

## Correspondence.

All Letters will appear with the names of the writers in full and we do not hold ourselves responsible for their opinions.

## B. HOMER DIXON AND THE CROSS.

SIR,—Mr. Homer Dixon sent me, unasked, a copy of his diatribe against the use of the Cross, which I returned with the following note:

Dear Mr. Dixon.—I return your paper, as I utterly reject, repudiate, and abhor the infidel-like notion that the symbol of salvation is "heathenish" or "popish." St. Paul does not say he glories "in a doctrine," as you make him. To interpolate the word "doctrine" into a Scriptural text is to incur the condemnation of those who add to the word of God (see Rev. xxii. 18). St. Paul says, "I glory in the Cross," by which, &c., manifestly making his allusion to lie to the material fact of the crucifixion, not to a metaphysical doctrine. I take St. Paul's ground, and glory in the Cross, not in any man-made doctrine about it. It is hard for me to conceive of a Christian who does not delight in being reminded of His Saviour's redeeming death by the symbol thereof. If you prove the form of the Cross to be of heathen origin, which is manifest enough, for heathens crucified Jesus, I then glory in it all the more, yes all the more, because it then becomes a further symbol of the victory of Christ over the Devil and his works.

Your paper speaks of the "Protestant Church." I do not know the institution. Tom Paine and Voltaire were Protestants. Were these members of the "Protestant Church?" My Church is the Church of Christ.

Yours faithfully,

## PARADISE.

SIR,—Your correspondent, Wm. Monson, refers to Eph. iv., 9, evidently under the impression that it is a passage of Scripture which conflicts with the views of "Christ's Descent into Hell," as propounded by certain commentators, and given in my previous letters. I had intended to refer to this passage, but your limited space more than anything else prevented my doing so. I beg leave on this occasion simply to quote the words of one of the best commentators on the Creed; and I intend this to be the end of my communications on the subject. Bishop Pearson says, "the words of St. Paul to the Ephesians seem to come very near to the words of the Creed. He descended into Hell," and to express the same almost in terms: "Now that He ascended, what is it but that He first descended into the lower parts of the earth?" (Eph. iv. 9.) Thus many of the ancient fathers understood of the descent into Hell as placed in the lowest parts of the earth; and this exposition must be confessed so probable that there can be no argument to disprove it. These "lower parts of the earth" may signify hell, and Christ's descending thither may be that his soul went to that place when his body was carried to the grave. But that it was actually so, or that the apostle intended so much in those words, the place itself will not manifest. For we cannot be assured that the descent of Christ, which St. Paul speaks of, was performed after his death; or if it were, we cannot be assured that "the lower parts of the earth" did signify hell, or the place where the souls of men were tormented after their separation from their bodies. For as it is written, "no man ascended up to heaven, but he that descended from heaven;" (St. John iii. 13) so this may signify so much and no more, "In that he ascended, what is it but that he descended first?" And for "the lower parts of the earth," they may signify no more than the place beneath; as when our Saviour said, "Ye are from beneath, I am from above; ye are of this world, I am not of this world;" (St. John viii. 23), or as God spake by the prophet, "I will shew wonders in the heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath;" (Joel ii. 30.) Nay, they may well refer to his incarnation, according to that of David, "my substance was not hid from Thee when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lower parts of the earth;" (Psalm cxxxix. 15), or to his burial according to that of the prophet, "Those that seek my soul to destroy it shall go into the lower parts of the earth;" (Ps. lxxiii. 9) and these two references have a great similitude according to that of Job, "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither;" (Job i. 21).

These cautious comments of so learned a divine as Bishop Pearson, should certainly lead men of less erudition in sacred knowledge to exercise an equal caution in the interpretation of difficult portions of Holy Scripture.

I may add that our hymn writers generally corroborate the views of commentators previously referred to, and our people of course express devotionally these views in their service of praise. Take for example hymn 473 of the S. P. C. K. Hymn Book:

"Oh Paradise! Oh Paradise!  
Tis weary waiting here;  
We long to be where Jesus is,  
To feel, to see Him near."

Hymn 201:

"They climbed the steep ascent of heaven  
Through peril, toil, and pain;  
O God, to us may grace be given  
To follow in their train."

I might quote from at least thirty other hymns in the collection expressive of the same doctrine, while I can find only one (the 371st) expressing anything different.

The inscriptions on the sepulchres of the primitive Christians, whose bodies were buried in the Catacombs of Rome, agree with the general doctrine of these hymns, thus—

"Paulus was put to death in tortures, in order that he might live in eternal bliss."

"Nicephorus, a sweet soul, in the place of refreshment."

"Petronia, a deacon's wife, the type of modesty. In this place I lay my bones; spare your tears, dear husband and daughters, and believe that it is forbidden to weep for one who lives in God."

"Alexander is not dead, but lives above the stars, and his body rests in this tomb. He ended his life under the Emperor Antoninus, who, foreseeing that great benefit would result from his services, returned evil for good. For while on his knees, and about to sacrifice to the true God, he was led away to execution. Oh, sad times, in which, amid sacred rites and prayers, even in caverns, we are not safe! What can be more wretched than such a life? and what than such a death? When they cannot be buried by their friends and relations? At length they sparkle in heaven! He has scarcely lived who has lived in Christian times."

I have taken the liberty of italicizing certain words in the above inscriptions to shew these ancient Christians, such as Alexander, who died probably about A.D. 138, did not believe that the soul sleeps in the grave; but in common with our hymn writers and with certain commentators, whose views I have given, they believed that the soul lived, consciously after the death of the body; and that the souls of the righteous at death yet "lived in God," and passed immediately into "the place of refreshment," "above the stars," where "they sparkled in heaven."

W. J. MACKENZIE.

Milton.

## TEMPERANCE AND THE CHURCH IN MANITOBA.

SIR,—In my last I gave you an account of the formal adoption of the Church of England Sunday School Institute literature in its entirety in the schools of this diocese, under the authority of Synod; and I alluded to the event as an index of the healthy condition of the Church and the admirable temper of the clergy, among whom not a dissentient voice was heard. I have now the great pleasure of drawing the attention of the clergy of the Dominion to the fact that while Rupert's Land claims the honour of being—so far as I am aware—the first diocese in Canada which has placed her Sunday Schools in direct affiliation with the Institute of England under Synodical action, she also claims the distinguished honour of being the first formally, and also under the direct authority of Synod, to adopt the cause of temperance as a distinctive branch of church work, and as an integral part of the machinery of the Church in this new land. I think I have told you that His Lordship the Bishop, who is also Metropolitan of the Ecclesiastical Province of Rupert's Land, is Patron of the Society, that it is diocesan in its organization; that it is formed on the basis of the Church of England Temperance Association of England, and that, following the example of its great prototype, the two pledges of temperance, and personal total abstinence, are its distinguishing features. I am now to inform you that the clergy of Winnipeg are all warm supporters of the Society, and are exhibiting an energy, ability, and zeal in promoting its objects, which put to the blush the half-hearted movements of many—I may say very many—otherwise excellent clergymen of the Church in Old Canada. It is absolutely delightful to work with such men. There is, I begin to believe, some subtle connection between the purity, the clearness, the exhilarating, and strengthening qualities of the atmosphere of this charming country, and the purity and brightness, the prompt decision, and the broad-mindedness and zeal of the clergy of the Church, which are rapidly pushing her forward, and keeping her foremost in all the work for which her magnificent power and perfect organization so admirably fits her. We held the first regular public meeting after our organization, last evening, and its success has astonished the clergy, and every one else. The largest public room available was crowded. Many stood up during the whole of the proceedings, and many were unable to get into the room at all, and were obliged

to return to their homes. All the clergy were present, and took a leading part. The speech of the evening was that of the Rev. Canon O'Mara, of St. John's Cathedral. The Rev. Mr. Forbin, of Holy Trinity, preached one of the best sermons I ever heard—and I have heard Canon Carmichael—the evening before, boldly, and with a force and eloquence I never knew surpassed, in favour of the cause, and exhibited his deep interest in the great movement at the meeting. The audience established their hearty approval of the organization by contributing a large number of names to the pledges, with a large sum of money to the treasury, and the Secretary was able to announce, amid much applause, that already the young society had secured about 150 names to its pledges. The Council adopted a novel and excellent mode of enlarging the influence of the new organization. They secured the consent of three of the leading ladies of the city, the Hon. Mrs. Chief Justice Wood, the Hon. Mrs. Walker, wife of the Attorney-General of the Province, and Mrs. Whitcher, who kindly allowed their names to be used as patronesses of the entertainment. Other ladies will be asked to give their assistance in a similar manner, on subsequent occasions, and thus the quiet and unobtrusive, but nevertheless powerful influence of the leading ladies in the Communion of the Church will be secured for this most important constituent of Church work. The most striking feature of this movement is this, and I commend it to the thoughtful consideration of every clergyman, and every Churchman whose eye this letter may catch—the enormous latent power of the Church of England. Most of us have some idea of the astonishing results produced in England by the vast temperance organization of the Church in England, but her clergy of Canada, as well as her laity, have not yet fully estimated the herculean power at this moment lying dormant in her loins. They have never yet in Canada roused the slumbering, but Titanic, forces which the Church can exert, not only in religious, but in political, moral, and social movements. I fear—nay I know—that her clergy especially have not yet risen to a full understanding, or a complete appreciation, of the wonderful latent powers which now lie in their hands, unnoticed, unutilized, and almost unknown. Her laity are full of zeal, and exult in the grandeur of the noble Old Church; and when called upon by the voice of a leader they respond with the characteristic celerity and bravery of the British soldier to the note of the trumpet. I have unbounded confidence in the laity of the Church of England in Canada. Shew them a good work to be done in the interests of their Church, give them a leader worthy of their courage, and animated by their loyalty and love to her, and you may lead them any where. The charge of the Six Hundred may be repeated a thousand times in the Church, and the unflinching courage and never-failing support of the laity will always be asserted; but they must have leaders worthy of them—men whose hearts beat with the same steady and strong stroke—whose souls are as warm as their own, whose aspirations are as noble, and whose zeal is as pure, as pronounced, and as ardent as that which burns in their own hearts—given all these constituents and the Church is invincible. That these constituents are largely found in this highly favoured Diocese is a striking fact, and one which I commend to the anxious consideration of the ill-conditioned Dioceses of Old Canada, where the Church is overweighted and nearly stifled by the wretched jealousies, the deplorable ignorance, the unsightly strifes, and the debasing struggles, initiated and encouraged, I verily believe, by a class of men who, arrogating to themselves all the purity of the Church, refuse to recognize purity in any but themselves, and refuse to dissent from their opinions the liberty of thought and action which they loudly mouthed demand for their own disintegrating processes. Here, we have no such heartburnings; here, the Bishop, the clergy, and the laity are all one; here, a healthy tone prevails; here, a warm love for the Church casts its noble influence over all the movements of her members; here, no appeal of the duly constituted leaders—the clergy—passes unheeded by the people; here, the best institution of Church work in England are copied and worked on the distinctive basis of the Church; here, the Church joyfully meets all other religious bodies in the common ground of charitable, or philanthropic effort, which she keeps within her own precincts, in work purely her own. She is deeply respected by all standing outside her Communion, as she is loved by those within it. Her course is pre-eminently wise, as well as pre-eminently charitable and loving. In the particular matter of temperance, she has taken the lead in this vast country. She has struck the key-note in a region which is an empire in extent, and will in a few short years be an empire in wealth and influence. She has already knit to herself, with threads of steel, hundreds of noble men who, in their anxiety to see the blighting curse of intemperance at least minimized in this fair land, though not actually in her Communion, welcomed her advent as a brave soldier in the fight, and who can determine the power, direct and indirect, which these men and their children will yet bring

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