

but natural that such should be the case. Even in America, sermons bearing upon the great political questions of the day have been hitherto confined to the chapels of such divines as Messrs. CHEEVER, BECKER and the like whose main objects in life would appear to be mob popularity and a high rent for the pews whence their incomes are derived. We have, of course, our thanksgiving sermons and our sermons on days of humiliation during times of war and times of famine. These either call forth from the congregation praise for past mercies or prayer for a cessation of present suffering; but they do not hint at any correct line of policy which, in the opinion of the preacher it is desirable should be adopted, or lay down any general dogmas of political philosophy of which a divine in the pulpit for the day may approve. The common sense of mankind seems to have prescribed as an axiom for general use the law once given to a few but now bearing full fruit that we shall render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsars and to God the things that are Gods; that we should not allow temporal matters to bring their petty influences to bear upon the worship of our maker—and eschew politics, above all, when we profess ourselves to be praying for the welfare of our own souls.

These remarks have been called forth by the growing popularity in this city of sermons, nay, we blush to write it prayers, in which a political element is introduced. We say "growing popularity" and trust that the phrase may be inapplicable to the case. The increasing frequency of such exorcisements in our Sunday services makes us fear however that the supply only keeps pace with the demand. We will instance what we mean by referring to a prayer which we heard offered up by a most exemplary divine in a well known Wesleyan Methodist Church in this City, on Sunday last.

Journalists, of course, in their positions as such, belong to no particular section of the Church. When however politics are introduced into the Sunday services of a place of worship it is allowable for them either to enter into argument with the pulpit politician, or to deprecate pulpit politics altogether as unseemly, useless, and opposed to the common sense of mankind. We prefer the latter course. The divine to whom we allude, in the course of his morning prayer, expressed a desire to the Almighty, that Great Britain might never interfere in the quarrels of other nations, and also that these Provinces, whilst retaining their individual freedom might become parts of a great nation on this continent which, &c., &c. These we believe were the words used or if not the exact words, words to the same effect, which, interpreted freely mean that the gentleman in the pulpit is in favor of Union and a general policy of non-intervention on the part of Great Britain. We will set aside, for the present, the idea that a minister prays for himself alone before his congregation, though the example before us might strengthen such an impression. It is generally supposed that a prayer offered up by an officiating minister should be one to which every Christian member of his congregation could cry Amen, without reservation. And this suggests the following reflection. Is it advisable that on Christian grounds politics should be introduced into the pulpit? Is it not quite possible that two members of the same congregation may differ on questions of subaltern expediency? Such being the case, is it not highly probable that if these two members are fortuitously placed in juxtaposition during the service, and say "Amen" to the same political prayer, a tempest of temporal feelings totally unsuited to the calm spiritual atmosphere of Church worship might be the result. That a Federationist and an Anti-Federationist might by accident be closeted in the same pew, is not impossible, and under ordinary circumstances, such a coincidence could not interfere with a common worship of the creator of all mankind. When, however, in a prayer in which both are called equally to join, an exhortation is offered up for a political consummation which one of the two pew fellows objects to on strong grounds of personal and political interest; it can hardly be supposed that peace can much longer reign in that pew. The Anti-Federalist disgusted at the uncalled for introduction of a hateful subject, would mutter at the first pause in the prayer. "I do not endorse that part which refers to Union," whilst Federationist pleased and elated at a breach of custom in favor of his cherished scheme, and hearing his neighbour's remark would not improbably observe "who desired that you should do so?" Whether such a scene as this is desirable or not in a place of worship we

leave it for our readers to decide. For our own part we conceive that the Divine who gives an opening for such a scene, is guilty of a great error in judgment. There is, indeed, but one motive for such conduct on the part of a minister which could prompt him to such a curious breach of good taste and the fitness of things. It is a motive which we are far from attributing to the clergyman with whom we are dealing; but it is one which, were the public once accustomed to Political prayers and political sermons, would, through the frailty of man, soon result in a constant conversion of the pulpit into the platform of the political orator. Most church-goers must have observed the pleasant and enlivening effect produced upon the most drowsy congregation by allusions in a sermon to matters even of a semi secular nature. If pounds, shillings, and pence can be introduced, the effect is more electrifying still. During the delivery of a charity sermon, how the sleeper wakes at the first mention of statistics, names, and places! How the inattentive pay attention when the "efforts of Mr. so and so," and the "noble collection" made in such and such a village, Church or city, are held up for the approval of the pious! It is easy enough to make sermons or prayers "interesting," (hateful word applied to such a subject!) by attracting attention to matters purely secular and we truly believe that the Divine to whose prayer we take exception had no such unchristian object in view. If once, however, congregations become accustomed to exhortations, spiced with politics, and sermons of the CHEEVER, SPURGEON, and BECKER style, there is no knowing how far the desire for more of such spice may extend. To judge from the sermon which succeeded the prayer we are considering the Reverend author of both is a sound Christian and a man of moderate measures. Let him then take our words in good part and exert his influence with his friends to purge our pulpits of politics, and, above all, to keep prayers to the Almighty free from all allusion to party politics.

Reviews.

MEMOIRS OF REV. S. F. JOHNSTON, REV. J. W. MATHESON, AND MRS. MATHESON, Missionaries to Tanna. By Rev. G. Patterson, Pictou, N. S. Z. S. H.A.

That this volume will be largely read by many excellent persons we have not the smallest doubt. We ourselves, however, somewhat wearied by its perusal, quit its pages with a feeling akin to relief. The memoirs of these ill-fated Missionaries will interest a certain class more than they will interest the general public,—indeed, the volume before us there is such that may possibly interest ordinary readers. Mr. Patterson seems to have foreseen this and has deemed it necessary to address himself, in his preface almost exclusively to members of the Presbyterian church. He believes "that there is something more impressive to church in the lives of her own worthies, than of others, even of superior gifts or more extensive labours." This is true only with regard to a certain class of men. We cannot but suppose that the faithful record of a saintly, self denying life, is calculated to impress alike the Roman Catholic and the Anglo Catholic, the Calvinist, and the Lutheran. Self-denial, piety, and devotion, are qualities which command admiration for the human race in general rather than for the particular views of any one Christian sect. The details of a saintly life make us proud of that humanity whereof we ourselves are an unworthy part, rather than of a community whose religious observances may, or may not be congenial to our taste. The volume before us consists, for the most part, of extracts from diaries, journals, letters, chiefly relating to matters of conscience between men and their creator. It is not easy to define the limits beyond which extracts of this nature become valueless. Many persons, for whose religious opinions we feel great respect, object altogether to the public exposure of such secret exercises as are here promulgated—of the solemn communings of a soul with its Saviour:—it is, they say, a breach, as it were, of the confidence between God and man, which has a tendency to encourage vanity and fanaticism on the one hand, or cant and hypocrisy on the other. There can, however, be little doubt that the practical example of a high religious influence predominating over all human passions in men eminent for talents, or brilliancy in society, or for activity and intelligence in the business world, may be

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