

Correspondence.

NOTICE.—We must remind our correspondents that all letters containing personal allusions, and especially those containing attacks on Diocesan Committees, must be accompanied with the names of the writers, expressly for the purpose of publication.

We are not responsible for opinions expressed by correspondents.

THE HABITUAL WORSHIPPER.

DEAR SIR,—I would like to ask what constitutes an "habitual worshipper" in our Church of England in Canada? My own idea has hitherto been that he is a person who loses but few opportunities of attending Divine service at one of our churches, and who makes a further effort to obey the command of our Saviour in partaking of the Holy Eucharist at the least three times in the year. I found to my sorrow and shame at our last Easter meeting our Vestry was packed with so called "habitual worshippers," as our minutes of the persons and proceedings testify. I state "packed;" I don't know of another word to convey the idea. It arose in this way: I believe the lay representative to the Synod, who, I am pleased to state, bears out my idea as to an "habitual worshipper," for he is a very regular attender at Church and at the Holy Communion, and not only that, I believe he contributes according to his means in offertories and subscriptions liberally, but has misrepresented our Church at the Synod for some years past, through outside influence. Just previous to our Easter meeting he was asked if he would propose another member of our congregation to fill the office this year. What passed further I can't state; but I was surprised to see a crowd of persons outside the church waiting for the Vestry meeting, which was a very unusual thing, for it was the first time since I have attended this vestry that we have had more than five or six, and these, I must state, I believe true to the Church, and what I call "habitual worshippers." One of these was the above representative at the Synod. For the last three years I have been appointed Warden—twice by the minister and once by the people. I very soon suspected the object of all these outsiders, for such they were. As warden for three years you might imagine I ought to know the members of our congregation. I did not even know two or three, and believe I have not seen them in the church during the time. I have also gone around twice at New Year's time for subscriptions, and you may be sure that I and my colleague called on all those that called themselves members of our church. The result of such appeal you may from experience know. I am ashamed to state our representative got these waifs to carry him through for this year, and boldly stated that he would get elected. Seeing all these people at his back it was useless to oppose him, so he was returned again.

A highly esteemed member put a question to him as to his opinion on a certain point. He distinctly stated he would not give his opinion, but would vote as he chose when occasion required. I suppose he had not received his instructions from head quarters.

Now, Sir, it strikes me very forcibly unless there are some steps taken to prevent these unseemly and anti-church proceedings our Church will sink deeper and deeper into something worse than dissent, and be uprooted in this Dominion altogether. We have now a people-ridden priesthood, and a Bishop elected by the people too. Surely it is time for Churchmen to be up and doing.

I would like some member to bring the definition of an "habitual worshipper" before the Synod in case we have to be subject to such a lay claim to that title; but I do not see why such outsiders should be allowed to choose my pastor and dictate as to what he should preach and teach me.

Yours,
INQUIRER.

MY DEAR SIR,—It is obvious that the constitution of the Synod is radically wrong in permitting men to vote for representatives of Synod who have no interest in the Church and are not identified with her in any way. How is this crying evil to be remedied? Devout men build and support churches, a mob rushes in and displaces them from office, disperses and is seen no more until the next Easter vestry meeting (Vide All Saints, Toronto). At present representatives are sent to make laws and decide questions of doctrine for the

Church, by those who are not members of the Church, and not even worshippers therein.

As an illustration, at the last Easter meeting in an important town, when a large number came forward to sign the book so as to qualify themselves for voting, the Rector observed many faces unknown to him, and reminded them that they must be *habitual worshippers*. A lawyer present stated that all who did not attend any other place of worship than the Church, were included in the term "habitual worshipper," whether they attended the Church or not, and that therefore the gentlemen present were entitled to vote!!!

Now Mr. Editor, a remedy for this abuse must sooner or later be found, for at the Synod the Church is not represented, but the great mob is. I think we might learn a lesson from those twelve Venerable, pious and godly Divines, who in February 1878, withdrew from the Council of the Church, for the purpose of frustrating the will of the Synod. Let the whole body of the Clergy, headed by the illustrious twelve, withdraw from the Synod on Tuesday, 10th June next, so that no business can be transacted. Let this be repeated year after year, until all be prepared to change the constitution, and permit only those to vote in returning representatives to Synod who are "bona fide" communicants of the Church. Our Synods, as at present constituted, are unchurching the Church. They are a curse, and not a blessing to us. This question must be agitated until we MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH, be relieved of this burden, too heavy to be borne. ALPHA.

Family Reading.

RAYMOND.

CHAPTER XLVI.

"When I told Hugh Carlton, continued the clergyman, that he would do well to use what time might yet be given him in this world in making his peace with God, he looked at me fixedly for a few minutes, with a sudden flush mounting to his very forehead, and said, 'Mr. Derwent, to make my peace with God I know that I must first make my peace with those whom I have injured upon earth. It will be a hard task to do it, for there are two persons who might rise up in judgement against me because of a cruel wrong I have done them; and to repair it I must not only ask their forgiveness, but confess to them the deception I practised on them. It will be bitter to own so many falsehoods,' he said, his colour deepening painfully, 'but I must do it if I am to restore to them the happiness of which I have robbed them; and I do earnestly desire to accomplish this now, much as I laboured in the days of my health and strength to take it from them. But I have gone down so near to the cold waters of death that they have quenched the fire of evil passions within me, and I have ceased to desire all that seemed to me most fair and precious in this mortal world, since the only hope or joy that can avail me now lies far beyond its narrow confines. I go rambling on, Mr. Derwent, he continued, 'because, to tell the truth, I am so ashamed of what I have to say; but I must ask you to help and befriend me in this matter, as I have no alternative but to lower myself in your eyes by letting you know all my wrong-doing. I have employed what I now feel to be base deceit in order to separate Raymond and Estelle Lingard. Do you think you can induce them to come and visit me here, in order to own it all to them, and see them restored to each other, as they ought to be? In their recovered happiness they will be ready, I think, to forgive me.'

"When he said this I saw that the poor young man little knew all the sad and painful results of his own unworthy conduct, and that they were likely to prove the worst punishment that he could possibly endure; but no one could save him from it; and I answered at once that you would, no doubt, be quite willing to see him when you were well enough to walk out, but that Estelle Lingard was, for the present time at least, lost to us all. He started up from his pillows with a look of terror, asking me, half-frantically, what I meant. I answered that Miss Lingard had been seen by no one since the night when he parted with her at Highbrook House, excepting by her old servant,

who could only tell us that she had left the neighbourhood altogether, after taking such effective measures to conceal her destination that no one had the remotest idea where she was. As he heard these words the colour left his face, and he flung up his hands with a despairing gesture, exclaiming, 'Oh, just retribution—just and terrible! This is what I have accomplished by my selfish schemes: to drive her out, alone and unprotected, on the world, to secure her misery, and Raymond's and my own.' His eyes closed, and I saw that he was nearly fainting. I called the nurses, who soon found means to restore him; but when I suggested my leaving him then to rest, and returning tomorrow, he implored of me so earnestly not to go, that I was fain to take my place again by his side, while the nurses left us alone at his request; then gathering up all his courage with an evident effort, he poured out his miserable history, and when he had finished, he turned away from me, shamefaced, and buried his head among the pillows."

"And there was nothing, nothing to guide us to Estelle?" asked Raymond sadly.

"Nothing. I think you have guessed nearly all he told me already in substance, at least, if not in detail. Hugh had loved Estelle from the first moment he saw her, and been absolutely resolved that he would win her to be his wife by fair means, but if they failed him, even then he was prepared to use those that were false and wrong, provided that one way or another he attained his purpose. The discovery which he very soon made that Estelle had irrevocably given all her best affections to yourself, did not deter him from his aim, as would have been the case with most men; on the contrary, the cruel pain it caused him seemed only to nerve him to a more unscrupulous disregard of all the principles of truth and honor, which had been the only religion he had professed before. His own self-will had long been the master power of his existence, and it was concentrated now on this one object with a strength against which his better nature could in no sense contend. He went warily to work, trying to gain her confidence, before he told her of his hopes. At last, when it seemed to him that a favourable moment had come, before your engagement with Miss Carlton was broken, he told her of his devoted love, and of his intense desire to win her, and met at once a most distinct and absolute refusal—so absolute, indeed, that Miss Lingard was unwilling they should ever meet again; and it was only by giving a promise, which he never meant to keep, that he obtained her permission still to see her as a friend. He told her that if she would allow him still to continue his intercourse with her, he would cease to seek her, or desire even that she should learn to love him. She was too candid and truthful herself to dream that he could purpose to deceive her, and so she allowed him still to visit her, and he used the privilege for the purpose of undermining your hold upon her by every means in his power; latterly, however, it had become painfully evident to him that she loved you with an unchanging steadfastness, which nothing could move, and that, unless he could overcome her constancy by some bold, successful stroke, it was nearly certain that he would be separated from her altogether after her uncle's death. The events at the time of the fire seemed to give him the opportunity he required, and he conceived the cruel scheme of working on poor Estelle's wounded delicacy, because he saw that she had betrayed her affections for you in the moment of your imminent peril. He came to you first, as you know, with his false statements."

"Yes," exclaimed Raymond: "he attributed motives to my poor Estelle as far removed from any she could ever have entertained as light is from darkness. I was never so indignant in my life!"

"That was done with a double purpose; he thought it just possible you might believe him, and be turned against her, but failing that, he hoped it would drive you into a hasty intimation of your wish to be united to her, of which he might make use for his own plans; in that he succeeded, unhappily, but too well: he persuaded her that you had felt yourself bound to marry her from a chivalrous spirit of honour, because she had betrayed her love for you, but that you did it most unwill-