

The Religious World

Treasury of the Home Missionary Society

The Executive Committee of the Congregational Home Missionary Society held on January 2, 1894, its annual meeting for the discussion of the appropriations for the year beginning April 1, 1894. From the statement presented by the Treasurer, it appeared that the receipts from churches, legacies, and individual givers, for the first nine months of the current year, were \$109,000 less than those of the corresponding months of the previous year. This means a decrease of thirty-five per cent. in the receipts thus far. If a similar rate of shrinkage continues during the coming three months, the Society must inevitably close the year \$75,000 in debt. In the face of these facts, it is obvious that no enlargement of the work can be thought of. Whether the same volume of work can be continued during the coming year must depend on the response of the friends of the Society in the next three months. To whatever cause Christian people give, they ought to be very careful that the treasuries of the various benevolent societies are not allowed to suffer. When these suffer, thousands of individuals also suffer. None who are supported by these societies are well paid. The treasury itself is impersonal, but those who depend upon it are quite as much in need of that which they receive as are any others who are helped. The poor in our great cities should be cared for, but not in such a way as to reduce almost to beggary thousands of others who are doing brave work for humanity under circumstances of peculiar difficulty. The treasury of the Home Missionary Society should be kept full all the time.

The Presbyterians and Poor Relief

The Presbytery of New York has taken hold of the problem of poor relief with great vigor. A Committee, the Chairman of which was the Rev. John B. Devins, at the last meeting of the Presbytery presented a report of which the following are the principal features: It recognized the greatness of the need, and that the need is likely to increase during the winter. It then emphasized two points: First, the Presbyterian Church should provide for its own poor living in the city through its own agencies; and it calls upon other denominations to join with it in relieving the charitable agencies of the care of any who are regularly connected with any branch of the Church of Christ. Second, the Presbyterian Church calls upon its people to support most liberally approved charitable societies. The Committee further recommends that a pastoral letter be sent to the pastors, elders, deacons, and trustees of all the churches and chapels in the Presbytery. The pastoral letter declares that no member of the Church should be allowed to suffer for the necessities of life; that, to prevent pauperism, employment should be provided, where possible, for all who are able to work; and that the Presbytery commends to the support of its people agencies which combine work with relief. It makes six suggestions:

1. Every church should care for its own poor.
2. It announces the appointment of a committee from the Presbytery to receive gifts for relief where it is needed.
3. If any church is unable to relieve its own distress, it may apply to this committee for supplemental aid.
4. To prevent deceit on the one hand and neglect on the other, charitable societies are requested to send to the pastor of the church with which such applicants are connected the name and address of every Presbyterian now receiving aid or applying for assistance.
5. After taking care of their own the churches should support liberally the properly authenticated charities.
6. Every church is requested to make a contribution to the proposed relief fund as soon as possible.

These suggestions are all practical, and, under the wise leadership of the Committee appointed, will do much toward the relief of the prevailing distress.

Dr William M. Taylor

The Annual Meeting of the Congregational Union on Thursday of last week was presided over by its President, the Rev. William M. Taylor, D.D. This was the first time that many of his friends had seen Dr. Taylor in a position of responsibility since his severe illness a year ago. A stranger seeing him would not have imagined that he had ever seen a sick day. His sturdy frame seemed as strong as ever, and the brightness of

his eye seemed undimmed. Those who knew him well, however, could detect in the tones of his voice a weakness which was unknown in other days. But, on the whole, his appearance indicated such a remarkable change for the better that none could help the wish that it might be prophetic of greater changes to come. If the improvement continues, the churches may still expect great service from Dr. Taylor by his presence in their councils and by his writings, even though it may not be prudent for him often to preach. The exercises of the meeting to which we refer were closed by prayer by Dr. Taylor himself, and the petition which he offered was characterized by the same richness of Scriptural suggestiveness, with just a touch of that fine spirituality which is seldom heard except in the utterances of those who have passed through deep and trying experiences. Dr. Taylor's many friends, while wishing for him a complete restoration to his usual health, rejoice at the marked improvement which has allowed him to be present in public meetings once more.

A few weeks ago we devoted a paragraph in these columns to the action of the Iowa Yearly Meetings of Friends, in the case of those who declined to sign a denial of belief in the possibility of repentance after death for those who have not had a clear vision of Christ in this world. We are informed by a correspondent that this action is calling out a strong protest from Friends both in this country and Great Britain. It is said that there is a strong movement on foot among the English Quakers looking toward the sending of a united remonstrance against the action of American Friends in deposing from ministerial office the persons who refused to subscribe to "the Declaration of Faith." A letter on this subject has appeared in the "Christian World" of London, written by William Tallack, which gives voice to the disapproval on that side of the water. He says: "It has long been one of the most cherished privileges of British Quakerism that its members are not bound to any humanly concocted creeds or dogmas of this kind. A reverent and Scriptural liberty of opinion is prized by the Friends in this country, but it is far otherwise in the Western American States, where many, if not most, of those retaining the name of Quaker have ceased to be characterized by the real features of Quakerism." If Mr. Tallack accurately expresses the mind of English Quakers, there is little sympathy between them and their friends in the Western part of America. It is interesting to note that all the controversies concerning theological mysteries are not confined to one denomination or to any one school of thought; but we hardly did expect such conflict among the peace-loving Friends.

The Kingdom and the Church

The "Northwestern Congregationalist" of January 5 contains a symposium, the subject of which is a recent paper of President George A. Gates, of Iowa College. The title of the paper is "The Church and the Kingdom of God." It had been previously delivered in many places in the West as an address. At the request of the editors, President Gates reduced his address to writing, and it has been made the basis of one of the most interesting and valuable symposiums that we have seen for many a day. The contention of President Gates is that it is the intention of our Lord to put emphasis on the kingdom rather than on the Church; that the kingdom represents the divine life, and the Church the institution by which that life manifests itself; that men have come to think more about the institution than about the life; and that consequently mechanism has come to hinder that which is vital and fundamental. The argument is presented with great perspicuity and vigor. President Gates believes that the time is ripe for a revolution as great as the Reformation; that we are not yet living the Christ-life; that selfishness is still dominant; and that, in a way of which we have as yet hardly dreamed, those who bear the name of Christ are called to be the followers of Christ. His paper is the strongest note we have yet heard from what may be called the School of Applied Christianity. It will elicit many criticisms and many condemnations. The symposium contains letters, some favorable and some unfavorable, from Drs. Abbott, Gladden, McKenzie, N. G. Clark, Millard, Ecob; President Hyde; Professors Ely,

Herron, Bascom, Pattee ; the Hon. William E. Dodge, and many other well-known ministers and laymen. We will not attempt to epitomize what ought to be read in full. The whole discussion is stimulating and uplifting.

When it was started, Hamilton College was known as an undenominational institution, and was supported about equally by Presbyterians and Congregationalists. A few years ago a movement was inaugurated looking toward closer affiliation with the Presbyterian body, and for a long time it has been considered *the* Presbyterian college of New York State. At one time the Synod of New York undertook to raise the sum of \$500,000 as an endowment, but that movement, we believe, was never a success. The new President of the College, Dr. M. W. Stryker, we are informed, announced at the recent meeting of the Synod of New York that no definite relations existed between the College and that body, and, when addressing the alumni of New York City, he said: "I don't know to how many of you it is known that the little flirtation between Hamilton College and the Synod of New York is ended, and happily for the College. I went to the meeting of the Synod at Rochester, and, acting, as I believe, for the best interests of the institution, I refused the offer of the Synod, and asserted the autonomy of Hamilton College. The Synod seemed surprised. They have become so accustomed to considering the College as wholly subservient to them that they didn't seem to comprehend fully the altered situation. Hamilton College is done forever with going about carrying its hat in its hand for people to drop in pennies because we are a Presbyterian institution. Every man who is a Presbyterian and an alumnus, and many of us are, would, I believe, give twenty dollars as an alumnus where he would give two as a Presbyterian." We are glad to read of this action. Hamilton College has occupied a large place in the history of New York State and in the history of the Nation. Its graduates are in many denominations, and all would gladly be loyal to it if it were on a basis on which all could co-operate. Denominational colleges usually have to look for their support to denominations more than to alumni, except so far as the alumni are members of those denominations. But Hamilton College has ministered to all denominations, and its graduates are largely outside the Presbyterian Church. This action practically declares that the support of the alumni of the College is of more importance than affiliation with any particular sect. In these days, when the tendency toward Christian union is growing with such rapidity, it seems almost ludicrous to have institutions of learning flying denominational banners.

The New Church Party in England Ecclesiastical life in England is colored by the constant contest between those who are striving to maintain the present Establishment and those who are seeking its overthrow in the interest of what they believe to be pure religion. For three hundred years and more this contest has continued. The jealousy which a large proportion of the best people in England feel for the Establishment cannot be appreciated here, where even the Episcopal Church has no desire for affiliation with the State. But on the other side of the water the question of the future of the Church is one of absorbing interest. The policy of the present Government has been distinctly in the line of disestablishment. The increased aggressiveness of the advocates of this policy has led to the formation of a new party in English politics. It is called the Parliamentary Church party. In a recent interview with the leader of that party, Sir Francis S. Powell, M.P., the representative of the "Christian World" elicited the following facts: The movement is the result of a feeling that, with many and unscrupulous enemies within the Parliament and without, the Church of England and Wales needed the formation of a party to resist the tyranny and injustice in the national Parliament. The idea was first mooted in 1885; it was then dropped, and is now again revived. Sir Francis says: "We are face to face with a very determined and dangerous body of public opinion which seems intent upon destroying the Church, and the Parliamentary Church party has been formed to do battle with that sentiment." As illustrating the spirit of the opponents of the Church, reference was made

both to the Welsh Suspensory Bill, which means the beginning of disestablishment in Wales, and the Parish Councils Bill, which aims at making the parishes self-governing rather than, as now, so largely governed by the authorities of the Church. This new party is composed almost entirely of political Conservatives. It will seek to work in harmony with the Church Defense Institution. Many eminent Churchmen have contributed to this movement, among whom we notice the names of the Duke of Westminster and the Bishop of St. David. The party will not embark on any active propaganda outside of Parliament, but will seek to defend the interests of the Church within that body. The organization of such a party is in itself evidence enough of the fear of disestablishment, which is evidently more widespread than many casual observers have supposed.

Our readers will probably remember what the letters at the head of this paragraph signify. The Pleasant Sunday Afternoon movement in England is, in its way, quite as remarkable as the Christian Endeavor work in this country. A conference of representatives of this movement was lately held in Memorial Hall, in London, to consider the advisability of forming a national organization. The Chairman-elect of the Congregational Union of England and Wales, the Rev. George S. Barrett, M.A., of Norwich, presided, and commended the work in unqualified terms. After a full and free discussion, it was voted not to proceed to a national organization, and also not to establish a newspaper which should be an organ of the movement. The reason for this action is not given in the reports which we have before us, but, for ourselves, we are very glad that both propositions were voted down. There is getting to be altogether too much machinery in Christian work, and we are firmly convinced that one of the most serious of all the perils which threaten the Church at present is the multiplication of absolutely useless conventions. The leaders of the P. S. A. in England have acted wisely. Such kinds of effort do not need organization. They will be adopted by existing organizations whenever and wherever there is need. In connection with this conference we notice that an address to ministers has been issued by some of the most prominent workers in this cause. It is entitled "The Possibilities of the P. S. A." It begins by admitting that a large number of the working people are alienated from the churches; that it is the duty of the churches to do all that is possible to win back those who have become prejudiced against them. Already it is estimated that in England some seventy thousand workingmen meet in the various P. S. A. gatherings each week, and a large number of these are drawn from the sturdier, more intelligent, and more vigorous ranks of British workingmen. The perils of the movement are frankly recognized, and its advantages stated with equal frankness. The address says: "The P. S. A. has enabled us to show sympathy with the workingmen in their struggles for purer and more wholesome conditions of life; it has given us opportunities for discussing social questions from the platform of the New Testament; it has attracted large numbers to our ministry of those who had not previously attended any place of worship; it has purified and blessed, by its reflex influence, hundreds of homes, and we have found that the clearest evangelical teaching has been eagerly welcomed by those who attend these services." The address is signed by five eminent Christian ministers, among whom we notice the Rev. A. Holden Byles, of Hanley, and the Rev. F. B. Meyer, who is well known in this country as the friend of and fellow-worker with Mr. Moody. We wonder that the P. S. A. movement has not received more attention in the United States. It surely is quite as well adapted to our life as to that of Great Britain. It offers just the kind of service needed in our manufacturing centers.

A Word from Dr. Parker Few men in our times say so many true things, or say them so well, as Dr. Parker, of the City Temple, London, and he is one of the most quotable of living preachers. He has just preached a sermon on "Casting, Giving, and Sowing," from Ecclesiastes xi. The sermon contains the following paragraph, which is worth being learned by heart by all who desire to do Christian work. He says: "I heard the other day of people raising £4,000 for a forward movement. What