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A table of contents for *The Churchman* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_churchman_os.php

Family Prayers. By the Rev. GEORGE CAIE. Pp. 194. Edinburgh : Gardner and Hitt.

This is a volume of prayers for five weeks, with a few prayers for special occasions, and private prayers for one week. Mr. Caie is minister of the church at Forfar. Every short service has a passage of Scripture and short prayers suitable to quite simple people. The writer is well acquainted with the English Prayer-Book. A new book of family devotions will be heartily welcomed, as the phraseology of familiar ones becomes stereotyped by repetition. The writer's language has a simple and restrained dignity, and his prayers breathe the spirit of the New Testament.

On Sermon Preparation. Pp. 230. Seeley and Co.

These eleven papers appeared originally in the *Record*, and they are by writers who are known as supporters of the principles of the Reformation, including Bishop Boyd Carpenter, of Ripon; Dean Lefroy, of Norwich; Dean Farrar, of Canterbury; Principals Moule, Chavasse, etc. It must be remembered that they are not intended to form a critical treatise on rhetoric, but are written for that great majority of young clergymen who have had no preparation for sermon preaching or public speaking at all.

The Month.

CHURCH PASTORAL AID SOCIETY.

THE sixty-first annual report of the Church Pastoral Aid Society says : "A population growing at the rate of 1,000 per day; the rich and the poor dwelling more and more apart; the parochial system, so admirable in theory, becoming more and more unequal to the demands made upon it; the increasing difficulty of obtaining volunteer help in all the great central parishes—these are difficulties which call for earnest consideration at the hands of English Churchmen, and which more than justify the existence of such a society as this as affording a means of coping with them."

The total income of the society for last year was £63,182, a decrease of £1,784, though considerably above the average of the last five years. During the year forty-nine new grants were made to forty-eight parishes, of which thirty-four were for assistant-curates, seven for lay agents, and seven for women workers. The total number of grants now on the books is 867, an increase of fourteen, representing a liability of £63,299 if all the grants were in operation. The actual expenditure of the year was £60,678. The average population of the forty-eight parishes to which new grants were made is 8,751.

BISHOP OF ST. ALBAN'S FUND.

The eighteenth annual report of the Bishop of St. Alban's Fund states that since the establishment of the fund in 1878, the population of that part of the diocese known as "London over the Border" has grown from 200,000 to at least 500,000. The year just concluded has shown the largest income yet received (£19,145); and though the increase has been mostly accounted for by legacies, the council thankfully report that the regular sources of income have been well maintained. In annual subscriptions, which are the most reliable source of support, there has been some slight increase. On the other hand, the amount from church collections has fallen from £1,662 in the previous year to £1,366.

“This is partly accounted for by the receipt of fewer extra-diocesan collections, but it probably also sadly reflects the increasing poverty of the country parishes, and also tells us of the efforts which have been made, at a great cost, to strengthen Church schools in the diocese. The council look back with gratitude to the kind support which, in these times of depression, has come from those to whom it meant a real sacrifice. They trust that no congregation will ever hesitate to send a collection because the amount will be necessarily small, since they feel that a special blessing is attached to the offerings and prayers of the poor.”

The expenditure includes a first charge of over £10,000 a year on account of grants for living agencies (twenty-three Mission clergymen, fifty-nine parochial curates, seventeen Scripture-readers, and thirty-one Mission-women), rents of nineteen Mission-buildings, and working expenses—which amounted to £529 last year. More assistance is urgently needed, the provision of suitable sites coming first among requirements for the development of new work. A sum of £1,865 was expended last year on this department, in connection with which Mr. Richard Foster's gift of an admirable site, valued at over £1,000, for a new vicarage at St. Mary's, Plaistow, is gratefully acknowledged. Grants amounting to £1,200 in all were made for one new church and for the completion of two others; and a sum of £1,300 was granted towards the debts on seven churches recently built, on condition that an equal sum should be raised locally within a year. One grant was made during the year from the Special Building Fund, which is now quite exhausted, since the instalments still to come in will not meet the present deficiency. The reports from the Mission parishes and districts continue to show steady work. In 1890 the number of baptisms was 1,310; the number of confirmed 322; of those present at Easter Communion 1,558. For 1895 the numbers were 2,936 under the first head, 758 under the second, and 3,376 under the third.

GIFTS AND BEQUESTS.

Mrs. Holt, of Bardney Hall, Barton, Lincolnshire, has given £1,000 towards the restoration of St. Peter's Church, Barton. Four years ago the same lady presented the parish with school buildings at a cost of £1,300.

An anonymous donor has just given £1,500 to the Church Army, for the purpose of providing and furnishing a lodging-home for men adjoining the society's Labour Home for the Outcast in Holloway. The St. John's Lodging Home, in Lisson Grove, which was presented to the society by one of its central staff, who are all honorary workers, has been filled to its utmost capacity every night since it was opened, nearly three years ago.

By his will, recently proved, Mr. James William Langworthy, of 15, Prince's Gardens, bequeathed £1,000 to St. Mary's Hospital, and £500 each to St. Thomas's and St. George's Hospitals, the London Hospital, University College Hospital, Charing Cross Hospital, the Ormond Street Hospital for Sick Children, the East London Hospital, and the Friedenheim Home of Peace.

The Marquis of Bute has signified his intention of contributing £10,000 to the University of South Wales, to be applied for the purposes of technical education in Wales, the sum to be handed over to the authorities as soon as required. The Drapers' Company have also promised £10,000 towards the fund for providing new buildings, and the Government have promised £20,000 on condition that an equal amount is raised by public subscription.

The Duke of Norfolk has given £13,000 for a site for a Roman Catholic College at Oxford.

THE POST-OFFICE.

The forty-second annual report of the Postmaster-General, which the Duke of Norfolk has submitted to the Lords of the Treasury, and which has just been officially published, states that, during the year ending March 31st, 1,834,200,000 letters, 314,500,000 post-cards, 672,300,000 book packets, circulars, and samples, 149,000,000 newspapers, and 60,527,000 parcels, a total of 3,030,527,000 postal packets of one sort or another, being an average of 77 per head for the population, were delivered in the United Kingdom. The Duke points out that in the year 1839, which immediately preceded the establishment of the uniform penny postage, the number of letters (including 6,000,000 franks) which passed through the post was 82,000,000, rising the next year, the first under the new régime, to 169,000,000. In 1870 post-cards were introduced, and considerable concessions in the rates for books, newspapers and samples were made. The total revenue in 1839 was £2,435,040, and the expenditure £756,999. In the year just ended the revenue was £11,759,945 postal, and £2,879,794 telegraph—£14,639,739 in all, with an expenditure of £11,007,617, leaving a net revenue of £3,632,122.

SUNDAY LABOUR IN BELGIUM.

The first question inquired into by the recently-established "Office du Travail" in Belgium has been that of Sunday labour, the first instalment of the Report on which has now appeared in a volume of over 500 pages. The present volume practically deals with all the chief industries carried on in Belgium, except transport trades, mines, and quarries. According to the *Labour Gazette* the number of typical establishments or branches of establishments selected for investigation numbered 1,459, employing 119,477 workpeople on weekdays. Of these establishments 946 employed Sunday labour to the amount of 41,679 workpeople. A distinction is made between regular and irregular Sunday labour, *i.e.*, between the establishment (of which 430 were included in the inquiry) in which workpeople are employed on every Sunday in the year, and those (516 in number) in which they are employed on occasional Sundays only. Of the above 41,679 workpeople, 13,651 (or 11·5 per cent. of the total number employed in the establishments) work every Sunday; 14,712 (12·3 per cent.) every other Sunday; and 13,316 (or 11·2 per cent.) on occasional Sundays. For the great majority (11,916 out of a total of 14,712) of those described as working every other Sunday the hours of such employment are from midnight on Saturday till six o'clock on Sunday morning.—*Record*.

 Obituary.

THE death is announced of the Rev. Thomas Green, M.A., perpetual vicar of Friezland, and Honorary Canon of Manchester. He was a Hulmeian scholar of Brasenose College, Oxford, where he graduated in the Second Class *Lit. Hum.* in 1844, having been ordained the previous year by the Bishop of Chester. He held the perpetual curacy of Bardsley from 1844 to 1849, when he was appointed to the newly-formed parish of Friezland. He remained there until 1858, when he became Principal of the Church Missionary Society's College at Islington. In 1870 he returned to Friezland, where he officiated until his death. He was elected Proctor in Convocation for the archdeaconry of Manchester in 1879, and was appointed Honorary Canon of Manchester Cathedral in 1881. He was, says the *Times*, a life governor of the Church Missionary Society, and at the same time gave an ardent support to such home Mission work as that carried on by the Church Pastoral Aid Society, the Jews, and the Irish Church Mission Societies.—*Guardian*.