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THE ONLY SUCCESSION.

THE discussion upon apostolic succession, which has been raised by the crossing of swords between the Bishop and the Archbishop, is not of much interest in itself. It attracts a certain class of minds to which we may apply the term "Sacerdotal," and it is more or less connected with such matters as the confessional, the elevation of the host, baptismal regeneration, or the authority of the Church. To those who accept the Word of God as the only rule of faith, and discard priestliness in its every form, apostolical succession is nothing but a figment of the imagination. These maintain that the apostles could have no successors. They remember the distinguishing features of the apostolate, that one must have been with the Lord and been able to witness to his resurrection. They acknowledge the claim of Paul to rank as an apostle, because after the ascension he had miraculously seen the Lord, and had listened to His voice. The conclusion is inevitable that the apostleship ceased, when the last of the twelve had gone to his reward.

The very notion of apostolic succession is begotten of the world. There cannot in the nature of the case be any hereditary line either with ministers of religion or Christians generally. Royalty may lay claim to an unbroken descent from some illustrious warrior, though even here many links in the chain may be found to be imperfect. The scion of a noble house may proudly trace his lineage, through the centuries, to him who, by some deed of prowess or some good fortune, became its founder. But there is nothing corresponding to this in the Christian life. In this regard we are without father and mother. We cannot boast of our patent of nobility. Nor can we indulge the pleasing dream of being succeeded by heirs according to the flesh. It is true that Christians are frequently blessed with the glad spectacle of their children becoming the genuine followers of Christ. But how frequently is the opposite to be seen, parents being broken-hearted because of the prodigality of their offspring.

No. Every man, every woman must stand alone. The Saviour has one saying that is applicable to all, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." It will not avail even in the case of an Archbishop that he can boast of the Papal blessing, if his heart has not been touched by the Spirit of God. The only true ordination is that of which the Apostle Paul speaks when he says, "and when James, Cephas and John, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hand

of fellowship." There is something which lies back of the call of the Church to be a minister, and that is the call of God. It is this which gives meaning to a pastor's ordination. It is this which gives him a place in the true succession of Christian men and women. But without it the Papal tiara and crozier, the cardinal's hats, the bishop's lawn, the minister's robe, are only like the sign-board over an empty shop. If so, then let the vain fancy of apostolic succession be given up, and let Christians consecrate themselves to the work which it has pleased God to assign to them of proclaiming a free and full gospel of salvation.

TALMAGE ABROAD.

A NEW chapter on Hero Worship has yet to be written. The hero of the day is the minister who is going through an ecclesiastical trial, or has just emerged from one. What other stars are there in the Scottish firmament besides Smith and McCrae? Their presence excites everywhere the deepest interest. They are literally mobbed. And here is Talmage, but the other day tried, persecuted, almost condemned by an ecclesiastical court, now lifted up to the highest pinnacle of fame. He is the lion of the hour in England. His carriage has the horses taken from it, and it is not drawn by enthusiastic men, but is literally carried on their shoulders. Fancy twenty thousand persons gathered to listen to the preacher's voice. The canny Scot is carried away too, and a crushing multitude besieges the Glasgow City Hall. If ever there was hero worship, surely this is the thing so named.

But is Dr. Talmage a hero, then? In our view he does not quite answer to the meaning of this word. For he does and says things which we cannot approve. It was heroic surely, some one will say, to go to the dens of vice and iniquity in the great city, and draw aside the curtain that hungry eyes might gaze upon the loathsome spectacle. There was something more noble than this to be done, and had Dr. Talmage attempted it, we should have placed his name in our roll of honour. In our view, there is no spectacle more sublime than to see a strong man go amidst outcasts and stretch forth a helping hand to the perishing—a hand which is made powerful by the sympathy of a loving heart. That is the work which we should like to see done in a city like Brooklyn or New York by such men as Dr. Talmage. And while in our comments upon the rev. gentleman's trial, we expressed the feeling of many, that it would have been better to have let the matter drop, than waste valuable time upon frivolous charges which should never have come to the surface, there were some things we must confess that detracted from the claims of the Dr. to hero worship. In spite of Dr. Prime and others, we cannot get rid of the impression made upon our minds by many things that were said and done by the Brooklyn pastor. This preaching and lecturing tour of the sensational American almost looks like the last act of a serio-comic tragedy. It is got up for effect, and it succeeds. The question was frequently put at the close of the trial, what will

be Talmage's next move? Every one thought that the greatest master of sensation this age of sensation has produced, next to Barnum, had played himself out. But lo! the Presbytery trial, instead of being the climax, was but one step of the many which has led to the extraordinary outburst in Talmage's reception by the staid old folks of the mother land.

The only thing left for the American to do in the way of creating a bigger sensation than ever in his own peculiar line, is to acquire the language of Zululand and preach to these African hordes. But apart from this, we do not wonder that the Brooklyn phenomenon has been so well received in England. He is exceedingly fresh in thought, graphic in description, with humour a little coarse but still suited to a British audience when massed together, with imagination run wild when portraying the horrors of city life or the terrors of the damned, with a keen eye to business, that thoroughly appreciates the intensity and earnestness of commercial men, and with a touch of the dramatic that removes him a thousand miles from the dry preacher; all this combined in one and the same person, it is no wonder that multitudes flock to see and hear him. But our feeling always is, were Talmage to strip himself of his unrealities, what a power for good he would become!

SABBATH RAILWAY TRAINS.

ON a recent occasion some of the friends of the Sabbath in Dundas determined to test the lawfulness of "Sunday service trains" which had been advertised in the company's time table for the purpose of taking passengers to church in Hamilton, morning and evening, and also to Sabbath school in the afternoon. A few persons use the train for going to church, but the vast majority of those travelling consist of pleasure-seekers, who never enter church or Sabbath-school. The case was tried before the Mayor, on complaint duly made. Although it was thought not improbable that the complaint would be dismissed on other grounds, the prosecutors were not prepared for a decision on the grounds taken by Mr. Wardell, viz., that a railway company being in the place of stage-coaches, has a right to carry passengers on the Lord's day, and therefore that the driver, being indispensable, is not breaking the law while following his ordinary calling on the Lord's day; further, that persons going abroad for business or pleasure are "travellers;" or persons who have bought a ticket and are about to enter a railway carriage are "travellers" so that conveying them by "land or water," comes within the exception of the statute. We invite the attention of our readers to this judgment so that it may be known whether the Christian public accept this as the law of the land; and if it is law, whether they are prepared to allow it to continue so, or are willing to seek to have the law amended. Are we disposed to allow every railway and steamboat to convey such travellers on the Lord's day, at all hours, whence and whither they choose? If this may be done, will not other forms of Sabbath