Richard Edwards. Madame E. Cousins gave two beautiful songs. The bazaar was kept alive by various attractions. The results were nearly £150, and considering the weather and economic times very satisfactory.

London, Hackney (Pembury Grove).—Taking the present depressed conditions into account, the result of the Four Seasons' bazaar gave rise to a feeling of great thankfulness to God, and of deep gratitude to a body of loyal, self-sacrificing workers. Minister (Rev. A. C. George) and people worked together with consecrated enthusiasm, and in consequence £238 was raised with comparatively little outside assistance. Old members and friends took a prominent part in the opening. Mr. and Mrs. James Johnson on Thursday, and Mrs. K. Triggs

and Mr. A. Fawcett (son of our oldest member who was also on the platform) on Saturday. It would be a real encouragement if the total sum could be increased to £250. The account is being kept open with the object of trying to secure the additional £17. Any help towards this end would be greatly appreciated.

Newcastle, Sandford (Gosforth).—The annual sale of work was held on November 25. Mr. W. Marchbank, C.C., presided, and Mrs. W. Phillipson Spence declared the sale open. The stalls were tastefully decorated. A quartette party from the Gosforth Wesleyan Church provided music, etc., during the evening. The sale was a decided success. Proceeds, for Trust fund, realised about £135.

Portland (Wakeham).—Held as usual in the spacious Y.M.C.A. Hall. Mr. Stone, ex-Mayor of Lymington, presided, and Miss Stone (his sister) opened the bazaar. The effort was well supported, and good business was done. On the second day the children graced the platform for the opening, Master Jack Smith being the efficient chairman and Miss Freda Seeley the gracious opener. A fine concert concluded the proceedings. Over £130 was raised.

Swinton (Worsley Road).—A very successful sale of work was held on November 28th in aid of the new Sunday School building fund. The opener was one of our own ladies, Mrs. Robert Boothman, who performed her task in a very graceful manner. Mrs. A. Bullock, of Stalybridge, presided, and was supported by Revs. G. I. J. Cushing and H. Cook, Mrs. Royle, of Mossley (an old scholar), Mr. Boothman, and Councillor A. Bennett, J.P., secretary of the trustees. All worked with a will, and a fine spirit was manifest from the beginning to the close. After meeting all expenses the net result was £112 10s., with which everyone was delighted. This brings the amount in hand to nearly £1,350. It is hoped to commence building early in the New Year.

Brighouse (Bethel).—A successful bazaar effort was consummated last week. Mr. James Sykes, of Elland, gave an inspiring address as chairman on the first day; Mr. Harry G. Swires, of Mirfield (who was unavoidably absent) was represented by Miss Swires and Mrs. H. W. B. Chapman, the latter of whom ably deputised as opener. Entertainments were provided by the Bailiffe Bridge choir and others. The trustees, who filled the platform at the second day's proceedings, made themselves responsible for the opening, and contributed amongst themselves £106. Mr. John Dewhurst, deeply interested in the project, presided, and the oldest active trustee, Mr. A. O. Stocks, J.P., opened the sale, both of whom spoke words of encouragement and reminiscence. Others taking part in the proceedings were Mr. F. Cocker, Messrs. J. H. and Norman Denham, Mr. A. G. Sladdin, and Rev. Herbert Lee. The excellent opening

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Re-opening Services.

Morecambe (Sandylands).—The church, which was extensively repaired outside in the spring, has now been re-decorated in the interior. The scheme of decorations, which is remarkable for its artistry, was conceived and carried out by Messrs. Waring and Gillows, Ltd., of Lancaster and London, the entire cost of the interior decorations being borne by an anonymous well-wisher of our Sandylands Church. On November 22nd the re-opening services were conducted by the Rev. W. M. Simm, of Blackpool, who preached eloquent sermons to large congregations. Special music was rendered by the choir under Mr. E. Noble, with Mr. G. H. Shaw at the organ. On Monday evening, Mr. Simm gave his popular lecture, entitled "Points of View." Mr. H. H. Palmer, B.Sc., head master of the Morecambe Grammar School, presided. Re-opening services were continued on Sunday last, conducted by the pastor (Rev. W. J. Southern). During the previous week a thanksgiving service was held, when over £40 was contributed to the church funds.

General.

Derby (Wilne).—An evening concert was held in the church on November 17th. Mr. Harrison Slater, the well-known elocutionist, of Derby, gave a very fine recital. Rev. J. H. Parkes also contributed two solos. The following instrumentalists rendered excerpts from Haydn's Eleventh and Twelfth Symphonies, including the famous Clock Movement. Violins, Mr. G. H. Plackett, J. W. Brown; flute, Mr. A. Plackett; piano, Mrs. J. W. Brown. Mr. F. E. Stevens (Shardlow) chairman. There was a crowded congregation. The effort was quite a success.

Birmingham.—On November 14th members of the local churches met in Gravelly Hill Church, Erdington, and many apologies were received. Most absentees sent warm greetings. Rev. F. L. Buxton created a Summer School atmosphere in his choice of hymns, reading and prayers in the afternoon meeting. After tea all were glad to welcome Rev. R. J. Doidge and were grateful to him for his service in leading the devotional meeting. During this meeting Rev. C. Ellison gave much food for thought in his very instructive paper on "Books young people should read." Later an hour was well spent in games. By the time the end of the programme was reached, all had the Summer School feeling and were loath to part. Much interest was shown in fixing the time and place of next meeting.

Lindley (Paddock).—On November 14th and 18th the married ladies gave a grand entertainment, which took the form of a sketch, entitled "Love in the Alps," by Eleanor Reynolds. About 23 ladies took part and all did exceedingly well. Mrs. Hamer was the coach, she also sang the song "Over the Mountains" during an interval. Proceeds, about £25, are towards the church decoration fund.

Elland (St. Paul's).—The annual "At Homes" were held on the two Saturday afternoons and four evenings of November 7th, 10th, 12th and 14th, and were characterised by enthusiasm and crowned with success. The opening ceremonies were marked by sincere devotion and the concerts in the hall by the children, the choir, the Scouts and the sketch party, were greatly appreciated. There were five stalls arranged by the matrons, the young ladies, the Girl's Guild, the Girl Guides and the Scouts, and a silhouette gallery by the institute. The total proceeds amounted to £271 4s. 5d. At the close Rev. E. Sheppard moved a vote of thanks to Mr. R. A. Mitchell (treasurer) and Mr. S. B. Tattersall (secretary).

Exeter (Providence).—On November 25th a concert was given by Exeter Male Voice Choir, followed by a coffee supper. The gathering was the first of its kind for the winter, and the hall was well filled. The expenses incurred were generously borne by the society stewards, and the whole of the proceeds (£11 5s.) devoted to church funds. Chairman, Mr. A. H. Thomas.

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South Lambeth (Fentiman Road, near Oval Station) — 11 a.m., J. Boden; 6.30 p.m., J. Boden.
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