

ERRATA AND NOTICES

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Items of religious news from every quarter are always welcome. Denominational News, as all other material for publication should be sent promptly.

Communications for publication should be written on only one side of the paper, and business matters and those for insertion should be written separately. Observance of this rule will prevent much copying and sometimes confusion and mistakes.

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Rev. Joseph McLeod, D. D., Editor.

WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 16, 1896.

To some people the newest things are always "the nicest." But they are not the most thoughtful people who think so.

Have you ever been in a prayer or conference meeting where the leader consumed a large portion of the time exhorting the others to be brief in their prayers and testimonies? A generous dose of their own medicine might do such leaders good.

The comparative decline of infant baptism is shown in the statistics of the Presbyterian church in the United States for the last quarter of a century. In that time adult baptisms increased one hundred and thirty-three per cent., the infant baptisms less than seventy-three per cent.

The anxiety of some ministers and churches to "keep in" with men because of their financial strength, going to the length of overlooking and sometimes even apologizing for their religious ways, does the cause of Christ more harm than all the assaults of its avowed opponents.

Dr. Lyman Abbott, editor of the "Outlook" and pastor of Plymouth Church, Brooklyn, made a serious charge against the press in a recent sermon, when he said,—"The press of to-day is not actuated by the single purpose to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth." To make a paper that will sell, without regard to its character, is, he thinks, the ruling purpose.

The Backbiter gets a deserved scoring in the Texas "Advocate." The tale-bearer, the whisperer, the insinuator, who with nods and winks which are meant to say, "I know some startling things which I could tell if I chose," is characterized as the worst character in the community. "Such people are the devil's best friends, and are to be shunned and dreaded by every good man and woman on earth. If there is anything really wrong in a man or woman, let the complaint be lodged at once in the proper place and before the proper authorities. Do not go around carrying a knife for a brother until you catch him off his guard, and then assassinate him. The assassin is the dread of all brave or honest men. Be frank, fair and honest with a brother, and talk the matter over between yourself and him—if you have aught of censure—and do not freeze your own soul and blacken his good name by murderous winks and innuendoes.

It is quite proper for a minister who is without an engagement to make public announcement of the fact that he is open to correspondence with view to becoming a pastor or an occasional supply. But it was left to a few England minister, presumably a Congregationalist, to hit upon the peculiar letter plan of applying for vacant pulpits. The "Congregationalist" is quite stirred up by it, and says a "We have never seen the like before. The letter, it is true, is couched in respectful terms, the style is clear, the spelling correct, and the chirography unexceptionable; but has it come to this, that men who think themselves called to preach the Gospel must resort to circulars? We should as soon think of a man daring to propose to the object of his affection through the medium of a typewritten letter, or of the prophet Isaiah dictating his glowing messages to a stenographer."

Of ecclesiastical politicians,

that is, men who use the methods of politicians in church and denominational work—for unhappily, there are such—the St. Louis "Observer" has been making note, and does not regard them with special favour. It says, and we think very correctly: If there is any place in the world where candor, frankness, sincerity, and honesty are demanded, it is in the church. Roguery, deception, and trickery may flourish in the business world, but they can have no place in the religious world. Strife and bitterness between the men of prominence in the church are bad enough, but insincerity and treachery are intolerable. They strike at the very foundations of Christianity. Those in high places cannot be too circumspect and cannot guard too carefully against giving occasion for suspicion and distrust. There should be no back-stairs politics in ecclesiastical affairs. Leaders in church work should give no cause for accusations of duplicity and dishonesty. Scheming and plotting, even in a good cause, should be conscientiously avoided. Even bluntness is better than the most polished craftiness. It is better to blurt out one's opinions at the wrong time and in the wrong place than to get the name of being a trickster and a smooth-tongued ecclesiastical politician.

In a private note to the editor, Miss Wile says something of some of the missionaries, and of the work:

Miss Barnes, who came out when I did, and who was formerly at Balasore, is now stationed with the Agers, at Bhudruck, doing evangelistic work; though the station is small, the three are working together and find enough to fill each day to the brim.

Dr. and Mrs. Burkholder are neither of them well. They are worn out with the many cares of this big station (Bhimpoor) with its innumerable duties and responsibilities, and the rainy season, with its dampness and heat, is not the time to recuperate. We all wish they could have a good long rest.

Many old missionaries say that, even with increased facilities for travel &c., the work is much more wearing than it used to be. For one thing, the growing christian communities require more secular work, and the people look to the missionary for everything. Then the work has spread and widened so much that there is a multiplicity of duties besides the going out daily to preach Christ and His gospel of redemption.

Dear Mrs. Boyer who is now at home with you, is a brave little woman, and God has rewarded her sacrifice by giving her to see the fruit of her labor.

A Ministerial Bureau.

Our Methodist brethren have no need of such a thing as a ministerial bureau; the stationing committee of each Conference sees that every circuit has a pastor and that every active minister has a circuit. In the Episcopal church the bishop makes appointments, or confirms engagements between ministers and churches. In some denominations, however, there sometimes seems need of some arrangement by which ministers without charges and churches without ministers may be brought together. In some instances a Home Mission Board answers the purpose; but there are cases which do not properly come within the jurisdiction of such Board. One of our exchanges tells of a Presbyterian Ministerial Bureau which has recently been established by The "Presbyterian Journal" of Philadelphia, and which is intended to perform various functions in the interest of ministers who are without a charge or who are contemplating a change, and of churches without a pastor or that are also contemplating a change. The bureau proposes to furnish to ministers upon its registry full information concerning all vacancies on its list, with details as to salary, manse, rents, financial plan, needs of the field, style of preaching preferred, etc. On the other hand, it proposes to furnish churches such information concerning the ministers as they may desire to obtain. Besides all this the bureau will provide temporary supplies for churches, arrange exchanges between ministers, and in general act as agents and advisers in all matters connected with ministers and churches. Compensation for these services is arranged on a graduated scale. While there is a good deal of the air of an "intelligence office" about this scheme, yet the exigencies of the situation in the Presbyterian and other churches seem to make this Ministerial Bureau a necessity, and it is quite likely that its advantages will be seized upon by many ministers and churches.

When a laboring man undertakes to support a family and a saloon at the same time, the saloon will grow rich and the family grow poor.

Present Day Questions.

A speaker at the recent Maritime Baptist Convention insisted on taking our present day questions, political and social, into Christianity. In so doing he maintained the attitude of Charles Kingsley, Maurice, Henry Ward Beecher, Dr. Clifford, Dr. Lyman Abbott and a host of others whom the church delights to honor. It is an attitude that commends itself, by its inherent wisdom, when understood. To neglect it is to ignore much of the teaching and spirit of the prophets of the Old Testament. For, they were "men of the times," enunciating principles for all the relations of life; first, for their own day, and second, for all time. Truth never grows old, is never out of date. The real is the true, and that abideth forever. Righteousness in essence is not variable, but a vital living principle, manifest in the growing history of a world, the Bible and the ever larger Christ. Growth in breadth does not mean a change of essence, but an expansion of that which conditions have narrowed.

As Christ is "the Light of the world," He is the light—the true light—for every relation. "Thy Kingdom come" is for now. "Thy will be done," is, as we are taught, "on earth as it is in heaven." "Thy kingdom" as the law and rule of the Father, as embodied in and expressed by Christ, and given to us in teaching, deed and life. That kingdom, as a supreme rule, we gladly acknowledge individually in the salvation of the soul. But, as life is one in different manifestations, yet one person, how can we narrow a supreme rule, and still be loyal to that rule while ignoring its application to any feature of life's action, and obligation? For, surely, if this is God's world His rule should prevail. And, Christians, being His representatives, are those through whom that rule is to prevail. For what purpose? To renovate a world, and establish His kingdom.

While individually and personally, we enter "the kingdom," and accept the rule of Christ, the principles of the kingdom are world-wide. They are a law of action, a rule of government. The forms of national government vastly differ, and will continue to do so. But, whatever the form, there is demanded a purpose, spirit and goal: "Do all to the glory of God." That glory is in righteousness. Clearly, then, national government should be a reflex of Divine government, and human law a transcript of Divine law. Divine law in the light of Christ. To secure that, miracles are not wrought, but "ye are the light of the world." It is the tritest of platitudes, that good laws cannot come from bad men. That bad laws may come from good men, good in some breadths of life, is possible. Still the rule is that christian law must come, either directly or indirectly, from christian men.

Then the conclusion is that the heaven of christian truth is for all of life, and that christian law is the obligation of christian discipleship; then to secure christian law it is obligatory on christian discipleship to exercise to the full the rights and obligations of citizenship.

God's temple is a world, and the inner sanctuary is for the outer sanctuary. All service is Divine service when hearted with a Divine motive, Heaven's word for earth's troubles and perplexities is Heaven's gift of light, love, and life—the Christ. Christianity is a present day knowledge and wisdom for our present day questions.

Christianity and the Right of Self Defence.

In a New York town last month four men undertook to burglarize the store of Adams & Co. They were discovered by the owners of the store, and at once opened fire upon them. In the fight which followed, the elder Mr. Adams was killed, and three of the burglars were shot, two of them dying soon after. The younger Mr. Adams, who shot the burglars, is an active member of the Methodist church. Depressed by the death of his father and the reaction after the life and death struggle the young man felt regret that he had been the means of the death of two men. Commenting on this the "Christian Advocate" said,—"There is no occasion for repentance, remorse or regret."

Knowing that some might think its verdict a wrong one, and contrary to the teachings of Jesus Christ, the "Advocate" in another article, states its creed in full. The article, which is printed, below, is a clear statement on several points which have, probably, perplexed many good people.

In social intercourse it is the duty of the Christian, both in his judgment of men and in his dealings with them, to possess and manifest the spirit of charity, to avoid all unjust or unkind causes of estrangement, to be slow to take offense, prompt to forgive, and

ready to make it easy for the offender to bear the cross of repentance, acknowledgment, and reconciliation.

In business transaction it is the duty of the Christian in dealing with his fellow-men to be governed by the principles of equity, to give an equivalent in goods or money for what he buys, and to return an equivalent in money or goods for the price received by him for what he sells; the equivalent representing the value, the work, and the risk; and it is his duty to apply the Golden Rule as to the profit which he will put upon his wares and services, charging others what he conscientiously believes that they would have a right to charge him under a reversal of the circumstances.

If any whom he trusts do not pay him, it is the duty of the Christian to consider whether the character and action of the debtor are such as to justify indulgence, and, second, whether he can grant indulgence with due regard to his own solvency, and to make the decision under the influence of the Golden Rule. Should he, however, conclude that the debtor is endeavoring to impose upon him, it is his privilege to resort to the civil law in order to secure the enforcement of justice; and if he think the debtor worthy of indulgence, if he conclude it is impossible for him to grant it and maintain his own solvency, it is then his Christian duty, though he will regret the necessity, to enforce his claims by law. Also, in every instance in which he has been swindled, it is his duty as a Christian, for the public welfare, to secure the trial and conviction and imprisonment of the guilty person. We believe the man who pursues that course is doing God's work as really as the man who preaches the Gospel.

In an uncivilized or unorganized community, where there are no courts or prisons, it is the duty of the Christian to be prepared to protect himself and his family, and it is right to join an organization which shall—for the purpose of self protection—assume the functions of government, and such would be the case if government should abdicate its functions. Therefore, had we lived in San Francisco in the days of the Vigilance Committee, of which Mr. Coleman was the executive head, we should have joined it, and prayed at the family altar for the blessing of God upon the work committed to us by the committee in the same way in which we now invoke His blessing upon the missionary cause.

In a civilized government, when the Christian is assaulted or when his house is invaded by a burglar, he should capture the assailant, if possible, and hand him over to the authorities. Should the assailant complete the act and escape, or escape without accomplishing his object, it is the Christian's duty to aid the authorities in securing him, and to contribute by every means in his power to his conviction and punishment; to do this with determination, but not with malice.

The best illustration we have ever known was furnished by the late Dr. Howard Crosby, who with his own hands arrested a thief whom he caught in his house, took him to the station, was present and testified against him, and when he was convicted, sentenced, and entered upon his term called upon him and said, "My friend, I have no malice toward you. You were performing a desperate deed, you deserve your punishment; but now I say to you that I am ready to help you to begin a new life."

While in prison he visited him, encouraged him, and led him to become a Christian. When his time expired he used his influence to secure him a way of earning an honest living. The man entirely reformed, married a respectable woman in the West, and maintained a grateful correspondence with Dr. Crosby until the latter's death. We consider the Christianity of the doctor in pursuing that course as far above that of the pusillanimous and weak person who would say of such a criminal, "Poor fellow, let him go," as manhood is above childishness. Such an act as the latter is but one grade higher than that of sending roses to condemned murderers.

But one question remains, and that is, What should the Christian do if his house, his family, himself should be attacked with murderous intent? If possible, he should capture the assailant, but should not attempt to do that when it is probable that he cannot succeed. The professional burglar may be assumed to be ready to kill. The Christian should fight for his family if they are attacked, and die with them rather than surrender. But if it be a mere question of property, and he sees himself utterly helpless, prudence will say, Submit. A man in his nightdress, awakened from slumber, rising to contend with an armed burglar who has every

motive to kill that he may escape, who came prepared to do it rather than be captured, who is accustomed to the use of firearms or knives and in the full possession of his faculties, has but little chance of success. And in many such struggles the innocent victim of outrage is wounded or killed, and not unfrequently in attempting to slay the burglar puts a bullet into his wife or child. As a question of prudence, therefore, a man may do as seems best.

The point specially in view now is, if he regard himself competent to meet the foe, what does Christianity require? That he shall submit to assault and the destruction of his property? We hold that it does not, that the burglar has no right to the protection of any law, that the inalienable principle of self-defense—a principle never to be surrendered except on grounds of prudence or as a means of doing a man spiritual good—comes into authority. Under such circumstances the man who can command himself and is competent, and shoot down the burglar that invades his store or his house is a universal friend of humanity, and is as worthy of a monument as the man who performs heroic deeds in the right cause on the field of battle.

What of the Sermon on the Mount? Most true, most beautiful, an absolutely correct description of the spirit which should dwell in the Christian's heart.

But the man who fancies that the words in the Sermon on the Mount, "That ye resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away," are of the nature of specific prescriptions to be applied literally, and not descriptions of the general spirit which He inculcates, misunderstands the spirit and teachings of Jesus, and has not read the gospels through.

This phraseology was intended to teach the disciples how to act in their transient period of persecution. The man who is persecuted as a disciple of Christ, as an apostle engaged in introducing Christianity, is not to resist. By his meekness and love he should demonstrate conclusively his motive, and take away from his persecutor, unless he be a demon incarnate, all motive to continue to persecute so unresisting, so loving a person. Jesus had called His apostles away from all social relations for that specific purpose.

Nor did Jesus Himself leave them in doubt when He was to be no longer with them.

We commend to those persons who think that the Christian should sit down and allow himself to be murdered and his goods despoiled by those who do this—not because he is a Christian, but simply as marauders and murderers—the following passages: When Christ was arrested, says St. Luke: "When they which were about Him saw what would follow, they said unto Him, Lord, shall we smite with the sword? And one of them smote a servant of the high priest, and cut off his right ear. And Jesus answered and said, Suffer ye thus far. And He touched his ear, and healed him."

As He was preparing His disciples for His departure, and just before Judas came to betray Him, He said unto His disciples, "When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye anything? And they said, Nothing. Then said He unto them, But now, he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip; and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one. For I say unto you, that this that is written must yet be accomplished in Me, And He was reckoned among the transgressors: for the things concerning Me have an end."

"And they said, Lord, behold, here are two swords. And He said unto them, It is enough."

Then came the arrest; a multitude, preceded by Judas, came to seize Him. This narrative shows that they were to suffer until the completion of the tragedy of Christ.

They were then sent out into the world to practice the principles of the Golden Rule, but to avail themselves of all their legal and civil rights for personal defense. In harmony with these views Paul appealed unto Caesar, and when Caesar is unable to protect the Christian he must protect himself by such means as are allowed, and governments have solemnly invested the citizen with the right of self-defense.

Therefore, both by the Gospel properly interpreted and by the law, and

on the principle of the greatest good to the greatest number, the actions of the persons who shot these burglars were not contrary to the spirit of the Gospel.

And where the Saviour instructed His disciples to pursue a course which ordinarily would tempt men to commit crime, and would certainly make His disciples paupers, it is where His primary object in such submission is to propagate the Gospel, and that alone. It would not, in our judgment, be an incongruity for a minister of the Gospel to shoot a burglar, and then to sit down by his side, preach the Gospel to him, and if he had the spirit of the penitent thief, who said, "I suffer justly because of my evil deeds," to bid him farewell as he died, with the hope of meeting him in the New Jerusalem. We trust, therefore that this young man, while regretting that the necessity arose, will never regret that, when the necessity was forced upon him, he "quit himself like a man," and can say, "To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour."

Voices and Echoes.

A Southern paper makes the cheerful announcement that, as soon as they are through with the tobacco, they expect to begin some mission work.

The reference is, of course, to the tobacco crop. But the "Lookout" suggests that as soon as the Lord's people get through with it "for good and all," they will be able to do mission work on a scale that we haven't yet dreamed of.

A righteous cause never needs the aid of wicked devices.—Rel. Telescope.

Churches which resort to questionable, if not vicious, methods of raising money to "support the cause" might make a note of this, And preachers and churches that compromise the truth for fear of losing the support of those whose ways are wicked may, also, give it a little thought.

An Indiana saloonkeeper recently applied for a divorce on the ground that his wife drank to excess. The judge caused inquiries to be made as to the causes which had led to the habits the husband complained of. The testimony showed that the wife had become addicted to liquor through temptations with which her husband surrounded her. The judge declared that, as the husband had in a sense caused his wife to become a drunkard, he should continue to take care of her.

And how would it do to make him take care of the other results of his abominable traffic? Not only are numberless men made drunkards, but numberless wives and children are made worse than widows and orphans, and many others are murdered and heart-broken by the cruel traffic to gratify the greed of the conscienceless creatures who carry it on.

A number of years ago a prominent clergyman of our church (Presbyterian) who was on the eve of marrying his second wife, was waited upon by his elders and informed of their objections to the choice he had made. He heard what they had to say, and then virtually told them to mind their own business. He married the woman of his choice and she made him a most excellent wife.—The Mid-Continent.

The average minister may be trusted to select a wife without the help of the church. That is a mistaken notion which assumes that a church may dictate to its minister in matters which are purely within the realm of his domestic life.

Some time ago, so the story goes, the senior girls of Smith College took charge of the college monthly magazine, and the enterprising young editor went into Northampton to instruct the printer as to what she wished him to do. "You can set up your type immediately," she said, "as we are in a great hurry for the magazine." "Yes, miss," said the printer, "but—but where is the copy?" "Do you mean the articles we're going to publish?" "Yes, Miss," rejoined the printer. "Oh," said the business editor, "the articles aren't all written yet. I'll let you have them just as soon as they are, of course; but in the meantime, you can go on setting up your type. I thought you could get that much done ahead." And it was some time before the printer could persuade the "business editor" that before "setting up the type" the copy must not only be written but handed over to him.—The Advance.

The story is, probably, slightly apocryphal. But nearly as unreasonable things are often expected of newspaper men. Communications, of one kind and another, are sent with special request for insertion "in the issue of this week," though they are not mailed in time to reach the office till the paper is being printed. And, without stopping to think of the impossibility, the request being granted, the editor is scolded for not doing what he could not do. But, fortunately, editors get so used to such things that they are not particularly disturbed by them.

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