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The Methodist
THE WORLD IS MY PARISH.

NEW-YORK, SATURDAY, APRIL 2, 1864.

The Laity and the Church.

FIRST ARTICLE.

NOTHING so clearly shows the transition character of the present period of Methodism as the unsettled state of Methodist opinion in relation to church government. Methodism being Protestant unconsciously strives for the realization of true Christian freedom, yet finds an opposition to such a movement in the providential character of its ecclesiastical system. It must not be forgotten, however, that the distinguishing trait of early Methodism was the employment of lay agencies in the prosecution of its work. Mr. Wesley, in his *Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion*, makes a labored apology for his innovation upon the order of the Church of England, in employing laymen to exhort, to preach, and to perform, in fact, all the duties of the pastorate, save the administration of the Sacraments. He very pertinently asks, "Was Mr. Calvin ordained? Was he either priest or deacon? And were not most of those whom it pleased God to employ in promoting the Reformation abroad, laymen also? Could that great work have been promoted at all in many places, if laymen had not preached? And yet how seldom do the very Papists urge this as an objection against the Reformation. In all Protestant churches it is still more evident that ordination is not held a necessary prerequisite of preaching." Thus early Methodism was a large application of the lay resources of the church to the prosecution of the work of extending Christ's kingdom. This novelty in the selection of the means employed by it was one of the chief objections urged against it by the sticklers for church order.

Mr. Wesley, moreover, in accounting for the power exercised by him in stationing and changing the stations of the preachers at pleasure, was careful to show that it had accrued to him providentially, and was exercised by him *over a voluntary association*, not in any sense over a church. On this point he says very distinctly: "These [preachers] severally desired to serve me as sons, and to labor when and where I should direct. Observe, these likewise desired me, not I them. But I durst not refuse their assistance, and here commenced my power to appoint each of these when and where and how to labor; that is, while he chose to continue with me, for each had a power to go away when he pleased, as I had also to go away from them, or any of them, if I saw sufficient cause. The case continued the same when the number of preachers increased. I had just the same power still to appoint when and where and how each should help me; and to tell any, if I saw cause, 'I do not desire your help any longer.' On these terms and no other we joined at first; on these we continue joined." By consent of all of the preachers, this method of administration has been carried into American Methodism, although this latter organized itself as a church with all the properties and ordinances of a Christian community founded on the New Testament.

In the formation of the American Methodist Episcopal Church, Mr. Wesley evidently exercised just a sufficiency of the authority, which he held resided in him as an ordained presbyter, to create a church constitution. He ordained for the infant community a bishop and elders, thus securing for it the due administration of the Christian sacraments. He wisely left to itself the details of its church government. Just as wisely did the ministers thus constituted by Mr. Wesley, limit themselves to a provision for the immediate necessities of the churches over which they were placed in charge. Without stopping to inquire whether their system was in all its parts conformable to a Scripture model, they sought only to make it effective in promoting the great revival whose avowed object was to spread Scriptural holiness over the land. The system of Methodist economy has therefore to this day been only temporary and provisional. It must be clear to every intelligent Methodist that it has not yet received its final form. It is as it is for the purpose of enabling it to meet certain exigencies; other exigencies are arising to which it must be adapted.

If the ecclesiastical system of Methodism is thus far provisional, we are remitted in seeking its ultimate form to the principles of Protestant Christianity. For not only is Methodism thoroughly Protestant, but it is a higher development of the essential spirit of Protestantism; it is an advanced expression of the Christian liberty to which early Protestantism bore witness—that liberty which in Methodism asserts itself still in lay preaching, a lay co-pastorate, and in the government of each single church by the joint authority of the ministry and the laity. Methodism thus far in its spirit is true to genuine Protestant influences, and the effort to complete its ecclesiastical organization in accordance with the principles of Protestantism is a necessary result of its free and vigorous life. It would be strange indeed if Christian liberty, having been recognized so fully in a part of the structure of Methodism, should fail of recognition in all the parts and in the system as a whole.

The Scriptural foundation of the claim of the Methodist laity to a full participation with the ministry in the government of the church is the universal Christian priesthood. By vindicating the priesthood of all believers, Luther rescued the church from the dominion of the hierarchy, and gave to the laity their proper place in the Christian congregation. By emancipating the laity he in fact emancipated the church. If all Christians are priests, then all are equal before God, and the ministry is an office not a hierarchical caste. Its service is a function performed for the good of the entire body. The laity participate with the ministry in the government of Christ's Church, for their relation to Jesus Christ gives them authority so to do. Hence a part of the work of the Reformation was a reform in church government, by which the laity were recognized as having of right a participation therein.

But inasmuch as the true nature of the Christian priesthood, and the rights which follow therefrom, have been obscured in the minds of some American Methodists, it may be well to place the original teachings of Protestantism upon this point in the clearest light. For the habits of thought of many Methodist preachers incline them to the opinion that the government of the church is a function committed by Christ to the ministry alone. They are therefore in doubt whether it may not be criminal in the laity to seek for a larger participation in the church government than is now conceded to them by the usages of Methodism.

Our Sanitary Fair in Rome.

FROM OUR CORRESPONDING EDITOR.

The Artists' Contributions.

THE Americans in Rome just now are, in the main, thoroughly loyal and patriotic. In politics, as in religion, distance effaces the small distinctions of home society; people separated by the ocean from their native land forget that they belong to this or that church, and call themselves Protestant Christians; forget that they belong to the Republican or Democratic parties, and call themselves Americans and loyalists. While in Rome I received a letter from Dr. Bellows, announcing the great Metropolitan Fair for the Sanitary Commission, to be held in New-York about Easter, and asking for contributions from Paris and Rome. The notice was very short; but I at once laid the letter before some of the resident Americans. Our excellent friends, Dr. and Mrs. J. B. Gould, took the matter up with promptitude and earnestness.

On two evenings they filled their spacious drawing-room with invited guests, and called their attention, after an hour's social enjoyment, to Dr. Bellows' letter and its claims. Addresses were delivered on these two evenings by Mr. Fogg, our Minister to Switzerland, and one of the very best men in our diplomatic service abroad; Mr. Stoddart, of Glasgow, who has rendered yeoman service to the American cause in that Scotch secession city; Dr. Butler, minister of the Episcopal Church at Rome, always ready, in the service of the country, for any form of useful activity; General King, our newly appointed minister to Rome, who gave some striking recitals of the usefulness of the Sanitary Commission, from his own observation while commanding a division of the Army of Virginia; and myself. The tone of feeling at both these meetings was excellent; and the substantial result will be that the fair will have a "Roman Table," full of interest and attraction. It cannot, of course, be so varied and complete as it doubtless would have been had more time been allowed; but yet, your readers will find it abounding in attractive works of art; in specimens of the curious industries for which Rome is famed, and, most of all, in mementoes taken from the historical sites of the monuments of ancient Roman grandeur.

Nearly every American artist in Rome sends a contribution in some form. Handley gives a beautiful bust of a fawn; Miss Foley a bas-relief of a lovely Roman girl of fourteen, exquisitely formed, and as exquisitely represented by Miss Foley's chisel; Roper presents one of his delicious landscapes, in which the very life of nature breathes—a lovely scene near Altdorf, in Switzerland; Tilton gives one of his best pictures, which will, I trust, cause a lively competition among buyers with long purses; Mr. Freeman sends a picture of a little English girl, a fresh and luminous picture indeed, which has been greatly admired, and will, I think, bring a large price; Rogers has nothing ready, but contributes a considerable sum of money to buy a finished work of another artist; Terry gives a finished sketch; Miss Adams a Roman figure, which I have not seen, but which is highly praised; Mr. Reinhardt sends photographic copies of all his works. The Misses Williams each contribute a picture; and Stillman, our admirable consul-artist, gives two pictures, besides giving his personal attention to the preparation, packing, and shipping of all the articles furnished, and devoting a great deal of his time to obtaining subscriptions and donations. The boxes and packing are furnished gratuitously by the banking-house of Freeborn & Co. Miss Charlotte Cushman has taken a deep interest in the movement, and not only gives her invaluable counsel and support, but has also purchased a very valuable picture, which she contributes to the fair. Miss Stebbins gives a copy of her famous bust of Washington; and the table will be graced also with Ives' excellent bust of Mr. Seward. Many of the artists have given up all other work for the time being, in order to have their gifts ready. The list of their contributions is by no means complete, nor can I make it so at present.

The noble example set by the artists, who, as you well know, are generally rich only in genius and talent, was followed by most of the American residents and transient visitors to Rome, who either sent contributions in money or made purchases themselves of works of art or taste, to be forwarded by the committee. Too much praise cannot be given to Dr. and Mrs. Gould for their enthusiastic activity in this service. The Doctor is, as many of your readers are aware, settled at Rome in the practice of his profession; and Americans not only find him skilful and faithful as a physician, but also ever kind and obliging as a friend, and ever true and loyal as a citizen. Others have followed in their footsteps, but I cannot give any further details. The Roman Table will show for itself at the Metropolitan Fair, and I know that you and your city readers will all be there to see.

An American Evangelist in England.

WE note with gratification the uniform success with which the efforts of American evangelists working in England have been blessed. It seems as if every corner of the kingdom was destined to be brought under revival influence through American instrumentality. It is but a few months since Dr. and Mrs. Palmer returned to their home from a long and fruitful tour in England and Ireland. They labored in most of the principal towns; the people everywhere attended their ministrations in crowds. Hundreds received the divine blessing in the different places they visited, and the aggregate of the conversions wrought through their agency must be numbered by thousands.

Not less signalized have been the labors of Rev. James Caughey. He has preached for years in England, Ireland, and America, and everywhere and at all times his efforts have been abundantly rewarded in the salvation of souls. We are gratified to learn from a letter from Mr. Caughey, addressed to an American friend, that his preachings in London at the present time are attended with an unprecedented manifestation of the presence of the Holy Spirit. Last summer, when Mr. Caughey left this country for England, his health seemed completely broken down, and he was apprehensive that owing to bodily afflictions his work was nearly ended. The premonitory symptoms of an insidious disease had already manifested themselves and he left our shores under great discouragement. His voyage across the ocean was a sad one; on reaching England he rested a few days, but finding no improvement in his health therefrom, concluded nevertheless to plunge into the revival work. Though he was still growing worse and suffering intensely, God's Spirit was poured out and hundreds were saved. Mr. Caughey made his bodily condition a subject of frequent prayer. After many weeks of suffering, toil, and prayer, a remedy was found and applied which proved efficacious to the healing of the disease; "*and now*," says Mr. Caughey, "*I am perfectly well*. The complaint seems to be entirely gone. My poor heart is full of gratitude to God for his healing power; it fails in words to express its thanksgiving. . . . And now I am bound by ten thousand renewed obligations to devote all my time and strength to this glorious soul-saving revival cause."

He thus describes his labors in England, and especially in London:

"During the last twenty-three weeks I have preached six times each week, together with many other meetings, and much other labor. Four weeks ago I arrived in this great city, and gave battle against the works of darkness, in a place which the Established Church once possessed, and abandoned for want of success; but Jesus gave us the victory, and we were running up into the sixth hundredth saved when I embraced an invitation to hold services in another part of the city, where God began immediately to pour out his Spirit, and his work is gloriously reviving.

"I have held meetings in various parts of England since my arrival in last August, in which about fifteen hundred souls were saved, making together with this work in London upwards of *two thousand souls*. This is no guess-work, as their names and residences were carefully recorded. And now, my dear Brother, you know me too well to expect me to say or feel anything else in reviewing these remarkable displays of the power of God than ascribing 'glory to the Lamb,' and giving all the glory to Jesus our conquering Lord."

The Total Abolition of the Slave Trade.

MOST of our readers may be familiar with the interesting discoveries which have recently been made in Eastern Africa, and to which, among other important results, we are indebted for knowing at length the sources of the Nile. It is gratifying to know that an expedition so perilous is likely to be followed by consequences much more important than the enlargement of our geographical knowledge. It already has revived in England an interest in the abolition of that most infamous of all social wrongs, the African slave trade, and it is to be hoped that the whole Christian world will be aroused by the new information which we have received through Captain Speke about this nefarious trade, and urge with untiring energy upon their governments the necessity of making a combined effort for putting a final stop to it.

Captain Speke has begun to discuss in public this important question, and to set forth his opinion as to the best means for attaining that much desired end. During his travels he got a clearer insight into the fearful extent to which the slave trade is still being carried on. He saw that the decline of the trade in America and Cuba would do but little toward its total suppression. If it is to be suppressed at all, it must be suppressed in Africa. There it is still going on with undiminished vigor. In Zanzibar Captain Speke found it to be three times as large as in Cuba. On the White Nile it was almost unparalleled. The merchants sent large parties up the country to obtain ivory in any way they could by beads or bullets, and sided with one chief or another to rob the natives and capture slaves. It was calculated that the capture of one slave involved the loss of four lives.

The steps hitherto taken by England for the suppression of the trade are altogether insufficient. Great Britain keeps a number of men-of-war along the coast of Africa, but does nothing for suppressing the inland trade. Although about £150,000 are annually expended for this purpose, the results are entirely inadequate. The Captain then sets forth his own plan for the total suppression of the trade, and as no man living has a more minute knowledge of this subject, his remarks deserve the closest attention on the part of every Christian government and people.

The plan of Captain Speke is substantially as follows: The English government is to be petitioned to use its influence, conjointly with the Egyptian government, to suppress the slave trade on the White Nile, and for that purpose to establish an alliance with the Bari negroes, at the foot of the cataracts above Gondocoro. In union with other European governments, missionaries are to be sent to the kingdom of Unyoro, the king of which country has already declared his readiness to accept missionaries, and from Unyoro further on to the kingdoms of Agunda and Karague. Some arrangement is to be made with the Sultan of Zanzibar to put a stop to the slave trade in his dominions. The English government is to recognize all persons convicted of taking part in slavery as conniving at murder, and to treat them accordingly; for without bloodshed slaves cannot be caught. England is to form a chain of negro depots round the east and west sides of Africa, in sufficient numbers to half man the English men-of-war, and yet to have a strong reserve at each depot, who shall be educated and brought up for the holy purpose of liberating their fellow-countrymen from the thraldom of slavery. Finally, as much as possible, negroes shall be educated and employed in all British services, and taught to abhor the slave trade, which they have hitherto been taught to consider legitimate from the fact that slaves are purchased with European articles of merchandise. Captain Speke recommended his propositions with great confidence, as he was assured it was the best course to suppress slavery by the education of the natives in Christianity and in the advantages of commerce and agriculture.

In compliance with the proposition of the Captain, an association is now forming in England for the suppression of the slave trade by the instruction of the natives of Central Africa in the truths of Christianity. It will open a wide field for commerce in lands remarkably rich and fertile.

In reading the interesting propositions of Captain Speke, we were especially struck with the thought how fine an opportunity here offers itself to the Christian governments to perform an act which history, to their eternal credit, would record among the most glorious events of the nineteenth century. Can any one doubt that it would be comparatively easy for the combined efforts of the United States, England, France, Russia, Austria, Prussia, not to speak of the minor Christian States, to carry out the plan laid down by Captain Speke, or a similar one that might be agreed upon, and stop the slave trade effectually for ever?

And what reason is there that such a combined effort should not be made? There are now treaties between England, the United States and France, for preventing the shipping of negro slaves from Africa; why, then, might not these same governments take one other step in advance, and extend their prohibitory measures to the interior of Africa? When Louis Napoleon, some months ago, invited the State governments of Europe to a congress for the purpose of removing, if possible, the causes of the wars which so frequently befall European countries, the humane intentions expressed in the letter of invitation met deservedly with unanimous applause. And it was only urged against it, that such a congress might not realize the expectations of the emperor, and might lead to new complications instead of solving the old ones. We can think of no congress of civilized nations which would be more free from any subjects of contention, and which would give less cause of jealousy, than an international congress for the suppression of the African slave trade.

We give credit to our friends in England for being the first to move in a noble cause which all Christian nations ought to make haste to espouse. Our own country especially, we hope, will not remain behind England, but unite with her in organizing associations which shall study the best way toward the suppression of the slave trade, and which shall urge upon our government and upon Congress the duty of coöperating in this direction with other Christian nations.

Mohammedanism in Paris.

ON the day preceding the recent feast of *Laïd-es-Ghir*, the Arab soldiers now stationed in Paris crowded the bathing establishments on the Seine during the whole afternoon and until late in the evening. Spahis and Turcos eagerly performed on that day the thorough ablutions prescribed by the Prophet. On the morning of the feast they all rose early, put on clean linen, and, dressed out in their best, went to the mosque from five to eight o'clock. Here the *Taleb* chanted their religious chants, and repeated verses of the Koran, both chants and verses being repeated by the congregation whenever he stopped. The meaning of the most frequently repeated hymn was about as follows:

"Praise be to God!
God pardons sin to-day.
God is thrice great; God is immense;
God is infinite;
Praise be to God!
All things are made by his power;
God is thrice great; God is immense;
God is infinite;
Praise be to God!"

At the close of the ceremony all the Arabs arose and embraced each other, exchanging congratulations and good wishes for themselves and their families. All who had any spite or enmity against each other were reconciled.

The charity prescribed to all faithful believers under the name of *El fatra* was scrupulously practiced during the two days. Some Arabs gave alms directly to the poor; others clubbed together and appointed one of their number as almoner to divide their offerings among the most destitute. No one gave less than one franc, several common soldiers giving two, three, four, and even as high as five francs.

On the first day both Turcos and Spahis were exempt from all military duties. Their morning and evening meals were feasts, the principal dish of which consisted of chickens dressed with a sort of coarse flour, and which they call *el mhouar*. To crown the festival the first day of *Laïd-es-Ghir* they had an Arab concert in the Moorish *café* of the barracks of the Quai d'Orsay.

Religious Statistics of Ireland.

A VERY interesting column in the tables of the religious statistics of Ireland to which we called attention in one of our recent issues, is that headed "All other persuasions." It contains the number of all who are not Roman Catholics, Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, Independents, Quakers, or Jews. Some of the creeds, which in Ireland have only a few scattered adherents, are much better known among us—as the Disciples of Christ; others are among us entirely unknown—as the Kellyites and Walkerites; other names sound as if they were mere inventions of individuals. Of particular interest for us are the number of those who openly declared themselves as opponents of Christianity. Of this class we find 21 free-thinkers, 20 secularists, 19 deists, 1 unbeliever, 1 atheist. Two professed to be rationalists, 2 materialists, 1 a positivist, 1 a philanthropist, 4 socialists; 44 males and 28 females claimed to be of "no religion." The whole number of those who by open profession declared themselves as avowed opponents to Christianity (leaving out of account the 393 Jews) did not exceed 150.

This is certainly an astonishing result. If we look into modern literature or at many classes of modern society, it often seems as if in every country thousands and thousands had abandoned Christianity for ever. How many of those who write against Christianity have boldly asserted that Christianity in our age was something obsolete, something almost dead; that it had long ceased to have any influence upon society. And many timid Christians have partly reëchoed such views, by exaggerating the strength of the opponents with whom Christianity has to combat in our century. Both the sanguine foe and the timid defender might learn a salutary lesson from religious statistics. The other countries of Enrope in which a religious census is taken, show a result not widely different in this respect from the statistics of Ireland. Everywhere the number of those who dare to avow themselves as being outside of the pale of Christianity is small. If there are many who fail to live as Christians, there are few who dare to proclaim themselves as adversaries of the Christian faith. Christianity is still, as it has been for centuries, the guide of the civilized nations, and there is as yet not the remotest prospect of its ever being supplanted by any other system.

The Title "American."

A RECENT article in the *Spectator*, *apropos* of the wrath of a Scotchman because that journal had called Victoria an "English" queen, thereby, in Sawney's mind, sinking Scotland out of sight, treats very pleasantly of the namelessness of the united people of the three kingdoms. To call the nation English is to incur the ire of Scotchmen, Welshmen, and Irishmen; to call it Irish, Scotch, or Welsh, would be sinking the greater in the less. Nor would the impracticable word "Great British" help the matter; for that would leave Hibernia out in the cold. Nothing better can be imagined than "Britteslanders," or Irish-Britons; titles not likely to come into use. The case, then, is hopeless. But the writer seeks to console himself and his nameless fellow-countrymen by the reflection that all the nations of Europe, except France and Prussia, are just as anonymous. The Poles and Finlanders will not drop their names for the honor of being called Russians. The Hungarians and the Tyrolese refuse to merge their national life or name in that of Austria. Crossing the Atlantic, he seeks also for comfort in the fact that *we* have no national title, while, in the same breath, he admits that we have one, and seeks to account for it. "With their usual love for bigness, they have quietly adopted 'American,' which defines them about as much as Continental defines a Frenchman." Begging his pardon for the contradiction, we assert that it *does* define us as completely as Frenchman defines a citizen of France, or Prussian a subject of Bismark. Definitions of this sort, this writer tells us in the very same article, depend upon usage; and all the theorizing in the world cannot alter them. Usage, all over the world, has consecrated the name "American" as the title of citizens of the United States of America; and no one ever dreams of a Canadian or a Mexican when the word American is mentioned. No "definition" could be more certain and exclusive than this has become, from long prescription, and from the universal consent of mankind. Nor is this an accident. What the *Spectator* calls "love of bigness" was the instinct of the nascent national power, anticipating, unconsciously perhaps, but none the less effectively, the grandeur of its development in the after current of history and of civilization.

"Our Sanitary Fair in Rome." Methodist, 2 Apr. 1864, p. 100. Nineteenth Century Collections Online, http://tinyurl.galegroup.com/tinyurl/9w5FMX. Accessed 3 May 2019.