

everything with a wave of the hand or by the oracular utterance of a phrase or two. That the "Bystander" has never read a single word which Principal Caven has uttered on the subject of "dogmatic preaching" is very evident. That this is as natural as it is evident is equally uncontroversial. Kindly hoping that the poor man meant "doctrine" when he said "dogma," the oracle forthwith tells us what it means by "dogma," and having given that word a definition which might just as properly and as truly be applied to "doctrine," as well as to many other words, it forthwith concludes that no sane person could have anything to do either with the word or the thing. We naturally conclude from this declaration—from which of course there is no appeal—that if the Athanasian creed is the grand example of dogma and is "unreason imposed by ecclesiastical authority," then all other "creeds" must in their several positions pass under the same definition, and receive their mittimus to the same limbo. The "Thirty-nine Articles," "the Confession of Faith," etc., etc., have, in that case, all the same element of "unreason" for they all teach very much the same supposed truths, and must all, therefore, be laid aside as a "load of sacerdotalism, paganism and Byzantine theosophy." Now, who told this man that the creeds of Christendom were "unreason imposed by ecclesiastical authority?" or how does he propose to shew that what Christendom and the ordinary usage of the English language have agreed to call "dogma" is simply another name for "unreason," while the word "doctrine" is all different, and may be possessed of any amount of "sweet reasonableness?" He does not propose to shew it. It is all a matter of individual opinion, and just as likely as not "unreason imposed" by personal dogmatism. That even this Athanasian or any other creed "imposed by ecclesiastical authority" could be examined by individual reason, and adopted by individual conviction, is dismissed at once as too absurd for anything like serious discussion. Men might say they believed it, but of course they never did. Why never? Because I, the "Bystander," cannot conceive how such a thing is possible, and therefore it is impossible. And so it goes on. Once settle that "dogma is unreason imposed by ecclesiastical authority" and that all creeds have been so "imposed" without being adopted by individual conviction, and the conclusion against these "credos" is as comfortable as it is convenient. But is it founded on reason, and is it entitled to any respect? It is, on the contrary, the mere "*sic volo, sic jubeo*" of an individual, and is even worse than the dogmas imposed by ecclesiastical authority, for while considerable efforts were made to shew that the latter rested on a revelation from heaven, and were in accordance with its dictates, the former is paraded as right simply because its author, and he not a very wise man at that, thinks it is.

It is all very well to preach up, as some are doing, a gospel of indistinctness, a revelation from somewhere or other which has not even the consistency of a fog, and is not so definite as what Jeremy Taylor used to call the "dream of the shadow of smoke." But what does it amount to! As even the "Bystander" admits, no religion can stand without some "intellectual belief," and whether this formulated and believed statement of fact or truth be called a "dogma" or a "doctrine" it comes very much to the same thing. Those, for instance, who have adopted the "Confession of Faith," with its every proposition, we are virtually assured, have done so either in ignorance or dishonesty. Why? Because some man more than usually wise or more than usually presumptuous, has said so, without, however, giving any reason for his assertion. A dozen of men or a dozen of hundreds, have, after having come to the years of maturity, with their intellects sharpened by continuous training, and their hearts professedly purified by contact with the Word and Spirit of God, declared solemnly that what some call "unreason imposed by ecclesiastical authority" is to them the shortest, simplest, clearest and most satisfactory exhibit of a revelation from heaven which they could desire, and that they adopt it as their own. Is it decent to say that all these men or any of them are necessarily knaves or fools? Or are they to be described as immature boys who are ready to swallow anything in order to be put in the priest's office so that they may eat a piece of bread? But suppose one of these men in the course of time gets new light, and says to his neighbours, "I want to remain with you, to work with you, to be identified with you, but there are some things in that 'creed' which we

all signed that you really must allow me to give up." Would it not be the most natural thing in the world for those others to say, "Tell us what you object to, and we shall see?" And would it not be the most absurd and unnatural thing possible for the troubled brother to say "No, I won't give any particulars. I just want relaxation all round, and to be allowed to think what I like and as I like, while I pass muster as being still what I was, though with a vague, indeterminate and very accommodating difference?" And yet it seems we are to be told that those who say they have *not* changed are all irrational, straitlaced bigots, while he who *has*, but will not tell either how or in what, but simply that he wants more elbow room, is the ideal of all wisdom and the embodiment of all virtue! If this be the essence of reason, what is unreason? If this be wisdom, what can be folly? If certain men agree to co-operate on certain terms, and some of them by and by repudiate the conditions of the compact, we repeat that reason and honesty would surely say that the repudiators should frankly and fully define their new position, so that it might be seen if co-operation were still possible. To apply this common-sense principle, however, to religious creeds and their adherents is, it seems, narrow, unreasonable and even monstrous. The cry is, "Set about and remodel your creeds." "Get quit of the 'dogma.'" "Get quit of the 'sacerdotalism.'" "Get quit of the 'paganism.'" "Get quit of all the Byzantine theosophy." But the reply is evident and reasonable: "Don't trifle and fool round with big words, like hulking illiterate pedants, but tell us what you mean and what you want. We are not 'crypt-acceptics,' and this creed does not make us feel as if in fetters any more than it did you in other days. We are ready to hear what you have got to say. If after hearing it, we can continue to walk together—good and well. If not, let each take off his several way." This seems to be a course recommended by individual reason, though often in these days, denounced as the utterance of personal dishonesty. "This creed" (whichever it may be), some may say, "is too long." If so, it surely lies with those who are dissatisfied to say how and where it ought to be shortened. The twenty-sixth chapter of the Confession of Faith has in this way in many Presbyterian Churches been got quit of. The objectors to its apparent teaching brought forward their reasons, the validity of these was allowed, and the necessary modification was effected. So has it been in the past with every change in the statement of dogma or doctrine, or whatever it may be called, in every Church which could be mentioned, and so in the very nature of things it will be in the future, in spite of all the cheap talk about "unreason," the gratuitous imputations against the honesty of other people, and the patronizing affectation of a superior "culture" and a deeper knowledge, which content themselves with glittering generalities and that strange air of profundity which instinctively leads one to think of the rather disrespectful inquiry about a former somewhat solemn and surly chancellor, "Do you think there ever was any one *really* as wise as Thurlow *looks*?"

By reference to Prospectus, in another column, it will be seen that THE PRESBYTERIAN is offered *free*, up till the end of this year, to new subscribers for 1887. This fact should be helpful to canvassers, and incite to immediate effort. In the matter of terms we are doing everything in our power to meet the wishes of friends; while the premiums we offer to getters-up of clubs will be found very liberal. Go about the canvass at once, and hurry in the names.

THE Rev. Dr. Reid has received the undermentioned sums for schemes of the Church, viz.: Additional from bequest of the late Mrs. Ann Quay, Port Hope, per her executors, \$13; C. Blair, Puslinch, 75 cents—for Home Mission. Mrs. John Thom, sr., Toronto, \$20; C. Blair, Puslinch, 75 cents; Friend, Ottawa, \$1—Foreign Mission. Executors of the late Rev. Dr. Spence, Scotland, for Aged and Infirm Ministers Fund, \$1,077.43; also from same, for Assembly Fund, \$48.49. C. Blair, Puslinch, for French Evangelization Fund, 75 cents.

YOU cannot dream yourself into a character. You must hammer and forge yourself one.

THE block of granite which was an obstacle in the pathway of the weak, becomes a stepping stone in the pathway of the strong.—*Carlyle*.

BOOKS AND MAGAZINES.

SCRIBNER'S MONTHLY AND ST. NICHOLAS FOR NOVEMBER. (New York: Scribner & Co.)—Both as attractive and as instructive as usual.

FUNK'S STANDARD SERIES has received the following additions: (1) "Pulpit Table Talk" by that inimitable gatherer of interesting anecdote, Dean Ramsay. (2) "The Bible and the Newspaper," by Mr. Spurgeon. (3) "Lacer, or Many Things in Few Words," by Rev. C. C. Colton, of Cambridge. These complete the first series, and with a dozen or more other works may be bound in one large volume. These publications should have a wide circulation.

TRUE MANLINESS. By Thomas Hughes. (Boston: D. Lothrop & Co.; Toronto: Hart & Rawlinson. Price \$1.)—This volume belongs to Messrs. Lothrop & Co's "Spare Minute Series," and consists of 154 separate extracts from the writings of Thomas Hughes, perhaps even yet best known as the author of "Tom Brown's School Days." Those who have read any of Mr. Hughes' books will not be very much surprised when they find that the selections which make up this volume fill 300 octavo pages and that they are all true to the title. The "spare minutes" devoted to the perusal of this book, especially by young men, will undoubtedly be profitably employed.

HARPER'S illustrated periodicals continue to occupy a foremost place in their several departments. The "Bazar" is an unquestioned authority in the world of fashion, and enlivens the leisure time of the family circle; the "Weekly" lends artistic vividness to current events and every-day topics; while "Harper's Magazine" and "Harper's Young People," to an unfailing supply of varied information and instruction fitted for readers of all ages, add the charm of a refined literary style. The last mentioned publication, being of comparatively recent origin, perhaps requires, and certainly deserves, special notice, as supplying the young with beautifully illustrated reading matter which, while it is sufficiently entertaining, is at the same time, to say the least, not inimical to their highest interests. The following are the new terms for these periodicals: Harper's Magazine, one year, \$4; Harper's Weekly, one year, \$4; Harper's Bazar, one year, \$4; Harper's Young People, one year, \$1.50. The reduced rates for combinations are: Harper's Magazine, Harper's Weekly and Harper's Bazar, one year, \$10; Harper's Magazine and Harper's Weekly, one year, \$7; Harper's Magazine and Harper's Bazar, one year, \$7; Harper's Weekly and Harper's Bazar, one year, \$7. Address, Harper & Brothers, Franklin Square, New York.

THE NOVEMBER ATLANTIC opens with five chapters of a striking new serial story, "The Portrait of a Lady," by Henry James, Jr. Mr. James is unquestionably one of the foremost of living novelists, and his new story will be followed with eager attention by a multitude of readers. Col. T. W. Higginson writes "A Search for the Pleiades," a charming out-door essay on New Hampshire mountain scenery, birds, and animals. The third paper on the "Intimate Life of a Noble German Family" is no less interesting than previous papers. Miss Phelps discusses the puzzling question "What is a Fact?" Geo. P. Lathrop describes the Concord School of Philosophy in a paper entitled "Philosophy and Apples." Prof. Shaler of Harvard treats "The Future of Weather Forecasting." Rev. S. J. Barrows has a thoroughly interesting article on "The Silk Industry in America." Richard Grant White seems to conclude his excellent English papers with one made up of "Letters and Notes from England." "The Washington Reminiscences," which have been pronounced by competent judges the best series of papers ever written on Washington political and social life, this time relate to the close of the Tyler administration. Miss H. W. Preston furnishes a capital translation of "Storms in Autumn" from the Georgics of Virgil. T. B. Aldrich contributes "The Jew's Gift," a striking poem, and there are also poems by E. H. Clement and Anna Head. There is, apropos of "The Stillwater Tragedy," a careful and hearty tribute to "Mr. Aldrich's Fiction;" and many other new books are reviewed in the excellent style for which the "Atlantic's" criticisms are noted. A variety of topics is treated entertainingly in "The Contributors' Club," which closes a remarkably good number of this sterling magazine.