

Churches the names of Established Churchmen should be received as eminently suitable to be arbitrators in such a dispute was equally significant. They all rejoiced in the change, and it seemed certain that the change which had taken place was only beginning, and they believed that in the working out of the great controversies which were ahead of them in Scotland the society would be eminently useful.

An Apt Text.

The late Bishop Baldwin had a habit of concluding each of his pastoral letters with a text. His last pastoral was on the subject of intercession for Sunday Schools, and the text on this, his last message, to his diocese was this, "The night is far spent, the day is at hand," Rom. 13:12. The Bishop's death on October 19th, following the pastoral letter of October 10th, furnishes an impressive commentary on these significant words of St. Paul. How eagerly did the Bishop look and labour in expectation of the dawning "day" which came so soon.

Mrs. Bishop.

The death of this lady in her seventy-second year has passed with very little general notice. But half a century ago her enterprising life would not have been so soon forgotten. Mrs. Bishop was the eldest daughter of the Rev. Edward Bird, rector of Tattenhall, Cheshire, and at the early age of twenty-two began a career of fearless adventure. She first spent four years in America, and in 1856 published "The English Woman in America." Thence she wandered over the world, and published accounts of her travels. In her fortieth year she married Dr. Bishop, of Edinburgh, and after his death resumed her restless life. Whether as Miss Isabella Bird or as Mrs. Bishop the account of her travels which she gave to the public always fascinated. It was strange to read what a woman—and a delicate one—could accomplish in the way of foreign travel, and to what remote corners of the earth she could penetrate. But what we value most in the life of Mrs. Bishop was the strong testimony which she bore in later years to the worth of Christian missions, especially in China. No one ever set in stronger contrast the light of Christianity and the darkness of heathendom.

The Venerable Bede.

To the English of the North the erection of a monument to the man whose memory has escaped oblivion must be gratifying. In June of 1903 an agitation was started to raise a memorial to the Venerable Bede in Monkwearmouth, where the great scholar, ecclesiastic, and historian passed his life. A generous response enabled the work to be put in hand. It was resolved that the memorial should take the form of a cross of stone, to be set up on Roker Cliff. The work has just been completed, and was unveiled by the Archbishop of York in the presence of a large gathering on Tuesday last. The cross is twenty-five feet in height, and weighs about five tons. The shaft contains some very fine carving. On the east side are some extracts from two of Bede's works; the west side depicts scenes from his life. In relief on the south side are busts of the friends and associates of Bede, and on the north side his poetic genius and love of nature are recalled by a design introducing a harp, and birds and animals. On the base is a short inscription: "To the glory of God, and in memory of His servant Bede." With the exception of the tomb in Durham Cathedral, it will be the only monument to this, one of the greatest of Englishmen, who in a barbarous age may be said to have laid the foundations of our recorded history, and of English letters. The de-

tails of the story of his life that have come down to us are few. And of these the most that the majority of Englishmen know is the incident, recorded in juvenile history "readers," of the old man on his death-bed dictating the last chapters of his translation of St. John's Gospel, and falling back dead with a prayer of thanksgiving on his lips as the last words were written down. At the actual ceremony of unveiling the monument it is estimated that nearly 5,000 people were present. Canon Rawsley, who has all along been prominently associated with the scheme, composed a hymn for the occasion. The following is the first verse:

"God of our life by Wear and Tyne,
To touch the heart and teach the eyes,
We set to-day this "beacon sign"
Of Bede, the honoured and the wise."

After the hymn had been sung, prayers were said by the Bishop of Durham, and on the invitation of the Mayor of Sunderland, the Archbishop of York unveiled the cross, amid loud cheering. The Archbishop, in a brief speech, expressed his thankfulness in having been permitted to take some share in unveiling this memorial of a beautiful life, and placed it under the care of the mayor, that it might be zealously guarded and lovingly cared for from generation to generation. The mayor, in replying, recalled the fact that Bede's last letter was written to Egbert, Archbishop of York, one of his pupils, so that it was peculiarly appropriate that the successor of Egbert should unveil the memorial.

Church Bells at a Funeral.

"Church Bells" has the following paragraph upon the subject: "The ringing of bells at funerals is a custom of ancient origin. It was a popular belief that the sound of the bell had power to drive away evil spirits. In England, Bishop Grandison, of Exeter, in 1339, found it necessary to check the long ringings at burials, on the ground that 'they do no good to the departed, are an annoyance to the living, and injurious to the fabric and bells.' Gifts of bells to churches, particularly in the earlier ages, were always deemed the most acceptable of gifts, and during the Middle Ages these bells were not uncommonly given as a memorial of some deceased friend or relation. Kings and queens may be found amongst the donors of bells, and one of the earliest of royal bell-givers was probably Canute, who presented a pair of bells to Winchester Cathedral in 1033." We have understood that the ringing, not tolling, of bells during a funeral, a custom still common in the south of England, is the survival of the old practice announcing to the parish the celebration of the mass, and requiring the people to pray for the soul of the departed. Perhaps some readers may be better informed and would write us on the subject.

DIVORCE.

One of the plague spots of modern civilization is the abuse of divorce. The sanctity of the marriage tie is the only sure safeguard of the home. Where this is denied and disregarded, virtue is banished and vice walks triumphant. When one hears or reads the sophistical pleas for greater liberty in this matter which are so frequently urged, the splendid declamation of Burke rushes back to the memory: "What is liberty without wisdom and without virtue? It is the greatest of all possible evils, for it is folly, vice, and madness without tuition or restraint. Those who know what virtuous liberty is cannot bear to see it disgraced by incapable heads on account of their having high-sounding words in their mouths." The extent to which this evil has developed in an environ-

ment of high civilization is evidenced by an authoritative statement made recently by Dr. Webb, president of Nashotah House, Wisconsin, at a mass meeting held in Boston that in 1903 sixty thousand divorces were granted in the United States; and that in the State of Massachusetts the proportion of divorce to marriage was one to fourteen. On the same occasion Chief Justice Stiness, of Rhode Island, said that "not one divorce in fifty was sought simply for separation; nearly always there was the purpose of re-marriage." These social statistics reveal, in plain English, a rampant legalized prostitution of the marriage bond. The Christian altar has been ruthlessly torn down, and with its stones a modern one has been built to Baal-Peor. Truly, the ancient apostolic order is changing, and paganism, with legal sanction, is masquerading in the garments of Christianity, fashioned to the requirements of what we are pleased to call our advanced modern civilization. There is a rottenness in the bone of our social fabric, and if we do not pause, consider, and conform our liberty to the guidance of wisdom and virtue, some future Gibbon may attribute our "decline and fall" largely to the prevalence of the vice of divorce. We may rest assured—plan, scheme, legislate as we may—that the wilful and unwarrantable breach of the solemn warning of our noble marriage service: "Those whom God hath joined together let no man put asunder," will inevitably bring its own punishment. "Wisdom," said one who was wiser even than the great liberal philosopher, "is the principal thing"; and Pope well reminds us that "Virtue alone is happiness below." The marriage bond binds us with links which we may strain, but cannot sever, which were welded in our own flesh and blood, and forged at the sacred altar of our faith.

THE PROVINCIAL SYNOD AND THE SUNDAY SCHOOL.

Among all the matters which came before the late meeting of the Provincial Synod at Montreal, there was none of greater importance than the work of our Sunday Schools. Since 1889 there has been a committee, appointed by the Provincial Synod, known as the Inter-Diocesan Sunday School Committee, composed of the House of Bishops, ex-officio, one clergyman and one layman, nominated by the Prolocutor, from each diocese, and one clergyman and one layman, elected by each Diocesan Synod; in all, a membership of forty-nine. Every three years this committee reports to the Provincial Synod. Now that the General Synod has been formed, the Provincial Synod at the late session adopted a resolution requesting the General Synod to take up and continue the work now being done by the Committee of the Provincial Synod. In their recent report to the Synod the Inter-Diocesan Committee drew attention to the fact that the work of the committee in issuing a scheme of lessons each year known as "The Canadian Church Sunday School Lessons" is bearing fruit, as each year finds the Scheme more generally adopted, and from Advent, 1904, the two committees preparing "Lesson Helps," viz.: The Sunday School Committee of the Diocese of Toronto, and the Committee of "The Church Record Publications" are preparing their "Helps" in accordance with this Scheme. The Inter-Diocesan Sunday School Committee has nothing to do with preparing "Helps"; having prepared the Scheme, the duty of the committee has been fulfilled, so far as this department of the work is concerned. Each year the Inter-Diocesan Sunday School examinations have been held. In 1901, fourteen teachers and eighty-six scholars were examined, representing six dioceses. In 1902 twenty-seven teachers and seventy-one scholars wrote on the examinations. In 1903 fourteen teachers and eighty-eight scholars were examined from four dioceses.