

## The Religious World

### The Rev. W. H. Noyes and the American Board

Information has reached us of the decision of the Prudential Committee to appoint the Rev. W. H. Noyes as a missionary of the American Board in Japan. The history of this case is well known. Mr. Noyes was a student in Andover Seminary, and was refused appointment by the Board because he was not able to affirm his disbelief in the theory of probation after death. He did not hold the doctrine as something to be preached, but in a tentative way as a possible solution of a most perplexing problem. After being twice refused by the Prudential Committee he was sent to the mission field by Berkeley Temple Church of Boston, having been previously ordained by council, and his spirituality, consecration, and great success as a missionary led to a unanimous and urgent request from the Japan Mission that he be commissioned by the Prudential Committee. It has been known for a long time that this was a test case, and it is generally understood that in its settlement Dr. Storrs, President of the Board, and Mr. E. W. Blatchford, Vice-President, favored the appointment, while Dr. Alden and Dr. A. C. Thompson were strongly opposed to it. We rejoice at the action of the Prudential Committee. That Committee has it in its power at once to settle the controversy which has so long and so sadly divided this society. If it would cease drawing hard and fast lines concerning who may be missionaries and who may not, and allow a man's honor, common sense, and, most of all, his Christian character to balance some little doctrinal uncertainties, the trouble would disappear. We have already advocated a committee for the purpose of devising a basis of co-operation between the "wings of the Board;" the Prudential Committee might make even that unnecessary. Its last action is much to be commended.

### Concerning the American Board

President C. F. Thwing has written an article for the "Congregationalist" concerning the difficulties in the American Board, which is worthy of consideration. It is entitled "Evolution, not Revolution, in the American Board." The thought of the writer is that a victory for either party would be purchased at too dear a cost, and that therefore some other way out of the difficulty ought to be found. He thinks that it would be difficult to make a change in the personnel of the Prudential Committee in the way that some desire, and suggests, first, the enlargement of that Committee. Let it be made to consist of twenty or twenty-five, the enlargement in numbers to be accompanied with a diminution of meetings. He would have new members selected from a distance, and men selected for their competency rather than their partisanship. His second suggestion is, an increase in the number of Secretaries, and he says that such enlargement is demanded not simply for personal and immediate reasons. We are very glad to see this letter from Dr. Thwing. It is exactly in the line of what we have advocated again and again. Our suggestion was the appointment of a committee to devise a basis for co-operation between the now conflicting parties, so that each party might be loyal to its convictions, and yet the work be no longer retarded. It may be that Dr. Thwing has suggested the best plan. We have never advocated a particular plan of co-operation, but we are perfectly sure that such a plan ought to be and can be found if the moderate men on both sides will combine. If, for instance, nine men were chosen who would resolutely face the fact that there is a difficulty which can be met neither by denunciation on one side nor dogmatic assertion on the other—a committee which should resolutely try to find a way out of the difficulty—we have no doubt that they would succeed in a way that would satisfy all but the extremists. The fact is that while one side is declaring that the majority of the constituency is with the present management, the gifts are showing that it is probably with the other side. The conditions will be in no way improved when the liberals are triumphant—as they probably will be in the not distant future. What is needed is such an adjustment of the difficulty as will do full justice to both sides and yet enable both to unite in the common work of foreign missions as they are now uniting without the slightest friction

in all other lines of missionary service. For ourselves we frankly say that we can see no reason why this controversy should divide the American Board and not the Home Missionary Society, except that personalities have been allowed to usurp the place of principles. Dr. Thwing's suggestion is in the right direction. Let it be followed up by others, until a conference results between all those of both parties who are more anxious about the work in which they are engaged than a victory for the party of which they are members.

### The Epworth League

The Epworth League is the society for young people in the Methodist Episcopal Church which corresponds to the Society of Christian Endeavor in most other churches. It has been in existence about four years, and its first International Convention was held in Cleveland, Ohio, June 29–July 2. The Convention was attended by more than five thousand delegates from abroad, and of course by great crowds from Cleveland and vicinity. The meetings were held in the Epworth Memorial Church, a beautiful building seating about three thousand people when all the rooms are thrown into one. The President of the League is Bishop Fitzgerald; the Secretary, the Rev. Edwin A. Schell; and the editor of "The Epworth Herald," the organ of the League, is Joseph F. Berry, D.D. In all important particulars the Epworth League is simply the adjustment of the Christian Endeavor idea to denominational purposes. Among the notable features of this Convention were the adoption of a "Reading Course" for the members of the League, and also of a badge. The Music Hall was thronged when the League was welcomed to Ohio by Governor McKinley, of that State, who, according to reports, must have made a capital speech. The following extract from his address gives the figures as to the growth of the League: "What phenomenal growth you have made since your organization in this city on the fifteenth of May, 1889! The wildest dreamer could not have prophesied it. You have 11,000 Chapters of the senior League, with a membership of 700,000—some one here tells me, 1,000,000—and 4,000 junior Leagues for the little children." In this Convention were representatives of the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Methodist Episcopal Church South, and the Methodist Church of Canada. The President of the League, Bishop Fitzgerald, answered the question, Why have a Methodist Episcopal Church League alone? as follows: "This Church has things it wants to set forth which cannot be set forth unless in a body in which all agree. There are many points in which we do not agree with others, but there are others upon which we are anxious to lay special emphasis. We rejoice in proclaiming free grace to all, and to promulgate the great doctrine of holiness of heart. We can already see the advantage of this. The young people are coming to understand the doctrines of the Church, and to proclaim them in private and in public also. We are building for the future." The Conference sermon was preached by Bishop A. W. Wilson, of the Methodist Church South, and the subjects considered were as follows: "Periodical Literature," "Education by Observation," "My Duty to the Unsaved About Me," "City Evangelization," "My Duty to the Heathen World." Among the speakers we notice the names of Professor W. H. Crawford, of Atlanta, President Raymond, of Wesleyan University, the Rev. L. A. Banks, D.D., of Boston, the Rev. A. J. Palmer, D.D., of New York, and Bishop C. H. Fowler. The reports of the meetings indicate a very inspiring assembly, and yet we cannot feel that Bishop Fitzgerald's reasons for the organization of a denominational League are in harmony with the trend of Christian sentiment throughout the world, or with the general movement of Divine Providence concerning the Christian Church. When other things are pointing toward unity, it is rather late in the day for any one to attempt to justify exclusiveness.

### Archbishop and Monsignor

It seems to outsiders as if a rupture between Archbishop Corrigan and Monsignor Satolli was inevitable. The Rev. Dr. Burtzell, before the McGlynn trouble, was pastor of the Church of the Epiphany in New York. Because of his sympathy with Dr. McGlynn he was removed from this church and assigned to a much smaller field at Rondout. Dr.

Burtsell's parishioners have been loyal to him from the first, and recently forwarded to Monsignor Satolli a petition for his restoration to his church, signed by fifty-one thousand names. The substance of the petition is that Dr. Burtsell is the founder of the church, and for twenty-three years was its honored pastor; that he had done nothing to justify his humiliation, but that, on the other hand, he had been most loyal and successful in his work. The result of the petition was a letter to Archbishop Corrigan from Monsignor Satolli, which was in substance as follows: "It seems wise to us, and it would be proper for you, to restore Dr. Burtsell to the parish of the Epiphany; and if you cannot so arrange matters as to bring about this result, we direct that you place him in some parish within your city limits of equal prominence and importance to the one from which you removed him." It is said that the Archbishop has refused to restore Dr. Burtsell to his church, and that the matter will now be referred to the Propaganda at Rome. There seems to be a difference of opinion as to the powers of the Monsignor. The champions of the Archbishop declare that he is being manipulated by a clique in the Church, who do not represent the real spirit of the Roman Church. Dr. Burtsell is perhaps the ablest ecclesiastical controversialist in the Roman Church in the United States, and it is safe to say that the matter will not be dropped until every possible step has been taken for his restoration.

It is said that the Church of the **The Church of the Covenant** Covenant, of this city (Rev. J. H. McIlvaine, D.D., pastor), is soon to be sold, and that the church organization is to unite with the Brick Church, of which Dr. Henry van Dyke is pastor, and that Dr. van Dyke and Dr. McIlvaine are together to occupy the pastorate of the united church. The report at first was that the sale had already been consummated; since then that report has been denied. Without doubt, however, we suppose, the plan will be consummated in the near future. Both churches are too far down-town for their own constituency, and one will do the work quite as well as two. The Church of the Covenant has had but three pastors—the Rev. George L. Prentiss, D.D., the Rev. Marvin R. Vincent, D.D., both of whom are now professors in Union Theological Seminary, and the present pastor, Dr. McIlvaine. The united church ought to be one of the strongest in the city. The Brick Church, on Fifth Avenue, is admirably located; Drs. McIlvaine and Van Dyke are intimate personal friends, both are exceptionally strong men, and without doubt will work together so as to make the pastorate of the church even more useful than either one has been in the past.

The daily papers have given an interesting, though altogether too short, account of the meetings at Chautauqua and at Northfield. Professor Drummond seems to have been the center of attraction, and, if the reports are correct, in some instances of controversy. There is probably no other man before the public at present in whom Christian people are more interested than in this Scotch Professor. The conspicuous feature of the first week's programme at Chautauqua were his lectures on "The Ascent of Man." One who was present writes: "The lectures on a subject which could so easily have been abstruse and obscure were as easy and pleasant as familiar tales, free from technical terms, extravagant expressions, and all affectation or mannerism of style. Simplicity and earnestness are his most impressive characteristics. His manner, too, is as simple and unaffected as it is dignified and courteous, with always the suggestion of the thoughtful man who desires to avoid attention." The lectures "have been literary expressions of scientific facts and permeated with a spiritual influence." The publications by which Professor Drummond is best known represent but a small part of his writings. He was but thirty years old when he became famous through his "Natural Law in the Spiritual World." Thirty editions of this book were published in England alone, and it has been translated into French, German, Dutch, and Norwegian. Professor Drummond is not a regularly ordained minister in the Presbyterian Church, but has taken thorough courses in theology and science in the University of Edinburgh and later in the University of Tübingen. To com-

plete his theological studies he went to the Free Church Divinity Hall, and in 1887 was made lecturer at the Free Church College at Glasgow. Wherever he has spoken his audiences have been immense, and the more he is seen and heard, the greater is the enthusiasm over the man and his lectures. More than any man of our time he is showing the masses of our people that there is no real antagonism between the latest results of scientific thought and an intelligent and rational interpretation of Christianity. He is another illustration of the fact that many of the most intensely evangelistic spirits are in the front rank of the "Forward Movement in Theology." Professor Drummond has been in our country so often that he seems almost to belong to this side of the water, but thus far he has resisted all calls to permanent residence among us. But, after all, in these days of swift steamers it makes little difference where a man actually resides, for all progressive thinkers are practically citizens of the world.

Among those who were honored with the **A Degree Declined** degree of D.D. during the last Commencement season was the eminent evangelist, the Rev. B. Fay Mills. The degree was conferred by Iowa College, one of the most prominent educational institutions in the interior. The degree has been declined by Mr. Mills in a letter so characteristic of the man that we have received permission from President Gates, to whom it was addressed, to print it in full in these columns. We are inclined to think that Mr. Mills's course is a wise one, and that it would be better for all concerned if degrees had never been conferred on any Christian minister. The letter of Mr. Mills is as follows:

Bethany,  
Pawtuxet, R. I., June 26, 1893.

Your kind letter of the 20th, informing me that your Trustees had very graciously conferred the degree of Doctor of Divinity upon me, is at hand. Permit me to express my heartfelt thanks for this great indication of their confidence, and to say that so great is my regard for you and the institution you represent that such an honor could not possibly have come to me more acceptably from any other source. It is with pain, therefore, in the fear that I may seem ungracious, that I ask your kind permission to decline this title. I have a sincere wish to refrain from anything like a critical impulse concerning others, but for myself I cannot but interpret the spirit of the Master's words, "Be not ye called Rabbi, . . . for one is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren," as indicating to me that I ought not to be called by any title of honor that is not owned by all of my faithful brethren in the ministry of Christ. So please let me remain a plain minister of Christ till the end of my pilgrimage.

May I trouble you to see that my desire is known wherever the knowledge of your kind action may have been published?

With the kindest wishes, I remain,

Yours in the Master's service,  
(Signed)

B. FAY MILLS.

**The Liquor Traffic in the New Hebrides** We are glad to note that a Committee has been appointed by the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches with reference to international co-operation for suppressing the traffic in liquor and firearms in the New Hebrides Islands. All who have heard the venerable Dr. Paton know his intense desire in this matter. The subject is one in which all Christians and philanthropists should be interested. Nothing should be left undone which will help to secure the co-operation of the United States and American churches in saving those Islands from the terrible evils which threaten to invade them and overthrow the Christianizing influences which have been working there for the last half-century.

**Islamism in the United States** Islamism, it seems, is being established in the United States. We remember to have read about two years ago that a Moslem temple had been erected in Liverpool; we now learn that there are four circles of the Moslem brotherhood in America. We have our information from the "Moslem World," printed in New York. To become a Mohammedan it is not necessary to renounce belief in the teachings of Jesus. The Koran explicitly says: "The true religion was taught by Moses, Abraham, Jesus, and all the inspired prophets. Mussulmans 'honor and revere the memory of Jesus, believing him to be one of the true prophets.'" Our "Church-Christianity," as they designate it, is full of "degrading superstition." All that is good in any religious system is, they assert, embodied in Islamism. As an evidence of their broad catholicity and freedom from creeds, they point to their long line of prophets, beginning with Adam and ending with Mahomet. It will be well for all our missionary societies to recog-