

favor that you publish in full this communication, although it is somewhat longer than I should perhaps, ask space for.

WM. T. WILKINS,
Clerk of Kingston Presbytery.

A HOPEFUL OUTLOOK.

Rev. Dr. Clifford Discusses Religious and Ecological Questions.

Rev. Dr. Clifford, of Westbourne Chapel, London, England, passed through Canada on his way home from a tour around the world. At Montreal he was interviewed by a *Witness* reporter and gave expression to his opinions on several important questions. Dr. Clifford is an active force in London life and his views are based on a wide experience of the conditions prevailing in the English metropolis.

SUCCESSFUL AGENCIES AT WORK.

Asked whether the world is growing better. Dr. Clifford replied:

"Better; yes, growing better all the time. That is what I have seen; that is what I know. There is evil, and their will be evil, I suppose, as long as we are men. But note this, there never was in the history of the world so many agencies for the amelioration of unhappy conditions and relations, for the coping with every form of evil, for the building up of character. Not only multiplication, but adaptation to the need. That is the remarkable thing. The agencies are suited. They are more permanent and effective. They are more in earnest. Now, coincident with all this, there is the evidence of evil. But the good prevails against it. The good restricts the evil; keeps it in check. Moreover, there is a large note of equity being struck all over the world. More and more the appeal is to righteousness. The desire for right and equitable relations ever grows."

THE SUPREME TEST.

"Do you find that the appeal is to dogma or to ethics as the supreme test?" was next asked, and the reply was equally emphatic:

"The test to-day is not any longer dogma, except in those quarters in which the desire is to buttress up priestism and priestcraft; the test is character and manhood. This is in keeping with the new Testament teaching. Christ demanded, not a dogma, but a character. This is what I have been preaching. The world—that is to say, considered in the large aspect—is coming to this position—character and conduct—this, in the last analysis, is the test of Christianity. Now, men are more and more willing to range themselves under this standard. The appeal is ethical at last—no longer is it believed that dogma can ever be the final test."

REGIME OF PRIESTISM

A significant utterance of Dr. Clifford's was on the tendency of High Churchism towards Rome:—

"The High Church Party in the English Church of England have long desired to exalt dogma for the sake of conserving their own power. Hundreds of churches in the national establishment to-day have so exalted ritual and dogma that they are Romanist in all but the acknowledgement of the supremacy of the Pope. They have tried to introduce the Apostles' Creed in the state schools. We have fought against that—that is to say—the Union of the Free Churches of which I am the incoming President—and we will ultimately triumph over this attempt to get in the thin edge of the wedge of dogma. The High Church Party is in alliance with the Roman Catholics, and the latter have the support of the Irish members in the House of Commons, but the Nonconformist and Puritan sentiment of the people has to be reckoned with. I predict that the next twenty-five years will, religiously speaking, be a critical period in English history. The High Church Party are determined to leave no stone unturned to bring in the regime of priestism; but there is a puritan sentiment amongst the people which, when aroused, will give a good account of itself."

In describing municipal life in England Dr. Clifford said there was a high standard of honor maintained and they did not know much about corrupt practices by public bodies. Ontario's system he greatly admired, and earnestly hoped that Canada would not follow the

footsteps of the United States in erecting colossal monopolies. In that country, though religion and politics are free; but industry is still in the feudal state. "The United States, at this late day, is still feudalized, industrially speaking. The contrast between the wealthy corporation and the masses dependent upon it for the right to labor is apallingly sharp." He foresees a time when the wage system will have to give place to collectivism. "Not immediately, of course. It took centuries to abolish feudalism in European countries, it may take centuries yet to abolish the wage system. But abolished I think it will be."

DISAPPOINTMENT.

BY HENRY BECKWITH, M.A.

The first deep impression of the Unseen Power comes to many from disappointment. A young man of brains and industry is apt to fancy that he can arrange his own career. Like the youth who met St. Philip Neri and made so artless a disclosure of his hopes, he has the whole route mapped out from stage to stage. The plan of campaign seems to promise certain victory. Each step on the ladder appears inevitable. Then, after part of the scheme has been successfully carried out, there comes an astonishing failure. A step in the ladder suddenly gives way. Yet all he seems to require and to insure success; all the conditions are there, and nothing has been forgotten. Nothing, that is to say, but God!

A FATAL OMISSION.

The young schemer has left out of his account a tremendous factor. God has not been "in all his thoughts." He has said, "I will do this, I will win that other; hard work will do it; brains will do it." And he has put forth his utmost powers, such as have commanded reward on former occasions. But the Unseen Hand steals out of darkness, and thrusts back the eager, confident aspirant; nay, perhaps hurls him to the ground. Then he lies bruised and beaten, and, above-all, perplexed. What has done it? he asks, still refusing to think of any but material causes. He goes over the facts again and again. "I was the best student, yet another has taken the medal. I was the strongest candidate, but my rival had a large majority. I never worked harder or better in my life, and I *should* have got it! Everybody said I was sure to succeed. It is perfectly inexplicable." And so on, perhaps for weeks or months, with the heavy aching sense of undeserved failure. It is a common mistake to think that a beaten man feels better when he can assure himself that he ought to have won. Alas, there is just the sting! To hear from all around you that you were certainly the most deserving applicant for some post which you have not gained, is that a consolation? Is it not rather a deep wound? Even Shakespeare may be respectfully challenged here—

"Tis not in mortals to command success;
But we'll do more, Sempronius, we'll deserve it."

Is it really more? Is merit more consolatory than success? The successful man at all events will not grudge such comfort. But surely, to have lost a thing which you deserved to win, and which, therefore, was by all rules of justice yours, fills the mind with bitter amazement. A young man thus tried is apt to rush into cheap cynicism, and vex all who are his best friends by exhibitions of temper and petulant conceit. And there is nothing sadder than the disappointed man who mopes and grumbles away the rest of his life. Let me add, there is also nothing more tedious, even to one's dearest, than such incessant complaints. If you wish people to flee away from you as a bore, if you would have smiles die away at the sight of your discontented face, then be a grumbler and a cynic.

THE PEACEABLE FRUIT.

But there is a better way than this. Let disappointment lead us to God, by reminding us that we are in His hands, not in our own. This would be a "peaceable fruit" to grow upon the branches of a beaten life. When we feel the firm hand repulsing us from some desire that was dear to us, let us instantly recognize it as the Hand of God. And then we shall not resist what we know to be the Irresistible. We shall not stand angrily amazed and bitter of heart; but we shall fall