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The Church Herald.

TORONTO, THURSDAY, FEB. 5, 1874.

We beg to call attention to the scheme of parochial mission services for Lent, inaugurated by the clergy of Toronto and vicinity, with the approbation of the Bishop, whose Pastoral letter on the subject appears in these columns. We also publish under the head of ecclesiastical intelligence, the scheme for these services, with special forms of prayer.

THE ENGLISH BISHOPS ON CONFESSION.

At a meeting recently held at York, in England, at which Earl Fitzwilliam presided, certain resolutions were adopted on the subject of Confession; those resolutions were forwarded to the Bishops. Some of the latter have sent in replies.

The Archbishop of York is amongst those of the prelates who have expressed their views on the subject matter of the resolutions. His Lordship expressly admits the right of the laity to express their opinion on a subject of so much importance to them. Referring to the declaration of opinion lately promulgated over the signatures of Dr. Pusey and others on the subject of the Confessional, the Archbishop very clearly points out the leading errors enunciated in that declaration. He says:—

"A body of clergymen, some of whom are distinguished for their learning and piety, have put forth a statement to the effect that Christ has instituted in his Church a special means for the remission of sins, after baptism; and that the special means consists in the application of the power of absolution to individual souls, after private confession to the priest. Any one who holds such an opinion must needs confess that our admirable Prayer-book is very badly framed for such a system. In truth, the system of our Church is exactly opposite to this. She encourages all Christians to carry their sins, not to the priest, but directly to the foot of the throne of grace. The confession which she favours is confession to the God of all mercy, not confession in private to one of His ministers. Carefully and searchingly she has weeded out, in successive revisions of her formularies, every expression of a contrary tendency. Only in two cases has she retained the permissive use of private confession. In the one case a person preparing for Holy Communion, who cannot quiet his conscience by the excellent means which she lays down, of confession and promises of amendment to God, and of charity and restitution towards man, is advised to go to some minister (Unit, by the ministry of God's Holy Word, he may receive the benefit of absolution. In the other case, the sick man who feels his conscience troubled by any weighty matter is to be exhorted to confess it, and then the form of absolution is to be used 'if he humbly and heartily desire it.' No impartial person can fail to see here the extreme caution with which private confession is treated, or the rarity of the occasions on which it is to be used. The Liturgy of the Church of England would be quite unfit for a system in which private confession and absolution by the priest were the appropriate means for restoration after post-baptismal sin. It is easy to understand that the sore perils that have attended private confession will be aggravated where it is practised without being recognised and controlled. It will be in the hands of those who appoint themselves, and who have to create, in young and impressionable people, the need which they are afterwards to satisfy. It has been answered that the remedy for this is to revive and control it. But, unless I greatly mistake the mind of the people of England, there is no part of the Church's teaching to which they are more firmly attached than that which affects the relation of God to His creatures. He is their Father, they His children; who, through Christ, have daily access to Him in prayer and worship. There is no need to interpolate a second mediator, where the great transaction of confession and penitence and pardon is carried on through Christ alone. The meeting seems to hope much from a change in the law. I confess that, in this, I do not quite agree with the resolutions. I hope more from a full examination of the subject, and the formation of a sound opinion. The more the subject is examined, the more will two facts be made manifest. One is, that private confession is discouraged in the Church of England. The other is, that any attempt to alter the character of the Prayer-book in this respect would be repugnant to the convictions of the great majority of the clergy, and of almost all the laity, and would be utterly ruinous."

The Bishop of Exeter in his reply to a memorial, on the same subject, expresses the strongest dislike to Romanizing teaching or practices. He regrets that certain members of the Church should use their position to teach what the Church does not teach; and he deprecates the existence of a disposition in certain quarters, to treat the decisions of the courts with disregard. He specifies as follows, some of the objections to habitual confession: That it is inconsistent with Christian liberty, and with that openness of life which St. James enjoins, when he bids us confess our faults one to another. It is the duty of the individual Christian to endeavour to make his peace with his own conscience, and the aid of the minister should only be sought when that endeavour has failed. The practice of habitual confession was tried and found hurtful, and the Church of England profited by the experience and discontinued it, and it would be both foolish and wrong to return to it; it tends to further weakness of character, and to cause temptation to falsehood, it sometimes causes a man to dwell on what he ought to cast out of his soul with resolute aversion; it sometimes leads to dangerous intimacies; it runs the risk of interfering with domestic life by bringing an outside influence between those who ought to deal directly with each other. His lordship then proceeds to say:—

But while I join the memorialists in earnestly deprecating and deeply regretting the mischief that we cannot avoid seeing, I think it of importance not to exaggerate its proportions, and I am bound to say that my regret is not accompanied by any alarm. The practice of habitual confession can only be introduced through its adoption by the laity, and I do not see the slightest reason to fear that any but an exceedingly small minority of our laity will be persuaded to go back to a mistake from which they have so entirely escaped. And with regard both to this and to other practices and doctrines which either have or appear to have a Romanizing tendency, I am quite confident that very few of the clergy who join in them, or advocate them more or less, are conscious of any such tendency in what they do. We may charge them with very grave mistakes, but we shall be unjust if we charge them with disloyalty of intention. The High Church party, of which these men may be considered the extreme section, are, as a whole, thoroughly loyal to the Church of England, and all resistance to what may be wrong in their action will be most effectual if we begin by recognising their undeniable merits; for among them, to my knowledge, is to be found such devotion to our Lord, such unwearied perseverance in spiritual labour, such heartfelt kindness to the poor as it would be not easy to parallel, and perhaps impossible just at present to surpass. When men like these make mistakes, we may well be confident that their mistakes will not do so much harm as their services will do good.

Opinions and sentiments of other bishops, similar to the above, have also been published. While we cannot help sympathising with the bishops in their efforts in the faithful discharge of their high and responsible duties, we feel a corresponding regret at the conduct and utterances of persons of extreme views, the effect of which is to weaken the cause of wholesome discipline by showing disrespect for Episcopal authority. On a late occasion Archdeacon Denison, because he could not have his own way in some matter respecting the licensing of curates, thought it right to advise his party to "break with the bishops." What he meant by the expression we scarcely know unless he intended to suggest the disestablishment of the church; or possibly the formation of a "new church," to be presided over by Archdeacons instead of Bishops. In any view, there was an unmistakable ring of disloyalty and disrespect in the speech, which we had supposed impossible in a clergyman occupying the high position of Archdeacon Denison. We hope such an example of insubordination will not recommend itself to any person excepting Archdeacon Denison, who for some reason personal to himself has on more than one occasion, given expression to sentiments subversive of that just and wholesome discipline which it is his duty to respect and uphold.

As to the Manifesto of Dr. Pusey et al. the object of it is plain enough, but its propriety is not equally manifest. We do not apprehend any necessity for turning our backs on the bishops, and seeking light from the gratuitous "opinions" of irresponsible persons, in difficult matters of doctrine or practice.

ENGLAND AND ULTRAMONTANISM.

It would seem that the laws of neutrality do not apply to third parties in relation to the kind of warfare now pending between Prussia and Rome. It is true these two powers are not in a status of war in the ordinary sense in which nations fight each other with carnal weapons, and therefore there is no technical rule to prevent the interposition of outsiders in the dispute. We should have thought, however, good taste and good sense would have been best displayed by the people of England had they refrained from taking sides in the ecclesiastical difficulties between the Emperor and the Pope. We do not forget that the contest involves principles of great importance, and is one much calculated to excite the sympathies and arouse the feelings of spectators; yet it should be remembered that a public manifestation of such feelings has a tendency to stimulate antagonism at home, and to produce an unfavourable impression abroad. With the different domestic questions in Church and State politics that in England serve to keep alive the spirit of party agitation, one would have thought it unnecessary, even on the principle of variety, to import the "little difficulties" of foreign powers. When Lord John Russell and his friends decided to get up a demonstration to express sympathy with the German Emperor in the Papal dispute, they must have foreseen that their action would give rise to a counter movement in favour of the Pope. It was not to be supposed that Archbishop Manning and the Roman Catholics of England would by their silence suffer judgment to go against them by default, and so we are not surprised to learn that the late meeting in favour of the Emperor, presided over by Lord John Russell, is to be matched by another in favour of the Pope, to be presided over by his Grace the Duke of Norfolk.

The first meeting took place according to appointment at St. James' Hall, London, on the 27th ult., and is said to have lasted over four hours. The object was to express the sympathy of England with the German Government in its struggle with the Ultramontane Party. The telegram informs us that letters approving the purposes of the meeting were received from the Archbishops of Canterbury and York and 237 members of Parliament, and that speeches were made by Messrs. Newdigate, Peel, Chambers, and others. As a natural sequel to the story of Lord Russell's meeting, comes the intelligence that the "Catholic Union of Great Britain" are preparing to convocate a great public meeting of Roman Catholics, under the presidency of the Duke of Norfolk, the object of which is, of course, to express sympathy with their co-religionists of Germany. Undoubtedly a large and influential number of Englishmen will give their support to this latter demonstration. The nett result will therefore amount to something like this: It will be shewn to the German Emperor and the Pope by public manifestation that a large number of the people of England side with Germany, and another large number (although smaller) give their sympathy and moral support to His Holiness; a condition of English sentiment perfectly well known to both potentates previous to any meeting on the subject. That either party to the contest will be influenced in the slightest degree by the resolutions adopted at these meetings, is extremely improbable.

Lord John Russell has thought it necessary to treat as a serious matter, the harmless and baseless claim of Pius IX. respecting some kind of a jurisdiction over all baptised persons. In his celebrated letter to the Emperor of Germany, some such kind of phraseology could only emanate from a weak source, and cannot by any means be made to alarm the fears or disturb the equanimity of the Christian world. However, the veteran Earl, (who is really very old) fancies the approach of danger, and with the greatest possible gravity, points out that the claim would include the Queen and Royal family of England; a proposition which excites his loyal indignation, one to which he protests he will not agree.

Well, we need not quarrel with Lord

John. The wonder is, however, considering the number of questionable dogmas that have been issued from the Vatican, why the Protestants of England, should have thought it worth while to protest against the incoherent language of a feeble old man in his controversy with the civil Power of Germany.

There is, moreover, an element in the German-Ultramontane quarrel which in common fairness ought not to be overlooked; an element which from any point of view, would negative the idea that the merits are all on one side of the question. The issue between the Pope and the Emperor, is not whether Ultramontane principle should spread through the world; the question is much more local and peculiar to the contending parties. It concerns the ecclesiastical law of Prussia, and the relations between the State and the State religion. Without for a moment favouring the idea of ecclesiastical supremacy over the Civil power, it is an undoubted fact, that the operation of the new ecclesiastical laws, is such as to deprive the Church of important privileges previously enjoyed; privileges which it must be confessed were mutually satisfactory, and in respect of which no particular reason existed for their being suddenly and harshly destroyed. There is then no reason to wonder that the Roman Catholic Church of Prussia should from long use have grown to regard these privileges as sacred rights; that their destruction, should be resisted; and that in the contest untenable claims should be advanced. And even amongst those who, like Lord John Russell, give their unqualified adhesion to Bismarck so far as concerns the end he is seeking to attain, there are many thoughtful men who consider that these ends might have been attained without resort to that degree of harshness which has so much the appearance of injustice.

DR. LIVINGSTONE.

The official intelligence from Zanzibar which confirms the late report of the death of the great traveller, will carry sorrow to the remotest bounds of civilization. The career of this eminent man presents a useful illustration of what the efforts of a life may accomplish when those efforts are directed upon a single object. That industry is more successful than genius, is a truism; and we might add that an unflinching tenacity of purpose is itself a kind of genius. Of the scientific men whose labours have penetrated the hidden secrets of nature, many, perhaps, have possessed rarer and more brilliant intellectual gifts than Dr. Livingstone; but few if any have turned their talents to better account, or laboured more faithfully in the particular departments of knowledge which they undertook to explore. The labour to which in early life he proposed to bend his energies, was one of the utmost danger and difficulty, but which, if successful, promised much to the cause of truth. Notwithstanding the efforts of Mungo Park and other African explorers, the vast interior of that continent remained almost unknown to the world; a kind of terra incognita, the approach to which was forced by so many natural and fatal barriers, that its name was invested with a sort of mysterious terror. The terrible severity of the climate upon European constitutions; the barren sterility of the larger discovered portion; the real or supposed danger which the adventurer would encounter from the dreaded cannibalism of the savage tribes of the interior; and above all the fatal results of previous attempts to penetrate into the country, combined to render the proposed exploration of Africa a most difficult and dangerous task. No wonder then, when there was so little to invite and so much to repel the steps of the traveller, such limited progress had been made in the geography of Africa.

The strongest and boldest might well hesitate before venturing to risk his life in the known and unknown perils of African travel. Yet Livingstone calmly and heroically prepared himself to enter the breach where so many had perished; to devote his life to missionary work in the most dangerous of all missionary fields, and to the investigation of that department of science in which so many had failed of success.

The subject of this sketch, Rev. David Livingstone, was born on the banks of the Clyde, near Glasgow, Scotland, in 1817. His parents were in humble circumstances, and anything

like a liberal education of their son was a matter quite beyond their means. The latter, however, was imbued with a strong relish for learning, and gave early proof of his readiness to overcome surrounding obstacles. At the cotton mills of Blantyre he was placed in early youth to earn his own livelihood. During the summer months he was able by hard work to earn enough to defray his expenses at a Glasgow school which he attended during the winter terms. By this means he acquired a fair education, including a knowledge of the classics. It was probably during his college life that he formed the design of devoting his life to missionary enterprises in Africa. In order the better to qualify himself for the work, in addition to Theological lectures, he entered upon a regular course of medical study, and in 1838 became a Licentiate of the Faculty of Physicians and Surgeons. In the same year he offered his services to the London Missionary Society, for Missionary work in Africa, and his proposal was accepted. He pursued his Theological studies until 1840, in which year he was ordained to the Ministry, and immediately afterwards left England for Port Natal, where he formed the acquaintance of his countryman Rev. Robert Moffat, whose daughter he afterwards married. Rev. Mr. Moffat was himself a very active and energetic Missionary traveller, and no doubt did much to confirm and strengthen his young acquaintance in the resolutions he had formed for the future.

From 1840 to 1856 he laboured incessantly as one of the agents of the London Missionary Society, in various stations in South Africa, and made many expeditions into the interior. During this period he twice crossed the entire continent at a line about ten degrees South latitude. In the course of these explorations he became acquainted with the physical features of the country, and with many of the native tribes, their language, religion, habits and customs. For these services he was presented by the Royal Geographical Society with the Victoria Gold medal in 1855. In the following year he returned to England when he was presented by the same Society with a most flattering address and testimonials in acknowledgment of his services.

In 1858 he returned to Africa accompanied this time by a staff of assistants sent out by the English Government.

He continued his explorations chiefly around Lake Nyassa and the Zambesi until 1861, when he again returned to England. After giving most interesting and important information as the results of his experience, the great traveller again started for Africa in 1865, and was destined never again to see the shores of Europa. From that time until his death he continued in the active prosecution of his perilous work of exploring the interior of Africa. Rumours of his death from time to time reached England; rumours which were afterwards falsified by intelligence of his welfare. In 1867 an expedition was sent out to Africa to search for him. This expedition was commanded by Mr. Young, who penetrated a long distance inland, and although not successful in reaching the object of his search, obtained satisfactory evidence of his safety. After the return of the search expedition letters were received from Dr. Livingstone, dated in the summer of 1868. At that time he was in Central South Africa, from which place he wrote an account of his search for the sources of the Nile, which he discovered to arise between 10° and 12° south latitude. Subsequent communications were received from him, up to 1871. After which time the principal intelligence respecting his whereabouts came through other channels. The expedition of Mr. Stanley, correspondent of the New York Herald, in search of Dr. Livingstone, and his real or supposed interview with the great traveller in the wilds of Africa, are matters of statement, the truth of which seemed so improbable that the world may well be pardoned for hesitating to believe them.

Dr. Livingstone published two books of travel, the first in 1867, and the other in 1869.

It is perhaps impossible at the present time to properly estimate the value of Dr. Livingstone's work. To the cause of geographical science, the materials