

The Religious World

Dr. Stimson and the Broadway Tabernacle

The Rev. Henry A. Stimson, D.D., of the Broadway Tabernacle of this city, announced on the morning of Easter Day that he was about to place his withdrawal from the pastorate in the hands of the trustees. He has occupied the position for three years. Before he had been pastor in Minneapolis, Worcester, and St. Louis. In the statement which he made to the church he said that his action was due to difference of opinion in regard to the administration of the affairs of the church. He withdrew because he was not willing to be a party to controversy. Dr. Stimson is one of the leading ministers of the Congregational fellowship. He is President of the Congregational Church-Building Society, and Recording Secretary of the American Board. His executive gifts are unusual, and he has proved himself, in every field which he has occupied, not only an able but a consecrated worker. His removal from New York will be a distinct loss, for he has made himself felt in many directions, and has won many friends during his pastorate, which has been one of great activity in many fields. There will never be any lack of fields for such a man combining so many gifts of scholarship, intellectual force, and spiritual power.

Dr. Cuyler's Anniversary

On Sunday last the Rev. Dr. Theodore L. Cuyler preached once more at the Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian Church in Brooklyn, the occasion being the fiftieth anniversary of his ordination to the ministry. He preceded his sermon, the subject of which was "The Angels at the Sepulcher," by an interesting account of his long term of service. "By a happy coincidence," he said among other things, "my fifty years' ministry has been linked with the Easter festival. I was licensed to preach about Easter time. My first sermon before this church was on that stormy Easter Sabbath in 1860. On the Easter Sabbath of 1885 the quarter-century of my pastorate was kindly commemorated in this church, and on April 6, 1890, I delivered the valedictory discourse which gave back this dear pulpit and made way for the advent of my beloved and heaven-blessed successor." The following incident occurred some ten years since, but we think it has never got into print. The half-century commemoration of Dr. Cuyler's ordination brings it out from one who was present: A coarsely dressed man, of the lower class, came into a Brooklyn store frequented by the well-to-do. He was not getting any attention, till one of the clerks politely inquired what he could do for him. Then this clerk served him with as much interest and civility as if he had been a rich customer. This drew the notice of the other clerks, and when the man departed, they began to chaff the one who had waited on him, asking if that chap was a relative of his, etc. Hearing this, a lady who had watched the whole affair spoke up very earnestly. "Permit me to say, sir," said she to the clerk, "that I have observed your courtesy to that poor man, and have been very much impressed by it." "Thank you, madam," he replied; "the fact is, I have been going to Cuyler's church for these six months, and he has lodged in me the idea that I ought to treat every man as a brother."

The Church and the Nation

Bishop Huntington's sermon, preached at the recent consecration of Dr. Satterlee as the first Bishop of Washington, had as its topic "The Power of the Church in National Life." The subject was most naturally fitted to the occasion, for, as Bishop Huntington said, "The setting up of a distinct jurisdiction in church government at the central seat of the law-making and law-administering power of a nation suggests something more than a likeness between a civil and a spiritual economy." We select from the sermon (which we find printed in full in the "Churchman") a few passages which may indicate its trend and significance:

The clearest thinking and wisest reading of the past, in our day, are leading to the conclusion, as scientific as it is Scriptural, that a nation has its reason and its motive in the making up of man, and in the mind of his Maker; that it is not a mechanism constructed and operated for material interests or commercial convenience, but a far nobler and grander thing. This conception rose in the mind of John Milton, not altogether a poet imagining dominions in the sky, but statesman enough to write: "A nation ought to be as one huge Christian personage, one mighty growth and stature of an honest man." Edmund Burke, more than a political philosopher or royalist advocate, saw it when he said: "The nation is indeed a partnership, but a partnership not only between those who are living at one time on the earth, but between those living, those who are dead, and those who are yet to be born." . . . Now when moral poison corrodes the roots of the country's character, when moral cowardice emasculates its civic manhood, when greediness snatches the spoils of a faint-hearted and fleeing patriotism, when craft and cupidity set up at the doors of Legislatures their market stalls, where offices of trust and the people's rights are bought and sold in a merchandise as guilty as that which Christ scourged in the temple, how can his servants intrench too firmly at its center the power of his kingdom and its righteousness?

In this country the safeguard against Erastianism is in its inherent impossibility. A State religion in the United States, native or imported, could only be

created after a subversion of the whole system of both government and manners, and that only after an extinction, radical and complete, of the spirit and the principle which gave the Republic its origin and its shape. What is wanted is not an American Christianity, but a Christian America. Christian character has a type and mold of its own, not of race or climate, not Anglo-Saxon, not Latin, but primitive and Apostolic. The Incarnation fixed forever its quality and its substance. Church life in this country must be organized; but, unlike that of ages of ignorance and craft, it must be an organization of minds and wills, minds that think and wills that are free. Washington is not to be a Jerusalem or a Rome. Let it be a city set spiritually on high, to which all the land may look, praising God, above the seven hills, or Zion.

Our first centennial retrospect has taught thoughtful citizens that private rights and personal liberties, fair dealing between neighbor and neighbor, justice and equity between class and class, demand a stronger guaranty than the franchise and promise of our democracy. A nominal Christianity, which shelters under a sacred name, by creed or ceremony, commercial combinations that enslave men and dishonor women and deform children, requires other checks and other commandments than Congress or courts. Close to the tribunals of law, the closer the better, it needs the voice that every Sunday and holy day proclaims the love of the brother man inseparable from the love of the Father, the sacraments of grace which know neither class nor color, the offices that rebuke by their tender impartiality the frightful inequalities and hatreds, barbarities and oppressions, of vulgar wealth and dainty pride, the Magnificat that sings the putting down of the mighty and the exalting of the humble and meek.

B. Fay Mills and His Work

The recent meetings of B. Fay Mills, whose reputation as an evangelist has been second to that of no man of the present generation in the United States, have attracted much attention and comment, and the cause is an entire change in Mr. Mills's methods of operation. For the last ten years he has been an evangelist pure and simple. The motives to which he has appealed have been higher than those of many of his class, but he has relied upon the machinery of inquiry meetings and pledge-cards and the pressure of strong emotions to secure decision on the part of those inquiring concerning the Christian life. But Mr. Mills is a man anxious to learn, and his experience has led him to distrust the older and more common methods of evangelistic work. He has seen a large proportion of those converted in revivals go back to their old life, and others unite with churches to which they have never added strength; and he has come to the conclusion that what is needed in our time is not so much a larger Church as a better and more spiritual Church. Moreover, he has been a constant and careful student, not only of the Bible, but also of history, theology, and the social order. His study of the Bible has shown him that its central doctrine is the kingdom of God; his study of history and society has shown him that there is nothing the world needs so much as that kingdom. He has also learned from a study of the Scriptures that the essence of that kingdom is love—such love as was indicated by Jesus when he said, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another as I have loved you." As a result Mr. Mills, for the present at least, has changed his methods. Under the new order he has held but three series of meetings: one in Madison, Wis., one in Lafayette, Ind., and one in Montclair, N. J. This week he begins meetings in Buffalo. His course of sermons in Montclair has been almost entirely on the Kingdom of God. His method is to lay foundations broad and deep in a careful study of the Old Testament and the New. After he has carried the people with him, showing them the place which that kingdom occupies in the Scriptures, he applies it to the life of the individual and of society. He distinctly says that there is nothing new in his work; that he is not discrediting what he has done in the past, or what other evangelists are doing; but simply that God has now called him to put the emphasis in another place. He is preaching no new social order; has little to say about Socialism or things of that kind, but simply holds up the life that was in Jesus Christ as the only true standard for the Church, for individuals, for society, and the State. He preaches the doctrine of repentance as earnestly as ever, and no one could more constantly or consistently call all to Jesus Christ as the only Saviour of men, both in their individual and corporate life. One of his strongest and most searching sermons, for instance, is on the place occupied by the family in the kingdom of God—a sermon which ought to be preached in every community. The sermons of this series are characterized by thoughtfulness, thoroughness, and timeliness. Very likely they will not reach so large crowds as his other preachings, and we have no doubt but that in time they will be materially modified. But they are all based on the Scriptures, and are the results of careful study. They are level to the needs of our time. They may be criticised as somewhat one-sided, but he is emphasizing a side most neglected. Mr. Mills is preaching the same truth that is preached from hundreds of pulpits, but, so far as we know, he is the first evangelist who has made such subjects the theme of his sermons. First he presents clearly and earnestly the kingdom of God for which Jesus lived and died, and then he calls the Church and individual Christians and all men to that kingdom, always urging repentance as the first condition of its entrance. Those who are expecting a revival of the old sort will probably be disappointed in Mr. Mills's present methods. At Montclair there have been no inquiry meetings and no pledge-cards, but the

churches have been full, and the truth has been so presented that there has been deep searching of heart, and probably many have been led to the Christian life. Concerning his work we should say that there is a large place for it in our land. It is the gospel of love faithfully preached, not as an easy faith tolerant of evil things, but as the loftiest, most august, and only victorious form of Christian living. To our mind he overlooks the fact that love often must refuse what is asked, and be severe in the interests of the one loved—but that correction his hearers make for themselves. What the effect of Mr. Mills's method will be remains to be seen. Whether it will be what the churches need in the field of evangelism we cannot predict, but that there will be as large a place as ever for him, either as an evangelist or in the pastorate, there can be no possible doubt.

Methodist Conferences The various conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the vicinity of New York have recently been held, or are now in session. We have noticed in the reports little of general interest. The question of appointing delegates to the General Conference is always regarded as one of importance, and the positions are sought in proportion as there is likelihood of an election of bishops. It is presumed that new bishops may be elected this year, and the names which we have seen mentioned from this vicinity are the Rev. James M. King, D.D., and Chaplain McCabe. One incident of interest in the New York Conference was the offering of the following resolution: "*Resolved*, That we recommend the General Conference to take under consideration the advisability and expediency of putting a colored man on the bench of Bishops." The resolution excited a brisk discussion, and was finally tabled; but the fact that it was offered is a sign of the times. It shows that, instead of the separation of the colored people into conferences of their own, which was advocated a few years since, there is now far more likelihood of the elevation of colored ministers to the bench of Bishops. This, in our opinion, is the more Christian thing to do. While the resolution was not adopted, and perhaps ought not to have been, it surely is a good sign that it was offered and seriously considered. Why should not a colored man be elected bishop if his ability and character are satisfactory?

Bishop Potter at Cambridge Cambridge University, England, has honored itself and honored Bishop Potter, of New York, by inviting him to be a Select Preacher before the University in May, 1897. Such an honor has only once or twice before been conferred upon a bishop or priest of the American Church. It should be remembered in this connection that, as the universities in England are all connected with the Established Church, only Episcopalians would ever be invited. The office of Select Preacher was instituted in 1804 by the University of Oxford, and has since become a regular appointment at Oxford, Cambridge, and Dublin. There are ten preachers who are called "Select Preachers," appointed for special service in the various universities. They are appointed by an official body consisting of the Vice-Chancellor, four Professors of Divinity, two Proctors, and four members of the Senate. The Select Preachers for the current year are the Bishop of Manchester, Canon Whittaker, of Truro, the Rev. Dr. W. Boyd Carpenter, Bishop of Ripon, and the Rev. Dr. W. Cunningham, Vicar of Great St. Mary's. Bishop Potter is well known in England as a preacher, and has before been honored by the University of Cambridge, which conferred upon him the degree of Doctor of Laws, and by the University of Oxford, which conferred upon him the degree of Doctor of Divinity.

Professor George Adam Smith Professor George Adam Smith, of Glasgow, who reached New York, on the steamship Majestic, April 1, comes to America to lecture before the Johns Hopkins University upon the Hebrew poets. He is also to lecture at Chautauqua in July, so will spend several months in our country. On Easter Day he preached in New York City. Professor Smith stands in the first rank of Biblical scholars, and is one of the most eloquent preachers in the Free Church to-day. His writings on the prophets (especially upon Isaiah) brought him into great prominence some six or seven years ago, and since that time his "Historical Geography of Palestine" has been published, after his travels in the East. Professor Smith is a man on the sunny side of middle life, with a warm, genial, sympathetic nature, loving his fellow-men and human companionship with an intensity that is not always combined with what is called the scholarly taste. Those who have had the privilege of listening to his preaching (the first seven or eight years of his public life were spent in pastoral work) and of knowing the man, appreciate the combination of splendid gifts and personal charm which have gained for him the place he holds in men's hearts. Professor Smith's chief contribution to Biblical literature is his lectures on the prophecy of Isaiah, which perhaps

constitute the best commentary on that book to be found in the English language. Many Americans had the privilege of hearing him lecture at the last Summer School of Theology at Oxford. Although so boyish in appearance, he is a lecturer of singular power—vivid, earnest, picturesque, and yet always scholarly and strong. No lecturer from the other side was ever accorded a more hearty reception than will be given to Professor Smith by those who have the privilege of hearing him. We extend to him our greetings, and hope that in many of our seminaries and cities he may be heard, not only on the subject on which he is to speak in Baltimore, but on the various other subjects on which he is one of the master teachers of our time.

A New Deputation We have received a suggestion in the form of a letter which we gladly pass on to our readers. It is one which would doubtless apply to almost all our missionary societies operating in our own country or abroad. New life and power would come from a study of the work on the field by representative pastors and laymen who are not constantly engaged in its administration. Our correspondent mentions the American Missionary Association by way of illustration, and evidently because its debt is not yet provided for, but the need in the one case surely can be no greater than in others. There are things in the administration of our missionary enterprises which need to be revised. The blame rests, not with those who administer, but with the system under which they are compelled to work. The duty for the hour is co-operation, but we are only beginning to inquire how we may co-operate. The saving to the treasuries from that alone would be quite sufficient, we are sure, for all the work which is now in hand. The suggestion of our correspondent is as follows: "In the embarrassed condition of the missionary societies it is encouraging to know that one of them—the A. B. C. F. M.—has become free from debt. We naturally ask how this came about. Among the co-operating causes there is one which should not be overlooked—the sending of the Commission to Japan and the admirable reports it made to the public. If there had been no such Commission, it is a question whether the American Board would enjoy the confidence it does to-day. May not other missionary societies profit by this experience? Why should not the American Missionary Association, whose appeal you published last week, appoint a similar commission to make a searching examination of their work, and tell the public all about it? If such a commission should render a report like that from Japan, it would greatly help to make this a Jubilee Year indeed."

The Length of Sermons The "British Weekly" recently offered prizes for reports concerning the length of sermons. Two or three hundred responses were sent in. The longest sermons reported were by the Rev. Donald Davidson, of the Free Church in Scotland, and the Rev. E. W. Bailey, of the Methodist New Connection in England, both preaching an hour and twenty-eight minutes. The shortest sermon reported was by the Rev. G. Bicheno, a Primitive Methodist minister, whose sermon was five and three-quarters minutes long. A study of the list as published in the "Weekly" shows twelve sermons of an hour or more in length; fourteen of fifty minutes or more—and among the latter preachers we notice the names of Dr. Maclaren, the Revs. Samuel Pearson, Mark Guy Pearse, W. J. Dawson, and Principal Fairbairn. Thirty-eight preached forty minutes or longer, among whom we notice the names of the Rev. C. F. Aked, Dr. Charles A. Berry, and the Rev. J. M. Gibbon; Dr. John Watson (Ian Maclaren) is reported as having preached thirty-seven minutes, as is also the Rev. Thomas Spurgeon, the successor of his father in the London Tabernacle; while Dr. R. F. Horton preached thirty-five minutes. A study of the list shows that the short sermons were chiefly preached by those connected with the Church of England. The longer sermons were divided among the various Nonconformist denominations. The study is interesting, because it shows that the men of recognized power are those who preach from half an hour or longer, while those who preach from fifty minutes to an hour are largely those who are recognized throughout the world as really great preachers. The list seems to show this—that those who have something to say and who know how to say it, who are the real prophets, seldom need be afraid of wearying their people; but that those who are more interested in something other than the prophetic message need not be afraid of preaching too short sermons.

The Armenian Patriarch There seems to be in Turkey an impending crisis in the relations between the Porte and the Patriarchate. The Patriarchate is both the political and religious center of the Armenians in Turkey, and through it all business between the Armenians as a nation and the Porte is conducted. The Sultan has long been at enmity with the Patriarch, and there is no longer any attempt at concealment. He considers the Patriarch Matthias the most redoubtable