

class of workers? There is a place for them. The Head of the Church supplies them. The leading ministers of the Church know them, inside and outside their own communion, and invite their co-operation. Ministers from all parts of the country write, imploring a visit from one or other of them. But as a church we ignore their existence, and are thus powerless to check their irregularities or supplement their deficiencies.

The office should be revived by the Church. Our very best men are required for it, and, as the committee of the Presbyterian Church (South) says, we will not get these, and no progress will be made in the matter "until the dignity and importance of this office and work are recognized."

To whom should the appointment of such men be entrusted? Why not to our Synods? This and various other matters should be committed to Synods, not merely to provide them with distinctive work, but because it will be simply impossible for our General Assembly to grapple with everything in a Church, so widely extended as ours is. It would not do to entrust the ordination of such men to Presbyteries or to any board or committee. The Synod should call them, and not call broken-down men, but men whom the general voice of the Church has already pointed out as having the requisite gifts. When one has been so called and set apart, a fixed stipend should be secured to him, paid either from a district fund, or through the Home Mission Board. He should be connected with some Presbytery, and have all the rights and privileges of other qualified members in that Presbytery. At the Synod his work for the year could be mapped out. While within the bounds of Presbyteries other than his own he would be subject to them, and would have only the right to sit and deliberate. This sketch of his relationship to our existing Church organization is submitted merely as a suggestion. Let the propriety of reviving the office be conceded, and there will be no difficulty in defining his place. The one danger to be guarded against is too rigid definition at the outset. Our Church is free. It has all power in itself. It can check evils when they appear or make rules as they are called for.

What does the Church exist for? To save the souls of men—to extend the kingdom of Christ, to develop Christian character to the highest possible point and to all its rightful issues. In order to accomplish these high ends, it must fearlessly use every agency that God blesses. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." If new modes of working, new agents or agencies are needed in new lands and new generations, let the Church acknowledge them, and do so not timidly but trustfully. In this, as in similar cases, it may be found that what we call new is really old.

#### THE RIGOROUS RULE OF PETER THE GREAT.

The beard was at one time considered as the symbol of what was uncivilized and barbarous, and so convinced was Peter the Great that this was the case, that he was relentless in forbidding public officials to be unshaven. The rule gradually became relaxed in practice, but it was not until the year 1815 that a decree was issued permitting the officers and soldiers of the army, except the Imperial Guard, to wear their beards when on service. I transfer the following circumstance and therefore interesting account of this act of the great ruler of Russia, from an article in *Scribner's* of 1880: Decrees were issued that all Russians, the clergy excepted, should shave, but those who preferred to keep their beards were allowed to do so on condition of paying a yearly tax, fixed at a kopek (one penny, for the peasantry, and varying from thirty to a hundred rubles, from £12 to £42, a ruble being worth at that time about 8s. 4d.) for the other classes, the merchants, as being the richest and most conservative, paying the highest sum. On the payment of this duty they received a bronze token, which they were obliged to wear about their necks, and to renew yearly. Many were willing to pay this very high tax in order to keep their beards, but most of them conformed to the Tsar's wishes, some through policy, some through terror of having their beards (in a merry humour) pulled out by the roots, or taken so roughly off that some of the skin went with them. The Tsar would allow no one to be near him who did not shave. Perry writes: "About this time the Tsar came down to Veronezh, where I was then on service, and a great many of my men who had worn their beards all their lives were now obliged to part with them, amongst whom one of the first I met with, just coming from the hands of the barber, was an old Russ carpenter that had been with me at Camisbinka, who was a very good workman with his hatchet, and whom I always had a friendship for. I jested a little with him on this occasion, telling him that he was becoming a young man, and asked him what he had done with his beard. Upon which he put his hand in his bosom and pulled it out and showed it to me; further telling me that when he came home, he would lay it up to have it put in his coffin and buried along with him, that he might be able to give an account of it to St. Nicholas when he came to the other world, and that all his other brothers (meaning his fellow-workmen who had been shaved that day) had taken the same care."

#### CHILD MARRIAGE IN INDIA.

The child-marriage question still continues to hold a prominent place in the public eye in India. Writing upon the subject recently, Ragoonath, the late Minister of the Maharajah Holkar, makes the following statements: "A man aged 47 years, who was lately defendant before the court of a magistrate, charged with having ill-treated a

child-wife, eight or nine years of age, wanted to go away from the locality, and applied to the British police for a guard to enable him to leave the place and to take the minor with him without fear of interference from her parents. The British people's representatives in India escorted a closed carriage, in which were seated this man and the girl minor, prevented the parents from approaching their child, and kept them off till the man had carried her away from her parents to a place about 1,000 miles away from the scene. I appeal to the people of Great Britain to say whether such conduct on the part of their agents in India meets their approval. Not content with countenancing slavery, they afford material and powerful help to the rich and influential owner of the slave, and enable him, under the rules of law and morality now in force in India, to deport a child from the proper guardianship of her father and mother. Such acts as these are, in the opinion of Sir J. Gorst, efforts to correct the evils of infant marriage. If this child had been the offspring of an Englishman and the scene London, would the British people have tolerated such conduct on the part of the British police?"—*Colonies and India*.

#### THE LADY DOCTORS OF INDIA.

In India lady doctors are now familiar to us, and although at first they may have been somewhat ridiculed by those who could not appreciate their value, they are fast making their presence felt for good in almost every corner of the land. So far as the native women of this country are concerned, it is gratifying to note that their success in all branches of college education is progressing to the entire satisfaction of their professors. Not only have they proved themselves to be generally well fitted for the arduous duties attendant on medical studies, but they have, in some cases, succeeded beyond all ordinary expectation. Bombay, Madras, the North-West Provinces, and the Punjab, all return flattering reports on the subject, and when we say that a class of female students can average over 700 marks out of 1,000 in a surgical examination, as we hear has recently been the case, little can be said against their power of skill or aptitude for gaining knowledge in one of the most important branches of the medical profession. Indeed, it appears not unlikely that women in India may prove themselves by no means inferior to men in most branches of the practice of medicine if the progress made by native females in hospital work may be taken as a criterion. In many cases they have proved themselves superior to male students in college examinations, and in no way behind them in application, power of reasoning, and resource. The fact that much of their success is due to the great interest taken in their studies by their lecturers and professors is not without a certain special significance.—*Overland Mail*.

#### PATRIOTISM AND POETRY.

In this fellowship of Patriotism and Poetry there is nothing extraordinary. Patriotism, while a moral, is also largely an imaginative passion. If it is to bring forth worthy fruit it must become more than this, wedding itself with reason and walking in the ways of duty; but without imagination a man can hardly even take in the idea of country and of nation. He has no difficulty in appreciating the claims of a clan, which is but a family expanded, or of sympathising with a class whose well-being is identified with his own; but the idea of a nation is a vaster thing than these, and he who grasps it has to blend in a single conception countless thoughts and associations that come to him from remote tracts and distant periods. A nation is a unity which includes a vast plurality, many members with diverse functions, and yet a common life and common interest. It comprises whole races which in early days strove against each other on many a battle-field, yet whose remoter descendants were destined, from geographical or other necessities, to become amalgamated. Looking back on history the thoughtful patriot discerns not merely its accidental confusions, but under them a latent meaning and a providential purpose. Petty resentments then give place to a sounder love of country, and the lesson of history is peace. How otherwise could a common country exist for the children of Provence and Brittany, or for those of Austria and Hungary? The true patriot remembers the past and his wrongs, where wrongs have existed, but only to teach the lesson they bequeath and pay a tribute to the suffering heroism of ancient days, not to forge bolts of vengeance, when there is no longer a head upon which they can justly fall. True patriotic love is not a vindictive passion—it is a magnanimous one; it is not a vainglorious assumption that a single nation has absorbed all the virtues, and that all other nations consist of "barbarians" as the Greeks, or of "hostes" as the Romans, called them. It is not an aggressive impulse; on the contrary, the aspiration of the patriot is that his country should be justly looked up to as the founder and sustainer of virtuous civilization in all lands. Patriotism is not a blind affection; it sees clearly the faults of the country loved, and cares little for its praise and much for the fulfilment of its highest vocation. It is not self-love dilated, but the extinction of self-love in an affection the largest known to man except that inspired by religion. The love of country blends the loyal devotedness of filial love with the discrimination, often painful, of love parental; and yet that love, far from obliterating, quickens in him who feels it the love which he owes to his neighbour, and the reverence due to total humanity.—*Aubrey de Vere in Essays, chiefly Literary and Political*.

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