

stature of crabhood, and so filling his place in the realm of being—what cared he for all this? ESCAPE was the one thing needful. Two things he saw: the devourer and the shell. The shell received him. The enemy lost him. And he lost himself in the shell. Is this cheap salvation confined to the physical world? Let us see.

I will glance first at the spiritual world. At every step of this long sea-shore I behold a Hermit Crab in his shell. These shells are not all the vacated tenements of the same species of departed mollusc. The crab that sits in one kind of shell, shudders for the fate of his poor blind neighbour when the devouring monster comes. The shells are labelled. One is labelled "The True Church;" its occupant is safe. Another is labelled "Predestination;" its crab is insured. A third, "Conversion;" its tenant is happy for itself, but wretched for the other two.

I will only deal with this last. How did the crab get into the shell? Some Sam Jones put him into that house of refuge! What is this "conversion" shell? It is a syllogistic formula. Its construction is this: "Christ died for sinners; you are a sinner; therefore Christ died for you. 'Believe' this and you are 'saved.'" You perceive that this kind of salvation is just taking refuge in a logical formula! Sam Jones takes the rankest scoundrel, in a moment puts him into this shell, and lo! the rascal is ripe for heaven! Having duly instructed him as to the "uselessness of morality" in all this business, he goes in quest of his next unfortunate dupe. The whole conception may be indicated in three words—hell, shell, ESCAPE! The motive, mere selfishness; the process, a sort of spiritual legerdemain; and the result, the most hateful thing known on earth—spiritual pride. Having labelled the new convert as "saved," he is left to vegetate in a passive state of idly waiting till it pleases God to take him to heaven. Not a thought or a word here about the necessity of "walking in the ways of His laws and in the works of His commandments." Not a word about so blessing *this* world by good deeds that the next world will be glad to have him. Not a word about spiritual growth through moral activities. Not a warning against the atrophy inseparable from the disuse of the moral and spiritual faculties. Not an allusion to the great law of the kingdom, "first the blade, then the ear, then the corn." No recognition of the profound truth written all over the face of Nature, that endurance is longest where growth has been slowest, that suddenness is all but a synonym for evanescence, that all which is best and highest extant in Nature to-day, is simply that which has successfully run the gauntlet of a hostile environment and survived, that while God gives us both the natural and the spiritual life, man must work hard to keep them alive. I see here the devil's master man-trap. Cheap salvation will wind up in damnation. Or, if a soul thus "shelled" to heaven's gate, gets in, is it not a Hermit Crab soul after all? Is not the whole conception of salvation degraded

and vulgarised by making it an adroit escape from hell, without getting rid of that character which leads thither, without even trying to build up that character which fits for heaven? But if the "chief end of man" is "escape," would not holy living be a safer "shell" than the soundest syllogism the Bible affords? In the moral world the great hermit-crab heresy of the day is "Prohibition." It is utterly false in principle. What is its aim? To protect man by annihilating a portion of his environment. Push this principle to its natural and logical extent, and consistency demands no less, and almost every blessing we have must be annihilated, because it may be made a curse. Money would have to go, for men are by it sometimes tempted to steal or to murder. Clothes should go, for they minister to vanity. Food must follow, for some (temperance) men are gluttons. The railway is doomed, for it causes much misery every day. This shows the rottenness of the principle in its very nature. It is just the "shell" principle. Suppose every species of temptation swept away from the earth. What then? "Men would be safe," says the prohibitionist. Yes, very, safe, but not *men*. Perchance there would then be no vice; certainly there would then be no virtue. Temptations mastered "are steps to heaven." They are the scaffolding used in building up a true manhood. God's love and wisdom are seen in the fact that He has set us down in the midst of "manifold temptations;" in other words, has surrounded us with the means of self-elevation. And His Word assures us that "blessed is he that endureth temptation." Your prohibitionist would amend this thus: "Blessed is he who hath no temptation to endure." Here is the hermit-crabism of the moral quack.

For the fundamental idea of the foregoing I am indebted to that great book, "Drummond's Natural Law in the Spiritual World," in which he says, "Any principle which secures the safety of the individual without personal effort or the vital exercise of faculty, is disastrous to moral character." This "disastrous" principle is the very *raison d'être* of the Prohibition crusade.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Although quite contrary to all rule to notice anonymous letters, we, for a new subscriber, make an exception in order to say that if "X. Y. Z.," of Quebec, will kindly help us by sending news from that Diocese, we shall much esteem the service. We are always thankful for Church news and succeed usually in publishing a far larger number of items than our contemporaries, though possibly they do not spread out so widely over our space. Let "X. Y. Z." and others in Quebec help us and we shall appreciate highly their kindness.

An Orillia Subscriber seems to be distressed at some strictures which appeared in the leading organ of Fenianism. Our kind friend should not fret because of evil doers. The paper he refers to is the bitterest enemy the Church of England has in Canada, and its enmity to every person who is helping the Church in any way is to that person a sign that he is doing good service to the Church. The other denominational paper he refers to is apt to express itself in somewhat frenzied terms against the Catholic claims of the Church, being the organ of an institution which is just as certain of extinction as every other thing which stands in the way of

Christian union. Subscriber will therefore do well to treat both these papers with the same indifference as we do; we take their attacks upon us as compliments. If we were false to the Church they would smile on our treachery; if useless to the Church they would delight in our shame, and treat us with silent contempt, but being made to feel our power they are full of wrath, and in their helplessness give vent to these bursts of spleen, by which Subscriber is quite needlessly disturbed. We repeat, "Fret not thyself because of evil doers."

LENTEN READINGS.

FORGIVENESS OF INJURIES.

Our Lord knew how hard a lesson this virtue was, and he left no chance for doubting what He commanded, and so escaping its fulfilment. He made His words strong and plain; He put a reminder of it into our daily prayer, He made our salvation to hang upon the fulfilment of it. He illustrated it by a parable the most dramatic and forcible. He lived it through all His life, and He died bearing it in His heart and breathing it from His lips. As He lay down on His bed of anguish—"One plank hard and narrow"—and at the moment He experienced the suffering that always harrows one the most to think of—though perhaps not the worst—the nailing of His precious hands upon the wood—we are told that then He said:

"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

O Saviour of the world, by those wounded hands, by those inexplicable tortures, win for us this heavenly grace; obtain for us that we may never, never for one moment, endanger our Eternity with Thee, by a thought, a word, an act of unrepented malice. Pray for us—who love Thee—as well as for them who loved Thee not.

If it were not hard there would have been no need to tell us. It is so contrary to our nature; it is perhaps the most distinctive virtue,—the badge of the Children of the Cross. Oh! let us daily search our hearts to see if we are wearing it untarnished. To see that there is no hard repellant feeling towards any who may have offended us. "—Would I do them good? Can I pray for them, cheerfully, honestly, not only that they may be brought to repentance, but that they may be blessed, temporally and spiritually? Could I hear without a pang, of their great success and advancement? Do I feel that I never want to see them again? If they have repented, could I restore them again to the place which they formerly occupied in my regard?"—For the Prayer says: "forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us." Heaven help us, if it means according to the degree—and that that measure of liberal restitution of favor and love that we show, is to be showed to us. I hope it means,—forgive us,—for we have forgiven. But I fear it does not mean that, and that our love and charity is to be the gauge of our reward. The larger, nobler, more loving our forgiveness, the larger, nobler, more loving our Lord's welcome for us. There are degrees of glory. If we just forgive, we may be just saved. Does that content us?

The constant habit of Bishop Boulter to forgive the injuries done to him, led one of his friends to write the following lines after his death, which must be considered the more beautiful, as being true:

"Some write their wrongs in marble, he, more just,
Stoop'd down serene and wrote them in the dust,
Trod under foot, the sport of every wind,
Swept from the earth and blotted from his mind.
There, buried in the dust, he bade them lie,
And grieved they could not 'scape the Almighty's
eye!"

THE INCARNATION.

[The following is the first sermon preached by the Rev. John Carter, lately of Trinity College, Toronto, and more recently of Exeter College, Oxford, where he graduated with second class honors. He was ordained by the Bishop of London, England, at St. Paul's Cathedral, London, on the 4th Sunday in Advent, and licensed to the curacy of St. Anne's Church, Limehouse].

The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us"—John i. 14.