

A NEW YEAR'S GREETING.

TO our subscribers and friends we extend a very cordial New Year's greeting, wishing them in all sincerity and heartiness, "A Happy New Year." The custom of expressing good wishes to one and all with whom we are brought into contact at this season needs no apology. The welcome which this greeting receives, proves that it is very meet and right and our bounden duty. We know, of course, that all this amiability of feeling, this neighborliness of sentiment, this avowal of peace with all men, brightens, adorns, gladdens New Year's morn only because the spirit of Christmas seizes on another day of universal observance to manifest its universal charity and gladness. The greatest of the poets who is the least known, tells us to "hope until hope creates the thing it contemplates." That is a true saying, so also of wishing; it is no idle phrase we use in "A happy new year to you." The world's happiness is heightened, is permanently enriched by all this gentle kindness of speech. Many a fog of misunderstanding, of alienation, of doubt, is dispelled by the shining in of this light of good will and warmth of brotherly cordiality. Hearts are eased of burdens, consciences of accusings, and the mind's vision is cleared as we hear and as we give wishfully the greeting, "A happy new year."

Many of our subscribers have so greeted us, we are indeed most grateful for their timely remembrances. We have before us a number of most generous letters. We could not afford space for all the kind words sent us, we select a few which represent the rest in tone. One subscriber of high social position, a layman of official distinction, writes, "The DOMINION CHURCHMAN is unquestionably the best written paper in the Dominion, I heartily wish it the greatest success." A greeting like that "tips the hills with gold" which are before us and helps much to give us a Happy New Year. One of the best read scholars in Canada, a divine of recognized learning and authority says, "I wish your agent would visit my parish, I shall be glad to say what I can for the DOMINION CHURCHMAN." A third, who is well known as a hard working parish priest, of no mean reputation also as a scholar, writes "I have great pleasure in testifying to the value of the DOMINION CHURCHMAN, and its influence in the extension of Church principles." Those are typical of a large number, the writers of the above are not extreme men, they are fairly representative of the overwhelming majority of Canadian Churchmen.

As so many ask, from all parts of the Dominion, for our agent to visit their parishes or districts, we take gladly the opportunity of thanking our friends who have shown so great hospitality and kindness to the R. v. Mr. Wadleigh, who has been canvassing for subscribers to this paper. We can assure all who have received Mr. Wadleigh so sympathetically, especially his brethren who have evinced so brotherly a spirit by helping him in his work, that their good will is very gratefully appreciated. Now a word to correspondents

who will help much to make our new year happy, if they will be good enough to follow our rules and advice in a few matters. We desire to say that our columns are open equally to "High," "Low," "Broad," or any other class of Churchmen who have something to say to their brethren on Church questions. We simply impose a few conditions which every one will see to be reasonable. First, we must have the name of each writer and address, either for publication or for our information. We use anonymous letters to light the office fire. Second, it is our rule to publish the name of letter writers who make personal references by name in their letters. Third, we cannot admit communications which are merely censorious, no good can come of fault finding, unless some principle is involved of general interest. Fourth, we beg our friends to be as brief as possible, for their own sakes, long letters have few readers. Fifth, we advise writers to read their copy over a day or two after writing, in order to pass judgment calmly on what has been written warmly. Sixth, we ask for mercy on the part of some who write hurriedly, who interline, erase, and generally hash up their M.S., until it is a very trying task to decipher. Seventh, we trust that our hosts of friends will each one secure another subscriber for the current year. By observing these things they will help to make happy their own new year by thoughtfulness and sympathy, and will, in a very substantial manner, wish us, as we again wish all, "A Happy New Year."

CHURCH THOUGHTS BY A LAYMAN.

NO KING BUT CÆSAR.

THE scene of our Lord's trial, as depicted with varying details by each of the Evangelists, has in it no more revolting incident than one given by St. John, who informs us that the chief priests cried out, "We have no King but Cæsar." The world to-day is presenting to us a spectacle even more shocking than the humiliation of the Jewish priests. Those priests saw in Jesus a rebel against their authority, in Cæsar they saw one whose power was not in direct antagonism to their own. Their cry was a pitiable one in a spiritual sense, but it was a natural cry, it was the voice of men whose higher vision was clouded by undue regard for professional interests, immersed in the dense fog of the present, they knew not the time of their visitation by the light of the future. To-day the "chief priests" of several denominations are practically shouting the cry, "We have no King but Cæsar."

In name the servants of Him who said "My kingdom is not of this world, else would My servants use their swords on my behalf," they are acting as though Cæsar, the sword power, claimed their supreme allegiance. They seem to act as though the spiritual powers of the kingdom of God were not theirs to wield, as though Jesus Christ and His Gospel were mere side issues. Looking at "the wondrous Cross whereon the Prince of Glory died," they see in it an obsolete, expended force, an interesting

antiquarian study, while the grand object for modern veneration and regard is the truncheon of a constable. "The Cross," they seem to say, "having failed to draw men to the Crucified, we now lift up the glorious baton of a policeman, which shall terrify and coerce men into moral goodness—we have no King but Cæsar." The arm of the Spirit of God, having as they suppose, been powerless, they now raise the arm of flesh.

The position taken by those "chief priests" of the sects who are so actively engaged in efforts to enforce abstinence by penal laws, is identical with that of the Papacy in the days when it sought to further the cause of religion by the gibbet, stake and other devices of the Scott Act type, devices based upon the Scott Act principle. The Papal authorities took this ground that, as a man's eternal welfare was in danger if he did not conform to Papal customs, it was not only justifiable, but most charitable to compel men by force of law to a life of orthodoxy. The Popes were model prohibitionists. This evil of heresy, said they, is ruining immortal souls, therefore we will prohibit it. Men ought not to be tempted into heresy, therefore we will close up all places where it is propagated. We will suppress this evil, we will fine and imprison all who persist in resisting our prohibitory laws, men shall not be free to go wrong, we will enforce them by the terrors of the law to walk in the paths which we prefer. The Spanish Inquisition was the precursor of the Scott Act, it had a higher excuse, the tortures of that tribunal were intended to save men from eternal damnation, the penalties of the Scott Act are chiefly aimed at the suppression of a custom of conviviality. The civil power should wield the civil sword, Cæsar must enforce his decrees by his legions, but with the civil sword, with the officers of law the Church of Christ has no right to interfere. The argument of the Scott Act is both too wide and too narrow. This Act is based upon the notion that it is the function of the state to guard citizens from the temptation to do evil. But there are sins as gross, vices as dangerous as drunkenness, from the temptations to commit which the State can never take steps to protect men. Thus the State is made partial in its severity and in its care, it literally sets an example of compounding for sins it has no mind to, by damning those it is inclined to. The liar, the slanderer, are more dangerous, more injurious, than men who take beer or wine in moderation, who speak the truth and slander not, yet the law sails over the former offenders without notice, and shoots out its arrows at the latter class of innocent citizens, as though the purchase of a beverage were a crime!

Scott Act agitators have never reflected upon the vital distinction between the deeds against which penal laws are directed and their pet Act. There is no such things as moderate thieving or moderate murder, in their very essence these deeds are criminal. No man cares to be thought guilty of such offences in any degree. But in regard to drinking, the act is in itself as innocent as breathing, it has