

Sunday Reading.

Sometime.

Sometime, when all life's lessons have been learned,
And sun and stars forevermore have set.
The things which our weak judgments here have spurned,
The things o'er which we grieved with lashes wet;

Will flash before us out of life's dark night—
As stars shine most in deeper tints of blue?
And we will see how all God's plans are right,
And how, what seemed reproof, was love most true.

And we will see, how while we frown and sigh,
God's plans go on as best for you and me—
How when we called he heeded not our cry,
Because His wisdom to the end could see.

But e'en as prudent parents disallow,
Too much of sweet for craving baby-hood,
So God perhaps is keeping from us now,
Life's sweetest things; because it seemeth good.

And if sometimes, commingled with life's wine,
We find the wormwood, and rebel, and shrink,
Be sure a wiser hand than yours or mine,
Pours out this portion for our lips to drink.

And if some friend we love is lying low,
Where human kisses cannot reach his face,
Oh do not blame the loving Father so,
But wear your sorrow with obedient grace.

And you shall shortly know that lengthened breath,
Is not the sweetest gift God gives his friend;
And that sometimes the sable pall of death,
Conceals the fairest boon his love can send.

If we could push ajar the gates of life,
And stand within, and all God's workings see,
We could interpret all this doubt and strife,
And for each mystery could find a key.

But not to-day, then be content poor heart,
God's plans like lilies pure and white unfold;
We must not tear the close shut leaves apart,
Time will reveal the calyxes of gold.

And if through patient toil we reach that land,
Where tired feet, with sandals loose, may rest,
When we shall clearly know and understand,
I think that we shall say, "God knows the best."

Out of Season.

There are some people whose very blunders seem to be more in the line of doing good than other people's best efforts. This seems to be the luck of the Spurgeons. A short time since a young girl came home from the Normal College in this city, so full of "news" that she could hardly tell her story. On entering the house she burst out, "Oh, father! young Mr. Spurgeon visited the Normal College to-day, and Mr. Hunter asked him to speak to the girls; and instead of trying to make us laugh, as most visitors do, or to give us the 'good advice' that we have heard a hundred times, he gave us something new. He spoke about Jesus, and invited us all to Christ; and he did it so naturally, and simply, and affectionately, that all the girls seemed interested. Oh, how much good it did me, father! I wish you had been there to hear him."

Now, this certainly was a very great blunder on the part of young Mr. Spurgeon. He ought to have known that the Normal College is not only a nonsectarian institution, but that many of the girls are daughters of Jews, and others of infidels, and it is not proper to speak of Christ and personal religion before them. It was certainly "out of season," and a great mistake in the young man. But give me a Spurgeon for such "blundering" as this. They can't open their mouths without saying something about Christ and him crucified, "in season or out of season."

This arrow, shot at a venture into that group of fifteen hundred girls, may yet be found to have reached some heart. J. S. H.—From the New York Homiletic Monthly.

[We were struck with this incident. May it ever be said of us and of ours that we do blunder thus. What is there else worth speaking upon? "I determined to know nothing among you save Jesus Christ, and him crucified."—Sword and Trowel.

I wonder many times that ever a child of God should have a sad heart, considering what the Lord is preparing for him.—Rutherford.

Consolation is the dropping of a gentle dew from heaven on gentle hearts beneath; it is one of the choicest gifts of divine mercy.—Spurgeon.

The English Baptist Anniversaries.

THE BAPTIST UNION OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

Our English brethren give themselves up to the Annual meetings of the several denominational organizations for about a week. After the introductory meetings on Monday, which we noticed in our last, other societies came in for a day or two, and the Union adjourned to meet again on Thursday morning at Walworth Road Chapel. The first thing at that meeting was a deputation from the Baptist Union of Scotland, which was cordially received and fraternal greetings were offered and accepted by Rev. W. Tulloch. After this the Rev. W. Woods read a paper on "The Union and the Associations." In the subsequent discussion, the following resolution was moved and adopted:

"That in the judgment of this assembly it is important that the Union and the Associations should become more closely united for practical purposes by the Union being made the medium through which the Associations that need it may receive help in their work, especially in the planting of new churches, by which the whole of the Associations may be stimulated to extend their evangelistic labours in the cities and villages of the country."

In the course of the discussion, the Rev. T. E. Williams, of Aberystwith, gave some statistics of work in Wales. There was not a single Baptist church in Wales, other than a Scotch Baptist, that was not identified with some Association. In the county from which he came the Baptists were very weak, and in the neighbouring county of Pembrokeshire they were very strong. In Cardigan there were 22 Baptist churches, 13 ministers, of whom 6 were pastors of grouped or affiliated churches. In Pembrokeshire there were nearly 100 churches, and the majority of the ministers—in any case, the half—were members of grouped or affiliated churches, so that the particularity of it was made manifest both in a weak and a strong county. In Pembrokeshire, one out of every 9 of the population was a Baptist; they were stronger there, in proportion to the population, than in any other county in the kingdom. The imperativeness of evangelistic work was manifest to all who were acquainted with Welsh Nonconformist history. The Welsh pastors of long ago were evangelists or apostolic pastors. They left their homes for months together in order to evangelize the land. The majority were not learned, but they were all glowing with love to Christ, and they were instrumental in planting in Wales something like 668 Baptist churches, with a membership to-day of 81,000—nearly one-third of the entire numerical strength of the Baptist denomination in this country—and there were no less than 350 evangelists in Wales, in addition to the pastors who presided over churches.

Rev. T. Nicholson, of the Forest of Dean, implored them not to get out of the old ruts. The old ruts might be improved, but God forbid that they should depart from them. The result of using the old ruts had been that the increase of the denomination in his locality had been 3,000 per cent. The Baptist Handbook would show a paucity of evangelists, but Mr. Williams had told them that in Wales there were 350. They were not mentioned for want of information. He himself had been a lay worker for forty years and was never tabulated. They did not take enough account of the unpaid agency. There were 10,000 lay workers in connection with their churches, and the Lord was helping them in the old methods of operation, and He would help them still. He was an advocate for grouping, but there were difficulties in regard to this in the trust deeds of many chapels; they might, however, be affiliated. Let there be half a dozen churches under the supervision of a superintending pastor.

The Chairman reported that Mr. Spurgeon was prevented by sickness from being present. Special prayer was offered for him, and a telegram of sympathy sent to him.

THE BAPTIST HOME AND IRISH MISSIONARY SOCIETY'S MEETING

on Wednesday evening, in Bloomsbury chapel, was one of deep interest. After the Chairman's opening address, Rev. E. J. Mateer, of Belfast, said:

For about a year I travelled over Ireland as an evangelist, going from the north to the south, down so far as Waterford, and returning by way of one or two large towns. And everywhere we went it was well known that we were what they called "dippers"—Baptists—yet the people came in large numbers to hear the Gospel. At the time I was accompanied by Mr. Parker, he singing the Gospel and I preaching it. It has been said in Belfast that amongst the large denominations there the people will not hear the Baptists. It is true. They hardly go any distance to hear when they discover we are Baptists, and we have little chance of being heard. If you go simply and preach the Gospel of Christ and the resurrection they will be drawn, naturally, to Him. For, after all, there is a warm heart that loves the Gospel there. And, if you bring the Gospel to men, they will listen. One would suppose that those who are labouring there ought to command a large number of people to the tents. In a sense they do; in a sense they do not. Where the tents are fixed people will come. It may be partly their curiosity; it may be partly from the easy, open meetings that are held in these tents. Perhaps an incident may bring more clearly to your minds the kind of work we are doing, than if I enlarge upon it point after point. In Waterford we had meetings among the populace—in a tent there—and a large number of Catholics came. They are distinctly forbidden to hear Protestant preachers; if they do, they have always to do penance: or if they read a tract or book printed by Protestants, immediately is the penance upon them. They must confess every thought; even if they have allowed their thoughts to run much on Protestantism, they must confess that too. Many of our agents have said when they come near to converse with the Catholics they run away. The idea is simply that we should go and preach the Gospel, and the people will come and hear, and be converted. I do not find it so. If you go to the people, especially the Roman Catholics, they will not listen. There have been isolated cases, where the Roman Catholics have listened to them, still not largely. But evangelistic work has always been successful.

Rev. Dr. Landels gave a very able and comprehensive address. Mr. Houghton, of Liverpool, said the Gospel was "Erin's only hope." It appeared to him that Ireland had come to her last stage almost, and the Gospel of Jesus Christ would be the only means of reforming the country. They were an influential denomination, and must work upon the apostolic principle. He thought they wanted more prayer in their assemblies. The proceedings then closed with the Doxology and Benediction, the donations and promises made having amounted to £100, and the collection to £12.

THE FOREIGN MISSIONARY MEETING was held in Exeter Hall, on Thursday, April 26th, in the evening, the attendance was large. The hall was crowded in every part and many persons were unable to gain admission. A choir of some three hundred singers was gathered on the platform, and, considering the fact that they were from different congregations and had met but once for practice, the precision with which they sang was most praiseworthy. Whilst the audience was assembling they gave several choruses from Handel's Messiah. The choir was taken precisely at six o'clock by the Right Hon. W. E. Baxter, M. P., of Dundee. Prayer was led by the Rev. J. M. Stephens, B. A., of Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Mr. A. H. Baynes read an interesting selection from the ninety-first annual report, which appears in full in the *Missionary Herald*. Mr. J. Tritton made the financial statement, which called forth great applause as he announced the entire liquidation of the debt on the report of the previous year. The year, however, closes with a debt of nearly three thousand pounds. But the ordinary contributions for the general work of the society show an increase of £3,612 9s. 9d., inclusive of a special donation of £1,000. In conclusion, he said, "I may just add that, through the generous kindness of a friend, £300 has been promised towards the liquidation of this debt in the hope

that the balance will be raised within the next two months, and the committee trust that this desirable result may be secured. What is most urgently needed is a deeper sympathy with the Lord Himself, and a more constant and individual realization of His presence and power throughout the churches."

The chairman's speech was very interesting, from his quoting several impartial testimonies, showing the blessedness of the work of missionaries. He said the missionary work has been steadily going on all over the world, and it has begun of late to attract more attention on the part of thinkers and politicians outside the domain of the Christian societies. In the beginning, missionaries were opposed by the powers that be; then they were pooh-poohed; afterwards they were sneered at as promoters of discord; but now men of the world have discovered that they are a real power, whose influence it is necessary to take into account in reviewing the state of nations not yet civilized. Having myself visited the four quarters of the world, I have had some little knowledge and experience of what is going on. I spent three months the winter before last, and travelled more than six thousand miles in that wonderful country, India, and one of my pleasantest recollections is of an afternoon in the garden of Lord Ripon's beautiful bungalow at Barrackpore, and looking across the Hooghly, where directly opposite are the once famous Baptist mission premises of Serampore, associated with the names of Carey and Marshman, and many events memorable in the history of missions. The last missionary meeting at which I presided was that of the Calcutta auxiliary to the London Society, and on the evening previous to my departure from the capital of our Indian Empire I met upwards of a hundred native Christians, belonging to all sections of the Protestant Church, and listened to several speeches of such eloquence and power that it was no easy matter to gather up the thread of them and reply. Then I personally went to the idol worship at Kal-Ghaut, and there beheld abominations of which I could not give this great assembly the faintest idea. The number of Government officials and other Europeans in India who underrate and minimize the effects of missionary enterprise is steadily decreasing; they are fast finding out that although the avowed converts may be comparatively few, the sapping and mining process has been steadily going on, and that the whole fabric of heathen mythology—shaken to its foundation—may topple over any day.

The Rev. James Smith said the work that our friends have described—the pictures they have painted, and the circumstances connected with India which they have mentioned have been such as I have been mixed up with during a large portion of my life. I have seen with my own eyes, to a large extent, the results of the important changes that have taken place in India, and which have been so well described to-night. If I could but lay before you a picture of what India was in 1840 or 1841, and what India is now in 1883, you would at once perceive that one of the most marvelous revolutions had taken place in that country that have ever been realized in any land. I remember perfectly well the state of matters as I found them. There were no roads, no railroads, no canals, no telegraphs, very little education, and much less religion. I remember, also, that in those days Hindooism, petted by Government and sustained even by some members of the civil service, existed in its full power. I remember that caste was so severe that, when I have passed by a man who has been cooking his rice and my shadow has fallen upon the vessel in which he was cooking it, he has taken the rice and thrown it all away. I remember perfectly well that, in the days of which I am speaking, there was scarcely any post-offices. It took five months to get from England to India. We used to have letters about twice a year. In fact, the whole land may be said to have been a land of darkness. Mr. Chairman, I feel proud of our connection with India. I say that the Indian Government is one of the grandest governments that ever existed. And I am quite sure that we have had a series of men in India of whom we may well be proud, and we

have a work in India greater far than has been done in any other country in the world. But, Mr. Chairman, I want to tell you what is the aspect of things now. Caste is fast passing away. I have occasionally seen men trying to get into a railway carriage, and people inside have been holding the door fast: the fact is, the people were trying to get into a carriage in which Brahmins were sitting; but the station-master just comes and opens the door and pushes them all in. All castes of Hindoos are obliged to sit together, and they do it systematically. I have spoken of Hindooism in this room as an unchangeable thing—as the greatest of false religions that ever existed in the world—as a philosophy that meets the wants of a learned man, and that meets the wants of the large masses of the uneducated. I have spoken of Hindooism as being the most ancient system perhaps in existence, and I thought at the time that nothing could change it. But the landmarks of Hindooism are passing away or have passed away already. If you just ask any of the Hindoos in India now as to their ideas of Puranic Hindooism they will not attempt to defend it. Some of them may try, like Chunder Sen, to take some extract from the old Vedas which very few people would contend against. They may tell you that there is some truth in their philosophy, which we will not deny; but the gods have passed away—gone where the gods of the Greeks and Romans have gone. Why, Mr. Chairman, we have heard of numbers to-night. Those statistics are not statistics that convey to your mind, or could convey to your mind, any real idea of the work that has been done. Nothing is more deceptive than statistics. In Delhi, when the census was being taken, I assisted to take it myself, and I had a very important work in connection with it. When that census was being taken, almost the whole of one race would have put themselves down as Christians if we had permitted them; we were obliged to stop them in order that we might have something like a reality instead of a deceptive census. But let me tell you that there are thousands and tens of thousands who have never joined the Christian Church but who are Christians in heart. There came to me the other day a well-educated man, one of good position in Delhi. He was a man, too, in a Government college, and he is reading for a degree. He said, "I am a Christian, I believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. There is no life that has ever been depicted on earth that can compare with the lovely, perfect life of Christ. But," he said, "I have got an aged father and a mother. We form part of a large family. By remaining where I am I can affect the whole. I can go on teaching the whole. Your zenana ladies are teaching my wife, she has some considerable influence over my mother. I do believe in Christ, but I cannot be baptized, for if I was I should break up my family and bring the grey hairs of my mother and father in sorrow to the grave." There are thousands of these. One of them said to one of our ladies not long ago, "Are there not thousands waiting for one another?" And so it is wherever you go. Go into the railway carriages, and there you have men talking about Christianity. Travel through the lonely parts of the land, and men talk about Christianity. It has become a general subject of conversation; and the spread of truth has been far greater than any of the statistics for a moment explains. I attended the two conferences of 1872 and 1882. Let me say that at the last conference, when the missionaries from every part of India compared experiences with each other, we were astonished to find that, in almost every quarter, the cords were being lengthened. In every quarter, the truth as it is in Jesus appeared to be extending and breaking out on the right hand and on the left. But now just let me call your attention to the position of education. That is spreading most rapidly. We have heard of twenty-five who had taken degrees in one college; but that is nothing. India has hundreds of such colleges or less important colleges; and, not only so, I find that we have more than 200,000 pupils in missionary establishments alone. There has been

recently a commission sitting, considering the subject of education, and the probability is that ere long we shall have a general national system of education, something like your own Board schools. So I am not without hope that missionaries may be very largely delivered from this great toil and trouble, and be enabled to give the whole of their time to their own work. But, as to education, nothing can stop it. It has spread on all sides. The people find that their material interests depend upon it. Males and females are longing for, labouring for, and praying for education. I want to tell you a little about Delhi. I am sorry to detain you. It appears to me sometimes that every stone of Delhi and every brick of Delhi belongs to me. When I went to Delhi in 1858, I went not only as a missionary, but as a man, I trust, with all the feelings of humility. I went ready to put my hands to anything, to clean boots, Mr. Chairman, or to do whatever was necessary. Many and many a time have I superintended the scavengers in Delhi, and felt it to be no disgrace at all. I need not go through what I have already told and written. The Gospel was preached with all my might, and that Gospel never could be preached faithfully in vain. I do not believe in the world containing a single place where the Gospel might not be preached, and preached, too, with success. It may take time before the people thoroughly comprehend it; but let them once thoroughly comprehend the great truths of the Gospel, and I am persuaded that there must be success. If you compare the state of Delhi now with the state of Delhi then, the improvement, is indescribable. The development has been marvellous—material development, religious development, educational development. Everything has been moving on at a most rapid pace. During my time in Delhi, as you will probably have understood already, I kept myself back from nothing. When an epidemic of cholera came and carried away thousands, I almost lived among the people. When fever came, and was almost as bad or worse than cholera itself, I took up my abode there, and Miss Thorne and myself and some of our brethren lived among the people, and fed them and clothed them, and did all in our power to keep them alive when death was all around them. If you had seen the change that has been wrought, the change in their habitations, the change in their clothes, the change in their lives—their moral lives and their religious lives—it you had seen, as I have seen, all the idols swept away from places where every house had an idol and where every family was in the habit of carrying a goat to the temple and making an offering to the bloodthirsty goddess; if you had seen large congregations of from 200 to 500 people night after night (and we have about forty of these meetings a week in Delhi), you would say, "What has God wrought! Never tell us about 'missions being a failure.' I wish that I could take you on one of the journeys into one of the villages. We had large congregations. I cannot tell you how eager the people are to hear us. They hang about us all day long. When we go to preach in the bazaar, they follow us. When we go to take rest at night, they follow us. They are most anxious to hear. Sir, we have been anxious to find people who were apparently prepared for the Gospel. We have got them by millions. The trouble now is not to get people to hear the Gospel. The trouble is that we have no one to tell it to them, and we cannot meet the demands made upon us. I feel perfectly confident that the progress of the Gospel in India is just now quite as fast as is safe. If we had thousands and tens of thousands coming over, where are the teachers to come from? If millions came, who would there be to teach them? We should just have a baptized heathenism. The Gospel is making progress now, in India, faster than you obtain the means to instruct the people. We are discouraged for the want of more men. Oh, where are they to come from? The highly-favoured churches of England—our own denomination—what are they doing? I am thankful that the denomination has doubled itself within my recollection, and more than that? but oh, I hope we are beginning to help. We shall be able to double our work, and tell of Christ to those who have not heard of him.