

to be able to sustain a complete fast for a month; but for a man to resist the depressing effects of a forty days' fast with nothing but water, which can hardly be called food, is certainly exceptional. Signor Succi is described as looking wan, thin, and sallow, and it is stated that he lost weight at the rate of about half a pound a day during the latter days of his fast. The loss was no doubt in great part due to the elimination of carbon dioxide by the lungs and of watery vapour by the skin and lungs. His temperature was well maintained. His pulse varied, but was during the latter days more frequent than natural. The room in which he lived was judiciously kept at a high temperature, and he did not exhaust his nervo-muscular apparatus by exercise. Perhaps the conclusion may be drawn from this experiment that a considerable proportion of our ordinary food is not applied to any useful purpose in the economy, but is converted in the intestinal canal into leucin, tyrosin, and other crystalloids, and that many of the inactive inhabitants of cities habitually eat more than is required to maintain their mental and bodily functions in the highest efficiency.—*Lancet*.

THE APPROACH OF AUTUMN.

The golden rod now waves with regal pride
Beside the gray snake-fence its dusted plumes;
With it, its modest friend the aster blooms,
And 'mong their half-dead leaves choke-cherries hide;
The thistle's fairy flosses laughing ride
The gentle breezes, that though yet at noon
Blow in a balmy concord with the sun,
Chill with November's breath at eventide.

It seems but yesterday since each pine tree
Was sombre set where spring's gold greenness shone;
Now pine and beech and maple, all I see
Blended in green and dusky monotone.
But, ah! to-morrow, in a flaming sea
Or one of naked boughs, the pines shall moan.

—H. W. C., in *The Week*.

AMERICAN LITERARY INDEPENDENCE.

I confess that I am not in sympathy with some of the movements that accompany the manifestations of American social and literary independence. I do not like the assumption of titles of Lords and Knights by plain citizens of a country which prides itself on recognizing simple manhood and womanhood as sufficiently entitled to respect without these unnecessary additions. I do not like any better the familiar, and as it seems to me, rude way of speaking of our fellow-citizens who are entitled to the common courtesies of civilized society. I never thought it dignified or even proper for a President of the United States to call himself, or to be called by others, "Frank" Pierce. In the first place, I had to look in a biographical dictionary to find out whether his baptismal name was Franklin, or Francis, or simply Frank, for I think children are sometimes christened with this abbreviated name. But it is too much the style of Cowper's unpleasant acquaintance:—

The man who hails you Tom or Jack,
And proves by thumping on your back
How he esteems your merit.

I should not like to hear our past chief magistrate spoken of as Jack Adams or Jim Madison, and it would have been only as a political partisan that I should have reconciled myself to "Tom" Jefferson. So, in spite of "Ben" Jonson, "Tom" Moore, and "Jack" Sheppard, I prefer to speak of a fellow-citizen already venerable by his years, entitled to respect by useful services to his country, and recognized by many as the prophet of a new poetical dispensation, with the customary title of adults rather than by the free and easy school-boy abbreviation with which he introduced himself many years ago to the public. As for his rhapsodies, Number Seven, our "Cracked Teacup," says they sound to him like "fugues played upon a big organ which has been struck by lightning." So far as concerns literary independence, if we understand by that term the getting rid of our subjection to British criticism, such as it was in the days when the question was asked, "Who reads an American book?" we may consider it pretty well established. If it means dispensing with punctuation, coining words at will, self-revelation unrestrained by a sense of what is decorous, declamations in which everything is glorified without being idealized, "poetry" in which the reader must make the rhythms which the poet has not made for him, then I think we had better continue literary colonists. I shrink from a lawless independence to which all the virile energy and trampling audacity of Mr. Whitman fails to reconcile me. But there is room for everybody and everything in our huge hemisphere.—*Oliver Wendell Holmes, in September Atlantic*.

THE BRIDGE MYSTERY.

The story of the man who stood on London Bridge and offered gold sovereigns for sale at sixpence apiece is well known, but it points a moral, to wit: That there are lots of good things to be had by keeping one's eyes open. All the best doctors in the Dominion agree that the new undervests for ladies and children, just introduced as the Health Brand, are about the best thing they have ever seen, being both luxurious to wear and making it almost impossible to take cold. When you go down town step into W. A. Murray and Co.'s and ask them to show you this article, and you will see at once that you can go out in any wind or weather with perfect safety if you wear them.

THE MISSIONARY WORLD.

In a letter from Princetown, Trinidad, dated July 21, which appears in the *Presbyterian Witness*, the Rev. W. L. Macrae says:—

In looking over our baptismal register the other day I was pleased to observe how large a quorum of the Halifax Presbytery we have in Princetown. And it may be interesting to state that last Sabbath the *Witness* editor was added to the list under the following circumstances. A Mohammedan man had been under instruction for over a year. Some days ago he became ill and was taken to the hospital. Last Sabbath he sent for me to come to see him. After the morning service he was found in a somewhat anxious state of mind. After a little conversation, in which he gave evidence of trusting in the Saviour, he said: "Ham at tayar hain."—I am now ready. And while lying on his couch he was baptized "Robert Dill—Mohammed," in honour of the *Witness* editor. We trust he may yet bear faithful witness of the truth. After leaving the hospital we found our way to a neighbouring estate, where we came across a blind man sitting alone in the door of his room, who listened to the story of blind "Bartimeus" with apparent interest. He seemed to grasp what is meant by spiritual blindness, and pointing him to the Great Physician, we left him with a little prayer that he might receive his sight. Having gone a little further, the singing of, chajan brought some twenty persons around another harass, one of whom was a leper with the disease in a considerably advanced stage. Since the type of sin is so terrible, how terrible, indeed, must the reality be! The parable of the great supper was read, which by the way finds a counterpart in more than one particular in customs of the people even here. The Gospel invitation was given under difficulties owing to various sources of distraction. Yet in this way many hear the Gospel who, on account of indifference and prejudice, could not be persuaded to enter a church or a place of worship. An appropriate chajan was then sung, in which the feast which God has provided is described as "love, peace, pardon and eternal life," with a refrain something like "O people, the invitation obey" after each line. Our chajans or Hindi hymns are always listened to with very much interest. Man is a "singing animal" the world over, and oftentimes the word finds an entrance to the heart when expressed in song, while heart and ears would be sided against it on other occasions. Thus the many opportunities that are within our reach of making known the "Glad Tidings" to those who are entire strangers to its life-giving power enables one to enter into the spirit of the apostle when he said: "Woe is unto me if I preach not the Gospel."

MISSIONS IN PAPAL EUROPE.

The very caption seems strange. It would have been natural enough when the "Man of Macedonia" appeared to Paul, for Europe was then a heathen country. But the late Professor Christlieb, though entirely in favour of aiding the Protestant Churches of France, Spain or Italy, entered a mild protest against placing any part of Europe in the same category as Africa or China by calling it a foreign missionary field. All enlightened minds aim to make proper discriminations, though this is not always easy. No one who knows anything of the dead Christian sects of the Levant has any doubt that missionaries should be sent to Persia or the Turkish Empire, unless it be the Archbishop of Canterbury, who seems to think that the venerable Greek and Nestorian Churches should be protected against Protestant invasion. There is, in our day, every variety of opinion as to the question: What is legitimate and necessary to missionary work, and what is to be regarded as mere proselyting and unwarrantable interference? The time has come when a discriminating judgment should be applied in all missionary enterprises.

Even work among the heathen should be carried on intelligently. Heathen systems should be thoroughly understood, and should be approached in such a way as to win success and not to block the way against it.

The dead sects of the east should be looked upon in a different light from that in which we place Mohammedans—though even the latter should be approached as those who profess to worship the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. But with Nestorians and Greeks there is an appeal to Christ and to the early historic Christianity. And the same is true of Papists. However the "Light of the World" may be obscured by the worship of Mary or of saints and images, that true Light furnishes the point of hopeful approach.

There should be a broad discrimination between work in Papal countries and that of the heathen world as to their comparative claim. The first and paramount duty of the Christian Churches of this age, whatever be their name, is to proclaim the Gospel to the nations who have never heard of Christ. In this duty Protestants and Catholics should stand upon common ground. It is the reproach of both that they have monopolized the great salvation for nineteen centuries, while the majority of mankind have remained in total ignorance of the Gospel.

American Christians at least should draw a distinction between the claims of Papal Europe and those of the Spanish American States. In the first place there is a geographical consideration. Mexico and Central America are at our door, and South America not only belongs to our hemisphere but is in close sympathy with our political institutions. The Pro-

testant Churches of Europe naturally feel that the responsibility of evangelizing these countries rests largely upon the American Churches.

But there is another and more cogent reason. The type of Romanism which prevails in Spanish America is far lower than that of the continent. European Catholics themselves have spoken of it as a virtual heathenism (for example Abbe Domineck, chaplain of Maximilian). And broad-minded statesmen in America have welcomed Protestant influence as a blessing to the Mexican Church.

But, making all proper discriminations, a good rule in Christian duty is that which Christ Himself laid down, "This ought ye to have done and not to leave the other undone." There are many reasons for aiding the Protestant Churches of Continental Europe. America owes a lasting debt of gratitude to the Huguenots of France. After the terrible massacre of St. Bartholomew in the sixteenth century, multitudes of survivors migrated to this, as to many other countries. The religious faith and life, as well as the national character of our colonies, were enriched by the Huguenot elements, and the kinsmen of those staunch exiles, wherever they may be found, should be regarded as our brethren.

There were others who in those days of terror took refuge in remote fastnesses of their native land, where they long remained shut out from the world. One of their descendants, writing recently of their history and their present needs, says, pathetically: "When our Protestants came down from their rocky peaks or out of caverns or forests they were timid, happy to be allowed to live, more like a degenerated race than like true Huguenots—they had suffered so much and so long."

The same writer complains that much of the work that has been done for this people has been little more than a proselyting process, which, instead of leaving the Huguenot Church a unit, strengthened in its ancient faith and order, has rather tended to break it up into the various sects.

The only alternative to this divisive process is to contribute funds in aid of these Protestant Churches and allow them to apply that aid through their own missionary agencies. But it is not always easy to decide between these methods. On the one hand the Churches left to themselves might preserve their unity, but on the other hand it is claimed that being run over to Baptist or Methodist communions they are quickened into a higher spiritual life, and are more effectually guarded against the prevailing rationalism. The question is a broad one. That the Methodist and Baptist missions in Germany and Sweden have led thousands of Lutheran converts to a more vital faith and a higher life seems clear, although the thousands who have thus been won cannot be classed with converts from heathen races, yet unquestionably they constitute a more vital element in the religious life of the continent than ever before.

We have little sympathy with the idea that missionary work is valuable just in proportion to its undenominational character. The Church is the best of all organizations for the extension of Christ's kingdom, and the different Churches will accomplish most for those who are brought into complete sympathy with them in doctrine and order. Whatever evils attach to sectarian zeal it is better than looseness and disorder, and organized missionary agencies under responsible management are better than the free-lance enterprises which are responsible to nobody and whose general tendency is towards transient impressions rather than established churches and self-perpetuating institutions.

There is one danger just now which may be regarded with no little apprehension, and that is the division of the Protestant mission work of Continental Europe into a number of separate and rival interests, each having an American headquarters in New York or Boston and a network of collecting agencies throughout the country.

One after another these societies—for they are such—are being formed, and their success will lead to the creation of many more. To say nothing of the discouragement and bewilderment of American pastors amid this multitude of rival appeals, and the serious detriment to those great missionary boards which are earnestly striving to get on without collecting agencies, will such a policy be wise and safe even for the churches which are aided?

A sharp and exciting competition in the American market; so much thought and interest turned away from the proper development of a self-reliant, moral purpose and an aggressive zeal in the churches themselves; the handing over of the missionary work of these churches to a central committee, to be carried on largely by foreign funds. Will not all this tend to apathy and to greater and even greater weakness? Even in heathen lands an undue spirit of dependence is fatal to the stamina of the Christian rank and file.

It is essential to the growth and efficiency of the continental churches that they should as fully depend on the development of their own effort and their own liberality as if there were none in any quarter to help them.

Then let that effort be supplemented by systematic and generous aid from more favoured lands. Let this be done without personal solicitation, and by proper concert of action. Our own mission boards will all gladly transmit contributions as directed and without expense. If any discrimination is made let those objects be specially favoured which are most economical of ocean voyages and the expense of collecting. There is need of serious attention to the present drift of these great interests, and of prompt measures to secure system, economy, increased confidence and more generous aid.