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MAGDALEN. By Hofmann.

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Chronicle and Comment.

Freedom in Russia. The Czar of Russia following, he says, the footsteps of his father, has issued a decree to establish religious freedom throughout his empire and to give some measure of local self-government and other concessions to village communities. The official sentences in the decree are of inordinate length and not so clear as plain common English, but the Czar has "deemed it expedient to strengthen and decree the undeviating observance of the principles of tolerance laid down by the fundamental laws of the Russian empire, which, recognizing the Orthodox Church as the ruling one, grant to all our subjects of other religions and to all foreign persuasions, freedom of creed and worship," etc. It will surprise most persons to learn that this is among the fundamental laws of the Russian empire, but the Czar announces it as if freedom of worship was nothing new in his dominions. He also says he is resolved to continue active measures for the improvement of the material position of the orthodox rural clergy, while enabling them to take a larger share in intellectual and public life. The peasants must be released from their present liability to forced labor. Communal property must be held sacred, but means must be found to render it easier for the individual to recede from the commune if he so desires. It is not yet determined whether the decree grants religious freedom to the Jews. Possibly our Doukhobor friends will now return to their native country. The decree is hailed with much enthusiasm by the country and is widely estimated to be the most important step made by the empire since the emancipation of the serfs in 1861. There seems to be no reason founded on historic fact for giving the Czar's father any credit for the movement. He was a fanatical, persecuting upholder of the orthodox or national Church.

Injunctions and Strikes.

There has been a threat of a strike on the Wabash railway system, one of the most extensive combinations of lines in the country, but so far the course of things has

been rather peculiar. President Ramsey, of the Wabash, went to court and obtained from Judge Adams an injunction commanding the officers and leaders of the Trainmen's Union, until further order of the court, "absolutely to desist and refrain from ordering, coercing, persuading, inducing or otherwise causing the employes of the Wabash railway company to strike or quit the service of the company." The officers recognized the authority of the law and employed their attorneys at once to have the injunction dissolved. This is better than denouncing the officers of the court for doing their sworn duty according to their knowledge and belief. The injunction does not compel individual employes to work for the railway, but prevents the officers of the union from suddenly precipitating a strike. The courts have come to recognize that the public and even dumb animals in transportation have rights in our common carriers; the railway companies and the union employes are not the only parties concerned in the matter. As for the points in dispute, the statements of President Ramsey and the officers of the union are so contradictory that the public cannot easily arrive at the truth. It is noticed, however, that both in Great Britain and this country the courts are bringing the principles of the old Common law into more prominence and "there is a pronounced leaning against conspiracies and combinations of employes to injure the business of employers by means of boycotting and picketing." These injunctions have been issued in various States, as New Jersey, Ohio, West Virginia, Illinois, Missouri, and so on. In Chicago, March 7, Judge Chytraus enjoined labor union strikers and pickets from interfering in any way with a building company. In New Jersey it is held to be unlawful to stop unwilling people on the street in order to argue with them. The highest English court, in the Taff Vale case, has gone one point beyond American decisions in allowing accumulated funds of unions to be levied on to make good damages caused through orders of the union's officers. There is probably a feeling in most men's minds that neither railway officials, nor employes, nor any combination of them should be

allowed to paralyze any great system of travel and transportation, such as the Pennsylvania or Wabash.

Morocco.

Late accounts or rumors make it very uncertain whether after all the Pretender to the Shareefian Parasol, "Ba Hamara, the Father of the She-Ass," has been actually vanquished. He has almost a legion of names, the original apparently having been Jellali, and he was known to some as Omar Zarzouni, of peasant origin, and smart enough to succeed as trick player or conjurer. This the Moors confound with magic, and a master of legerdemain is next to a saint, to whom with them all things are possible. He has shown himself to be a man of some ability. His tricks were taken for miracles. His humility was proclaimed by his lowly steed, and his adopted war cry is, "Down with the Nazarenes." Fanaticism has been called to his side, while the very things that have called forth commendation of the Sultan in European minds count against him with the faithful followers of Mohammed. The bicycle, the camera, the motor car, some attempts at reforms in taxation and government are looked upon with little less than horror by the average Moor. Mr. Cooper, an Englishman, was murdered by an ignorant mountaineer, who fled for refuge to the most sacred sanctuary of Morocco, the sacred pillars of the Karueen. The young Sultan had him dragged from the sanctuary, flogged around the town, and publicly executed. This is said to have created an unspeakable indignation in the minds of the fanatical populace and to have been one of the sparks that kindled the revolt. The people are described as not only a thousand years from the civilization of Europe, but decadent in every way, diseased, without national feeling, mentally, morally and physically developing along a downward line. A well-informed writer says of the country: "Human and animal, political and material, national and individual, steady, inexorable, pathetic, and unredeemed, the deterioration is writ large and clear." And yet the country is believed to be enormously rich in natural and undeveloped resources; its agricultural richness is well known. And it is only a cannon shot from Europe; the French are creeping up from the southeast with a steady policy of mild aggression; the English are charged with introducing the magic working cameras and bicycles; every over-peopled land in Europe looks with longing eyes at this belated, benighted country. We need not wonder that European statesmen wish such a tinder box in the bottom of the Atlantic.

Germany and Catholicism.

At Treves a high school was organized for girls on the basis of equality of Protestant and Roman Catholic. This school has been repeatedly attacked by the Romish priesthood, for the reason, it is believed, that it cut off the attendance somewhat at a seminary conducted by the Ursuline nuns. Feeling ran so high that notice was given from Roman Catholic pulpits forbidding parents to send their children to non-Catholic schools. Although the Bishop of Treves was absent at the time the notice had his authority and he even went so far as to refuse absolution to parents who acted in opposition to the prohibition. The matter got into the parliament, where the attention of the Prime Minister was called to it, who answered rather indefinitely that he considered the movement calculated to promote religious dissension. The affair does not tend to help Chancellor Von Buelow to repeal the laws against the Jesuits, which are still in force in Germany. The Prussian party is not strong enough to give much favor to their opponents, the Catholics. The Chancellor's proposal does not recommend a repeal of the entire law against religious associations of a political caste, but only so much as will allow individual Jesuits to live in the country without subjecting them to special police surveillance. They must not combine as a society. Even so much liberty is denounced by the Protestant press. It is asserted that to remove even so much restriction will embolden the Clerical party to demand full permission for the Jesuit communities. The government may thank itself if the demands are somewhat dictatorial, as it put itself under obligation to the Clericals in order to get the new tariff through in December last. The subject will make the next election a hot contest.

both sides of the painful problem. He thinks one cause of the chasm between the laborer and the Church is the class spirit of envy and hatred toward his employer and all those in better circumstances that the laborer cherishes, and that the root of this spirit is his unconverted heart. Another cause of the separation, Mr. Colledge says, is the laborer's feeling that he is not wanted in the Church. This feeling is largely a mistake. There are very few churches in which the laborer is not entirely welcome, and every effort is made to get him to believe this and to come to the Church. The Church has not forgotten that Jesus was a carpenter, and it has not shut the door of his house against those who toil. The unconverted heart is the main root of the whole matter. Many laboring men and labor unions show a spirit of hatred, not only against their employers and the rich, but also against non-union laborers, that is a denial of human brotherhood and the common rights of man. As long as this spirit is cherished it will ever make men unfriendly to the Church of Christ. Such men are opposed to some of the fundamental doctrines of the Church and will ever stand against it until they experience a change of heart. Yet the Church should keep its door wide open for and show a genuine welcome to all laborers, and exert itself by every rightful means to close up the chasm between the laborer and the Church. While we speak thus of the general problem, we do not forget that there are multitudes of laborers in the Church that are consistent and earnest followers of Christ.

Launch Out Into the Deep. Peter objected to this command of the Master. He knew that lake, had been brought up on its blue waters and had fished it from shore to shore. He knew its deeps and shallows and could tell just where to cast the nets. Besides, he had just been fishing in the very water where Jesus wanted him to go and knew there was nothing there. Therefore he objected to the bidding. This is our state of mind at times. There are deeps in the sea of life into which we are afraid to launch out. The deeps of sacrifice, of suffering, of sorrow and of death, we fear to launch out into these. We shiver at the thought of these dark depths and would fain fly to shallow waters. We want to have everything plain and easy with everything in sight. But we cannot have it so in this world. The universe is too vast for us to sound its bottom, and we must drop our nets into depths where we cannot see. God will not let us always hug the shore, but drives us out over the deep water of disappointment and hardship, suffering and sorrow, for there is something there that will fill our nets and make us rich. We may be still closer to Peter's mind when we think our place of work contains nothing of interest and value. We want to catch fish, but we think there are no fish in our pool. We see others pulling up their nets swollen with fish, but we say the water under our boat is empty. We think we must get bigger boats and hunt richer waters. It is easy for us to think that we would do splendidly if we were only somewhere else. If we only had more education, or more money, or a more conspicuous position, better nets and waters swarming with fish, what great hauls we would make. But nothing can be done with our pitiful means and few opportunities. There is no use launching out over our deep, for we have tried it and know there is nothing there. So strong is this feeling in us at times that we are almost ready to put our opinion up against the command of the Master and the providence of God. But Peter's after-experience should give a pause to this thought.

Communications.

PREACHING TO WIN SOULS.

By Rev. Theodore L. Cuyler, D. D.

"How far do your chief American preachers aim at the conversion of souls?" This question, once addressed to me by that master-workman, Charles H. Spurgeon, is pertinent yet; it showed his estimate of the highest purpose of the Christian ministry. Certainly, the chief aim of our Divine Master was to seek and to save the lost; his first text of which we read was the word "repent!" To win souls to Jesus Christ by the aid of the Holy Spirit was the main purpose of the apostles. Paul struck the keynote when he declared that he was determined to know nothing but Jesus Christ and him crucified; and he ceased not to warn sinners night and day with tears. The great Reformation in the sixteenth century was far more than

a protest against prevailing errors; it was a direct bringing of souls to the Lord Jesus Christ. When a spiritual famine prevailed in Great Britain, the Wesleys and Whitefields rose at once to the demand of the times; they addressed their fellow-countrymen as exposed to the "wrath to come," and their one aim was to lead souls to the only Saviour. Out of these wise labors grew the mighty Methodist Church, with its world-wide labors and philanthropies.

The question which my beloved British brother addressed to me is pertinent to every minister of the gospel: "How far do you aim mainly at the conversion of souls?" No minister is likely to succeed in what he undertakes with only half a heart; certainly he can never do what he never even attempts to do. If your whole heart is not bent on the glorious work of converting sinners by the help of God, you will never accomplish it. You may produce many able discourses, freighted with valuable thought; you may wax eloquent over social evils and plead for reformatory measures and philanthropies; you may say many good things, and true things and helpful things; but if you stop short of leading immortal souls to Christ, your ministry in one vital point will be a failure. There is much talk about "saying the masses"; but people are not saved in the mass; they must be reached and persuaded Christward one by one. Men may go to perdition by the regiment; they must be led to Jesus individually. A single soul was audience enough for the Master at the well of Sychar, and in the "inquiry-room" of Nicodemus.

Aim, therefore, to make your preaching pointed and individualizing. You are not to be a pulpit scold; but you may so present God's truth pungently and lovingly that every unconverted person in your audience may be made to feel "that means me." "Thou art the man," sent David's arrow into Nathan's heart. Pray God to help you love every sinner before you so fervently that you will tell him plainly that if he does not repent of his sins and accept and obey Jesus Christ, he will be lost forever! Don't be afraid of the word "Hell" any more than of the word "Heaven." The too common assertion that the faithful, tender and solemn presentation of the divinely revealed retributions of sin is an attempt to "scare people into religion" is utterly preposterous. As the ambassadors of Jesus Christ it is our bounden duty to "declare the whole counsel of God," and we have no right to conceal or to belittle any great revealed truth. If Noah had not been "moved with fear" of a predicted deluge, he never would have prepared an ark for saving himself and his household. It is a criminal cruelty to conceal from the transgressors of God's law and of God's love that the "wages of sin is death."

There is much truth in Mr. Gladstone's weighty declaration that "the decay of the sense of sin against God is one of the most serious portents of these days." Preach, therefore, my brother, most plainly and lovingly the guilt and the doom of sin, and pray that every impenitent soul before you may be convicted by the Holy Spirit. Nobody is likely to flee to the Lord Jesus Christ until he or she feels the need of him. Deep convictions of sin usually produce deep conversions; shallow convictions produce shallow conversions and half-way Christians. Go down to the roots. When you have made a sinner see himself, then point him to the all-sufficient Redeemer, whose atoning blood cleanseth from all sin. This was Peter's style of preaching at the time of Pentecost, when three thousand souls were convicted and converted in a single day. When you are preaching repentance you cannot be too pungent; when you are offering salvation through the Lord Jesus you cannot be too winsome and beseeching.

It goes without saying that only a part of your soul-winning is likely to be done in the pulpit. Much of it is to be done by personal interviews. Seize opportunities. Keep your doors open to all who desire to converse with you. Pastoral visitation (which is going too much out of fashion) will give you opportunity to discover those who are anxious about their soul's welfare, and you will rejoice to converse with them, and to urge an immediate acceptance of Christ. Once, when during my afternoon visits I discovered three or four inquirers, I summoned my church officers, and special services were appointed every evening. They resulted in the conversion of nearly an hundred persons. Watch for the presence of the Holy Spirit! Listen for the first drops of the blessing; and then gird yourself for the happy work. There is no ecstasy this side of heaven comparable to that of winning souls to a new life and to the life everlasting. "It is my heaven on earth," said Samuel Rutherford, "to spend my days in gathering in some souls to Christ."