

companion. When they do start on a search for the lady's friends, they are sure to be scattered in different places, and a good deal of time is consumed in the search, very likely to pounce at last on a solitary couple, who though possibly equally bored with themselves, it looks somewhat of an intrusion to leave a third person with.

Then there is something to be said in regard to the way in which the musical part of the entertainment is arranged. The lady of the house usually asks some of her musical friends beforehand if they will play and sing for her, so that they can come provided with music; but as there is no programme, the performers are left in doubt as to when they will be called on, which is a fruitful source of disquietude to a nervous person. Then it is a great trial for a singer to be obliged by a loud commencement of his song to announce to the talking, laughing multitude that he is going to sing, while scarcely less reassuring are the "hushes" of well-meaning friends who are desirous of obtaining silence. The moment it dawns on the walking, standing, chatting crowd that some one is singing, politeness requires an instantaneous quiet. No matter if you are at the telling point of your best story or making the wittiest remark, at the first pipe of a shrill voice, the check-rein of politeness pulls you up, and demands a sudden halt, for your reluctant ears to be, perhaps, assailed with a jargon of foreign words, or wonderful shakes or trills of a voice pitched half an octave higher than nature arranged the vocal words for. Then how difficult it is for a number of persons to stand perfectly still! The best of shoes will occasionally creak, and silk dresses rustle with the faintest movement, frequently just as the singer is at the most pathetic part of the song. The softest tones are lost by these inadvertent noises, and the effect of the whole is spoiled. As to the players, in one way they have an advantage over the singers, for as no one listens to their efforts any mistakes pass unnoticed. They have for their consolation the fact that their performance is useful at least in filling up the chinks in the conversation of the assemblage, and leaving no gaps in the general buzz. For this purpose bands are sometimes engaged, and do even more, almost drowning the voices of the guests *in toto*, or making them yell till their throats are hoarse. Sufficiently remote, a string band is an agreeable accessory to a party, but the hostess who engages one will do well to taboo the playing of waltzes lest she would set her young guests to wishing to clear the rooms for a dance. Musical parties, to be really successful, should be small and for lovers of music only. But where large ones are given, one room provided with seats at least should be set apart for lovers of sweet sounds, while if some sort of engagement cards were provided, they would obviate the difficulty above mentioned in changing partners during the evening. Dinner-parties are becoming more and more popular, and are growing in favour with young people as well as older ones. Their chief drawback is that they are costly and only entertain a few. When the guests are chosen with tact and skill, the *cuisine* good, and the table appointments well arranged, they often prove delightful. The hostess knows who to expect, and having an equal number of ladies and gentlemen no one is left out in the cold. One cannot complain of "having nothing to do" at a dinner-party; the danger is rather, in view of the number of courses provided, of having too much. They certainly give opportunities of displaying conversational talents. The hosts do well who remember it is a greater charm in them, as entertainers, to make *their guests talk* than to do over much in that line themselves. One great advantage in the dinner-party is that it does not upset the usual routine of life. The city man dines at or near his usual hour, and gets to bed at a reasonable time—a great essential for the gentlemen of this work-a-day Canada of ours. He has not an extra meal (as in the case of suppers) thrown in to tax the endurance of his digestive powers, and as the number of guests is limited to a few, there is more chance of congeniality among them. If the custom of wearing gloves before dinner could be dispensed with, some of the "red hands" that are so frequently a disfigurement to beautiful toilets would be done away with. The literary entertainments that have sprung up of late seem to be more suited to country places than cities. In cities people have so many opportunities for attending good concerts, the theatre and opera, that amateur performances partaking of their nature suffer from the contrast, and though they offer us opportunities for displaying the talents we have, and occasionally those we have not, there is great danger of our boring our acquaintances without improving ourselves, or what is worse, fostering those habits of mutual admiration which only require our backs to be turned to meet with often well-deserved ridicule. If, however, these literary evenings further a love of books and prove entertaining nothing can be said against them, while they certainly have the virtue of providing the guests with something to do. If people learned to play games, as chess, back-gammon, cards, etc., and they were provided for those who liked them at our social gatherings, amusement might be found for all, instead of a portion of the guests, and

time that is now dragged out wearily by many a good-natured *chaperon* might be passed pleasantly enough; for even the greatest talkers find three or four hours, many evenings in the week, a severe tax on their conversational powers, when "the season" has had many predecessors.

J. M. LOES.

THE CHURCHES.

DR. STUBBS, formerly Regius Professor of Modern History at Oxford, was recently consecrated to the bishopric of Chester. The ceremony was performed by the Archbishop of York.

A WEALTHY member of the Episcopal Church in Chicago has given a valuable site on Washington boulevard for a theological college. He is also to pay for the erection of the building.

THE endowment of Knox College, Toronto, will in all likelihood soon be accomplished. The amount required for the purpose is \$200,000: of this sum \$154,000 has already been subscribed.

THE Bishop of Worcester announces that a gentleman who wishes to be known only as a "land-owner" has given \$50,000 for the purpose of making better provision for the spiritual wants of the town of Birmingham.

THE new oratory dedicated to the Blessed Virgin at South Kensington, London, was recently opened by Cardinal Manning and several Bishops. The new church occupies a fine site at the corner of Brompton and Cromwell Roads. It cost about \$400,000.

A RELIGIOUS contemporary gives the church connections of the present Senators of the United States as follows:—Presbyterians, 27; Episcopalians, 16; Methodists, 12; Congregational, 7; Unitarians, 5; Baptists, 4; Roman Catholics, 4; Jew, 1. Total, 76.

THE Methodist centenary celebration will be held in the City Road Chapel, London, the mother-church of Methodism, during the month of June. The same month will also see the consummation of the union between the various Methodist Churches in Canada.

THE Rev. Paxton Hood a short time since preached on "The Gospel Notes to be found in Tennyson." Soon afterwards one of his hearers at a prayer-meeting solicited intercession for his minister that he "might preach the Gospel according to Christ and not according to Tennyson."

DR. BICKERSTETH, Bishop of Ripon, died recently. The deceased prelate, a distinguished member of the evangelical section of the Church of England, was highly respected by all parties. He was large-hearted, charitable, and tolerant. Dr. Hellmuth, late Bishop of Huron, for some time assisted him in the discharge of his Episcopal duties.

THE statue erected in honour of Martin Luther at the Memorial Church, Washington, will be unveiled next week with imposing ceremonies. The Hon. Chief Justice Waite is to preside. The Hon. O. D. Conger, of the United States Senate, and the Rev. Dr. J. D. Morris are to be the orators, while President Arthur will unveil the statue of the great Reformer.

As an amendment to Mr. Dick Peddie's annual motion for the disestablishment of the Church of Scotland, Sir Alexander Gordon is to move the appointment of a commission to inquire into the causes of disunion between the Presbyterian Churches in Scotland with a view to such settlement of ecclesiastical affairs in that country as may be most agreeable to the inclinations of the people.

At a meeting of the Ottawa Presbytery last week the Rev. W. D. Armstrong submitted an overture on the evils resulting from the intense party politics of the country. In support of his overture he showed that political partyism was injurious to mutual good-will, public confidence, and loyalty to truth. The overture was transmitted to the General Assembly where the subject will come up for discussion.

AMONG the many distinguished men on whom honorary degrees were conferred during the ter-centenary celebration of Edinburgh University were Professor Green, of Princeton, and Professor Briggs, of the Union Seminary, New York. Both are eminent in the department of Old Testament exegesis. The University of Glasgow also bestowed the honorary degree of D.D. on Professor Mowat, of Kingston.

THE establishment of a great Mahommedan university at Hyderabad is contemplated. The suggestion was made by an Englishman, Mr. Wilfred Blunt, that a university for the dissemination of Mahommedan learning and the propagation of Islamism should be founded in Central India. The young Nizam has favourably received Mr. Blunt's proposal, made all the more attractive since he offers to endow the first professorship.

THE Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States is by far the most influential section of the denomination that owes its origin to the labours of the Wesleys and Whitfield. The General Conference of that body has just been held at Philadelphia. The meetings this year were of more than ordinary interest, since that Church in the United States has completed the first century of its history. Not a little excitement was occasioned in connection with an election of bishops. Four were required. Various candidates were named. It was openly asserted that canvassing and wire-pulling were freely resorted to, if not by the candidates themselves, certainly by their friends. The suspicion is not by any means agreeable that partisan tactics have entered within the sacred precincts of the temple.

ASTERISK.