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Church is weaker in the second and third-class cities, and weakest in the country; while the Methodists and Baptists, who are particularly strong in the country, exhibit a great falling off in the cities of all three classes, and most particularly in those of the first class. The obvious deduction is that the Church is grappling fairly successfully with the problems and difficulties confronting her among the great urban populations of the United States.—*Church Bells.*

Correspondence.

All Letters containing personal allusions will appear over the signature of the writer.

We do not hold ourselves responsible for the opinions of our correspondents.

N. B.—If any one has a good thought, or a Christian sentiment, or has facts, or deductions from facts, useful to the Church, and to Churchmen, we would solicit their statement in brief and concise letters in this department.

Deacons.

SIR,—Last week I wrote to you on behalf of an increase in the Episcopate. Will you allow me now to plead the cause of the third order, that of the Deacons? We profess to believe in three orders, but we really have only one and a half, an order of Priests and half a one of Bishops. Why should the Diaconate be merely a stepping stone for the Priesthood? Surely there is a special work for deacons. It seems to me that if the three orders were fully recognized, the Church would not only be the Church of Canada by right, but would quickly become so in fact. In most parishes there are lay readers. If they are worthy to be lay readers they are worthy to be deacons, and they would be able to give more work in the service of the Church. Why should lay readers supplant deacons? One is an order for man's convenience, the other ordained by Divine Providence. Then, so many of our missions are in charge of lay readers. These men would be much more useful to their parishes if they had received the Divine commission. The canons allow men to be ordained deacons even if they do not go on to the Priesthood. What, then, stands in the way of my suggestion? Nothing, nothing but that indifference and want of zeal which seems almost a characteristic trait of Church people. Mr. Editor, when you plead that the Church may have enough Bishops, will you not plead too that we may have deacons in practice as well as in theory?

A "DIACONALIAN."

The Children's Aid Society.

AN APPEAL.

SIR,—The enlarged sphere and the extent of the claims of the work of this Society, opened up by the passage of the "Children's Protection Act," have made it absolutely necessary to obtain a more commodious and suitable "shelter." To meet these demands the Board have rented the large house on Adelaide street, formerly used as St. James' Rectory. But considerable expenditure is necessary in preparing it for the purposes of a shelter, and there is required in addition very much in the way of furniture. The Society has, in the past, depended entirely upon voluntary contributions, and it is the desire of the management to continue to do so in the future. The City Council has made an appropriation of two thousand dollars (\$2,000), but the amount is wholly inadequate considering the character and extent of the work. It is expected that there will be an average of from forty to fifty children in the shelter, pending their being placed out in foster homes. The work is of a nature that will appeal to all persons who desire to see the neglected children of the city cared for, and placed in homes where under the kindly and moulding influences of family life they will grow up to be useful and respectable members of society, instead of degraded members of the criminal classes. A number of cots are required, but it is intended to appeal specially to the Sabbath schools of the city to supply these, and it is felt that Sabbath school scholars will gladly respond. The Society, therefore, appeal to the general public to provide the funds necessary for properly equipping the shelter, and for carrying on the greatly enlarged work now lying open to the Society's hands. We pledge the management to see that all possible economy is used, consistent with the efficient carrying on of the work of rescuing the unfortunate neglected children of our city. Already the Society has been the means of cheering the hearts and brightening the prospects of a number of children, by placing them in comfortable Christian homes. But the public generally has little conception of the great number of children who need the paternal care which the "Children's Protection Act" enables only this Society to exercise, and of the vast benefits which are certain to accrue, both to the children

themselves and the community at large. Many children are now practically waiting for the Society to do for them, as it has done for those already placed out, and many homes are being opened to receive them; but the Society can bring together the waiting child and the open home only as the generous public will aid with the money needed for the somewhat complicated and delicate work it has undertaken. May we ask for a prompt and generous response? Do not expect a collector to call, but send your contribution to the Treasurer of the Society, A. M. Campbell, Esq., Room 25 Confederation Life Building, Toronto.

J. K. MACDONALD, President.

J. EDWARD STARR, Secretary.

Toronto, May 5th, 1894.

Family Reading.

To The Holy Trinity.

Great Creator, Lord of all,
Father, Friend, on Thee we call,
Hear Thy children's prayer;
Guard us, rule us, as is best,
With Thy loving favour blest,
Till we reach Thy home of rest,
And are with Thee there.

Jesu, Who for man did'st die,
Who dost plead Thy death on high,
And our place prepare;
From sin's bondage set us free,
Lead us onward after Thee,
Till with joy Thy face we see,
And Thy likeness wear.

Holy Spirit, Life, and Light,
Wisdom, Purenness, Love, and Might,
Fallen souls restore;
Guide our spirits when we pray,
Cheer us, help us on our way,
Make us holier day by day,
Till we sin no more.

Ever blessed Three in One,
Make Thy will in us be done,
Show in us Thy love;
Keep us Thine while here below,
Make us in Thy grace to grow,
And at last Thy glory know
In the world above.

Love's Mastery: Or the Gower Family.

A turn in the road brought the party in view of what, in that part of the country and at that season of the year, was a rather unusual sight, a large encampment of gipsies. Horses and asses were tethered to the ground: the male part of the company were apparently abroad in quest of supplies, while the children and one or two elderly women were lounging about in the vicinity of the encampment. They were dark strange-looking wanderers, veritable gipsies, as both speech and complexion indicated.

"Now for some real fun!" cried Clara Venables, suddenly checking her horse, and turning to her companion. "Mr. Gower, I challenge you to have your fortune told."

"Most willingly, after yourself," Mr. Gower answered, laughing.

"After me, of course! That is just what I intended. It won't be for the first time, I can assure you. My fortune has been told by pretty nearly all the gipsies in the kingdom—by this old crone herself before now, likely enough;" and Miss Venables sprang from her horse, threw the reins to her companion, and advanced towards the elder of the two women, who, seeing prospect of a good stroke of business, and perchance, as the young lady remarked, recognizing in her a former patron, came forward, and commenced, in strange-outlandish dialect, recounting her marvellous powers, and advising the whole party to make proof of them.

True to her challenge, Miss Venables was the first to accept; and, after scrutinizing the remainder of the group, the gipsy drew her apart, and poured into the ear of the giddy girl very much the same story as she had confessed to hearing so often before.

She came back, laughing and shrugging her shoulders. "Now, Lora—ladies first—you go; and then Mr. Gower must redeem his pledge."

Lora hesitated. It was not a proceeding that suited her refined and fastidious nature: the close

contact with so coarse and repulsive a woman as this certainly was, and the actual folly of the act itself, both considerations drew her back. And yet at the same time a feeling unworthy of her better self, and which hitherto she had never owned to, led her strangely onward. Might not this fortune-teller really possess a little of the power she boasted? Would she not, with a sufficient bribe, give some little certain glimpse of the future which concerned her so anxiously? She hesitated for some moments. "George, will you allow me?" she asked at length.

"Nay indeed, I will make no rash promises lest I should break them," he answered, smiling.

"But have you any faith in the thing?"

"Yes, every faith," he answered sarcastically, and not doubting for a moment that his betrothed would comprehend his meaning.

But Lora's thoughts were too busily absorbed just then; and she took the grave words in earnest.

"Surely, you need not get down. Ride on a few paces, if privacy is so absolutely indispensable, and let the woman come to you," Captain Flammank continued.

But Lora preferred dismounting. The gipsy woman had heard and weighed each word of the brief conversation; and, in order to impress more forcibly upon the mind of the haughty beauty the importance of her professions, she drew her farther apart, and almost beneath the covering of a low canvas tent, which had shielded a portion of the vagrant family during the severity of the past two nights.

"And with what will the lady have her hand crossed?" was the first question the woman put, as Lora, all unused to so humiliating a position, stood loftily before her.

Miss Gower drew out her delicate portemonnaie, and placed half a sovereign in the extended palm. The gipsy's eye gleamed triumphantly; Miss Venables' gratuity had not exceeded a silver-piece, not of the largest.

After lengthened and curious investigation of the delicate hand most reluctantly uncovered and displayed, the old woman commenced a strange unintelligible jargon, to which there could be no definite meaning attached, but which conveyed plausible assurances of luck, wealth and unbounded happiness, should the lady's fortunate star continue in the ascendant.

Dissatisfied and perplexed with the one question which alone she cared for altogether unanswered, Lora was about to turn away, when a new idea struck her, and she stood yet farther within the shelter of the dark and dirty tent.

"You answer any questions, I imagine?" she inquired, with that kind of proud and almost insulting tone of superiority which the crafty woman at once recognized and resented.

"Any one question you may choose to put, my lady," was the reply, with no touch of annoyance or of resentment in the tone.

"Am I to be happy in my love?"

Miss Gower spoke the words in a low hushed voice, and with a flush of shame mounting to her very brows.

The old woman looked keenly and pitilessly into her face. Now was her time for revenge; though how far more bitter a one was to be inflicted through her medium neither at that moment would have dared to contemplate.

"A strange shadow rises before me," the gipsy said, "which will surely come between your true love and yourself: whether or not, in the end, you will struggle through, it is not given me to disclose—only beware!"

"Just what I have always dreaded and believed," Lora murmured inwardly, and, turning away with a proud smile and a flush of colour upon her face, she rejoined her companions.

"What an age the old witch has kept you! Now Stella, for your turn!" Clara Venables exclaimed.

But Stella drew back.

"O no, thank you, not me," she answered quickly.

"And why not you, I wonder? If I had a face only one-tenth as pretty as yours, would not my fortunes be different? Dozens of devoted lovers—yourself among them," turning to Mr. Gower, "sighing at my feet, and I don't know what felicities beside. But seriously, Stella, you'll go?"