

Miscellaneous.

BEECHER AND SPURGEON.

Two men stand out before us as the popular men of the day in the pulpit, with reputation world-wide—we refer to the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon and Henry Ward Beecher. It was long the custom to call in question the power of these men, but the day is gone when one can exclaim "clap-trap" with a sneer, and pass them by. The fact of substantial and permanent success meets us face to face. "Clap-trap" may attract the crowd for a twelvemonth, but it has no power to hold it through the years. It is wiser to acknowledge the facts, and, while guarding against error, seek to make the most of that power, whatever it may be, by which they have won success. Spurgeon and Beecher stand before the world as the most successful pulpit orators of the day. Wherein lies their power? Holding fast the distinction of matter and form, we should say that, in the particulars we have enumerated, Spurgeon's success is due more to the matter, Beecher's more to the form, though each possesses, in some degree, all the elements, both in matter and form. Taking Coleridge's antithesis between science and poetry, Mr. Beecher's cast of mind is rather poetic than scientific. This accounts for some of his peculiarities. If he has any system of theology, it is one peculiar to himself, so that, taking him in connection with his family, the division of theologians into "the orthodox, the heterodox, and the Beecher family," is more than a witicism. As a result of this laxness and want of system, we find him often speaking of "orthodoxy" and sound theology, and disparaging some of the truths most precious to the Church of God, a feature in his preaching, that we deeply deplore. Spurgeon, on the other hand, has the most clearly defined system of theology. In the presentation of the practical truth of God we find a marked difference in the two men. Spurgeon dwells more than Beecher upon the doctrine of the cross in its relation to the conversion of men, and the development of Christian activity. The number of conversions under his ministry is, therefore, greater, and the distinctively Christian activity of his church more noteworthy. Beecher dwells more than Spurgeon upon the duties of the Christian believer and worker in the spheres of social and civil duty, applying the truth more to the everyday home-wants of men, seeking to guide them in the world as it is, aiming to make them better fathers, relatives, and friends, better business men and citizens. No man of the day attempts to apply God's word to these practical connections of the Christian with the world, especially in the national sphere, as does Beecher, often, we are constrained to concede, with an aim to faithfulness, and, on the whole, presenting vital truth, which lays hold of human hearts, and makes him a moulder of public sentiment, and a leader among men. Both address their messages to the practical ideas in man, but Spurgeon the more powerfully, appealing to the latter from its darker side with a tremendous and awful intensity of earnestness, which has never been surpassed since Jesus of Nazareth uttered his proclamations of woe in Galilee and Judea, while Beecher addresses more the idea of virtue or manliness, as if seeking to press some dishonesty, cowardice, and meanness as the cardinal sins. In respect to form, both make use of all the elements of power enumerated. Both delight to present truth in the concrete. Both hold practically to the theory that the world is typical, and so both abound in illustration. Beecher, born a poet, yet affectionately acknowledges, in his "Star Papers," his indebtedness to Ruskin for the "blessings of sight." "We are more indebted to him for the blessings of sight than to all other men. We were, in respect to nature, of the number of those who, having eyes, saw not, and ears, heard not. He taught us what to see and how to see." Spurgeon, in one of his early sermons, gives substantial expression of his adherence to the same theory, though coming by it in a different way. The world in all its breadth is thus tributary to both; and is made to speak most eloquently for God through them. Beecher uses it the more poetically, Spurgeon the more practically. Both present specific truth, and are, therefore, always fresh and novel. Of the two, Beecher is rather the man of genius and artistic excellence, Spurgeon the model gospel preacher, and the man of larger Christian influence with the masses. While admitting that no man is to be servilely copied, we yet hold it to be laudable to hold of and turn to service every element of power in every man. It is granted and affirmed that there are objectionable elements and eccentricities in their style, especially in Mr. Beecher's, which are to be avoided, at least by other men, and through mad imitation of which this country and Great Britain have been visited with an infliction of a set of argylemen of the "Rev. Shallow Spurgeon" type. But though these peculiarities lessen their influence, they abate not one whit from the value of the princely gifts bestowed upon them by the Master. We are constrained to think that if Mr. Beecher preached the general doctrine of the cross with the fullness and the "blood earnestness" of Spurgeon, he would be everywhere the mightiest man of the modern popular pulpit. These powers of the two men, so far as available, the pulpit should seek to make of service. Preaching, so conformed to what is high example, as well as to the demands of correct theory, meeting the needs of men in all the relations of life, will have the grandest of beauty, and yet be a gospel of aesthetics; it will possess a personal novelty, and yet not be a gospel of "clap-trap"; it will always be sublimely practical, but never a gospel of petty social reform. Such preaching will meet the demands of the three tendencies noted at the

beginning of this discussion as characterizing the times in which we live.—Princeton Review.

TURKEY.

It is now within a year or two of half a century since Mr. Hallam predicted "with an assurance which none can deem extravagant, the approaching subversion of the Ottoman power." In these words the historians of the Middle Ages only echoed a vaticination to which every Christian writer, who, during the preceding two hundred years, had turned his view toward the East, had given utterance; and probably at the time when he wrote there was more ample ground for anticipating the fall of Turkey than at any previous period. It does not concern us here to inquire by what causes the inevitable ruin was retarded. The process of disintegration, which began with the separation of Greece and Egypt from the house of Osman, has practically secured the independence of Roumania and Servia, and is now giving more menacing signs of its activity in more vital parts of the empire. In Thessaly and Albania, the atmosphere has "grown electric." In Epirus, there is open insurrection. In Candia, there is a more dangerous rebellion than any which has shaken the throne of the Sultan since the Greek War of Independence. At Athens and throughout the kingdom of Greece, there is warm sympathy with the insurgents and malcontents—perhaps even something more. The movement, indeed, has assumed the proportions of a Pan-hellenic revival; we should not be greatly surprised were we to hear that Greece had demanded not merely Candia, but Epirus and Thessaly, with the frontier of Mount Khimera and Olympus. In yielding to any such demand, there would be a terrible risk, but no less in refusing it. The theory of non-intervention, which allowed Hapsburgs and Hohenzollers to fight out their duel unmolested by France or England, would scarcely permit a repetition of the championship which brought on the Crimean war.

It would be impossible to conceive in this age a community more degraded than the Ottoman empire. The political system, the social system, the religious system, the military system—all alike are tainted with irremediable corruption. From the Sultan himself down to the meanest rayah, there flows unceasingly a tide of immorality, drowning all sense of moral obligation, national or personal. The law courts are but markets for the sale of justice; the fiscal system is a vast engine of extortion. The army has lost the fighting merits of the old Turks without gaining the discipline and skill of Western war. Then the doctrines of Islam, so powerful in the era of conquest, have lost their efficacy in the period of passive decline. It is not strange that mental and physical degeneracy follows the harem life and opium-eating. In European Turkey the Christians, despite a grinding tyranny, have steadily increased in numbers within the past half-century. The Mahomedans have as rapidly diminished, and as the Turkish armies have always been composed of the Faithful only—it would indeed be perilous to arm the rayahs—it is clear that in military strength the Sultan must be approaching insolvency.

The Christians, under Ottoman rule in Europe, are three times as numerous as the Mussulmans; and of the latter, four millions in number, more than two-thirds are Slavonian converts. It will be seen, therefore, that the pure-blooded Osmanlis, the only stable support of the Sultan's throne, are in a very small minority. The empire is by no means prepared to sustain unaided the attack of Greeks within, and Greeks without; yet at this very critical moment, when the Western Powers should above all things have been conciliated, ill fortune would have it that Turkey should commit an unpardonable sin in the sight of the commercial classes, who hold the purse-strings of England and France. Whether the catastrophe was due to the personal profligacy of Abdul Aziz, as is asserted by some, or to the malversation of his ministers, it would be difficult to discover; but it is certain that the gravest disaster to the Ottoman power which has occurred since the liberation of Greece, has been the recent failure of the Government to pay the coupons of the Consolidated Debt. Englishmen, in particular, smarting from the results of their too great confidence in the rosette pictures of Mr. Layard and Lord Palmerston, will be little disposed, we imagine, to encourage any projects for propping up a bankrupt State. The Levant has got a bad character, and, no doubt, centuries of oppression have produced their natural effect. Cruelty, deceit and disregard for morality or law, have deformed the fine Hellenic intellect, and probably the Candiotas—like their ancestors, the Cretans—deserve to be placed among the "bad kappas." But in spite of this, our sympathies in the present struggle, so daring and seemingly desperate, should rather be given to them than to their tyrants. They fought for liberty through six long years in the war which set free their brothers on the mainland. They were unsuccessful, and Europe took no thought of them. They have been since misgoverned more shamefully than even the Syrian Christians; their remonstrances have been treated as a crime, and, taking up arms in self-defence, they are now exposed to all the fury of Turkish vengeance, to be crushed unaided by superior numbers, to be handed over to the tender mercies of a fanatic horde.

It is something worthy of our admiration to see the whole male population of a country rising in armed resistance to despotism, and fighting for their homes and for their faith. If there be anything more than a paltry quibble in the doctrine that nationalities should be autonomous, then Candia may be claimed by Greece on grounds fully as cogent as those on which Italy sought, and won, Venetia. In whatever way Turkey meets such a claim, there will be danger for her. In yielding, she may show weakness which may tempt Greece to intrigue for Thessaly

and Epirus, or even to look further north to the capital itself, and to encroach on the south bank of the Danube; by refusal and defiance, she may call into action forces yet dormant, and bring upon herself disasters like that which have befallen Austria. Already by vacillation she has roused the spirit of resistance all around her. Daunted by the dangers that menace her in the south, she has lowered herself to purchase the neutrality of the stubborn Montenegrins by concessions which she would, not long ago, have spurned, surrendering territory, which she disputed in a protracted struggle, and giving up a port on the Adriatic coast. Nor has she been less pliant in dealing with her northern neighbor, Prince Charles of Roumania. This prince, whom she first refused to recognize as hospodar, she afterwards acknowledged on conditions, and now even the conditions are abandoned. All these unwonted acts of meekness on the part of the Porte are ominous of a coming struggle—they are but the calm that goes before the tempest.

If the agitation in Candia should result in war, and Greece be unable to encounter Turkey, it would be the plain duty of the signatory Powers of the Treaty of Paris to interfere to prevent a brave people from being annihilated, and an island, richly endowed by nature with all the elements of agricultural and commercial prosperity, from being turned into a desert. But no foreign interference can longer delay the collapse and disruption of the Ottoman State. These disorders and revolts are not the disease of the community, but the symptoms only. The malady itself is seated deeper, is altogether curable. The day is not far distant, we are certain, when the European dominions of the Sultan will be partitioned out among Christian States. It would be a bold thing to anticipate that distribution; but it will probably be affected by the revolution, which has excluded Austria from Germany, Bosnia, Servia, and Turkish Croatia will probably gravitate to that new Empire "which will have its centre at Pesth." Roumania will grasp Bulgaria, and firmly fix on the mouths of the Danube, may consolidate into a strong power. To the share of Greece will fall the splendid country to the south of the Balkan range, the islands of the Aegean, and the city of Constantinople itself. The Turkish power will cross the Bosphorus to its true home, where it still preponderates in number, in faith, in the elements of a national life.—London Review.

HOW TO TREAT RITUALISM.

The Episcopalian, which has from the first given no uncertain sound concerning the lapse of portions of its Church into the old Romanistic corruptions, in a late number gives the following wholesome views:—Every one whom God has set in the Church to teach, to lead, to rule, or to influence, should follow these examples. Take the doctrines which are taught and advocated in some of our churches, and which are published in works written by her leading ministers. The real presence of Christ in the bread and wine, the justification of the soul by inherent righteousness, baptismal regeneration, confession, worship of the elements used in the Lord's Supper, and priestly absolution: is it right and dutiful to God and His Church that any man should be merely understood to hold and teach them, or to repudiate and oppose them? The people of God have a right to know beyond all doubt what stand their teachers take on these doctrines, and every man must be positive and clear in his statements. Inference—guesses that he is all right, presumptions that he is correct in his views, will not satisfy. We want to know which he believes and is prepared to inculcate, and what his silence on such topics means.

So in regard to the new ritualistic practices, and the new ecclesiastical dresses; it is not sufficient that the leaders of the Church should be understood not to favor them or to approve them. The professions and aims of ritualism are not concealed. The advocates are clear and outspoken; they are not supposed to favor the introduction of the Romish Medieval, and Judaizing primitive or semi-pagan, rites. They openly contend for them, argue for their propriety and usefulness. They contend for Divine approval and expect the Divine blessing. And should not those who abhor these practices, who believe they are unchristian, superstitious, and disastrous to the cause of true religion, and utterly subversive of spirituality, give as decided expression to their views?

If a man is understood to oppose them, how came that understanding to obtain? Did he express the unfavorable opinion privately, or was it merely inferred from some gesture, or meaning silence? And if some have good reason and sufficient ground to say publicly that any leader is understood to approve or disapprove certain practices, then should we not have consistent conduct? Why not come out, and in a matter so important, so exciting and alarming, be expressly and unmistakably plain. Bishop Hopkins has done this, and the whole world will respect him for his candor and decision. The Church does not merely understand him to favor ritualism. We see his heart is there, and we hear his sighs—now feeble with age, yet deep drawn and expressive—for its return. He goes for "glory and for beauty," for all that the most advanced ritualists desire. He shows that he would lead, if he were a younger man, and contend with all his energies for albs and copes, for chasubles and tunicles. There is and can be no doubt of his position.

On the other hand, we are assured that the Bishop of the Diocese of New York, in whose jurisdiction the ritualism which is exciting so much attention, and causing so much pain, sorrow and unhappiness in the Church, this leader of eminent position is understood to be opposed to the whole thing. Of course we are glad to find it so. We would publish the fact to the world, and cheer the desponding and mourning people of God by the assurance. We pray all

cotermporaries of the religious and secular press to give circulation to the statement. But we more earnestly desire that there might be a clear and decided expression of his disapproval.

The Bishop is not merely understood to be opposed to affiliation with Christian ministers of other denominations. He has, by address, by a pastoral letter, and by clear protest, shown his decided opposition to the practice. He has declared his opinions, argued their correctness, stated his practice in conformity with his convictions, and thus used all his influence and authority to render the affiliation unpopular and to put an end to it. We would like to see his disapproval of ritualism expressed in a manner equally decided and earnest, and as much stronger as the subject is more worthy of reprobation. No other form of disapproval will satisfy earnest and thoughtful members of the Church. The ritualists themselves will not feel any disquietude from such understandings. They will argue with strength and correctly, as they are warranted by Scripture to do, and say, "He that is not against us is on our part." If the Bishop presents himself at our ritualistic services, abstains from rebuke, censure or remark; if he does not order us to "remove the ribbons," or to extinguish the candles; if he does not issue addresses against us, nor remonstrate in pastoral letters, we may be sure that he approves, or will not molest us. He is ours, and we may hope for his outspoken approval.

ROME AND THE FREEDMEN.

"E. D. M." the veteran correspondent of the Christian Herald, thus trenchantly handles the proposed scheme of Romanizing the freedmen of our country, entertained by the recent Baltimore Council:—

We imagine, the Romanists, as well as many Protestants, are mistaken about one material fact. They imagine that the Southern negroes are a sort of heathendom, which is open to conversion and propagandism. This is true only in a very partial measure. The largest body of Southern negroes already belong to Methodist and Baptist congregations—not, perhaps, as converted members, but in the same manner in which they do here. What means has the Church of Rome to turn these Methodist and Baptist negroes to Romanism? They have not been very successful in converting whites—can they convert negroes any easier? They propose to make twenty new bishops for this purpose! Well, if they make a hundred, it will not advance the business a single step. But this is connected with other modes of operation, which are efficient. The creation of twenty new bishoprics affords promotion, directly or indirectly, to many more ambitious priests. This is the means by which many of the ablest Jesuits have been introduced into this country. They want (and, to some extent, will succeed) to increase the number of active and zealous missionaries, who can go out among the negroes, as the Jesuits went among the Chinese.

Supposing these missionaries in the field, what success will they have? They will have two things in their favor—first, the suavity and kindness of the Jesuit priests, noted over the world for their shrewd knowledge of human nature, and their conformity to the ways of the people among whom they go. They are accessible to all men. If our Protestant missionaries would adopt more of the same manners, they would come much nearer the maxim—be ye as serpents, while ye are harmless as doves. Another advantage they will have in the character of the negro. Naturally superstitious, he will be very ready to believe the exaggerated stories of saints and miracles worked by saintly hands. Naturally fond of show, and subservient to power, he will be ready to trust in the supposed grandeur and infallibility of the Roman Church. So far, the Jesuit missionaries among the negroes will proceed on safe and hopeful ground. But there are two rocks on which they will be shipwrecked. The Roman Catholic Church in this country is de facto an Irish Church. The German part of it neither makes nor desires to make much impression outside of itself. It is mainly Irish bishops and priests which govern and direct the course of the Church. Now, it is a fact, present and historical, that the Irish Catholic is an enemy of the negro. It is likewise a fact that the negro knows this, and acts upon it.

In the General Assembly held in Brooklyn, May, 1865, was a black Presbyterian minister from the city of Philadelphia. In the course of an excellent speech on the religious character of the negro, he said:—"There have been some efforts made to convert the negroes to Romanism; but whenever a negro thinks of a Roman Catholic, he thinks of an Irishman, and that ends the matter." No doubt this feeling is not quite so strong on the plantations of the South, but it must be remembered that the negroes have a sort of telegraphic way of communicating with one another to the most distant part. Wherever the Roman propagandist goes among the negroes, he will be met by strong prejudices against him.

But the battle is to be fought among negroes, mainly with the same weapons it is fought with all over the earth. In the case of the negroes, the advantage is decidedly with the Protestants. What the negro needs most—what he desires most—what he will take readiest—is education. The one thing he wants to do is to read. Whoever teaches him to read, can give him the Bible, and make it the book of his household. He longs for knowledge, and he thirsts after it as no student ever did. The one great work of the Protestant among the negroes is before him, plain as daylight, and sure as the path trod by the Angel of Life: Go to the negro, quickly, earnestly, faithfully, with the spelling-book in one hand and the Bible in the other, and all the dangers of Romanism, all the dark images of rebellion, and all the clouds which gather round our country, will disappear together.

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