

OUR RELIGIOUS COLUMN.

The following poem was found near a skeleton in the Museum of the Royal College of Surgeons, Lincoln's Inn, London, and was sent for publication to the Morning Chronicle. Yet though fifty gibes were read were offered for the discovery of the author, his name has never transpired.

Behold this ruin! 'Twas a skull, Once of ethereal spirit full; This narrow cell was life's retreat, This space was thought's mysterious seat. What beautiful visions filled this spot! What dreams of pleasure long forgot! Nor hope nor love, nor joy nor fear, Have left one trace or record here.

Beneath that mouldering canopy Once shone the bright and busy eye. But start not at the dismal void; If social love that eye employed, If with no lawless fire it gleamed, But through the dew of kindness beamed, That eye shall be forever bright When stars and suns are sunk in night.

Within this hollow cavern hung The rosy, swift and tuneful tongue. If falsehood's honey it disdained, And when it could not praise was chained, If bold in virtue's cause it spoke, Yet gentle concord never broke, That silent tongue shall plead for thee When time unveils eternity.

TRYING TO MAKE A CHRISTIAN NATION.

Good intentions, even when recorded by brave attempts at execution, are not always sufficient for the accomplishment of worthy ends. It is highly honorable, for instance, to aim at the reconstruction of society on the basis that every human being is or ought to be a Christian. But it is a "stubborn fact"—a very mule of a fact—that most men are not Christians and do not really wish to be Christians. Say "ought," to an average man and he replies "can't," which means won't. It is idle to attempt to make this a Christian nation by acknowledging God in the Constitution, or by enacting laws far in advance of the average moral sentiment of the people. Such provisions must be generally disregarded, thus making Christianity, as embodied in political forms, a mockery. We hope that Christianity will one day be recognized in all constitutions and laws and methods of public instruction and of private business, but that hope is founded on the expectation that the whole world will then be converted to Christ, and that such recognition, unanimously and voluntarily adopted, will have no savor of hypocrisy about it. We look forward to that time when upon everything shall be written "Holiness unto the Lord," as to the day of completion, the day when the capstone of the temple shall be laid by Christ himself. But to anticipate that day by constitutional recognitions of God the Father and Christ the Saviour is like hanging a capstone high in the air and fastening other stones to it, instead of building up from a foundation in solid earth. We must build up from the Christ within us the hope of glory, not down from a Christ hanging upon the vote of an irreligious majority.

Bishop Temple's Recanted Recantation.

The evils of the present union of Church and State in England were never so sadly apparent as when Bishop Temple, in the Convocation of Canterbury, stood up to defend his contribution to the volume of "Essays and Reviews," which that same body, in 1841, condemned as "containing teaching contrary to the doctrine received by the United Church of England and Ireland in common with the whole Catholic Church of Christ." The Archbishop of Exeter announced in Convocation that he had permission from his Diocese to state that Bishop Temple's essay would not appear in any future edition of the volume, and that it would probably never be published again. The Convocation evidently accepted this as a recantation on the part of Bishop Temple of the obnoxious opinions previously held and a surrender of all fellowship with the former associates in free thinking. It came as a healing balm to the wounded consciences of the clergy. It fell like oil upon the troubled waters of the English Church. All was peaceful once more. Even those who had most bitterly opposed the condemnation of the doctrine of Dr. Temple and his consecration confessed themselves satisfied and the convocation breathed free once more.

We cannot enter very fully into the brief joy which pervaded that assembly at this recantation. It was not the recantation of the Bishop Temple to do, even though it was done late. It came not too early for the pride of a self-willed delirium of conscience, nor too late to spoil the picture—so pleasant to the enemies of the Church—of a Bishop who had renounced his own communion had condemned Bishop Temple would have done something towards saving both his own honor and that of the Church. But no repentance or recantation, whether coming early or late in the day, can undo the wrong done, could atone for the evil already produced by his essay, or for the scandal brought upon Christianity by the selection of its author as one of the chief pastors of the flock of Christ. He might withdraw that essay from circulation and burn every copy—may, like Cranmer, he might have burned the hand that wrote it, but he could not withdraw its teachings from the minds of his readers.

But it seems that Bishop Temple was not ready to grant the Church the favor of even a tardy recantation. The calm produced by the Archbishop's statement on Wednesday, was broken on Friday by a statement from the Bishop himself. It came like a thunderbolt into that peaceful home, and those who had for a few hours fancied that the storm was over, saw fresh cause for alarm. For the Bishop defiantly stated that he held the same opinions as formerly, and was ready to defend them. He should withdraw his essay from publication, if at all, only because the volume in which it originally appeared had done its work—and that a good work.

Bishop Temple makes much of conscience, and takes the ground that he cannot honestly regret having given to the world the essay in question. But ought not conscience to have told him that, as long as he upholds doctrines which his own convocation has formally condemned, he cannot honestly hold a bishopric? The English Church has learned and cannot soon forget one important lesson. That lesson is the peril of Crown appointments to the episcopate, and, consequently, of the whole connection of Church and State. Men now have their eyes open, and Bishop Temple, it seems, is declined not to allow them to close again very soon.

SUMMARY OF CHURCH NEWS.

Mr. Isaac Lamb, the inventor of the "Lamb Knitting Machine," was recently ordained a Baptist minister in Michigan. The Hanson Place Baptist Church in Brooklyn, N. Y., received sixty-three additional members at the last communion. The religious interest continues.

Rev. J. Hyatt Smith has resigned charge of the Lecounton Avenue Baptist Church, Brooklyn, and intends to start a new enterprise on the open communion principle. The Baptist colleges have nearly 5000 students, an increase of over 500 since last year. There are 800 students fitting for the ministry, of whom 240 are in theological seminaries.

The Rev. Levi Wheelock, formerly a Congregational minister, was reordained to the work of the ministry by a Baptist Council at Woodland, Barry county, Michigan, January 15. D. C. Adams and wife, of the Methodist Church, the former an acceptable preacher in that body, and E. R. Pierce and wife, the former a useful minister of the United Brethren Church, were lately immersed by Rev. E. J. Goodspeed, D. D., of Chicago. The Rev. L. Ford, former pastor of the Christian Church in Lewisburg, Pa., but more recently admitted into the membership of the Lewisburg Baptist Church, has received a call to become pastor of the Bridgewater Baptist Church in Montross, Susquehanna county, Pa.

On Wednesday evening, February 16, a mass meeting of the Baptists was held at the First Church, Baltimore, Md., when the sum of \$25,000 was raised for the Bataw Place Baptist Church, now nearly completed. This sum, together with \$58,000 already contributed (including the lot donated), amounts to \$83,000, leaving a comparatively easy amount yet to be raised for the entire cost.

The Sewell Baptist National Education Society have voted to transfer their theological school, now at Hampton, N. H., to Providence, R. I., provided such a movement is generally desired, and something in the way of endowment promised. The propositions selecting Havard, Mass., and Buffalo, N. Y., and proposing a division of the institution between Bates and Hillsdale Colleges, did not meet with favor.

An Episcopal church in Elizabethtown, Kentucky, has allowed the Presbyterians the use of their church, Bishop Cummings gladly consenting. The report that Bishop Williams, of Connecticut, has prohibited Dr. Ewer's preaching in Connecticut is not true. He has, however, written to him on the subject of his sermon, and an action will depend on his reply.

Dr. Temple has changed his mind about refusing to allow his essay to appear in future editions of "Essays and Reviews." It will appear, but as the composition of Frederick Temple, and not of the Bishop of Exeter. A convocation of English bishops, held at the summons of the Archbishop of Canterbury, has resolved to appoint a committee of scholars to report at a subsequent meeting as to the wisdom of revising our present version of the Bible.

The English Court of Arches has decided what garments may be worn by the clergy. The cope, chasuble, surplice, alb, tunicle, and biretta are allowable in the communion service, but at no other time. An appeal is to be taken to the Privy Council. Bishop Whipple, who is travelling in Europe for his health, had a gift of twenty thousand dollars presented to him for the endowment for the Episcopal College of a professorship, and one thousand dollars worth of books. The presents were made from the Oxford University.

The General Theological Seminary (Episcopal) of New York has at last secured a dean in the person of J. M. Forbes, D. D., a clergyman of some note, who some time ago returned to the Church of his youth, after having for fifteen years been a member of the Roman Church. Rev. George W. Foote, Missionary from Utah, preached on Sunday morning last at St. Luke's Church, Thirteenth street, and gave a very interesting account of the work of the Church in this benighted region; also, of the great need of funds to carry on the work among the Mormons, particularly in building churches and school houses.

There is in Salt Lake City a temporary building used for church and social purposes, the latter having over one hundred pupils. Mr. Foote is a clergyman of pleasing address, and we should judge, of considerable ability, and one who is well calculated to prosecute, under Bishop Tuttle, this important work. He will, no doubt, be favorably received by Episcopalians, and the wants of the mission receive a liberal response at their hands.

An incendiary fire destroyed the Presbyterian church at Sugar creek, near Charlotte, N. C., a few days ago. It had just been remodelled and repaired. The Holmes Church, on the Eastern Shore of Virginia, has made a call for the pastoral services of the Rev. Dr. Handy, of Orange Court House.

Mr. P. Cowan, Jr., has accepted an invitation to labor in the Church at Charleston, S. C. Since he completed his course in the Seminary last spring, he had been preaching to the Columbia colored congregation at the Ladson Memorial chapel.

The Methodist Recorder, during three weeks, has reported 1500 conversions among the Methodist Protestant churches. Methodist preaching was started last April in Orebro, a large town in Central Sweden, half way between Stockholm and Gottenburg. A large hall was obtained, and after nine months' labor they have 350 members, and the room far too small for the number of worshippers.

In 1868 the Methodists received 194,840 probationers. How many of these were received to full membership it is impossible to tell; but the following year showed an increase of but 54,447 in the full membership. It is evident that the source one-third of the "probationers" became full members, after making all possible allowances for losses by death or excommunication.

The Methodists in New York report 182,955 members, of whom 136,374 are full members. The Presbyterians have 109,333 members, the Baptists 96,703, the Episcopalians 63,047, and the Congregationalists 25,448. During the last nine years Methodism in New York has increased 10 per cent. in membership, 23 per cent. in churches, 31 per cent. in persons, 5 per cent. in Sabbath schools, 15 per cent. in Sunday school teachers, 37 per cent. in Sunday school scholars, 140 per cent. in the value of church edifices, and 164 per cent. in the value of parsonages.

\$500,000 are considered sure before even a charter is asked. It is understood that whenever Genesee College shall move to Syracuse, it will be incorporated in the University. A paper was read signed by the Alumni of Genesee College approving the measure.

The faculty of Yale College, Mass., have recommended to the Congregational churches in the State to provide the rooms for students in the Yale Seminary building, with furniture, at a cost of sixty dollars for each room. The Pearl Street Church in Hartford, Conn., have voted unanimously to give up their expensive quartette choir, one of the finest in the State, and to substitute congregational singing. There will then be three Congregational churches in Hartford which sing congregationally.

The Fourth Church of Hartford, Connecticut, have given the Park Church and Society liberty to call the pastor, the Rev. N. J. Burton. The church have done so, and the society will undoubtedly concur. The Court says that the Wooster Street Society have voted to form a church, and already upwards of fifty names are pledged. The Centre Church, having long for the right man to take charge of that field, and to be also a helper of the Rev. Mr. Gould in the abundant work of the Centre parish.

The endowment of "Luther College," at Decatur, Iowa, is reported at \$73,134, which sum is being constantly increased by contributions large and small, even down to twenty-five cents. The Rev. R. Adelberg, recently of Albany, and President of the Lutheran Synod, is now pastor of a German Lutheran church in Watertown, Wis., and a Professor in the Northwestern University, located in the same place. This institution has six clerical professors and 134 students.

The Rev. Chester D. Hartranft, of New Brunswick, N. J., having accepted the call of the First German Reformed congregation, Race street, below Fourth, will enter upon his pastoral duties on the first Sabbath in April next.

The Archbishop of Cologne has suspended Dr. Kaiser, of Dusseldorf, for failing, in celebrating the marriage of Prince Charles of Romania with the Princess Elizabeth, Protestant, of Wied, Prussia, to exact the promise that the children of the marriage should be educated in the Catholic faith.

Archbishop Spalding, of Baltimore, is said to be the leader of a third party in the Roman Council, which aims to mediate between the two extremes. A writer says that a paper drawn up by him which has received signatures, expresses the desire that the Council may limit its action to a declaration of censure against whoever shall profess erroneous doctrines hostile to the Pope's primacy; against those who maintain that "while they owe an external veneration for the decrees of the Roman Pontiff, they are by no means obliged to yield the internal assent of their hearts and minds" against those who see nothing impossible in the Pope's opinion differing from that of the bishops, thus morally severing the head of the Church from the body and members; and against those who maintain that the Pope may occasionally condemn some propositions, and that the mere fact of not having thoroughly understood it.

The administrators of the various Catholic dioceses have published the regulations for Lent. Fasting is enjoined to the extent of allowing but one meal a day, with a "moderate collation" in the evening to the amount of one-quarter of an ordinary meal, consisting of "bread, butter, cheese, fruits, salads, vegetables, and fish," but not milk or eggs. Tea, coffee, or chocolate is also allowed in the morning. Flesh meat is allowed by a declaration of censure against, on Mondays and Thursdays, and there is to be no restriction of any sort on Sundays. Fish, eggs, and milk are the only articles of the meat kind allowed on fasting days, though custom allows fish to be fried in lard instead of butter. Children, the infirm, and those who are unable to do without, are excused from keeping the fasts.

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