

Moral and Religious Miscellany.

ITEMS FROM THE LEEDS FREEMAN.

DEATH OF THE EMPEROR OF RUSSIA.

"One Emperor passeth away and another cometh," we may almost put down as the event and the lesson of the week. Scarcely has the announcement of the death of Nicholas astonished the world, before it is added that the place he had filled for twenty-nine years is already occupied by another; and the "foremost man in the world" thus goes to the grave, amidst "the regrets of a nation," and with the salute of the newspapers, while his death, so much marked, produces scarcely any other immediate result than the substituting of Alexander for Nicholas in a few State papers!

But while the immediate results of such an event are thus humbling to humanity, the more distant results may be equally as momentous as the present ones are unimportant. The question has been put hundreds of times within the last twelve days, What will be the effect of the death of Nicholas on the policy of Russia? but still that question awaits, and seems likely to await, a satisfactory reply. The unreasonable hopes which the event at first induced, were, indeed, dissipated almost as soon as formed; for men remembered, what it is strange they should ever have forgotten, how comparatively small is the influence, even of a despot, upon the tendencies of a nation, which the man can do little more than represent. Yet the feeling of relief which the removal of so powerful a man as the late emperor of Russia caused is by no means gone. On the whole, doubtless, the event will be favourable to the return of peace. Even should Alexander pursue unchanged the policy of his father, that policy will be carried out with a much feeblér hand. It is seldom given to a nation to have successively *two* governors of the power of Nicholas. Some hope may also be derived from the readiness with which the authority to negotiate was renewed to the Russian Plenipotentiary at the Congress of Vienna.

That Congress is fixed, it is said, to commence its sittings on Wednesday next. It is somewhat singular that the day fixed should be the one selected by the Queen and the nation for prayer to Almighty God. A solemn day that will be to England on every account! Doubtless the representative of Britain, as he takes his seat in the Hall of Congress, will remember the manner in which the day is being spent by thousands of his countrymen at home.—The army before Sebastopol will also remember it. Who can tell what will be the effect of the prayers in England, both on the negotiations and on the war?

GLIMPSES OF THE PAST.

* * * * * We violate no neutrality, as we give no opinion, in adverting to the writings of our brethren upon the *terms of communion*. At a very early period differences of opinion were entertained by individuals: some maintained that baptism was imperative before communion; others, that "faith in Christ, and holiness of life," should alone be required from brethren. Bunyan wrote either five or six works in favour of the latter view, and against *some* who opposed it. William Kiffin wrote his "*Sober discourses of right to Church Communion*," 1581, in reply to Bunyan. A. Palmer, A. M., published his *Scripture Rail for the Lord's table; against Mr. Humphrey's treatise of Free admission*." Mr. B. Cox also wrote on the question, and Blake, the Presbyterian, replied to him, pleading for free admission.

V. Powell, though in favour of open communion, and forming most of the churches in Wales upon this basis, yet published nothing in favour of it, that we have seen.

WORKING-MEN'S SUNDAY SERVICES AT LIVERPOOL.

PRESENTATION TO THE REV. HUGH STOWELL BROWN.

Some time ago it was thought probable that Mr. Brown would resign his charge at Liverpool and accept the pastorate of a new chapel in London, and the working-men attending these services then determined upon presenting him with some token of esteem. Mr. Brown, however, declined the invitation to London, but he was considered only the more entitled to some substantial mark of respect for having refused the offers made to him. Accordingly, on Thursday week, a meeting was held in the Concert Hall, for the purpose of presenting him with a piece of plate, consisting of a handsome tea and coffee service of the melon pattern, and also a purse of £105 for Mrs. Brown.

Nathaniel Caine, Esq., the originator of the Working-men's Sunday Services, occupied the chair. He said the intention of the promoters of the Working-men's Sunday Services was to recommend the pure gospel to the masses by simply preaching the first principles of Christianity, irrespective of doctrinal construction. Many unfounded charges had been made against them. The addresses given had been characterised as infidel lectures; but he was happy to say that, in spite of denunciation, they had been the means of doing incalculable good to the working-men. Many who would scorn to set their foot in a church or a chapel had been induced to go there; and he mentioned two or three instances in which the gospel, as there preached, had fallen as "dew upon mown grass," reviving seared and blighted hearts.

The Rev. Hugh Stowell Brown, as honorary secretary of the society, read the report of the year's proceedings, which was cheering in the extreme. From the report it appeared that the services which in January, 1854, had been attended by 250, had increased in January, 1855, to 2,500, and of these from 1,500 to 1,800 were working-men. If they could obtain a place large enough to accommodate 5,000 people, he had no doubt that in the course of a month there would not be a seat to spare. Depending upon the blessing of God, they should scatter with a lavish hand the seeds of truth. Their mode of operation might be deemed novel, might be pronounced erratic; but they must of course be permitted to do, or attempt to do, their own work in their own way; and right glad would every member of the committee be, if those who considered their proceedings irregular should, by proceedings more in accordance with ecclesiastical proprieties and conventionalism, gather such great assembles of the people as those which it had been their pleasure to see so often within the walls of the Concert Hall.

DEATH OF THE REV. DR. INNES OF EDINBURGH

On Saturday morning week, this venerable minister, and eminent man of God, passed away. Four week ago, when visiting a sick-bed, he met with an accident, from the effects of which he never recovered. Dr. Innes died in the eighty-fifth year of his age, and sixty-second of his ministry. He was first licensed to preach the gospel in connexion with the Established Church of Scotland, and was one of the ministers of Stirling till 1799, when for conscience' sake he resigned his living, having embraced Baptist principles; and partly, perhaps, he was actuated in the step by a desire for a greater liberty in preach-