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Rev. Rude & Miller, Editors.

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Communications.

For the Lutheran Visitor.

Correspondence.

THE SYNOD OF S. W. VIRGINIA.

Dear Brother: The printer makes these things sometimes, but these are not things which the members of the church do not know, and everybody knows the true position of the Synod of S. W. Virginia. How we are doing is a matter of fact, and we do not need a long list of names to prove it. We may at some future time, when in a good humor, give you a little of our experience for the encouragement of our friends, but at the present we pass by the usual flattery, and shall tell you about the facts of the case.

FOREIGN MISSIONS

For some time past has received its attention from this body, but it has set a good example before its sister Synods in ordering, at its recent session, that collections be taken in all the congregations for this important work. Too long have we neglected this duty. While we have no foreign mission under our control, we ought to co-operate with our brethren in the North in sustaining and helping on their foreign missionary work.

THE FEMALE SCHOOL.

talked of for several years past, is to be established at Marion, Smythe county, Va. The citizens of Marion have subscribed liberally to this enterprise, and will doubtless do more, as they have the assurance that a first-class college is to be located in their midst. Valuable property, most advantageously located, and well adapted to educational purposes, is offered on accommodating terms. Everything now appears propitious to the successful inauguration and success of this school.

REV. J. J. SCHERER.

is the moving spirit in this important enterprise, and we trust he may be eminently successful in the work he has so auspiciously begun. He has the confidence, we are assured, of the people of Marion, and will receive the moral and pecuniary support of the Synod of S. W. Virginia. This enterprise is not begun in

OPPOSITION.

as some at first thought, might suppose, to Staunton Female Seminary. The two institutions will be about two (200) hundred miles apart. We can not conceive that the one will interfere with the other. On the other hand they will mutually be an advantage to each other. Both institutions are necessary to the educational interests of the daughters of the church in Virginia. Without a school in the south-western part of Virginia many of the young ladies of our Church would be deprived of the advantages of a liberal education, if they would be under the necessity of seeking it in the schools of other denominations. With the present prospects of the Marion enterprise, and the present patronage and hold upon the confidence and affection of the people which the Staunton Female Seminary enjoys, we believe there is a promising future before each of these schools, and it will not be long till the advantages of these enterprises will begin to be seen and felt in all our church work.

LICENSE

was granted to Mr. Vastine Stickley, a recent graduate of Roanoke College, to preach the Gospel and administer the sacraments. Brother S. has already received and accepted a call to the Giles county pastorate, and has entered upon the discharge of pastoral duties in that interesting field of labor. The license of Rev. J. P. Oberchain was renewed. This Brother continues to supply the Floyd pastorate with occasional preaching, whilst, for another year, he will prosecute his theological studies at the Seminary. The license of Rev. J. B. Greiner was also renewed. He is at present engaged in teaching and preaching at Mt. Airy, the highest point on the Virginia and Tennessee division of the Atlantic, Mississippi & Ohio Railroad.

THE ORDINATION

of Rev. E. E. Sibole, the pastor of the College church, Salem, Va., was ordered to be attended to before his own congregation; and Rev. D. F. Bittle, D.D., Rev. Prof. S. A. Reppass, and Rev. Prof. Youce, were constituted a committee to attend to this duty. Rev. Mr. Sibole is a graduate of Roanoke College and of the Seminary at Philadelphia. We trust he may be instrumental in doing much good in his present field of labor.

NO VACANCIES

in the S. W. Virginia Synod. All the pastorates are supplied with preaching. This is encouraging. With increased liberality, this Synod may soon go into the missionary field and enlarge her borders. But to do this work efficiently she must educate her missionaries, and then send them out. The field is already white unto harvest. O that the Lord would send forth more laborers into the harvest field!

In conclusion, we think the brethren of the Synod of South-Western Virginia have great reason to thank God and take courage.

Yours &c., V. D. M.

Selections.

Influences—Their Power.

How subtle the influences which affect life and character! Impalpable and immaterial, they are to be measured only by their results; and these are to be known only after long, patient and close observation.

The field of their operation is as immaterial as themselves. Mind is known only by its phenomena, and these reveal something of its nature and much of its powers. Thought is its great work, and receptivity a function or quality of its nature. Words and ideas agitate and direct its forces, and determine, to some extent, its action. So ethereal and subtle is its nature, so delicate its construction, while in union with matter, as in the animal organism, the slightest cause may disturb its equilibrium, and so jostle its elements as to produce confusion. A thought will vibrate through all its chambers and its echoes be heard through eternity. So delicate of impressions, yet impressions are, in fact, indelible. Evanescent in appearance, they are permanent in fact. An agonizing thought paralyzes the mind, or sends it on a wild revel of madness; while a word of comfort or joy thrills it with an ecstasy of delight.

The wind has, in all ages, been made a symbol or representative of the mind. The same words, in different languages, have represented both the mind and the wind. How just and proper this may be known by the properties of the air. There is nothing in all material nature so delicate and subtle as it. So easily impressed is it, that the slightest cause disturbs its rest, and puts it in motion. Under the powerful force which the sun exerts upon it, it is never at rest but for a moment, and in some limited spot. Could we see the air, nothing would be more beautiful than its constant and incessant motions. By some local and confined force, its particles begin to move and whirl, and roll or dash, until a more general motion is excited. The forces which set it in motion continue to act until it begins to move and whirl with violence, and then, as if maddened by the disturbing cause, it sweeps over the surface of the earth and leaves devastation and ruin in its path. Storms and tempests, tornadoes and cyclones are the final result of a primal, gentle and subtle, yet powerful force acting on its particles, and setting them in array for a wild rush and sweep over the earth. Could we see and observe how this great result was brought about, we could know no more of the peculiar and subtle motion of the air than we observe from the results of its motions, but we could discern more distinctly the delicacy and subtleness of the powers or influences that aroused it to such a passion.

We may see in this illustration what gentle forces, what subtle influences may affect the mind and heart of men, and color the life and character. Were the soul of man as passive and non-resisting as the air, he would be as much under the control and at the mercy of the powers and influences which act on him as that fluid. But fortunately for his well-being he possesses, in an eminent degree, the power of resistance and self-determination, so that the influences that bear on him may not have their natural effect. On this fact of the power of resistance and self-determination rests his responsibility and the reasonableness of the commands of God.

Placed in a world which has an atmosphere of influences, both good and evil, man is an object of admiration. Could we see a power inherent and active in the air that could and would resist the first gentle and subtle influences that so often awake it into violent activity, and lash it into fury, storms and tempests, tornadoes and cyclones would not so often lay the works of God and man in ruin. And if man would but lay the power of his mighty will upon the influences and powers that bear him onward toward ruin, he would display a majesty that would approach in grandeur and sublimity the manifestations of divine power.

How slight the influences that may direct the Christian heart from its affection and loyalty to the Lord Jesus Christ, and lead man into ways of disaster and ruin to his soul, may be gathered from the exhortation of the Apostle Peter in the following words, when speaking of the con-

To the Rescue.

Prof. Tyndall, in his "Alpine Hours" gives a thrilling account of the rescue of a man who had fallen in a crevasse of the glacier. He was the porter, who, sent on with an assistant in advance, had incautiously stepped on an ice bridge, and fallen into the fissure. He had lain there an hour when Prof. Tyndall and his companions were started at seeing the solitary man standing immovable, saying that his comrade was dead, and indicating the spot where he had fallen. Peering into the darkness they could see nothing, but faint means betrayed the buried life, and instant preparations were made for the rescue. The porter had carried down the strong rope with him; but waistcoats, coats, and braces were hurriedly taken off and knotted together, and by their aid Bensen, the guide, and Professor Tyndall, were let down from one projection to another, till they reached the bottom of the debris, a distance of forty feet. The fallen fragments had frozen together again, so that the man was enclosed in a solid mass of ice. They cautiously hewed it away, the severed pieces ringing significantly as they fell into the lower depths on the edge of which they were standing. After moving a layer of two or three feet thick, a hand appeared as white as the snow about it, and making its mute but powerful appeal. The head was lain bare but the lips could only utter inarticulate sounds. The knapsack was cut off, the rope passed under the arms and an effort made to pull him up; but so firmly was he imbedded, that not until the last foot was extricated could they lift him out of his narrow house. By pulling him from above, and pushing him from below, the poor fellow was lifted to the surface of the glacier; and these men, exhausted by an hour of severe labor, and drenched with dripping ice, carried him by turns to the top.

Then, for a long time, every measure was employed to restore suspended animation, till at length the groaning ceased, and Bensen, in agony exclaimed, "He is dead!"

But the more sagacious Professor, leaning over his patient, marked the gentle breathing and felt the calm beating of the pulse. He was saved—this young, strong man—the only son of his mother, and she a widow. Brought back by wise, tender hands from the chill of death, to the warm pulsation of life and strength.

Dear friends, listen with attentive ears, and you will hear the faint moans of your sisters, increased in the ice folds of cruel superstitions. You will not hesitate, when life depends on your action. If you can not go down in the darkness to the rescue, there are brave, strong, heroic souls who are ready for the adventure—ready to peril their lives for the Master, and for those he has died to redeem. You will not hesitate to strip off your superstitious to furnish the ropes which will enable them to reach the depths of the abyss.

There is work to be done there demanding courage and discretion. Women bound hand and foot in the ice chains of idolatry are to be hewn out. Stroke upon stroke must fall, even before the appealing hand is seen. Aid must be afforded even after the head is freed, and sight is given to the eyes. These poor helpless ones must be lifted with strong, tender hands into the pure air of christianity and civilization. They must be watched over and tenderly cared for, until the gentle breathing and the tranquil beating of the pulse give evidence of their new life.

"Saved by the power of an endless life." This is the reward that will abundantly repay hours of weary work and watching. Saved through Christ! this is the joy that cometh in the morning, when the heaviness of the night has all passed away. *Heathen Woman's Friend.*

VALUE OF A WORD.

Of the value of a single word spoken in love and faithfulness, a teacher now in Minnesota, but formerly connected with a rural school in Connecticut, says: "I had taught nearly three months before I asked one of my scholars, a girl of eleven, if she loved the Saviour. She replied that she did not. A few days after she told me she thought she did love the Saviour, and she soon went to work among her mates, and the result was five others were soon persuaded to love Christ also. If I had yielded to the common excuse, 'I am afraid I shall not say exactly the right thing, what might have become of those six precious souls? I never can be thankful enough that I spoke to that scholar. She seemed to wish to love the Saviour, and all that was needed to cause her to decide whether she would love Him or not was to have some one to ask her to love Him. Do you say, 'That was easily done? Then go and do likewise.'"

A godlike man is the only goodly man; a Christlike nature brought into the soul doth only denominate a man a true christian.

A Moment's Carelessness.

A photographer of note once took a long journey, with a great supply of apparatus, to photograph an eclipse at a very advantageous point. The preparations were made with great care, and the moment of total eclipse came and passed. The operator went to his instrument, and to his great mortification and vexation, found he had forgotten to put in the slide. No picture was there, and all his journey and expense had been for nothing. The eclipse would not repeat itself for his accommodation.

Later a scientific man, expert in all matters of the kind, was watching most intently with a telescope all the phases of the eclipse, but at the moment when it was total chanced to look off, a cause of much regret to him afterwards.

A little neglect, a moment's carelessness, often make way for lasting regret to some body.

A sculptor had spent months over a model for a statue, which was to be exhibited along with many other competitors. Just as the drayman was bringing it to its destination in Washington, he let the box fall on the pavement, and the figure was broken into fragments. So, too, a piece of ancient sculpture, which had withstood the storms of three thousand years, and had safely made its long journey over land and sea, was broken to pieces on the sidewalk in New York by the careless handling of a porter.

Yet these are small grievances besides those which effect the heart and soul. A moment's thoughtless speech may crush the sweet hopes in a heart, and leave it to cheerless misery. A little unkind act may do a mischief that a life time of regret can not undo. A neglect to seek Christ when the Spirit is calling us to come may cost us our precious souls.

It seemed a small matter for a man to neglect to appear at the prayer-meeting one evening, but never again did the Spirit strive with her, and in a little while she was gone, gone forever. *Presbyterian.*

Joining the Church.

Says one man: "I have easily been setting sins. I am striving against them; and when I overcome them I mean to join the church." Now, the church is a fort into which a man should run, that he may fight better for his life against the adversary.

A man says: "I am full of diseases from head to foot; and as soon as I get cured of them I am going into the hospital." What are you going into the hospital for when you are cured? The church is a hospital where men may be cured. The church is a bulwark that hides men from the stroke of battle. The church is a school-house. It is a father's or a brother's house. It is a family all the members of which are striving to help, as far as they can, those who are associated with them. It is an institution in which men are trying to save their fellow-men by throwing about them the silken cords of sympathy, and giving them the right hand of fellowship, and teaching them to help themselves.

Many a man that has been lost, would have been saved if he had gone into the church and said, "I am weak and in peril, and there are hours when I do not feel myself able to stand; brethren, hold me up." If a man comes into the church saying, "I have met with a great change; thank God, I am safe; and I come in here to shine"—if that is the spirit with which one comes into the church, and if he can come in so really and truly, we want men for lanterns and head-lights all along the road, and it is not a bad thing. But then there are multitudes of men who might well come into the church, saying, "Brethren, give me a harbor. There are storms after me, and I can not stand the sea. Give me anchorage." Let such men in. Give them shelter and protection. What is a church good for that is not good for helping sinners? Men say, "Take care of the church." A church is not good for anything except what it can do for men. Is a hospital built to look pretty and to be kept clean and pure? What is a hospital good for but to receive persons who have diseases, and to cure them? A church is good in the proportion in which it helps men who can not get help elsewhere; and the more desperate is the case of the man whom it rescues, the more noble is the church. Well, what about its own reputation? Let that go. He that would save his own life, shall lose it. *Christian Statesman.*

JOY IN GOD.

Joy is the natural state of God's universe. By the natural state, I mean the state for which it has been designed by God. . . . Yet joy is too much the exception, and sadness the rule. The azure sky of the purest and happiest spirit has its clouds and summer storms, while thousands and millions in the world are like the inhabitants of some underground cavern, living and dying amid darkness, or in a mere glimmer of light, without ever having seen the glory of God's universe, or experiencing one hour of the joy which God's creatures in heaven have had for ages. The very birds seem happier than men. Men groan while they warble notes of gladness. The lark sings like a very angel in the skies, while man bows down in anguish among the clouds of the valley. The winds are full of melody, the sun shines brightly, the waters move merrily—the whole earth wears a wedding garment, and breaks forth into singing; the trees clap their hands, and the mountains and hills rejoice. But the dusky lanes and crowded tenements are full of weary and sad hearts, and the prisons are full of wretched criminals, trying to catch a glimpse of light through the bars; and men are borne to the gallows on a morning when the whole maternal world is crying praise to God; and wounded and sick men fill hospitals, and maniacs rave in their dreary cells.

This seems very strange in a universe designed for joy. Yet it is not all thus. Some hearts on earth sing with the birds, and shine with the sun, are merry with the waters, wear a wedding garment with the earth, and rejoice with God's beautiful creation; and dead men, who once knew sin and misery, are happier than they, and live in joy before God; and with them, thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousands, are glad, and have been for ages, and have filled with their melody mansions more numerous and glorious than the stars. If it is asked, whence this joy springs? I answer, these beings have joy because they are good—because they know and love God, because they have been delivered from eager self-will, and, from the depths of their spirits, have uttered a hearty Amen to God's holy and loving purpose.