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Contributors and Correspondents.

POSTURE IN PRAYER.

EDITOR BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

Sir,—The proof which you adduce from Scripture that *standing* and *kneeling* are proper postures in prayer is most satisfactory; and I thank you for it, as it is much needed at the present day. Thus agreeing with you in the largest portion of your valuable article, you will kindly permit me to express a difference of opinion on one point. The fact that *sitting* is a proper posture in public prayer is, in my humble opinion, unsatisfactory. So far as I know, there are only two passages in the Old Testament in which persons are represented as sitting in prayer at all. The one is Exodus 17, 12, in which Moses, it is said, was compelled to sit on account of physical exhaustion. The other passage is 2 Samuel 7, 18, in which it is said, "Then went King David in and sat before the Lord." David's prayer was evidently strictly private; besides, the word rendered *sat* may with equal propriety be rendered *remained*, as Genesis 24, 50. "Let the damsel abide with us a few days, at least ten." "Surely Rebekah would not think of literally sitting so long with her friends." Again, in Genesis 29, 10, Laban said to Jacob, "Abide with me; not surely intending that he should sit for seven years! I admit in 2 Samuel 7, 18, it would be quite proper, with our translators, to render the word *sat*, if the more general sense were unsuitable, or if it were known that sitting was then the usual posture. But it would be reasoning in a circle to infer from this solitary passage that sitting was the usual posture, and then to infer that such must be its meaning here. The proof *à contrario* against sitting in public prayer is of great and decisive authority in view of the immense number of passages in which the other postures are expressly indicated, and to many of which you have very properly referred.

There is just as little proof in the New Testament that sitting is a proper posture in public prayer. The references in your valuable article are plainly not in point. Our Lord seems never to have led in public prayer. He did not desire those whom he made to sit—literally to lie down—to join him in the prayer which he offered in standing. His prayer was one in which they were not competent to join, as it was directly connected with the miracle. The reference to the institution of the Lord's supper is as irrelevant. The Evangelists do not profess to describe postures; but they simply indicate the ordinary posture at table. If a person, at the present day, were to express a wish to sit down at the Lord's table, no one would suppose that he was determined not to stand during the times of prayer. Besides, in point of fact, the Evangelists do not tell us that they sat at table at all, but that they reclined. The very word used in reference to John, "He then lying on Jesus' breast." Thus there is no example in the Bible of sitting in public prayer. Devout and serious Christians should not in any way countenance a posture indicative of laziness or indifference, but not of deep humility and prostration of soul before God infinitely great and holy.

If people complain that standing in public prayer is fatiguing, the prayers might be sufficiently shortened to afford them reasonable relief, and this might be done without loss, if repetitions and prolixity were avoided, and expressions concise, simple, and full of meaning and devotion were used.

COMMUNICATED.

WOODVILLE REVISITED.

EDITOR BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

Sir:—From the interest you and others have expressed, I am sure you will be glad to hear that the work continues at Woodville with unabated power. It was my privilege to revisit this scene of revival and participation in the sacramental services of last Sabbath. None present will ever forget the sight in the Church last Sabbath, when seventy-two new communicants were admitted to full membership upon profession of faith. The most of these were young people of eighteen or twenty; one was under twelve, only one over forty. Nearly all had been the subjects of much earnest prayer by parents or other friends. Indeed this has been remarked of almost every one who has professed conversion since the work began, and of these there are a considerable number besides those received into Church fellowship. After some weeks absence the change I found in persons formerly encountered in the inquiry meeting was most marked. Several, whom what had seemed hopeless dullness, had brightened into intelligent and most devout Christians. Others from frivolity and callousness had become eager seekers of the Saviour, or humble claimants for a place among His followers, at whom they had formerly scoffed. Well may our brethren of Woodville sing, "The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we were glad."

At Mitchell, I fear, about 400 have been added to the various Churches, our own receiving 131. At Fallerton and Downie, Mr. Hamilton's charge, the addition has been 54, and at Clinton, Peterboro', &c., over numbers. Does it not seem as if the Master were setting his seal of approval on Evangelistic work in our Church? Oct. 6th, 1874. W. M. ROGERS.

N.B.—The above was received too late for last issue.—Ed. B. A. P.

Canvassing for a Charge.

EDITOR BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

DEAR SIR,—One of your correspondents lately called attention to the practice so common in our Church, of canvassing when a minister is to be elected to a vacant congregation. It is doubtless an evil. But when we take into consideration that, according to the present system, every minister in the Church is considered open to receive calls, that, although for the last three years there have been nearly three vacancies for each probationer and minister without charge, that every vacant congregation, however small and poor, is encouraged to expect at least a half-dozen candidates to choose from, and that the form of an election must be gone through with, though there should be no more than one candidate, the system would appear to be incomplete without canvassing. Our present Church laws appear to be sufficiently stringent, but they cannot be enforced in such a way as to meet the evil, and while the system remains as it is, it will be difficult to frame a law that will meet it. If a minister wants a congregation he is very apt to say so; and if he has friends they are likely to recommend him. But it is the two objects aimed at in the probationer's scheme were separated, viz: Effecting settlements, and supplying vacant congregations where there was no desire for settlement with preaching, and ministers without charge and probationers eligible for and desiring settlement, were sent only to congregations who wanted ministers, and only one candidate were sent at a time, and no other till it were seen whether he would be chosen or not, and if vacant congregations were given to understand that the vacancies were nearly three to one of the probationers and ministers without charge; and that unless they could entice some minister away from his charge they had only one-third of a minister falling to their share to choose from, and consequently their choice might not be altogether unhindered; and if an induction was looked upon as a settlement; and a minister once settled was removed from the list of candidates for vacancies; and if as high a standard of honor were introduced into the Church as prevails in the world, so that it would be considered as dishonorable to entice a minister away from his congregation as it would be to entice away any other employee from his employer, the evil of which your correspondent complains might be to some extent remedied. But as long as desirable vacancies are looked upon simply as openings for ministers who want better places, and ministers without charge and probationers as conveniences to keep vacancies open for them and read their edicts for induction, to obtain the way of reform need be expected. Perhaps the simplest and most effectual remedy which could be adopted would be one which was suggested by one of your correspondents some time ago, viz: To me the probationers scheme into the ordinary missionary scheme. Then all the probationers and ministers without charge, who preferred useful employment to "going to and fro in the earth," could be at once employed. The balance, with a few of those inducted unsettled ministers, and those congregations who preferred supplying themselves, might be left to arrange matters among themselves.

AMANS JUSTITIAE.

TEMPERANCE.

NO. 2.

Did temperance do nothing more than waste an immense amount of money it would indeed be a great evil. But it is chargeable with a great deal more than this. It is chargeable with the destruction of health and life. Who does not know that the use of intoxicating liquors to excess engenders disease and ruins health? The bloated cheek, the palsied limbs, the emaciated frame, too plainly tell the tale. Health, the most precious of earthly gifts, is ruined by intemperance; life itself is taken away. It may be doubted, however, whether the amount of disease and death caused by this monstrous evil is fully believed. It is calculated by those who have paid attention to the subject, that from fifty to sixty thousand die every year from the effects of intemperance in the United States, and about as many more in Great Britain. What a fearful destruction of human life is there here. We regard with horror the bloody practices of our British forefathers, who, in the days of Duress, offered up human beings to their false divinities. But here are more numerous victims than were ever immolated in that day, being annually sacrificed to the grim idol of intemperance.

We mourn over the ravages of war, and we have reason to do so, but we have still a sadder reason to mourn over the onslaught of intemperance, for while the one is killing its thousands, the other is killing its tens of thousands.

But the evil habit of which we have been speaking not only injures the body, but enfeebles the mind. It depresses, corrupts it. It enkindles the unalloyed fire of passion in the heart. It not only attacks the outworks of man's nature, but it storms the fortress. It besieges the very citadel. It defaces the image of God from the soul of man. It benumbs and deadens his moral sensibilities. It encloses him. Never is the body of a poor wretch more completely under the power of the slaveholder, than is the mind of the drunkard under the power of the master passion that tyrannizes over him, and which is the more slavery of the two? While the body of the slave is the property of his master,

his soul may be Christ's freeman, while the body is in chains; the mind may be unshackled.

Look at Uncle Tom, what a great old Christian was he, notwithstanding his bonds. How strong in truth—how mighty in prayer. And doubtless there were many Uncle Toms to be found in the plantations of the sunny South in the reign of slavery. Many who, like Paul and Silas, were enabled to sing praise unto God in the house of their bondage, and who were in the enjoyment of that liberty wherewith Christ makes his people free. But what is the case with the poor inebriate? He is completely under the power of that unnatural appetite that has been enkindled within him.

All the powers of that body, which is fearfully and wonderfully made; and all the faculties of that God-given mind, reason, imagination, will—all are subjected to the rule of the tyrant passion. No more eagerly did Diogenes, amid the scorchings of the nether world, desire a drop of water to cool his parched tongue than does the slave of drink long for the stimulating influence of the intoxicating cup upon his diseased nervous system.

Intemperance then, is injurious, mentally and morally. It beclouds the intellect, it benumbs the mental faculties, it corrupts the heart. The power of thinking is paralyzed; its effects are baneful in the extreme; its exercises are withering, blighting, scorching influence upon man's mental and moral nature. How many bright lights has this destructive habit extinguished? No walk of life is exempt from its ravages. It counts its victims among the members of the legal and medical professions, and even the sacred office is not exempt. It has entered our Legislative Hall, and our Senate Chambers. It has entered our pulpits, and there it has done its work of destruction.

Another count in the indictment is that intemperance is the cause of the greater portion of the crime that disturbs the peace of society, and that dishonors humanity. The records of our newspapers, as well as the evidence given our Courts of Justice, bear ample testimony to this. From the effects of intoxicating drink in the United States 100,000 are annually sent to prison, and 200,000 children are reduced to want. Intemperance fills our jails and our penitentiaries. Of all those brought to the bar of justice charged with the fearful crime of imbruing their hands in the blood of their fellow men, it is found in the great majority of cases, that drink—alcohol—has had something to do with it. The same remark will hold good in reference to other crimes. Let intemperance be kept from the land, and soon, very soon, the black catalogue of crime would be diminished. The keepers of gaols, the wardens of penitentiaries, as well as the judges on the bench, all bear ample testimony to the truth of this. The judges in England, as well as in Canada, have given their united testimony to the fact that strong drink is the grand producing cause of crime.

The evil of intemperance then is very great, and the results flowing from it are disastrous in the extreme, and if those results are indeed so disastrous, should not all classes of the community arise in endeavoring to remove that cause which is the fruitful source. Some medical men have been blamed not only for partaking of alcoholic beverages too freely themselves, but prescribing it too liberally in their practice. It is cheering however to know that a change for the better is taking place in this aspect. For proof of this we may quote the following strong resolutions, which were passed at a recent meeting of the American Medical Association held at Detroit.

Resolved.—That in view of the alarming prevalence and ill-effects of intemperance, with which none are so familiar as members of the medical profession, and which have called forth from English physicians the voice of warning to the people of Great Britain, concerning the use of alcoholic beverages, we, as members of the medical profession of the United States, unite in the declaration that alcohol should be classed with other powerful drugs; that when prescribed medicinally it should be done with consistency, caution, and a sense of great responsibility.

Resolved.—That we are of the opinion that the use of alcoholic liquors, as a beverage, is productive of a great amount of physical and mental disease; that it entails diseased appetites and enfeebled constitutions upon children; and that it is the cause of a large percentage of the crime and pauperism in our large cities and country.

Resolved.—That we would welcome any change in public sentiment that would confine the use of intoxicating liquors to the use of science, art, and medicines.

Messrs. Moody and Sankey in Belfast.

Messrs. Moody and Sankey held three meetings each way last week. At the Monday evening meeting the audience was promiscuous, and the crowd was so large that it was decided to have two meetings each day, in addition to the mid-day prayer-meeting, and that one be held exclusively for women at two o'clock, and one for men at eight at night. This arrangement was wrought admirably. The church open to the overflow in the evening was also well filled with both sexes. Three addresses were delivered by various ministers, and it was occasionally visited by Mr. Sankey. The arrangement, however, prevented the female operatives, of whom there are vast numbers in Belfast, from hearing Mr. Moody, and it is contemplated to make some alteration in the daily programme in order to attain the most desirable object. The females engaged during the day are intensely anxious to have these privileges extended to them, and their disappointment during the week has been borne with great patience. The attendance at all the meetings have comfortably filled the

churches, and the after-meetings have given satisfaction, the number of inquirers steadily increasing. Judging of the results already obtained, by comparing them with the first week in Edinburgh, it is perfectly evident that the Lord is blessing the evangelists more and more abundantly. I would pause here in my record to make an appeal. The clergy here of every denomination are manifesting great interest, affording every help, and vying with each in seeking to forward the movement, but it is plain, and it is a matter of sincere regret, that Mr. Moody is gradually being weakened; he has all the fervour and zeal, but he lacks the vigour and rhetorical power in delivery he used to have when I listened to him in the Free Church Assembly Hall, last January. The work here is to be heavy, his strength must be husbanded for other spheres in England, and the call to the Apostle Paul to come over to Macedonia is a small voice in comparison to that now raised in Ireland to revive Scotland to come and help! Scotland and Ireland may draw near to each other without jealousy, and in the prospect of perilous times unitedly to "Hold the Fort." It is, too, plain that Mr. Sankey is paler, his voice is less flexible and clear, notwithstanding he has gained the consent of all that his singing is marvellously beautiful, and that sacred song is an effective method of teaching divine truth. As in Edinburgh the mid-day prayer-meeting is regarded as the pulse of the movement, and it is most encouraging to witness day by day the deepening interest in the awed solemnity of these noon-day gatherings, the audible responses to some pointed direct petition—all indicate the earnestness and sincere heartfelt longings for a copious shower of blessings. The Friday meeting, although the weather was most inclement, was not only the most numerous attended, but the most impressive of the week. Being market day, many farmers and other country people dropped in, and their appreciation of the services was most manifest. The noonday meeting on Saturday was intended for children, the area was reserved for them, which they crowded to excess. The whole church was overflowed long before twelve. Mr. Sankey presided, and gave an instructive opening address. He was followed by the usual five minutes addresses from various clergymen, and by Mr. Henry Morhouse, whose few sentences were most touching. Between each address a hymn was sung, and so pleasantly did the hour pass that three girls beside me involuntarily sighed, and one said—"Is it over so soon?" Indeed the entire audience retired reluctantly, being greatly pleased with the first children's assembly. There is more to follow. Mr. Moody was not present. It may be incidentally mentioned that the press generally is respectful, and a part of it, so far as fair paragraph reports are concerned, is favourable. Although it is a subject of profound gratitude that such a hearty response has been accorded by the people to the invitation of the clergy to attend these special meetings. I doubt not but that they are oft remembered by all Christians in Scotland, especially by those whose own hearts have been so very lately revived.

I cannot refrain from attempting to describe Messrs. Moody and Sankey's first open-air meeting in Belfast. From the moment of its appointment much anxiety was expressed about the weather, as all through the past week it had been most unsettled, scarcely a dry hour at a time, and not unfrequently was the rain driven by a violent chilling wind. Some one at the Saturday noon-day meeting expressed some doubt about the propriety of making such an arrangement, but the Rev. Mr. Johnstone said, "We must pray for favourable weather." From that instant, it was the wish of every heart that the God of providence would smile on the meeting. Verily many anxious eyes scanned the heavens yesterday so soon as day broke, and a more beautiful Sabbath morning's dawn has seldom been seen, as the slanting rays of the orient sun tinted the emerald tops of the Crumlin Hills, which, in a semi-circle, environ the city; but as early morn passed away, an icy sheet of mist—a Scotch linar—arose from the level which had been soaked by the rains, and cumulated clouds darkened the sunlight, making the forenoon cold and gloomy. At noon, too, these heavy, threatening clouds drifted south, and overhead were white fleecy clouds gradually thinning, giving prospect of a dry afternoon at least. The meeting was convened in a field in the northwest suburb of the town, and the address was to be delivered at 2 p.m. For more than an hour—indeed many on leaving their churches at conclusion of forenoon service—crowds thronged their way through the streets leading in the direction of the field. Such a sight of respectably attired men and women on such a mission to hear the gospel, perhaps was never witnessed by the demizens of these thoroughfares, which in times of riot are the centres of the fray. A platform was erected near the centre of the green, which has an undulating slope towards the east, enabling those present to easily see the speaker. When Mr. Moody and the gentlemen accompanying him ascended the dais, there could not have been fewer than 20,000 souls before him. It was a scene ever to be remembered when the Rev. Mr. Johnstone rose to pray, entreating the great God, through His Son, to have compassion on the multitude. The 23rd Psalm was sung, and very generally joined in, when Mr. Moody read the 58th chapter of Isaiah. Then Mr. Sankey sang his solo, "Jesus of Nazareth passeth by," amid breathless stillness, and the pathetic words, in most melodious tones, rolled over the vast concourse with thrilling effect. When he had finished, the mass of human beings took one long breath, and frigid looked to find with earnestness of inquiry which showed how affectively the gospel had been sung. At the moment Mr. Moody commenced his ad-

dress on "Preach the Gospel to every creature," the sunlight shone out with a subdued brilliancy. Many on the outer skirts of the concourse were nervous lest they would not hear the great preacher's voice, but ere he had finished his first sentence all fears were allayed, and he delivered a most powerful discourse, interspersed with forcible and appropriate anecdotes. From the first he caught the attention and enlisted the sympathy of all, and he kept them hanging on his utterances for nearly forty minutes. After one or two hymns and the benediction was pronounced, the vast congregation silently dispersed to their homes to ponder over the subjects which had been pressed on their acceptance, perhaps on many for the first time. The judgment day alone will tell the good resulting from the hour's proceedings. It may be briefly stated that the morning meeting for Christian workers on the same day was largely attended, and the address, &c., were of the usual portment and arousing description. The meeting held in the evening in the Presbyterian Assembly's Hall, May Street, exclusively for the anxious inquirers, was most encouraging; some 250 were present, of both sexes and of all ages. It is improper to reveal the secrets of the inquiry-room, but Mr. Moody, as the crowded noon day prayer-meeting to day, expressed his unfeigned pleasure and encouragement as being one of the best meetings of the kind he ever held. Thus ended one more day's work, which will ever be memorable in the Christian annals of Belfast.

An Interesting Letter.

A correspondent of the Philadelphia *Presbyterian* writes as follows about Romanism and the Anglican Church:—

"When the Irish Episcopal Church was disestablished, a distinguished man drew a melancholy picture of it, forsaken by the State, and 'honeycombed by Plymouth Brethrenism.' There was truth in the extravagant phrase, but the Church of England is far more honeycombed with Romanism. One nobleman passes to the Jesuits after another, the successions of the clergy are still more numerous; and the spread of an extreme Ritualism is more garish than ever. Lord Ripon is the last spoil over which the spoilers are jubilant. In one sense his change was not sudden. He had been, for some time, an advanced Ritualist, and was simply more logical and self-sacrificing than those he has left behind. His flattering rank among the Freemasons, his place in political life, and his hold on what is yet English sentiment, have been all surrendered by an asceticistic statesman, that he may have the privilege of joining some such dismal pilgrimage as Archbishop Manning has organized to Pontigny, and be told, as Archbishop Whately once impatiently said to a Lingling Master of Ceremonies, 'You foolish man, you don't even know your foolish business.'

The *Times* and the average Protestant are bitter and contemptuous. John Lemoiné looking across from France, says, 'he has only transferred himself from one secret society to another,' the organ of the Ritualists is radiant with smiles; it says, 'the man who believes that our Lord founded a church, and left its teaching and worship to the guidance of Mr. Disraeli, must be an idiot.'

Father Dalgairns, who, with Faber, has shed such brilliance on the Brompton Oratory, is credited with this perversion, as that of the Marquis of Bute is laid to the duo of Monsignor Capel. Dalgairns, and Archbishop Manning belong to what is known as the "Metaphysical Club," whose essays appear occasionally in the *Contemporary Review*, and it invariably attract attention by their singularly subtle speculation. For this is the aspect persistently assumed, by English Romanism of culture and learning; and its new University, to be presently opened at Kensington, has secured a staff of men of the highest standing. Paley, who is in the front rank of classical scholars; St. George Mivart, Huxley's opponent, for physiology; Burd for chemistry, and Proctor for astronomy. Nor is Oxford neglected: a detachment of those who were bred in it, men with the power to influence others and command their respect, being told off to cultivate the students.

Yet in spite of all this honeycombing, (and on the side of natural science as well as Romanism) England is, of all countries in Europe, the most profoundly and nobly religious. It was only the other day that Lord Shaftesbury said, "I remember talking with M. Guizot, about the events of 1848, when every throne on the continent was placed in the dust, but when the Queen of England could walk and drive about as usual; and that great statesman said to me, 'I will tell you what saved your empire. It was not your constable; it was not your army; it was not your ministers; it was the deep, solemn, religious atmosphere that still is breathed over the whole people of England.'" There is something pathetic in this anecdote, coming so close on M. Guizot's death, while his own France still staggers under her last blow, and is recovering strength without apparently recovering reason; pathetic in the light of those farewell words of the aged man to his son-in-law, "It is a great country, but hard to serve."

The fact that a daughter of Baron Rothschild, of Paris, has passed a successful examination as teacher, so that in case of any sudden reverse of fortune—indeed, by the way is rather improbable, she may earn her livelihood, should induce other daughters to follow a similar course of training, and render themselves useful, as well as ornamental, members of society.