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"ONE IS YOUR MASTER, *even* CHRIST: AND ALL YE ARE BRETHREN."

Moral and Religious Miscellany.

CHURCH CURIOSITIES IN LONDON.

One of the principal business thoroughfares in London is Cheapside, a straight street of about half a mile in length, passing through the heart of the city, of a width which was no doubt considered extraordinary some five or six hundred years ago, but which modern improved taste pronounces to be narrow. At the western end of Cheapside stands the General Post-Office and St. Paul's Cathedral; at its eastern extremity are the Bank of England, the Mansion House, and the Royal Exchange, with its unrivaled facade.

Just in the middle of this busiest and most thronged of all thoroughfares, over whose well-worn stones two hundred thousand foot passengers and thirty thousand vehicles pass and re-pass every working-day in the year, in the very heart of London's commerce, stands Bow church, a beautiful edifice, built by Sir Christopher Wren, the architect of St. Paul's, richly adorned with tracery, carved work, stained glass, and a magnificent organ, and capable of accommodating, with comfort, about three thousand persons. It may be interesting to your readers, and it may assist them to form a judgment of the working of the Established State Church in the city of London, to narrate a few facts relative to this church and parish as at present existing; premising, however, that this gives the unfavorable side as regards the Church Establishment. There is a favourable side, which we may illustrate at a future time; both sides ought to be made known, in order to form a fair estimate.

The living of Bow parish is in the hands of a rector, and its worth £1,200 sterling per annum, and this income is derived from the tithes, the payment of which, is, of course, compulsory on persons of every creed. A short time ago the rector of the parish died, after having held the "cure of souls" there, and received this handsome income for more than 20 years. Yet at the time of his death not more than about twenty people of the whole parish knew him even by sight; and, being six feet four inches in height, and stout in proportion, when once seen he was not soon forgotten. He never came near his church, never either preached there, or attended divine service there. He employed a curate at £100 a year to do the whole duty, and quietly put the other £1,100 in his own pocket, without even condescending to look at the parish whence this revenue was derived; and no man had the power to compel him, either to do the duty or refund the money.

Yet this worthy man was a dignitary of the Church, an arch-deacon, whose duty it was to go up and down in the diocese of London, see to the churches being properly kept up, and deliver periodical charges to keep them to their duties. This office brought

him an additional large salary. On one occasion the pastor of Bow parish invited the two church-wardens—lay officers, chosen yearly by vote from among the householders of the parish—with two or three parishioners, to dine with him. After the port and sherry had been pretty well discussed, he rose and said, "Gentlemen, I shall be happy to take champagne with you; and forthwith his livery servants placed a quart bottle of champagne to every man. For himself, he poured out his wine into a half-pint tumbler and drank it in that style. It is not for me to say in what condition the guests went home.

During all these years the average congregation on the Sabbath day in Bow church was from forty to sixty persons, in a building capable of holding 3,000. This is partly to be accounted for, of course, by the fact that most of the merchants, whose warehouses are in that vicinity, reside in their villas out of town, like the worthy rector himself; still there is a large population of clerks, servants, and small tradesmen in the neighborhood. The week-day service is held on the Wednesday morning, if we are not mistaken. On one occasion, a musical friend of ours, who had some acquaintance with the organist of Bow church, thought he would attend the weekly service, to hear the instrument played. He accordingly went into the organ loft. There were the organist and about twenty children from a school, who were paid to come and sing. There was the clergyman in the desk, and the clerk to say amen—in all about twenty-four persons engaged to conduct the service. Besides these the congregation consisted of two old women in a far corner of the church.

There is an ancient endowment which affords five pounds to a clergyman to preach in Bow church on the anniversary of King Charles' assassination. Lately, the two church-wardens for the year, both of whom happened to be Non-Conformists, thought it their duty to go on the occasion. They formed the whole of the audience. Parson and clerk, and their two selves, and not a soul else came; no organist, and no singers; there was no fund to pay them for coming to church on extra time. The clergyman gave out a hymn, and the old clerk commenced a tune. After a verse or so had been sung, our Methodist church-warden thought that a little more life was very desirable, so he and his brother official began to sing lustily. The poor old clerk, who in all his years of office had never heard such a thing in the church before, lifted up his spectacles from his wide-opened eyes, turned pale, and was unable to sing another note; he had been so put out of his way! To these two persons the preacher read an able historical discourse of an hour long; it was the curate of the parish. They went afterward into the vestry to thank him for his sermon. "Gentlemen," said he, "I am much obliged to you for coming. Fourteen years have I come to this church on this day with this very