

THE SUNDAY MAGAZINE.

Conducted by
REV. ALFRED TAYLOR.

VOL. IX.—No. 3.

MARCH, 1881.

\$3.00 PER ANNUM.

OUR HOME HEATHEN.

BY THE EDITOR.

It is recorded that once upon a time the collecting agent for a missionary society called on a busy merchant for a donation in aid of the conversion of the very distant heathen. The busy man, being of a very practical turn of mind, declined to give his money for a work which was to go on so far out of reach of his personal observation, but said, "Send me a heathen or two, and I'll see what I can do to convert them." The collecting agent is reported to have turned away in indignant sorrow at the perverse and impracticable view this man took of the foreign missionary cause. The idea of importing heathens for the purpose of converting them did seem so ridiculous.

Well, the day was when it was a rare thing to have a foreign heathen among us. The few representatives

of the far-away nations of the earth who came to our shores were converted idolaters, trophies of the success of missionary effort. They came to tell us of the myriads of their countrymen who continued to sit in darkness and the shadow

of death. Their broken dialect was listened to with interest by many a crowded missionary meeting, and in many a Christian home circle the conversation ran on the curious strangers from the Gold Coast of Africa or the Islands of the South Pacific. The thought of the distant heathen coming in troops to our shores was not contemplated by our fathers. Had they been told that the Chinese would come by the ship-load to our Pacific coast, and that the angels of heaven would drop down and settle by the thousand in our eastern sea-ports, they



AH WING, CHINESE ARTIST.

ABOUT MOTIVES AND METHODS IN GIVING.

BY THE REV. W. T. WYLIE.

MOTIVE power must lie back of method, but method in turn has much to do with developing motive.

In this paper we propose to speak especially of method, but always keeping in view the motive, and remembering that any method is bad which fails to enthrone and strengthen in the heart the highest and purest motive.

To all giving, at the last the Judge will apply the test,

“Have ye done it unto me?” From a cup of cold water to the fortune of a millionaire, the real value of each gift will be tested by the motive which underlay it.

Now, let us bear in mind that giving is an act of worship. Everything in the method of giving which exalts self and dishonors God is evil.

Whatever is false in principle must be bad in its effects.

A large congregation often shows a pitiful record in its gifts for objects of pure benevolence.

The average gift of church-members in the United States to the cause of missions, both home and foreign, will not exceed 20

cents a year per member. In many cases it is far less.

Anybody will admit at once that this average, less than two cents a month, is not the measure of the obligation of the average Christian in this land.

The average income of each person in the United States is 50 cents a day—about \$15 a month, \$180 a year. Does 20 cents of this properly represent the obligation which Christ laid on His followers when He, having finished His work in the flesh, gave the commission, “Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature”?

One hundred and eighty dollars less 20 cents leaves \$179.80 for self.

Why are the gifts of believers so small on the average? We reply, Because there is lack of proper instruction in Bible rules, and lack of proper training in this service.

Responsibility for this must rest on the leaders, ministers and officers, who are expected to wake up and work up the lay members in this as well as in other Christian duty.

The Church is able to send the Gospel to the entire heathen world in ten years, if individual Christians were alive to this work.

Let us notice how funds are usually raised. The most

common method is the ordinary collection, generally spoken of as “passing the hat.” In this case many give nothing. The largest part of those who go through the motions of giving, get down to one cent.

The base of the pile gathered is coppers. Above that is a layer of nickels, since three-cent pieces got out of circulation. On that is a thin layer of dimes. Over that a few stray quarter-dollars. Above that one or two half-dollars; and possibly, as a sort of flag to adorn the top of the pyramid, there may be a paper dollar.

This is an actual photograph of a collection in a well-to-do

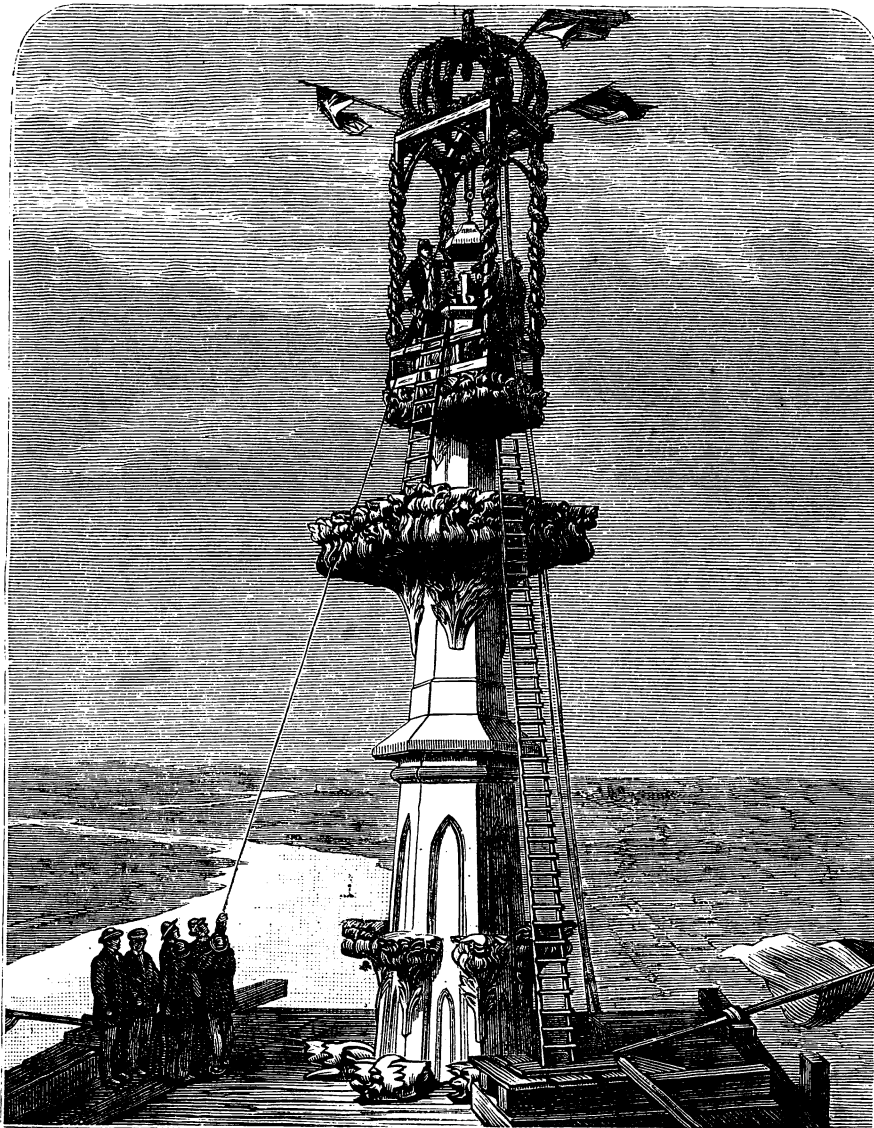
congregation of some four or five hundred persons.

The strength of the people was not drawn out, financially.

A second method of collection is by subscription paper.

This plan reduces the number of givers, but usually increases the amount of money secured.

Where a subscription is to be taken, a good leader is looked for. He is placed at the head of the list, with the highest figure which he can be induced to name. Then the paper passes to others, who are never expected to give more than the leader, but are urged to come as near him as possible. By this method, wrong motives are appealed to with those who give, and the great majority of church-members are passed by.



PLACING THE COPESTONE ON THE SOUTHERN TOWER OF COLOGNE CATHEDRAL.

A third method is resorted to in emergencies to lift a church debt, or swell the gifts for the conversion of the heathen. A fair is appointed, members are expected to give food and fancy articles to the fair, and then go and buy them back, and so enrich the Lord's treasury.

Of all methods this is the very worst. It presents the idea of giving to the Lord, while, especially where "chances," "grab-bags" and other delusions are resorted to, it is largely a ministrations to self in one form or other, and leaves the participants spiritually demoralized.

Now, note some of the principles of the Scripture on the subject of giving :

- (1) Giving is an act of worship.
- (2) Each as a worshiper is called to give.
- (3) Each is to give systematically.
- (4) Each is to give according to his ability.
- (5) The one-tenth is set down by the Lord as a starting-point, whether the income be little or much.
- (6) Thank offerings and free-will offerings are called for and encouraged.
- (7) The spiritual good of the giver is always to be kept in view.

We lay these down as great foundation principles, and proceed to set forth a method of giving which keeps in view all these points. This method, while it encourages the growth of spiritual life in the individual, also insures the largest result in money gathered. We knew one church go up in seven years from a total of \$2,000 for all objects to more than \$9,000 ; each year gaining on the preceding, and increasing in spiritual life and power.

"By their fruits ye shall know them."

This plan calls for two things : Instruction and Organization.

The pastor and officers must lead the people, showing them what should be done, and how it can be done, and then saying, "Now come."

The people should be informed from the pulpit and by the press, of the objects for which they are called to give. A man can not care for that of which he is ignorant. Ignorance is the mother of idleness, not of effort.

The people should not be urged to give from selfish motives, but should be reminded that what is given should be given "as to the Lord."

Then, suitable opportunities should be given to each to make his contribution. The water which lies stagnant in the marsh starts off on a beneficent service when a channel is opened to it. If that channel be not opened it will remain inactive, and breed the poisonous miasm.

Lastly, instruction having been given—motives of true spiritual power being appealed to—facilities for giving being placed within the reach of each, the Church should call for fidelity in this grace, as it does in other matters connected with Christian life.

"To every man his work," is a principle of God's kingdom, but it must be enforced by holding each to account for the quantity and quality of his work. It is a great mistake to suppose that there are to be no "business principles" in religious life. We shall, in closing, present

SIMPLE METHOD

of organizing and working church finances for the support of the Gospel, or for the spread of the Gospel, or, still better, for both, worked together. This requires :

1. A full church-roll of the Church. On this should be members and adherents, parents and children—"all the souls in the congregation." What would an army do without an exact roll? Yet, most churches fail just here.

2. Cards for subscription of a daily or weekly amount (daily is best), to be paid weekly or monthly. These

should be in two distinct forms. One for the support of the Gospel ; this should include pastor's salary, wages of sexton, fuel, light, repairs, etc. ; also the support of the Sunday-school. The other card should be for missions, education, church erection, freedmen, and such other objects as the Church places on its schemes of benevolence. These two cards lay before each person the field which he is to labor in.

3. Facilities for payment of subscriptions should be furnished. When the cards have been handed in and recorded in the treasurer's book, each should be returned to the person who gave it, accompanied by twelve small envelopes (one for each month), on which is placed his name or number. Each month he is to place in one of these the amount of his subscription for the month, and put it into a box provided for this purpose at the church-door. The treasurer opens the envelope, records it for that month, and the transaction is closed.

4. Efficient executive service is required for the working of any system, however simple. Treasurers who have tried this have declared that when once started it requires the minimum of care and labor to keep it going.

The method described above has the advantages of simplicity, thoroughness, flexibility, and, above all, fruitfulness in spiritual results.

Again and again in the last few years, the writer of this has been told that the plan "was not practicable," "could not be carried out," and all that ; and in scores of churches it has proved effective, has strengthened the church life, has multiplied the gifts of the people by multiplying the givers, as well as training each to liberality, and has convinced many doubtful ones that we are always secure when we follow the lines which God has marked out for His people.

BUTLER, PA.

ABOUT A SILVER BELL.

BY FRANK H. CONVERSE.

I AM as free from any taint of superstition as any busy, matter-of-fact woman can possibly be, regarding presentiments and warnings as forerunners of dyspepsia, and the claptrap of modern spiritualism as two-thirds charlatanism and one-third credulity.

In no way, however, do I attempt to account for, theorize upon, or explain away, the facts which I have written down at the oft-repeated solicitation of brother Frank, who must have inherited from his remote Huguenot ancestry the tinge of supernaturalism in his nature—a tinge, however, which—thank goodness!—is only manifest in the belief which he shadows forth in his favorite quotation :

"There be more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than thy philosophy dreams of."

And I'm sure it's a most fortunate thing that I am so constituted, for my husband is not a rich man, and I don't know that we should ever have owned a roof over our heads—unless it was a *very* humble one—if he hadn't inherited what is known by the townspeople as the "Old Hazeltine Homestead," where we have lived for almost twelve years.

And when I tell you that the house, with its live-oak frame, was built almost two hundred years ago by "wicked Sir Harry Hazeltine"—so the family record calls him—that there is one chamber with a bent and twisted hook in the middle of the ceiling, where Sir Harry hung himself, and another—in the unused part of the house—where somebody rocks a cradle and croons a weird lullaby on stormy nights, you will at once see that anybody troubled with