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OUR ENGLISH LETTER.

THE DAY OF INTERCESSION.

DEAR MR. EDITOR.—St. Andrew's Day, November 30th, has been set apart by the authorities of the Established Church of this realm as a day of special prayer for missions. This has been the case for about five years, and it is fully believed that gracious results have followed in copious blessings upon not a few places in that mission-field, and a revival of interest in the great work in the midst of the churches at home. It was a wise direction on the part of the rulers of the English Church, and it will not be allowed to become obsolete. The influence of the movement is felt in other churches, and in many quarters the day was specially consecrated to special prayer for the enlargement and prosperity of the great enterprise.

IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY,

two services of very great interest were held. Dean Stanley preached in the afternoon, and a distinguished Nonconformist minister, the Rev. Dr. Stoughton, was the lecturer in the evening. The man was worthy of the honor put upon him by the liberal Dean, and his address was most excellent. Much comment has been called forth by the appearance of another "Noncon." in the pulpit of the Abbey, and not have been the vials of wrath poured upon the head of the offending Dean. He cares little for that, and his next move may be equally astonishing, in an invitation to one or more of the advanced scientists whose views are notoriously loose, if not positively sceptical. Yet much satisfaction is felt by vast multitudes that men like Dr. Moffatt, Dr. Caird, and Dr. Stoughton, though outside the ranks of the establishment, can occasionally be heard in a place so famous and so dear to the nation as Westminster Abbey.

THE REV. ARTHUR TOOTH

has again made himself unpleasantly prominent, and has been the cause of renewed rioting in the unfortunate Church of Hatcham. He has gained a victory in the Law Courts, for by the accidental omission of a word or two in the legal documents, the entire suit against him has failed, and, after all, he remains the legal Rector of the Parish, and in possession of the disputed church. In a letter to the Archbishop, he disclaimed any intention of availing himself of the victory he had gained, and referred to his prolonged suffering and much injured health. But his evil genius, or some crafty advisers, persuaded him to go in for further services in the full-bloom ritual in which he and his curates delight. The result was another great row and almost another free fight in the church on the holy Sabbath. Much disgust is felt at the unseemly spectacle, and much pity for the amiable and good men so high in place and authority, and yet utterly unable to terminate a deplorable scandal, or to restrain the vagaries of these traitors in the establishment.

MR. BRIGHT AND THE BISHOP

of Peterborough have been engaged in a rather lively correspondence, and it is not a little difficult to decide which of the famous controversialists has given the hardest blows or remains master of the field. Mr. Bright has cleared himself from the imputation of jeering at the rite of consecration, although he distinctly avows he does not believe in "holy ground" any more than the good Bishop believes in "holy water." Upon another point Mr. Bright has made his position good. No explanation can do away with the unhappy and offensive terms in which the new Bishop of Truro has referred to the state of his diocese, and the wide prevalence of dissent throughout all its borders. Mr. Bright spoke of this attack in plain terms, and with honest,

manly indignation. His ringing words were echoed far and wide, and produced intense feeling. The Bishop has explained in part what was intended to be set forth in the offending document, but cannot reconcile it with fair play or the principle of a broad and generous catholicity.

THE WEATHER

has been a leading topic for the past few months, and not without sufficient reason. The predictions of impending storms which have been sent to us from America, by means of the submarine telegraph, have been verified by the sad experience of thousands on land and sea. We have had gales along our coasts of terrible severity, and wrecks have been numerous, with great loss of life. Boisterous wind and continuous rain have prevailed during a great portion of the past month, and a marked exemption from severe cold and almost entire freedom from frost. This is not the case in Scotland, for there the snow has fallen, and no small degree of frost has been felt. It is considered unfavourable to health throughout England, but we do not think there is more sickness than usual at this dark and dreary season, for November is by far the most trying and disagreeable month of the entire year.

THE WAR

almost compels constant reference, for it rolls on with deplorable severity, and no sign of an early termination. The Turks have, during the fortnight, gained a few unimportant advantages; but have not been able to relax the tightening grip of the Russians upon Plevna, and Erzaroum, or drive back the hosts of the stern invader. There is no sign of intervention on the part of the great Powers, and Turkey is left to reap the fruit of her evil doings, and the sword of punishment is in the hand of a strong and relentless foe. There are some who yet urge England to interfere, but wise counsels prevail. Lord Derby has again affirmed the intention of the Government, in plainest terms, and for the present we are not likely to intermeddle in the bloody quarrel.
Dec. 10, 1877.

(Our readers will see, by comparing the present with the immediate past, how slow is steam as compared with electricity. Plevna has fallen since our correspondent wrote: and we know it here.)—EDITOR.

CALVINISM DENOUNCED IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

CANON FARRAR'S two sermons in Westminster Abbey, on eternal punishment, are the pulpit event of the week in England. The first was on 1 Peter iv., 6. Denouncing "Those who take loose conjectures for established certainties, and care more for authority than for reason and conscience," the preacher set forth his own doctrine as that of men "whose faith must have a broader basis than the ambiguity of opposing texts; those who grieve over the dark shadows flung by human theologians over God's light; those who believe that reason and conscience and experience—no less than the Scripture—are books of God, and that they, too, must have a direct voice in these great decisions." Pursuing this line of impassioned denunciation, Dr. Farrar rebuked, with a severity which no one will venture to call too stern, the way in which the common doctrine is sometimes handled "by narrow-minded and loveless hearts."

"He knew of nothing so calculated to make the whole soul revolt with loathing from every doctrine of religion as the easy complacency with which some cheerfully accept the belief that they are living and moving in the midst of millions doomed irreversibly to everlasting perdition. No language could be stern enough to reprobate the manner in which many elder brothers of the Prodigal had turned God's gospel of penitence and redemption into anathemas and all but universal perdition. If we were not unaffected when the destitute perish with hunger or the dying agonize in pain, was there any human being worthy of the dignity of a human being who did not revolt and sicken at the notion of a world of worm and flame?"

As for the texts adduced in support of the customary doctrine, he declared that they are "in the first place alien to the broad, unifying principles of

Scripture; that, in the next place, they are founded on interpretations demonstrably groundless; and, in the third place, that for every one so quoted two can be adduced on the other side."

He proceeded:
"If this awful doctrine had to be decided by texts, then the original language must be appealed to and interpreted in its proper and historical significance. Where would be the popular teachings about Hell if we calmly and deliberately erased from our English Bibles the three words, 'Damnation,' 'Hell,' and 'Everlasting'? Yet, I say unhesitatingly—I say, claiming the fullest right to speak with the authority of knowledge—I say, with the calmest and most unflinching sense of responsibility—I say, standing here in the sight of God and my Saviour, and, it may be, of the angels and the spirits of the dead—that not one of those words ought to stand any longer in our English Bibles; and that being, in our present acceptance of them, simply mistranslations, they most unquestionably will not stand in the revision of the Bible, if the revisers have understood their duty.

On the other hand, however, he declared he could not preach the certainty of what was called Universalism—that all will be finally saved—though that doctrine did, indeed, derive much support from many passages of Scripture, and had been held by some of the early Fathers. Neither could he accept the spreading belief in conditional immortality. His belief was fixed upon the living God, and his answer to the question, 'What is the fate of dead sinners?' was, with Thomas Erskine, that we are lost here as much as there, and that Christ came to seek and save the lost. His hope was that the vast majority of the lost would at length be found.

The second sermon was from the text "Are there few that be saved?" It contained even less of argument than the first, and, if possible, more of intense expression of feeling. They have, however, produced a profound impression in England, and will no doubt awaken interest here.—*Ch. Union.*

AN EPISCOPAL CHURCH WITH A PRESBYTERIAN HEAD.

We read in the *Church Times* (Ritualist) 'The painful fact that the Supreme Governor of the Church of England is becoming an alien from its faith, and discipline has received another confirmation. We read in the *Glasgow Herald* that on Sunday week the Queen and Princess Beatrice communicated at Craithie parish church. The Princess of Wales was also present, but we are glad to say that her Royal Highness would have nothing to do with the business.'

BOSTON CELEBRITIES.

If Mr. Murray's work is judged by the ordinary standards applied to churches and pulpits, it is a failure. He has little or no church; his prayer-meeting is a lecture from himself; his Sunday-school I think is nil or very nearly so; there are few additions to his own comparatively small church by profession; he is doing no organic work. Moreover, it runs counter to—say, an old-fashioned Puritan taste, inherited from a grandfather and not wholly lost in an apostate residence in New York city, to see in a shop window a photograph of a fine looking man in a racing sulky, holding up to her work a 2.30 trotter, with the subscription, "Rev. W. H. H. Murray and his famous horse Brandywine." Nevertheless I believe, though I judge from hearsay, and from unfavorable hearsay, that Mr. Murray is doing a useful work in Boston, and one which needs to be done, in some method, in all our great cities. Let us try him by a little different standard than that of the ordinary ecclesiastical statistics.

A man of rare presence and peculiar magnetic power goes out on a Sunday morning with a choir of ten or twelve, collects a crowd by a tune or two, then mounts a barrel and preaches a sermon. He asks for no show of hands, organizes no church, holds no Sunday-school. He simply throws out the truth and leaves it. Is he doing a good work? I do not say the best work; that may be a question; but good work; of that I think there can be no question. His congregations grow and he puts a canvas roof over his head; winter comes on and he moves into a hall. Is he not still doing a good work? Mr. Murray is doing just

this. He is a street preacher in a hall. He has a magnificent chorus choir; his morning service is a sacred concert, where you may hear the best of solo, part and chorus singing. This is his magnet, his bell, his chimes to call the people together. When they have come he preaches to them. So far as I can judge from occasional reading of his Music Hall sermons in the "Golden Rule," which is his larger pulpit, he gives them sound doctrine, generally orthodox and even conservative doctrine, reserving his radicalism for his Sunday-school talks, I believe, at Burnstead Hall. He reports no statistics; I rather think he has none to report. He makes no attempt to organize or to carry on church work. His church, if it may be so called, is simply a background to his platform, a lecture and concert committee to keep the necessary machinery of the performance in motion. He gives men truth and leaves them to do with it what they will. His method would be a very poor one for ministers generally to imitate; one may not altogether like his manner of going out into the highways and hedges to compel the people to come in; he may like Mr. Colcord's method in New York city better; nevertheless it is something gained to go out at all. And the people do come in; and Music Hall is reported to be a decided financial success. There is no church building; but then there is no church mortgage.

But unquestionably the most popular preacher to-day of Boston, the one who has stronger hold on more hearts and on more widely different classes in society than any other, is Phillips Brooks. Yesterday I went to hear him.

Trinity Church is the finest ecclesiastical edifice in the modern Athens; but architecturally it impressed me as a magnificent pagan temple, though consecrated to the worship of God. There is no paganism, however, about the preacher, whose power is his intense vital Christian life. He preaches in the most ornate and, I suppose, the wealthiest church in the city; but the glory of his ministry is in the sewing girls and the clerks whom he draws into his congregation. Every sitting is rented except the five hundred seats which he insists shall be free. In the evening services, which he appoints during certain seasons, all seats are free. Popular I have called him; popular he certainly is; but the arts of the pulpit, of the rhetorician, or of the orator are curiously wanting; I should say even studiously avoided. He stands quietly before his desk; he reads his carefully-written sermon with telegraphic rapidity; he uses almost absolutely no gestures; his illustrations are few, but chaste and fresh; but his power is in his personality. His text was the answer of the disciples when Christ foretold that one of them should betray him—"Lord, is it I? Lord, is it I?" His subject cannot be easily characterized in a sentence. It was a portrayal of the experience of self-disclosure which Christ brings to the soul to which he comes and in which he abides—a revelation of the possibilities of both good and evil, of divine sonship and of abysmal degradation, which are in every human soul. What made the sermon powerful was the fact that it was written out of the preacher's personal experience. It was not egotistical. He spoke not of himself; but he spoke unmistakably out of himself. He drew his theme not from books, not even from the Bible, nor yet from a keen study of others' experiences, but from his own. In unveiling his own heart he unveiled other hearts to their own consciousness; in interpreting the voiceless experiences of his own soul he interpreted the unheard experiences of other souls to themselves. I am told that Phillips Brooks has many imitators. The man who imitates his style has really little or nothing to follow; but he who imbibes his spirit, and learns to preach the Christ, not of history, but of his own life and experience, who learns, in the endeavor, how poor that experience is, and who is sent to the living Christ to learn constantly new experiences, that he may be a constantly fresh preacher, will have imitated Phillips Brooks to good purpose, and will have, in a smaller circle, something of his rare pulpit power; no other imitator will or can.—*Christian Union.*

MOUNT ALLISON—PUBLIC EXERCISES.

THE MALE ACADEMY.

On Monday evening, the young gentlemen connected with the Male Academy had their first Exhibition at Linley Hall. They were greeted by a full house. The following was the programme:

- I. Devotional Exercises.
- II. "Oh the Mountain Life is Free," Chorus Class.
- III. "Things in general," W. S. Knowlton. "Prophecy of Capps," L. J. Sherwood.
- IV. "Soldier Chorus" (*Faust*), Misses M. Carritt, A. Freeman, Walton and Goodwin.
- V. "Shipping," A. G. Winterbotham.
- VI. "Mabel Waltzes," Mt. Allison Orchestra.
- VII. Is the Hope of Reward a greater incentive to action than the Fear of Punishment?—A. S. G. Murray, A. S. Kendall, and E. J. Elderkin; Neg. E. N. Bell, A. R. Fenwick, and C. L. Humbert.
- VIII. "Fete Militaire," (S. Smith,) Misses M. Carritt and S. N. Worrall.
- IX. Conclusion of Debate, Reports, &c.
- X.

"Sleep while the soft evening breezes blow," (*Sir H. Bishop*.) Chorus Class. Rev. Dr. Stewart who is still somewhat disabled by a knee trouble, was able to be present to conduct the devotional exercises. The Essay, "Things in General," was read by a small and mainly young gentleman, whose antipathy to Nova Scotia, provoked roars of applause. The debate was very well conducted by the respective disputants. There was no time lost in preliminary observations and apologies, but both sides contested closely in well chosen words, the points raised. The music was under the direction of Professor Sterne. "Mabel Waltzes" by Mount Allison Orchestra were received with unbounded favor. The soldier Chorus and Fete Militaire were rendered with much spirit and were well received.

Principal Kennedy in his report stated the attendance had been 93, of which number 77 were boarders. He said the School had been graciously preserved from any fatal illness. The Term had been a very successful one. Mr. Whiston, Principal of the Commercial College, stated his institution was now in its fourth year, and the attendance was now three times what it was at first. Twenty-four students are now studying for diplomas, and in addition there are 30 book-keepers from the Male Academy. The out-look for the College is encouraging. The Rev. Dr. Pickard being called upon, congratulated the Academy on the very pleasant evening it afforded. The Male Academy was first; the Ladies Academy and College were an outgrowth from it, and he trusted it would remain first. He was reminded it was just thirty-five years ago this month he came to Sackville, and on 17th January succeeding the Male Academy was started with seven students.

President Allison said he had observed that the students were divisible into three classes. The first was well developed young men, who came here with definite aims and objects. The second a class of fine lads bordering on manhood, and thirdly a large and promising class of boys. He would say to the two latter classes that there are rewards and penalties attached to the student's life. He would remind them that the greatest of rewards is not the wealth, is not the fame that hinge upon and result from the acquisition of stores of knowledge, but is knowledge itself. "The greatest penalty for not improving