



The Tramps
or
Go-Preachers

by
W.C.T.

THE TRAMPS or GO-PREACHERS

(Sometimes called Pilgrims).

Do they Walk "the Jesus Way?"

BY W.C.T.

[FROM THE *IMPARTIAL REPORTER*.]

ENNISKILLEN.

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Illustration on cover: William Irvine (left), Edward Cooney (right)

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Notes About This Reprint

This reprinting reproduces the text of the original 1910 booklet by W. C. Trimble. There are, however, some differences in presentation which you should note when referring to this edition:

- 1) The fonts do not match the original typeset used in the 1910 printing.
- 2) The pagination and chapter numbering do not match the original. This is primarily due to differences in typesetting and to making this version available for printing using a paper size more commonly available on modern computer printers.
- 3) Some minor spelling and punctuation differences may have occurred. These may be due to portions of the original being difficult to read or mistakes in retyping.

About William C. Trimble

William Copeland Trimble (born 8 November 1851, died 24 November 1941) was the editor of *The Impartial Reporter and Farmer's Journal* from 1881 to 1941. During the opening years of the Twentieth century, the newspaper hosted a series of articles about the original Two-by-Two church (more often known at the time as “The Tramps”, “Go-Preachers” or “Cooneyites”) in an ongoing series of articles. Some of the articles were admiring, but conflicts throughout Britain regarding the new movement made their way into the news.

Enniskillen (the home of *The Impartial Reporter*) was the hometown of prominent early worker Edward Cooney. The largest of the early annual Conventions of the Two-by-Twos was also held just outside the city at Crocknacrieve in Ballinamallard. Eventually, the newspaper's Letters section became a battleground for disputes between Two-by-Twos and their opponents. This resulted in some very harsh language from both sides.

Perhaps hoping to put an end to the controversy, William Trimble himself authored a series of articles examining the claims being made by the Two-by-Two workers. For this, he had rich sources, since the Two-by-Two workers regularly preached in the open

squares of the town, and Conventions were open to all comers (except for the Sunday evening services). At the end of the series, Trimble received many public and private requests for copies of the articles from throughout Ireland. Rather than reprinting the columns, he re-edited the material into a small book which was distributed to those who requested copies.

Mr. Trimble died in 1941. Aside from his newspaper work, he was a noted historian. Among his published works are *The Historical Record of the 27th Inniskilling Regiment From the Period of Its Institution as a Volunteer Corps Till the Present Time; With an Appendix roll of Colonels, Roll of Present Officers, Etc., Etc.* (1876), the massive three-volume *The History of Enniskillen with Reference to Some Manors in Co. Fermanagh and Other Local Subjects* (1919), *Lyrics of Lough Erne* (date unknown), and *The Inner History of Enniskillen during the Revolution* (1927). He was also lectured worldwide and was a figure in Irish politics during the lead-up to independence. Trimble had a particular concern for the plight of Ireland's poor farmers—to such an extent that he alienated the rich landlords and became known as “The Farmer's Friend”. It has been noted that Oscar Wilde and Samuel Becket, who spent their formative years in Enniskillen, would have been influenced by his style of writing.

The Impartial Reporter is Ireland's third-oldest surviving newspaper, and the world's oldest newspaper continually operated by a single family. Although sold in 2006 to a newspaper holding company, the family continues to manage the paper.

FOREWORDS.

A Convention of what are known as Tramp Preachers or Go-Preachers (as they name themselves), sometimes described as Pilgrims, was held in the month of July last, at Crocknacrieve, near Ballinamallard, in the County Fermanagh. If they had contented themselves as Evangelists with persuading their hearers to live a better life, good wishes might have been extended to their operations.

The main feature of their public addresses, however, was, denouncing the Christian ministry, and assertions that all those who have been recognised as great, good and holy men, in the past and in the present, have been consigned to everlasting perdition because they had believed in a Christian ministry set apart for the work and had worshiped in sacred buildings generally described as churches. The Popes of Rome and Archbishops of Canterbury, John Knox and Calvin, Wesley and Whitfield, Spurgeon and Moody – all of them and of their class, people were told, had gone to eternal torment!! People listened to this clap-trap of the religious mountebank, and there were some people who accepted it as true because of the fervour of the speaker.

It happened on one occasion that I overheard a lady speak concerning one of the Tramp Preachers, of his manifest earnestness and sincerity, of the impression he had made, and of his surprising knowledge of the Bible, as if he knew more of its teaching than other people. When I recognised that a lady of her intelligence had been so impressed, I did not wonder that rural districts had contributed so many unthinking converts to the Preachers; and it occurred to me that the time had arrived for someone to discuss the points raised at the Convention in plain language, which the simplest could understand.

I, therefore, began a series of articles in the *Impartial Reporter* on the Tramp Preachers, and pursued the inquiry – Did they, in their doctrines and practices, follow what they called “the Jesus way?” These articles were necessarily brief, being written for a newspaper, from which I had sometimes to delete sentences and paragraphs, so as not to encroach too much on the space. They were written during the distractions of a busy life – frequently without the sequence of thought so necessary for successful production – and, therefore, were

not all I would have wished them to have been.

Yet a number of friends have been kind enough to consider that these articles have been helpful not only as information to many who have been influenced by the Tramp Preachers, but to “deepen the stakes” of our own people in what they had learned and believed. Finally, the suggestion was made that these articles be collated and preserved for use in pamphlet form; and thus they have taken the present shape for convenient circulation.

I have striven to avoid personalities, and all personal contention, in making plain to those who may care to read these pages what is the teaching of God's Word on the subjects discussed.

I quote largely from the “Twentieth Century Version” of the New Testament, because it makes plainer some of the points referred to than our Authorized translation; though for all practical purposes one is as good as the other.

W. COPELAND TRIMBLE.

Impartial Reporter office,
Enniskillen, December, 1909.

THE TRAMP PREACHERS.

Chapter I.

STARTING POINT.

The Tramp Preachers have said so much about what they call “the Jesus way,” which they say they follow, and which they assert all others do not, that it may be of some interest to examine the point, to see what amount of truth (if any) be in it. In doing so I would wish to avoid personalities and dogmatism, to which they are so much given, and speak not as a theologian, but as a man in the street, and talk after the manner of the modern newspaper man instead of that of the sermonizer.

Here are a number of people, evidently sincere, like others, who boldly aver that they and no others follow “the way” or manner of the Lord Jesus; and that all who either are clergy or are supporters of the clergy are going to hell. This latter assertion we may not consider – it is so transparently absurd and preposterous for anyone outside of a lunatic asylum to give attention to as a reasonable proposition; but it leads up to our starting point.

“THE JESUS WAY.”

How shall we know “the Jesus way?” We shall find it (1) in the addresses of our Lord; and in His manner of Life; and (2) in the interpretation of it by those whose authority and example are unquestioned, being accepted by all parties as an authorized exponent.

We find the first definition of the Jesus way in the most remarkable human production since the foundation of the world up till that time – the first fully reported speech of Jesus of Nazareth, which revealed a new code of ethics, such as Socrates or Plato had never dreamt of and which the poetic mind of David had never conceived an idea of in his loveliest song flights.

Jesus had as a teacher, after the manner of the time, obtained some disciples – only four at this time, and had been teaching in what we now hear denounced as “clergy houses.” The synagogue saw Him regularly, and a that portion of the Jewish interlude when it was

permitted of laymen to inquire and speak of things of God, the young man Jesus read the law (the Pentateuch) and the Prophets (the prophetic Books) and “preached the gospel of the Kingdom.”

And great multitudes followed Him, so that there was no synagogue or other “clergy house” able to contain them; and He healed their sick, relieved those who were in torment, and blessed those who came to Him. The blue sea of Galilee was at hand – just about the width of the broadest part of Lough Erne. He could not speak there. So the new Teacher went up to a mountain.

Overlooking the lake of Gallilee, just as Pool-a-phouca overlooks Lower Lough Erne, and between Gallilee and Nazareth, is mount Hattin; and here our Lord withdrew from the busy world to teach His disciples, for His address is primarily addressed to them.

Then Peter and Andrew, and James and John (the sons of Zebedee), we may presume, sat, after the manner of the time, near His feet, while He saw the multitude which had come to hear the Messiah, and He spake unto them, beginning with what are called the Beatitudes.

“JUDGE NOT.”

In that marvellous sermon, we find at the beginning of the 7th Chapter of Matthew’s Gospel these words – putting them into our own every day language:

“Do not judge, that you may not be judged.”

With His great knowledge of human nature, Jesus. knew one weakness of the Jews – fault-finding, and commenting on the faults of other people, without recognising their own. “Why look at the beam (or mote) in another person’s eye when all the time there is one in your own?” And this trait of the Jewish character is as familiar to us Christians to-day as Paul found it to be a weakness to the spread of the gospel when he warned the Romans – (12th chap.) –

Let us not therefore judge one another anymore.

This weakness of the Jews was rebuked by our Lord, and he warned them – (using our every day mode of speech) –

*For just as you judge others you will yourselves be judged,
and the measure that you extend to others will be given to
you. (Matt. V, and 2.)*

Now one of the prominent features of the Tramp Preachers is that they wholly disregard this teaching of our Lord and of Paul. They pay no heed to it whatever – for the main portion of the addresses at Crocknacrieve, as well as those delivered in our streets and halls, have been punctuated with judging others – not merely those whom they presume to know – (and it is a great presumption) – but to judge the men of past time; and, with the assurance of the fool and the ignorance of the heathen, they have the audacity to declare that they know and understand the decrees of the Almighty, and all those people so described by them are in hell or going to hell.

I shall not delay here to comment upon either the consummate ignorance and folly of any human atom daring to fathom the decrees of the Almighty, to comprehend His amazing forbearance and wonderful mercy, or the coarse banality of the person who condemns his fellow-creature and rolling the word “hell” under his tongue as if he knew all about it. I am aware that some Mr. Brazen Assurance will tell me that “it is not he who says it – it is God that says it,” but God never said anything of the sort which these men rave about. Where did he ever say that Charles Haddon Spurgeon – perhaps the greatest preacher and teacher of his day – would go to hell? Or John Wesley? Or Moody? These silly men show their own vacuity when they take a text, twist it to suit themselves, and then argue, therefore – “therefore” it must,” &c, Ay, “must,” indeed! I read the story of one so low and bad as a dying thief, a criminal, and crucified on the cross – past baptism, past repentance, with the torture of the nails driving him mad, but not too late for Christ to say to him –

This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise.

That “very day!” No purgatory, no delay, no immersion, that “day.” The Tramp Preachers would have damned that poor creature – like all of the rest of us – to the nethermost hell, for they would argue, “God said it,” but this is only one instance of the daring presumption of these poor creatures to attempt to fathom God’s providence and mercy.

APPLY THEIR OWN FOOT-RULE.

Our Lord tells us, then, that when others do judge us – although He warned them not – that they will be measured by the same

standard. Seeing, then, that the Tramps will not walk the Jesus way, and will insist on judging, let us put their own foot-rule to them and inquire if they do walk the Jesus way?

Look at those three chapters of the Sermon on the mount – long chapters containing 111 verses, which would run to two columns of the *Impartial Reporter*. One is tempted to delay, and dwell on the new gospel, and some of the beautiful passages, like –

*Consider the lilies of the field,
They toil not, neither do they spin;
And yet I say unto you
That even Solomon in all his glory
Was not arrayed like one of these.*

How one would like to dwell on the consummate beauty of this thought! But we must pass on. Take those three chapters as a model sermon, and where is there one word of reviling in it from beginning to end?

Where is the mimicking of parsons and preachers?

Where are the phrases of priests in the Temple repeated with a sneer to excite laughter, like “As it was in the beginning, is now,” &c.?

Where is the description of the priests as “So-much-a-week men?”

Where is the condemnation of their fellows as hypocrites? Where is there a relation of stories of one’s own family, violating the sanctity of the home hearth, to illustrate arguments and to hold up to censure? Where did Jesus refer to his parents as sunk in sin, or to Rabbis being paid for sending them to hell? Or trot-out samples of his brothers or sisters for the multitude to comment upon?

Where is there ridicule?

Take all the speeches of these Tramps and put them beside the speech of the Great Exemplar, and O – how vast, how infinite the chasm! – as the east is from the west; one feels a sense of disgust and turns away in sorrow.

Yet they tell us that theirs is “the Jesus way!” It is a libel on the Lord Jesus, Apart from the accurate report of His speech, which is there as a model, could any one conceive Him who spake, as never man spake, sneering at those who followed Him, mimicking their tones and gestures, ridiculing their words, causing the multitude who hung upon His words to laugh and grin in the holding up of

those who professed openly to be His followers, to odium and reproach?

We have four separate accounts of the life of Jesus. We see him in all moods, as Master and teacher, as family friend and as son to parent, participating in the joy of the wedding feast as well as in the sorrow of the death chamber, and where is there even one single instance of the shocking methods of these people who use His holy Name as the warrant, forsooth, for their jeers and sneers and laughter? Not one.

CHAPTER II.

“HYPOCRITES.”

It may be replied to me, as a justification for the hard words of the Tramp Preachers, that Jesus Christ referred more than once to “hypocrites.” He did. But He was competent to say who was a hypocrite and who was not: He knew: He was the authority: He could read the heart. Yet these poor mortals of Crocknacrieve, without any special gifts, claim to be able to say who is and who is not a true disciple. I heard one of them on one occasion, with the same presumption which characterizes other pretensions, allege that power was given to them to discriminate between who was and who was not genuine. They actually claim to possess part of the Divine essence.

“Who,” asked Paul, when rebuking the early Roman Christians for judging their neighbours:—

Who art thou that judgest the servant of another! To his own lord (or master) he standeth or falleth.

To God alone minister and laymen stand or fall, and no one who possesses ordinary intelligence and ordinary reason would arrogate to himself the pretension of right to describe his fellow-men who were and are serving their God according to a pure heart, and in obedience to what they believe to be His will, as “hypocrites.”

No one who differs from the Tramps that I know of has ever ascribed hypocrisy to them. They, at least, receive credit for sincerity. Thereby hangs a tale. Last year the *Impartial Reporter* of August 20, speaking on the subject, said—

It is folly to ignore that this new movement did obtain an impulse from the intense earnestness and burning zeal of Mr. _____, who not only preached Christian communism but practised it. He inherited money, and he divided it with others. So also have many other good Christians. He would give his coat to another man poorer than himself;—as have others, as we have pointed out, who never advertised it. But the very fact of there being a man addressing the multitude who had been an embodiment of self-sacrifice caught their fancy, and they followed And the

proof of the “Jesus way” which we had exemplified at Crocknacrieve was allowing those few words to rankle in the mind for a whole year, and then an outburst, that the speaker “did not want any whitewash from the *Impartial Reporter*.” No; what he wanted, apparently, was not some words prompted by a kindly feeling but the contrary, so that he might, pose as a martyr, or one “reviled.”

What example have we in the life of our Lord of allowing a thing to rankle in the breast for a whole year, and then to reproach the author of the saying because it was friendly? Is that “the Jesus way?”

But as to the use of the word “hypocrite,” to whom did our Lord address it? Not to His followers, not to those who professed His name, but to His opponents! And I would like to see the authority for one professing Christian to turn round and revile another equally good with a charge of hypocrisy! Yet we are told this is “the Jesus way!”

The Tramps do admit, however, that there are “hypocrites” among themselves, according to their speeches at Crocknacrieve, But who is right in all those matters? They have no standard or interpretation of Scripture, like the Churches. With the 29 Articles or Westminster Confession of Faith a man knows where he is: with the Tramps no one knows definitely what they believe. Mr. Wm. Irvine is the standard. Even Mr. Edward Cooney has been declared not to be sound. I am now stating what several of the Tramps know to be fact, that Mr William Irvine rebuked Mr. Cooney several times for “the balderdash” – (those were the words) – which Mr. Cooney had uttered during some public addresses. Now, since Mr. Edward Cooney, one leader, be wrong, – and he the very soul of the movement – who is right? Apparently, Mr. Irvine only. He is the only one who can interpret the will of God correctly! Is not the whole thing absurd?)

Before I part from the use of the word “hypocrite,” I would like to quote a few sentences from an authority – the apostle Matthew – about religion and hypocrisy: –

*When you pray, you are not to behave as hypocrites do.
They like to pray in the synagogues and in the corners
of the streets, that they may be seen by men. There
I tell you, is their reward. But, when one of*

*you pray, let him go into his own room, shut the door,
and pray to his Father, who dwells in secret, and his
Father, who seeth what is secret will recompense him.*
(Twentieth Century Testament version, Matt. V, 29.)

May I ask my readers, who are they who have for the last few years prayed long and loudly at the corners of our streets, in our Diamonds, protested that they and they only are right, and proclaimed their own saintliness and sanctification? Who have declared their own righteousness in public so often that to a sensitive mind it must have become nauseous, who have exalted themselves to heaven and sent their neighbours to hell!

Is this “the Jesus way?”

“Thank God” said the Pharisee in his self-righteousness, “I am not as this publican.” No, he was not, indeed. I heard one man who professed great sanctity at the Diamond of Enniskillen, revile his own family; and another fellow, copying his leader’s manner, professed how close he was to God, and how utterly lost was some one to whom he referred by innuendo, that he could not pray with a child which he afterwards lost by death. This person thus referred to in such lying terms; sent the sanctified one warning that if ever he dared to again refer to his sorrow in public in that fashion, that he would thrash the sanctified one within an inch of his life, and that he kept the whip ready. And he did: but there was no occasion for its use. The saint became dumb on that subject until he finally left the town without paying 20 shillings in the £11 Someone may ask, Was that charity on the part of him who threatened? The charity consisted in giving the liar time to repent and not repeat his sin. The burst of passion may be excused under the circumstances.

“REVEREND.”

The Tramp Preachers condemn the application of the title of “Reverend” to the ministry. It is a small matter. Yet when they disapprove of it, and of infant baptism, they do not join the Baptist church which holds their own views on these points, but they create further division.

Let us examine this matter of the designation of Reverend. Jesus was described as “Rabbi,” a teacher, or master. Therefore, that title would be warranted by Scripture. That would be “the Jesus way.”

In the middle ages a minister was addressed as “Master,” a word derived, like our word “Mister,” from the Latin magister. As the title was addressed to several individuals and not confined to one class, the need arose for some word to designate those who were given to ministering in sacred things and the word “clerk” (from the Latin clericus, and the Greek kleros) came into use. It was a matter of evolution. The plural form of the word “clergy” as applied to a class came from the French word clergie. The Greek word kleros (I have not Greek type and must use the Roman letters) may indicate the origin of “clergy.” Kleros signifies a “lot,” and was used probably because that after the Christ’s death some of the apostles were elected by lot.

Whether the word “Reverend” was used to conform to Paul’s advice to the Corinthians (1, last chap., 16th verse) to “show deference” to such men [fellow-labourers and workers in the cause of Christ] I cannot tell, and I have not time to pursue the inquiry; but I am satisfied that these terms were used to add dignity to the office of those who were “set apart” to tell God’s good News, because of the nature of the gospel itself, and to glorify it.

The title of “Reverend” was not conferred on clergy in reply to any demand of theirs for such a designation, but was the outcome of the desire of Christian people for a title to be used towards those who were consecrated to God’s work. It was not demanded by the clergy, as the Tramp Preachers assert, but was accorded to the clergy or ministry as a term of courtesy, and has now become current as one of the ordinary designations of human society, as a designation necessary by society to mark those who, minister in spiritual things; just in the same way as we use the word “Professor” or “Judge” to particularize those who minister in other respects. And instead of disparaging the Christian ministry, our duty is pointed out by Paul in the 16th verse of the last chapter of his first letter to the Church in Corinth:—

We beg you, brothers, to value those who toil among you, and are your leaders in the Lord’s service, and give you counsel. Hold them in the very greatest esteem and affection for the sake of their work.

It was to carry out this injunction that a term was found to respectfully designate the leaders in the Lord’s service; and it was accorded to the clergy, not designated by them. I admit, however,

there is no scriptural authority for its use; and its use or abnegation may be a matter of taste. The rector of Killeevan in this Diocese when issuing notices lately, did not employ "Rev." as a title before his own name, nor the word "clerk" after it, but signed himself simply as "John O'Connor, Sec. Board of Missions." That method would satisfy even the Tramp Preachers. Some ministers, such as Baptists and Congregationalists, do not use the term "Reverend" at all: its use or disuse does not at all affect their ministerial usefulness. The term is merely one of courtesy, which may be offered or ignored according to the individual taste.

One thing seems to me certain—that the man who has to demand it as a right has but poor claim to it, for if he be what he ought to be, the courtesy will be freely extended. All men delight to honour a godly minister, The clergyman who has to lay claim to any designation by reason of his cloth immediately forfeits it; for if he deserve it he will receive it. To no one is a compliment so readily tendered as to a Christian minister.

But for a clergyman to deserve the title of "Reverend" he must be a minister. To minister (from the Latin ministro) is to serve, and he who serves God and serves his parish, his congregation, or the sphere in which he works, will obtain the recognition which his work deserves.

If a minister think of his social position, or the status of his office in a church, and trouble himself about precedence in diocese or state, or about the social standing of those whom he would admit to his home, he clearly unfits himself for the reverence due to a minister of Christ, and is not entitled to the designation, If he be lazy in the performance of his duties, or incompetent, or unfit, he by his own acts disentitles himself to the designation which courtesy willingly yields to a minister of God.

CHAPTER III.

THE BIBLE.

While the Tramps profess to confine themselves to Scriptural authority for all their ideas, (which we will develop later) they condemn to hell the very men to whom they are indebted for their Bible. For to whom do they owe their Bible but to the clergy? Not speaking of the manuscripts preserved and copied by the clergy, the very Bible which the Tramps now use was translated from the original tongues for the most part by clergy, and it is known as the Bishops' Bible, to distinguish it from other editions such as those of John Tyndale, Myles Coverdale, the Breeches Bible, &c. The very book on which the Tramps place their all, according to their own story, came to them through a polluted source, for it came from the copyists and translators down through the "greasy, dirty clergy," as they call them. And how can the Tramps accept as true a book preserved by and translated by and produced by "damned men," damned for their sin, and children of the devil, &c? Is it not absurd? How could a pure stream come through a polluted channel?

Indeed, I may ask, what Scriptural warrant have Tramps for reading a gilt-edged, Persian-leather-bound Bible at all? Our Lord never used one. He only read the Law and the Prophets. How is it that we do not hear a Tramp speak in this fashion?—

Brethren, we must be consistent. You must walk the Jesus way: I see you have what you call Bibles. Jesus never used a Bible: He did not know what a Bible was. Yet you take a thing printed by sinful men, going to hell, on paper made by men going to hell, bound in fine leather by men going to hell — and actually gilt! — gilt with the gold we all despise! — gaudy with gold on the outside,— while Jesus had none. This was not the Jesus way.

Now I could understand all that, if a Tramp said it. But they neither dress like Jesus, speak like Him, nor read the Law and the Prophets like Him, nor teach like Him; and yet we hear so much of the "Jesus way!" In plain speech, those who were not ashamed nor afraid to charge men like John Knox and John Wesley with "inventing a new church," — [I feel ashamed to have to quote it] — just take what suits themselves out of Holy Writ to buttress up their own position, without any regard to its meaning, its context, the period,

the climate, or the surrounding circumstances – and the stranger thing still is, that there are any people found so very simple minded as to give any credence to their story.

THE LORD'S EXAMPLE.

If we are to judge of the Tramps by their public utterances the sole, or at least main, object of their crusade is, not to preach the gospel of life and hope to fallen man, but to discredit the clergy and close the “clergy-houses” or churches.

What example have we of the Lord condemning the clergy as a class? He went to the “clergy-house” day after day Himself. He fulfilled the law of Moses, which went so far as to set apart sons of Levi for the purpose of administration in the Temple. In accordance with that law Jesus must have brought His offerings and given His tenth; and so far from opposing the “clergy-house” He spoke in it! That was “the Jesus way.”

Nay, more! The first recorded act of our Lord, after He had attained his Jewish majority, was to go to the clergy of that day, to the Rabbis, the recognised exponents of the Law and Prophets. The first awakening of the Great Teacher to his Divine mission was not in the “houses of the saints,” but in God’s house, in the Temple; and it was there, in that clergy-house, built and re-built by God’s own authority, that Jesus was found reasoning with the Rabbis, and “speaking as one with authority” when His anxious mother found Him. Then perhaps she realised for the first time that her Son’s vocation had come.

“Do you not know or understand [Wist ye not] that I must be about my Father’s business?” was His reply to her question and intimation of anxiety of His parents on His behalf. But, mark! – He obeyed. “He submitted Himself to their control.” He obeyed.

This was the Jesus way. The teaching of the Tramps is to leave father and mother without adequate cause, to break up the home, and forsake them. Let us deal now with “the clergy” and “clergy-houses.”

THE CLERGY.

Perhaps on no point are the Tramps more insistent than that there are no clergy mentioned by the Lord Jesus Christ; and one

speaker at Crocknacrieve said that he had never met any one who could show him that they were wrong in this contention from the Bible.

He might as well have said that they did not find a railway train mentioned in the Bible, nor the telegraph, and, therefore, that they should not employ either. For their time had not arrived.

How could there be Christian teachers, preachers, or clergy mentioned in the Gospels? Jesus Christ had three things to accomplish when He arrived at man's estate. He had (1) to teach the principles of His kingdom, (2) to die for the redemption of humanity, and (3) to rise again. There could not be teachers or preachers – Christian Rabbis or expounders of the new law of Jesus Christ – until He himself had expounded it, had died, and had ascended to the Father; and, therefore, we cannot find any mention of them in the Gospels, and beyond the command to go forth and preach, the thing was impossible. Men could not preach without having the new laws of the new Kingdom before them; and our Lord's work was not accomplished until He had risen.

When we come, however, to the after-time, we find the early days of Christian society depicted, the choice of Matthias to fill the vacancy in the Apostles, we learn of the seventy; and we find that gifts were given to them of different kinds – some as prophets, some as evangelists, pastors, and teachers, to fit His people for the work of the ministry, for the building up of the body of Christ.

Then Paul, whose words I have just quoted, in his first pastoral letter to Timothy (3rd chap., Twentieth Century version), sets out the qualification for “a man who aspires to be a Presiding officer in the church.” He also prescribes for the “Assistant officers.” Who and what are these officers but those whom we to-day describe by the term “clergy?” In the 4th chapter and 4th verse Paul refers to the time when “the hands of the officers of the church were laid on your head.” And in the 5th chapter Paul points out that –

These officers of the church who fill their office well should be held deserving of especial consideration [double honour, Authorized version], particularly those whose work lies in preaching and teaching.

Mark the words “double honour!”

And so considerate was Paul of those teachers [or clergy, as we call, them, to employ a word to distinguish the class] that he reminds

the early Christians that “the worker is worth his wages” or, the labourer is worthy of his hire; and so particular is he to guard against slanders being leveled at those officers of the church that he says –

Do not receive a charge against an officer of the Church unless it is supported by two or three witnesses.

Paul rams home those commands with the warning that any one who teaches otherwise is puffed up with conceit, not really knowing anything, having a morbid craving for discussions and arguments. How aptly Paul describes some people whom we know who met at Crocknacrieve! And the final paragraph contains a warning to avoid those who, while asserting their proficiency in it [theology], have yet, as regards the Faith, gone altogether astray.

So if, as the Tramps complain that the clergy are “honoured, praised, and esteemed,” on account of their calling, because the commands of God are obeyed, (and Paul spoke in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ,) they receive that respect because of their calling and because that it is “the Jesus way.”

In the New Testament we have authority, abundantly, for the setting apart, of teachers or pastors, and for paying their respect. No one can presume to deny that. But if a Tramp say – “You cannot find the particular word ‘clergy’ in the Bible,” I reply – “You cannot find the word ‘Tramp,’ or the other description, ‘Go-Preacher,’ there either: but you do find the authority for extending double honour to those whose work lies in preaching and teaching.”

The Tramps themselves render respect to their teachers. It would be idle for them to deny it – if they were so inclined. Have not their pastors or teachers been invited as guests to the best houses in their community? Are they not received by their own people with every consideration? If they do get buffetings outside their own circle, they at least receive “special consideration” from their own brethren. Crocknacrieve is not an ordinary farm house; nor are some of the other houses of entertainment at home and far off of a rude and rough kind. The labourer is entitled to his reward, and the teachers deserves consideration, as well as courtesy.

CHAPTER IV

“CLERGY HOUSES.”

As to “clergy houses” or church buildings not being warranted by Scripture, we may pass over the fact of the Temple and the usual synagogue having been used by our Lord, as we would be told that they belonged to the Jewish or Old Dispensation, and come to closer quarters.

It is quite true our Lord did not preach in a church, apart from His discussions in the Temple, as it was not possible for a church to be provided to worship a Saviour non-existent. For He was living, and had not then, as he did subsequently by His death, become a Saviour. When great multitudes followed Jesus, He spoke by the sea-shore, as the Bishop of Manchester does to-day (he follows “the Jesus way,”) or on the mountain side, for there was no need in that climate for shelter, and no house sufficiently capacious in all Gallilee to contain the multitudes, if there had been a storm. Nor would Christian churches have been permitted by the State in honour of One whom it condemned and crucified. Churches were a natural growth: just as men emerged from cave dwellings and built houses of wattles, and then constructed larger houses of stone to contain more people, so did the meetings of Christians, after our Lord’s death, increase in size, so that small rooms could not contain them; and as the prohibition against services was removed, the demand for a large central place of meeting created the supply.

Since people must be taught, there must be a place for teaching. Fifty or 100 young Christians could be better taught by one person at one time, when teachers were few, than scattered about private houses, where rooms are adapted for a few, not for many. Centralism in a church or meeting place secured a degree of health by ventilation, as well as uniformity of teaching and doctrine; and if questions were asked by young converts, the answers instructed all at the same time. There could not possibly be any mention of a Christian church building during the time of Jesus Christ, any more than the mention of a New Testament; for the time had not arrived for it. There was neither Saviour nor Mediator while our Lord lived: just as there could be no testament, [no wills,] without the death of the testator.

NO SUNDAY SCHOOL.

The same absurd reasoning of the Tramps that nothing could be adopted unless it were mentioned in the Bible was urged against a Sunday school in Enniskillen for children. When it was started the recognised leader of the schism, Mr. Wm. Irwin, sent word that it must be stopped, that there was no Scriptural authority for it. No: no more than for his yapped-edged Bible; no more than for his use of a railway, or a bicycle. None of these things are mentioned in the Bible, Our Lord read the Law and the Prophets from scrolls. Why does not Mr. Irwin, on the same reasoning, read his Bible from scrolls and parchments? One reason is that he could not read Hebrew or Greek, even if he had the scrolls.

Our Lord observed the seventh day of the week as the Sabbath. Mr. Irwin does not follow “the Jesus way” in this respect either: he observes the first. Nor does he go barefoot or wear sandals.

I would like to know the “Jesus way” or authority for separating the sexes in public assembly? Is it to show, after the Eastern fashion, the inferiority of women? Or is it, in imitation of the division of the sexes in the “clergy-house” of our Lord’s day? I frankly confess my ignorance.

In the same way I confess my ignorance of the reason why married women of the Tramps should be asked to lay aside their wedding ring? All nations, savage or civilized, have some method of indicating the married state. With some it is an arrangement of the hair on the head; with others a garment of dress; with others the ring. Civilized womanhood adopted the ring as the emblem of the married state. It is at once a protection against improper advances and gives a dignity to matronhood.

I am fully satisfied that the mother of Jesus wore her dress – (somewhat like a nun’s) – after the manner of the married women of Gallilee, with the usual pieces of silver arranged over the forehead, quite different from the time when, according to tradition, she had served the Lord in the Temple as a virgin. But the Tramps tell their women to put aside the honourable circle of marriage, and if that lead to happiness in the home I will be surprised to learn it. One case was pointed out to me lately of a “saint” of this kind who had ceased speaking to her husband, so great is her sanctity; and I know another case of where children refuse to kneel at the family altar with their parents in prayer.

CHAPTER V.

PAYMENT OF TEACHERS.

At the outset of these articles I pointed out that the second method of ascertaining “the Jesus way” was by receiving the testimony of an admitted authority. Paul had not been one of the Lord’s disciples, but he declared in his first letter to the Romans that it was through Jesus Christ that he “received grace and apostleship;” and that statement is accepted as true and conclusive by the whole Christian church.

Now Paul was not an ignoramus, but an educated convert. He may have been “insignificant” in his bodily appearance, but he certainly was powerful in logic, and rose in his rhetoric at times to great heights of eloquence. Eloquence has a great charm for me, and, therefore, I stray from my subject to quote one of his sublime passages, as it lies before me. Although Paul said that “he was no trained orator” (2nd Cor. 11 chap. and 6th verse) yet he gave way at times to glorious bursts such as this (Rom. VII., 35–39 Revised edition):—

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or anguish or persecution, or famine, nakedness, or peril, or sword! Even as it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long:

We were accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

That was a peroration worthy of a great orator! That Paul knew “The Jesus way,” not only from what some disciples of the Lord may have told him, but from direct inspiration, will be at once admitted. Let us then test the Tramp Preachers by Paul.

The Tramp Preachers denounce teachers or clergy, among other causes, because they are paid, Why not? In the 9th chapter of his first letter to the church at Corinth Paul asks what soldier serves in the army at his own cost? and (11th verse)

If we sowed unto you spiritual things, is it a great matter if we shall reap your carnal things?

Then he points out that while some of the pastors have exercised that “right,” that he had refrained from exercising it, for which he subsequently blamed himself; and he emphasized the point that “they which minister about sacred things eat of the things of the temple, and they which wait upon the altar have their portion with the altar.”

Could anything be plainer? The priests of the Temple got their tenth, and I am certain that our Lord, who observed the law of Moses scrupulously, did not go empty-handed to the Temple. And Paul quotes the Lord Himself (14th verse) in saying that – (Twentieth Century version)

Even so did the Lord ordain that they which proclaim the gospel should live by the gospel.

Although Paul did not himself receive a salary or accept many offerings, for he worked for his own support, and did it of his own will, in the 18th verse he again affirmed his full right to “charge” or support.

This matter of payment is only one of degree. Some teachers are paid (like the clergy of the church of Rome) by offerings, without any fixed salary. This is strictly scriptural. Other teachers are paid by a variable salary within certain limits; and others by a definite salary, as the best way of settling the matter for pastors and people; and others have additional offerings also. But all givings are voluntary. The Tramps are rewarded with offerings, and do not receive a salary.

The large salaries of some English bishops open up such a big question that I need not deal with it here. These bishops are fettered by the state with large houses, sometimes demanding the assistance of private means, and it would need extra strong men to close the establishments and live in a quiet manner, like their Scotch and Irish brethren, as they ought to do. But these bishops work, seldom having a day free from a public function. The incomes of our local Clogher bishops, Protestant and Roman Catholic, are only in keeping with their continual travelling and hotel expenses, correspondence, and other accounts, and charities. I, of course, in no sense condone exactions by clergy or unreasonable demands for subscriptions.

But let there be no mistake on one point. The Tramp Preachers receive their support for preaching to their people. Their earthly

reward may be small, but it is not smaller than that received by some Orders of the Roman Church, nor nearly as small. There are also others, not clergy, who take vows of poverty in that church. A Christian Brother must exist on £20 a year. No Tramp could surpass that figure for a year's clothing and maintenance. How such a man lives comfortably I do not know, but I do know that I never yet saw a Christian Brother anything but thin and ascetic-looking. How could he be otherwise, to clothe, keep, and feed himself on 7s 8d a week!!

The Tramps have no monopoly of poverty or dividing their goods. I know clergy of the Church of England who give away so freely that it is almost a disease with them. I know a bishop who gives away almost all his salary. I know Church of Ireland ministers who live on extremely small incomes, much less than an English artisan would receive; and I know Methodist ministers who out of wretchedly small incomes have contributed too generously to the Thanksgiving Fund, to help forward a good cause. A minister should not be a beggar, except in the eyes of a Tramp. He must not only be kept by the gospel that he preaches but he must read (and reading means books and magazines), or be an ignorant man, out-of-touch with current thought, with the doubts and difficulties, and discoveries of the day, with the perplexities of mankind, and the helps of humanity, and therefore be unequal to his position as a teacher.

I note that while the Tramp Preacher sneers at the £3-a-week preachers and the "dirty, greasy clergy," as they are described by those who are really dirty in appearance, the self-same £3-a-week preacher and the junior £1-a-week preacher have few shillings to spend on moving about or anything else. The clerical profession is proverbially a poor one—perhaps the worst remunerated of all; and only few can envy an educated man being doomed to live on small remuneration in a rural spot, — away from literary companionship or the opportunity indulging in Biblical or other criticism, with the view of improving himself, with other educated men of similar tastes.

The Tramp Preacher, however, who boasts of his poverty has always sufficient funds to go to Keswick or Scotland, to the South of Ireland or Belfast; to Suffolk, the United States, and Canada, or South Africa. In fact he has only to say that the Spirit leads him somewhere and the funds are available to send him thither; while the

poor parson or preacher may not have means enough to send his family to the sea-side for a few weeks in the summer.

Poverty, like riches, is a matter of degree; and to all outside appearance, and notwithstanding all their professions, there is no real poverty among the Tramps. They see to it that “the labourer is worthy of his hire.” They get their clothing, and sustenance, as do the clergy, only in a different way; and they are able to do what the clergy are not able to do, and are not permitted to do, to fly about from place to place, without any anxiety as to ways and means. The clergy get the money to provide the food and clothing; the Tramps expect and accept the food and clothing; and the Tramp, because he does not get receive what the other receives in the other’s way, snarls and says there is no warrant for a paid clergy, while there is warrant in abundance. And if there never were Bible warrant, the necessities of the case would compel the provision of funds. Funds must be found to advance the gospel, and they are found by the Tramps also.

Surely we are not all fools. These men are themselves paid or rewarded, as well as the clergy. As I have shown, the difference is only one of degree. And while it is possible that there are cases where the minister may receive more than his deserts, it is pretty certain that some of the Tramps receive more than their deserts also, for they are often ignorant and nearly illiterate, and not worth salary. In both cases, however, the donors give voluntarily; whether a man subscribe to a church fund, or entertain a Tramp and puts his donation in a bag, the donations are given by the free will of the donors; and the difference is only one of degree-and, of order and organization.

The Tramp idea, apparently, is that (for example) a man may be worth £5 a week as a commercial traveller, but when he travels for God he is to be worth nothing – that God will not reward His servants, and that the world or the Devil may. That was not “the Jesus way.” His law was that the labourer should be worthy of his hire.

What bunkum, too, a lot of the talk about suffering and privation! The Tramps have no monopoly of suffering. Into how many circles it permeates; into how many homes it enters; and Tramps make a lot of suffering for themselves by their own fads and mania. I was amused reading some of the statements at Crocknacrieve about class differences in churches. We do know, unhappily that there is too much of class distinction; and I may go

farther – I believe too many clergy pass it by without rebuke. For myself, I cannot tolerate it. “God does not recognise human distinctions.” But the man who lives and dines at Crocknacrieve house, in the high place of his community, while the rank and file partake of food on the grass, should not speak on such a subject. There are and there will be little social distinctions – the fewer the better. And that minister is most like his Master who regards all his people as brethren, and who sets his face rigorously against caste and class. I do admit that there is too much of this weakness in the Christian church, and that, too, notwithstanding the strong admonition in the 2nd chapter of James. As this James was a brother of Jesus Christ, it is well to quote the passage from such an authority:—

My brothers, are you really trying to combine faith in Jesus Christ our glorified Lord, with the worship of rank? Suppose a man should enter your Synagogue, with gold rings and in grand clothes, and suppose a poor man should come in also, in shabby clothes, and you are deferential to the man who, is wearing grand clothes, and say “There is a good seat for you here,” but to the poor man – “You must stand; or sit down there by my footstool,” is not that to make distinctions among yourselves, and to show yourselves prejudiced judges? Listen, my dear brothers. Has not God chosen those who are poor in the things of this world to be rich through their faith, and to possess the kingdom which he has promised to those who love him? But you – you insult the poor man! Is not it the rich who oppress you? Is not it they who drag you into law-courts? Is not it they who malign that honourable Name which has been bestowed upon you? Yet, if you will keep the royal laws which run – “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thou dost thyself.” you are doing right; but, if you worship rank, you commit a sin and stand convicted by that same law of being offenders against it. (Twentieth Century version.)

If I were a Bishop or Moderator I would advise that the first half of this chapter be read once a month in every congregation, for unhappily some Christian ministers do make distinctions and pay too much regard to the donor of large sums, who may not, after all be said, contribute as much as his humbler brother, in proportion to his means. The parable of the Widow’s mite is too often forgotten.

For the same reason, also, the names of those who give largest subscriptions to God's work should not be placed at the head of the list, as is too often done, but placed alphabetically, as the man who contributes 5s to a good cause may, in proportion to his means, really give more than the donor of £2.

What example did the apostle Paul himself afford of receiving money for preaching? For if the Tramp say that he must have Biblical authority for everything, we must look to the law and to the testimony. For if the Tramp say that Jesus, we know, worked as a carpenter before He set out on His special mission. "Is not this the carpenter?" is sufficient to show that He worked with his hands at a trade, and thus dignified labour. And He may have so worked during a the time of His mission, but it is not recorded.

Work was "the Jesus way." I may not digress here to dwell upon the ignorance and despicable spirit of those drones and loafers of society who appear to look down upon work as degrading, and trade as lowering to status in the world. Work is absolutely necessary – as a mere matter of health; and as to its dignity, Jesus worked at His trade – that is enough. Now the Tramps abandoned their trades, and we will contrast them with Paul:

Paul claimed the right of reward for those who should preach the gospel, but he declined to accept the 'right' in his own case, for said he 1st Corinth IX and 15:–

I, however, have not availed myself of any of these rights. I am not saying this to secure such an arrangement for myself; indeed, I would far rather die [than do it.]

And Paul gave his reasons. He declined to take a personal salary for preaching the Gospel. But he worked at his trade to support himself. In his letter to the church at Thessalonica, Paul said –

You will not have forgotten brothers, our labour and toil. Night and day we used to work at our trades, so as not to be a burden to any of you, while we proclaim to you God's Good News.

And to the Corinthian church he wrote:–

We work hard, toiling with our hands.

Is not that plain? Paul was not a loafer; he worked at his trade. The Tramp preachers gave up their trades or business, and do not follow the example of Paul, yet Paul blamed himself for preaching

“without payment.” Those are his own words in the 2nd Corinthians; and he goes on to say (chap. XI and 8)–

I robbed other churches by taking pay from them; so that I might serve you.

Paul took pay from them: and then he goes on to say that –

I did not become a burden to any of you; for our brothers coming from Macedonia supplied my needs.

And he glories in the boast –

I kept myself, and will keep myself, from being an expense to you. in any way.

This is certainly not the way of the Tramps. They cannot claim that in this respect they follow the Paul way.

If we take the word “expense” of the 9th verse in the context with “taking of pay” of the 8th and “payment,” it is abundantly clear what Paul meant. He says that he was almost wrong in not taking reward – for it would have been right to have taken it – but that he did not take it: for, as already quoted in the 12th chapter, – “I refused to become a burden to you.”

Paul himself did accept, donations from the Philippian church, for we read (chapter IV., 16 and 17) that they had “sent more than once to relieve his wants,” and he admitted that then he had “enough of everything and to spare.”

Paul went so far as to say (4th chap.), when advising the Thessalonians, “to live quietly and to attend to their own business” “to work with their hands,” as he had himself directed, so “that you may not want for anything.” Now here is the example. How do the men who speak of “the Jesus way” follow it? There is no escaping the conclusion: they neither take salary nor work at a trade.

I must not be supposed to contend that a minister or teacher should work at menial labour. Not at all that a trade would lower his position, but such a man would require all his time for discharging the spiritual work appointed to him to perform. I am simply testing those who insist on following what they call “the Jesus way” by their own foot-rule; and they do not follow the example of Paul in working at his trade to keep himself any more than the precept of Jesus, that they should accept reward, for the labourer was worthy of his hire

[or wages]. As Paul put it in 1st Corinthians, IX chap., and 14th verse—

Even so did the Lord ordain [or command] that they which proclaim the gospel should live of [by] the gospel.

CHAPTER VI.

COLLECTIONS.

There is a lot of “rot” spoken about “no collections” at Tramp meetings. I feel strongly upon this point, because it is deceptive. One would think from such an announcement that the Tramps had no collections at all—that there were no demands upon their liberality.

The Tramps DO receive donations from their own people, (not from the general public,) and generous gifts, too. The bag which they place in the houses of their people “collects” the donations, and the ‘brethren’ give freely. Does it not savour of misrepresentation to convey that there are no collections among the Tramps to maintain their teachers, when they are collections?

It is quite true, however, that the Tramp Preachers do not take up collections at their public meetings from the general public: and in so far as the announcement conveys that it relates only to collections at public meetings, it is true. The Tramp Preachers wait for the inclusion of the neophyte into their ranks before subscriptions are invited; but, of course the “no collection” idea could not practically exist, as travelling expenses and upkeep, and maintenance costs, must be met, and the money must come from some source, – as it does come from their own people, who, to their honour be it said, contribute liberally.

Are collections wrong, that they are so decried? One of the most striking things in Paul’s second letter to his Greek friends in Corinth is his appeal for what we would call the Palestine Famine Fund (chaps. 8 and 9), when he asked them to excel in their giving as an expression of love, and according to their means. He made arrangements for the distribution of that fund (verses 18–21), and provided that “brothers” be sent to them to complete arrangements for the gift before he went there himself, so that it would not look as if the donation were being given under pressure.

Also, in the conclusion of Paul’s first letter, after one of those bursts of glorious eloquence which mark him out as a man of great gifts, he says –

With reference to the collection for Christ’s people, I want you to follow the instructions that I gave to the churches in Galatia. On the first day of every week each of you should put by what he can afford.

Here is an express command to make a collection for Christ's people; if it never were given, common sense would teach that givings should not be confined to the well-to-do, but that everyone should give according to his means.

And what was done in Galatia and Corinth by Paul's command was also done in Macedonia and in Greece for the poor, for he writes (Romans 13th chap. verses 26 and 27)–

that they have been glad to make a collection for the poor among Christ's people at Jerusalem. Yes, they were glad to do so; and indeed it is a duty which they owe to them.

The Tramps announce that they do not make collections. The collections in our churches are mainly for the poor or for missions; and here is Paul expressly laying down the Christian rule that it is a duty.

Is Mr. William Irvine's authority to be accepted in place of that of Paul?

The cry of "no collections" as a lure or bait to draw the niggardly and attract sympathisers cannot be commended. It is a base motive, an unchristian motive, and one which must recoil on those who use it.

Is it "the Jesus way" to decry a practice openly and follow it in secret? Is it "the Jesus way" to repudiate that which the Apostle Paul specially commanded? It will not do for some of these men to wriggle out of the corner by saying that there were no collections taken up by Jesus. No. For the Christian Church was not formed in His time. Until He died and rose again, His work was not completed; and the birth of the Church – founded on His whole completed work – could not have taken place till after His ascension.

The first word on the subject of collections, therefore, is from Paul, who saw our Lord, who knew Peter and James, and several of His apostles; and that command arose out of the new circumstances of the infant church – for in our Lord's day the priests of the "clergy-house" and the other needs of the Temple were provided by the law of Moses. Paul admits in the last chapter of Philippians that he received gifts to relieve his wants from Philippi, and Paul accepted some money from other churches, he said to the Corinthians, so that he did not want their money, but themselves as disciples. There is abundant proof of the giving of money, and of collections and (17th verse, and chapter) that "many people at that time were in the habit

of making a profit out of God's message," – but Paul was not one of these.

ORGANIZATION.

The Tramp Preachers oppose the organization of Christian Churches on the ground that there was no such organization in the early Church. Here, again, "2 have tile 20th century compared with the first, under different circumstances.

In the first century Christians were few, they lived in fear and trembling, and in Rome were in danger of being cast, as many of them were, to the lions, in the amphitheatre for the delectation of the heathen. But a change came; Rome became Christian and the organization spread throughout the world.

Argument on this subject may be highly concentrated on this point. Let us suppose that the whole County Fermanagh were to follow the Tramp Preachers. What then? Would not the Tramps be compelled by force of circumstances, themselves, to devise an organization to provide for ministering to the people in every district? Of course they would. They could not avoid it. As matters stand they boast of having 600 preachers going over the world. We need not here inquire into the merits or de-merits of those so-called teachers, some of whom could scarcely pass an examination in the sixth class of a National school: the point is, that with numbers, with adults and children of their own communion, they would be obligated to provide a teaching organization, a missionary organization, and a money-providing organization; for their preachers cannot and do not live on air.

They say that religion should be free. And, therefore, people should not subscribe to the churches. Whoever else does not pay to his Church or community, one thing is certain – the Tramps pay more than any other. They give freely in money, those who possess it, and they give freely in kind. If all the chickens, butter, cakes, and bread contributed by members of the Tramp fraternity were placed on paper for one year, according to its value, it would startle most people as to its generosity. At the last Convention at Crocknacrieve, one member gave five tons of flour towards the commissariat! This donation was equal to £67 in hard cash!! One farmer contributed £100, his profit for the year. The talk, therefore, as to "free religion" is pure nonsense. The Tramp fraternity pay heavily. if they do give

freely, for their religion, and no one blames them for it. But if other Christians contributed as generously as they do, Church funds would be in a stronger condition everywhere and never languish. Organization is a necessary, vital provision for any Christian community.

JESUS A PAUPER.

It is scarcely necessary to refer to the Tramp description of our Lord as “Jesus the Pauper,” or other misrepresentations. Our Lord was not a pauper. He was a workman, and His trade could always keep Him. Will any one dare to say that He was a botch? But if at times He was far from his mother in Gallilee, and “had not where to lay His head,” at other times he was an honoured guest, as at Bethany, where he was welcomed at the home of Martha and Mary. A man could not well be a pauper who was addressed as “Lord” and with the words – “I am not worthy that thou should’st enter under my roof.” He dined at times with a rich man like Zacchæus, and at others, as when He waited by the well in Samaria, His disciples went with money to buy food. It is not at all likely that the great Physician who healed all manner of diseases and raised the dead to life, would be, as the Tramps say, “a slave,” or left as “a pauper and a tramp,” dependent, as they say, “on charity.” Did He eat the bread of charity when welcomed to the table of Zacchæus or the home of Peter, or of Martha and Mary? Nay, His presence was deemed an honour, and His company was sought for as a privilege.

UNEDUCATED MEN.

This brings us to the interpretation of Scripture by uneducated men.. Now education is not everything: we all know that the Apostles were poor fishermen, and we all know that they received their Divine commission from above, and that tongues of fire settled on others, so as to qualify them for their teaching work. Some “ministers” of the gospel and some educated men have been far from Jesus. Education may qualify the mind, but it does not always qualify the heart. But I do say that while Protestants claim the right of private judgment, yet no one can so well interpret the Scriptures as the educated man who has made the Scriptures a study, and by his knowledge of the original tongues and reading can comprehend the

meaning of several passages which otherwise might be obscure or be judged by modern standards. And if a man do not understand Hebrew or Greek, the next best thing is to get a commentary by one who did understand what he was writing about, so as to be conversant with the scene of the Lord's labours, and the meaning of doubtful passages.

I do not know that there is even one among the Tramp communion (though there may be) who can read a single sentence of the Lord's sayings as He spoke it. Their chief authority (Mr. Irvine) does not know Biblical Greek, which is distinct from what we understand as classical Greek, just as the language of Chaucer was different from that of Spencer; and that of Shakespeare from that of Tennyson. I do not seek to make little of the Tramps on this account, Far from it, Some of the best and most influential preachers were not acquainted with either Hebrew or Greek. But they took the counsel of those who did understand these languages on delicate points; and did not assert that all the rest of humanity were wrong, and that they alone were right.

CHAPTER VII.

TRAMP HYMNS.

One example of the low standard of education or want of knowledge of the Tramps is to be found in what they call a Hymn Book, which contains along with some well-known hymns a surprising collection of doggerel, – that a fifth rate newspaper would be ashamed to publish. It looks as if some of their lines were written for nigger airs, with choruses.

The “Jesus way” was to sing a hymn, which in his case was one of the Psalms; but the Tramp, so far from ascending to the beauty of, say –

*The Lord’s my shepherd, I’ll not want,
He makes me down to lie
In pastures green, he leadeth me
The quiet waters by.*

consoles himself with this stuff –

*Live the way I live was what Jesus said
To the men who went forth then;
Tramp about and preach, saints will give you bread,
This you’ll find described in Matthew Ten.*

They call this “poetry!” And this –

*So we’ll fight for the Jesus way,
Whether it suits or not,
Never mind what the Pharisees say,
Those who preach should get what Jesus got.*

This last line is grotesque! There are no two lines of the stanza correct; it is prose instead of poetry; and the last line contains three syllables more than the second, with which it should correspond. It is rhyme, but it is bad prose, had composition, bad sentiment, and is utterly devoid of poetry. In another stanza, about a revival we are told that men

*Will get right themselves first
And walk the Jesus way,
For Pharisees at all times
Would never do but say.*

Say what? Imagination must supply the answer.

It is as clear as noon-day that the writers do not possess the sense or faculty of poetry or they would not perpetrate such street-ballad rhyme.

Some of this doggerel is intended to be sung to airs such as “The Boys of Wexford,” “Belmahone,” (not Bell Mahone, if you please,) “Poor old Joe,” &c. One of the stanzas that may be sung to the former is very rich(!) in composition, in rhyme, and sentiment: –

*We are the slaves of Jesus,
We'll therefore onward go,
And preach the truth though scribes, forsooth,
Say we should not do so,
For well we ken, through Matthew Ten,
The way that pleases God.
Christ's way is right,
For it we'll fight
Till put beneath the sod.*

We may forgive “the scribes,” who say “we should not do so,” but the “Matthew Ten” is an anti-climax! Did any one ever read such stuff?

To return to the rhymes, Tramps offer us this wretched doggerel while we are rich in sublime ideas, charmingly expressed, and written in musical cadences for song and soul. And while these are at hand to uplift or soothe the Christian heart, we find such stuff as this, speaking of our Lord –

*He grew from year to year,
Amidst the clashing view of creeds,
Claiming to be the truth of God,
Producing poisonous weeds.*

How could “the truth of God” produce “poisonous weeds?” It would take a Tramp to tell that. We are not informed, either, as to the “clashing view of creeds,” whatever that may mean. I can comprehend clashing creeds, but not a “clashing view.”

However, at the risk of being tedious, I must refer to one other so-called “hymn.” It is about a gate through which few obtain entrance, we are told; and it has a “hit” at the “prophets false,” as it pictures them, after the manner of a satire, saying –

*None are to be like Christ to-day;
He preached for naught but we'll take pay;*

*He said, give freely, live like we,
But we must get a salary (sic).*

Observe the grammar and the *salar-ee*. Then it proceeds farther – note the first line (and its last word) –

*He lived the slave life, they are gents;
He freely gave, they charge pew rents;
He went about, they settle down;
They get man's smile, He got man's frown*

That stanza, I think, should secure a leather medal for the writer. It is a gem of undiluted ignorance, of deliberate mis-statement of truth, and bosh. The writer also has a weakness for “Matthew Ten,” as he or it is termed – not Ten Matthews, we may suppose, but the 10th chapter of Matthew’s Gospel:

*So few profess through prophets true,
[The “prophets true” are the Tramps!]
They’re numbered with the transgressors, too:
Whilst thousands say Lord, Lord, through men
Who preach, but work and live Matthew Ten.*

Is it the “few” or the “prophets true” are “numbered with” transgressors? Alas, poor Matthew Ten, you are responsible for a lot of this rubbish!

It is enough to make anyone indignant that the highest and holiest of subjects, sacred and elevated, should be dragged down to such depths. The writers and readers are apparently unfitted by their want of knowledge to appreciate the height, depth, and beauty of David’s psalms, – the most wonderful expression of the human soul, – or of such hymn-writers as Toplady, Charles Wesley, Faber, &c., when they can descend to such stuff. It seems to suit their intellects and their ideas of religion. I confess I feel indignant over the production of such literary garbage under the name of “hymns!” It is a libel on the word.

The word hymn comes from the Greek word *humnes*. It was originally intended to signify a poem in honour of the heathen gods, or heroes of old; or something to be recited in public. Augustine’s definition of a Christian hymn is the view generally accepted, that it is “praise to God with song” (*cum cantico*); but no definition of any kind I know of, would include such material as I have given samples of in the foregoing paragraphs, under the name of “hymns.”

The word “hymn” has been applied to psalms, though that word in itself conveys that it is a song intended for use with or accompaniment by the psaltery. Indeed the whole book of Psalms was described, by Bede as *liber hymnorum*, the Book of Hymns, by universal consent. A hymn, (or psalm) was sung by our Lord and His Apostles after the institution of the Lord’s supper. Perhaps it was the 103rd –

*O thou, my soul, bless God the Lord,
And all that in me is
He stirred up His Holy name
To magnify and bless.*

Other references to hymns occur in the New Testament, but it is worthy of remark that Paul seems to have recognised a difference between the sacred songs when he referred to “psalms and hymns, and spiritual songs,” when he used the words – (I am again obliged to use Roman instead of Greek letters) – *psalmis kai humneis kai edais pneumatikais*. Some of the quotations of Paul from oriental poetry were from hymns, and the prayer of thanksgiving of the disciples in the 9th of Acts is given in a poetical manner. Luke also was given to poetry.

The whole subject is most interesting, and the transition from Hebrew and Greek to German and English hymns, both in Latin and in the vernacular. Luther’s movement was immensely assisted by the use of hymns, and the Church of Rome is beginning at last to recognise their power and teach their people in England to sing them, None is more popular there than “Faith of our Fathers,” which could as truly be sung by Protestants but for the reference to the Virgin Mary as Mediator in the third stanza: –

*Faith of our fathers! living still,
In spite of dungeon, fire, and sword;
O, how our hearts beat high with joy
Whene’er we hear that glorious word!
Faith of our fathers, holy Faith,
We will be true to thee till death.
Our fathers chain’d in prisons dark
Were still in heart and conscience free;
How sweet would be their children’s fate,
If they, like them, could die for thee!*

*Faith of our Fathers, holy Faith.
 We will be true to thee till death.
 Faith of our Fathers! Mary's prayers
 Shall keep our country true to thee;
 And through the truth that comes from God
 O, then indeed we shall be free.
 Faith of our fathers, holy Faith,
 We will be true to thee till death.*

This hymn has now become as common with Roman Catholics in England as the "Boys of Wexford" in Ireland, or "The Church's one foundation" with Protestant people; As to modern hymns, their real beginning came from the Independents, Dr. Watts laying the foundation, assisted by Baptists. Writers like Toplady, Cowper, Heber, Doddridge, Erskine; Keble, and Lyte will occur to most minds, and the greatest of all, Charles Wesley; and in a minor degree Dr. John Wesley himself. It is when we look at the beautiful hymns of these authors that we recognise the immense gap between them and the doggerel of the *Go-Preachers' Hymn-book* which emanated from the Tramp or Go-Preachers. There are some hymns which are immortal, like the splendid lines attributed generally to Addison, but by some people said to date from 1615 –

*When all Thy mercies, O my God,
 My rising soul surveys,
 Transported with the view, I'm lost
 In wonder, love and praise.*

The recital of this hymn is a prayer in itself. How aptly the thoughts are expressed of our dependence on the Divine care and of gratitude for His mercies! How sweetly flowing are the cadences – the emphasis on each alternate syllable – (for example in the all, weak, plaints, and cries of this first line) –

*To all my weak complaints and cries
 Thy mercy lent an ear,
 Ere yet my feeble thoughts had learned
 To form themselves in prayer.
 Unnumbered comforts to my soul
 Thy tender care bestowed,
 Before my infant heart conceived
 From whom these comforts flowed.*

*When in the slippery paths of youth
With heedless steps I ran,
Thine arm, unseen, conveyed me safe,
And led me up to man.*

The remaining verses can be found in any hymn book. How exquisite that hymn! it satisfied even the Presbyterian purists, who were afraid to touch anything but David's psalms.

When the burdened soul seeks comfort it may try to sing with Charlotte Elliott—

*My God, my Father, while I stray,
Far from my home in life's rough way,
O teach me from my heart to say
Thy will be done.*

Though it is extremely hard, after losing a loved one, to be able to say with her—

*If thou should'st call me to resign
What most I prize, it ne'er was mine,
I only yield thee what was thine:
Thy will he done.*

And if one's self be stricken down—

*Should pining sickness waste away
My life in premature decay,
My Father, still I strive to say—
"Thy will be done."*

But when the end approaches there is the strain of confident hope and comfort—

*Then, when on earth I breathe no more
The prayer oft mixed with tears before,
I'll sing upon a happier shore,
"Thy will he done."*

What a glorious anthem is Robert Grant's—

*O worship the King all-glorious above,
O gratefully sing his power and His love.*

The writer had a true sense of poetry when he described God as—

*Our Shield and Defender, the Ancient of days,
Pavilioned in splendour and girdled with praise.*

That last line is very fine. The same majestic rhythm runs through it all, and Mr. Grant is equally happy in describing the earth –

*Hath stablished it fast by a changeless decree,
And round it hath cast like a mantle, the sea.*

None but a poet could have written this last line, describing God flinging the sea like a mantle round the earth, Mr. Grant is also happy in –

*Thy bountiful care, what tongue can recite?
It breathes in the air: it shines in the light;
It streams from the hills; it descends to the plain,
And sweetly distils in the dew and the rain.*

While the last verse has a splendid burst of true adoration,

Perhaps there is no hymn more beloved and dear to the Christian heart than Toplady's "Rock of Ages" whose last stanza has been repeated by many an aged sufferer –

*While I draw this fleeting breath,
When my eyelids close in death,
When I soar through tracts unknown,
See thee on thy judgment throne,
Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee.*

How beautifully are the sentiments expressed by Isaac Watts in his exquisite hymn –

*When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of Glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.*

With its lovely third stanza –

*See from His head, his hands, His feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingled down;
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?*

There is no hymn more popular than Lyte's well known appeal to his God for help –

*Abide with me: fast falls the eventide;
The darkness deepens; Lord, with me abide;*

*When other helpers fail, and comforts flee,
Help of the helpless, O abide with me.*

Then he speaks of the change with advancing years, and decay, and invites the King of Kings to come with healing in His wings, and bring—

*Tears for all woes, a heart for every plea
Come, Friend of sinners, thus abide with me.*

He needs God's presence, and wants God to stay with him, and then follows a pæan of exulting strength—

*I fear no foe, with Thee at hand to bless;
Ills have no weight, and tears no bitterness;
Where is death's sting? where, grave, thy victory?
I triumph still if Thou abide with me.*

When fervent prayer ascends to heaven what more fitting language than that of Horatius Bonar—

*When the weary, seeking rest,
To Thy goodness flee;
When the heavy laden cast
All their load on Thee;
When the troubled, seeking peace,
On Thy name shall call;
When the sinner, seeking life,
At Thy feet shall fall:
Hear then, in love, O Lord, the cry,
In Heaven, Thy dwelling place on high.*

What balm there is in the hour of trouble for those who sing that well-known hymn of Watts, more popular to-day, than when he published it in the early part of the 18th century!—

*Our God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast,
And our eternal home.
Under the shadow of Thy throne
Thy saints have dwelt secure;
Sufficient is Thine arm alone,
And our defence is sure.*

Then those who like to dwell on the name of our Lord find comfort in the immortal lines of John Newton –

*How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear!
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fear.
It makes the wounded spirit whole,
And calms each troubled breast,
'Tis manna to the hungry soul,
And to the weary — rest.*

Or that other hymn “Jesus, the very thought of Thee,” as popular in Roman Catholic as it is in Protestant circles, written by Bernard of Clairvaux, and translated by Caswall, which contains the stanza: –

*Nor voice can sing, nor heart can frame,
Nor can the memory find
A sweeter sound than thy blest name,
O Saviour of mankind.*

We could dwell for hours on this delightful subject and repeat stanzas of wide-world hymns which have comforted the hearts of millions – hymns of thanksgiving, of prayer, of Christmas, of Harvest, and so on.

Scores of hymns rise at memory's call from “Hark, the herald!” to “Lead, kindly light,” and the point of all of them is not the petty contentions, arguments, and Pharisaical spirit of rhymes of the Tramp preachers, but a true worship in which all can join: –

*O measureless Might! ineffable Love!
While angels delight to hymn Thee above,
The humbler creation, though feeble their lays,
With true adoration shall lisp to Thy praise*

From all the sublimity of conception, beauty in sentiment, and adoration in praise, of those hymns of master minds which I have quoted, it is bathos to descend to the depths of the lines I have referred to in the Go-Preachers' so-called “Hymn-book” but more correctly “Rhyme-book.” Let me take another sample. The scene depicted is the last day.

*On that great day when goats and sheep,
What they've been sowing sure shall reap;*

When did goats and sheep take to “sowing” and “reaping”? Then the writer speaks of Our Lord’s “brethren true,” meaning, of course, the Tramp Preachers, and proceeds. Note the wording of the second and third lines!

*If they rejected whom He sent,
Men who had gone just as He went;
Among the goats they’ll have to go,
For slighting shepherds true below.
Who heeding their dear Lord’s command,
Went poor and hungry through the land.*

The punctuation is as printed. I forbear correcting it. Then the writer proceeds to attack the ministry again:—

*But my poor preachers, Christ shall say
Ye scorned and prophets false did pay.*

With what sublime self-satisfaction they know exactly what the Christ will say! For pure Pharisaism, the snug application of certain texts to Other people and glorifying themselves as the very elect of God it would be hard to beat the following doggerel—

*Depart, ye cursed, Christ shall say,
To all who brethren turned away;*

[The “brethren” here plainly refers to the Tramp Preachers!]

*When purseless scripless forth they went;
Like twelve and seventy whom He sent.
Because ye have not them received
I see ye ne’er on Me believed.*

There is the comfort for the dupes of this mania, who may think this rhyme is inspired like David’s psalms, because bound up as a “hymn-book!” “A hymn-book!!” Then the writer depicts our Lord’s invitation—(the punctuation is not mine):—

*Then come, ye blessed, Christ shall say,
For I was homeless in your day.
And in my brethren’s bodies came,
To prove if ye would bear My shame
In housing preachers who like Me
Refused to take a salary (sala-ree).*

What warrant have these men for daring to put such language into the Lord’s mouth? They want, evidently, to use the Lord Jesus as an

advocate for themselves, and put words into His lips which He would not speak. When was our Blessed Lord ever offered a “salaree” that he “refused” to accept it? What arrant bosh? And all this in the name and guise of religion! Small wonder that Mr. William Irvine reproved some of his preachers for their “balderdash.”

CHAPTER VIII

“MATTHEW TEN.”

The references to “Matthew Ten” in the rhymes of the “*Go-Preachers Hymn Book*,” and the quotations from the chapter, show that the Tramp Preachers regard it as the bed-rock of their movement. On the 10th chapter of Matthew’s Gospel they base their dress, mode of living, itineracy, methods, &c., and I venture to say that if they incorporated the Sermon on the Mount with that chapter, no one would be inclined to say anything towards them but God speed; for with their ways of life, whether they shave or refuse to carry a purse, no one has any concern; the outside world is only concerned when the Tramp Preachers, ignoring the command “Judge not” – do judge and condemn their neighbours. What shelters me in the present examination of their methods is the latter part of the same passage: –

“That you may not be judged, for just as you judge others, you will yourselves be judged, and the measure that you mete, will be meted out to you.”

The Tramps assume that the commands in the 10th chapter Matthew, delivered at the beginning of our Lord’s ministry, apply to them and to us to-day. The first thing noticed about this chapter is – the persons to whom it was delivered.

Calling His twelve disciples to Him, Jesus gave them – [note the word] – authority over foul spirits, so that they could drive them out, &c.

Here the commission was to “the twelve:” the proof of the committing to them of this power was its exercise, and its marvellous effects. It is plain from the context that the command was to them especially, for not only are they mentioned by name but they only received the power which was the fruit of the commission, and only they were able to exercise it.

There are many people who claim to be in the succession of the Apostles, but without investigating any one of these claims, and without venturing any opinion as to whether these claims are well founded, the fact remains beyond all question, that not one of the claimants; no matter how exalted or humble – can exhibit the proof of the power which the Apostles received to “cure the sick, raise the

dead, make the leper clean, drive out demons.” The proof of the commission was its exercise and the fulfilment of its agency.

The Tramps have no such proof; they are not of the Twelve Apostles, nor are they of the 72 disciples, to whom Luke narrates that these instructions were addressed.

One thing remains abundantly clear – the 10th chapter of Matthew states distinctly (ver. 5) that the apostles on this mission were not to go abroad, but to confine themselves to their own country, to Jewry. They were not even to go to the adjoining province of Samaria, nor to the Gentiles; they were to confine their operations on this particular mission at home to their own province, for which they obtained these special instructions “to the lost sheep of the House of Israel:” and for that reason, going among their own people, speaking their own language, travelling over a district not much larger than, or about the same size as, the County Tyrone, they were not to cumber themselves with changes of clothing, nor were they even to take a staff in their hand. These were the orders and they were obeyed.

We may quote the rest of the passage. Having recited the names of the twelve, the record proceeds. Those twelve Jesus sent out as his messengers, after giving them these instructions: –

“Do not go to the Gentiles, nor enter any Samaritan town, but make your way rather to the lost sheep of Israel. And on your way proclaim that the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. Cure the sick, raise the dead, make the lepers clean, drive out demons. You have received free of cost, give free of cost. Do not provide yourselves with gold, or silver, or pence in your purses; nor even with a bag for the journey, or a change of clothes, or sandals, or even a staff; for the worker is worth his food. Whatsoever town or village you visit, find out who is worthy in that place, and remain there till you leave. As you enter the house, greet it. Then, if the house is worthy, let your blessing rest upon it, but if it is unworthy, let your blessing return upon yourselves. If no one welcomes you, or listens to what you say, as you leave that house or that town, shake off its dust from your feet.”

(Twentieth Century version.)

Those were the instructions, and they remained valid until the great change came. Perhaps two years had elapsed since that Judæan mission. The fulfilment of prophecy came nigh. The Feast of the

Passover was near, and our Lord sent his disciples to prepare for it, according to the law of Moses. Then followed that supper in the upper room which has excited the wonder of humanity, the most elevated imagination of the artist to depict on canvas or fresco, and the most intense devotion to the Christian to partake of, in which our Lord foreshadowed His end.

*And, after thanks and glory giv'n,
To him that rules in earth and heav'n,
That symbol of his flesh he broke,
And thus to all his followers spoke –
“My broken body thus I give,
For you, for all; take, eat, and live;
And oft the sacred rite renew
That brings my wond'rous love to view.”
Then in his hands the cup he rais'd,
And God anew he thanked and prais'd;
While kindness in his bosom glow'd,
And from his lips salvation flow'd.
“My blood I thus pour forth,” he cries.
To cleanse the soul in sin that lies;
In this the covenant is seal'd,
And Heav'n's eternal grace reveal'd”*

With certain knowledge of death before Him, that. His disciples would no longer have a leader, and that prophecy must be fulfilled, Jesus bids them prepare for distress and more perilous times. He reminded them of former commands – (as in the 10th chapter) – as told in the same Twentieth Century edition of the New Testament, from which I have already quoted: –

*He said unto them all –
“When I sent you as my Messengers: without either
purse, or bag, or sandals, were you in need of anything?”
“No,” they answered.
“Now, however.” he said, “he who has a purse must take
it and his bag as well; and he who has not must sell his
cloak and buy a sword. For I tell you, that passage of
Scripture must be fulfilled in me, which say's –
He was counted among the godless;
indeed, all that refers to me is finding its fulfilment.”*

“Master.” they exclaimed. “look, here are two swords!”
“Enough!” said Jesus. (Same version)

Thus the commands of the 10th of Matthew and 10th of Luke were cancelled.

The Tramps put things this way: –

“Are not all rite commands of Jesus to be obeyed?” –

Answer, “Yes.”

“Did not he give injunctions in Matthew Ten?” – “Yes.”

*“Therefore, as you are to observe all His commandments
you must obey and go with those who follow those
precepts?”*

But the Tramp does not point out to the unthinking the conditions of those commands, nor the all important fact that those commands, given during the earlier part of His ministry, were cancelled in the 22nd chapter of Luke, after the Lord’s Supper, when new conditions had arisen.

When His disciples were to go among their own people only, in a small district, they had no need of purse [wallet], bag [scrip], or shoes [sandals]; bare feet were sufficient for a short journey but “now, however,” now, under the changed circumstances, when they would be without their Master, and would have to go out to preach His gospel in foreign parts, they must provide necessaries for themselves; and thus guard against danger by providing a sword. The people of Gallilee were accustomed to go armed in those days, to protect themselves against robbers and wild beasts. Even so lately as 30 years ago travellers in Palestine had to go armed, or travel in large parties for protection, or secure an armed guard. Even yet arms are a necessary provision for safety in parts of Palestine.

When Jesus referred to the sword, it was found that there were two swords in the company; and Our Lord said – “They are enough,” or sufficient. These swords were probably of the short Roman pattern, which could easily be concealed among flowing dress, and they were retained by the disciples, for Peter used one to cut off the ear of Malchus, showing that it was a sword intended for use. But Jesus had taught them that they must not advance His Kingdom by force; His sword, which was to prevail, was a spiritual one; and the disciples, doubtless, afterwards discerned that Jesus then spoke, as he frequently did, figuratively.

So that we see plainly, without a shadow of doubt, that our Lord revoked His commands in the 10th of Matthew. The case is precisely the same as if an Act of Parliament had been passed for a certain local set of circumstances, but when the conditions became changed this Act was repealed; and just as the original wording of the first Act remains on the statute book to tell of what had been enjoined before the repealing Act annulled it, so we have the original commands in the 10th of Matthew and Luke, as part of the recorded history of events, as well as the repealing orders of the 22nd Luke. The 10th of Matthew, on which the Tramps affect to base their whole code of ethics, has now no binding force whatever, as it was repealed by the same authority which had created it, in addition to the fact, that it was addressed to the 'twelve' alone. Thus, the code and ideas which the Tramps have built on a wrong foundation, crumble to the dust.

The teaching by the Tramp Preachers respecting "Matthew Ten" is clearly not "the Jesus way."

CHAPTER IX.

BAPTISM AND IMMERSION

The Tramp Preachers at Crocknacrieve ridiculed the idea of infant baptism, on the ground that it was not conformable to Scripture; and they also contended, as they manifest in their “dipping” services, that baptism should only be performed by immersion.

This subject is a deep and prosy one for discussion in a newspaper. I am not a theologian, and therefore not versed in doctrinal points, and can convey to my readers only what affects my own mind on the subject. I do not say that Baptists are wrong in immersing their people, but what I do contend is, that they are not entitled to declare that others are wrong who baptise by sprinkling; and that the Scriptural grounds for one are equally strong as for the other; while reasons of health require that – in this climate at least – baptism by sprinkling should be preferred.

It should be remembered that just as the form of the cross bore a sacred significance in Pagan times, so the rite of baptism had existed previous to the ceremony at Bethabara. It was generally used for purposes of initiation. Indeed when we come to the baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist, we ask into what was this an initiation. for John himself admitted that it was he who should

have been baptised by the Messiah, baptised as a believer in Christ, just as he had been the fore-runner. Had this baptism by John any connection with the Jewish habit of baptizing converts or disciples, or with purification from sin by sprinkling of water, as indicated in the 30th chapter of Ezekiel, and in the 13th of Zechariah? However, Jesus considered the ceremony was fitting “thus to satisfy every claim of religion,” and the opportunity was availed of by God the Father to seal the act with a declaration of the sonship of Jesus –

This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased.

It is strange that our Lord did not Himself perform the ceremony of baptism. He did not even baptize His disciples, so far as we are informed; and it seems as if He regarded the rite as of secondary importance when he confined Himself to preaching the Word, and

leaving baptism to be performed on His followers by the disciples (4th John).

The Tramp Preachers, when insisting on immersion as Scriptural, argue that Jesus, after His Baptism, came up “out of” the water, quoting the words of the authorized version. I do not see that the words “out of” necessarily involve the fact of immersion, though they are capable of such a construction. The word used in this passage in the original Greek for “out of” is *apo*, which means “from.” The word *ex* in Greek means “out of;” and therefore we have the same passage in the Revised version rendered – “He came straightway from the water,” which does not convey any idea of immersion at all. The Twentieth Century version is in the same line – “After the baptism of Jesus, and just as He came up from the water,” so that the idea of immersion is absent. No idea is conveyed as to the depth of the water, one foot or four feet.

The word baptism comes from the Greek *batizo*, to dip or wash, and it bears both significations in Scripture. It does not necessarily bear the sense of immersion. It also frequently conveyed the sense of cleansing, as in the 5th of Ephesians and 10th of Hebrews (22nd verse), where we are told to have “our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience.” The early proselytes were dipped or immersed, and others were sprinkled, in the ceremony of baptism. Both forms are Scriptural. Immersion was perhaps preferred among the early Christians, but sprinkling steadily advanced in popularity and in use until it became legalised in 1311 by the Council of Ravenna, which left the matter to the discretion of the officiating minister. Baptistories or buildings for the baptism of neophytes and others were built in connexion with several of the early churches of Southern Europe, but the matter of climate felt itself felt as the Church proceeded northward, until the practice of immersion gradually faded away.

Yet from time to time there were outbursts of “Anabaptists,” as they were called, in favour of immersion, and so violent even were the Baptists in England after the Reformation in professing their doctrines, and so intolerant of infant baptism, that several of them suffered punishment by the state for upholding their principle, and some of them even perished at the stake.

It is quite true, as the Tramp Preachers maintain, that our Lord was an adult when he was baptised by the Baptist, but they forget

that he had been baptised (the Christian equivalent of circumcision) when an infant of eight days old through rite of circumcision. As a matter of necessity all disciples of John were adults. Christianity had, not then entered upon its career; and when Jesus Christ preached His gospel one of the most momentous utterances of the time was His declaration respecting children –

*Forbid them not,
For of such is the Kingdom of heaven.*

Whether these children were the baptised children of Jewish converts (as does not seem likely), or children who by circumcision had had their covenant made with God by their parents on their behalf, as we do to-day in the rite of baptism (as seems most probable), the fact is, our Lord recognised their heavenly qualification. These children without any baptism by immersion, were already fit for the Kingdom of God, and they had already undergone the Jewish form of baptism in infancy. When Israelites became Christians they had their children baptised as well as themselves, following the law of Moses under the new state of things as well as the old, and thus we have the infants of converts baptised as well as those of mature years.

When Peter preached on the day of Pentecost to the multitude, he told them by repentance and baptism they would receive the Holy Ghost, for the promise was “unto you and your children”, so that Peter conveyed the impression distinctly that children were to be admitted into the church along with their parents.

The Tramp Preachers fall into an error in conceiving that the baptism on the Day of Pentecost was one of immersion, We must have regard to common sense and to the surroundings, We are told in the 2nd chapter of Acts that these Apostles had added to them that day 3,000 souls. How many hours of the day remained after Peter’s great speech? We are not told, It takes the Tramp Preachers about five minutes to baptise one of their people, which, if their theory of immersing the 3,000 could possibly be true, would have required 15,000 minutes for the ceremony at Jerusalem; and as that space of time would cover 10½ days, it was obvious that the form of baptism employed could not possibly have been that of immersion. Two minutes to each immersion would have consumed five whole days of 24 hours!!

Moreover, if we were to suppose that it was possible to immerse the 3,000 in one afternoon and evening, where was there water for the purpose? The brook Kidron was the only natural means available. There was no deep river Erne there, and the brook Kidron was dry at that season; and baptism must have been then performed either by pouring water on the head, as was often done, or by sprinkling.

Nor was it possible, so far as we can see, for the Philippian gaoler and his family to have been immersed, when baptised at midnight in their own apartments. From what we know of Eastern houses, and especially the eastern fashion in which their women were secluded, it seems highly improbable, and beyond the ordinary bounds of possibility, that immersion could have taken place. Private baths or tanks were not usual in those days.

In the case of the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8) Philip and he came to "some water." And they "went down into the water" from the carriage. That is, walked down into the water, and Philip baptised him. But when they "came up out of the water," conveys the idea of returning again towards the chariot. The words do not necessarily involve the idea of immersion.

As in the case of the 3,000 also, we must have regard to exigencies of climate. Deep water was rare in Palestine. Water was scarce; and when pools were to be found they were generally shallow.

Philip and the eunuch may have waded into the water of the pool as far as the ankles, or deeper, which their eastern dress and bare limbs would have permitted, so that Philip could obtain water enough to place on the eunuch's head, instead of dipping him wholly, and thus sending him home in wet garments.

Further, the same Greek word *eis* translated here as "into" occurs several times in the same chapter of Acts, perhaps ten times, and in no instance does it possess the meaning of "under," so that "into the water" does not necessarily convey the meaning of "under" the water. It is altogether the other way. I question strongly, but that is a matter for scholars, whether even one case of immersion can be proved from Scripture.

On the other hand several cases of baptism by sprinkling, or pouring water on the head, as we know, from the apocrypha and early writings, did take place. Long before the advent of the Messiah, perhaps for two thousand years (as directed in Genesis 17, and 13 and

14 verses) infants were brought into God's church by circumcision. This is unquestionable.

As infants were received into covenant with God by circumcision, so the converted Jew, who was baptised, would in the same manner, bring his child for baptism, for the promise of old was "to him and to his children." All Jews who have been converted to Christianity have brought their children to "be baptised," following the custom of their faith.

Baptism, according to Paul, dated back to the time when the children of Israel had been "baptised unto Moses in the cloud and in the Red Sea." That baptism was not one of immersion, but of sprinkling; for the children of Israel passed over on dry land; and it was a type of Christian baptism, Paul tells us (6th Corin. 10th chap. and 6th verse), and an example. Here the children were baptised along with the older people.

Paul, indeed, goes farther. He speaks in the same letter to the Corinthians, (7th chap., 14) that when one of the parents had accepted the Christian faith the children were "holy," and the use of the word "holy" is here understood to convey that the children were brought into connexion with the church, and presumably baptised. And Paul addresses these children in his letter to the Ephesians, and to the Colossians (3 and 20), as members of the church.

Another point rises here. We have mention in the Scriptures of several households having been baptised, such as that of Stephanas by Paul, and the word "household" includes children. Immersion was not at all likely in an eastern house of the period. There were no facilities for it.

Then, in no case have we any mention made of children who, having been once baptised, were re-baptised as adults. It is absolutely certain from the reading of history that infant baptism prevailed along with adult baptism. Both Justin Martyr and Origen, who lived shortly after the apostles, write of infant baptism as a practice of the early church: and it is noteworthy that the doctrine is held by all the Christian churches, with the exception of the Baptists; and while I do not dispute from Scripture their right to baptise adults, if they please, I maintain that they cannot deny from Scripture our right to baptise our children into the Church of Christ.

The whole question is one on which a great deal might be said, if we lived in the Holy Land. But we do not live there. In Jerusalem the

temperature varies from 70 to 130 degrees, and a bath in such a heat might prove grateful. In our treacherous climate, with an average of only 55 or 60 degrees in the summer alone, except during a few spells of heat, the same ceremony would be dangerous to some, and fatal to others; while immersion in winter would be simply impossible, as it has proved to the Tramp Preachers themselves. Baptism by sprinkling is not limited to any time or place; baptism by immersion requires, with the Tramp Preachers, warm water, or exposure in the open air; and it becomes impossible in Normandy, in Iceland, and in Greenland, where the Arctic zone forbids immersion. So that having regard to all the circumstances, the practice of the Jews and of the early church, to the difference of climate and, therefore, of dress; to the changed condition of Christendom as distinct from the heathendom of the early Christian age, when we desire to see all our children enrolled – even if it only be nominally – in the Christian army, and to the example of Paul in baptizing a whole household, I am content to accept sprinkling as abundantly Scriptural and much more prudent, more modest, and more decorous than immersion.

THE THREE THOUSAND.

In a letter to the *Impartial Reporter* a correspondent, who wrote over the signature of “Within;” made the following reference to the foregoing article:—

You say that after Peter preached at Pentecost, it would have been impossible to immerse the 3,000 converts. If Peter used the Anglican or Roman ritual, and only the 12 were permitted (as the ritualists assume) to act, it would take much longer. This ritual or ceremony has five collects, eleven prayers, three questions, the: Lord’s prayer, the Creed, and the thanksgiving for the regenerated baby and the sign of the Cross, give them half-an-hour each, and work a ten hour day, it would take nearly three weeks; whereas 120 baptisers would do the whole number in the scriptural way in one-and-half hours.

IT WAS NOT IMMERSION.

The baptism of the 3,000 is a difficult point for “Within,” and with all respect to him he cannot be allowed to ride away with his

idea of 120 baptisers. That idea may impose on some credulous minds, but it cannot, to use the current phrase, “hold water.”

Why? Because we know the premisses, the condition of things then and there.

- (1.) We know where the ceremony took place – at Jerusalem.
- (2.) We know the time. The day was the feast of Pentecost; and
- (3.) The hour of the day was shortly after nine o’clock in the morning, the Jewish third hour of the day.

To sustain his theory of 120 baptisers officiating, I need not point out that just as Scripture pointed out when the multitude was fed by fifties, it might have been expected that such a remarkable thing as 3,000 being baptized in 120 sections would have been recorded; but it could not have happened, because it was impossible.

Many of the Tramp Preachers judge of Palestine by our local conditions. Here we have abundance of water – too much. There they have too little. There was in all Jerusalem only one possible fountain, now known as The Virgin’s Spring. Its flow of water trickled to the Pool of Siloam: this pool supplied Jerusalem with drinking and cooking water, and was 52 feet long by 11 feet wide, and 19 feet deep!

The Jews would not permit Nazarenes or anyone on whom they looked with contumely to soil this pure water by wading in (if it were: possible) and being immersed. But the thing was impossible because the 52 feet would not permit of more than nine or ten sections of people dipping (if it were possible to conceive that the ceremony would be permitted), and then the ceremony was again impossible because no one could stand in 19 feet deep of water!!

The large pool of Bethesda outside the walls was in a similar condition, and it was 20 feet deep. And the water was jealously guarded because it was so scarce. All through the Scriptures the imagery of fertile land and prosperity was connected with springs of water, because they were so scarce, and even in the Apocalypse a river of water was supposed to flow by golden streets in the Great city to typify the abundance of what was experienced as a scarcity here below.

Our friend may say – But the disciples could go out of the city. Now Jerusalem was built on the top of a ridge, and there was no river near it. strange to say, – none. This accounts for the barrenness of the city suburbs. There was no moisture.

On the eastern side of Jerusalem lies the valley of Jehoshaphat, and here at a particular time of the year meanders the little brook Cedron or Kidron, but most of the year it is dry. It was dry at the time of the baptism of the 3,000, because the time was the Feast of Pentecost (always held in the summer season) the last of the feasts connected with the ingetting of the harvest, when the unleavened bread made from the new wheat was baked. So the valley of the Kidron was then dry: there was no water for the 3,000.

But if we even can suppose there was water in the brook, it would not have suited immersion; it would have been too shallow. Photographs reveal the bed of the Kidron and we now can look upon it as it really is, Moreover, a subterranean passage led the blood and water of the sacrificial rites of the Temple into this very brook, and it would so pollute the water (on the one hand) that it could not be used, while the flood water from the Jewish burial place (on the other hand) prevented its use.

No, no, our friend's contention is hopelessly absurd. The baptism of the 3,000 must have been either by sprinkling or by pouring water on the head; just as in the case of the Phillipian gaoler at 12 o'clock at night, when It was not humanly possible that there could have been immersion.

Moreover, suppose they could have found one "hole" in the brook Kidron for immersion, allowing five minutes for each neophyte, it would require 1666 hours for the whole ceremony; and as there would only have been about nine hours of the day before darkness available for it, this again shows that such a service would have been absolutely impossible, No matter how one views this matter, the idea of connecting the baptism of 3,000 proselytes at one time by immersion within nine hours of the day at any place was impossible; and further impossible, because there was no water available for the purpose.

I am rather glad that "Within," has given me an opportunity of making this matter clear, for in condensing these articles I have avoided going into details to further prove my points, for sake of brevity. The Pool of Hezekiah I have not referred to, because it was always unclean. It was near the Calvary side of the city.

CHAPTER X.

SHOES AND SANDALS

I cannot understand why the Tramps, who desire to follow Jesus Christ so literally in all respects, do not obey their own code in "Matthew Ten," as they term it, and go without shoes. They adhere to the one suit of clothes, they will not have "wallet" or change of clothing, they do not carry purse or scrip; yet they wear shoes, though ordered in the same sentence not to use them

Now Jesus, following the custom of his day, walked barefoot or wore sandals. For this reason some of the monks of the Roman Catholic Church go barefoot, while others wear sandals, to be like Him, in this respect, while the Tramps do neither, nor have I ever known them to refer to the subject.

This simple matter is an illustration of where some knowledge is needed to understand the Bible. Outside an eastern house were placed some jars of water, for the purpose of washing the feet, and thus were the feet kept clean

when entering a house. When Jesus went to dine with the Pharisee, the latter gave the Christ no water to wash his feet. Jesus reclined after the Eastern manner at dinner, and the outcast woman thus was able to wet his feet with her tears, and dry them with the hair of head, and to anoint them with perfume.

Where have the Tramps any authority for their untidiness? The gospel of dirt may appeal to some, as if to resemble veritable tramps, but, happily, untidiness, is out of fashion now-a-days.

Even if "Matthew Ten" were not cancelled, as it undoubtedly is, it would not apply to this climate. A man wearing the simple, single garment or few garments of the East, could readily bathe and wash himself, and thus keep himself clean. The dirty fellow of to-day, who will not bring night garments about with him, and will continue to use the one suit of clothes without change, saturated with perspiration, in a foolish obedience to what he calls "Matthew Ten," should go to Palestine to carry out his methods. They do not suit the Temperate or Arctic zones.

In Palestine, even with its light clothing, a change of garments was esteemed as an honourable and a valuable present, and included a *ctoneth* or under-tunic; a *miel* an over-tunic, with sleeves, and

perhaps a *sadin*, a light wrapper corresponding to our inside clothing. Some people in that warm climate wore only the *sadin*, so as to be ready for active exercise or rapid exertion; and when the word ‘naked’ appears in the Scriptures, as applied to a Jew, it meant not actual nudity but the sparseness of garments. One must have knowledge of the East to understand some passages in Scripture, such as “I was naked and ye clothed me,” which meant the giving of extra dress, and was a token of the highest respect.

Palestine was about the size of the province of Ulster, and it was and is situated in a warm climate, where a river bath was grateful, and where a linen or calico garment was sufficient for use. The Tramp will not wear that garment, and while he uses the garments of this climate will not observe the cleanliness that they demand. He will neither shave, nor let his hair grow, as the Lord did, being a Nazarene; and he preserves an unclean-looking stubble on his chin. Some of the Tramps also affect shabby garments, as if to resemble a tramp or “pauper,” while others are just as particular about their clothing as the rest of humanity.

FACTION.

Paul writing to the Philippians warned them against those who “proclaim the Christ out of jealousy and opposition,” who speak in “a factious spirit,” and advised them that “nothing should be done in a factious spirit or from vanity.” He urged Timothy “solemnly, as in the sight of God, to avoid controversy, a useless thing, and the ruin of those who listen to it.” Paul advised the Hebrews to “obey their leaders and submit to their control, for they are watching over your souls as men that will have to give an account,” and John pointed out that “true love was not mere words but showed itself in acts.”

Where is there any love or charity, even a particle, in the language of the Tramps? For love or charity is a hall-mark of Christianity. I am constrained, therefore, to give special heed to two verses in the last chapter of Paul’s letter to the Romans:

I urge you, brothers, to be on your guard against people who, by disregarding the teaching which you receive, cause divisions and create difficulties: dissociate yourselves from them. For such persons are not serving Christ, our Master, but are slaves to their own appetites [notoriety, and the rest]; and, by their, smooth words and flattery they deceive simple-minded people.

How appropriate these words are! Since the Tramps believe in total immersion (as many do), why not join the Baptists? Since they do not believe in a special dress for the ministry why not join the Baptists? They do not do so, but create schism, “cause divisions and create difficulties,” as spoken of by Paul, and endeavour to delude and prey on the more religiously inclined members of society, to pervert them. No wonder that Paul wrote to the Ephesians – “Do not let any one deceive you with specious argument.”

WOMEN PREACHERS.

I have not hitherto referred to the Tramps allowing women to speak in public at their assemblies. That, most certainly, is not “the Jesus way,” for it never occurred with Jesus, or his disciples, and Paul is most emphatic on the point, when he says (1st Cor., 14 and 34) –

Let the women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak. (Revised version.)

The Tramps have no authority whatever – not the faintest – for women preachers. I do not here enter into the expediency of the principle, or the possible utility of women in the church as preachers. I am simply judging the Tramp Preachers by their own foot-rule.

COMMUNISM.

Some Tramps have sold their possessions to divide them; others retain their property, and take good care to hold it.

Christian Communism was tried by the Apostles and disciples. It is a most desirable thing; but when it failed with the disciples it necessarily failed with the Tramps.

The idea was discussed by Plato in his Republic; Sir Thomas More considered it in his Utopia; Robert Owen spent £60,000 of his own private fortune to advance Communistic schemes, and Saint Simon, one of the most distinguished of the French nobility, made great self-sacrifices to advance the cause; and the followers of John Humphrey Noyes in America, as well as the Moravians, tried to show a practical example of its virtue and excellence, but all these things ended in tragic failure, like several other Communistic schemes which have been tried in South America and elsewhere in later years and have failed. Christian Communism cannot exist until and unless

man reach a high ideal of perfection; for the loafer will become lazy once you take away the self-interest motive of labour; and weaknesses of character and disposition will mar the good effects of enthusiasm and self-sacrifice.

The Tramps have, alas, found that they had, as, Mr. William Irvine acknowledged at Crocknacrieve, “hypocrites,” as well as other communities.

Perhaps the highest form of Christian communism has been exemplified in the Society of Friends, for which I have always had a profound admiration. They exhibit love towards one another in a Christian spirit; and when one of their number fail in business, he is placed on his feet again. If he fail again, the same thing occurs; and then he obtains a third and last chance. No other Christian community exhibits this spirit of Christian communism in the same way. Nay, I have known an honest man who failed through stress of circumstances to be slighted by members of his own congregation, when, on the very contrary, it was their duty to come to his assistance. We might all – Protestants and Roman Catholics alike – take pattern by the Society of Friends in this and other respects, if we cannot adopt all their views. And the spirit of love, of charity, of brotherly kindness so remarkable with the Quakers, is the very opposite of the bitterness, jeers and sneers, and factious opposition of the Tramps, who have been taught by those who should know better, to mock and insult those who may happen to differ from them in opinion. Let us hope that they will in time, in the words of Paul, be

No longer like infants, tossed backwards and forward, blown about by every breath of human teaching...towards the snares of error: but holding the truth in a spirit of love, we (they) shall grow into complete union with Him who is our Head—Christ Himself.

CHAPTER XI.

DRESS OF MINISTERS.

It is scarcely necessary to touch upon the “special dress” of ministers so often referred to by the Tramp Preachers. There is no warrant for special dress of Christian teachers in the Bible any more than for that of

Christian people generally; but there was special dress in Palestine to distinguish Pharisees, Sadducees, Samaritans, and the priests of the Temple, as we all know. And we also learn from our Lord’s parable, that there was a special dress suited for special occasions like the “wedding garment,” which was obligatory.

Ecclesiastical vestments as worn at present in the eastern and western churches were unknown in the Apostolic age; nor is there a trace – hardly a trace to be found of them during the first three centuries. The long and flowing garments of the better classes in the east, associated with dignity, were in all probability worn by Christian ministers, and these remained unchanged during the next four centuries. Modern ecclesiastical costume did not begin till the ninth century, and it approached the old civil dress of the Roman official dignitaries.

The long white gown of our Episcopal ministers may be a modern adaptation of the white tunic of old, which among those of the better class had two long stripes of varying width on the tunic, which are supposed to be represented by what we now call stoles. In the Church of Rome the early bishops held positions of power in the state, and thus some of the decorations of the Roman magistracy passed into use by the clergy. These and the vestments that followed had some symbolical object and were supposed to be of some doctrinal significance. Development of these vestments occurred in the 12th and 13th centuries, and these were supposed to approximate to those appointed for the Mosaic priesthood. But neither our Lord nor his disciples wore any form of ecclesiastical garment.

There is no obligation on a Christian minister to wear any particular form of outdoor dress, but Society of itself has demanded that ministers should wear costumes befitting their profession, so as to mark out those whose business it is to minister in holy things, and

also, perhaps as a sign or token of their mission. There is no snarling or grumbling at a nurse having a particular garb; and how sweet that garb, with its snowy whiteness and cleanliness, is to the eye of a weary patient, can only be understood by those who have realized its value? That special dress immediately compels respect to one whose profession is to minister to disease and pain; it opens up a way through a boisterous crowd; it claims of itself a deference to the wearer.

In the same manner the dress of a minister marks his calling, and facilitates his movements. Yet I have known ministers not to wear clerical dress. I know ministers to-day who wear a tweed or serge suit, but the tone of society, constituted as it is, tends to consider such dress worldly and not becoming to a minister. The garb of a minister points out an accredited servant of God; and the probability is, that human society, through its respect for sacred things and the office of a minister, will continue to demand that the ministerial office show some token by which it can be recognized and receive respect.

There is no authority in Scripture for Roman alb, Anglican surplice, or Presbyterian gown. Any one may preach the Gospel as effectively and authoritatively without special dress as with it; but there are some people who think the continuance of a historical white and black garment is of service, and according to their faith be it unto them. Some of our best preachers never don a

clerical garment of any kind: others do: and so long as the Gospel is effectively preached mankind will not trouble itself about the dress.

In the Church of Rome some significance is attached to certain elaborate and costly vestments, embroidered with gold and lace; but it is absolutely certain that neither our Lord and his Apostles nor the early Church acknowledged or wore vestments of any kind. The black gown worn by Presbyterian ministers and by Evangelical Episcopal ministers (during the sermon) was first adopted at Geneva as a protest against the ornate vestments of the Roman clergy. The last clergy to wear the black gown in Enniskillen church were the late Dr. Magee, afterwards Archbishop of York, and his successor, the rector of Enniskillen, the late Rev. Samuel Greer, and the late Rev. W. Hanna Bradshaw, curate, – each of whom wore the black gown when entering the preaching pulpit.

CHARITY.

In bringing these articles to a conclusion I wish it to be understood that there should not be condemnation of a Christian movement solely because it does not happen to Proclaim our own views on religious matters. Any religious movement will have a certain amount of good about it. It shows the yearning of the soul after its God, the desire for better things, the effort of man to partake of the higher and better life.

Therefore, the movement of the Tramp Preachers would have been received with a certain amount of sympathy if it had led the drunkard to forsake his ways, the sinful to follow a new course, and the ordinary man to think more of religious things and walk as God desires he should walk. But the Tramp Preachers were not content with that; they were not reformers but revolutionaries: they wished not merely to build up but to pull down and destroy, to defame their neighbours, to exhibit an unparalleled malice against others better than themselves. and all under the pretence that they could read and understand God's Word better than other people, in which they could not and do not succeed.

We must then view them with charity, extend patience and kindness, without sacrifice of principle; and while holding fast by the "old paths," take care not to revile, persecute, or harass those who would like nothing better than such a display of want of charity, seeing that they do not pretend to exhibit charity themselves. I have never, in all my large and varied experience, known any body of people who seem so utterly destitute of charity as the Tramp Preachers, and charity is one of the hall-marks of the Jesus Christ who revealed himself to us in the Scriptures.

IF THE LORD WERE TO COME.

I have sometimes wondered if the Lord were to come on earth again, what would happen? If, for example, he visited London, where would He betake Himself, if we are to judge Him by His past? Somehow, I think. and it is only a matter of opinion, that he would not be found in the stately St. Paul's, nor in the dim light of St. Margaret's, Westminster, nor within the costly Cathedral at

Brompton, nor Argyle Square Presbyterian Church, nor the City Road Methodist Church, nor nor any of those places where His name is daily or weekly invoked; but that He would go to the East End, to Whitechapel and Wapping, to the poor and needy; and that He would say –

“God stamped his image on man, but ye herd them like beasts of the field, and make brutes of those for whom I died. Your gorgeous cathedrals are loathsome to Me in sight of the wretchedness of your own brethren. Your feasts and fasts and observances are as the outside of the cup and platter, in view of the misery of the poor, whose wretchedness ye make no sufficient effort to alleviate.”

Then some of His East London disciples might say –
“Lord, we have in Thy name fed the hungry and clothed the naked, and relieved suffering as best we could.”

To which Our Lord might reply – “Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these, ye have done it unto Me.”

Amongst the crowds who would follow Him would be the Bishop of London, just like any one else, with Nonconformist ministers, jostling for place, among his clergy – all on an equality; and the missionaries and deaconesses, and the barefooted friar and sandalled monk or the purlieus and Sisters of the Poor, alongside of the Salvation Army man and lass. Perhaps He would repair, seeing there was no mountain, to the open space and the steps the great building erected by the genius of Christopher Wren, or mayhap by the tall column, with its gilded ball, which tells of the Great Fire of London. And he might say –

“Blessed are the workers, who toil for My sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

And the people would cry Amen.

“Blessed are all ye who labour for Me, and not for the gain of office, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.”

And they would cry Amen.

And the Lord might say –

“Truly I say unto you, there be many swinging censers of silver and brass, yet My Father desires the incense of grateful and loving hearts. As far as the East is from the West, is your East of London from your West; and it will

be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for those, the stewards of wealth, who, knowing My will, see their brethren ground down to the dust and lend not a hand to save. Go ye among the people. Tell them I am come, and behold, there shall be a new heaven and a new earth. For My people shall not be destroyed, nor shall rapine and plunder exist under the shadow of the cross which ye exalt on high, and which man places on the necks of the poor to crush them in their misery.”

I could not possibly conceive of the Lord going to St. Peter’s in Rome, with all its gorgeousness and state and ceremonial; but I could fancy Him going to the yellow Tiber, to the beautiful children in the narrow streets and caressing them,

For of such is the kingdom of heaven.

And if good Francis of Assisi could be there, would not he, too, go to the poor and humble, as well as to all those who are contrite in heart?

One wonders what would the Lord do? The impress which He has left on our minds does not fit in with earthly pomp and grandeur, and “lordships” and “graces” and “eminences.” I hope I do not give any offence when I say that I cannot conceive of Him being escorted by a Cardinal, with two priests holding up his red train, any more than I could imagine Jesus being attended by an archbishop in state robes, with mitre on head, holding a crozier, and two pages holding up his train. My fancy may be at fault. My ideas may be astray, but the impression which the Christ gives me of His kingdom being not of this world in the sense of temporal state and pomp and power, and the avoidance of earthly titles of distinction, lead me to conclude that while He would receive ALL who truly love and follow him – Protestant and Catholic, peer and peasant; that His humility and meekness, His tenderness and devotion. His entire abnegation of all worldly pomp and empty ritual, would lead Him once more into the streets and fields, away from forms and ceremonies, while at the same time He would not forget the injunction – “not to forget the assembling of yourselves together,” – and He would be found on God’s Day in a place dedicated and consecrated to God’s name.

You ask where and what that place or building would be? It would just be wherever – wherever – He was truly worshipped;

wherever the hearts of the people beat in true unison with His own. For he could overlook those who had not the pure heart, and read at a glance those who really worshipped Him in spirit and in truth. And one can easily fancy His message to the troubled crowds of burthened humanity who would flock to Him – forgetting their sorrows and woes, their anxieties and heartaches, as they would hear the tender, pleading voice of the Messiah, in a stream of liquid music, say: –

*Come unto Me
All ye that labour
And are heavy-laden,
And I will give you rest.
Take my yoke upon you,
And learn of me,
For I am meek and lowly of heart,
And ye shall find rest for your souls.*

And that music is monosyllabic but for three words! Nearly all words of one syllable!

And, if I may be permitted to sermonize – He can be with us, in our churches, chapels, and homes; – He can be with us in our workshop and in the field; in the counting house and factory, if we only allow Him to accompany us, I cannot fancy Him on the race-course, any more than I could fancy Him in a drinking den. But I can mentally see the Saviour of men in any home where He is welcomed, no matter how humble, where His holy name is invoked; for “wherever two or three are gathered together in His name,” there is He in the midst of them.

The Jews always set a vacant chair at a table on the occasion of a Feast for the Messiah, if he should come. The place is. “laid” for Him. We know that He has come for all those who receive Him, and it is for us, by His grace, to retain the companionship while life lasts.

