







# The Morning Star.

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### An Agricultural Society for Jaffna.

The call of the Government Agent, Mr. Lewis for the meeting to consider the question of forming an Agricultural Society for Jaffna seems to us to be a great mistake. The call as issued is directed primarily to the "Chief Headmen" and then "others" are told that they may come if they like. One thing is certain, officialdom will not make the proposed society a success. Unless the society can reach directly the cultivators of the soil it will attain no practical results. It seems to us that the call should have been to the influential farmers of Jaffna, some from every section of the peninsula. If a direct personal invitation from the Government Agent to such influential cultivators were carried to them by the headmen, then the headmen would be serving a legitimate purpose, but to expect new agricultural methods to be propagated through the headmen is to expect the impossible. What is needed is a society whose principal members shall be the chief farmers of Jaffna and to this solid body of men the "others" can then be added. What is every body's business is nobody's business, and the problem of a successful agricultural society is first to make it the business and concern of those who, when their interest is once awakened, will be the main channels through which valuable information can percolate to the "others," the great mass of ignorant farmers whose sole idea is to do things as they have always been done, and who never bring brains to bear on their work. America is permeated with the influence of the farmers' "Granges" as they are called: they meet several times a year and discuss the latest methods of work and the more ambitious among the members put into practice the new ideas, and the result is a large number of small experiment stations where the value of the new ideas is tested. At the next meeting results are reported and compared and then the rank and file of the members follow lines marked out for them by the leaders of their number who have learned by experience.

The fairly well-to-do farmers of Jaffna are the ones who must be looked to to put into practice new suggestions, for the poor farmer who makes a hand-to-mouth living will never feel that he can afford to do anything that has in it the element of chance.

We feel sure that the line along which the Govt. Agent intends to work will not produce the results which it ought—the headmen are essentially politicians and farming is the least of their concerns. We need new methods and ideas: let us get them from those who are competent to teach and suggest but see to it that the suggestions in intelligent form actually reach those who can use them.

### The "Star" for 1905.

We again invite the attention of our readers to the change about to be inaugurated in the issuance of this Paper. The Paper will be issued as at present, in English and Tamil, but on double crown paper, 20 inches by 30 inches. This will increase the size over one-third besides making it weekly instead of fortnightly. In spite of this increase the price will be put at only Rs. 2.50, if subscriptions are paid before June 30th of each year otherwise Rs. 3.00 will be charged. The Star will be the same size as the Ceylonic Guardian for which Rs. 7.75 is charged and 50 cents less than the price of the Hindu Organ which is one-third smaller.

The "Star" will appear in full besides the more important news items. News letters and important points in Ceylon will be a feature and occasional reports from the various churches showing what each is doing. The editorial department will contain leaders on important public questions and every endeavor will be made to give a clear, Christian paper that shall contain something of interest to every reader.

The new rates will be found at the head of this column, but all rates given must be increased 50 cents for subscriptions paid after June 30th of each year.

### Difficulty of Preaching Sermons.

In the "Nineteenth Century" for September last there is a very interesting article on the above subject by the Right Rev. Bishop Wellwood. As many of the readers of the "Star" are preachers some resume may be of interest. The article opens by pointing out that, though sermons are generally criticised and, not unfrequently, gibbered at, nevertheless they are demanded as a part, and a not unimportant part, of most religious services. Mission is not objectionable, indeed it is useful. But the writer contends that most of the critics do not know how difficult a task the preacher's is.

One of the difficulties the preacher has to contend with is the fact that his theme does not admit of novelty in the matter, but only of variety in the treatment. This is not quite true of this country, for it is possible to find converts to whom a simple statement of the Gospel plan of salvation will come with all the force of novelty. Generally speaking however, it is true, even here, that the official

preacher is rather to remind his hearers of truths already known and induce in them a moral impulse that shall lead to obedience to the truth known. The writer glances at the restrictions which usage places on the preacher. Some of the ordinary orations of the pulpit are denied to him. For instance the use of humour, if not entirely forbidden by the narrowest taste, must be restricted. And the very narrowest limits and then he is better left to those who profess to be masters in the art.

The unbroken silence which prevails while the sermon is delivered is another difficulty. To contend with this seems rather a strange difficulty. To most preachers, however, the applause, or other expressions of opinion, would be rather a distraction than a help. It is not often that a preacher is quite master of the feeling of his congregation. The true way of the feeling of his congregation, sufficiently in sympathy with his audience, to gauge with fair accuracy what they are feeling.

The article goes strongly for short services and short sermons. "I do not think any service should exceed an hour and a half, any sermon should exceed half an hour. As a rule, sermons gain point and power by compression." With this opinion we are in the fullest accord.

The latter part of the article deals with general rules for the composition and delivery of a sermon. The first is that the preacher ought to write out his sermon. "Fluency is a peculiar snare to preachers, and above all to young preachers." He must not be so sure of himself that he can deliver the sobering discipline of committing his thoughts to paper. A sermon is so solemn a thing that not only every passage of it but every statement—I might almost say every sentence—must be carefully considered. It is so easy to overstate the argument, or to understate it, or to misrepresent truth by some partial ill-conceived expression. To those remarks there must be entire agreement. The writer gives as his opinion that a sermon should be present at least six or eight hours work. Few will contend that this is too long. Yet we cannot but fear that the majority of sermons preached in Jaffna represent much less. A saying of the apostle James is quoted to the effect that "unprepared preaching is, like schism, either a necessity or a sin." It necessarily be laid upon us we must preach without full preparation. But it behooves us to see that we do not allow the trifling of our work when time and opportunity are both afforded us. We have a very significant phrase in English to describe such work. We say it is "scamped work." In any branch of work such a scamp is severely condemned. But what shall we say of "scamped work" in the pulpit?

As to the delivery of sermons much latitude is allowable. "Reading adds little, perhaps nothing, to the value of a sermon, but it may detract something from the energy of effect. The habit of reading a sermon from manuscript may be tolerable before a cultivated congregation, but there are congregations, especially such as the illiterate who can read and not spoken. It does not follow that a sermon should be committed to memory. Perhaps there is no better way of preaching than that which is suggested by the author. He should write out his sermon in full, or almost in full, and read it over a good many times until its thoughts, and in some degree its words have stamped themselves on his mind, and he can deliver it without aid of manuscript, or at least with no other aid than a few heads, inscribed upon a sheet of notepaper as a means of saving him from a failure of memory.

In sermons prepared as an utterance which is made to the preacher says as what he is that makes the sermon. The power which comes from association and recollection, where the preacher is speaking to his own flock are dealt with. But where these are absent there remain two personal qualities intensity and sympathy which the preacher must have if he is to succeed. "He must speak with living reality, not as one who is smooth or careless or self-confident, but as though his words came surging from his soul."

Controversy is generally to be avoided. "It cannot but be a grave mistake if the preacher makes use of his pulpit to champion any theory before a mixed congregation, or to attack the extreme theories of biblical criticism. The preacher's office is not to destroy faith but to fortify it. Attacks upon the Word of God have their place, but that place is surely not the House of God. All such teaching as is given in the pulpit should be in fact and in intention constructive, for the office of the pulpit is not to pull down, but to build up. The highest triumph of preaching is not in instructed intellects but in converted and consecrated souls."

"It is not a little remarkable that, wherever preaching in modern times has produced a powerful, energetic, and permanent result, it has done so by an appeal to the intrinsic spirituality of human nature. The need of today is that preaching should become more spiritual. After all, it is the spiritual side of the message that man needs, and that which is most difficult to give. It is this side which is capable of divine things and religion alone can satisfy its demands. But herein lies the supreme quality of the preacher's office, self-sacrifice as an ambassador for God."

These extracts can only show in the very briefest outline the course of thought in the article. But if the counsel given be followed it cannot but be helpful to the work of preaching. It is useless to ignore the difficulty of the task laid on the preacher. It is vain to deplore the conditions under which we must do our work. But we may face them courageously bearing in mind the strong man's definition of difficulties i. e. "Things to be overcome." G. J. T.

### Religious Liberty in the Philippines.

The extraordinary and rapid change which has taken place in the Government and religion of the Philippines since the American occupation is graphically described in the *Missionary Review of the World* by Dr. Homer C. Stutz, of the American Methodist Mission:

As recently as 1889, under the tyrannical rule of the friars, Senior Lalare and his companion Senior Cuello, who came to Manila as agents of the British and Foreign Bible Society, were in the case of the first named poisoned at his hotel and in the second thrown into prison and only liberated on his giving a pledge to leave the island and never return. The pages could be filled, writes Dr. Stutz, with the names of men who were deported for the crime of having a Bible in their possession. Dr. Stutz writes with pardonable emphasis that the American Government speaks of the integrity of the judicial courts, of religious liberty and of the success of the educational system as now in force in the Philippines. Over three hundred American teachers and over thirty thousand one hundred Filipino B. S. men have been raised up within three years—now giving free educational advantages to one hundred and

forty thousand native children and youths, and all this in the English language.

The people are eager to hear the message of the missionaries. "It is simply a thirst. They are restless, discontented, and ready to receive the word of a satisfying religion. He gotten in the soul by the Holy Spirit." "A most gratifying feature of the work is its spontaneity. We have never begun a work in a city until we have been invited to do so. We have always had a little band of men and women who have been committing together for more spiritual light." The M. E. Mission has about 25,000 hearers every week, and the total Protestant Community from among the Filipinos now numbers over 1,000,000. B. Guardian.

### Note and Comment.

A well-known, the Princess of Wales is an excellent swimmer, and she intends that her children shall go through a course of instruction in swimming and life saving. Queen Alexandra and all her daughters, too, are good swimmers.

As many as 51 candidates, says the *Hindu*, for various examinations of the Madras University have now been rusticated. Their names and other particulars are published in this week's *Gazette*. Of these, one is a candidate for the M. A. Degree, 2 for the B. A. Degree and the rest for the Matriculation examination.

The Bombay Industrial Exhibition will remain open in December and January. Over 50,000 articles are to be exhibited by only 1,000 exhibitors. The opening ceremony took place at 5 p. m., on Saturday, the 10th inst. H. E. Lady's examination will open the ladies' section. The exhibition will be open daily from 3 to 4 p. m. Admission to the Exhibition is free, but tickets which will have to be paid for. For the convenience of visitors the tickets will be sold in books of sixty and thirty coupons which will be strictly non-transferable. The ordinary tickets will be sold for succeeding days; children under 12 will be admitted at 4 annas each.

At Leicester, on September 22, Miss Cottrill von Petzold, M.A., was inducted into the office of pastor of the Free Christian church. There are several women pastors in America, but this is, we believe, the first instance of such an appointment in England. Miss von Petzold is 28 years of age, and daughter of an officer in the Prussian army. She was educated at an officer in the High School, Friedenshof, Stetten, and at the age of eighteen she gained the Government teaching diploma. As she was desirous of obtaining a degree she left her native country, and went to Scotland, where she took a B. A. degree in preliminary examination. Having studied at St. Andrews for two years, she proceeded to Edinburgh, where she succeeded in obtaining her M. A. degree. To prepare herself for the ministry she took a course of theology at Manchester College, Oxford, and worked for three years at this branch of study. She also attended lectures at Berlin University. The Master of Balliol, who was unable to be present, sent a letter expressing the hope that Miss von Petzold would have a successful and useful ministry.

The impossibility of trying to satisfy Catholics is beginning to dawn on the German Emperor whose rebuke of the Most Rev. Dr. Benzler, Roman Catholic Bishop of Metz, is already the subject of discussion in Germany. Dr. Benzler recently interdicted a churchyard where a Protestant had been buried, declaring that by that act of burial the cemetery had been desecrated. The Emperor, on the other hand, is reported to have written to the offending prelate to the Imperial presence, and informed him that he (the Kaiser) would not permit an inch of Protestant Germany to be cursed. He added: "Two-thirds of my subjects are Protestants. I have done everything in my power to fulfill the desires of my Catholic subjects, without heeding the dissatisfaction of men of my own faith, with the single idea of enabling all to co-exist in unity and with mutual esteem. See to it that you do not arrive at the conclusion that these efforts and sacrifices have been in vain, that the Roman Catholic Church does not desire peace, but submission. If my attempts at conciliation fail owing to the intolerance and presumptuousness of the Roman Catholics, the wind may possibly blow in another quarter. Serve God to the best of your knowledge, but do not forget that you must also serve the Emperor and your King and that, although the King rules in your land, it may in a moment be turned into a mailed fist."

The preliminary estimates for the Japanese Budget covering January, February, and March, 1905, and the fiscal year commencing on the 1st of April, have been completed and were submitted to the Diet at its meeting on November 25th. The war expenditure is estimated at 770,000,000 yen, (a yen is 3 rupees nearly) and the ordinary expenditure at 90,800,000 yen. It is proposed to provide for the war by increasing taxation to the extent of 30,000,000 yen, and by retrenchment in the administration expenses and the suspension of public works amounting to 70,000,000 yen and to raise the balance of 610,000,000 yen by means of loans.

The Government proposes to raise the land tax to 7 per cent, to double the taxes on income and business, to increase the tax on salt and to advance the duties of the domestic duties. The Government will retain the charge imports on inheritances, railway tickets, freight bills and textile fabrics. The proposed monopoly which was abandoned in the last Diet will be revived. It is expected that it will realise 10,000,000 yen annually. It is probable that the monopoly plan will excite strong opposition. The Bank of Japan, the bulk of the loans will be raised at home. The Government on record and an enormous crop is expected to increase the popular savings.

The army and navy are exercising scrupulous care in buying from manufacturers direct. The department loan under subscription has already been described.

### Progress of the

- Dec. 10th. Japanese guns at Russian warships.
- Dec. 12th. Only one Russian Japanese warship.
- Pr. Arthur by a mine, 38 men lost.
- Pr. Arthur town and doing hearing discontent in Russia at the disturbances.
- Dec. 14th. Another Japanese warship off Pr. Arthur. Japanese fire at Ito depot and does great damage.
- Dec. 16th. Japanese attack the "Itaipu" and cruiser "Orion" at Pr. Arthur. Both probably sunk.
- Dec. 17th. Several Japanese warships.