

SPECIAL  
ARTICLES

## Our Contributors

BOOK  
REVIEWS

## HOSPITALITY AT CHURCH.

By Rev. James Hastie.

The Bible abounds with commands and examples of Hospitality. How Lot acted in this matter will occur to all—and Laban, and Joseph, and Boaz, and Rebekah, and Rahab, and the Widow of Zarephath, and the Shunamite, and memorably Abraham. (Gen. xviii. 4. etc.) Then in the New Testament there are Simon the tanner, and Cornelius, and Lydia, and Phoebe, and Philemon, and Galus. Nor was their hospitality all outlay and no income. Every one of them realized the truth of the Scripture promise, "that even a cup of cold water given to a disciple shall not lose its reward." Rebekah was rewarded with a good husband and many precious gifts, Gen. xxiv.; Laban, with a good servant for himself and a husband for both his daughters, Gen. xxix. and xxx.; Rahab, with the preservation of herself and kindred from destruction, Josh. vi.; David, with the discovery of his enemies, 1 Sam. xxx.; the widow of Zarephath, with the miraculous increase of her meal and oil, and the restoration to life of her son, 1 Kings xvii.; the jailor, and also Lydia, with salvation for themselves and their households; the Barbarians of Melita, with cure of both body and soul.

In Abraham's case as well as in Lot's, angels were entertained unawares, and verily they had their reward. Lot was preserved from the flames. To Abraham the glad message was brought of the promise of a son by Sarah, in whom all the families of the earth should be blessed.

And surely it is worthy of note the high place given by the ancient heathen to hospitality, as seen in the title they gave to their supreme divinity, Jupiter, when they called him as they did, Jupiter Hospes—Jupiter "The Hospitable."

And in the interior of Russia to-day where hotels and other houses of entertainment are very scarce, the kindness of the peasants to strangers is most delightful. The humblest but offers its bed and its table to the traveller. No compensation will be taken. Indeed, a byword is current there which has almost the binding force of a law, "that to take pay for the bread and salt which a passing stranger eats is a great sin."

But, this question has a bearing on church life which should not be overlooked. Young men and young women come into town and city the year round to work or study, who belong to the Presbyterian Church. Whether they continue to attend that church or no will depend largely on the welcome they receive or the reverse on their arrival. Lonely and alone they long for sympathy and recognition. For a few weeks they do give attendance at the denomination of their fathers, and if the hand of fellowship be promptly given, and a seat be provided, they will abide, otherwise they will not.

Occasional visits are made of an evening to other churches, and not unfrequently they have but to make one visit when they are taken by the hand, and kindly spoken to, and invited to return.

Next Sabbath some genial visitor calls at their lodgings and takes them again to the same church, and so friendship goes on for weeks till at length the youth turns away altogether from the church of his fathers to some other from no other cause than want of hospitality

and affability on the part of the people.

Now, who should take the initiative in speaking to this new-comer? Should any one person, should any one order of officials have a monopoly of this luxury? An atmosphere of sociability is only possible in a congregation when everyone is mindful to entertain strangers. Let no one wait for another to move. Let every man and woman make it a matter of personal obligation.

The minister cannot for the most part leave the pulpit to sneak to the new-comer before he gets away. But somebody is sitting immediately in front, or behind, or by his side. Some one showed him to a seat, and let that same person play the "Achates" to him at the close of the service. Some one must touch elbows with him as he passes out. Let every one who has opportunity show affability, and should a dozen do so the same day all the better.

It is not the Confession of Faith and Catechism which drive many a youth from our communion, nor the absence of instrumental music or its presence, nor the defective architecture of the meeting-house, nor the quality of the preaching so much; in a legion of cases rather it is the want of that which Abraham so abundantly possessed and used so generously. Christian Affability.

## "RALPH CONNOR" AT HOME.

A writer in the Boston Congregational who has been visiting Winnipeg, has this to say of a well-known minister residing in that city:

"Ralph Connor known in the churches as the Rev. Charles W. Gordon, D.D., is the minister of St. Stephen's church, for which a fine new edifice has been built. Like the late Dr. John Watson, he is first a hard-working, all-round city pastor, and a man of letters only in his moments of relaxation. "At the meeting of the local presbytery held during my stay in the city, he seemed to be consulted on all manner of questions, and evidently he is in the forefront of the forward movement in his church in Winnipeg and western Canada. At first sight he seems the dreamer rather than the man of action, but the real man is the harmonious union of imagination and practical talent. He dreams dreams, and then with the energy of a successful man of affairs he translates them into concrete real realization. One of his intimates told me he belongs to the mystics; often a plain business man cannot understand him. He added in the same breath, 'he is as shrewd as the best of them when he comes to a turn in real estate.' One of Ralph Connor's first transactions in Winnipeg real estate was to buy a liberal portion for his own house on Broadway. It is a substantial brick building, with ample grounds, and a spacious double study. Dr. Gordon works with a private secretary and he knows how to delegate to her most of his detail matters. In his church he gathers a large audience, including many strangers, and he preaches long sermons. Dr. Gordon is optimistic concerning the outcome of the movements of the union in Canada. He even thinks that the Anglicans may be included. While resisting the sacerdotal theory of orders he has come to believe that the office of a bishop is necessary to the most efficient administration in the church. Two months of the year he reserves for an outing in a cottage on one of the thousand islands of the Lake of the Woods.

## THE LIVING WATER.

By Nicol Moffatt.

Why think of the woman of Samaria and leave out her partners in shame? Let them all assemble together, since Jesus has called for them. "Go, call thy husband and come hither," is His commandment. They represent a large, sad class in society, and for their uplifting His disciples must ever strive and pray.

Notice the Saviour's method of reaching her. "Give me to drink," were words which instantly removed their differences. Both were agreed that on a hot, dusty noon hour a good drink of cool water was necessary. Both felt a debt of gratitude for the refreshing water of Jacob's well.

Take another step, however. They are to agree once more. "Living water" was spoken of thrice, and to "never thirst" became the hope and desire of both. Poor soul! thou hast hardly touched the wide sea of good. If left to thyself thou never canst. But the Saviour knew the keenness of hope. "Give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw," revealed a better self within her just awakening. What a quick wing hope has.

But there must first be a clearing away of obstacles. The conscience must be reached. Here again the Saviour shows his skill in discovering a breach in the soul's wall—go call thy husband. Now is the moment of all the ages to her. Is she to lie and kill the last root of that tender plant of God—conscience? It would have been the last and fatal leap into endless night. But it was the same gentle voice that appealed to her honor which had previously driven away her fears and renewed her hopes. She therefore was enabled to save herself from that cruel fate.

Consider anew at this point the gift of God, referred to by Jesus, and also termed the "well of water springing up into everlasting life." In our holidays we have all searched the hillside for the cool springs. We turned not at the hot or nettles; we were undecieved by the moss covered stones or decaying stumps. A poor place this for anything good! But to see the bubbling fountain! From afar, somewhere, the fresh, pure liquid has arisen, and here it overflows and puts to naught its rude surroundings.

Woman of Samaria! thy soul may be as rough as that wild mountain side, and seem unknown to any good. But receive the "gift of God," which will be a well of "living water." From thy soul will spring up a stream of pure rich thought and impulse.

Disciple of Christ! hasten to find these springs. It will cost thee something. But as the Master who had added to His physical exhaustion by this interview, said, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of," so verily thou wilt be fed. Thou too must sit at the well or beside to do this work. A smile is worth a dozen tracts and thy sympathy may be needed in the absence of the mother—probably dead, probably deceived. Thou art the living wire which with one hand thou dost raise the fallen and with the other hold to Christ. Thy meat will be to do His will and finish His work. Waver not at thy weakness—thou seest not the whole. Since love has emptied thy heart, thou has given the best. Since effort has exhausted the soul thou hast done thy part. With Christ thou hast spent thyself and with Him wear the crown.