

# Religions....

IT IS RATHER evident that the time limit in the Methodist church of this country is to be in part abandoned. While many people who have taken a just pride in the mighty strides of that church regard with apprehension any further encroachment upon the itinerancy, which in certain respects has been regarded as the key to the success of Methodism, it should be understood that in all probability the proposed measure will be so hedged about by conditions as to render it practically unimportant to the majority of churches.

It is not proposed to extend the time limit indefinitely or to make it general, but only to fit special cases where, in the judgment of official boards and congregations, the interests of a church would be injured by the removal of a pastor at the end of five years. The new regulation in such instances will permit his reappointment for one more year, but no longer than five, from year to year. Such a condition now exists in Elm Park church, where it is the unanimous feeling that it will be a misfortune to relinquish Rev. Dr. C. M. Gilfillan at the close of this year under the present time limit. Hence the result of the deliberations at Chicago is awaited with some anxiety. It is understood that if he remains another year an assistant pastor will be employed as the increasing duties connected with this great church are becoming too arduous for one man.

## Religious News Notes.

The following is the programme of the Wyoming District Ministerial association, the first session of which will be held at Kingston June 4 and 5:

**MONDAY.**  
7:30 p. m.—Prayer Service, Stephen Jay.  
Devolutions, Josiah R. Wagner.  
8:00 p. m.—Address, Charles M. Gilfillan, Alternate, Frank Young.

**TUESDAY.**  
8:30 a. m.—Devolutions, George A. Cure.  
9:00 a. m.—Business.

1.—The Orthodox Requirements Respecting Faith in the Scriptures, Charles M. Gilfillan.  
2.—Do We Use the Old Testament Scriptures as Much as We Ought in Preaching the Gospel, H. H. Dresser.  
3.—What Should Be the Attitude of the Pulpit Toward the Relation Between Labor and Capital, Willis L. Thorpe.  
4.—Discussion, Gustav A. Jacobs.  
5.—Toward the Relation Between Labor and Capital, Willis L. Thorpe.  
6.—Discussion, R. M. Pusey.

**TUESDAY.**  
1:30 p. m.—Devolutions, Judson N. Bailey.  
2.—Net Results of the general conference of 1899, Amos A. Williams.  
3.—The Use of Public Means of Conveyance on the Sabbath by Ministers of the Gospel and Members of the Church, Herbert L. Ellsworth.  
4.—Discussion, Curtis E. Mogg.  
5.—The Importance of Mission Work in Wyoming District, Clinton B. Henry.  
6.—Discussion, Theodore Vanhagen.

**TUESDAY.**  
7:30 p. m.—Devolutions, Harry Kelley.  
Sermon, William G. Simpson.  
Alternate, H. H. Miller.  
Committee: Amos A. Williams, L. E. Sprague, E. V. Armstrong, L. C. Marlock, F. D. Cornell.

Elm Park church will surely merit its title in the near future. The ground on the recently purchased triangle has rapidly been prepared and sown with grass seed, while a large number of elm trees have been planted. At present workmen are about to lay water pipes at convenient intervals to keep the soil in a properly moist condition. The square will be sowed with a beautiful green lawn which in the course of a few years will be amply shaded by magnificent trees. There will be no walks to break up the lovely surface and afford a looting place for the idle, but with its beautiful church and park-portion it will be a source of pride to the city from every point of view.

Clergymen and others interested in church work are requested to send to this office not later than Thursday news items and announcements with reference to Sunday services intended for publication in "The Tribune." This will insure publication. To make the religious department of the widest possible benefit and service, clergymen are urged to send in items concerning their churches and societies affiliated with them. When possible the announcements concerning church services should contain the topics upon which the pastor will speak at the morning and evening services.

Next Sunday two of the most gifted preachers of Wales will be in this city. They are the Rev. Charles Davies, of

## Sunday-School Lesson for May 20. Parable of the Sower.

MATT. XIII 1-8 and 18-23.

BY REV. J. E. GILBERT, D. D. LL. D., Secretary of American Society of Religious Education.

**INTRODUCTION.**—In the opinion of most scholars this passage should follow Christ's recitation of the parables of the wheat and the tares, the mustard seed, the leaven, the hidden treasure, the pearl of great price, the dragnet—recorded in this chapter, and by Mark (chap. iv), Luke (chap. xiii), and Matthew (chap. xiii). The parable of the sower, therefore, ought to be studied consecutively, in the above order. For that purpose "Notes on the Parable," by Dr. Trench, of King's college, London, will be helpful. The introductory, which is a light parable at first, and a parable of the sower, is a noteworthy event. They were evidently intended to set forth various phases of the kingdom of heaven, as a corrective of the false views then prevailing, and were called forth by the enmity of the Pharisees, who had arrayed themselves against Jesus in open and bitter hostility.

**AUDIENCE.**—The lesson deals with two audiences. There was first a great multitude, a motley crowd, gathered out of every city representing all classes (Matt. vii: 28; Gen. xlii: 10). Matthew declares in verse 2 that they were assembled at the shore of the sea, near Capernaum. While speaking Jesus sat in a boat, pulled out a little way from shore, as he did on a former occasion (Luke vi: 12), that attitude being usually adopted by public teachers. The number of His disciples being small, and learned men from Jerusalem hostile to Christ being present, it is probable that this great audience was in the main unfavorable to Christ. After the multitude was dismissed—we are not told how a smaller company, the disciples only, gathered about Jesus to receive further instruction in a more familiar way. Thus there was a separation between the masses of the people and Christ and the multitude without, a distinction which furnishes a key to the lesson, and becomes more marked and significant in the after ministry of Jesus (John xiv: 16).

**ANALYSIS.**—The lesson is in two great parts—what Jesus said to the multitude and what He afterward said to His disciples in reply to their questions. The latter part may be divided into two sections. In the first section, which is the parable, in the other He explains what He intended to teach in the parable of the sower. We have, therefore, three great topics—first, "The parable spoken;" second, "The parable explained;" and third, "The parable applied." Or, more briefly, the form, the reason for the form, and the meaning of Christ's teaching, proceeding from the outer hearing, which is the mere vehicle, to the real substance, which He intended to deliver. This must be the order of our study.

**ADDRESS.**—What did Jesus say to the great audience by the sea? So far as the record shows He spoke a parable and nothing more, the contents of which may be arranged under three heads: 1. "A sower went forth to sow his seed;" referring to the broadcast method of depositing grain in the soil; 2. "Some of the seed fell by the wayside, the footpath at the side of the field; some fell upon the rock, places where a thin soil rested upon stone or perhaps

that margin of the field where the stone gathered out of it had been cast; some fell among thorns (Gen. iii: 18), the foes of good agriculture, growing up without culture; some fell on good ground, the mellow and prepared earth. In this He takes notice of the parts of the field, but not of the soil, the seed, the sower, the sowing, the intended for grain, 3. The first seed was trodden down by passers-by and afterward devoured by birds; the second sprang up, but soon withered for lack of support, the third encircled by the thorns; the fourth brought forth. All this was very plain, yet obscure. As a narrative of facts it was well understood, every farmer familiar with such occurrences, but a section in the discourse of a religious teacher, its purpose and meaning were not apparent in mere words.

**REASON.**—Why did Jesus use a parable? Why did He not speak in direct abstract terms, as He had done? So the disciples queried. The answer of Christ is condensed in Luke. "Unto you," the disciples, "it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven; but to others it is not given." Was Jesus partial, withholding from some what He granted to others? Was His parable a concealment? (1 Tim. ii: 4). In the lesson of today He is reported to have said: "This parable is told to those whose hearts are waxed gross (Psalm cix: 70), and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have been closed." By their aversion and pride the Jewish rulers had blinded their eyes, and were unable to understand the truth. But the disciples by following Jesus had improved their capacity to learn (verse 16). Parables are considered the best method of teaching, and are taken to picture and illustrate unfamiliar things. This method of teaching, used under the old dispensation (Judges vi: 8; II Sam. xiii: 17), is suited to attract and fix attention, and is valuable in addressing the masses. To those who are sincere it is very profitable, because it adorns the truth. Christ's parables were like the pillar and the cloud between the Israelites and the Egyptians; they helped those who desired to learn, and foiled those who sought to enslave (II Cor. iii: 16).

**MEANING.**—The reason for parabolic teaching having been given, the disciples desired Jesus to explain the parable (Matt. xiii: 35). He proceeded to do a service which, doubtless He would have gladly rendered to any of the vast audience that dispersed in ignorance, had they been honestly anxious to know. He said: "The seed is the word of God." The hearts of four kinds—those whose hearts are hardened by the constant passage of secular things; those whose hearts are softened on the surface, but whose inner parts are unimproved and unsoftened by the riches and pleasures of this life, and, finally, those who are ready to receive and nurture truth, who are anxious to learn, who are prepared to adjust themselves to the truth as they perceive it. These descriptions of man's moral state, so graphically drawn, were not new. They are to be found in many places in the Old Testament (Lev. xi: 19; Jer. iv: 24; Zech. vii: 13). The parable, therefore, is a picture of the heart. (See Matheson's Growth of the Spirit of Christianity.) The outcome, as described by Jesus, was what every one might expect. Noth-

ing comes in the first three cases, the failure begins by different processes. In the first the devil takes the word away, let the person should believe, showing that he understands the conditions of salvation. In the second there is a reception of truth with joy, and a subsequent falling away, the temptation—a short-lived excitement. In the third nothing is brought to perfection, but all is choked. The last one brings forth fruit, but in different degrees. Probably the primary intention of Jesus was by this method to account to His hearers for the results of His own ministry, its successes and failures. Beyond that He doubtless intended that the disciples should know what fortune awaited them and the causes in which they enlisted. But, hearing upon all ministrations, the parable exhibits the nature of the kingdom of God and the method of its progress, not a temporal reign, as was currently believed, but a spiritual unfolding by the truth (John xvii: 27), depending upon laws that should be understood and observed.

**TEACHING.**—The word of God is seed. Potentially it contains the kingdom of God as an acorn contains the oak. It is the germ of noble character, of right conduct, of good society, of self-government, of high civilization (Psalm i: 2-3; John viii: 31-32; I Tim. iii: 16-17; I Pet. ii: 2). The results attending the dissemination of God's word depend, not on the word, on the preacher, nor on the surroundings, but wholly on the Holy Spirit, although He is ever present (Rev. iii: 20), but on the state of the heart of him to whom the word comes. The truth is for all, and should be published to all (Mark xvi: 15); but all are not prepared to receive it (Matt. vii: 6; John ii: 19; Heb. iv: 2). 3. There can be no more deplorable condition of human nature than that perversion and blinding of the spiritual part so that the sublime truths, designed for the soul's good (Matt. iv: 4), can find no lodgment, preventing all that uplift and development which glorifies the race. 4. A good heart is one that yields to the word of God (Deut. x: 20; Psalm cxi: 9; Job xxvii: 29). The truth seekers are the noblest men (Acts xvii: 11). To them is given power to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, that which which involves the destinies and hopes of souls to know which is life everlasting (John xvii: 25). That power increases with its use (verse 12). 5. There is a good heart produced by the truth (Prov. iv: 23). The great end and hope of the Gospel is not salvation, but fruitage; not merely deliverance from sin and its consequences, but the production of character of the life principle of the word (John xv: 3; I Pet. i: 5). The character is a growth, it is gradually slow (I Pet. i: 5; Mark iv: 28). The holiest ambition of any mortal is to be able to say with Christ, "I am the truth."

**PROTECTION OF SONG BIRDS.**  
Consul General Dubois Describes the Swiss Methods.  
From the Washington Star.  
Consul General Dubois at St. Gall has made a report to the State department in regard to the methods pursued in Switzerland for the protection of song birds, in which he says: "Switzerland has not many feathered songsters, but those that do exist are carefully protected, not only by law, but by the fostering care of the people, particularly the German-speaking Swiss, who are very anxious to protect the birds of their country. In 1875 a law was enacted prohibiting the trapping or killing of song birds or the robbing or molesting of their nests in any part of the Alpine republic. But in northern Italy bird murder is epidemic, and this spirit has spread over the Swiss cantons of Ticino and Valais, where the willow wren, hedge sparrow, black cap, swallow, nightingale and little singers of all kinds are victims of the trap, the net and the gun. "As the seasons come and go the Swiss birds make their pilgrimage north, and in golden autumn, returning across the land of northern Italy and the Swiss cantons of Ticino they are mercilessly pursued by hunters of all ages and all classes. On the lake of Maggiore it is estimated that at least 60,000 of the feathered songsters are trapped or killed every year, and in the region round about Varese, Verona, Chiavenna and Brescia many millions are indiscriminately slaughtered to satisfy the demand of the tables and of the millinery establishments of the world. "One of the schemes is to cover the limbs of trees and the rocks, and even the telegraph wires, along the line of the bird migrations with a certain paste of such adhesive qualities that whenever the birds stop in their flight for rest or food they are held helpless captives; hundreds are often captured in a very small space by this simple means. "During the past year the border police of Ticino captured and destroyed 13,000 bird traps set to imprison these weary little flyers. Authorities are being urged to take the most rigorous measures to suppress the evil. "The criminal courts are having many more bird-law-violation cases than formerly, and bird-catching-and-killing crimes, which in former years were either overlooked or punished only slightly, are now dealt with seriously. The excellent laws are being enforced, and the song birds of Switzerland may yet survive the attempt to exterminate them."

**Baptist.**  
Penn Avenue Baptist church, Penn avenue, between Spruce and Linden streets. Preaching, E. J. Hamilton, senior pastor, 10:30 a. m.; Rev. Robert F. Y. Pierce, D. D., morning prayer in the lower temple, 9:45. Topic of morning sermon, "The Christian's Inheritance." Sunday school at 10:30; Young People's meeting at 6:30. Topic of evening sermon, "Symphony, the Jewel of Human Kindness."  
First Baptist church, 320 S. Third street. F. Mathews, pastor. The usual services morning and evening, 11:30 a. m. and 7:30 p. m., in the basement of the Welsh Baptist church, Main avenue. Sunday school, 10:30 a. m. Plymouth church, Dr. Boddes superintendent. R. Y. F. U. prayer meeting, 6:30 p. m. at Iovette hall. Closing exercises and entertainment of the industrial school, Wednesday evening, May 25, 7:45 p. m., at the Welsh Baptist church, Main avenue.

**Miscellaneous.**  
Calvary Reformed church, Monroe avenue and Gilman street. Preaching, Rev. J. W. Spence, 10:30 a. m.; 7:30 p. m. Morning subject, "Pure Religion;" Sunday school, 11:45 a. m.; Christian Endeavor society meeting, 8:45 p. m. Presbyterian church, 114 S. 3d street. Rev. Levi Bird, D. D., pastor. No regular preaching service Sunday on account of the absence of the pastor from the city. All South United churches. Fine street between Adams and Jefferson avenues—Rev. O. H. Beardsley, pastor; residence, 629 Adams avenue. Morning service, 10:30; subject, "The Efficiency of Methodism;" 12:15. Evening service, 7:30; subject, "Morality and Religion." Sunday school after the morning service. "Companionship" will be the subject at the Young People's meeting, Methodist hill, 12:15. Evening service, 7:30; subject, "Morality and Religion." Sunday school after the morning service.


**Presbyterian.**  
First Presbyterian Church—Morning service, 10:30; evening service, 7:30. Dr. Melrose will preach at both services. Thomas F. Archibald will be ordained as a minister of the gospel at 7:30 p. m. on Wednesday evening in the First church. Services will begin at 7:30 o'clock.  
The Second Presbyterian church. Services, 10:30 a. m. and 7:30 p. m. Dr. Robinson will preach at both services.  
Providence Presbyterian church—Rev. George E. Guild, D. D., pastor. Morning theme of discourse, "The Law;" Sunday school, 12 noon; Endeavor meeting, 6:35 p. m.; evening service, 7:30. The seats of the church are always free.

**Methodist Episcopal.**  
Elm Park Methodist Episcopal church, Linden street and Jefferson avenue—Rev. C. M. Gilfillan, pastor. Prayer and praise service at 9:30 a. m.; preaching at 10:30 a. m.; by Rev. L. E. Sprague, D. D.; 7:30 p. m., address by Rev. C. H. Spivey, of the Silver Lake quartette. 12 o'clock noon, half hour Bible study in Sunday school, 10:30 a. m.; Sunday school at 2 p. m., and Epworth league at 7:30 p. m.  
St. Paul's Methodist Episcopal church—Rev. J. B. Sweet, pastor. Morning prayer at 9:30; preaching service at 10:30, sermon by Rev. Dr.

**Episcopal.**  
St. Luke's Parish, Rev. Rogers Israel, rector; Rev. George Parsons, senior curate; Rev. M. B. Nash, junior curate. Fifth Sunday after Easter. St. Luke's church—7:30 a. m., Holy Communion; 10:30 a. m., morning prayer and sermon; 7:30 p. m., evening prayer and sermon; 9:15 a. m., Sunday school and Bible classes.  
St. Mark's—Dunmore—8 a. m., Holy Communion; 10:30 a. m., morning prayer and sermon; 7:30 p. m., evening prayer and sermon; 9:15 a. m., Sunday school and Bible classes.  
East End Mission, Prescott avenue—3 p. m., Sunday school and Bible classes; 7:30 p. m., evening prayer and sermon.  
South Side Mission, Fig street—2:30 p. m., Sunday school and Bible classes.  
St. George's, Olympian—2:30 p. m., Sunday school and Bible classes; 7:30 p. m., evening prayer and sermon.  
Christ's church, corner Washington avenue and Park street—Rev. F. S. Ballentine, pastor. Services, 10:30 a. m., 2:30 p. m., 7:30 p. m. All seats free. All welcome.  
Church of the Good Shepherd, corner of Green Ridge street and Money avenue—Rev. Francis E. Bateman, rector. Fifth Sunday after Easter. Holy Communion at 7:30 a. m.; morning prayer and sermon at 10:30 a. m.; Sunday school at 2:30 p. m.; evening prayer and sermon at 7:30 p. m. Rev. E. W. Smith will preach at the 10:30 p. m. service. All welcome.

**Evangelical Lutheran.**  
Evangelical Lutheran—Fifth Sunday after Easter. Gospel, I John, xvi: 25-29; epistle, James, i: 19-27.  
St. Mark's, Washburn and Fourteenth streets—Rev. A. L. Rorer, Ph. D., pastor. Services, 10:30 a. m., 7:30 p. m.; Sunday school, 12 m. Morning subject, "Asking the Father in Jesus Name;" evening subject, "The Spirit's Intercession for Us."  
Holy Trinity, Adams avenue and Mulberry street—Rev. C. G. Spitzer, pastor. Services, 10:30 a. m. and 7:30 p. m.; Luther league, 6:30 p. m., Sunday school, 12 m.  
St. Paul's, Short avenue—Rev. W. C. L. Laur, pastor. Services, 10:30 a. m. and 7:30 p. m.; Sunday school, 2:30 p. m.  
Zion's, Milton avenue—Rev. P. F. Ziehlmann, pastor. Services, 10:30 a. m.; Sunday school, 2 p. m.  
Clair church, Clair avenue and Birch street—Rev. W. H. Miller, pastor. Services, 10:30 a. m. and 7:30 p. m.; Sunday school, 2 p. m.  
St. Peter's, Prescott avenue—Rev. John Randolph, pastor. Services, 10:30 a. m. and 7:30 p. m.; Sunday school, 2 p. m.  
Grace Evangelical Lutheran church of the General Synod, Madison avenue and Mulberry street—Rev. Luther Hess Waring, pastor, 9:30 a. m., Sunday school, D. L. Fiches, eqq., superintendent; 10:30 a. m., divine worship, subject of sermon, "The Prayer God Answers"; 6:45 p. m., Y. P. S. C. E.; 7:30 p. m., divine service, topic, "A Sunday in Paris;" the third in the series on church life and work in Europe. A welcome to all.

**Methodist Episcopal.**  
Elm Park Methodist Episcopal church, Linden street and Jefferson avenue—Rev. C. M. Gilfillan, pastor. Prayer and praise service at 9:30 a. m.; preaching at 10:30 a. m.; by Rev. L. E. Sprague, D. D.; 7:30 p. m., address by Rev. C. H. Spivey, of the Silver Lake quartette. 12 o'clock noon, half hour Bible study in Sunday school, 10:30 a. m.; Sunday school at 2 p. m., and Epworth league at 7:30 p. m.  
St. Paul's Methodist Episcopal church—Rev. J. B. Sweet, pastor. Morning prayer at 9:30; preaching service at 10:30, sermon by Rev. Dr.



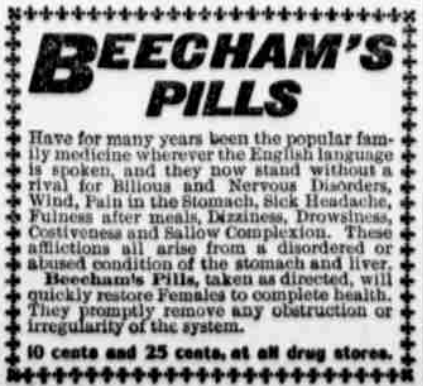
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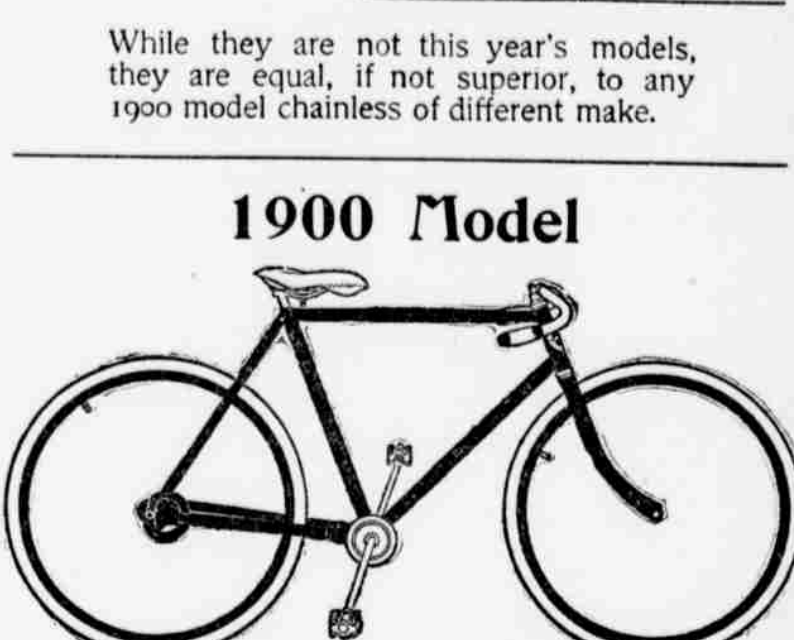
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