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WHOLE SERIES.
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Poetry.

For the Christian Messenger.
Too Late!

Matthew xxv. 11, 12.

With breathless haste the heedless five
Return, while throbbing fears affright.
Oh, what if they should be too late!
Too late! Oh, woe! They now berate
Their carelessness and sin. They strive,
Still hoping to behold the light.

At length they reach the door, and cry,
"Lord, Lord, to us now open."
Far
We've come. Our lamps are trimmed at
great
Expense of toil and time. Hard fate
To be shut out. And we were nigh.
O Lord, our Lord, the door unbar!"

They listen breathlessly, with dread
Intense, and trembling, sinking heart.
And now they hear the bridegroom's
voice.
The sound a moment doth rejoice
But swift dismay ensues; far fled
Is hope; and horrid terrors start.

"I know you not, nor whence you came.
The hour is late the feast begun.
My friends are here. Joy reigns. The door
Is shut, and cannot open more.
Do ye depart, whate'er your name.
There is no hope. My words are done."

The five are seized by black despair.
They hear within the sound of mirth,
And know that fullest joy prevails.
The disappointment which assails
Their hearts is woe from their fear.
A conscious guilt brings terror to the
birth.

A double darkness wraps them round.
The gloomy sky, each lowering cloud.
Seems full of scorn and hate. The air
Brings mocking laughter. Everywhere,
Our right and left is frightful sound.
Or shape. They trembling wait aloud.

The night grows darker, wilder. Dread
And unendurable distress
Increase. Each other now they blame.
Remorse and hate within them flame.
A quenchless fire by furies fed,
Which lapse of years ne'er maketh less.

Too late! too late! And this is all.
'Tis not for blasphemy, or sin
Of blackest hue. They are TOO LATE!
O youth, the warning heed. Await
Life's end with prayer. Obey the call
Of love. With Christ then enter in.
SYMONDS.

Wolfville, January, 1880.

Religious.

For the Christian Messenger.
Father McNamara and the Independent Catholic Movement.

Many of the Baptist laymen of Boston and vicinity have united themselves into a society known as the "Baptist Social Union," for the purposes of social intercourse, and of mental and moral improvement.

The members of this Society meet once a month in the city and enjoy a first-class supper. After supper the evening is spent in listening to addresses by eminent men. Those especially are invited to speak, who will well represent any worthy and prominent movement of the day. In this way the Baptist laymen seek to keep abreast of the times. Through the kindness of a member of this Society your correspondent was invited to their last social gathering. Among the speakers of the evening was Father McNamara, the leader of "the Independent Catholic Movement." This movement is one attracting so much attention at the present time, that it was thought your readers might be interested in a short account of the life of its originator and the character of his work, as presented by Father McNamara upon that evening.

Father McNamara, who, by the way, somewhat resembles Henry Ward Beecher, after some introductory remarks, spoke as follows:—
"I am an Irishman. I was born in Ireland. My parents were sincere and honest Roman Catholics. From my childhood they intended that I should become a priest. They died, however, and my means in various ways being scattered, the idea of the priesthood had to be set aside for a time. I came to America, and here in Boston I supported myself for a number of years as a clerk in a publishing firm. From Boston I went to New York.

Having obtained a little money I at

once began my preparation for the priesthood. To this end I pursued my studies at St. Mary's College, in Missouri. It was here that occurred one of the most solemn and important events of my life. It was on Sunday morning. The priests and students had all gone out to service. I was feeling unwell and so remained in my room. It was my custom to read constantly the Douay version of the Scriptures, although not much encouraged to do this by the priests. In this way I was engaged on that memorable morning, when God revealed himself to me in a wonderful manner. I had had rich experiences before in the study of the Word. But on this occasion I was, so to speak, lit out of myself and held communion with God, in a manner not to be described, but which can readily be understood by Christians. Upon the return of the priests from service, I immediately went to Father Quigley to make confession. This Father was a good man, and even were he the opposite, my work is too great to attack priests. To him I endeavored to describe my feelings and thoughts in my late communion with God. Father Quigley replied, "My son, I do not understand you, I have had many students under me, but you are different from them all. You tell me things I do not understand. But I am convinced the Lord has some great work in the Church for you to do." At the time I attached no great importance to the event, and endeavored to throw off the influence of the accompanying circumstances.

From Missouri I went to Paris, and studied for several years. Here I was ordained, and became one of a Missionary Class of priests. These priests do a work among the Catholics somewhat similar to that of Evangelists among the Protestants. But I am an Irishman, and so we resolved to come back to America to preach to my countrymen, for whom my love is very great. Here I received an appointment to assist in establishing St. John's College in Brooklyn. To-day this stands as a monument to my zeal for the cause. While engaged in this work I gave very little time to spiritual thought. Saying mass, repeating the breviary, hearing confessions, making addresses and collecting money, occupied all my attention. It was in these addresses that I first gave utterance to views with which the Bishops did not agree. Such views, were passed over at that time, being probably regarded as an occasional outburst of an erratic nature.

From New York I went to Raleigh in North Carolina, where I was settled for five years. Here I had many difficulties with Bishop Gibbon, afterwards Archbishop Gibbon of Baltimore. My views were not liked by this Bishop. I did not know why, for I was an ardent priest. I was so ardent as to be aggressive. I was always ready to accept a fight with any one outside of my own Church, whether I was prepared for the conflict or not. And thus I wondered the more, why my views were so at variance with the Bishop's. The quarrels continued. The Bishop called upon me to retract something I had said. I refused, and deliberately broke with him.

I returned to New York, my situation was very peculiar. I was a priest, and yet a priest who refused to obey those in authority in the Church. The lay Catholics were put out of sympathy with me, for they do not understand how any one can oppose the Bishops. I continued to be an ardent Catholic, and would not give up the Church, yet wherever I went I did not hesitate to say that the Bishops were the worst men in America. But if they were bad, the Church was all right, and I believed God would remove the evil.

For four years I supported myself by lecturing and writing for newspapers. By these means I maintained myself as a priest. During this time I became convinced by study, that the Early Irish Church was not founded by the Romish Church, and did not willingly submit to its domination. I was prepared to prove that the Irish were merely tools in the hands of the Italian

Church. I then published a paper in New York, proving what I have stated. I appealed to my Irish brethren to come out from under the yoke of the Italian Church, and wound up the paper by excommunicating the Pope.

I still continued my work as a priest. I went into Water Street in New York, where I heard confessions, and in general, conducted my services after the manner of the Catholic Church. The poor people said I was as good a priest as any, and flocked to hear me. The Roman Church excommunicated me, and I excommunicated it in return. I preached to the people out of the Bible, which I now studied more than ever. From it I received new views and fresh arguments. Protestant ministers coming in to hear me would say that I had preached an excellent gospel sermon. But I did not know what a gospel sermon was from their standpoint. A year passed in this way. I had little religion, and longed for experiences, such as I had enjoyed in former years.

About this time I happened to go into a meeting at a Sailor's Bethel. Prayers were being said, hymns were being sung, and addresses were being made. The leader kept asking those present, "Who will raise a hand for Jesus?" "Who will decide for Jesus?" "Who will rise and show his desire to be on the Lord's side?" Here was a system of religion of which I knew nothing. It affected me very much. I rose amid those sailors, and asked for the prayers of God's people. My Saviour there explained to me, what Father Quigley years before could not explain. I then went back to my own people, broke the crucifix before the altar, destroyed the altar, and laid aside the vestments of the Romish Church. The Catholic hierarchy thought that now the people would not come to hear me, and that consequently they would easily get the better of me. But who can hinder the Lord's work? It has grown. There has been no money behind it, for we have depended upon the collections of the poor. To-day it is assuming still larger proportions. Christ is preached to the Roman Catholic people. The open Bible is given to them. Four services are kept up constantly in New York and Brooklyn. Several priests have come over from the Romish Church. Thousands of people have renounced the authority of the Papal power.

The above is necessarily an imperfect account of Father McNamara's speech, but it may aid in giving the reader a correct idea of the man and of the character of his work. The listener to this address could not fail to be impressed with the sincere honesty of the man throughout the whole of his career. Neither could it be doubted, that he was strongly attached to the Irish people. To this fact, is probably due one source of his great power among the Irish Roman Catholics. He is reaching a class who would be repelled by any one coming among them as a Protestant; for Father McNamara although having thrown off all the control of the Roman Catholic Church, yet claims that he is a Catholic, but not a Roman Catholic. The work is new and it remains for the future to determine the shape that "The Independent Catholic Movement" will ultimately take.

At present, all that can be said, is, that a great work has already been performed, that it is even now assuming yet larger proportions, and that there is a probability for the future that it will be the means in God's hands of lifting the entire body of American Irish Catholics out of their present ignorance and superstition, and of relieving them from the supremacy of an oppressive Papal yoke. Nay, who of us will dare to prescribe its limits. B. R.
Cambridge, Mass., Jan. 25, 1880.

Farmers gather what they sow,
while seamstresses sew what they gather.

A promise should be given with caution and kept with care.

For the Christian Messenger.
Pulpit Elocution.

RUSSELL—THE READING OF HYMNS.

No reformation in the modes of public or private life is more urgently demanded by general sentiment, than a change as regards the power of the Christian ministry to render the services of the pulpit appropriate and impressive in manner. In no respect is present deficiency so deeply and so generally felt, as in the preparatory act of reading the hymn, which should be—in the reading not less than in the singing of it—the living voice of assembled hearts lifted to the throne of Infinite Majesty. The best security for the appropriate and truly expressive singing of a psalm or hymn is that just and impressive reading of it which imparts its spirit to heart and ear, and is the prelude by which both the congregation and choir have their souls attuned to the sentiment of the sacred song. But to fulfil the Apostolic injunction of "making melody in the heart," after a dull, cold, prosaic or see-saw reading of the hymn, is a task next to impracticable. An attentive eye may, in fact, see, that in such circumstances the youthful and thoughtless among the congregation, have sometimes as much as they can do to preserve decorum.

This department of pulpit elocution is one which requires more than any other, the closest attention of the student. Few persons comparatively seem to possess the ability to utter the words of a lyric stanza in the spirit of poetic feeling; and few indeed seem capable of reading a verse without a false intonation, which, when applied to the beautiful language of the poet, makes it fall on the ear.

"Like sweet bells jangled,—out of tune and harsh."

Many pulpit readers are actually so little moulded, either by nature or art, for the exercise of devotional reading, that the loftiest inspirations of the sacred muse, become in their hands absolute doggerel to the ear. The associations of devotion are thus thrust out of the mind of the hearer, to make room for those of ludicrous incongruity. The situation of the student of theology is by no means favorable to the acquisition of a command over the voice, such as the appropriate utterance of poetic sentiment, and especially in the lyric form, necessarily requires. The receptive sensibility of the soul not being balanced by the power of utterance, oppresses rather than enlivens feeling, and quells rather than inspires the voice. Habit and culture and skill, are all required to render feeling tributary to expression. Hence the great moment of personal cultivation and self-education in elocution, to him who would worthily occupy the pulpit, as the leader of an assembly met for the purposes of devotion.

The power over human feeling, which lies in a hymn appropriately read is indescribable. It is difficult indeed, for the most indifferent heart to escape from the appointed influence of the sanctuary, when the minister yields his whole soul to the sentiment and spirit of a hymn, and gives these forth in tones that come fresh from the great fount of feeling. "If I have ever been of any use as an instrument of spiritual good, it has been to a great extent, through the reading of sacred poetry. Where I have had my choice of means, I have selected it in preference to any other. I would charge it on you, young men, to cultivate and cherish this invaluable aid to your usefulness." Such were the words of the late Dr. Nettleton to the students around his bed, during his last illness. The reading of this eminent servant of God, ever indicated in the tone and expression of the hymn, a soul baptized into its inmost sentiment. The unlettered working-man felt then the efficacy of a human voice hallowed by genuine devotional feeling; and the cultivated student became aware how imagination and taste and ear might all be rendered tributary to the deepest spiritual impressions.

But, in addition to the usual disadvantages of imperfect culture, the clergyman in the daily routine of life's active duties, has a host of impediments to the appropriate and impressive use of the voice, in conducting the part of public worship to which we now refer. He needs peculiar preventatives to counteract unfavorable influences. He is called not unfrequently from the midst of active duties, to conduct the devotions of a week-day prayer-meeting. He commences with the reading of a hymn, with the din and bustle of business yet sounding in his ears. Happy for him then, if his early culture, has given him that instant susceptibility by which the charm of poetry lending its tributary aid to the spirit of devotion, inspires the power of uplifting the heart of the worshipping assemblage, by the utterance of a spirit attuned to the vivid tones of deep and genuine emotion! Without a degree of such effort, the reading of the hymn is but a desecration. It were perhaps well worth while to inquire whether the coldness and deadness of heart so lamented at such meetings, are not in any degree owing to the absence of these appropriate expressions of the heart.

The full and free expression of feeling is a thing which most students are apt to shrink from, under the very erroneous impression that if they give full and free vent to the emotion which a hymn inspires, they will appear affected, or theatrically excessive in style. The elocutionist replies that genuine feeling can never be mistaken, and that such tears are unfounded. True elocution was perfectly exemplified in the noble and beautiful and impressive reading of the eminent individual before mentioned. No one ever ventured the insinuation that his manner was artificial or theatrical. What is needed is a full heart and a natural utterance,—not labor and effort to reach a certain style or effect.

German Baptists in Russia.

The Moscow correspondent of the *Cologne Gazette* states that the sect of Baptists originally founded in Tiflis by the German emigrant, Maria Kalweit, only ten years ago, has increased considerably since that time, and has spread over a large area, including Gori, Worouzooka, and even Odessa and Vladikaukas. The new law granting freedom of worship to all denominations having been sanctioned by the Czar, the sect is likely to attract converts and spread over new ground in the future even to a greater extent than in the past. Last October an assembly of Presbyters of all Baptist communities in the district was held at Tiflis, but the result of the proceeding was kept secret. The correspondent adds that not long ago a Russian gentleman, a teacher of ancient languages, joined the Baptist community. The Exarch of Grusia sent a learned divine of the Orthodox faith to convince him of his error, but the apostate had so many quotations from the Bible in readiness to support his new creed that the Orthodox priest, having forgotten to provide himself with a copy of the Bible from which to quote, found himself compelled to quit the field.

The progress of Christianity in the Fiji Islands is indicated by the fact that there are now 841 chapels and 291 other places where preaching is held, with 58 missionaries engaged in preparing the way for others. The membership numbers 23,274 persons.

The Baptists were the pioneer missionaries in Liberia, Africa, being in the field eleven years before the Methodists. They organized their first church in 1821. Now their Association has 22 churches, with 1,600 communicants.

A Baptist college is to be established near Winnipeg. Revs. J. Crawford, D. D. and G. B. Davis, B. D., will form part of the faculty.