

The Provincial Wesleyan

Published under the direction of the Wesleyan Methodist Conference of Eastern British America.

Volume XXII. No. 49.

HALIFAX, N. S., WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 7, 1870.

Whole No. 1091.

For the Provincial Wesleyan. TRANSSUBSTANTIATION.

The doctrine of Transubstantiation is one of the distinguishing tenets of the Romish Church. It is rejected by all Protestant bodies without exception, while every true Papist must believe in it as the peril of his soul's salvation. To so great an extent has the doctrine become identified with the Church, that the Test Act, passed in the reign of Charles II. and repealed little over forty years ago, effected the exclusion of Catholics from public offices by requiring them, among other things, to abjure belief in so Papistical a tenet. Like other errors of the Church of Rome, it grew during the darkness of the middle ages. A too literal interpretation of the words of our Saviour at the Last Supper—"This is my body,"—had, as an early period, caused a vague belief to spring up gradually in the Church that the sacred elements were connected in some mysterious manner with the body and blood of Christ. These, although it is impossible to speak with precision on the subject, seem to have been generally regarded as present at the administration of the Eucharist, though in what manner this presence was supposed to be realized cannot be determined, as the matter had never been publicly discussed in any Synod. Indeed, it is probable that the matter was largely left to individual judgment. In the year 831, however, Paschasius Radbertus, a Benedictine monk, and Abbot of Corbie in France, published a book in which he unequivocally maintained the doctrine of the real presence. It would appear to have been regarded with dislike by Charles the Bald, then King of France, who appointed Ratramn and John Scotus, two learned men, to reply to the objectionable publication. But the want of clear and decided views on the subject caused the discussion to be inefficiently conducted both by these champions and other theologians who voluntarily entered the lists. As the aversion, however, which Charles felt for the doctrine did not take the shape of a prohibition, the matter gradually sank to rest for two hundred years. A choice of beliefs being thus afforded, it may easily be imagined which one gained ground during the sombre period of intellectual gloom which followed. But the events which took place about the middle of the eleventh century removed all doubts on the subject, and decisively settled what was to be the orthodox faith on the subject. In 1043 Berenger, of Tours, publicly avowed his disbelief of the doctrine of Transubstantiation. For this he was condemned in no less than seven Councils. At four of these he was himself present and solemnly avowed his errors, only to relapse again. He lived to an advanced age, tortured by the recollection of his repeated perjuries, but protected from the extreme rigour of ecclesiastical law by the celebrated Hildebrand, afterwards Gregory VII, who besides being influenced by personal friendship, was probably himself inclined to the contrary opinion. The Council of Placentia, held during the pontificate of Urban II, sanctioned the doctrine of the real presence. Innocent III, in the fourth Lateran Council, finally determined the nature of the presence, precisely established the dogma, and affixed to it the name of Transubstantiation. The gradual and unnoticed growth of pernicious error was never more strikingly exemplified than in the history of this absurd and blasphemous tenet. Bad, too, as it would be as a mere belief, its practical consequences have been a wide deviation in the administration of the Eucharist, as practised by the Romish Church, from the primitive type afforded by the Last Supper. Fear lest the blood of our Lord might be spilt, caused the cup to be withdrawn from communicants and confined to the priests. The use of the wafer instead of broken bread sprang from scruples of a similar nature, about breaking the body of Christ. Thus the apprehension of committing an imaginary sacrilege has resulted in an actual neglect of scriptural usage.

The doctrine we are at present discussing, though unquestionably resting on a most patently ridiculous as is commonly supposed. It is founded on one of the metaphysical subtleties so rife in the middle ages; but precisely because it is thus founded has been almost invariably misunderstood. Philosophers are unanimous in asserting that our knowledge of matter is purely relative; that is, that of matter, in itself, we can know nothing, but only as it has qualities which are *en rapport* with our senses. "When I see and taste a piece of gold," says Mill, "I am conscious of a sensation of yellow colour, and sensations of hardness and weight; and by varying the mode of handling, I may add to these sensations many others completely distinct from them; but the sensations are all of which I am directly conscious." Of what would be called the essence of anything,—that which makes it to be *gold*, what it is,—we know nothing. This is unknown and unknowable something, in which the various qualities of which we are conscious are supposed to inhere, is called *substance* (and under *substance* stands) or *matter*. This substance, then, being entirely inaccessible to human observation, might be annihilated or changed in toto without our knowledge, so long as the various properties clothing it continued to produce in us the appropriate sensations. Transubstantiation is the removing of the substance of the bread and wine, and the substituting in its place the substance of the flesh and blood of Christ, the qualities of the original elements remaining the same as before. Those, therefore, who developed the doctrine into its more refined form, did not commit the palpable absurdity vulgarly attributed to them, of supposing the change to be cognizable by our senses. This would not be transubstantiation, which means a change in the substance, something of which our senses, commonly appealed to in refutation of the doctrine, can tell us nothing. But although the popular view of the nature of the presence be incorrect, there is nevertheless, a genuine absurdity adherent in the tenet. Granting the existence of an external cause, to which we are compelled by a necessity of our nature to refer our sensations, if this unknown *substance* be matter minus all its qualities and properties, in what possible respect can the substance of the body and blood of Christ differ from the substance of the

bread and wine? The expression may appear to border on irrelevance; but in reality the reflection will suffice to discover that it does not. For, deprive any portion of matter of merely the property of extension, and to what a chimaera do we reduce it! What is left as a residuum, and how could it manifest itself to the senses, or be even realized in imagination? And if it be replied that extension, or the property of occupying some portion of space, is itself all that substance really is, the answer is obvious that extension differs only in degree and not in kind, and must be the same for the divine body as for the eucharistic elements. But, in truth, when we talk of matter as something divested of all sensible qualities, we are talking of that of which we know nothing.

The presence, however, of the flesh and blood of Christ, in whatever manner it is supposed to be realized, involves other absurdities quite as gigantic as the above, and a great deal more blasphemous. When a person has achieved a faith sufficiently submitted to believe in the mystical transmutation effected by the blessing of the priest, he has still to credit the most stupendous miracle, or rather series of miracles, that the human mind can imagine,—the perpetual consumption and as perpetual renewal of the body of our Lord. And, passing over the horrid blasphemy involved in the idea of taking into the system the flesh of the Saviour, the digestive functions have to be suspended that the elements may not undergo assimilation. There are numerous minor absurdities connected with the tenet which cannot be discussed here, but which will suggest themselves to every one. To this fantastic Moloch of superstition, engendered by the frivolities of a vain philosophy on a misinterpretation of the words of our Lord, has been sacrificed a host of heroic souls for refusing to fall down and worship it. Surely out of the mists of error steaming up from the golden chalice of abominations held by the woman clad in purple and scarlet, and obscuring the Sun of Righteousness from the weary eyes of mankind, was never shaped a phantom "more dreadful and deformed." The meek and lowly Jesus, telling his Godhead in the Eucharistic elements, and calling on mankind to believe in the wondrous transmutation, or be consigned to the martyr's stake in this world and everlasting flames in the next! The conception is worthy the imagination of a fiend.

THE COMING YEARS.

BY CARL SPENCER.
The glorious coming years,
The glorious coming years,
Our prophets see them far upon the way:
With tumbrel and with song,
They bear the standard of the coming day.

The grand millennial years,
The fruitful harvest years,
So sure to blossom when we shall not see.
Contented we forego,
If each one seed may sow,
Which in that century shall be a tree.

O world of want and wrong,
O world, despairing long!
Our hopes are strong for thee, our hands are tall:
Our prayers, with labor wrought,
Have golden answers caught,
The promise is as vague and bountiful!

For every hopeful plan,
All help from man to man,
Room, where the hosts of true reform advance;
The names of Right and Good,
Though little understood,
Shall keep their armies safe from sore mischance.

Than every enthroned ill
Our Faith is higher still,
High as the throne where Right with God appears.
So lifted over fate,
So strong to work and wait,
Are they who count on the eternal years.

REVIVALS.

Whatever we may think of extravagance attendant upon revivals of religion, we cannot doubt that God has, in the history of his church, shown that he does at particular times pour out his Spirit upon men. Those who disbelieve the supernatural religion must go through the New Testament chiefly to prune it. What is left of our Bible after the supernatural taken from it? It would not be a intelligible record of anything. It is either supernatural or it is nothing at all which any man need care about.

The history of the Pentecostal revival is told naturally and without the slightest appearance of exaggeration, and if that be true then all revivals are accounted for. They come from God, and are to be desired as the greatest boon that can give to man. They are to be sought after as the revival is dependent upon the spiritual condition of the church, and if a church were always alive to God it would have a continuous revival. We question whether it were possible for any church to bear the strain of a perpetual revival, such as has been at times enjoyed. Cities have been moved by the outpouring of the Spirit of God until many were obliged to flee the Spirit and attend to the work of God. Very often revivals have so shaken communities that ordinary business almost ceased for a time. God's Spirit sometimes produces the most wonderful effects upon the minds of men who even sin revival meetings. Overwhelming agitation of soul, zeal, tenderness and solemnity attend revivals. They can not continue always at the same high key, but they nevertheless should be sought for most earnestly by all who love God. The victory often turns toward the church in a community where the struggle has been long and hard and a revival turns the tide of affairs against sin. The direct way to find God in revival power is to go in penitence, in humiliation, in faith and ask for a new heart, a clean heart,

The Church must seek holiness, if it is successfully to draw near to God. There must be no hypocrisy, no robbery of God, no sham excitement no "getting up" of earnest, but instead a direct, solemn, honest, earnest appeal for forgiveness and sanctification. Ministers and members must come in self-abasement, in deep repentance for all past sin, in perfect trust to the all-merciful God. He will forgive, bless, sanctify and revive. He will never turn us away when we thus come to him. "He is able to save to the utmost," and he will save. We may be sure that sinners will neither be convicted nor converted while the Church lives in a backslidden state. Such a church is an incubus, and a disgrace; a great shame and a scandal in Zion. Such a church is criticized, laughed at, sneered at by those who do not fear God. Its example is pernicious, deadly; and, as an inducement, offered him a seat in his own pew. Succeeding in this, he was emboldened and encouraged to proceed in the line of Christian activity and usefulness. And now, mark with what a blessed result. He was the means of leading one hundred young men to become stated attendants at the sanctuary, many of whom have been truly converted to God.

A minister of the Gospel mentioned that he had no eye of sympathy to look upon the afflicted, no voice to speak to them; each man, forgetful perhaps the greater words of others, absorbed only in his own, rushed forward, if possible, to be the first into the troubled waters, and so rap the solitary blessing which the pool contained. Here, on this mountain side, sits Jesus. There is no troubling there; there need not be. What ever troubling there is, is always on man's side. With him all is calm. We see in our mind's eye the multitude toiling up the mountain side; the eagerness, the anxiety, the casting down at Jesus' feet, and beautifully simple is all that we have told us of what he did; "he healed them all."

And there lay before Jesus, if we might be bold enough to say so, no alternative but to heal them all. The only alternative was to get up and go away; or tell the people who brought their loved sick ones to take them back again unhealed; but what an alternative would that have been to him. He could never have done this. So, then, when we cast down our sorrows, or ourselves, or our friends' sorrows, or ourselves, right at the feet of Christ, let us think, "He cannot go away from them." This is no presumption, no lowering of Jesus, no deduction from his power; but it is a holy faith and courage to have such a thought, and it is greatly honoring to him. What would have become of us, if it had been once recorded that Jesus was too busy to attend to such and such a person, or that he refused any one or sent him away unhealed? No doubt Satan would say, "Ah, that case is just like yours;" or "our own mistaking hearts would be sure to fix upon it, and to feel, "So and so went away; ah! my experience may be the same." But Jesus, owing to the blessed pliancy of his nature, cannot go on—no, not a single step, if a helpless, suffering being, willing to be healed, is cast in faith at his feet. He is rooted and bound by misery. Such is his blessed human nature, that if he were obliged to spurn the miserable from his feet, or to go away from them, he would be miserable himself.

I think of the helpless misery of that crowd cast down at Jesus' feet. Lying there, they suggest the thought that conscious helplessness has in itself power with Jesus. Coming so closely in the sacred narrative upon the impassioned outcry of the Syro-Phoenician woman at the feet of Jesus (which has a lesson of its own), it seems to have a special teaching. For many might say, "We cannot plead as she did." Diffident of their own earnestness and energy, and seeing how much was won by the Syro-Phoenician woman by the exercise of these qualities, they might say, "If Christ has to be so hardy entreated, then what can we hope to get—who are feeble, who seem as though we are not wise enough to use arguments which we can reach his head, or strong enough to utter cries which can pierce his heart?" We need only read on a little further; and behold the multitudes lying at his feet.

These sick people thus lying at Jesus' feet, saw a voice to us—his helplessness speaks to ours; it says, "Perhaps you cannot address arguments like the Syro-Phoenician woman to the head of Christ, or it may be, are dull in pleading with the affections of his heart; then do not consider that all is over—that there is nothing for you; do not depress yourself with what you cannot do; think rather of what you can do. You can be before Jesus, where he can see you; you are very close to him when you are at his feet. In common, every day life men are frequently losing gain which they might have had, while aiming at something higher which they cannot have; so it is in the spiritual life too. While aiming at what is much higher than we at present have capacity for, we miss what is within our reach. We must not fret ourselves that we have not attained to this or that energy of spiritual life, and shut out the comfort of knowing that we have "something"—that we are at the Saviour's feet. Satan would hide from us that we are there; for he knows that none tarry long there in humble waiting, without being lifted up and given strength. If the reader feels very helpless, let him not flee from this thought, but use it; and the way he is to use it is this. He is to stay still where he is—not to want to move at all—not to be restless; Jesus sees him, that is enough.

THE INVITATION SOCIETY.
Some years ago a gentleman residing in one of our cities was deeply impressed and grieved by seeing multitudes who neglected public worship; and he determined to make the effort to induce some of the Sabbath-breakers to frequent the House of God. It required some little effort at first, but he overcame his timidity. The Lord's day evening he went forth with his holy purpose, and meeting a young man who did not appear to be on his way to a place of worship, he respectfully addressed him, got into conversation with him, and he persuaded the stranger to accompany him to worship and, as an inducement, offered him a seat in his own pew. Succeeding in this, he was emboldened and encouraged to proceed in the line of Christian activity and usefulness. And now, mark with what a blessed result. He was the means of leading one hundred young men to become stated attendants at the sanctuary, many of whom have been truly converted to God.

A minister of the Gospel mentioned that he had no eye of sympathy to look upon the afflicted, no voice to speak to them; each man, forgetful perhaps the greater words of others, absorbed only in his own, rushed forward, if possible, to be the first into the troubled waters, and so rap the solitary blessing which the pool contained. Here, on this mountain side, sits Jesus. There is no troubling there; there need not be. What ever troubling there is, is always on man's side. With him all is calm. We see in our mind's eye the multitude toiling up the mountain side; the eagerness, the anxiety, the casting down at Jesus' feet, and beautifully simple is all that we have told us of what he did; "he healed them all."

And there lay before Jesus, if we might be bold enough to say so, no alternative but to heal them all. The only alternative was to get up and go away; or tell the people who brought their loved sick ones to take them back again unhealed; but what an alternative would that have been to him. He could never have done this. So, then, when we cast down our sorrows, or ourselves, or our friends' sorrows, or ourselves, right at the feet of Christ, let us think, "He cannot go away from them." This is no presumption, no lowering of Jesus, no deduction from his power; but it is a holy faith and courage to have such a thought, and it is greatly honoring to him. What would have become of us, if it had been once recorded that Jesus was too busy to attend to such and such a person, or that he refused any one or sent him away unhealed? No doubt Satan would say, "Ah, that case is just like yours;" or "our own mistaking hearts would be sure to fix upon it, and to feel, "So and so went away; ah! my experience may be the same." But Jesus, owing to the blessed pliancy of his nature, cannot go on—no, not a single step, if a helpless, suffering being, willing to be healed, is cast in faith at his feet. He is rooted and bound by misery. Such is his blessed human nature, that if he were obliged to spurn the miserable from his feet, or to go away from them, he would be miserable himself.

I think of the helpless misery of that crowd cast down at Jesus' feet. Lying there, they suggest the thought that conscious helplessness has in itself power with Jesus. Coming so closely in the sacred narrative upon the impassioned outcry of the Syro-Phoenician woman at the feet of Jesus (which has a lesson of its own), it seems to have a special teaching. For many might say, "We cannot plead as she did." Diffident of their own earnestness and energy, and seeing how much was won by the Syro-Phoenician woman by the exercise of these qualities, they might say, "If Christ has to be so hardy entreated, then what can we hope to get—who are feeble, who seem as though we are not wise enough to use arguments which we can reach his head, or strong enough to utter cries which can pierce his heart?" We need only read on a little further; and behold the multitudes lying at his feet.

These sick people thus lying at Jesus' feet, saw a voice to us—his helplessness speaks to ours; it says, "Perhaps you cannot address arguments like the Syro-Phoenician woman to the head of Christ, or it may be, are dull in pleading with the affections of his heart; then do not consider that all is over—that there is nothing for you; do not depress yourself with what you cannot do; think rather of what you can do. You can be before Jesus, where he can see you; you are very close to him when you are at his feet. In common, every day life men are frequently losing gain which they might have had, while aiming at something higher which they cannot have; so it is in the spiritual life too. While aiming at what is much higher than we at present have capacity for, we miss what is within our reach. We must not fret ourselves that we have not attained to this or that energy of spiritual life, and shut out the comfort of knowing that we have "something"—that we are at the Saviour's feet. Satan would hide from us that we are there; for he knows that none tarry long there in humble waiting, without being lifted up and given strength. If the reader feels very helpless, let him not flee from this thought, but use it; and the way he is to use it is this. He is to stay still where he is—not to want to move at all—not to be restless; Jesus sees him, that is enough.

Now I think how beautifully simple everything is here; the great and unadorned words in which this great transaction is recorded lead us to thoughts of simplicity. There is simple trust on the part of the afflicted people, and those who brought them; and simple pity on the part of Jesus.

As little children we must receive the Kingdom of heaven, and simple food suits the infancy of the soul—ay, and its ripe old age. For when many things have been learned about types and prophecies, and many speculations have been made, and systems of theology constructed, what does the soul fall back upon when in view of eternity, but just the simple truth of "Jesus dead, and alive again for us?" That was what made a prelate eminent in learning and controversy say, in extreme old age, and in his dying hours, "Don't talk to me of the cross, but of the One that hung 'upon the cross."

Let us say to ourselves and to others, what is needed for healing is not many thoughts, or high thoughts, about Jesus, or any intellectual knowledge about him at all, but the plainest simplicity of trust; and it will be very helpful if we see that the like simplicity is in him. Simply pity that is what we are to look for from Jesus. We need not connect it with any theological thoughts; it is a pure unaccompanied feeling; and where shall we see it exercised as in those who are cast at his feet?

We are now in the right place before Christ—in the right position—that of expectancy, with the right feelings—those of self-helplessness, and yet hope. Who knows how soon you will say, "We cast them down at Jesus' feet, and he healed them."—*Eng. Paper.*

RESULT OF A POOR SERMON.

A little more than thirty years ago, then a young minister, I went one evening into the lecture-room of the Presbyterian Church in Newburgh, New York, expecting to hear my venerable father, Dr. John Johnston. I was, at the time, settled on the other side of the Hudson River. The services had commenced when I entered, and they were singing the first hymn. Father Johnston saw me, and coming down, urged me to preach for him. This I refused decidedly, as I had no preparation. As length he persuaded me to go into the desk to take some part in the exercises. He made the prayer after the singing, and, in the midst of it, called the divine blessing upon the young brother who was provisionally present and was about to preach the Word! I thought this exceedingly cool, as I had positively declined; but when he concluded his prayer, he said to me in an undertone of voice, "Now it is my preaching to be done you are to do it."

"OUR MAN."

Last Saturday morning, as I came down in the steamboat which plies throughout the summer between Wheatledge and New York, I met Mr. Gokee on the lower deck. Mr. Gokee's bobby—who of us does not have one of some sort—is a real horse, and I am confident that a fast trotter is quite as essential to his conception of heaven, as a piano can be to that of Elizabeth Stuart Phelps. You may see him almost any pleasant summer afternoon in one of those sodden looking, trotting sulks, leaning perpetually forward, as if to expedite his speed, and whirling round a race course which he and a few others of his like have constructed at Wheatledge, in a tearing race with his own shadow. Let me do him the justice of saying that he never races with anything else. My first notion of his presence was a hearty slap on the shoulder. I recognized Mr. Gokee's favorite salutation even before I heard his gruffly good natured voice.

"Mr. Laicus," said he, "I want you to come up and see my new horse. I've got the smartest trotter in Orange county."

I congratulated him on his possession, passed a few words with him about his horse, and passed on. As I went up the stairs to the upper saloon, who should I see but William Wheatledge, Esq., the shrewd, sagacious and successful stock broker! He is a member of the Street Presbyterian church, but has I regret to say, a better reputation for piety in the church than he has in the Wall Street circles.

"Ah! Mr. Laicus," said Mr. Wheatledge, "I am glad to see you. Hope you are going to spend Sunday in the city. I want you to come up and bear our new man. We have got the smartest preacher on Manhattan Island."

The similitude of the phraseology in the two invitations struck me, and after a few words about his church and its prospects, I walked on to sit down and ponder a little over these lessons conveyed. Mr. Wheatledge was quite unconscious of it, but he had employed about his new minister almost precisely the same language as that which Mr. Gokee had employed about his horse. And that was not all. It was quite clear that his language very fairly represented his thought. He wanted me to come up and see his minister put through his best paces. To Mr. Wheatledge's thought the minister was "our man," and his smart preaching was to our honor and glory, if not to our emolument.

"Our man! It strikes me that there is a world of bad significance in that phrase. It really means, though perhaps no one would more indignantly dispute the meaning than William Wheatledge, it really means, "We own the minister. He is ours. We hire him, we pay him, we expect him to do our work, to serve as our substitute, to represent our ideas, and to be silent about our follies, to applaud our virtues, to calm our conscience and quiet our fears; to be in a word, our very humble, not to say obsequious servant." I wonder whether the Philippians, Paul was "our man?" I think I hear his indignant protest against the assumption which those words convey. I do not think William Wheatledge represents the whole modern Church, by any means; but there are a good many William Wheatledges in it.

"For my part," says Mrs. S.—"after a stirring sermon on the necessity of personal work for Christ, 'for my part I don't believe in lay people undertaking to carry on missions, and engaging in personal conversation with the impatient, and all that sort of thing. At all events, I have not the taste for it. I leave that to our minister. That is just what we hire him to do in my opinion.' What is that but an enunciation of the 'our man' doctrine?"

"I never heard such preaching as that before," said Deacon M., after an original sermon by his young and enthusiastic pastor. "and I never want to hear any more like it. It is not what I have been accustomed to," and Deacon M. shakes his head occasionally as though it was quite conclusive against any doctrine that he had not been accustomed to, and seemingly quite forgetful that Christ enjoined his ministry to bring things new, as well as old, out of their treasure house. What is

this but the proclamation, in a slightly different form, of the "our man" notion of ministerial independence?

When Square Giles, the distiller, got up in the middle of service, and slamming his pew door behind him, marched all the way down the aisle, because the minister denounced the liquor traffic, every squeak of his heavy boots was an indignant protest against the insubordination of "our man," who dared preach against the sins of his own parishioners.

"For my part," says Mrs. Hardcap, "I don't see what the minister's wife wants of two servants. I get along very well without any; and I think it downright extravagance to dress so. 'I am positively ashamed of our minister's wife,' said Mrs. Wheaton, 'she dresses so shabbily; and if she can't get time to make more calls, why doesn't she keep more servants?' Mrs. Hardcap and Mrs. Wheaton, agreed in nothing else, are clearly agreed on this, that "our man's" wife is not her own mistress, but is bound to dress according to the behests of her husband's employers, and to hold her household subject to their supervision.

I think the ministers themselves are sometimes to blame in this matter. It is not long since I heard a sermon against the Papacy, in which the minister propounded the doctrine that the clergy were not to be held, but the servants of the Church; a position he maintained with so much energy, and with so much amplitude of detail, that it seemed to me he retained very little of ministerial independence.

No! As I read my Bible, the minister is not the servant of the Church, but the servant of Christ; he is not "our man," but the man of God." And, gentlemen of the clergy, one word to you. There is nothing, after all, the American public like so well as genuine independence. Let no man so well as genuine independence, and having, dare maintain. Let Mrs. Potiphar, and Squire Giles, and Deacon M. grumble. For one dead and withered pew-holder your manly conduct shakes off, there will be a dozen to take his place. Be "our man" to no church. Own yourselves.—*Laicus in Christian Union.*

METHODISM IN ALSACE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE METHODIST RECORDER.

Sir,—At this time when the "Provinces of Alsace and Lorraine, owing to the war, have suddenly become topics of almost household interest, and the question whether they should remain French or become incorporated with a united Germany is so universally discussed, it may not be uninteresting to your readers to know something about Methodism in those parts. The fact of the German language being spoken, apart from any political consideration, was sufficient reason for the German Methodist Episcopal Church in occupying wherever they had the means, any field of labor which presented itself, and, therefore, when some few years ago the preacher, labouring in Rhenish Bavaria received an invitation to cross the border into Alsace and preach the Word there, he was not long before he made use of the opportunity offered. His labours in these parts met with encouraging success. Other Methodist preachers also visited the district, and two colporteurs were further employed in distributing Bibles and tracts. Suddenly, however, the good work was checked by the severity of the French Law, by which not more than twenty persons were permitted to assemble together at once. Persecution soon followed, and the preacher, after holding a meeting one evening, was arrested next morning by *gendarmes* and conducted with hands chained, like a common criminal, to Weissenburg, where he lay in prison for six weeks. In 1868, however, another effort was made, and the preacher in one of the Baden circles visited the district, regularly preaching at great risk, owing to the meetings exceeding the legal number. In Strasbourg, where it was necessary to have special leave to hold public meetings, an appeal to the prefect for such permission was refused. A petition then, signed by several citizens, and supported by the American Ambassador in Paris, was, after much trouble, brought before the Ministry; but up to the time of the outbreak of the war had been unnoticed. "No wonder, then if the oppressed Methodists and Protestants generally of Alsace should view in the victories of Prussia the advent to them of that under Prussia they would fully enjoy. Since the commencement of hostilities the country has been visited by more than one of the Methodist preachers in order to distribute Bibles and tracts to the soldiers. I submit a translation of the greater part of a letter which appeared in a late number of the German Methodist *Evangelist*. It is from the young preacher in whose district Alsace was included before the war. His account of his visit to the old scenes of his labours under new circumstances will be read with interest, as many of the places have become familiar by the early incidents of the campaign.

Yours, &c.,
EDWARD POPPE.

Bow, Nov. 5.

Having received a stock of books and tracts from Bremen, as well as from the British and Foreign Bible Society in Frankfurt, for distribution amongst the sick and wounded soldiers, I directed my steps to dear old Alsace, which had been closed to me since July 15. I left Lahr on September 6, with the intention of crossing the Rhine at New Preistort so as to reach Bischwiller. As far as the railway was all well, but patience had to be exercised. Being disappointed of the opportunity by which I had expected to transport my books to the Rhine, I was obliged the next day that I was able by means of various waggons to reach the river with my package. It him to be crossed, however, and an opportunity of being conveyed by waggon to Bischwiller presented itself. Already in the first French village (Catholic), I realized the fact that I was no longer in Germany. The people, who were soon crossed, were, with me, whiskered one to the other. "He has got des patches," it was soon noticed abroad. "The gentleman has despatches, and has distributed them amongst the Prussians." I testified their curiosity by offering them some of these "despatches," which were seized with great eagerness.