

Roman priesthood in Ireland. Such action will finally destroy their religious prestige.

METHODISM AT A STANDSTILL IN ENGLAND.—Our English exchange comments upon the fact that the net gain—according to the *Methodist Recorder*—in England for the past year has been only 674 members, the total being still under half a million all told. It seems as if this auxiliary religious agency, which did good revival work in its early days, were no longer needed—the Church herself being now thoroughly alive, awake and active.

"PEOPLE VISIT THE CLERGY in churches below Central Park, and ask to be called on only when it is necessary." So we read in *St. Andrew's Chronicle* (N.Y.), where the practical impossibility of the clergy visiting the people is demonstrated. In village congregations and country parishes of very limited area, the house-going parson may still be a reality; but it requires a large staff of clergy to visit a city parish on the same scale.

PREACHING AND PRATING.—"He that preaches twice a Sunday," said Bishop Andrews, "*prates once.*" So quotes *Church Bells*, in order to enforce the necessity of more careful, but necessarily less frequent, preaching; quoting also much to the same effect from Augustus Hare, Lacordaire, and Bishop Wilberforce—and also dwelling on the practical "preaching" of lives like those of Savonarola, Howard, Garrison and many other public men.

BAPTISM AND CONFIRMATION.—Canon Mason's recent learned work on the spiritual distinction between these two rites is convicted by the *Guardian* reviewer of exaggeration in favour of the latter. In order to exalt confirmation as the special channel of spiritual gifts, the author seems disposed to minimize the importance of baptism as a spiritual benefit. He seems even to go beyond the usual distinction between the Spirit dwelling "with" and "in" believers.

A REMARKABLE CONFIRMATION was that recently in St. George's parish (Dr. Rainsford), New York. The number was 237, but of these only 97 were "Episcopals" originally—the rest had been Lutherans (51), Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, Dutch Reformed, Congregational, Roman Catholic, Unitarian, Jews, Chinese, &c. These figures are a notable proof of the extensive ramifications of the parochial work at St. George's

HOW TO TREAT CORRESPONDENTS.—The famous Dr. Parker, of the London "City Temple," writes to the *Times* about the heaps of correspondence inflicted now-a-days upon public men. He receives interminable letters on all imaginable subjects. Anonymous letters he puts straight into the fire; those of the "dear brother and fellow-sinner" class go into the waste paper basket; and those whose first sentence does not state the business are shelved.

GOOD FRIDAY COMMUNION.—An interesting subject is being discussed in the columns of the *Guardian*, viz., the propriety of a celebration of Communion on Good Friday. So many churches—including three Cathedrals—London, Edinburgh and Truro—have daily celebrations now that, in these places particularly, it seems an anomaly to have no Communion on such a solemn day, when the Church seems to provide fully for its celebration. Verbal and sentimental "commemoration" cannot take the place of the "commemorative sacrifice" itself.

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THE CHURCH-GOING BELL.

Multitudes who ignore the fact that the Church Catholic provides a carefully composed and fitly arranged routine of prayers for different periods of every day, do not realize how much they miss by not recognizing in some shape this important fact. If their recognition goes no further than to notice the ringing of the parish bell from hour to hour as they busy themselves about their daily avocations, something is gained—for their souls. Those who do this are sure to acquire a habit of mental ejaculation or at least of spiritual recollection, which has a cumulative force that tells in the long run to a degree that can scarcely be sufficiently estimated. A working girl in a New York factory said the other day, "I'm glad we work near Trinity Church, for we never forget the Saints' days: the chimes remind us, and when the bell rings out, we all join softly in the hymn that is being played." If those Rectors who possess such chimes would remember the possible (indeed, probable) effect of ringing them periodically for the edification of those who may be harnessed to business in the crowded mart around, they would use them.

WHO ANSWERS THE CALLS?

That is scarcely the question. The responses may be literally "few and far between," and yet the blessing be scarcely diminished in force or extensiveness. It is well to remember that numbers are no criterion of spiritual value and success in such matters. The church may be full, crammed, and yet less actual good result, from a spiritual and religious point of view, than if 999 had been elsewhere and only one or two earnest praying souls present. We cannot but think that where the servant of Christ is at his post, even if he be left to say the service *secreto* from beginning to end, there are those present who bring a blessing with them. "Was there any one there?" is a common question as the parson wends his way homeward from an ordinary Mattins or Evensong: to which Bishop Odenheimer once answered, "yes, the church was full—of angels!" Let us suppose, then, that we have those two things merely: the Church bell proclaims the fact that the parish priest is about to begin the service, and then the priest at his post proceeds *alone*—both bell and priest do their work, and do it well.

DAILY WORSHIPPERS,

however, are very sure to turn up occasionally, and—if encouraged—a certain element of regularity and system, a pious habit of attendance, will gradually grow up, and a congregation of the requisite "two or three" be available. Then we have the Divine promise, "There am I in the midst"—that is sure to be fulfilled. What more could be gained for blessing and edification, if 1,000 ordinary mortals were there, instead of only two or three. The *Churchman* of New York, in a recent editorial, takes up this subject in its usual business-like way, commenting on the fact that there are twenty-two churches (out of 84) in that city where daily service is the rule; but that in country places the ratio is much smaller. Why should such figures prevail?—for we suppose the proportions are about the same everywhere. There can be no question that those twenty-two city churches carry on a wondrously valuable work—from Trinity down to the humblest mission chapel with its little tinkling bell—which might be increased fourfold by the general carrying out of the Church's plain directions for daily service.

THE BUSINESS VIEW

need not be excluded, and the New York paper presents it trenchantly. The parson should con-