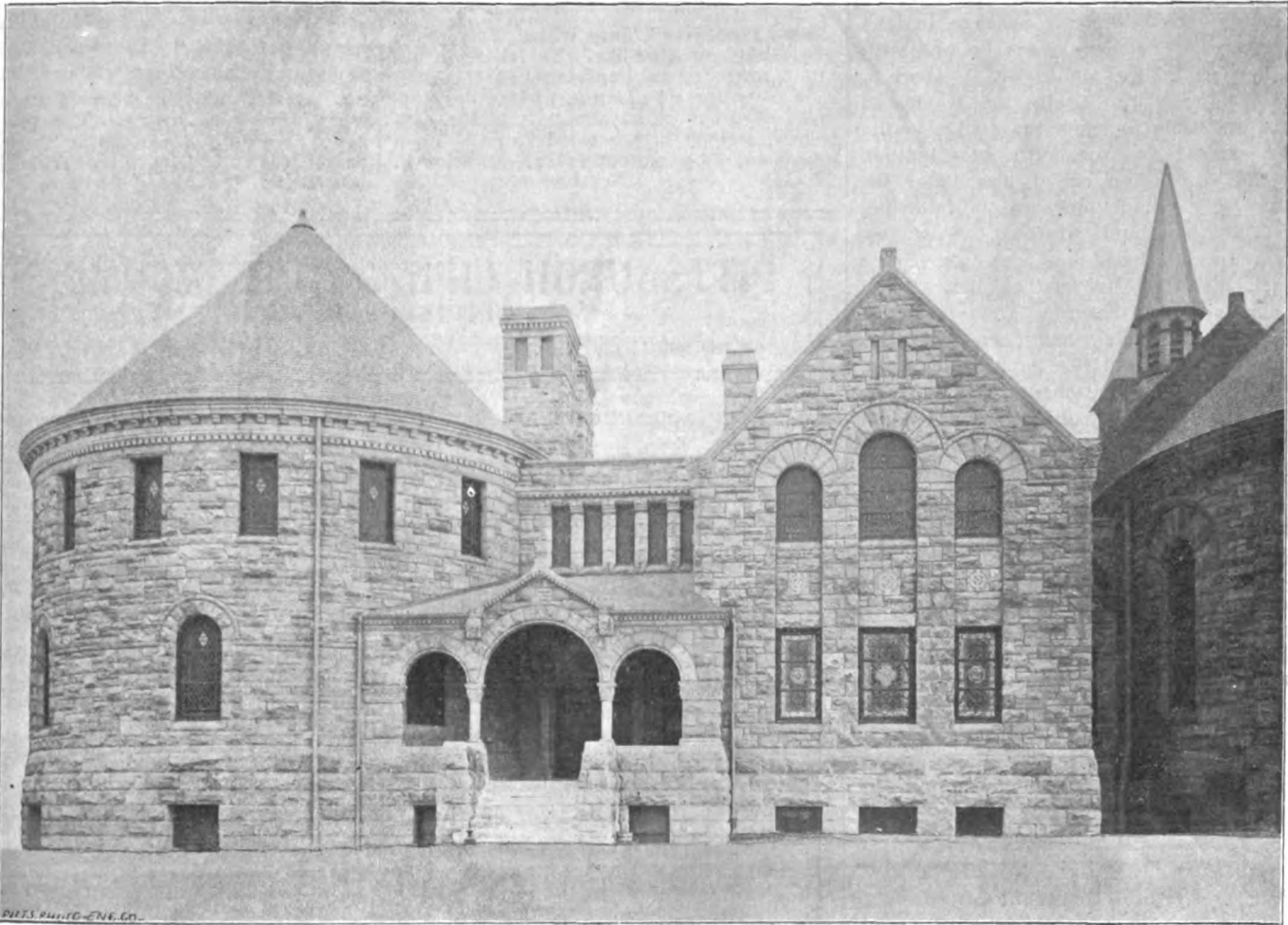


# Presbyterian Banner.

Pittsburgh, Pa., Thursday, January 8, 1903.



The Kumler Memorial.

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## Chronicle and Comment.

### Venezuela.

It is not strange that this country still occupies no small part of the attention of the world. The English claims are put in

three classes: "For interference with the liberty and property of our subjects, for injury to British property in the last revolution and the last revolution but one, and, lastly, for default as regards to the Venezuelan external debt." From Jan. 1 to October, 1901, it is claimed that grievous outrages were committed on the persons of British subjects and their property. The Times says that Lord Cranborne laid down a dangerously wide principle when he asserted that bondholders who had loaned money to South American governments were entitled to the protection of their fellow-countrymen, or that when conducting industrial enterprises in that part of the world they had a right to support. Balfour was careful to repudiate such international law. But the seizing of two vessels on suspicion on the high seas make it necessary to give Venezuela a "lesson in the first rudiments of civilization, if we are to continue to trade with her at all." The Times thinks that a pacific solution of the complications would, from the first, be no less acceptable to Germany than to England, although the feeling in America has been that Germany was less peacefully inclined. One vessel, the Racer, was boarded by Venezuelans when dismasted and drifting toward the coast; her crew were robbed, and the vessel seized by the custom house officers of Carupano. Protests were made, but the acting minister of foreign affairs, Dr. Baralt, said they "were used to these communications." The Times thinks it would be well to break the custom by substituting something more energetic than communications. It has been generally published that all parties had agreed to submit the differences to The Hague Tribunal, but at last accounts Baralt was making difficulties and Germany was insisting on conditions that make arbitration far from clear sailing.

Reports and denials continue to come from

### Foreign Notes.

China of a renewal of Boxer activity under some of the disgraced generals. Usually it

said that the movement is, at least, not discouraged by the imperial authorities. Nothing very definite can now be learned of the subject. No little discussion has arisen over China's payment of indemnities to the powers. Silver appears to be the money standard in China, and that country and the United States hold that the indemnities are to be paid in that metal, while other powers think the tael should be kept up to its value when the treaties were executed. Silver has greatly fallen in value since then, but the Chinese contend that a tael is a tael and they should not be compelled to keep it up to a gold standard. We side with them; a bargain is a bargain.—In the Philippines there is much dissatisfaction over the same subject of an unstable currency. A bill is now before Congress to remove the uncertainty. Mexico shows symptoms of going over to the gold standard.—Austria and Hungary, under Emperor Franz Joseph, have for many years constituted anything but a happy family. Dec. 31, 1902, the Prime Ministers of the two peoples held a conference and an *ausgleich*, or act of union, was effected. Rumor is that it was accomplished only when the emperor threatened to resign unless he could have such a union that the empire could negotiate commercial treaties and consider measures of defense. The powers agreed upon will probably be required to put up barriers against American products.—Edward VII. has been proclaimed, Jan. 1, Emperor of India amid scenes of unprecedented Oriental magnificence. The gorgeous East, with barbaric pearls and gold, Ormus and Ind, were reproduced in more. Lord Curzon, from a throne decorated with golden lions, made an address of congratulation and eulogy, the national anthem was sung, princes, potentates, and powers signed their allegiance, and a hearty message from the Emperor was read. The splendor and richness of the dresses and jewels were telegraphed over the world, but there was a sad reminder in the account which ended by saying, "The Maharajah of Jaipur donated a lac of rupees to the Indian people's famine fund."

### A New Movement.

In New York and Albany, and perhaps in some other localities, there have been efforts towards organizing a league of independent workmen. It appears to be aimed against the restrictions put on employers and workmen by the various unions throughout the country. Local branches of the league will be organized, at least, this is proposed, all over the country, to demand that employers shall run open shops in which union and league men can have a fair and equal chance for employment. The league is to be strictly a laboring men's affair, but will be incorporated and work to command the confidence and co-operation of employers and the public generally, and, as an incorporated body, will be in a position to defend its members in the courts and, of course, be responsible for its actions. Membership is to be confined to American citizens. This restriction does not go far to commend the league as free from uncalculated restrictions. The object of the organization may, however, be best expressed by the words of its own prospectus: "To protect independent workmen in their independence; sustain high wages by skillful, energetic co-operation with our employers; establish reasonable hours of labor according to the exigencies of the trades; promote intelligent understanding of our work; furnish favorable conditions for training apprentices in order that our boys may become successful workmen; maintain sanitary conditions of employment by means of State laws and inspectors; compel officers of the government to enforce the laws; compel labor unions to observe the laws; protect members against unjust treatment from employers by due process of law; provide a labor bureau for its members."

The Japan Weekly Mail relates that Bishop

### Schereschewski.

Schereschewski, of Shanghai, nineteen years ago, contracted an illness which rendered him almost helpless. He refused to be a burden to his mission and resigned his see, but would not allow that his working days were ended. A paralysis prevented his going about in the work of evangelization; so he sat in a chair and worked for China by translating the entire Bible into Wenli, giving the great message to a greater number of the common people. He is a man of wide attainments in scholarship, and his work went on with such energy that two secretaries were kept busy. In eight years he wrote his entire translation in Roman letters on a typewriter, although he could use but one finger on each hand. It is spoken of as a work of heroism and self-sacrifice that might well shame other workers with fewer limitations. Bishop Schereschewski is no longer a young man. About 45 years ago he was a student in the Western Theological Seminary. He was there noted for his extensive scholarship, but imbibed some peculiar views, left the Presbyterian Church and found a harbor under the shadow of the Prelacy.

### Football.

An editorial in the Banner some weeks ago expressed in brief what a great many people have been thinking of the strenuous game of football. It attracted considerable attention, and word comes now from various colleges and universities that the sport must be modified or abandoned. "Well-informer persons," says an article in a metropolitan daily, "say that the International Football Rules Committee will have to abolish mass plays from the gridiron before the season of 1903 begins." If they do not do so, says the same paper, on their own initiative the authorities of the colleges and universities will do what will compel the committee to make some change. The members of college faculties who are brought most in contact with athletics are said to be virtually unanimous for a radical change of the rules. The Chancellor of the Syracuse University has been quoted as saying the game had become as brutal as the prize fight. President Wilson is quoted as saying the game would have to be altered if it is to be continued among the sports at Princeton. He thinks the game "is clearly in the way to be discredited because its rules have been slowly altered in the direction of making all the success of the game depend on mass and strength. These changes have made the game very much less interesting to lookers-on, not only, but much more dangerous to the players." It is believed the rules committee would gladly

earthed a great king that was worshiped as a god forty-five hundred years ago, and when he died men began to erect a vast temple over him. The sculpture of the temple was of extraordinary beauty, and it contained a panel painting whose colors were as fresh and bright as when they were put on, though they soon began to fade under the light. The priests and women favorites of the king were buried in the temple. The handles of some of the coffins had been sawed off to let them into their vaults, and the saw marks were as plain as though the saw had just gone through. Unwrapped of their windings, the mummy corpses revealed the features of these great people who were mighty rulers in Egypt more than a thousand years before Moses was born. The writings on the coffins recorded the deeds of the king, and thus after more than four thousand years he rises up out of his grave to tell us his story. In time this temple became buried under the sand of the ages, and other graves, even of Egyptian slaves, were placed over the tomb of the great king. In a grave dating twenty-four hundred years ago was found a long Greek poem celebrating the victory at Marathon. This is thought to be the very oldest Greek manuscript in existence, and is of extraordinary interest to scholars. How true it is that "there is no new thing under the sun"? These records that go back far into the dust and mist of antiquity show us the same human life, ruled by the same motives and passions, that we see around us to-day. Some things cannot be buried: time will unseal their coffins and expose their record to the world. It is well for us to remember in the midst of the flying years that nothing we do shall be lost or forgotten, for "God requireth that which is past."

The Herald and Presbyter quotes our editorial note in which we pointed out its unfair interpretation of our editorial on "The Problem of the Theological Seminary," and

**No Foot-Note  
Needed To This.**

says: "We hope when our contemporary takes up the subject again it will add a foot-note to the effect that it does not refer to Presbyterian seminaries, but only to other seminaries, or to seminaries in general." No, no such foot-note is needed by the readers of the Banner, for they are intelligent and fair-minded people who are quick to see a point themselves and have no disposition to misrepresent it to others. It might be well, however, for us to add such a foot-note to a special copy of the Banner and send it to the Herald and Presbyter.

## Communications.

### FUEL AND FIRE FOR PRAYER MEETINGS.

By Rev. Theodore L. Cuyler, D. D.

Over a large part of our country there has been a serious apprehension of a famine of fuel. To the familiar and stereotyped question, "What shall we get to eat and drink?" has been added the questions—"Where shall we find a supply of fuel?" and "How shall we keep our houses warm?" Christian brethren, if the want of physical heat in our dwellings is a calamity, it is equally a calamity to have a famine of spiritual fuel in our prayer rooms. I know of no surer thermometer for the average church than its prayer meeting. Frigidity there pretty certainly indicates a cold and unfruitful church; it is at once the cause and the effect of a spiritual declension. If the appointed place or meeting the Master and for fellowship with each other and or invoking divine blessings is well-nigh deserted; if the prayers offered are only from the throat outward, and without any pith, or point or purpose, if formality chills the tongues and the hearts, then the pastor of such a frigid flock has abundant cause for discouragement and despair. The worst thing of all is that the conduit-pipe of spiritual blessings becomes frozen up.

Wherever a prayer meeting has become cold, formal and lifeless, the first step is to bring in fuel. Those who attend the meeting must bring it. A devotional meeting without any purpose is a pious sham. It must have a meaning, a definite aim, and Christian people must go there with just as definite an idea of what they are after as brokers have when they go to a stock-board, or voters have when they go to the ballot-box. We never can drift aimlessly into spiritual blessings. Why am I here to-night? What soul-want have I brought here to be supplied? What thought or word have I brought here as my contribution to this meeting? These are the questions that every honest Christian ought to ask of himself or herself. The leader ought also to prepare himself for his work as carefully as a minister prepares to preach. Many a prayer meeting

is ruined by utter aimlessness on the part of the leader; and the people become just as "scattering" in their remarks or their petitions. One good method of correcting this vice is to select some important practical topic—which may be announced on the previous Sabbath, or be presented by the leader. This tends to directness in speech and prayer; this concentrates the meeting; there is some profitable instruction afforded, as well as a kindling of devotional fervor. The praying and speaking are "at a mark."

Prayer meetings should never be frozen by formality. They are family gatherings; let every one of the household, old or young, male or female, be allowed to bear his or her part. If anyone monopolizes too much time, let the pastor or the leader kindly admonish such offender. Absolute freedom should be encouraged—in exhortation, in confession of sin, in asking for prayers, in stating questions of conscience, in personal experiences, and in suggesting lines of Christian effort. Intellect is not so much in demand as heart. Pastors had better not turn devotional meetings into preaching services; they are the people's meetings for their spiritual development and for their direct personal converse with God.

Prayer—and of the right kind—is the main thing in these family gatherings of Christ's household. But as when a family hold a reunion at a Thanksgiving Day dinner each one contributes the fuel of his or her personal experiences and feelings to the warmth of the feast, just in like manner the individual members of the church ought to bring their increment to the interest of the prayer meeting. Much is made in the New Testament of witness-bearing. Those early meetings for social worship which Paul and Peter and John and Silas held, must have been largely occupied with personal testimonies. They testified of the saving grace of Jesus Christ. What a prodigious power there is in the narrative of our actual and deep experience of Christ's goodness and indwelling grace! No skeptic can answer that.

There is a sadly large number of tongue-tied church members. They can talk fast enough elsewhere—in a social company or at the table, or behind a counter in a store or a shop. They can use their tongues when they want to gain a customer, or secure a bargain, or a vote. It is only when a good word is to be said for their Master and his cause that their lips are sealed; or if they speak at all, it is too often in a formal and half-hearted fashion. The fuel they bring is only water-soaked wood, or burnt-out cinders.

When a church is under the quickening influences of the Holy Spirit, there is no place that feels the baptism of fire more than the devotional meetings. The "gift of tongues" descends there abundantly. New converts give their testimonies; restored backsliders make penitent confessions; and a single sentence or two spoken by a new recruit thrills an assembly more than an elaborate sermon. "Come aboard, all hands!" I once heard a young sailor shout out in a revival meeting; "whosoever will, let him come and be saved—captain and mate, cook and cabin-boy!" That nautical paraphrase by the enthusiastic "blue-jacket" gave a fresh idea of the comprehensiveness of the gospel invitation.

This leads me to say that all the revivals in the churches under my pastoral charge began in the prayer meeting; certainly the first tokens of them appeared there. Let it not be forgotten that as all the coal in the mines of Pennsylvania is of no use until it is kindled, so all our methods and measures and movements are of no avail without the "power from on high." We may bring in the fuel; but the baptism of fire is from heaven. The seed of fire is often in one or two, or in half a dozen hearts; then the flame spreads. The most powerful revival my beloved church ever experienced began in this house where I am writing, and at a prayer meeting held on a bitter mid-winter evening. When the spark kindles, then we must fan the flame; never despise the day of small things.

Bonfires of pine shavings and tar barrels are sometimes lighted by human hands and make a transient blaze; but "the Lord is not in the fire." Prayers for the Holy Spirit, working with the Holy Spirit, and with the simple desire to honor Christ and save souls is the only sure way to secure the indispensably precious blessing. Bring in the fuel. I beseech the infinitely loving Jesus to kindle the fire. The new year opens with a "week of prayer." Follow it with many weeks of praying, giving, working, and clean honest Christian living. God never broke his promises. Pray without ceasing; labor without ceasing; and above all, quench not the Holy Spirit!

Brooklyn, N. Y.