

The Religious World

Federation of East Side Workers

"One of the Greatest Charities of Modern Times" is the phrase in which the Federation of East Side Workers was recently described by one who knew it perhaps as well as any one could. We publish below the provisional suggestions for the plan of federation prepared by the Committee. Those connected with it represent various charities and religious denominations. They are organized in the recognition of the fact that if the problem of the city is ever to be solved all minor differences must be dropped, and there must be union among all who discern the importance of the great work. Of those who sign this paper one is a Presbyterian minister with decidedly conservative tendencies, one is a Unitarian, one an Episcopalian, one a Jew, one a Baptist, two others Presbyterians, and there are two concerning whose religious affiliations we are ignorant. These East Side workers are already realizing Christian union, and showing that all are really Christians who do the work of Christ. Without further comment we present in full this provisional plan of federation. It is as follows:

Without surrendering our allegiance to the religious body or charitable society with which we may be connected, the representatives of the churches, synagogues, and benevolent organizations laboring in lower New York believe that the time has come for a closer co-operation among the workers than at present exists. To secure that end, a committee known as the Committee of East Side Workers shall be appointed, consisting of the pastor, priest, or rabbi, and one member of every church and congregation, and the President and an accredited representative from each benevolent society, desiring to co-operate in this manner, having its field of labor south of Fourteenth Street and east of Broadway. The duty of this general Committee shall be to consider the spiritual and temporal needs of the people within this district, with a view to greater efficiency at less expense. To carry out this plan, the appointment of six sub-committees is suggested, as follows:

1. An Executive Committee consisting of the President and Secretary of the general Committee, and five representatives of the co-operating religious bodies or benevolent societies to be chosen by the general Committee. The function of the Executive Committee shall be to carry into effect such plans as shall strengthen the work of the general Committee and increase its usefulness.
2. A Religious Committee to consider the spiritual needs of the district, with a view of reaching every family with religious truth. To prevent unnecessary competition, resulting too often in discord in families, and overlapping of effort causing useless expenditure of time and money, it is recommended that such methods of mutual help be adopted as may be approved by the Committee, as, for example, the exchange of church lists.
3. A Benevolent Committee to consider the temporal needs of the district, with a view of helping every family needing aid and of preventing the pauperization incident to indiscriminate giving and lack of co-operation. Self-help shall be the goal constantly kept in view, with direct relief as the last resort.
4. A Building Committee to secure a suitable building, as near the center of the district as practicable, to be occupied by branches of the several co-operating societies, the expense of which shall be borne by the societies in such proportion as the Committee may decide.
5. A Lecture Committee to provide courses of lectures each winter for the working people, in such places as may seem best, on topics relating to the different phases of their life, including the care of the home, the training of children, the relation of capital and labor, wages, rent, improved dwellings, temperance, etc.
6. A Sanitation Committee to study the question of tenement-house reform in this city and in other cities, to aid in enforcing the sanitary laws already on the statute-books, to suggest needed reforms, to create a public interest in favor of improved dwellings, public baths, and small parks in this part of the city, and generally to consider all questions relating to the health and comfort of the people among whom we labor.

(Signed by)

REV. JOHN B. DEVINS, Hope Chapel, New York Employment Society.
MRS. CHARLES R. LOWELL, Charity Organization Society.
MR. JOHN SEELY WARD, JR., Brotherhood of St. Andrew.
MR. NATHANIEL S. ROSENAU, United Hebrew Charities.
REV. DANIEL H. OVERTON, Emanuel Chapel (Presbyterian).
MR. J. LLOYD THOMAS, Industrial Christian Alliance.
REV. J. G. THOMS, Mariners' Temple (Baptist).
REV. W. T. ELSING, DeWitt Chapel, City Mission Society.
REV. DANIEL REDMOND, Wilson Mission.

Simultaneous Meetings for Home Missions

The last General Assembly at Saratoga did some things which to those outside seem unworthy and even childish; it must not be supposed, however, that it took no wise action. Among the good things there decided upon was the unanimous and hearty vote given to the recommendation that all the Presbyteries hold simultaneous meetings in the interests of Home Missions. The object of these meetings is to awaken the entire Church to a sense of the importance of the "Home work." The meetings are to be held during the week, or two weeks, preceding the annual collection for that cause. They will probably be in the week preceding the Sabbath designed for taking the annual collection, and it is intended that each meeting should be addressed by a minister and an elder from other churches. Then

when the collection is to be taken each minister will appear in his own pulpit, where it is presumed that he will present the same address which he has before given in another church. The plan may be so extended as to include a general exchange of all pastors on the Sabbath preceding the collection. This is very wise. The custom of depending upon Secretaries for service of this kind is not a good one. The Secretaries are overworked; the calls upon them are too many. Furthermore, the pastors usually present the cause better. They are not better informed concerning the facts, but they know better how to reach their own people. One of the best means of promoting a missionary revival would be a more general exchange of pulpits when the various missionary objects are presented.

The season for conferring honorary degrees is now about over. "The Song of Degrees" is now heard in the land. Most of the colleges have had their commencements, and usually in proportion to the insignificance of the institution has been the number of such "honors" conferred. Especially is this true in regard to Doctors of Divinity. If that title has any value at all, it is when it is given to those who have proved themselves, by their studies and contributions to theological science, worthy of special mention in the Church. But on every hand the degree is awarded without the least regard to the worthiness of the recipient. It is no uncommon thing for mediocre men to inspire a petition to some college not overburdened with conscience, asking for the honor. We have known that to be done again and again. It is well known that the degree has been practically purchased in many instances from institutions which ought not to have the privilege of conferring any such distinctions. Instead of being an honor, the way in which the degree is often conferred has been a scandal, and the better class of colleges and universities are now much more careful than formerly. Many grant but one in the course of the year, and in each case for distinguished theological scholarship. This is as it should be. For instance, Adelbert University, at Cleveland, conferred but one such honor at its last commencement, and that was given to Professor Williston Walker, of Hartford Theological Seminary, whom all recognize as worthy to receive it because of his scholarly works on Congregational history. Some English ministers, with greater desire for prominence than consecration to Christ, have sought among our colleges a consideration which they could not get in their own country. This has been the occasion of much unpleasant comment in scholarly circles in England. More than once the writer has been asked if he knew how certain persons secured their "titles." He has not been able to answer definitely, but has often been morally certain that if the whole truth were known it would reflect credit neither upon the American institution nor the English recipient. It is a cause for real gratitude that the number of degrees given by our colleges is diminishing, and we may hope that in the future they will be still more limited. At present the two letters "D.D." may probably in the majority of cases be said to stand for "Doubtful Dignity."

Unoccupied Mission Fields

The Rev. James Douglass, of London, is contributing to the "Missionary Review" an interesting and valuable series of articles on "The Unoccupied Mission Fields of the World." Those which he has last described are Mongolia, Ili, Nepal and Bhotan, Afghanistan and Beloochistan, Siberia, Annam, Tonquin, Lower Cochin China, the Philippine Islands and Cambodia, and Arabia. These fields are described in one article, and they give a startling impression of the vast regions hardly yet touched by the influences of the Gospel. Into some of these fields occasional missionaries have already penetrated, and in some of them the Roman Catholics have been at work; but they are relatively unoccupied, and the figures given by Mr. Douglass justify the use of the word "unoccupied." In Mongolia, James Gilmour, one of the greatest missionaries and noblest heroes of modern times, did a glorious work, but at present there are no Protestant missionaries in that population, which is reckoned at two millions. The Roman Catholics are at work in a part of this district, but most of the people are entirely without Christian influences. Ili comprehends what is generally known as Sungaria and Chinese

Turkistan, a district populated by a confusion of races. Dr. Lansdell calls it "an *olla podrida* of races, languages, and religions." The population of Sungaria is about two millions, and that of Chinese Turkistan probably about another two millions. The moral condition of these people is exceedingly depraved, and what religion they have is chiefly Mohammedan. There was a time when this whole district of Asia was pervaded by Christian influences, but they were literally stamped out by brute force, and for centuries it was unsafe for one bearing the Christian name to travel in the land. Things have changed, and Mohammedanism is no longer the creed of the Governors. Roman Catholics are already at work, and the gate of opportunity is wide open to Protestants. The population of Nepal is between two and three millions, and the majority are Hindu in faith and descent. The area of Bhotan is much smaller than that of Nepal, but its population is somewhat larger, being probably over three millions. The people are said to be a fine race, ingenious in the construction of their houses and in other manual labor. The prevailing religion is Buddhism. Afghanistan and Beloochistan are practically one field. The Afghans are a fierce and military race, and Mohammedanism of the most fanatical type prevails. The population is between six and seven millions. Siberia, which is an immense territory, has a population of between five and six millions. The Greek Church there is described as "horribly dead," a mere mumble of confession and sacrament. One great preacher of the cross has repeatedly traversed the Siberian desert—Dr. Baedeker; but he is now an old man and cannot much longer continue his work. Annam is a kingdom of six millions, and Tonquin another with a population of twelve millions. These, with Lower Cochinchina, the Philippine Islands, and Cambodia, have among them a few Roman Catholics, but the majority of the population are in total spiritual darkness. Arabia, too, we are told, is now entirely without Gospel agencies. The mention of these names and of the population inhabiting these districts gives a hint of the work which remains to be done before the world can be said to be even nominally Christian. Into most of these lands heroic missionaries have penetrated, but they have not been able to continue their work. Science and commerce and the spread of the sway of European governments are all combining to make the working of these fields much easier than formerly. They will not long be unoccupied, but when all that science and commerce can do has been done it will remain true that the men who alone can do the work which waits to be done will be men of heroic stature both intellectually and spiritually.

Missions Among the American Indians

While we are speaking of the unoccupied mission fields of the world, it is interesting to turn to the achievements of the long line of faithful and consecrated workers who have done such splendid service among the American Indians. Among those most to be commended we must not fail to include the early Roman Catholic missionaries. As the Rev. Edgerton R. Young, himself one of the noblest of missionary heroes, says: "Fearlessly and cheerfully they trod the then unknown wilderness for hundreds of miles that they might reach the forest retreats of the fierce Mohawk, the timid and disheartened Huron, or the bloody, and then almost always victorious, Iroquois. Where the pestilence raged among these savage tribes these priests of Rome seemed almost ubiquitous. Utterly devoid of all fear, and apparently proof against contagion, they went where death held high carnival, that they might, as they fondly imagined, by performing their simple rites of baptism and making the sign of the cross, open the portals of heaven to the expiring victims of smallpox or other loathsome diseases." The Protestant missions to the Indians are of a later date. Among those most devoted have been the Moravians, although no abiding results remain to tell us of their work. The Methodist Church of Canada has done much for the Indians. The Hudson Bay Company was expressly ordered to look after the spiritual interests of the Indians, and in compliance with this command, until a recent date, many missions of the different churches were in part sustained by grants of money from this corporation. Among those most successful in this field may be named the Rev. Peter Jones, a native, who was converted in 1823; John

Sunday, another remarkable convert, and a man whose influence among his own people was great. From being one of the most depraved of savages he became one of the most consecrated of Christians. The story of his conversion is almost as striking as that of St. Paul. Another Indian convert who had much influence was Henry Steinheur, and still another the Rev. James Evans. The Rev. Edgerton Young, in writing of these men who have done so much for the Indians of Canada, has failed to mention his own name, but few men of our time or of any time have done more for the advancement of the kingdom among the Indians than Mr. Young. This is but part of the story. If we were to turn to the Pacific Northwest, we should find other romantic and heroic histories. The work, for instance, which the Rev. Cushing Eells and Dr. Marcus Whitman accomplished—the one among the Indians themselves, and the other in retaining the Northwest Territory to the American Union—is one of the most thrilling passages in the annals of modern times, but the story is too long to be more than mentioned here.

The Grindelwald Conferences

It will not be the fault of the indefatigable Rev. H. S. Lunn, M.D., if Grindelwald is not almost as famous as a religious and educational center in Europe as Chautauqua is in the United States. For several years Dr. Lunn has organized excursions from Great Britain which have mingled pleasure, entertainment, mental instruction, and religious inspiration with the advantages of travel in the midst of the most glorious scenery of Europe. Last year the meetings were held at Lucerne because a fire had destroyed the hotels at Grindelwald, but this year they return. The meetings are held from July 1 until the middle of September. The plan in most instances is to have addresses in the evenings, and leave the day free for sightseeing. The Conference on Social Problems is July 14-28; that on Reunion and Church Problems July 29 to August 10; Educational, Scientific, and Literary, August 11 to September 7; and that on Historical and Political subjects, whose special topic will be "Switzerland an Object-Lesson in Democracy for Europe," will extend until the 17th of September. We shall not try at this time to give the details of these Conferences. Those who are in the vicinity of Grindelwald will, without doubt, find them full of interest. Among those whose names we see as already engaged to be present are: Pastor Theodore Monod, of Paris, W. T. Stead, Mrs. Sheldon Amos, Newman Hall, Professor Shuttleworth, the Dean of Bristol, Dr. J. Monro Gibson, Sir B. W. Richardson, Mr. Edward Whymper, the famous mountaineer; Hugh Price Hughes, the Rev. C. A. Berry, D.D., and many others equally prominent.

The Nonconformist Conscience

One of the most encouraging signs of progress in recent years is known as "The Nonconformist Conscience." The phrase is distinctly English, and has relation to the Puritanism of the Nonconformists; but others than the descendants of the Puritans have proved themselves to possess this most desirable quality. When the Prince of Wales so disgraced himself and the throne to which he is heir as to go about among the English nobility carrying with him a gambler's kit, a large part of the English people rose in denunciation; and when, soon after, Albert Edward visited one of the northern cities, he rode under a banner bearing the inscription: "A welcome to our Prince; but no welcome to gamblers." The effect of the Nonconformist Conscience in the celebrated case of Sir Charles Dilke, and perhaps even still more in that of Mr. Parnell, is well known. It has just been manifesting itself again. Lord Rosebery, the English Prime Minister, is the owner of the horse that has lately won in the famous Derby race. The scenes enacted about the race-track were a disgrace to any civilized land. Lord Rosebery himself once described politics as "a living and ennobling effort to carry into practical life the principles of a higher morality." He has had his own words thrown back at him from countless platforms, pulpits, and newspaper offices during the last few weeks. So far as he is himself concerned, his motives have been honorable, but the spectacle of the English Prime Minister as leader of the racing fraternity of the Kingdom is not edifying, and we do not wonder that the Nonconformist Conscience has again made itself manifest.