

one-third of the distance to the floor, is the cheapest and easiest remedy we know of, but it is not always effectual. Anything to break the sound-waves. We would be glad to receive suggestions from our readers who have had experience in meeting this difficulty.

"L. S. K."—To what extent have personalities a place in public prayer? Recently two men were gambling in a building when it fell in, one being killed. At his funeral I prayed that the other, through God's mercy in sparing his life, might be led to a better life. Was I right? Give us a few rules for guidance in such matters.—A.: A public prayer should be on public matters. No person should be singled out in it, except in one of two cases: when

the public welfare is exceptionally dependent on the person, or when public feeling is unusually aroused concerning him or her, as in cases of bereavement or calamity. The personal matter then becomes really a public matter. There are occasions, however, of a semi-public character, such as funerals or special prayer meetings, when the rule is more lax. The incidents related are an instance in point. Was the preacher right in so praying? We think so undoubtedly. The escaped sinner was so closely connected with the occasion that so far as that audience was concerned he was a public figure. But to pray for a sinner by name, in ordinary public worship, is almost never defensible. It is out of taste; it stirs up needless animosity; it furnishes a cloak for malice; it does no good, but much harm in many ways.

HELPFUL DATA IN CURRENT LITERATURE.

THE LIMITATIONS OF FREETHINKING. By Rev. Dr. D. S. Phelan. *North American* for September, 10 pp. A well-digested and rather brilliant essay, without much that is particularly new, but what there is being remarkably well said.

CAVE-TOMBS IN GALILEE. By Lawrence Oliphant. *The Living Age* for August 18, 6 pp. An article with something new even for old travelers in Palestine. The writer has made considerable study of the tombs of which he writes, and it is worth while for a minister to know what he has to say of them.

INDIAN WAR IN THE COLONIES. By Edward Eggleston. *The Century*, 19 pp. Mr. Eggleston here begins his series of historical articles on life in the colonies. It is safe to predict that they will be both valuable and interesting. The present installment certainly is. He handles the English language in an admirable manner, and his fancy is lively, while not running away with his facts.

OUR NOMINATING MACHINES. By George Walton Green. *Atlantic Monthly* for September, 6 pp. A clear and vigorous statement of the reasons for much of the rottenness in our politics. The writer attempts rather to tell what the matter is than how it is to be cured. We have never failed to urge upon the preacher his duty to take part in politics. We urge the reading of this article for the same reason.

WHAT IS THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH; OR, WHO ARE THE DISCIPLES OF CHRIST? By J. S. Lamar. *Sunday Magazine* for October, 5 pp. The subject looks like an immense one for a magazine article, but the readers will find that it refers to the denomination called "Disciples" and "Christians"—of which Garfield was a member. It is a description of their doctrines, methods, and a few statistics of their progress.

WITHOUT GOD, NO COMMONWEALTH. By Cardinal Manning. *Eclectic Magazine* for September, 6 pp. A clear, concise statement of the principles on which government rests. The cry of "Equality, fraternity, liberty," is a taking one at present, and is too apt to be carried farther than reason can consent. Cardinal Manning recognizes this tendency, and his words on the subject are, to say the least, timely and suggestive.

EDUCATION IN CHINA. By Rev. D. M. Bates, M.A. *The American Church Review* for September, 18 pp. A very interesting article discussing the modes and standards of education in China, what relation it sustains to the people at large, and the advance made in educational methods from the West. The description of Chinese literature is brief, but interesting, and the discussion on the educational institutions established by missionary societies is not without value.

CLERICAL TRAINING BEFORE AND AFTER ORDINATION. By John Andrews Harris, D.D. *American Church Review* for August, 16 pp. The writer admits the fact of a decline in ministerial authority, and sets himself to the task of finding the reasons and of pointing out the indications of such decline. The fact is not particularly agreeable, but it has to be faced. It is not necessarily a proof that the ministry is declining because its authority is declining. It may mean simply that the people are much farther advanced than they used to be in independent thinking and in moral judgment. The priest's authority is greater than the minister's, but the priest may be not nearly so great as the minister. This article is not profound, but it is suggestive, and shirks none of the disagreeable phases of the subject.