

The Wesleyan.

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In noticing the expulsion of the religious orders from France, the *Evangelist* remarks that the Carmelites, who reckon some hundred and fifty members in thirteen departments, were specially devoted to receiving the confessions of women, married and unmarried!

From \$1,000,000 to \$2,000,000 worth of birds' nests are yearly imported into Canton, most of them coming from Java. They are very expensive, costing from \$30 to \$40 per pound. The nests are composed of pure gelatine, secreted by a species of swallow and deposited against a wall.

The Bishop of Liverpool, speaking at a meeting of the British and Foreign Bible Society, expressed pleasure at meeting on the platform a number of his Nonconformist brethren, but said the division between them, due to the conduct of the Church in days gone by, was of too long standing for him to expect it to be healed till the Lord should come again.

At Allahabad a Mohammedan girl of five years of age was some time since married to a boy of seven by the Mohammedan form of marriage. She never lived with him, and, indeed, never saw him after the ceremony was performed. When she came to maturity she married the man of her choice, by whom she has had children. Now, however, the first husband has claimed her, and by an order of the Chief Court.

Funds have been granted by the Russian (Greek) Church for a mission in San Francisco. A priest has been appointed to proceed to California, accompanied by deacons, sub-deacons, acolytes, and a full choir. Five thousand roubles have been granted for the preliminary expenses, and the necessary money for the establishment will be forthcoming when the mission leaves St. Petersburg.

At a meeting of the Clogher Diocesan Synod held recently, Mr. J. C. Bloomfield, J. P., is reported to have said concerning the parish of Belleek, Co. Fermanagh:—"They had no minister at present, as one had died and the other resigned, and all the Episcopalians could do there was to look upon a remarkably handsome young man in the person of a Methodist preacher. This was an awful state for a parish to be in!"—*London Methodist*.

The Presbyterian Church at Dunkirk, N. Y., by a large majority vote, has decided to stand by its pastor the Rev. Mr. Adams, who was recently deposed by the Presbytery at Buffalo for heresy. The Presbytery has accordingly declared the minority in the church, which accepts its decision, to be the Presbyterian Church at Dunkirk, with all the rights, privileges and immunities belonging to the church. Under these circumstances the case goes to the civil courts, to determine to whom the property belongs.

The death of Baron Ricasoli removes one of the last of the old regime of Italian statesmen. He had much of the old Roman sternness and probity. It is reported that he owed his dismissal from office to his fidelity. It is said before the marriage of the present King of Italy he, then Prime Minister, waited upon Victor Emmanuel. "Sir, Italy is not rich enough to keep two courts; the one she has ought to be one in which a virtuous lady can appear without a blush." Hence his political downfall.

A gentleman, in a letter to Chaplain McCabe, pledges \$250 each for three frontier Methodist churches before the close of the year 1880, and adds: "During the year 1881 I will help you build a church every month." If thirty such letters could be written, church planting upon the frontiers would not be interrupted by an empty treasury until five hundred new churches with five hundred congregations and Sabbath-schools would be added to Methodism, and the great work in the South would go steadily on.—*N. Y. Advocate*.

The *Morning Star*, in a discussion of the question of women's speaking in the church, and of the prohibition thereof in the fourteenth chapter of First Corinthians, indulges in this sort of exegesis:

"Lalein, translated speak, signifies, to prate, babble, talk idly, chatter. It is just this kind of confusion Paul aimed to correct, and this was exactly the word to use for that purpose. It is a shame for a woman, as well as for a man, to babble in the church, and it is necessary that she should be 'under obedience' to rules of order and propriety, as well as men, and not to presume upon license on account of the courtesy awarded to her sex."

The *N. Y. Independent* says:—"Doubtless, there was a great deal of bribery in the election of this week. But no constituency in America equals that of classic Oxford, in England. It has six thousand electors, and at the election of Sir William Harcourt there was \$50,000 spent on those men, or \$8.25 each. When Sir William was called to the Cabinet, it became necessary to repeat the election, and the Conservative candidate was elected, his 2,730 votes costing him \$50,000, or \$14.65 each. His agent employed on election day 1,200 voters as 'messengers,' 'clerks,' and what not, and hired 1,075 'conveyances,' or one for every two voters, every voter that owned a cart being paid to take himself to the polls. The details are fearful.

THE CLASS MEETING.

In the course of a sermon preached to his own congregation at Birmingham, during the Methodist Conference of 1879, the Rev. R. W. Dale, one of the foremost Congregational ministers of England, spoke at length upon Methodism. This sermon, with others, has now been published. Of the Evangelical revival of the last century, Mr. Dale regards Wesleyan Methodism as the "most conspicuous monument and memorial." He shows how the older Nonconformity of England had become imbued by its spirit and quickened by its life; and how by the influence of Methodist doctrine the "narrow and rigid lines of Calvinism have been gradually relaxed." With the Episcopal Church of England as the "permanent home" of the revival he has sympathy. After having spoken of the tendency of the Evangelicals towards "individuality" as their "besetting weakness" and added that "the Methodists are not open to this criticism," Mr. Dale said:—

Methodism has founded one great and remarkable church institution. The class-meeting is perhaps the most striking and original of all the fruits of the Revival. It was not invented; it was the creation of the circumstances in which the Revival was carried on; it was a natural product of the soil; and the Methodist people should take good heed how they treat so precious and wonderful a growth. It renders possible a far more effective fulfilment of the idea of the pastorate and a far more perfect realization of the communion of saints than are common in any other Protestant community.

There are some things in Methodism which I do not covet. I do not covet the close and compact organization which is made possible by the authority of the Conference; but I covet the class-meeting. If we could transplant the institution into Congregational soil, we should modify it. The difficulty is that it does not seem to bear transplanting. But if we could transplant it—if all the members of this church were grouped together in "classes" of a dozen or twenty, meeting for prayer, for conversation on the hopes and duties of the Christian life, for the quiet study of Holy Scripture, and especially to those parts of it which are directly related to conduct and to the discipline of ethical and spiritual character; if every class had a wise and devout Christian man or woman at the head of it, the trusted friend of all its members—we should secure a depth of religious earnestness, a fullness of religious joy, and a development of moral vigor and refinement which at present seem to be beyond our reach.

Of course Methodism does not correspond to my conception of what a Church should be; if it did I should be a Methodist and not a Congregationalist. But if the idea of the church is imperfectly fulfilled in Methodism, the idea of church fellowship is largely realized. This I believe, is one of the chief secrets of its rapid growth; and in these times, when Romanism and Ritualism are striving so hard to destroy the Protestantism of the English Church, Evangelical Christians should remember that individualism involves a suppression of half the duties and a surrender of half the blessedness of the Christian life. The children of God belong to the household of faith. Religious isolation is alien to all their healthful instincts. If they cannot find a home—a real home—in a true church, they will enter a false church rather than be without any home at all. Individualism is powerless against the great organized religious communities.

The Methodist who despises his birth-right should ponder those words. Certain suggestions, too, are worth thought on the part of leaders.

THE DEAD-PRAYER OFFICE.

What becomes of the unanswered letters? Thousands of them find their way to the Dead-letter Office. Some never reach the person for whom they are intended because, the postage is not paid; some fail because they are directed to the wrong office; some cannot be sent because the address is illegible; and some because the matter inclosed is unavailable. These float through the mails, are examined at different offices, marked "missent," and finally they fall into the Dead-letter Office. There they are opened and read, and, if valuable, they are forwarded; if not they are given to the flames. Such is the accuracy and skill of the postal officials, that very few letters ever fail of reaching their destination.

Some prayers never reach God, because they are not addressed to God's office. They are directed to the audience. Here one prays a "sharp cut" to some stubborn brother, or rebukes some error in theology in another, or drives some keen-edged blade of censure into another. directs a severe criticism to some who are rushing into fashionable follies, and sometimes (shame on us!) the very supplication which we offer in tenderest tones, in behalf of the weeping widow and helpless

orphans, is intended more for those who mourn before us than for God who sits in glory above us. God's office is not in our neighbor's care, and if we direct our prayers to that point, they will certainly go to the "dead-prayer office."

Again, there is a prayer upon which the address is illegible, not because it is a rough, scrawling "hand-write"—these can always be deciphered—but because it has so many extra flourishes. This prayer is uttered in a pompous, grandiloquent style. It is full of long words, scientific terms, and classical quotations. The writing on the envelope is very much in keeping with the style on the inside. The ink was fancy, and it soon faded; the pen was the tongue, and it did not see the color in the prayer. How different when indicated by the heart! It is no wonder that this prayer gets lost, and finds its way into the "dead-prayer office."

The last prayer we notice is the unavailable prayer. There is a great latitude allowed us in the postal-matter of our Government, but there are a few things which cannot get even into the mail-bags. Sharp-edged tools and corroding acids, no matter how securely wrapped, will not be transported through the mails; these are put in a separate box and sent to the Dead-letter Office, or they are captured by the first postmaster that handles them. Many of our prayers, if answered, might be a blessing to us, but they would fall like a shower of daggers upon our neighbors. Sometimes in our prayers we half-way complain of the strange providence which has befallen us, and argue the case with God; then the prayer is full of sharp-pointed arrows. Is it at all strange that kind answers are not returned? The corroding of selfishness, or sensuality, or pride, is sometimes in our prayer. Such a prayer is lost on the way. It is poured out in mid-air. It is never answered, and well for us that it is not.

No legally "stamped," sincerely directed, and well-meaning prayer is ever lost. The answer may be delayed, but the prayer "is on file."—*Advance*.

SOMEBODY'S BUSINESS.

"Bury me in the Potter's Field. I have enough money on my person to save the city expense; aged thirty-two years; white; born in the United States. Cause—Alcohol. P. S. Cause—Nobody's business." So runs the note found in the pocket of Fredric J. Vogel, who shot himself through the head with a pistol on Tuesday morning in front of the Bellevue Hospital. "Cause—alcohol. Cause—nobody's business." Yet may it not "concern" the man who sold him the suicidal poison, and the men who are selling a like poison to others? Is there not one of all these who will be the least concerned in the matter? May it not concern those who made the laws by which governments live largely of the profits of the sale of poison? May it not concern the people for whom and practically by whom such laws are made? May it not concern a poor widow living at No. 232 East One Hundred and Seventeenth street, whom the man doubtless, honestly promised to love, honor, cherish and protect, and who has just passed through the last act of a long and torturing tragedy, whose horrors she has had to bear alone? May it not concern the children given to him to nurture for God and now deserted? May it not concern the drinker approaching the same infinite abyss? May it not concern the moderate man who is not more moderate than this young man one; now more moderate than many by whose respected example he was led to ruin? May it not concern the mercenary advocate of the liquor traffic? One such death should paralyze his tongue. Ten thousand do not. May it not concern those who are convinced of the evil and are doing nothing to stay it? May it not lend nerve to the arms of those who are doing what they can—*Montreal Witness*.

MISSIONARY POWER.

Every impulse and stroke of missionary power on earth is from the heart of Christ. He sows, and there is a harvest. He touches nations, and there arises a brotherhood not only civilized by his light but sanctified by his love. He spreads his net and gathers of every kind, and lo! the burden of the sea is not only fish but fishermen, who go and gather and come again. What follows, then, but that the criterion of missionary power and success in any branch of the Church is in its conscious nearness and likeness to him? If there are activity, free giving, ready going, a full treasury, able men who say, "Here am I, send me," it is because through all the organization Christ lives, and his personal Spirit works. There is no other possible spring for that enthusiasm. Take him away from the bravest missionary at his post—the lion heart of Selwyn would break. St. Paul would sink and die of homesickness "alone at Athens." If the ship labors in the sea, it is because there is no call of faith to the Master. If the machine stops or cracks, it is because the motive force is not let on. If the flower of Lebanon languishes, it is because the roots are not in the heart of the ground. If money fails, you can start a thousand conjectures as to this defect or that in the plan, but you are looking for a disorder

on the surface which is deeper down at the core. You have undertaken the amazing task of converting the world to Christ by a selfish Christianity. Know, oh, blind interpreter, that when men love Christ with right loyal and joyous devotion they will speak of him, give to him, tell out his history; and of missionary men and money there will be no famine. God's river of life will be full of water. It is time for Christians to think amidst their perplexities, whether the difficulty is not where they forgot to look for it—in their piety itself. We shall have more money for the Master when we have more of the Master. The world and the flesh and the devil have got the money; and they have got not a little of it in the hands of baptized men and women. It will come out when they believe with all their might in him by whom the "world" was overcome; who transfigured the "flesh" into a living temple, and who, by putting Satan behind him, drew to him the ministry of angels. How much of the present Christ, so much missionary strength.—*Bishop Huntington*.

RELIGION AND HONESTY.

In an editorial under the above title the *Hebrew Leader*, a Jewish organ, published in New York, has the following on the Dr. Thomas case:

A Methodist preacher at Rock River, Ill., one Dr. Thomas, has stirred up a lively commotion in that section, and his case is attracting general attention throughout the country. He is a heretic in the opinion of most of his brethren. He appears anxious to obtain all possible notoriety, and shows a strong disposition to have somebody make a martyr of him. True, the time is past for literal branding with hot irons in such cases, but this man wants the best attainable substitute for the old way. To this end he preaches doctrines condemned by the authorities of his church and the reverse of the faith to which he solemnly subscribed when he entered its fellowship, doctrines which he is bound by his ministerial vows to oppose with all his might.

Not only in the pulpit which he occupies, but elsewhere in public he squarely aims his heterodox sentiments, and seems to think he is doing just right. It does not occur to him that there is anything wrong in breaking his pledged word. He turns the guns of the fort of which he was put in charge against his commander, and appears unaware of any impropriety. Indeed, his words, acts and attitudes indicate pride rather than regret. We do not undertake to decide in these columns the dogma of any sect or denomination, but we can decide on honesty. If there is anything at all in religion it shows that it is not honest for a man to persist in staying in a voluntary organization which he says he does not approve of—and this most especially applies to ministers. It was the duty of this minister, as an honorable gentleman, to gracefully step down and out when he found he could no longer be in fellowship with his brethren. This rule applies to all voluntary associations, and it accords with the dictates of good morals and is in harmony with the amenities that obtain among gentlemen. It is the only way to avoid endless strife and bitterness. Speaking of this case an esteemed secular contemporary says (and we heartily endorse his sentiments):

We have no sympathy with these would-be martyrs who create disturbances in organizations, of any kind, by violating the compact on which they entered such associations. If the Rev. Dr. Thomas wants to preach in opposition to the creed of his church, let him do so by all means. That is his own affair. But let him first set himself right by leaving a Methodist pulpit in which he does not belong, and cutting loose from the church whose faith he has renounced. If he can get no other pulpit, he will do better to hire a hall than to continue in the role he has been playing. There is room enough in this country for all conflicting opinions. Our constitution wisely leaves the utmost latitude in this matter. The heathen and the saint are equal before the law. But those broad principles of common fairness which are approved by honest men of all nations, principles that are older than any known religion, and which must last to the end of time—these fundamental rules of human conduct are violated by the Rev. Dr. Thomas when he turns a Methodist pulpit into an agency for the dissemination of doctrines inimical to the faith to which he subscribed when he was commissioned as a Methodist preacher.

The inhabitants of the New Hebrides have consigned to London 3,700 pounds weight of arrow-root, by way of payment for an edition of the New Testament in their language.

Miss Maria Louisa Charlesworth, the author of many works of fiction intended to illustrate the application of religion to every-day life, died lately at Nutfield, at the age of sixty-one. She was a daughter of the late Rev. John Charlesworth, B.D., formerly rector of Flowton, Suffolk, and afterwards of St. Mildred's, Bread-street, City. Her most popular work was "Mourning Children," which has passed through many editions.

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