

fashion for the past fifty years. On a tall, slender person it looked elegant. In those days there were no strait jackets of whalebone, buckram, steel springs and hickory splinters to distort, torment and deform their handsome persons.—*New York Times.*

WALTER THORBURN'S VISIT TO BOSTON.

Boston seems to have proved a source of considerable annoyance to him financially, because the methods of worship there didn't coincide with his own notions. Here are some pickings from his story of one Sunday passed in the city of "rational religionists": I arose before five o'clock, he says, resolving to examine the interior and exterior of their churches. Wherever I espied a steeple for my guide thither I steered my course; and into most of them I found access, as the sextons were either dusting inside or sweeping outside. This may be rational enough, for aught I know, but I thought it was hardly consistent with pure religion; they ought to give a man 70 cents a week more, on condition that he beat the cushions and swept the gutters on Saturday afternoon.

At ten o'clock I entered a church which I had not before seen. The minister, after sitting awhile to breathe, got up and asked the congregation to join with him in singing to the praise and glory of God, "when upstarted a string of lads and lasses, who sung out most lustily to the praise and glory of themselves! I turned around to see how the minister brooked the affair, as no one joined with him, when lo! there he stood, as mute as a mummy, with his psalm book shut and one hand upon each side of the pulpit, supporting his noble frame, his face mantling with a complacent smile as he looked under the broad brims of the ladies' hats (at that time the ladies' hats measured three feet, brim, crown and border), and seemed absorbed in contemplating the sweetness of their warbling throats. . . . I found it to be an old Scotch tune called "French" which they were singing, so I opened my hymn book, turned my back to the minister, like the rest, and sung to the end of the hymn, keeping time with the lads upstairs. The people looked around, and some smiled, and some said, "He's a Yorker," and some that I was daft.

In the afternoon, continues this chronicler, I went to another church to see if I couldn't find something more orthodox. . . . A woman, dressed pretty enough, but I thought her cheeks more ruddy than nature commonly paints in the month of June, got up and sang most sweetly, all alone by herself, praise and glory to the whole congregation. . . . After the church was out I asked a gentleman who she was that sang for us, and he told me that she belonged to the theatre; that she sang till past twelve o'clock to the praise and glory of the devil; that the rational church paid her \$300, and the devil's church \$600 per annum. So that between the two she cuts a pretty bright figure. I said to myself, "If one of those stern old pilgrims who landed on Plymouth Rock that cold, stormy day, with their noses as red as a north-west moon, were to enter now, how those pigmy degenerates would sneak into mice holes."

Continuing he says. I must observe that all the ministers I heard in this eastern country are readers, not preachers of the Gospel. . . . Without a blush on his face he pulls from his pocket a roll of black leather, in form of a tobacco pouch; from this he unrolls about a sheet of paper, and, without even opening a Bible, reads a text from the head of the sheet, and so reads on till he comes to Amen at the end of the sheet. I wondered at the indecency (to call it no worse) of the man. . . . Everywhere they read their sermons, and sing praise by proxy. . . . The minister, however kept on reading his "dead language." Before this I was at loss for the meaning of "Professor of the Dead Languages" in Yale College, but I now thought it must mean those who learned those young Yankees to read sermons.—*N. Y. Times.*

NEW ORLEANS.

One might make various studies of New Orleans; its commercial life; its methods, more or less antiquated, of doing business, and the leisure for talk that enters into it; its admirable charities and its medieval prisons; its romantic French and Spanish history, still lingering in the old houses and traits of family and street life; the city politics, which nobody can explain, and no other city need covet; its sanitary condition, which needs an intelligent despot with plenty of money and an ingenuity that can make water run uphill; its coloured population—about a fourth of the city—with its distinct social grades, its superstition, nonchalant good humour, turn for idling and basking in the sun, slowly awakening to a sense of thrift, chastity, truth-speaking, with many excellent order-loving men and women, but a mass that needs moral training quite as much as the spelling book before it can contribute to the vigour and prosperity of the city; its schools and recent libraries, and the developing literary and art taste which will sustain bookshops and picture galleries; its cuisine, peculiar in its mingling of French and African skill, and determined largely by a market unexcelled in the quality of fish, game and fruit—the fig alone would go far to reconcile one to four or five months of hot nights; the climatic influence in assimilating races meeting there from every region of the earth.

But whatever way we regard New Orleans, it is in its aspect, social tone and character *sui generis*; its civilization differs widely from that of any other, and it remains one of the most interesting places in the Republic. Of course social life in these days is much the same in all great cities in its observances, but that of New Orleans is markedly cordial, ingenious, warm-hearted. I do not imagine that it could tolerate, as Boston does, absolute freedom of local opinion on all subjects, and, undoubtedly, it is sensitive to criticism; but I believe that it is literally true, as one of its citizens said, that it is still more sensitive to kindness.

The Metropolis of the South West has geographical rea-

sons for a great future. Louisiana is rich in alluvial soil, the capability of which has not yet been tested, except in some localities, by skillful agriculture. But the prosperity of the city depends much upon local conditions. Science and energy can solve the problem of drainage, can convert all the territory between the city and Lake Pontchartrain into a veritable garden, surpassing in fertility the flat environs of the city of Mexico. And the steady development of common school education, together with technical and industrial schools, will create a skill which will make New Orleans the industrial and manufacturing centre of that region.—*Charles Dudley Warner, in Harper's Magazine for January.*

For THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN.

WONDERLAND.

The following lines were suggested on hearing an aged divine in his description of the Bible call it a "Perfect Wonderland."

Is this dear Book my Wonderland?
Do its promises charm and cheer?
Will it pilot me safe o'er life's stormy path,
'Mid the tempests dark and drear?
Yes, it tells of Him who spake to the waves,
That were stilled at His command;
And a guide it will be, for sinners like me,
This Book of Wonderland.

Is this dear Book my Wonderland?
What of that wondrous story,
Which the angels told in Bethlehem plains
Of the Lord of life and glory?
For my soul was thrilled with that wondrous love
Which redeemed the sons of men,
And I read this plea, "He died for me,"
In this Book of Wonderland.

Is this dear Book my Wonderland?
Yes, it speaks of a Saviour risen,
Who burst the bars of death and the grave,
And ascended up into Heaven;
As prophet and priest He intercedes,
As my king He rules and defends,
And I'm bidden come to my Father's home
In this Book of Wonderland.

I read in my Book of Wonderland,
Of a city beyond compare,
Its golden streets and pearly gates
For the saints of God prepared;
And there 'mid the shining host I'll see
My Saviour at God's right hand,
And join in the song which the angels sing
At my home in Wonderland.

I will treasure this Book of Wonderland,
My compass and chart I'll be
Till I rest my oars on the farther shore
By the banks of the crystal sea,—
Until I am safe in my Father's house,
Where the many mansions stand,
And with golden lyre, join the heavenly choir
In my home in Wonderland.

Toronto, 1887.

THOMAS YELLOWLEES.

RELIGION IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

The danger arises simply from the weak and sickly sentimentalism respecting the transcendental spirituality of religion, the non-religious character of the State, and the supposed equitable rights of a small infidel minority. All we have to do is for Catholics and Protestants—disciples of a common Master—to come to a common understanding with respect to a common basis of what is received as general Christianity, a practical quantity of truth belonging equally to both sides, to be recognized in general legislation, and especially in the literature and teaching of our public schools. The difficulties lie in the mutual ignorance and prejudice of both parties, and fully as much on the side of the Protestants as of the Catholics. Then let the system of public schools be confined to the branches of simply common-school education. Let these common schools be kept under the local control of the inhabitants of each district, so that the religious character of each school may conform in all variable accidents to the character of the majority of the inhabitants of each district. Let all centralizing tendencies be watchfully guarded against. Let the Christians of the East, of all denominations, increase the number and extend the efficiency of all their Christian academies and higher colleges. And let the Christians of the vast West preoccupy the ground, and bend all their energies in their effort to supply the rising floods of their incoming population with a full apparatus of high schools and colleges to meet all possible demands for a higher education.

One thing is absolutely certain. Christianity is ever increasing in power, and, in the long run, will never tolerate the absurd and aggressive claims of modern infidelity. The system of public schools must be held, in their sphere, true to the claims of Christianity, or they must go, with all other enemies of Christ, to the wall.—*A. A. Hodge, in New Princeton Review for January.*

A MAN has been apprehended for stealing two Bibles from Newington Church, Edinburgh.

THE *Century Magazine* prints for the first time these words of Abraham Lincoln, given in an official reprimand to a young officer who had been court-martialed for quarrelling: "The advice of a father to his son, 'Beware of entrance to a quarrel, but being in, bear it that the opposed may beware of thee!' is good, but not the best. Quarrel not at all. No man, resolved to make the most of himself can spare time for personal contention."

British and Foreign.

THE collections on Hospital Sunday, at Birmingham, are diminishing.

MR. GEORGE WILLIAMS succeeds the late Mr. S. Morle as president of the Band of Hope Union.

THE Bishop of Ripon believes that more misery has been caused through the weakness than through the wickedness of men.

THE chief brewer in Guinness's is said to have had for many years a salary of \$35,000, being \$5,000 more than the prime minister.

MR. STEDMAN, the accomplished critic, takes a doleful view of the poetic outlook. He thinks the present time is "the twilight of the poets."

ONLY five members of Edinburgh town council supported a proposal to erect a recumbent figure in St. Giles's, as a memorial of the late Dr. Wm. Chambers.

A VENETIAN at present visiting Paris, Signor Camini, is credited with the ability to speak and write fluently no fewer than ninety-six languages and dialects.

DE QUINCEY knew how to use colour to the utmost verge of that splendour which borders vulgarity in style, and yet De Quincey was never less than refined.

LORD RONALD GOWER uses for his library the same book plate that was designed by his paternal ancestor, Thomas Gower, who flourished in the reign of Elizabeth.

NEGOTIATIONS on the part of the English Presbyterian Church, for federation with the Free Church of Scotland, give promise of being carried to a happy conclusion.

FOUR popular editions of "The Lives of Robert and Mary Moffat" have already been called for; and now a remarkably handsome presentation edition has been published.

TO meet the threatened deficiency in the English Presbyterian Foreign Mission Funds, Mr. Stitt, Liverpool, has offered \$500, if four other Liverpool friends will each give a similar amount.

MR. GEORGE PITTENDRIGH, M.A., has been ordained by Aberdeen Presbytery, on his appointment to the mission staff at Madras. The address was delivered by Principal Robertson, of Calcutta.

THE claim of Rev. John Brand, for \$37 of stipend from John Street Church, Glasgow, has been settled, by the managers paying him \$200 and contributing the balance to Schemes of the Church.

A COLPORTEUR says he knows of four cases in which an alienated husband and wife were brought together by reading Miss Annie Swan's story of "A Divided House," which was originally published in the *Christian Leader*.

THE Rev. Charles Jerden, Greenock, is to move at his next Presbytery meeting that no appointment be made to the chair of practical training, in the U. P. Hall, but that the Synod arrange for the work to be done by a lectureship.

MR. ARTHUR MURSELL was spoken of by some, as likely to succeed the late Stowell Brown, at Liverpool; in reality, he is returning from Birmingham to his charge at Stockwell, vacant by Mr. E. Maclean accepting a pastorate in Wales.

A GREAT convention of temperance reformers will be held in London, in February, under the auspices of the United Kingdom Alliance, to agree upon the best methods of united action for obtaining satisfactory legislation against the drink traffic.

MR. ROBERT YORSTON, of Kirkwall, has been presented by the provost and magistrates and his minister, Mr. Webster, with a purse of sovereigns, on completing the 100th year of his age. He was able to shave himself on the day which closed his 100th year.

DR. HUTTON has been giving a political review to the Paisley Liberal club. Mr. Gladstone, he said, had trusted too much to a kind of special pleading, elastic phrases, and opportunism. Many golden moments had been sacrificed to his pet question, the politics of Ireland.

MR. G. R. SIMS, revisiting the scenes of his former articles on "Horrible London," finds that religion and temperance have stepped in and taken a tighter grip of the masses. In several slums the great bulk of the people are now pledged abstainers, and their aspect and manners appreciably improved.

DR. GRAY, of Liberton, in responding to the toast of "The Clergy" at the Edinburgh Perthshire Association dinner, remarked that it might be said the clergy were fonder of firing into one another, than against the common enemy, but having associated with clergymen of different denominations, he could say that their bark was worse than their bite.

THE Rev. James Rennie, in opening the sale in Glasgow, of Italian art goods, in aid of the fund to liquidate the debt of \$3,000 on San Remo Presbyterian Church, said that when there recently, he one Sabbath found in the congregation Scotch, English, Americans, French, Germans, Norwegians and Swedes, so that it was thoroughly catholic and cosmopolitan.

THE frequency with which the *Presbyterian Messenger* is obliged to appeal for more liberal support seems the reverse of creditable to the church of which it is the organ. Just now, it is asking the deacon's court of each congregation to purchase a supply of monthly numbers and give every family a free copy. It is questionable, however, if people read or profit much by what they pay nothing for.

THE Polteneytown congregation, by 336 to ninety-six, has again elected Mr. Nigel Robertson. One elder declared he would never receive what a Free Church voluntary preached; and a builder said he did not need to come to church to hear sermons read. He could read sermons himself at home. There was the usual talk about "human hymns," "constitutional principles," etc., but there was a majority of seventy-seven to proceed with a call.