

manent message to the heart of man. He is above all a preacher's preacher, and the dainty volumes containing his sermons, published in Everyman's Library, should be on the shelves of all who desire to know how a sermon should be modelled to remain in the mind and heart of its hearers."

Our Noble Standard.

In a recent speech, Mr. Roblin the Premier of Manitoba, said: "The Provincial Government has decided that after the first of January, 1907, every school of this Province must have a Union Jack flying during school hours. The Government will provide the flag, and it will be the duty of the trustees to replace any such flag that may have become useless. The rule of the department will be that any school teacher or board of trustees that neglects or refuses to float a Union Jack in school hours will forfeit their right to the public grant. I trust in making this move we will not be misunderstood. We welcome the various peoples that come to our Province, who are born under foreign flags, who speak a different tongue, and we give them the benefit of our civil laws; endow them with civil rights; the benefit of our criminal law; the free education of the schools, all of which are the outcome of the civilizations and benefits that follows the Union Jack, and, I think, the man who comes from a foreign country in order to better his circumstances, and objects to perpetuating the glories of our flag, who declines to have his children infused with British patriotism, is a man that is undesirable." This is refreshingly plain speaking, there is no doubt whatever as to Mr. Roblin's meaning. Some of his political opponents object to such language on the ground that it might hurt the feelings of some immigrants from the United States. We do not agree. These people are not fools. They know that they are coming to Canada where they intend to live and to obey our laws. In their own country all children who attend the common schools have every morning to stand up and swear allegiance to the Stars and Stripes and to the Republic one and undivided to which the flag belongs. The people brought up under such conditions will appreciate and respect the new land which reverences the flag which braved a thousand years the battle and the breeze, and which floats over all that is most free and most loyal in the world.

Trial by Combat.

The "Church Times" has a memorandum on the contents of the early episcopal registers of the Diocese of Salisbury, beginning with Simon of Ghent, who was consecrated at Canterbury on 20th October, 1297. While full of interest, especially showing the practical use made of Rural Deans in those days, there is one illustration of the change of habits which deserves general notice, and that is the legal proceeding known as wager of battle. The cause of action arose as follows: In 1142 King Stephen seized the castle of Sherborne from Roger, then Bishop of Old Sarum. The castle remained in the possession of the Crown until 1337, when King Edward III. granted it to the Earl of Salisbury. Bishop Wyville seized the opportunity of the castle being thus transferred to a subject to bring a writ of right for the recovery of this old residence of the Bishops of the diocese. The case, after innumerable delays, came before the Court of Common Pleas at Westminster; but the Earl of Salisbury claimed to defend his right to the castle by single combat, and the question at issue was, therefore, bound to be decided by trial of battle. This was in 1355, and in that year Bishop Wyville issued his mandate to the Archdeacon of Berks (and doubtless to the other Archdeacons in like fashion, though this is the only one entered) directing him to order all the clergy, both regular and secular, to celebrate

Masses, and to ask the prayers of their congregations for the success of the Bishop's champion in a forthcoming trial by combat. More particularly was this to be done on the morrow of the Feast of the Purification and the subsequent octave, when the duel was expected to take place. Bishops being, nominally, at least, men of peace, and apparently also nobles of high degree, were spared the chances of single combat and were allowed to employ champions upon whose success or failure in mortal combat the title to land was decided. On the appointed day two champions duly appeared, and were subjected to the usual preliminary examination for the detection of illegal weapons or unallowed armour. This examination resulted in the Bishop's champion being found wearing several "rolls of prayers and charms," and this caused the combat to be deferred. The adjournment gave time for the disputants to arrive at a compromise; the Bishop paid the Earl 2,500 marks, and the latter allowed judgment to go by default. Strange as it may appear it was not until the nineteenth century was well advanced that this strange, and to our ideas, barbarous legal proceeding was abolished. It had fallen into disuse and was practically forgotten until an appeal to the "wager of battle" was entered by a man accused of murder. The victim was a young girl who had been found drowned under cruel circumstance and pointing strongly against the accused. He protested his innocence and claimed his right. There was no combat, of course, the law was changed, the accused was released and disappeared. Years afterwards he was reported to be living in New York, an old man and the last to escape his doom by this bold appeal.

British Postage.

A recent visitor to Canada, writing to the "Speaker," deploras the high rate of British postage "as playing into the hands of the publishers in the United States, to the serious injury of our own trade with and interest in the Dominion." He further notes the fact that flooded with United States literature instead of British, the spirit of the former must be more or less imbibed by the readers; while convinced apparently, that were the conditions equal, British serials would have the preference. He pleads for the "binding together still more firmly the chain of Empire by affording an equal opportunity to the publications of the Mother Land."

"Open Access" in Public Libraries.

We are accustomed to hear warm commendations from those who have visited public libraries in the United States, upon the wide liberty of choice permitted to the readers there. From conservative England we learn that there, too, the public is treated with confidence, manifestly not abused. The librarian of Islington public libraries gives us in a late number of "The Library World" his own experience of "open access" to the books, entering freely into points of detail of use only to those in authority. We learn, however, that "an inherited belief in the general ignorance and incapacity of the public at large" has passed away; and that with time have come much simplification and modification of the "open access" methods. Two points are emphasized—the sheer impossibility of depending upon "close supervision" to prevent wrong-doing; and the fact "that close supervision is absolutely unnecessary in the case of at least 98 per cent. of the frequenters of public libraries, and it has always seemed to me to savour of an insult to the great majority of well-behaved citizens, to plan their libraries like prisons for the pitiful purpose of occasionally spotting a wrong-doer." Will not Canadians respond to being placed "upon honour" equally with their British and American contemporaries?

The XXIII. Psalm.

We would earnestly commend the very beautifully worded rendering of the 23rd Psalm by Miss Marie Corelli, which appeared in our issue of the 20th September, to the careful consideration of the members of the Hymnal Committee, and greatly hope that they will see their way clear to its inclusion therein.

RELIGION IN FRANCE.

We are apt to think of the state of religious affairs in France as deplorable and to believe that the actions of the French Government and of the Curia have combined in putting an end to the perfunctory appearance of religion in that country. For very many years we have heard of its lifelessness. Mme. Waddington tells of an interview which she and her husband had with the late Pope, in which that astute Pontiff questioned them as to the state of religion in France, questions which they, as Protestants, evaded, until he desired them to speak without reserve. "We told him the women all went to church and sent their children to the Catechism, but the men are indifferent, if not hostile, and once the boys have made their first communion they never put their foot in a church." All our information coincided with these statements, but there was always the saving clause of the small band of sincerely religious men. We hoped that in time of trial this band would assert itself, and although we have heard very little of them, gradually they are coming to the front. Canon Scott Holland and his friends in England are advocating in England a Christian socialism in periodicals like the "Commonwealth," but the French Roman Catholic Church has kept pace, if it has not preceded, them in this field. There they draw attention to the sections of labour where the need of mutual action is needed for improvement. A writer in the Dublin "Review" says: "The Action Populaire is the united effort of a number of distinguished publicists and sociologists to encourage and promote all healthy forms of association among all classes of workers. It seeks to follow the advice of the present Pontiff and to take its stand within the domain of practical matters where an understanding with all men is easy." This society publishes booklets three times a month, of which hundreds of thousands are sold and thus the French Church is becoming a genuinely social and institutional Church not in large cities or business centres only, but in country parishes. "Of exceptional interest," the writer says: "Are the accounts given by various curés in different parts of the country of their efforts to promote the local welfare. In many cases the result has been the complete transformation of the parish." "They give the priest an opportunity of coming into contact with many whom he could not otherwise reach, and they become in his hands instruments of Christian regeneration." Then we have the Sillon, which, since 1899, has started and spread over the cities and towns, being in character very similar to the Y. M. C. A. of this continent. Count Albert de Mun, the leader of the clerical party, is the head of the Catholic Association of Young Frenchmen, and all these societies and associations, even when undenominational, as some of them are, work for the promotion of religion in France, and in France almost all are professedly Roman Catholic. Consequently, we think, that instead of religion dying out in France under the new law it will spring up purified and invigorated and infused with a strong manly strength. Writers well informed on the political side, like a Roman Catholic correspondent of the "Church Times" predict dire consequences through the need of parochial associations under the law to retain the parish churches, as these have been forbidden by Rome, but French ingenuity may be trusted to get over the difficulty.

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