

clerk who had charge of forwarding the Bishop's letters in London, it was not till six weeks after the election that the Bishop received the official notice that the choice of the Synod had fallen on him. The contents of a telegram addressed to a third person was, indeed, communicated to him, in reply to which he cabled at once to the effect that he could give no encouragement, but would wait for the official communication to answer formally. The belated letter, when received, was answered at once with every expression of respect, and regret at the apparent tardiness in communicating the decision. It will appear to any one that an election of this nature could not be declined until it had been officially communicated. Meanwhile, the unfortunate coincidence of the arrival of the cablegram announcing the election on the very day the Bishop was to preach in Westminster Abbey, on the Centenary of the consecration of the first Bishop of Nova Scotia, was made the occasion of a sensational message sent by the correspondent of a New York paper, purporting to give an extract from the discourse, which was fabricated by the writer, and adding a screed of abuse, which was seized upon in this country and repeated far and wide. Of all this, and the excitement growing out of it, the Bishop, who was traveling in Switzerland, was wholly ignorant. When it was brought to his knowledge, he repudiated the charges of disloyal utterances in his sermon, and at the same time, corrected the assertion, made by the same authority, that he had accepted the Nova Scotia Bishopric. It was thus, as he had not yet received the official notice of his election, that the people in Nova Scotia learned, through the public press, of his determination. The telegram he had earlier sent had been evidently misunderstood, and the delay in transmitting the official letter was not then known. Doubtless, it may have seemed strange to the members of the Synod that they had not been earlier communicated with, but, directly after, the whole matter was satisfactorily explained. No one can be more gratified than the Bishop of Iowa at the admirable choice which has been made by the Synod, which has just met. The Bishop's congratulations to Dr. Courtney were sent at once, by telegraph, and their reception has been most kindly acknowledged by the Bishop-elect. The choice of a distinguished priest of the American Church following the failure of the Synod to secure an American Bishop, is a most gratifying proof of the unity of the two Churches, and gives promise of even closer union and more perfect comprehension in the time to come. God bless the administration of the fifth Lord-Bishop of Nova Scotia!

ABOUT SOME HYMNS.

On a certain day in the first half of the last century, it happened that a clergyman stood at his study window, watching the fast gathering storm outside. Warned by their wonderful instinct, a number of sparrows fluttered restlessly about near by, seeking secure sheltering places under the eaves and amidst the clustering ivy leaves. There was probably more than the usual chirping and twittering, and certainly less than the usual watchfulness on the part of the excited birds, who were so eager to avoid the full force of the coming pelting rain and driving wind. Suddenly, without the least warning a hawk swooped down upon one of the little covey, and barely missed transfixing it with its strong cruel talons, outstretched for the purpose. Frightened and bewildered by the terrible and unexpected danger, the sparrow darted hither and thither, closely followed by the remorseless foe, and then as though in despair flashed through the open window, right

against the breast and into the hands of the interested spectator inside. Foiled in his attempt the hawk turned on the wing from the window and disappeared in the stormy gloom. Having given its liberty to his trembling captive, the clergyman, Rev. Charles Wesley by name, seated himself at his desk and wrote the thoughts this incident had caused to arise, as follows:

Jesu, Lover of my soul,
Let me to Thy bosom fly,
While the nearer waters roll,
While the tempest still is high:
Hide me, O my Saviour hide,
Till the storm of life be past;
Safe into the haven guide,
O receive my soul at last.

Fresh from the glowing soul of the man, the hymn came like a hot coal from God's altar to appeal to the hearts, and in prayerful praise to open the lips, of generations of Christians. Its simplicity, its directness of purpose its touching, trusting faith, along with the evidence it bore of true poetic instinct soon won for it a place in the first rank of hymns, (perhaps ten or twelve in all), which are universally beloved and will remain as long as the language remains. Aye, and perhaps longer even than the world shall exist for some. For there are many who in the climax of the storm of life, have found its prayer just fitted to their needs, and with the words upon their lips have tasted the blessedness of being received "into the haven" by the Great Lover of souls. Who shall say that they did not continue the song when they suddenly found themselves in the Paradise of God? A number of affecting little anecdotes reflecting the use of the hymn, in supreme moments have sprung into existence, but most of them are in great part, if not wholly, the work of pious imaginations. Such for instance as the telling account which went the round of the papers some years ago, of the shipwrecked sailor, who "could have no other refuge," though near enough to the watchers on the shore to be heard through the storm, singing the hymn so suggestively appropriate to one in his perilous condition. And such perhaps, the pathetic story of a well known sweet singer, who, as he drifted away from a sinking vessel in dependence upon a defective life buoy was heard to sing, "Hide me, O my Saviour hide," just before he went down to be hidden "till the storm of life be past." Of course there is evidence most certain of hymns suiting the spiritual wants of the brave fellows, who go down to the sea in ships, when skill and manful endeavour availed nothing, and death stared them in the face. A fine old Norwegian from Christiania, Josef Hansen, described one of his perils by water to the writer years ago in hospital at Quebec: "We had done all we could," he said, "and then as we all stood together the mate gave out the hymn, 'A strong Tower is our God,' and before we had finished singing it we were struggling each one for himself in the water. Eleven were lost, only three saved!" Here is what is probably a true instance of the use of one hymn spontaneously by one in time of dejection. Upon a steamer on the Potomac one summer evening in 1881, a well known evangelist of song was delighting a party of tourists, by singing familiar hymns, concluding with, "Jesu, Lover of my soul," rendered *con amore*, with a peculiar emphasis upon the concluding lines of each verse. Just as he finished a gentleman broke in with "I beg your pardon, sir, but were you engaged on the side of the North in the late war?" "Yes, sir," was the reply, "I fought under Grant." "I was sure of it," replied the other, "for I heard you sing that hymn one night eighteen years ago; I was on outpost duty on the other side, and had made my way up close to your picket line, quite near enough to take certain aim at a sentry who was humming the tune you have just sung, as he stood on guard. Just as I was about to fire the words rang out:

"Cover my defenceless head
With the shadow of Thy wing."

I couldn't kill the man then, but drew back into the shadow and returned into camp. That hymn saved your life that night." "And I remember the night well," said the singer, "for there never was a time when I felt such depressing loneliness as on that lonely dangerous beat with thoughts of home and friends filling my heart, when without intending it at all the words of my favorite hymn came to my lips. And to think that my Heavenly Father kept this mercy a secret from me for eighteen years." This incident witnesses to the exact truth of the hymn to nature, and to its correct voicing of the soul's cry in eternity. And it is because it contains these qualities that it deserves to exist and to form part of the service of the Church. Since only in so far as it possesses the attributes of truth to nature and towards the God of nature, could it exist alongside of those prayers which are sure to remain because they truthfully breathe the real want of faithful souls.

Probably the touching simplicity and broad catholicity of the hymn, has preserved it from the hands of the hymn-improvers, so sternly inveighed against by John Wesley in his Hymn book of 1779. With the exception of a verbal change in the third line, which is, as no one will deny, an improvement, it has come down to us, just as it was first given to the world. In Hymns Ancient and Modern, the third verse is omitted possibly because the compilers considered, as do many others, that the hymn is complete without it; or that the verse is so evidently inferior to the others in versification and natural beauty, as to suggest, if not the work of another hand, at least the thought of another time. To the writer it has always seemed, with its rather forced expression and tone of antithesis to breathe more of John than of Charles Wesley. The wearing power of the hymn is wonderful. We have it tortured into a florid setting as an anthem, rattled out to the cheerful strains of "Innocents," and droned out dolefully to "St. Martins." But it is always a favorite, however arranged, (sometimes *in spite* of the arrangement) and stands well. What a graceful hymn writer, Chatterton Dix, calls the crucial test, it is to a wonderful degree "singable." Sung to the finely harmonized tune in Hymns A. & M., it has a magnificent effect as an in-trait at floral seasons, expressing the sense of the comfortable words, and of the Canon in the Liturgy, and concentrating the attention upon Him in unborn sacrifices and sacraments find their completion, "Jesus Christ the Righteous."

The Sabbath is kept holy by Divine worship, and the command to rest was given in order that the day might be thus sanctified. There is a notice abroad that Sunday is first of all a day of rest, then afterwards a holy day. If one will but look at the commandment he will see that it should be a holy solemnity. The heart of the command is in the beginning, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." This commandment is positively broken when we stay away from Church services upon the Lord's day. No evasion is possible to escape this duty. Yet there are Christians who systematically stay at home and read the papers and sleep. How can this be keeping holy the Lord's day? Or they go to one service and mistakenly imagine that they have sanctified the day. When it was said that "the Sabbath was made for man" it was not intended that it was so made that upon that day he should forget God. It was made for man and for his highest faculties, namely the spiritual, without which man sinks almost to the level of the beasts that perish.—*Ex.*

If you have not been confirmed you lack something, and you know it. Don't wait to be urged. Go at once to your pastor.