

state of things. The same is true also of the great Methodist Church in the Dominion. Generally it may be said that a kinder and more fraternal feeling between the Churches is more prevalent than ever before. The interchange of pulpits in this city, effected by the Toronto Ministerial Association last Sabbath, is a gratifying evidence of the fact. There is no reason why such interdenominational exchanges should be confined to the cities. Where there is a will there is a way, and the same thing might occasionally take place throughout the Dominion. These pulpit interchanges are a cheering indication of the growth of Christian cordiality, and will help to extend the desire for union, and pave the way for its accomplishment.

What is observable in Canada is seen to be still more pronounced in the Evangelical Churches in the United States. The Episcopal, Presbyterian, Reformed, Congregational and Lutheran Churches are all turning their attention to what will soon be one of the most important practical questions before the whole Christian community. Each body accepts without controversy the principle of union. That in itself is a great step gained. Bases of union are of the first importance, and will require patient and exhaustive discussion. Many organizations, forming part of the indispensable machinery of existing Churches, now rivals, more or less friendly, will have to be brought into harmony. Sacrifices, both personal and denominational, will be called for, and care must be exercised that there be no sacrifice of justice and honour. Difficulties do not occur in the earlier stages of union negotiations. It is when the adjustment of details and making provision for practical work are reached that trouble arises. Then, in addition to the general desire for union, the valuable qualities of forbearance, generosity and delicate tact are especially requisite. On these and on all matters concerning the negotiating Churches there ought to be ample consideration, full, free and unrestrained discussion before final conclusions are reached. Better a thousand times that all possible grounds for radical and irreconcilable differences of opinion should be removed, and all ambiguities calculated to occasion subsequent misunderstandings, should be cleared away prior to the consummation of union, than that they should afterward emerge to disturb the peace, and endanger the perpetuity of a United Church. If the blessed union, for which an ever increasing number of Christian hearts long, is to be realized, and there are strong reasons to believe that its accomplishment is possible, it will not be on the basis of uniformity, but on the foundation which the Evangelical Alliance has taken for its motto. In essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; in all, charity.

#### HOME RELIGIOUS TRAINING.

THERE is apparently no end to the ecclesiastico-political controversy as to religious teaching in the public schools. On this question wise and good men differ, as do others who can scarcely be so classified. They continue to wrangle and pay controversial compliments to each other. Perhaps good may yet come out of the contention, but it is hardly visible at present. There are matters pertaining to the religious education of the young about which Christians of all denominations are practically at one. It is never for a moment questioned that every child should receive religious instruction. That duty is clearly laid down in the Word of God, which is the only rule of faith and practice. Professing Christians generally recognize that the child should be taught, for its own sake and for the sake of society, that moral and religious training is essential for the safety of the individual and for the well-being of the commonwealth. Neither is it doubted that the Christian Church should devote special attention to the religious instruction of the young. Within the last century the Church has accomplished a great work in this most promising sphere. Attention is constantly directed to the consideration of methods by which this important and pressing work may be still more efficiently promoted, and never before was there a greater consecration of Christian effort to the service of God in the training of the young than at the present time. Much real and lasting good has resulted from the faithful and systematic labours of the Sabbath school. Greater results still ought to be looked for and prayed for from this universally recognized Christian agency.

Another point equally clear, concerning which

there is no controversy, is that it is the primary duty of Christian parents to see that their children are faithfully instructed in the truth of Christ. In the administration of the sacred ordinance of baptism they acknowledge this obligation. Exhortations to the discharge of their duty, which cannot be delegated, are frequent, and plain as they are frequent, in the pages of Scripture. How is the duty generally discharged? Is there systematic and regular Christian instruction in the family? When duty to be done is irksome, it is not difficult to invent excuses for its neglect. In this particular it is easy to allege that, what with their week-day lessons, attendance at Church and Sabbath school, the children are too exhausted to give their attention to Scripture teaching in the quiet seclusion of the family circle. It is sufficient to give them a distaste for religion altogether. Let them read their Sunday school library books, or whatever comes handy. No one with a modicum of common sense would for a moment insist on making home instruction in religious truth burdensome to the children. Home teaching need not be conducted with all the rigidity of method and discipline necessary in public schools. It may and ought to be quiet, varied and informal, but natural and real. The Bible is a book of exhaustless variety, and in it will be found ample scope for all occasions and for all moods. What is chiefly required is that such instruction should be regular, earnest and affectionate. Line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little. Such faithful parental work would be a present joy and productive of inestimable future blessings. Duty and affection urge to its performance. Parents who are faithful in this respect will not fail of their reward. Their children will rise up, and call them blessed.

#### Books and Magazines.

**HARPER'S MAGAZINE.** (New York: Harper & Brothers.)—The May number opens with a very interesting and readable paper, finely illustrated with portraits, on "The Recent Movement in Southern Literature," by a rising Virginian poet, Charles W. Colman, Jun.; "Through the Caucasus," by Ralph Meeker, is continued, and affords reading of great interest. Charles C. Marshall writes on "The American Mastiff." Charles Dudley Warner's "Mexican Notes," and Professor Richard T. Ely's "Social Studies" are well worthy of perusal. Good and numerous engravings, ably written serials, poetry and the customary departments give special attraction to an excellent number of this standard magazine.

**SCRIBNER'S MAGAZINE.** (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.)—"The Development of the Steamship," by Com. F. E. Chandler, of the U. S. Navy, gives a vivid sketch of the marvellous revolution in steam navigation within the present century. The engravings of the engines of Henry Bell's *Comet*, and those of the latest construction, afford a very suggestive contrast. Professor Schaler's paper on "Forests of North America" is both an able and practical one. Other very interesting papers are "Marse Archie's Fight," a dialect story of the war; "An Ocean Graveyard," by J. Macdonald Oxley, of Ottawa, and "The Manse: A Fragment," by Robert L. Stevenson. Mr. Bunner's "Story of a New York House" concludes with the present number, and "Seth's Brother's Wife" is continued. The engravings are numerous and finely executed.

**ELEMENTS OF ENGLISH.** An Introduction to English Grammar, for the use of schools. By George Hodgdon Ricker, A.M. (Chicago and Boston: The Interstate Publishing Company.)—The author says: This little book has been written with the hope of making this branch of school study less difficult, more attractive and more useful to young pupils. The work is elementary. It is designed to be used in the lower grades of schools, and to prepare the pupil for the study of larger works on language and grammar. It consists of a series of lessons, treating of the parts of speech and their uses, of the simple sentence in its various forms, fully illustrated by practical exercises composed of common words in daily use. . . . It also contains practical lessons on spelling, capital letters and punctuation. Directions for letter-writing are briefly and clearly stated and illustrated. The principles of analysis and synthesis are concisely stated, followed by brief methods of parsing.

#### THE MISSIONARY WORLD.

##### OUR WORK FOR MISSIONARIES.

The great Apostle of the Gentiles heard a cry from Europe, "Come over, and help us." He obeyed the call, and we, even in this remote age, may be thankful that he did. But he himself utters a cry in several of his Epistles—a cry which, doubtless, his readers gladly heeded, and which again we may be thankful that they did; for, sustained by the prayers and sympathies of his fellow-Christians, Paul was enabled to bear the burden of the Churches, and to deliver his testimony even as a prisoner in the Rome of Nero.

That human plaint, or, as we may surely call it, that apostolic command, "Brethren, pray for us," still rings through the world. Our apostles, the men and women whom we have sent forth, are calling upon us to intercede for them, to make their cause ours, and to talk to them of God when we are talking to Him for ourselves. As they preach the incarnate God in the bazaars of India, as they present a living and personal God to the semi-atheistic Chinese, as they face the horrors of African barbarism, or try to train the infant churches of Madagascar, and preserve them from the wily teachings of the Jesuits; in their multifarious work, and amid their sore trials and discouragements, living oftentimes apart from all elevating and ennobling influences; with their stupendous task always pressing upon them, from their inmost souls must often arise a cry of anguish almost akin to despair, "Brethren, pray for us."

As already remarked, the words may be regarded as an apostolic command; but, for the nonce, let us take them as the earnest appeal of our missionary brethren and sisters in the dark regions of heathendom, amid the festering civilisations of Romish lands, and even in the slums of our great cities. And we would submit that the first and chief work which we stay-at-home Christians have to do for the mission workers is to give heed to this appeal; and for the following reasons. We have sent them forth into the mission field instead of going there ourselves. The command to preach the Gospel to every creature is laid upon all disciples of Christ; but, as gifts and circumstances differ, and as he may be said to build a house who merely draws the plans or furnishes the money, so, in this work of preaching, others may engage in it besides those who actually proclaim with their lips the glad tidings of salvation. If, then, we do not hear the voice of God calling us to go forth, we may certainly hear Him bidding us to take our share in this great enterprise of filling the world with the knowledge of His grace in Jesus Christ.

The missionaries are our delegates, commissioned to represent and plead our cause—that is, the cause of the Divine Master—and we must not be indifferent to their interests or to the success of their labours. We should see that they are properly supported; we should care for their children, for whom, in many cases, they cannot directly care themselves; we should assure them of a sufficiency for their widows, or for themselves, if spared to old age. But this is, after all, only a small part of the service we are bound to render them. We should have a growing sympathy with them in their trials, and should rejoice with a hearty joy in their successes. All news respecting them should be as welcome to us as the letters we receive from our sons or our brothers in distant lands. Is this so? Is missionary intelligence eagerly read in our Church assemblies and in our home circles? Are we thus conscientiously bound up in the bundle of life—to use an antiquated phrase in a novel connection—with our mission delegates, the apostles of our Churches? Suppose it were so. There would still remain the paramount duty of praying for them. But a sceptical voice whispers: "Of what use will it be to intercede for them?" We answer by remarking that, in the forefront of the model prayer, and before our own individual wants are referred to, we are taught to say: "Thy Kingdom come." And when, in addition, we remember certain sayings of our Lord, we are led to the conclusion that intercessory prayer does avail, and that our missionaries will directly benefit by our supplications. Nor is this all. They will feel themselves stronger and more courageous if they know that the churches at home are pleading for them. When Israel fought with Amalek, Moses was on the mountain-top praying for victory, and the knowledge that their leader was doing his part to advance the conflict must have given nerve and courage to the people.