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TORONTO, WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 23, 1882.

IN one of his lectures on Men and Books, Dr. Phelps says: "The distant, the strange, the unknown, the half-known, awes a cultivated mind often as it does the rudest." That must be the reason why so many congregations go two or three thousand miles to get a minister.

THOSE people who can see a considerable degree of likeness between John Wesley and "General" Booth, of the Salvation Army, are gifted with an amount of imaginative power really wonderful. To our mind, the men and their methods are about as unlike as men and methods can be. Fancy the learned, cultivated, and pious Wesley calling his fellow-labourers such names as Hallelujah Jim and Glory Tom. It is enough to make the revered Father of Methodism turn in his grave to have his name used in such a connection.

By Victoria (British Columbia) papers we learn that the Rev. Dr. Cochrane arrived in that city on the 1st of August, by steamer from San Francisco. On the evening of the 3rd he visited the prayer meeting in the First Presbyterian Church, and preached. He also purposed preaching in both the Presbyterian churches in the city on the following Sabbath. After that his course would be to New Westminster, Langley and Yale, returning to Victoria on the 20th, where he expected to deliver an address on Home Missions and a popular lecture on "Whitfield."

In a recent address on Revivals, Mr. Moody made this statement:

"People might have said after John had been beheaded that the 'revival' was a failure, because he had only preached a few months, and the result was a violent death." People would have said John was a martyr, and would have honoured him accordingly. But if nine-tenths of his converts became worse enemies than ever, and the other tenth spent their strength in abusing Christ and His disciples because they did not eat locusts and wild honey, and wear camel's hair as John did, then sensible people would certainly say the revival was a failure, and they would say right. Some of Mr. Moody's own imitators get up revivals that are not only a failure, but a fraud. Mr. Moody, however, is in no way to blame for that.

IN our opinion, it is to be regretted that so able and judicious a journal as our neighbour, the "Guardian," should state in an editorial note that the "Boy Evangelist" witnessed twenty-three thousand conversions in five years. No doubt our contemporary heard the "Boy" say so, but we venture to say the "Guardian" has no further evidence of the fact. Does the "Boy" say how long they *stayed* converted? Not long ago another "Boy" Evangelist made a hundred and seventy-five converts in a few weeks in one of our western towns. The movement made a great noise, and the town minister—one of the "Guardian's" friends among the number, we believe—got roundly scolded because they would not help on the movement. They were opposed to revival—of course they were. In about a year the "Boy" returned, and out of his one hundred and seventy-five converts found one in the membership of the church, two attending occasionally, and the rest were nowhere.

They could not be found with a search-warrant. It is just such statements as this of the "Guardian" that makes it difficult for ministers to keep revivalists of a certain type from doing an infinite amount of mischief in their congregations. The "Boy" announces that he has converted so many thousands. Certain kinds of people believe him, and demand the pulpit for him. The minister, for good reasons, may refuse. There is a difficulty immediately, and perhaps a split. Our Methodist friends suffer quite as much in this way as others.

PASTORAL VISITATION.

HOW many times a year should a minister visit his congregation? For our part, we don't see why a family in good standing in the Church, without trouble of any kind, and needing no help, should be visited at all. Visited, however, most of them must be, and the question is, how often? That depends. A man who won't go to Church should, if possible, be visited twice a week—on Saturday to ask him to attend, and early on Monday morning to ask him why he didn't. A man dangerously ill should be visited very often—a dying man should, if possible, be seen every day, or sometimes oftener. Confined invalids should be seen at regular intervals if unable to go to church. A church-going family in good standing, and in no need of special help, should certainly be satisfied with one visit a year. A new or very weak congregation may need special attention. Other circumstances may modify the rule, but certainly an annual visit is as much as should be expected from a hard-worked minister. Too much visiting is worse than too little, if the minister who visits too little is a good preacher. No amount of "calling" will make up for pulpit slipshod. The people who get the calls will be the first to denounce the slipshod. There is intense selfishness and vulgarity connected with the demand for incessant visitation. Why should any man be so selfish as to demand for himself and family time that should be spent in preparing sermons for the whole congregation? Consciousness of social inferiority makes some people demand extra attention from ministers. They need his visits to bolster them up.

NATURAL RELIGION.

ADMIRATION of nature and its beauties is not at all to be cried down. Especially in this holiday season do people direct their minds to the outer world and appreciate their environments. At any time the works of the Creator call forth the interest and the wondering attention of the true Christian. Nothing scarcely remains to be said or done in this direction. The poets of the last two centuries have quite sufficiently educated people on the point. No one now thinks of disputing the fact that the more a person knows of God's works the better he can worship God; and the poet's once startling assertion, that "an undevout astronomer is mad," is regarded as more commonplace. There is, however, a very distinct line to be drawn between admiration and worship, and the most intelligent admirer of nature and its charms will be the last to accord to them more than their own place.

A writer in a recent number of the Montreal "Witness," who is called in the heading "A Philosopher," and who is presumably a Christian, says:

"Sabbath morning, up early. How calm and peaceful! A visit to the city of the dead on our Mount Royal at midnight could hardly give you a more realistic idea of the speaking silence of a Sabbath morning in the country. Then your surroundings are so sweet and beautiful as to remind you forcibly of an ever-present, all-wise, and beneficent Creator, in whom we live and move and have our being. The cloudless heavens above, the sun rising behind the eastern hills, the waving corn in rich abundance, the 'trees clapping their hands,' the profuse variety of wild flowers, the birds enjoying their morning toilet, and on the wing from tree to tree, and the winding little rivulet running at our feet, all spoke to my inner consciousness of God their Maker."

That is very good. There is no fault at all to be found with it. We have merely quoted it in the interests of fair play. But when the same writer, in the very next paragraph, permits his theme to run away with him in the following fashion, what are we to make of him?

"Whether the doctrine of evolution be true or not, it makes little matter; facts show that there must be an infinite, intelligent source of life and power somewhere. Evolution only takes us a little further back in the cycles of ages, and calls God by another name, while only half doubting the doctrine of supernatural personal presence. The author of 'the new faith' admitted a great first cause, and all his

disciples who are worthy of the name follow his example in this. An evolutionist need not be either an agnostic or an atheist."

Now, "whether the doctrine of evolution be true or not, it makes little matter;" what we object to is the calling of God by another name. What is that other name? Perhaps by "putting this and that together" we can make out.

The author of "Ecce Homo"—the Gospel according to Pontius Pilate—in his new book on "Natural Religion," after a most lugubrious lament over the imagined downfall of Christianity, sets himself very industriously to the task of cobbling up a "religion of the future." This new creed is specially prepared, in the first instance, to suit the "weaker capacity" of those very scientific people who have searched the universe and found no God in it, including not only Agnostics, but professed Atheists. The religion-maker very affectionately pats them on the back, and tells them they are very much mistaken in their estimate of themselves; that they are not real Atheists at all; that what they have been rejecting is nothing but a name—a word; that in the very negation, the very absence of Deity, which in the wide range of their explorations they have always met with, is to be found the true object of worship; that they have a God, and that God is Nature. This "religion of the future" is only an "exploded superstition" of the past. Its name is Pantheism. It had its origin in poetic exaggeration. And surely the eloquent speakers and the "glowing" writers of the present day should be very watchful that they do not give it any encouragement.

SATURDAY HALF-HOLIDAY.

WHILE a good many are trying to get up an agitation for the practical abolition of the Sabbath as a day of rest and religious service, and for its transformation into a season of amusement and relaxation for the few, and eventually of ordinary toil for the many others, with a great deal more of wisdom and practical beneficence, are seeking to have more of the Saturday set apart for holiday-making, and instead of trying to increase the aggregate amount of work, are doing everything in their power to have it permanently lessened. If those who try to pose as the friends of the working man would do more in this latter direction, they would show their wisdom and their benevolence in a much more unmistakable manner than they do in that which they so generally adopt. What is to prevent the Saturday afternoon holiday being universal, and with positive benefit to all parties? In some establishments there is no work done on that day after twelve o'clock noon. Will any one say that in such cases the employed receive less wages and the employer less satisfactory service? Notoriously the facts are all in the opposite direction. Once adopted, the plan is found to work in a manner satisfactory to all parties concerned. A kinder feeling springs up all round. The work done in the course of the week is found to be not less, but, if anything, more. The class of workers in such establishments is by-and-by improved, for an increasing number are anxious to share in such advantages, and employers have thereby a wider choice. If they find some inclined to abuse the privilege, their places can be easily filled. In this way a feeling of greater mutual confidence is established, and everything moves on more pleasantly and with greater satisfaction. The employer finds that it is to his advantage to deal reasonably and liberally with his "hands," and these, on the other side, are naturally more inclined to do their work cheerfully and with greater conscientiousness. This Saturday half-holiday is, no doubt, not everything, and will not, of course, act as a universal talisman for rectifying labour troubles and sweetening the relationship between class and class. But it greatly helps in that direction. It has done so already, and the more it is adopted the more this will be the case. It is, in short, not *more* working time which the world needs, but less; not less rest, but more. Of course, those who argue for the amendment, or rather the abolition, of the Sabbath laws, are careful to have it understood that they have no desire to increase the aggregate of human labour. Such, however, would be the result of success attending their efforts. In fact, the Sabbath laws, even so far as they are mere matters of human enactment, operate as a protection for the poor against the cupidity and oppression of the rich. Some say that the rich have special advantages even now, and ask why the poor