

feud with his seven brothers and compelled to take refuge on the other side of the Jordan. The sons of Tobias continued to trouble the public peace long after the reign of the Ptolemies had come to an end, but we have neither the space nor the desire to follow on the track of their audacious villainies. In dealing with the high priests of this period or those who were candidate for that sacred office, we meet signs of the same degeneracy and of the worst results of Greek influence.

The reign of Seleucus Philopater is for our purpose comparatively unimportant, and we pass at once to that of Antiochus Epiphanes the Magnificent, or as the satirists of that day called him, Epiphanes the Madman, by whose action the crisis was created and the conflict forced that instead of crushing the Jewish religion roused once more the old heroic spirit of the Hebrew people.

The Maccabean period is a phrase generally used to designate the years from 168 B. C. to 63 B. C., that is, from the outbreak of the revolt against Syrian persecution until the Romans took control in Palestine. Sometimes it is used to denote the time from the beginning of this great struggle until the establishment of the Hasmonean dynasty by John Hyrcanus in 135 B. C. We shall not now be able to deal at any length with the period of independent Jewish rule, but must be content with the simple task of stating briefly the origin, meaning and results of the struggle which made this national independence and political life again possible.

The whole period may be again divided as follows: B. C. 168—165. The brilliant and successful struggle for Religious Freedom. 162—142. Time of Religion and fight for Political Independence. 142—63. Period of Political Independence, ending with absorption in the Roman Empire.

Just before the beginning of our period, Onias III the High Priest, who was in a decidedly difficult position, lest the favour of the Syrian court. There was in Judea a free-thinking Hellenizing party whose members promised the King access to the temple treasures, and an orthodox party that had zealously guarded these from foreign hands. The High Priest had maintained a strictly legal position, and therefore his professions of loyalty were not acceptable at the court. Antiochus Epiphanes had not been long on the throne when a brother of Onias approached him with a wicked proposal. Holtzmann marks it as a sign of the times that with this man the series of double named Jews begins. His Jewish name of Joshua or Jesus was translated into Jason. He offered an increased yearly tribute to be made High Priest and, further 150 talents to be allowed to set up a gymnasium in Jerusalem, and to acquire for the people of Jerusalem the citizenship of Antioch. He knew that this proposal would please the King, but he certainly would not have ventured to offer it if there had not been behind him a powerful Hellenistic party. On the other side, there were many zealous, orthodox Jews to whom it must have seemed the height of wickedness that as the result of base intrigue the High Priest should be supplanted by his own brother and that for the purpose of making Jerusalem a heathen city Antiochus ventured to comply with this request. The gymnasium was built at the foot of the temple mount, and the priests gave more time to sports than to the sacred services. Jason went so far as to send a gift towards the worship of Hercules at Tyre, a festival which was to be honoured by the presence of the King. This, however, was too much even for his ambassadors. They did not dare to carry this out literally, but

gave the money towards the building of a ship. Jason, we are told, did not wish to deny his Judaism but merely wished to act as a broad-minded, tolerant man. The orthodox Jew could not attain to that point of view. For a heathen to send a sacrifice to Jerusalem was alright; it was an acknowledgement of the glory of the true God. For the Jew to send presents to foreign gods was quite another thing; it destroyed the peculiar divine glory and was a base betrayal of the eternal King. In politics, especially the politics of those days, we soon see that more than one can play the same base trick. This Jason found to his cost. A Jew of the tribe of Benjamin, known as a Hellenist, later sent with money and information to the King and took advantage of his position to overbid Jason by 300 talents, and thus secured the high priesthood for himself. This led of course to further confusion and strife, as Jason was not the kind of man to yield without a struggle.

(Conclusion next week.)

Should Not Publish Sensational Novels.

Some interest has been caused in Toronto Methodist circles by the publication of a protest signed by the Rev. Egerton R. Young, and addressed to Rev. Dr. Carman, general superintendent of the church in Canada, against the present policy of the book-room. Mr. Young objects to the publication of what he terms "sensational works" by an institution started by the church for the publication and dissemination of religious literature. He quotes early conference utterances on the question and continues:

"In these days, when there are great 'searchings of heart,' and earnest consultations among both ministers and devout laymen to account for the sad declension of spirituality in our churches, is it not our imperative duty to search out for the cause of this declension? We cannot disguise the fact that successful evangelistic services, such as our fathers saw, are almost of the past, while the love of the world and its amusements and frivolities so engross multitudes of our people that the week evening services are neglected, and there is but little relish for the family altar or even the Sabbath day services. Already many reasons have been advanced to account for these sad declensions, that in many parts of our beloved church are being mourned over. There is a growing conviction in the minds of many that it is in a large measure owing to the character of the literature which is now supplied to our people, especially that which is furnished for perusal on the Lord's Day. Formerly this was carefully looked after. Once there was a religious publishing house, where only such books as were of a helpful religious character were admitted. Canadian Methodism has no such house at present. The latest novel or the sensational romance has taken the place of the choice religious books that our fathers and mothers in Methodism gave to their children on the Lord's Day. Ministers and Sunday school teachers, as well as godly parents, are feeling their helplessness against this torrent of iniquity."

The directors of Bovril, Ltd., have appointed Viscount Duncannon, C.B., to be chairman of the company, in succession to the late Mr. John Lawson Johnston, and Mr. Geo. Lawson Johnston to be vice-chairman.

Sparks From Other Anvils.

Christian Guardian:—The full enfranchisement of women in municipal elections should not be delayed, and that could lead the way for enfranchisement in provincial and national elections.

Congregationalist:—It is not always easy to get real missionary news into the daily papers. But it seems as though whenever any sort of a man opens his mouth to condemn missions and missionaries a reporter is at hand to send his talk throughout all the newspaper world.

United Presbyterian:—It is not a question whether or not the Chosen Stone shall be laid, but it is a question for us to decide whether we shall build upon it, or be ground to powder under it. A stubborn will may assert its independence, but almighty power will inflict the penalty which justice decrees.

Presbyterian Journal:—Presbyterianism concedes the right of individual judgment. One may express his dissent on particulars, but his manhood demands an uncompromising loyalty to the Church as a whole. Such is true of the Confession of Faith. No creed of its size was ever written that contains so little with which thinking men cannot agree.

American Messenger:—A poor man who had become blind, but who still found ways of working for God, was one day visited by a Christian brother, who bewailing the blind man's sad fate, added, "But you have the greatest consolation: you will soon be in heaven." The poor man, raising his sightless eyes, replied with a smile, "Soon in heaven, did you say? Why, I have been there these ten years."

Christian Observer:—Maine has gained in wealth much faster than any of the Eastern States. Yes, although her geographical location and her topographical characteristics (bleak and mountainous) hinder her development in agriculture, in manufactures and in commerce, the great sources of wealth; and though the introduction of iron vessels has crippled her shipbuilding industry, yet Maine, with her prohibitory law, has outstripped all her New England neighbors in the wealth of her inhabitants.

Central Presbyterian:—The personal history of Calvin is not the pending question, but the theology of his Institutes. His conduct toward Servetus may have been extreme, but so, apparently, was Samuel's, when he 'hewed Agag in pieces.' No mercy was shown the enemy under the commonwealth of Israel, and the severity of Calvin can be partially explained by imputing to him a zeal inspired by Scriptural examples. But his faults have no more to do with his Institutes than the apostasy of Solomon with his Proverbs, or the crimes of David with his contributions to the book of Psalms.

Presbyterian Banner:—Old manuscripts are still coming forth from under the accumulated debris and dust of Egypt to confirm our faith in our sacred writings. What is believed to be the oldest fragment of the gospels yet found, containing the first chapter of Matthew, has recently been discovered. It was found in Oxyrhynchus, 140 miles south of Cairo, near where the famous Logia or Sayings of Jesus were unearthed, and its date is placed by some experts as early as 150 A. D. This papyrus of Matthew is said to belong to the same Sinaitic and Vatican cydices, and is a remarkable confirmation of those texts and of the accepted version. Christianity is not afraid of the pick and spade and is still bent on proving all things that it may hold fast that which is good.