

EDITORIAL LETTER.

Boston, March 26, 1878.

"Mr. Meredith conducts a Bible-class on Wednesday evenings, of a thousand persons." This, from a Boston Methodist, confirmed what we had previously heard of Mr. Meredith as a remarkable biblical expositor and teacher. Sitting in the gallery of Grace Church, on Sunday evening, we had leisure to look about us before the service began. Here, five years ago, we heard Chapman deliver one of his scholarly discourses on the Bible. This time we were to listen to Meredith on Paul. "Where does the wonderful Bible-class meet?" we asked. "In the basement of this church," was the answer. "How many are here now, with every pew full to the door?" "Well, I should imagine about ten or twelve hundred people." Our informant was astonished to learn that, by liberal calculation, there were less than six hundred persons in the congregation. There is much deception as regards numbers in a crowded church. When a favourite speaker gains popularity, his friends are always liberal in counting his hearers. Thus, we came to reduce Mr. Meredith's Bible-class by, at least, fifty per cent.—a heavy discount, but figures do make sad work with the imagination. Still, Mr. Meredith's fame remains intact, for, to bring even hundreds together during successive weeks for the study of ancient historic narrative, requires more than culture or enthusiasm. Mr. Meredith is both a scholar and an enthusiast, but he is also, as all who hear him must soon admit, a close and very accurate student. He is about forty-five, of dark complexion, tall, sanguine, and draws immensely on his nervous energy, of which he possesses great store. With the exception of John B. Gough, we have heard no man more demonstrative at intervals, and whose intervals are more frequent, than in the instance of Meredith. He had been well over this ground—of the life and times of the rare man of Tarsus—that any one could see. For class teaching he had qualified himself to declare distances, localities, characters, climate, governments, rulers, and all else, with freedom and accuracy. There was a gracefulness of manner and elocution, too, with uncommon touches here and there of word-painting, which indicated that this preacher had genius as well as culture, beyond anything we had been led to anticipate. Boston loses nothing with years, so far as its evangelical pulpits are concerned. It has all the fire of the fathers, with a great deal more than their learning.

Rarely have we heard three or four principal points in a sermon presented to better advantage than during Mr. Meredith's discourse. As, for instance, when he lingered over Paul's conversion, and demanded that the sceptic should either explain how the persecutor became a penitent, or that he should stamp the Bible as a tremendous falsehood. Really there seemed no positive alternative, as his logic laid this subject before the mind. Abandoning the Bible, all could easily be settled. But, to do this, it is not enough that the sceptic shall quietly waive the old book aside; he must make war upon it as the most gigantic fraud that ever was concocted by designing men—men who, nevertheless, seem never to have been influenced by any worse motive than to make the world better! But, accepting the Bible, this phenomenon must be explained.

The day is not far distant when the law will step in to alter such churches as Grace in Boston. Its entrances are the best adapted to bury a multitude in one hopeless crush at the first panic, of any we have seen for some time. May a cry of alarm, false or real, never be heard within its sacred walls, till the trustees and the architect shake hands across a wide, free entrance. The way into this church is more direct in the spiritual than the architectural sense.

(N. B.—It is but right to add that subsequent enquiry showed there were more entrances to this church than the

dangerous one we have referred to. The law had already stepped in and provided against the worst contingencies.)

Before we pass from this subject, it may as well be intimated that Boston church officials are growing in a direction which might well set an example for our Provincialists. It is a common experience for the stranger to meet at every church door, not men paid for the purpose, and whose emoluments might give their actions an air of selfishness—but men of means and culture, who, with kindest word and hand, take a visitor to the very best place in the church. There is a gospel of the pew as well as of the pulpit, and of the doorstep as well. We wish our leading men would more frequently become ministers of welcome to passing multitudes.

The Hall of the Bromfield St. Methodist Book Concern was well filled with Preachers on Monday at 10 a. m. Mr. Studley, now of Tremont St. was in the chair. Notables were there not a few. Dr. Pierce, the soul of pleasantness, leading his "Zion's Herald" into the very first ranks of journalism; ex-President Cummings, venerable and beautiful in his humility; Dr. Mark Trafton, comely of presence, and doubtless "the chief among ye, takin' notes," his "Letter from a dead man," even now passing into form by the printers' hands; Dr. McKeown, Revs. T. B. Smith, Fred. Woods, William Full and others of our provincialists among the number. It has a strong appearance, this Boston Preachers' Meeting, capable of great things. This morning there was merely a little playfulness and cross firing, for the season was verging on Conference and removals, with all the uncertainties involved—a time when men stop and draw breath. He is a fortunate stranger who escapes here without a speech. Dr. McKeown and others inveigled an innocent stranger to this awful precipice this morning; but, we imagine, they will scarcely do it again. They were invited to come "owre the borders," and study an institution once known to the American people, now limited to the Methodist Church of Canada—a republic—the purest type of a republic on the face of the earth to-day—a church in which 1500 preachers work by the unselfish system of representation—a church extending from Labrador to the Pacific, having no Bishop or Presiding Elders, no designation higher than that of Methodist preacher. It was an awful presumption! But, such mischiefs are sometimes bred among even ministers on the bilious "blue-Monday." They laughed, and let us off! But any one could see there was a lingering sadness behind it all from a consciousness that there is curious suggestion in one awful financial fact which cannot be laughed out of countenance—the M. E. Church of the United States pays \$650,000 for Presiding Elders alone, and—about the same amount for missionaries! They are a noble, band, doubtless, but if 1500 ministers can dispense with Presiding Elders, why not 50,000? Why not?

The new Pope is disposed to reach his ends by ways less direct, or at least by words less blunt and dogmatic, than his predecessor. He is seeking diplomatic relations with the British Government, though that may be to smooth the way to erect a grand Romish hierarchy contemplated for Scotland. (Will the ghost of John Knox abide it?) The new Pope, moreover, seems willing to abandon altogether temporal power. These are great concessions; but how are we to interpret them?

A new appointing power has appeared in Methodism. On the 25th of March the New York Herald published, in advance, the stations of the New York and New York East Conferences. When the actual appointments came out for publication it was found that the Herald was correct in many instances. The secret of this would seem to be, that most of the congregations of those Conferences invite their ministers, so that it is known for some months who are to be sent to certain places. But where is the Episcopal jurisdiction in such a case. In a representative system like our own the Herald's announcement would not have suggested any idea of inconsistency.

Will our Brethren on Circuits whose Wesleyan lists have been neglected, please note!

An unusually large number of subscribers have been continued on the solicitation of Ministers. Others have been kept on hoping—as we had always found it safe to count upon the circuits where these live—that the present ministers would shortly send up a good report. The number of unpaid subscribers is altogether so much in excess of previous years that a thorough revision of the lists is inevitable. With all our disposition to favour subscribers, we cannot consent to involve the publishing office in such loss as must follow if Ministers do not definitely report. The year, as we have reason to know, is a trying one; but we cannot avoid the conviction that some brethren could easily avoid a consequence which is now pretty sure to come. A few circuits will have subscribers cut off by the dozen, or by the score, excepting where positive information is forthcoming.

There is one word which, as we stand on the verge of General Conference, and may be pleading more in the interests of some one else than the present occupant of this office, we feel free to say—The majority of our Ministers are nobly in sympathy with our publishing interests, and have proved it by heartily cooperating with the Book Steward and Editor; but there are a few whose indifference to these interests it will be very difficult to reconcile with what is generally regarded as loyalty to Methodism, an appreciation of the advantages of our literature, or the ordinary faithfulness of the Christian ministry. Our predecessors, we believe, had the same experience, though they may never have had the courage to confess it.

THE REV. JOB SHENTON has received and accepted an invitation to the Superintendency of St. John's, Newfoundland. Should the Transfer Committee concur, here is one step toward practical union.

MEETING OF THE GENERAL BOOK COMMITTEE, EASTERN SECTION.

The members of this Committee will meet at the Book Room, Halifax, on THURSDAY morning, 18th inst., at 10 a. m.

(By telegraph we learn that the representatives from Charlotetown will cross on Wednesday, so that the Committee is called to suit that time.)

The Executive Committee will meet at half-past two p. m. WEDNESDAY, 17th.

WAR MATTERS.

It would seem that the positions of the European nation, in the event of war, are now so clearly defined that Russia is disposed to take breath before another movement. Clearly, Austria and Germany are with England. This shuts Russia up to the policy of a tremendous conflict or a quiet negotiation for the settlement of wrongs. Bismarck is making strong overtures for a Congress, which, it is quite likely Russia will grant. We may yet be saved the awful history of an European War.

ROMISH AGGRESSIONS.

If any reader wishes to understand what Romanism really is about,—its designs, its tireless purpose, he should read Arthur's "Popes, Kings and People." As a masterly exposition of that imperial, undying aim at universal conquest, which has signalized the Popes quite as much in latter as in earlier times, Mr. Arthur's work has no equal. We are so often lulled into repose by an apparent change of policy upon the part of the Romish Church, that our blindness deserves to be treated somewhat rudely. Mr. Arthur removes these scales of ignorance from the eyes of the most sceptical.

Even New York begins to see danger in this direction. We find this paragraph in New York correspondence of the Pittsburg Advocate:—

The Anti Papal League is the aggressive title of a new movement organized in this city, with, I am told, a number of the best known and most respected clergymen and laymen of the United States on its rolls. Our uncompromising old friend, George P. Edgar, always militant, in war and peace, is driving it, as general agent. The object is to withstand the insidious and alarming aggressions of the papal power, in our educational, reformatory and political institutions. The principal means are, the organization of auxiliary leagues in all places, for the agitation and enlightenment of the public mind on this subject, and for the embodiment of public sentiment in united action wherever called for. Lectures, preaching, conventions, and above all, the publication of facts, tracts and books, and the urgent circulation of many powerful arguments of various kinds now in print, and many of them too little known, are the leading modes of activity proposed for this organized anti-papal power. A central anti-papal book and tract depository, with branch or auxiliary depositories in all other cities, would seem naturally to be the future of the first prominent demonstration. Their rooms are at 132 Nassau street.

To the articles now passing through these columns on the Supernumery Fund, we need not ask that careful attention be given by all who are interested in our church schemes. As bearing upon what must be a principal subject of discussion at the coming Annual Conference, they embrace all necessary information, collated with excellent tact and leading to direct and convincing conclusions. Our brethren will sincerely thank our correspondent for his very able articles.

VAUGHAN'S SENTENCE.

This wretched criminal has met the just sentence of the law for a double crime of almost unparalleled atrocity. We are not always in favor of publishing details which can only create horror and disgust among refined readers; but the address of Justice Wetmore in delivering sentence upon Vaughan is at once a cry of warning and a funeral lamentation. We give extracts:—

MR. JUSTICE WETMORE'S ADDRESS.

"The purpose for which you are again brought before the Court is of the most dreadful character. You, a young man of some 28 years of age, scarcely in the prime of manhood, blessed with health and strength, and with the prospect of an ordinary length of life, you are now about having sentence of death pronounced upon you. The period beyond which you shall not be permitted to live is now about to be fixed by your fellow man.

The sentence I shall pronounce is the judgment of the law. I have no option or discretion to exercise. The law says, whosoever is convicted of murder, shall suffer death as a felon—and if there ever was one case more than another imperatively requiring that the stern enactments of the law should be carried out, that case seems to be yours. Notwithstanding the untiring ingenuity of your Counsel, who did all that counsel could do for you, the case most clearly presented against you, on your trial by evidence pointing to conclusions that no reasonable man can doubt, is of almost unheeded atrocity. A poor, unoffending, helpless old woman ripe for the grave, has been sent into eternity, to appear before her maker without a moment's preparation. No object of gain or revenge appears to have actuated you. Nothing but your uncontrollable lusts seem to have led you to the commission of this fearful crime.

"Ministers will gladly attend you and with their prayers and holy teaching, earnestly endeavor to bring you to that truly penitent state of mind without which it is impossible that your sins can be forgiven. It is too late for you now to shun the error of your ways. So far as you are concerned the die is cast; your doom is sealed. There is no thing left for you but to seek your Maker's pardon, if you would avoid an eternity of woe. But your dreadful position may serve as a warning to others who have not the fear of God before their eyes. It was not one step from the path of rectitude that brought you to the dreadful abyss into which you have fallen. It was step by step in the ways of wickedness that has caused your ruin. Had that first step not been taken, there never could have been a second step, and you, instead of being a condemned felon about to terminate his existence on the gallows, would probably have been a useful member of society in the position in which God had been pleased to place you. May your sad fate be a warning to us all.

"It would be wrong, nay it would be absolutely criminal in me to hold out the shadow of hope for mercy on this side of the grave. The sentence I shall pronounce most unquestionably will be executed. Let me therefore earnestly beseech you not to waste one moment of the little time allotted you in this world. Let every second of it be devoted to supplication to your Maker for pardon. Seek the assistance of holy men to aid you. By earnest prayer and supplication you can obtain pardon and peace from your offended Maker. The arms of a merciful Saviour are ever open to a truly penitent sinner."

Here the Judge, standing up, and every man in the vast audience following his example, said in tones thrilling and solemn:

"Your sentence is that you, William Vaughan, be taken hence to the place from whence you came, the common goal of the City and County of Saint John, and from thence, on Saturday, the twenty-second day of June next, to the place of execution, there to be hanged by the neck until you are DEAD—and may a merciful God through the atoning merits of our crucified Saviour have mercy upon your soul!"

At the conclusion of the Judge's sentence, during the delivery of which the utmost silence had been preserved, the prisoner, who had throughout preserved the utmost coolness, grasped the front railing of the dock and bowing to the Judge, said in a strong, firm voice, "I am willing to die." He then left his

place with as firm a step as he had stepped into it; and was escorted back to the goal.

The court was immediately afterwards adjourned sine die.

The Morning News adds a few words to the solemn report, which may furnish all the information a natural curiosity may demand in respect to this doomed man.

This most atrocious murder was committed on the thirteenth of February last, and the circumstances connected with it, as far as have been revealed by the witnesses, will long be remembered by the public. Seldom, in the history of this city, has the press been called upon to chronicle such a dreadful crime. The news as conveyed to the public by the morning papers of the fourteenth of February was received with horror. The energy with which the police authorities made search for the murderer, merited the highest praise.

Vaughan had from Saturday—the day he received his sentence—just eleven weeks to live. During that time he will be visited frequently by spiritual advisers. His wife and relations will be allowed to visit him. He expressed a wish to a News representative to see all his relations before his death. He was married by the Rev. Mr. Parsons on June 6th, 1872 to Rebecca J. Hughes. He has no children.

On Saturday a rumor was current that Vaughan had made a public confession; this, however, is incorrect. The confession he has made is private, and will not be made public until it is more complete.

WASHINGTON LETTER.

ART AT THE NATIONAL CAPITAL. A LIFE SCHOOL ESTABLISHED. SOME AMERICAN ARTISTS JEALOUS OF THEIR FOREIGN BRETHREN. THE SUPERIOR EXCELLENCE OF FOREIGN PICTURES. GEORGE'S "DEATH OF CAESAR," THE "DEATH OF MOSES" BY CABANEL. AN ATTEMPT TO PAINT DEITY. CHURCH'S GREAT WATERSCAPE. A PICTURE WITH A HIST TOBY, &c., &c.

Since the establishment of the Corcoran Art Gallery in Washington, the capitol of the United States has become quite an art centre. No city in the country, perhaps, can show as many painters who, either as professionals or amateurs, wield the brush and dabble in colors. A life school of art has been established in the city, and I am told that fine physical specimens of both sexes are standing as models.

There is some expression of disapproval among American artists, of what they call a disposition on the part of the trustees of the Corcoran gallery to encourage foreign artists, and to ignore native American talent. There is doubtless some truth in the impeachment, but the trustees, whose duty it is to select and purchase the pictures, deserve more praise than reproach for the discrimination. True art belongs to no section; the Kosmos in its patriae, and to enable, idealize, and perpetuate, its patriotism. The gallery contains a few pictures, by American artists, of real merit, but the worst pieces, it cannot be denied, are foreign subjects by foreign artists.

Among the most imposing pictures both in size, subject, and treatment, is "Caesar Dead" by the great French artist Delacroix; it is said to be only a study of what he subsequently reproduced in a larger picture, where the assassins are represented as fleeing from their ghastly work. Here only is seen, on the blood spattered marble of the senate floor, the gashed corpse of Caesar, muffled in his mantle, retaining even in the helplessness of death the imperial dignity of the first of Roman emperors. The picture shows a thorough knowledge of color, form, and perspective, and, like other pictures by the same artist, is expressive of intense dramatic feeling.

Among the pictures is one remarkable for its historic associations as well as for its excellence as a work of art; it is the "Adoration of the Shepherds," by Mengs, and it was bought from the collection of Joseph Bonaparte, who purchased it in Madrid during the brief time his great brother was able to hold him on the Spanish throne. The artist has reproduced the conception of Correggio in his Holy Night, by making the light of his picture emanate from the infant Jesus.

The "Death of Moses," a picture of 10 by 13 feet, is one of the early ambitious essays of Alexander Cabanel, a French artist who has since become famous. The painting, though meritorious in some of its details, is, upon the whole, unsatisfactory, if not shocking, for the artist has attempted something too high for mortal reach—a portraiture of Deity. It was the purpose of Cabanel to represent the death of Moses as described in the 34th chapter of Deuteronomy. The Almighty is represented enthroned in air, pointing with one hand to the promised land, but indicating with the other that Moses is not to enter there, groups of angels sustain the ma-