

1903 Impartial Reporter

Newspaper Articles

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THE IMPARTIAL REPORTER

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Newspaper for Enniskillen, Northern Ireland

THE 'PILGRIMS' OR 'TRAMPS' PREACHING THE TERRORS OF HELL! BELIEVE THAT GOD IS WITH THEM

THE DRESS AND PECULIARITIES.

The Irwinites, or Pilgrims, or Faith Healers, or Tramps, as they are variously called, were to have left Enniskillen this week, after a stay of six weeks, but they are remaining somewhat longer. **Mrs. Betty** spoke of themselves as Pilgrims or Tramps on Monday night, but they are **generally called Irwinites**, after their leader, though, on the other hand, they say they have no leader. They think the churches have lapsed or back-slidden, and that they are called by God to rouse people to a sense of their danger from hell-fire. They hold things in common; they live morally; they, in common with most people, do not hoard gold, for most people have no gold to hoard; and they live honestly in sight of all men.

But, like most religious enthusiasts, they have their peculiarities. The use of the razor is eschewed; and those in the highest state of grace, like **Mr. Irwin** himself, did not use linen collars or shirts; but latterly the white collar has come into use again, but the razor is still avoided. Given to parades and making a joyful noise about the Judgment Day with what is called singing, and asking 'Where will you spend eternity?' they did a lot of it at Christmas time with a spirit of fervour, to the inconvenience of most people, and to some individuals in particular. They assembled for instance, on the steps of Dr. Wilson's house, in Darling Street, for choral purposes, at a time when Mrs. Wilson was in a most dangerous state, and the police had to remove them. It was expected that prosecutions would follow, but representations were made that these people rather liked being made martyrs of, so as to excite sympathy, and no summonses were issued. When Sergeant Dobson interfered in this case, one of the Pilgrims said it was better to be there than in a public-house. 'Bedad,' said the sergeant, 'there are none open, now: you couldn't get in.'

The pilgrims are total abstainers both from intoxicating drink and tobacco. A Mr. Donaldson, of Derrygonnelly, who professes to be 'saved' since he joined the body, has also as a matter of conscience, given up the sale of tobacco, in which he had had a turnover of £700 a year. He believes it to be a sin to smoke, or to sell the tobacco, and would, doubtless, feel amazed to learn that some of the best and hardest-working clergy of the day smoke, and that Spurgeon said he could thank God for a cigar. But probably the Pilgrims would say that these men, although clergy, are 'not saved,' and that Spurgeon could not have been 'a saint,' or he would not have smoked.

Indeed, they profess little respect for clergy. Although most of these people have come from the Methodist ranks, they are severe in private conversation and public statement upon 'ministers and preachers.' Hell is a word in frequent use with them. Everyone—almost everyone—is going to hell, according to their ideas.

A well-known local Tramp from the country, who describes his past life in the worst light, and owes his reform to Methodist agencies, has been severe upon the very church whence he derived the blessing. He told the Rev. Mr. Oliver, the junior Methodist minister of Enniskillen circuit, that he was 'an emissary of the Devil, and leading the people to hell.'

This religious visionary, however, does not confine his remarks to ministers of the gospel; his mind has become so depraved since his religious mind became unhinged, that he has actually stated in public meeting on the Diamond of Enniskillen that his own mother and

brother are going to hell, and that his father went to hell—a vicious slander that would justify the horsewhip. Such shocking statements show that these people are in a state of mild religious lunacy, for such wild theories are now accepted by his colleagues, not as a surprise, but as a matter of course; though to the outside world a man's mind must be truly depraved who would hold up his own mother, one of the most respectable ladies in the country, to the scorn of a motley crowd on the Diamond of Enniskillen. Indeed, such a person is not a man at all, for no MAN would be guilty of such disreputable conduct.

The possibility, too, is that at the time such a revolting statement was made by a dishonouring son, that the same mother was nursing her grandchild for the parents, who had left it in her care, while the son was thus left at liberty to defame his parents. We used to be told that the Fifth Commandment—'Honour thy father and thy mother' was the first commandment with promise—that thy days be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee,—but the new craze seems to have developed a taste for dishonouring parents.

Mr. Irwin, however, does not rebuke his 'brother.' He speaks of his own 'ungodly' parents, and with such examples some of the younger and weak-minded followers repeat tales of 'ungodly' families, and like the Pharisees of old, indicate that they are truly saved, and they only are right.

One young man, who does no harm, and perhaps may do some good by his simple common place harangues, with no teaching but full of personalities, startled some of his hearers lately by saying that when he had been in Enniskillen before preaching, praying, and conducting services, that he was not 'saved' then at all; but he thought he was at the time! but now he knew he was not; but of course now he was really and truly 'saved.' How he knows the difference is the puzzle! He imagined it once; he may imagine it again. Most probably he was right all the time, for he was always a good young man.

These people feel disappointed at Enniskillen. It has not responded to their invocations. Agricultural labourers, rural peasants, and some women have joined their ranks, in the excitement of the moment, so that on last Sunday evening a body of 50 or 60 people, chiefly from the surrounding districts, marched through Enniskillen, singing (in a way) about the Judgment Day. Their enthusiasm is manifest; only about 15 have joined in Enniskillen, and the chief of these have been seriously-minded for years, and excellent Christian workers, and in consequence their addresses and prayers are much above the low level of the ordinary rant.

The Tramps are without doubt the greatest Pharisees ever heard locally. **Mr. Irwin** likens Enniskillen to Capernaum, which would not listen to the Saviour, and thinks a similar fate is in store for Enniskillen because it will not listen to him. For he said—

CHRIST IS IN ENNISKILLEN, AND I AM HIS MESSENGER.

This is the starting point. These people all believe implicitly, like all religious fanatics, that God has called them specially to preach. Some of us may think that the Almighty would have made a much better selection if He had really had a hand in the business, for some of the Pilgrims are mighty poor stuff, and not worth listening to, except one young man who sings beautifully and prays free of rant. They are so full of fervour about the souls of other people, and are so carried away with their own earnestness and vanity, and are so self-convinced that they are the messengers of the Most High God, that they have persuaded others to believe them. We have seen such things in every age and clime; and what we see today will be repeated a year hence, as long as human nature is the same. A minister in England proclaimed himself last year to be the Messiah, and got numbers to believe him. The mad 'Mullah's' friends believed in him; the Doukabhors have their religious craze; and to this day there are thousands of adherents of Joseph Smith and the Book of Mormon. These religious crazes have their day.

The chief topic of the 'Pilgrims or Tramps', as **Mrs. Betty** speaks of her party, is speaking of the necessity of 'confession,' and the danger of going to hell. Almost every one, according to them, churches and people, are going to hell; and they cannot understand why, with such a terrible fate in store, Enniskillen folk will not listen to them and accept God's message from His ministers—namely, themselves, who do not affect 'fine linen' or clean-shaven faces. Enniskillen has its Bibles and places of worship, and its people can read, but the people are not right unless they be 'saved' after the manner of these people, and 'testify!'

Part of their programme is to 'confess,' that is, after the manner of the old Methodist love feast, to 'testify' for Christ—if we may introduce the Saviour's sacred name in this connection without being suspected of irreverence, for the sacred name is bandied about in the public street as if it were Jack or Tom, and while without intentional irreverence, yet with hurtful familiarity. The Methodist influence is seen at the 'confession,' for nearly all of the country folk commence after the Methodist manner with 'I praise God,' etc. and they give the day and date of the day on which they say they found salvation. Their earnestness is unquestionable; their sincerity is beyond doubt; but there is an immense amount of egotism and vanity; and some of the stories border on the ludicrous. One man—deprived of the sense of hearing—said he owed his state of grace to an apparition of an angel!—which lasted for a minute in broad day light. **Mr. Irwin** himself tells the story of a Scotchman, who says the Lord Jesus Himself spoke to him and said—'Jack, will you not trust in ME?' with emphasis on the last word; and others in their excited state say other things out of the common. The 'apparitions' of Lourdes', and Knock, therefore, do not stand alone.

One young man from the Derrygonnelly direction says God is not so much with him lately because he is not shouting so much as he did after he was 'saved!' He used to shout 'Glory,' and 'Hallelujah,' and 'Praise the Lord;' he says God was very near to him then, but that since he became quiet he notices the coolness of the Almighty. So he will revert to the shouting again. This man does not recognize that this is purely a matter of mental excitement. He used to 'kaly' in the olden times, and people came to 'kaly' at his own house, but now his wife and children are all 'saved,' and they are all happy. So long as our friend does not want to annoy his neighbours he is at liberty to shout the live-long day, but this state of mind generally ends in the lunatic asylum, and as there are three cases in Omagh Asylum traceable to the religious excitement engendered by these Pilgrims, the cooler some of them keep their heads the better.

(To be continued in our next.)

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**THE 'PILGRIMS' OR 'TRAMPS'
 A HOT TIME FOR ENNISKILLEN
 THE 'DAMNATION ARMY.'**

**THEIR IDEAS OF PERSECUTION
 (Continued from our last.)**

It is surprising what an effect this religious frenzy has upon young men and women of impressionable minds. So far as it keeps them morally right, and encourages them in the right path it may be commended—all religions do the same; but there are some very disagreeable features about it, and mainly its want of charity. Charity, or love, is as Professor Drummond wrote, 'the greatest thing in the world.' The spirit of this new mission, which boasts that it is the same as in our Lord's day—(when and where did women preach in those days?)—is an utter absence of Christian charity. Every one (almost everyone) is going to hell. The dignity, the loftiness, the beauty, the sympathy, the piety, the adaptability of the Christian religion does not seem to be understood by them as others understand it. They preach the terrors of hell, and heaven is the place of insurance against its burning flames. 'Ah,' said one Pharisee, one Sunday night on the Diamond, 'you will insure your life in an insurance office, but you will not insure it in heaven against hell.'

Proceeding, he said—'The Town Council talk, and they preach politics, but they will not turn to God.' This was rather hard on some local preachers, who are members, but there would be no Town Council there nor any right for that man to speak in the streets of Enniskillen if other people were like him, for he would not even record his vote at an election. 'Render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's' is not understood by some folk. This speaker is, of course, another of 'God's messengers,' he claims to be one, and the stiff-necked people of Enniskillen are such fools as not to recognise it and to hail him as a Divine teacher.

There is a hot simmering time ahead for Enniskillen folk in hell, anyway! This **Mr. Irwin**, who uses our streets, and blocks our thoroughfares with meetings, and pays no rates for their upkeep, leaving that to 'the ungodly', says Enniskillen is (with only a few exceptions) going to hell headlong. He says that the Enniskillen merchant, going to Church on Sunday morning with his Bible under his arm, is going to hell. Speaking a few nights ago on the parable of Dives and Lazarus, which some people interpret as a reality, he spoke of the rich people in Enniskillen, and said—'If you believe the rich people in this town are going to heaven I don't, for I think they are nearly all going to hell.' **Mr. Tom Betty** said the people of Water-street are going to hell which nearly tempted one resident to fight it out with **Mr. Betty**. Various speakers at the meetings say the townspeople are going to hell. They are all very cock-sure about it. No Pope ever claimed the power of loosing and binding in hell and heaven stronger than these Pilgrims or Tramps claim to know those who will go to the hot place. They do not know of such a passage evidently as 'Judge not, that ye be not judged,' nor of God's great mercy or patience, nor of the repentance of the dying thief in his last moments; for they are always judging their neighbours severely, and scarcely ever in charity; their preaching is invariably of hell; and as to God's mercy and His infinite compassion it is so seldom dwelt on that it is not remembered. Every other sentence almost of **Mr. Irwin's** oration one night had hell mentioned in it.

Take a quotation or two—'If a man wants to rise more than another he has only to tell lies, to boss the rest, and the Devil will get him a shilling a week more. The aristocracy of heaven are the people who dress cheapest; and the finest linen and the silk handkerchief is the mark of the man who is going to hell; if you see a man with fine dress and fine gold he is going to hell. Like Dives, the people who are dressing in purple and fine linen are qualifying for hell. The man who gets rich in this world is very likely to burn in the next. So his hearers might content themselves to be common men. ... The man who can enjoy the social party and not the prayer meeting is going to hell. That is the sort of preaching is wanted today.'

'But,' **Mr. Irwin** went on to say, 'it did not pay to speak the truth. However, there is a day coming when the people here—(meaning those of Enniskillen)—will be exposed before the whole world. Everyone who lifts his voice or pen against Jesus Christ or against his messengers—and I am one of them—has to answer his God.'

This is very fine bombast! With what sublime audacity this Pharisee associates himself with the Most High, and proclaims himself His messenger, with the view of striking awe into the simple-minded souls who listen. And he clinched the idea with these words—'It is awful if a man dares to lift his finger against God,' and the inference was obvious.

Let us follow the discourse of this man. 'Jesus Christ is in Enniskillen. I am not the Saviour—(Oh what an expression!)—but Jesus Christ is in town, just as sure as the devil is in the town, and I know he is here when he gets men to speak and act for him.' Then warning his hearers to be 'saved', he said—'If you make a God of gold you are an idolater, and the town is pretty well filled with idolaters.'

So then, Enniskillen, is in a bad way; but bad as it is the pilgrims like to stay in it. Poultry comes to them from the country. Having described the 'rich man' who walks along the Enniskillen street, passing you by, thinking of his gold and business, 'that man is in the devil's power,' said **Mr. Irwin**; he belongs to the damnation army.

Then **Mr. Irwin** asked his hearers to hold up their hands, those who belonged to the Salvation Army. Hands up of course. Then those who belonged to the Damnation Army. (No hands up.) Why then, he said, are you not in the Salvation Army? Because you are in the

Damnation Army.

If you see a man above his fellows he is there by trampling over his fellows; he is going to hell. **Mr. Irwin** went on to speak of a card-player who had played cards during his last hours and had gone straight to hell. There are men, said he, who close their eyes on earth who will open them in hell tomorrow morning; and he drew a pathetic picture of a dying person, and the relative closing his eyes, and that poor person would go to hell. The devil was in the North of Ireland and in Enniskillen, and they should escape this yawning hell. It was the few who would escape hell and the many would find it.

This is the sort of talk with which he is frightening the young women and the agricultural labourers and shop assistants. One young girl of 15 at a meeting rose to leave. 'I saw the devil in that girl's face, and the devil would not let her sit,' said **Mr. William Irwin** most improperly. Query, if there was a Devil at all in the case, was it not in the mind of an uncharitable fanatic who dared to utter such a slander against a girl who is a better christian than he is?

The Pilgrims know they are not liked, and for that reason they say they are 'persecuted.' One of their dogmas—for they have no doctrines—is that if you are 'really saved' you must be persecuted; and argue if you are not persecuted you cannot be saved. They roll the word 'persecution' like a sweet morsel under their tongue. One lady frequently dwells upon it. She says that because they are 'partakers of the Divine nature (!!) that therefore they are marked out as the Lord was, and must suffer persecution as He suffered; and if they are not persecuted it is a sign that they are unfaithful. She referred to the sneer of spectators at them or the withering smile of the bye-stander, and said—'There is a real joy in being despised.' When this 'wor-ruld' blames her she knows she is right; when the world says she is right she is inclined to think she is wrong. She welcomes opposition. They appear to dwell on the idea of a persecution that does not exist. No one persecutes them, as they are generally credited with being soft-headed—perhaps an unkind thing, but nevertheless this is the attitude of the public, and this is the kindest way of viewing their extravagances.

An example of the part that imagination plays in this matter of persecution was illustrated one night lately, when a recent accession made her debut as a speaker. In the course of her 'testimony,' with the usual abundance of capital I's, she said she had had some persecution. Now this lady is one of the most respected ladies in Enniskillen; and so far from having endured one particle of persecution, she has been popular and esteemed. The lady is above telling a falsehood; but under the influence of this excitement she imagined that something said or done was calculated to be persecution. It must have been so, for she has thriven on it physically; and persecution would be the very last thing that would be conceived in her case. But her imagination took advantage of her reason, and she feels happy at thinking she has suffered something for the Lord's sake!! The real truth is, the whole truth is, that her conception is utter rot. She was not persecuted, and what really did occur is no discredit to any one, except, indeed, to herself by doing that which she was not warranted in doing. She may have made a mistake, and perhaps the less said about it the better, but if any one made a mistake it was the lady who imagines that she was persecuted.

This is how they bring themselves into co-operation with God. 'Jesus Christ was the great soul-saver, and *we are partakers* of His nature. We must be soul-savers and bring others into the Kingdom.' And then the speaker (a lady) said—'Oh, that God would help us to bring souls into His Kingdom!' and further in her address,—'I want God to raise me up for His glory.' She believes that the Almighty God is specially using her, under His power, as His messenger, for that purpose; though a more incoherent speaker, with a senseless flow of sentences running one into the other, and uttered with ecstatic excitement and without any pause, could scarcely be conceived. In brief, her addresses are rambling rhapsodies of disconnected jargon and full of religious conceit.

This lady says that over the land there is 'a complaint that no one is being converted,—no striking case; the world is not ringing with the shouts of victory, and something is wrong. But if we are right with God—if we are **Irwinites**—He will use us—(more of the self-conceit)—and if we yield ourselves afresh He will come and abide with us that He may be glorified *in our lives*.'

The Devil is to them a great personality. In their 'burning' desire to abase themselves and humble themselves when they 'confess', they tell of how the Devil tempted them to do This, led them to do That, drove them one way, would not let them go another. Their power of imagination is marvellous! In the same manner the Almighty God, who is generally spoken of as a God of Terror, not as a Heavenly FATHER, full of goodness and love—is made a personality. They speak of Him as being with them, revealing Himself unto them, showing what to do, filling their hearts, &c., all of which shows a remarkable power of imagination, or credulity; for if the Lord really DID all they say, His holy influence would be manifested in the language of His people and in their walk in life! The kernel of the christian religion is LOVE. The Pilgrims may possess it, but they do not show much of it in their talk about their neighbours. On the contrary the greatest want of charity is displayed, for almost everyone is going to hell, and they assume with the most sublime audacity to take upon themselves to say who is and who is not going to hell, as if the Almighty Creator of Heaven and Earth sent them confidential messages as to their fellow human creatures.

(To be continued in our next.)

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**THE 'PILGRIMS' OR 'TRAMPS'
 IMAGINE THEY ARE INSPIRED.
 NO TRAINING TO PREACH.**

THEY WEAKEN FAMILY TIES

The Pilgrims imagine that each of them has the gifts of preaching and teaching. They do not concede that you serve God where you are placed; you must leave your place and family and go out with them. And so it is, that they have a number of unlettered people, full of zeal but without prudence, trying to teach and preach, but without the gift, repeating the prosy sayings they have heard from others. They think God will give them the power to speak and teach, but for so far the Almighty has not done much in this direction. It is a question if one of them know how or when the Synoptic gospels were written, whether before or after the fall of Jerusalem; whether our Lord spoke Aramaic or Greek, or was bilingual; or whether the last of the Canonical Gospels was written by John the Apostle or John the elder, or the circumstances under which it was written; or whether they know anything at all of the Book they profess to expound. Most likely some of them think it came from Heaven, bound in Morocco. But as to an exposition of the Holy Scripture it is a rare occurrence; they do not confine themselves to a text, and discover all its meaning—they ramble over the whole gamut of the Testament, without proof for their wild statements.

Mr. Irwin and Mr. Betty, Belnaleck, are the leaders, if the phrase leaders be admitted. Perhaps it is a case of *primus inter pares*. Yet **Mr. Betty** wears a white linen collar, and a decent suit of clothes. The ladies affect severity of attire. How far that may go has scarcely yet been defined; but it has gone so far that feathers are discarded and a straw sailor hat is the regulation head covering.

The craze has carried women and men out of their usual senses, and while, as has been said, any movement that does good, that makes men and women live better, is to be commended, it is the excessive language, the empty platitudes, the self-conceit, bad taste, the baneful influence, the Pharisaic assumption of 'Stand aside, I am holier than thou,' which are the characteristics of Irvinism. Speaking one night to an audience, he told them they were sunk in sin. 'You are lepers,' he said. 'For you to touch me would be to defile me.'

This is the person who claims to be a follower of the friend of the Magdalen. Yet he thrives on the excitement and his burning zeal impresses itself on any who listen. He is not at all of the 'Beloved Apostle' type; he is rather of the fiery Peter nature, and however amiable in private life, as a speaker is a rather repugnant type of Christian, with a hard and harsh voice; rugged, denunciatory, argumentative, Pharisaic, self-sacrificing, full of earnestness, consumed by the idea that he is God-sent, and that he has a great mission to fulfil. **Mr. Irwin** is absolutely adamant in his manner. No sweetness or graciousness. Nothing winning or attractive. And yet because of the zeal and power of his speech, and his threats of hell, he obtains adherents, and fathers and mothers will deplore the day their children were upset by this last phase of religious fanaticism. In fact, take away 'hell' from the addresses of these people and there is nothing left. They have no teaching power.

These people do not seem to have a sense of the ludicrous. A countryman came to do business with an Enniskillen gentleman, and conversing with the gentleman on the subject of the interview on a cold day, said he must pray to the Lord about it. Sinking on his knees before the fire, the man prayed to himself, but the gentleman could not help remarking that the hands were kept moving in front of the fire all the time.

A few Pilgrims went into an Enniskillen photographer's. The artist had occasion to go into the dark room, and on his return to the room was amazed to find the 'sisters' on their knees praying. In the days of our Lord some people prayed in the corners of the streets that they might be seen by men; now it is done in private houses as well as in the public meeting. The fervour of their religious ecstasy carries all before it.

One feature in connection with these people is one of the saddest. Their idea is that a 'saint' cannot remain in the 'wor-ruld' but must go out to preach the—(i.e., their)—Gospel, and hunt for 'saints.' To this end they give up their situations. **Mr. Irwin**, himself, gave up a comfortable business. He had £300 a year when 20 years of age. A few others have given up a lucrative business connection. Some have sold their farms to join the craze, and most likely other farms will be in the local market from the same cause. No matter how uneducated—and some of them cannot write or speak correctly—they believe they are called on to preach, and 'they must go out.' For this reason they are prepared to suffer. And just as some Roman Catholic monks take vows of poverty, and others take vows of silence, and others shave their heads, so these people go out in a spirit of self-sacrifice, and they do sacrifice; home comforts, and enjoy the thought that they are denying themselves for Christ's sake.

Knowing themselves to be uneducated and 'poor instruments,' they rely on God to teach them what to say, and they quote the Apostles, who were poor men, but 'these folk' are much below the level of Matthew, Luke, or John. They, at least, though Hebrews, could write their Greek, and good Greek. Many Pilgrims cannot even write plain English. And as for Paul, he was a scholar, capable debater, and 'miles ahead' of the ordinary 'Tramp.' The 'Tramps,' to show that they are thoroughly and entirely saved, must forsake 'the world,' and go about from place to place, preaching, because the Lord did.

They put themselves in His place, and consider that the state of things existing now justify them copying the Master's methods 1900 years ago. Why not copy His dress also? And walk from place to place? Bicycles, which are largely used by the 'Pilgrims,' were not used by the Master. Guns are put aside now and rowboats because the Master did not use them, and newspapers are not read because He did not read them, but neither did He use a bicycle. He rode on an ass, but the modern 'Pilgrim' bestrides a Humber or Rover; and instead of reading the Prophet in the original Hebrew, or the sermons of the Master in the original Greek manuscripts, reads them from a well-bound Bible, which is in every case very well read; though it is doubtful if the Sermon on the Mount—the great charter of Christianity—be much heeded.

One effect of the Pilgrims' missions is to weaken family ties. The love and duty which binds parent to child is disregarded. They teach that if the child be led by 'God'—(that is, by them)—he must leave his parents, and even in case of a funeral in the home, the 'saved' one must 'let the dead bury their dead' if they could do anything for an immortal soul during that same time. Only too many instances have occurred of children leaving their homes and setting aside the duty they owe to their parents and to the home, denounce their own relatives as 'going to hell.'

We have already quoted one case of a prominent Pharisee of this cult outraging the memory of his own mother and of his own brother. They seem to feed on these revolting details, and to look for examples of what they call 'ungodliness' and sin. The case which occurred at Lack only a short time ago will be vivid to the minds of our readers, where a 'Tramp' illustrating some point, said that a certain neighbour woman had gone to hell.

Her son demanded of the foul-mouthed fellow why he had done so.

'Jesus Christ told me to do so,' was the impudent reply.

The son very properly gave the Pilgrim a good thrashing; and when the slanderer appealed to the magistrates, they properly told the son that he had not given the fellow half enough.

In another case, a father heard that one of these mountebanks had referred to a grievous death in his own family, though no name had been mentioned, with the view of affording an example of the 'ungodliness' of parent and child. This Pharisee apparently was copying the methods of another brother who had defamed his parent. The father in this case accordingly wrote to the man, and the answer he received was an evasive one, that neither the person's name nor the place had been mentioned. The reply that went back to the defamer contained this passage:—

I wish, therefore, to give you due warning that while I must try to forgive this daring piece of effrontery on your part—(altogether inconsistent with the Christian character)—and your wanton wounding of another's most tender feelings—that if you dare repeat it, an outraged father's feelings will visit on you such treatment as the case deserves. You are quite at liberty to preach, but not to malign, defame, or slander your neighbour. You may play the Pharisee, but not drag in the beloved and honoured dead.

One parent in Enniskillen noticed one of these people enticing his son to the meetings, and to the surprise of the enticer told his son that he wished him to avoid the meetings, that there were three Protestant churches in Enniskillen for him to go to, and that there were isms and divisions enough without seeking to establish another.

But, in truth, the young men who attend the meetings are few. Young and old women form the bulk of the meetings. However, there is danger wherever they are. One earnest young man had given expression to the hope that all the churches in Enniskillen would unite for a revival. But a loud-voiced lady showed that they would not touch the churches. 'The Lord will work in *His own church*' was the pointed reply.

When some of these goody-goody people think of '*giving up all*' to '*win souls for Christ*,' as they put it, they do not think of what a low value they place upon the service, or how ridiculous they make themselves. They mean well: but their position is preposterously absurd. They say the Lord calls them, when they yield to their own wishes. They say they 'forsake all' and go out for Him, after the manner of Peter, when they have little to forsake.

'Lord,' said Peter, '*we have left all and followed thee.*' Now, what had Peter to leave but an old boat, that probably remained with his family, and a few nets. And he made a fuss about it as if the Master did not know. Some of these people do the same, with little to leave, but it is only fair to say, that there are a few who have given up, in their spirit of enthusiasm, comparative comfort to rough it.

Let us examine this matter in a sensible way. Some young man has been selling tea or hardware, or setting potatoes, and some young lady who has been selling yards of ribbon, think it would be well to go out to '*work for the Lord*,' and in a spirit of self-sacrifice '*go out for Him.*' And because they like the idea, they imagine the Lord has called them to His work. How very poorly the Lord is served at times with such feeble instruments! If the Lord had a hand in it He would chose a Luke or Paul or Peter or John. He never chose a woman to preach, in any case.

Then they imagine the Lord himself inspires them to speak, tell them to speak, tells them what to say, &c., when whatever we know of inspiration tells the direct contrary.

This young man or young woman spends four years of apprenticeship in learning properly how to weigh tea or sugar, and measure ribbon or pack up paper. Four years! And though four years be required for that trifle they think that without any preparation, without the necessary foundation of an education, and careful preparation for at least as much time as is given to learning how to sell tea or linen, they are competent to teach the subject of all others which requires the very best information, and the most careful study.

A Presbyterian student requires seven years to prepare him for the pulpit; a Church of Ireland student requires six years; a Methodist probationer requires four years, and he does not require a degree, but a Pilgrim can obtain all the preparation he or she wants without any years of study at all. That subject which occupies the best thoughts of men and perplexes the minds of the ablest at times, these neophytes fancy they can master in a few minutes. Some uncharitable person might suggest that it was some malign influence which leads them to this absurd position? Or is it the crass folly of their leaders, who show such an example of not understanding the very truths they profess to teach.

No person can profess to *thoroughly* understand and teach the New Testament who does not understand the language in which it was written. Many do teach it, and teach it effectively, who do not understand Biblical Greek; but although good teachers or preachers they

could not in truth profess to teach it 'thoroughly,' without a knowledge of Greek, and without a knowledge of Greek any Protestant minister or Roman Catholic priest is handicapped. Yet the Pilgrim will step in when angels fear to tread.

The Word of the Lord is plain, no doubt, but the Word of the Lord was not written in the English language; and with all 'the plainness' the ablest minds have not been able to arrive at the same conclusion about its words. Since that is so, how poorly are they equipped to understand the Word, who, unable to read it in the original, can scarcely read it correctly in the translated version.

These people will pay a man specially as an expert to plough land; or a girl to make butter; they will go to a tailor for clothes; and to a dressmaker for frocks; or a shoemaker for boots. They go to these as specialists, because they know much better about these respective articles than they can possibly know. Yet the Word of God that requires an infinitely higher education and talent to grapple with, they proclaim requires no proficiency to teach, and no years of close study, and they profess to master that which demands the greatest skill and erudition. The ploughman requires training, and the shoemaker an apprenticeship, but to understand and teach the Word of God requires neither! Oh, the supreme folly of it all!!

We must apply our common sense to this matter. If the Pilgrims were not so bumptious, so self-assertive, about professing to understand the whole of the Lord's will, people would not heed them; **but in their eyes Puncheon and Spurgeon were wrong; Rev. John McNeill; Rev. Hugh Price Hughes were wrong; George Clarke, Rev. Henry Montgomery, Rev. Crawford Johnson,—all these and other men were all wrong, and the Pilgrims only are right!**

Is it not absurd on the face of it?—That these men and women of little education, and no training, having served no apprenticeship to the study of God's Word, while they do serve three or four years to a worldly calling—should be able to teach and expound what tasks the greatest minds of the century.

There they are so abnormally uncharitable; and so wrapped up in their idea of 'persecution' that they have brought themselves to believe that they are persecuted, and, therefore, that they are like the Blessed Lord Himself! How preposterously absurd! Nay more, these poor deluded well-meaning fanatics, believe they are partakers of the Lord's Divine nature!

There is no need for saying anything more; nor of argument. All argument in their case is useless. They must be allowed their little craze, as one of the penalties we pay for freedom of thought and speech; but let them repeat their vilification of the living and the dead, and the law must be brought into play to put an end to wholesale slanders.