

more than that, she can do it more successfully and more truly than any denominational body, we would add that anyone versed in Church history knows that spasmodic revivals, differing only in mere details from this one, have arisen at intervals in Western Christendom during the last eight or nine hundred years, without one of them having done any permanent good or having left any better mark behind them than the production of a new sect, not superior to its predecessors. Consequently no historical scholar is at all likely to run after this movement, though he may feel no call to interfere with any little good it may so much as seem to do. And then just the expenditure of time and energy employed in fraternizing with the movement would be sufficient for the Church herself to do the work, which in fact, as we have said, she ought to be continually doing.

In reference to the actual character of the movement, some new light has lately been thrown upon it.

Dr. Lyman Abbott, the editor of the *Christian Union*, took advantage of a recent visit to England to assist at a meeting or service of the new organization in one of the slums of Birmingham, and, as a result of his experience, denounces the movement in the strongest terms. "If this," writes the Doctor, "was a fair representation of its worth, it is my deliberate judgment that the sooner the Salvation Army folds up its tents, and silently steals away, the better for the cause of Christ and humanity." Last week one of the *Christian World's* correspondents, signing himself "An On-locker," follows up the attack by protesting against the Antinomian teaching of the army at its so-called "holiness conventions." He recently attended two in a Wesleyan chapel and he thus records his experience: "I was wistful," he says, "to discover something to promote the real holiness of the persons present, but was unable to do so. There was nothing, so far as I could judge, tending to create or foster the spirit of reverence for God and sacred things, nor was there anything to produce or increase love for the true, the pure, the beautiful, the good. I felt sad at the close of these so-called 'holiness conventions,' because I had seen no sign whatever of the true spirit of humility, but many unmistakable signs of the spirit of the Pharisee. One after the other, led by the major-in-charge, boldly and unhesitatingly affirmed that they were entirely holy, having no fault of any kind remaining in or about them. I did not hear a single word from which I could trace a feeling of self-abasement, but every speaker showed complete self-satisfaction, and was manifestly perfect in his own eyes. At the last meeting I was present at, during the major's address, the people were told that they were doing wrong if they sought Divine aid to assist them in the conflicts with the evil tendencies of their nature, in their efforts to subdue and overcome pride, and temper, and lust, and envy and the like. What they had to do was to go to the communion-rail (i. e., the penitent form) and if they did so God would take all sinful inclinations and habits away, and they would have no more trouble with them. The audience were told that it ought not to be necessary at night to ask forgiveness at the hand of God. The following are the speaker's words: 'In the morning I go to the Lord, and ask for help through the day. At night I don't pray "O God forgive what I have done amiss during the day"—I have no need to do that, because I don't do anything amiss.' I felt quite shocked at such language, especially as it was addressed to a class of people who were far from faultless. According to this the Lord's Prayer, which He has given us as the basis of our prayers, is no longer appropriate to the holy men and women of this age, and the petition "Forgive us our sins, as we forgive them that sin against us" should be expunged. How different was all this self-assurance and self-complacency, if not self-glorification, from the spirit of meekness and fear and self-abasement of the Apostle Paul, who spoke of himself as the chief of sinners, and who saw that he must take heed lest having preached

to others, he himself should become a castaway." The writer submits that "instead of using every possible means of persuading the people that they are perfect, which really cannot be of much moment, it would be better to insist more on the necessity of true repentance, and instead of sneering at moralists, teach them that their profession of holiness is vain, unless they are honest and truthful, and merciful and kind."

METHODISM AND THE IRISH CHURCH.

HAVING a somewhat intimate personal knowledge of the Irish Church we were astonished, some time ago, to read in the daily papers reports of certain speeches, made by the Revs. Dr. CROOK and OLIVER McCUTCHEON, who went through Canada as a deputation from the Methodist body in Ireland collecting funds. The first named of these ministers said, "During the last eleven years the number of Ministers employed by the Irish Church has decreased nine hundred, and a great many churches have been closed. When he passed one of these closed Protestant churches, with grass growing before the door, he thought it a call for the Methodists to take charge of the parish to prevent the people lapsing into Roman Catholicism. Ten, twenty, thirty of our ministers could be employed in the closed up Churches, the churches were already built and the preachers trained." Mr. McCUTCHEON followed in the same strain, and said, "In the South of Ireland it was either Methodism or Roman Catholicism." These gentlemen presumed wholly upon the entire ignorance of their audience as to Ireland and its religious condition. As a matter of fact, which any person may see set forth in the census of the present year, there are only 42,000 Methodists in the whole of Ireland, of which the Southern part contains only a few hundreds. To represent the people of Southern Ireland as divided between Methodists and Roman Catholics is a barefaced falsehood; it conveys an idea which is absolutely contrary to the truth. The organ of Toronto Church Radicalism, instead of taking up the cudgels on behalf of the Irish Church immediately following these speeches, as well it might have done, went out of its way to reproach that Church bitterly for its neglect and apathy, thus committing two grave wrongs to our sister Church in her poverty and distress; first believing the scandalous falsehoods of one of her enemies, and next basing upon that dishonourable distrust a charge which was most ungenerous. The official organ, the *Irish Ecclesiastical Gazette*, deals with these statements thus; it says, "Either the statements about vacant churches and parishes waiting for Methodists to occupy them are great facts or great falsehoods. Will they then point out where such vacant parishes and churches are? We have no hesitation in stigmatizing these assertions as gross falsehoods, without a shadow of foundation, and we ask our Canadian cotemporaries to publish our contradiction to their countrymen."

We respond to the appeal of the *Ecclesiastical Gazette* with pleasure, not unmixed with pain, for no Christian mind can help being shocked, revolted at the utter disregard for what is truthful commonly manifested by those who, like these Irish ministers, are determined upon advancing their sect, at any cost to the good name or interests of the Catholic Church of England.

We especially commend the facts of this case to the Revs. RAINSFORD, SHERATON, JONES, and MESSRS BLAKE, HOWLAND, HODGINS, and others, who are so fond of the Methodist body, and who gush on Methodist platforms over their union in spiritual

fellowship with Methodist schismatics. The falsehoods of Messrs CROOKS and McCUTCHEON were heard by several Churchmen, and these gentlemen collected the money of Churchmen who believed in their story about closed-up Irish churches and parishes. In the world of business, men who collect funds on untruthful statements are often punished for the offence of "obtaining money under false pretences." We would advise the Methodists of Canada openly to repudiate the deputation which has imposed upon them; the cause of Christianity demands that the code of Christian Church morality shall not so sink below the standard of the world as to render an offence like the above condonable if done in the interests of a religious propaganda.

THE CLAIMS OF THE PAPACY.

MANIFOLD are the claims set up by the Roman Catholic branch of the Christian Church—(we see no reason why we should not use the branch phraseology, as our Lord Himself suggested the idea in the fifteenth chapter of St. JOHN'S Gospel: "I am the Vine; ye are the branches.") The claims of Rome are all reducible to this one: that St. PETER was given absolute jurisdiction and authority over the whole church by our Lord, and that the Pope, as his direct successor and representative, has those powers now—so that any disobedience to him is flat rebellion to CHRIST'S ordinance. Now, the very magnitude of these claims and the momentous issues depending on them, make it a duty of everyone before whom they are brought to demand the fullest historical truths before he yields assent to them. But this is exactly what cannot be given; for not one of the propositions of which the papal claim is made up can be substantiated from history. We should know nothing of St. PETER'S privilege if it were not for the New Testament, which is the one only evidence to be adduced in support of any charter or privilege granted to St. PETER. But we must take this evidence as a whole, and then we learn, moreover, that whatever may be the exact force of the famous words, "Thou art PETER," etc., they were followed twice at least, if not three or four times, by words in which our Lord expressly asserts the equality of the twelve apostles, and refuses to give priority to any of them; that not one act of authority or jurisdiction over the other apostles is recorded as having been exercised by St. PETER, though there is direct evidence of authority being exercised over him by the Apostolic College (Acts viii., 14); and some trace of his subjection to the jurisdiction of St. JAMES (Acts xii., 17; Gal. ii., 12); and that there is no hint that, if he had any personal privilege, he was empowered to hand it down to any successor; whereas the final commission given to the twelve, or rather to the eleven, must be transmitted to their successors, as they themselves died before the commission could possibly be executed. And when we get outside Holy Scripture there is no evidence of the slenderest value that he was ever Bishop of Rome, while it is a matter of certainty, on the principles of Roman canon law, even were all these things otherwise, that there has been no legitimate transmission of the succession in the See of Rome for the last thousand years. LEO XIII. has the smallest possible claim to be the canonical successor of St. PETER, or even of GREGORY the Great. Now, as no chain is stronger than its weakest link, it certainly cannot be stronger than its own strongest link, and in this case St. PETER