

The Wesleyan,

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OUR ENGLISH LETTER.

DEATH OF THE POPE.

DEAR MR. EDITOR.—So much has been written on the death of the Pope, that it appears almost unnecessary to make further reference to it, but these brief notes upon passing events would be incomplete without some allusion to such an important event. A prolonged life, and a lengthened occupancy of the Papal throne will make the name of the deceased Prelate a very memorable one. In addition to these his career has been most remarkable, and during his Pontificate events of unusual importance to Italy and the Catholic Church have transpired.

THE TEMPORAL DOMINION

has been wrested from the Papacy and the Italian Kingdom occupies a commanding and hopeful place among European Powers. The General Council of the Romish Church has promulgated the doctrine of Papal Infallibility and other changes of vast importance will mark the reign of the late Pontiff as one of unparalleled interest. Pius IXth is reported to have been a man of very great amiability, a priest whose life was blameless, temperate and pure. He secured a large amount of personal esteem, and visitors to Rome from all parts of the world, and of all communions, speak highly of the distinguished Ruler of the Vatican. He could not yield gracefully to his reverses, and cherished rather sharp and unforgiving sentiments towards his opponents, issuing anathemas and excommunications on the heads of many who differed from him. His claims for deference and unreserved obedience were high and not unfrequently preposterous. He had many failings, but the prevailing tone of his numerous biographers, is that of generous recognition of his undoubted talents and of his private and public virtue.

DEATH OF GEORGE CRUIKSHANK

who was well known and widely esteemed for his artistic ability and his life of philanthropy. His long connection with painting and engraving, goes back almost to the beginning of the present century, and he has been foremost in the ranks of the talented and clever illustrators of popular works and papers. Serious, witty or comical by turns, he was always severe on all forms of vice and folly. There are sound lessons and useful suggestions through all his works. He threw much energy into the temperance movement, and his genius was never more powerful than when depicting the terrible results of the drink traffic and the misery of its victims. The deceased artist was an acceptable speaker, an earnest worker, a liberal helper to many works of mercy, and was permitted to labor on to the close of life, beloved and honored by a very large circle of admirers and friends.

THE DEATH OF DR. DUFF

the veteran Indian Missionary has just taken place, and Edinburgh has laid him in his grave with all the distinguishing honor of a public funeral. The grand old missionary was well deserving of the love and renown which crowned the decline of his life, which has been evidenced at his interment, and will long surround his name and make his memory fragrant. He was a sound scholar, an enthusiast in his devotion to the mission work, and his services in India were of incalculable value. Since his return to Scotland he has taken an important part in the direction of the foreign work of his church, and by his fervent eloquence on the platform or in the pulpit, and by his pen he has rendered most valuable service. He was spared to a good age, and retained to the very close of life his mental powers, and passed into eternity in full assurance and cloudless peace.

THE EASTERN QUESTION

at the time of writing these lines the outlook is more hopeful. The intense strain is relaxed. Parliament granted the six millions, and the Government is doing its best to spend a considerable part of it before the vote of credit will expire on March 31st. They are purchasing vessels, pushing forward some that are building, large numbers of men are being employed in Dockyards and arsenals, and a vast buzz of preparation is heard in all military departments. We feel tolerably secure now until the Conference meets, and hopes are strong that then some other way out of the trouble, will be devised, instead of entering into war.

THE ENGLISH FLEET

has proceeded to within a few miles of Constantinople. The Sultan did not desire it, and while it had to encounter no opposition when it finally sailed up, it went without leave. The assigned reason was the maintenance of order, and the security of the English residents. But the number and strength of the vessels were out of all proportion to the mere task of taking care of English folk, and looked very much like a menace to Russia. Then came a threat from Russia, that they must advance on Constantinople, for the protection of all the Christians there, and for a time it was believed that the threat was fulfilled. They are very near the famous capital, and in the event of any serious hitch in the complicated negotiations, or any further warlike demonstration on our part, they can quickly enter, and it will be no easy task to drive them out. They are not far from Gallipoli, and they have in many respects a terrible hold upon the prostrate Empire. The terms of peace are not yet arranged, and there are reports current that the Turks have become rather untractable within the last few days. This may arise from the presence of the fleet, and some lingering hope that after all England may actively interfere for their relief, and prevent the threatened dismemberment of their possessions. "B."
Feb. 21, 1878.

OUR PROFESSIONS.

THE MEDICAL PROFESSION.

(BY AN M. D.)

To any young man desirous of spending a life of usefulness, and benefit to his kind, the profession of medicine presents many attractions. To possess the knowledge necessary to heal the sick, to relieve the suffering, and to allay pain, is certainly no mean attainment, and he who views it correctly will consider it second to no calling on earth, in its opportunity for doing good to others. That the sacred trust of this noble profession has often been prostituted by dishonest minds, to prey upon credulous and suffering humanity, detracts not in the least from the nobility of the profession itself, but should incite its friends to guard it with more jealous care. It is a profession honorable for its hoary age, its benefits to humanity, and for the great and illustrious men whose lives have been devoted to its pursuit and study. From the time of Esculapius till this time, many of the greatest minds have been found in its ranks; and though it has been assailed by the wicked, the ignorant, and the skeptical from without its ranks, and by dreamers, experimenters and fanatics from within, it still stands grand in its ever increasing ability to "do good unto all men."

But with all the attractiveness of the profession we love, with all the honor of following its course of usefulness, we hesitate before advising young men to adopt it as a life business. Indeed our object just now is to show many young men why they should not enter the profession at all. There are three motives we consider which should actuate every individual aiming at the adoption of the profession of medicine; to do good unto others, to gain eminence for skill and ability, and to win an income worthy of his knowledge and grave responsibility. Now there are many things in the way of debarring him from obtaining these objects in their desired and desirable degree; and among the first of these is the already crowded state of the profession—crowded to such an extent that many within its ranks, with all the conditions to ensure success, fail hopelessly. The medical schools of the United States turn out about three thousand graduates every year; add to this the annual production of the European and Canadian Colleges, and we have no mean army annually added to an already overcrowded profession." Nova Scotia with its scattered

population has about three hundred practitioners, while Ontario has fifteen hundred, and our own Halifax about forty. Indeed we find throughout the Dominion that every town and nearly every village is full to overflowing. While in the neighboring Republic the supply exceeds the requirements to a greater extent even than with us. In the newer Provinces and Territories the same condition of things exists, and while farmers, laborers and artisans, are asked for and find ample room and opportunity, the medical profession is already crowded. That the medical profession has already too many within its ranks should of itself be a sufficient reason to induce thinking and cautious young men to hesitate before adding themselves to the numbers; but to those who are willing to take their chances in the multitude we would like to point out other causes and conditions of failure.

Many persons enter upon the study of medicine without a previous liberal education and are thus almost incapable for its proper study or ability to comprehend its teaching. Young men from the farm, the workshop, the counting house or the school-room with minds poorly cultured begin this study when they should possess a good education and trained intellect necessary to the successful understanding of the subject they are to pursue. The result is, in spite of his best endeavors and continuous industry, a half-educated physician, a man who must be a failure pressed by the keen competition around him. He who wins in these days and stands a peer among his fellows must have no such positive weights to keep him back. The defective early education will show through the whole after life. To all then who lack a liberal education as the foundation for the pursuit of this special study we respectfully but earnestly tender the advice to leave the medical profession alone.

Another obstacle in the way of success is a want of adaptability to the requirements of the profession. We may fail to make ourselves plain on this point. Granting a finished medical education and a sphere of labor not overcrowded, there is yet required, may we say, tact to win and maintain the public patronage and confidence. Men there have been of ability and excellent medical attainments, yet wanting this necessary qualification, who have utterly failed as practitioners. Goldsmith, whose name and works are immortal though he possessed "incredible industry," could not succeed in the practice of the profession; and Dr. Holland in our own time, who has attained such excellent position in the literary world, looked in vain for patients from his surgery window in Springfield, Mass. By failure in his chosen profession, Holland was actually driven into literature. For lack of this adaptability as well as for the overcrowded state of the profession we find in our own Province and in other parts of the Dominion, physicians who have been driven or drifted into various other pursuits. We have found them at the Dentists' Lathes, presiding at the school-master's desk, as clerks behind the counter, on the farm, in the counting room, in the pulpit and even as the professional tramp. Happy is he who finds before it is too late that he has chosen a profession to which he is unsuited and which is unsuited to him; for often the man realizes his mistake when the die is cast, when opportunities for other pursuits in life are forever past; and instead of his talents adorning a profession to which he was suited, he finds himself obliged to drag along a useless life with all his aims a failure.

DR. MARK TRAFTON ON THE PAST AND PRESENT.

Old men see with the eyes of experience. If any one is at liberty to form judgments upon modern as compared with previous conditions of the church, it surely is a man of age and opportunities. Dr. Trafton of New England, all know who have read his book or his fugitive, racy letters, is not a cynic. When he discourses upon the defects of our religious life or worship, we ought at least to listen respectfully. Here is a remark he makes in *Zion's Herald*, on preaching:

"Are we not losing faith in the 'preaching of the Word?' Do we not rely too much on our 'extraordinary means,' upon our auxiliaries? We are expected (Heaven pity us!) to fill the empty slips, to raise the current expenses, to pay off a crushing debt, to popularize 'our pulpit,' and to do this we must be sensational, and select and advertise all sorts of tacking and trite subjects! The poor preaching, almost ashamed of the course he feels forced to pursue, says to himself: 'A necessity is upon me; if I do not draw and fill the house, the few who represent and rule this church will not ask for my return, and the authorities dare not send me back against their remonstrance; or, should they do it, I shall be opposed by men whom I wouldn't set with the dogs of my flock, if I had one!'"

This is another shrewd opinion upon pulpit exercise:

There is another matter germane to this discussion, to which I must refer, and

that is the manner of prayer in the pulpit. The old preachers 'wrestled with God in prayer.' Any one whose memory grasps those old times, will at once mark the difference between the prayers of the former and the present time. The old preacher prayed as though he expected an answer then and there; and how often it came in overwhelming power upon the congregation! They implored, they besought, they importuned, they pleaded the promises, they could not be denied; and the kneeling church joined in the earnest plea, with the vocal cry, 'Amen! Come, Lord Jesus!' Are such prayers heard in our churches now? 'But,' one says, 'such exercises would drive all sensible people from the house.' Let them go; the sensible people would come in, and you will have solved the much agitated question, 'how to reach the masses.'"

Down-right earnestness in the pulpit is as necessary now as ever. How are men to believe us if the soul be not full of the divine subject? And how are we to satisfy ourselves or others as to our sincerity in this awful truth, if eye and voice and manner be not in harmonious activity before the world? As to prayer in the pulpit, this is an opportunity to bring together God and sinners, which may well stir the soul.

AN EDITORIAL COUPLE.

The *North-Western Ecotaller*, a well-conducted weekly paper published at La Crosse, Wisconsin, has, we note, under its title this announcement:—
J. Allison, A. M. } Editors.
M. L. Allison, A. M. }

J. Allison is Professor Allison, formerly Principal of Ladies' Academy Sackville and M. L. Allison is his wife. The professor is a clever and cultured writer and one of the most powerful natural orators Nova Scotia has yet produced. He has lately gone into the Temperance movement in Wisconsin, and appears to be an extremely popular lecturer. Mrs. Allison is a woman of superior intellectual powers and is a fine writer. Both are regular graduates of an American College. They seem well fitted to make their mark in the position they occupy, and will doubtless do much good in it.—*News*.

THE TELEPHONE ANTICIPATED.

—Long ago the wise man said "There is no new thing under the sun." We are continually being reminded that the civilization of ancient times was nearer a level with that of the present than modern self-satisfaction is wont to allow. Here, for an example, is an old African anticipation of that wonderful instrument, the telephone, which has stired the admiration of the world as one of the latest triumphs of human thoughts. A missionary writes that an instrument for the transmission of intelligence by sound has been in existence from time immemorial among the Camaroons on the west coast of Africa. A drawing and description of this instrument, the "Ellimbic," was sent to the *Athenum* October, 1865. It is thus described: "By the sounds produced on striking the instrument the natives carry on conversation with great rapidity and at several miles' distance. The sounds are made to produce perfect and distinct language, as intelligible to the natives as that uttered by the human voice, and which I had the means of testing on several occasions. The instrument is in universal use among the Camaroons, and up in the interior, in the Abo and Budi countries, a part of Central Africa not yet visited by Europeans." Such facts have a close bearing upon the question of man's original estate. Traces of a high, ancient civilization are being continually uncovered in many quarters. As we trace backwards the line of human descent we come quite as near the being made a little lower than the angels. The proofs of man's deterioration grow quite as rapidly as the evidence of his improvement. Retrogression is a fact of anthropology, as well as progression. The story of Eden is not yet ruled out from the realm of scientific probabilities.

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