

Bible study may be introduced with good effect in many places, and very busy ministers may help each other. If the work of the church is to be carried on, and the missionary enterprise maintained, the spiritual life of the congregation must be constantly quickened by the Holy Spirit acting through a faithful ministry. If we live in this spirit then, so far as we are led to use evangelistic services we shall use them wisely and well.

THE CRITICS CAREER.

I had intended to give an introduction to the series of notes destined to appear in this column but that can stand over as my attention has been attracted by the Moon. The Moon is a new comic paper, published in Toronto, a copy of which some one has kindly sent to me. I see that this is Vol. 1 No. 18 so that evidently the Moon has waxed and waned for seventeen weeks while, in every obscure corner, I have been unconscious of its blissful beams, and in the meantime various literary people have seen the Moon "over the left shoulder" and given handsome testimonials. In any case it may be only a chance visit, as in the present state of the coal bill. I am afraid that even the expenditure of 5 cents extra per week "for fun" will have to be carefully considered. By the by, I was going to say that the new journal, with all its moonshine, has no joke on the burning question of coal but that would not be correct as there is a small one, on a subject in which I am not now interested viz, engagement rings set with cokes instead of coal. The Moon declares that everything in its pages is original "There are no stealings," whereupon I am tempted to say "My friend you are no moon you are the Sun," for the moon shines by reflected light. Well, indeed, it must be a funny editor's room without scissors or paste, only brains and the inextinguishable pen, or as to the mechanical instrument perhaps fun has learned to flow freely through the type-writer. However if the Moon does not steal it is willing to buy "comic verse, prose or drawings." Also I was never taught to make verses, and my prose is destitute of fun. As for drawings I would advise the Editor to apply for some of the drawing papers in the last entrance examination, some of the illustrations of that verse from Grey's Elegy were no doubt funny enough. An Editor of a comic paper was once dining out and he met a gentleman who said "You are the Editor of —, you must have some funny things sent to you." When the Editor graciously replied "Yes we have" he was met by the cruel question "Why don't you put them in?" The Editor of the Moon has put in some funny things, and many shrewd sensible things as well, here is one paragraph that meets with our hearty approval.

Truly, consistency is a jewel—and a rare one—for public condemnation and approval is, after all, only relative in its application. Witness a preacher coincidence! Some months ago a discordant howl of indignation cried down a showman who depicted the awful agonies of a negro burned at the stake, in a series of moving pictures—and society calmly applauds or at least permits, an infringement on common decency every whit

as flagrant, so long as the revolting detail is staged and termed 'a melodramatic success.' It may sound like cant, but the author who will lend his pen to the perpetuating of a story of dastardly crime, and the management that will permit its presentation, have strong reason to suspect 'rotteness in the state of Denmark.' It is strange too, that the newspapers speak of these productions as entertaining, while at the time of the original devilment, their columns exhausted the supply of invective. They have the nerve, too, to label these horrors 'Drama.' We wish the Moon success in the endeavour to increase the gaiety of nations, and of the Canadian nation in particular. Honest fun, wholesome milk, genial satire are quite consistent with lofty aims and noble work.

NAPOLEON AT ST. HELENA.

BY JOHN CONNOR, LONDON.

Among recent books, one of the most interesting and suggestive is Lord Roseberry's 'Napoleon—the Last Phase,' the last phase being St. Helena. All the world is fascinated by the mystery and tragedy of Napoleon. His three phases—(1) obscurity; (2) mastery of the world; and (3) St. Helena, make up a drama of human interest almost without parallel. Physically, of giant endurance he fought for five days without taking off his boots or closing his eyes; intellectually a prodigy; of will power, a marvel.

Why did he fail? Why did not his success continue?

It is admitted Napoleon deteriorated as he grew older. Something corroded his intellect. He never had much heart. The corrosive was undue ambition. Fed and stimulated by success after success, his ambition grew insatiable. Undue ambition is not very different in its effect from that of any other vice. A calm judgment tells one such and such a thing is an impossibility, and the object sought not worth the risk involved. But when ambition becomes imperious, it means the previously cool judgment has become subjected to a disturbing and disintegrating influence. This is what happened in the case of Napoleon. Up to a certain point, with comparatively moderate and concentrated aims, he retained his cool balance of judgment. But when the maggot of universal dominion entered his brain, and when he actually came to expect a time when "all the kings of the earth should have palaces of residence in Paris, and attend in state the coronations of the French Emperor," he had clearly lost the balance-wheel of his reason.

Napoleon should have remembered, but did not, that all history shows there is no human method of assuring permanence of human conditions; that no man could be sure of himself or his powers for five or ten years more, much less be sure of others. It should have been conceivable to him that all other rulers and diverse peoples might not tamely submit to the Napoleonic theory of universal and unquestioned dominion. Too great ambition, walking arm in arm with tyranny, has not unselfed ended, as in Russia, in assassination. Napoleon at least died peacefully in his bed. He had that

much at least for which to thank St. Helena.

From Napoleon's recorded talk at St. Helena one learns that, like ourselves, if he was fond of saying, if he had this or that to do over again, he would do differently; whereas, unless a man were omniscient and omnipotent, he would simply have made other mistakes, and perhaps worse mistakes. Had Napoleon been all-knowing, all-seeing, and all-potent, he would have belonged to a category other than human. It is a reflection of ourselves, and not without pathos, to hear the exile of St. Helena tell how differently he would do this or that, had he but another opportunity!

It is not easy to account for Napoleon, the "combination of energy and intellect never equalled,"—his successes thus far,—and the tragic final phase at St. Helena, on any merely human hypothesis. The Presbyterian theory is stronger, that Napoleon went to his Providential limit,—that he was a needed scourge in the hand of God,—that he came swiftly to his place of temporary dominion, and was then swiftly withdrawn.

Literary Notes.

An American at Oxford, by John Corbin, 12 mo. cloth, 325 pages, \$1.50 net.—Boston, Houghton, Mifflin & Co. The interest of Canadian educators enlisted by the establishment of the Cecil Rhodes' scholarships should ensure a wide reading for the volume. The author is an American college man who has studied at Oxford University and entered fully into its life, so as to give a most instructive account from an inside point of view. The thirty-three chapters all phases of Oxford life and are grouped under the following general heads. "The University and the College." "Oxford out of Doors." (Athletics.) "The College as an Educational Force." "The History of the University and the College." "The Problems of the American University." Those additional articles of distinctive interest are reserved for the appendix, viz.: "Athletic Farming in England," "Climate and International Athletics." "An Oxford Final Honor School." The author has the right qualifications for his task. Ardent sympathy with college life, a quick eye for local color and a true estimate of the power of association, a penetrating insight into motives, a proper judgment of the real value of things, fine power of description, and an exquisite literary style. Very instructive are the comparisons between different features between Oxford and American university life, and the illustrations of different ideals. One of the most remarkable is the chapter on "The Educational Problem" showing the break-down of the Harvard elective system and the superiority of the "Oxford Schools." The student who wants to feel the warmth of college hearth-glow the educator who is engrossed with university problems, or the general reader who wishes to know the source of the intellectual forces that give intellectual pulsation to a great nation will find this the work he needs. No finer presentation of the central interests of Oxford or the influence of its unique academic atmosphere has appeared. The realistic vividness of the text is supplemented by 12 full page illustrations of Oxford buildings and scenes. The mechanical workmanship of the volume is good.