

bers of the Church of England, but only as Lutherans, and yet that Holy Communion has always been administered to them. This is certainly a very striking fact, if it be true, and it would hardly seem possible that a paper of the standing of the "Spectator" would come forward with such an assertion unless it were prepared to prove it. In view, therefore, of the fact that Lutheran Confirmation is by an ordinary clergyman and in a non-episcopal Church, it makes the question of Confirmation and Communion a very real problem, and we are not surprised to find that the "Spectator's" assertion is being given great consideration. It is possible that some of our readers may care to comment on it, and, if so, we shall be glad to hear from them. The bearing of this subject on the great issue of Christian Unity is, of course, direct and important.

Religion in Schools

Viscount Bryce, the former British Ambassador at Washington, inaugurated a Conference on Education in London, England, last week, and delivered an important speech on "Salient Educational Issues." He put in the forefront a plea for the inclusion in the school curriculum of moral training based on religious principles, declaring that Bible and religious instruction must not be left out. He said he had learned how strongly Americans felt the need of strengthening school work in this direction, and he asserted that parents and Sunday School teachers could not be relied upon to do all that was necessary, although it is the first duty of the parent to give his child moral and religious instruction. Lord Bryce further urged that the teacher ought to be permitted to place his moral precepts as the basis of his duty to God, and the speaker believed that not one out of a thousand teachers would misuse his opportunity. Further, the speaker was struck with the fact that both in the United States and Great Britain knowledge of the Bible was declining among all classes, with incalculable loss to the life of the country. This is a message for Canada to which we shall do well to take heed. The paper on this subject, read at the recent Conference in Toronto by Professor Cotton, calls for very serious attention, for it shows how much can be done under existing laws. Lord Bryce is absolutely correct when he insists upon religious instruction as the basis of all true life.

Religion and Advertising

We have been much interested in the movement connected with the effort to make advertising an efficient working partner of religion. In the "Baltimore News" for Saturday, December 20th, there was a Religious Section, consisting of no less than eight pages, giving the news of various Churches, and containing full announcements of Sunday and Christmas Services. The idea that advertising can be harnessed to the chariot of religion is, of course, not new, but the extent to which it has been carried during the past year in the city of Baltimore shows that modern publicity methods, as applied to religion, are capable of almost indefinite expansion. There is no reason why religion should not benefit, as educational and charitable institutions have benefited, by the wise and persistent use of proper advertising. The effort has been made in several places in the United States, and also in England, and we hope it will soon extend to Canada. So long as the methods are seemly and not sensational, Churches cannot help being benefited by being made more widely known. Religious life is intended to be at once aggressive and progressive, and everything that makes for these essentials can be heartily welcomed.

The Fight at Montreal

Every lover of civic purity will rejoice at the result of the effort made to close the all-night cafés in Montreal. The unity of desire and effort has been splendid, including all the churches and other philanthropic agencies. The Bishop's part in it has been particularly strenuous, prominent and powerful, and he has been nobly seconded by his clergy and laity. It shows what can be done for righteousness when men of various Churches unite, and we congratulate Montreal on the unanimous decision of the authorities to close these unseemly and unsavoury places. Every blow struck for the purity of our cities will resound throughout the country, and we feel sure the action in Montreal will put other places on the alert. Purity, truth, righteousness are essentials of life, whether it be personal or civic, or national, and often they are not obtainable without the courageous and persistent effort which has been so happily crowned with success in Montreal.

Intercessory Prayer

Four kinds of address to God are mentioned in 1 Timothy 2:1: "Supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks." It is not now our intention to speak of all these. A separate article might profitably be devoted to each. It is of intercession that we wish to speak particularly. It is possible to supplicate and pray without making intercession. We know what it means for one person to make intercession for another in ordinary affairs. The compassionate wife of a monarch intercedes for the life of one of his condemned subjects. Or his son, a prince of the royal blood, intercedes for a servant who has disgraced himself and is about to be dismissed. Or a minister of the Crown intercedes for a friend, that a post of honour be given him. In every case it implies a place of nearness, intimacy, or privilege on the part of the one who makes intercession. Not every one can intercede for another with the King. One might pray him formally to grant a special favour, and if the case were particularly urgent, one might cast himself at his feet and make supplication to him. But to intercede for another one would have to be in a place of nearness to, or favour with, His Majesty, either officially or in the more intimate circle of friendship or kin. When this is understood, we see what is implied in the fact that it is our privilege to make intercession for others, even for kings and great men of the earth, as in the Scripture noted above. It shows the place of nearness accorded to the believer and his great privilege as a child in the family of God, or officially as a minister in the kingdom of God, an ambassador for Christ.

Having glanced at the meaning of intercession, and the position of nearness to God necessary for the exercise thereof, let us note a few Scriptural examples. Abraham interceding for condemned Sodom is one of the first instances recorded. He was called "the friend of God," and was in a position to intercede with Him for others. His conduct was noble, his plea most eloquent. We pass over the patriarch's prayer for Abimelech, king of Gerar (Gen. 20:7, 17), and come to the notable case of Moses making intercession for the guilty nation of Israel. It is one of the most touching incidents on record. What self-sacrificing love he displays, offering even to be himself blotted out of God's book if Israel might be spared (Exod. 32). Joshua, Moses' successor, on his face before the Lord, is another remarkable instance of one making intercession for a nation (Josh. 7). Four hundred and fifty years later we find Samuel also interceding for the same perverse people. He

says to them, "I will pray for you unto the Lord." "Cease not to cry unto the Lord our God for us," they ask of Him. And, "Samuel cried unto the Lord for Israel, and the Lord heard him" (1 Sam. 7). David, too, though himself culpable, intercedes, and is heard in that he feared. Like Joshua, he associated the elders with him in his intercession (Josh. 7:6; 1 Chron. 21:16). King Hezekiah also prays for the people of God, saying, with reference to their ceremonial trespass in connection with the Passover, "The good Lord pardon every one of you." His intercession prevails, for we read, "The Lord hearkened to Hezekiah, and healed the people" (2 Chron. 30). Daniel, at a later date and in a darker day, intercedes with God for His erring and captive people, unworthy of mercy and meriting to the full their bitter chastisement, but beloved for the fathers' sakes. Time would fail to speak of others: Isaiah praying "for the remnant that was left" (Isa. 37:4); Jeremiah, unable to restrain the pent-up desires of his sorrowing heart, venturing to lift up his cry for his fellow-Israelites, though thrice forbidden of God to do so (Jer. 7:16; 11:14; 14:11, 19-22). Ezekiel, too, makes intercession for rebellious Israel (Ezek. 9:8). So obligatory is this intercession for God's erring people that Samuel said he should sin if he ceased to pray for them (1 Sam. 12:23). The time came in their history when Jehovah "wondered that there was no intercessor" (Isa. 59:16). Other examples might be cited, encouraging us to engage much and earnestly in this unselfish and blessed exercise. But we pass on to Him who in this, as in all else, was absolute perfection. In the wonderful intercessory prayer of John 17 we see the Lord of glory praying for His own. Beside this sublime example of intercession even the prayer of the "greatly beloved" Daniel pales as the light of the moon before the rays of the morning sun. We feel that we are on holy ground as we hearken to the wonderful words of desire for the little flock, soon to be left in a merciless and unbelieving world. As we stand and listen, we say in our hearts concerning His intercession, as was said of His teaching, "Never man spake like this Man!"

Now that He is no more here it is ours to take up the service and make, in our measure, intercession for others. Christ interceded for His flock as a whole and for Peter individually, praying that his faith might not fail, even in his grievous fall. Following His steps, it is ours to pray for the Church as a whole, for all saints, and for each individual whose particular need we may happen to know. In permitting us thus to plead for others, God has placed upon us a high honour, indeed. Intercessory prayer was never more needed than in these perilous times at the end of the age. The servants of God need our intercession in their work: the pastor seeking to feed and gather the scattered flock; the teacher with heresies to combat and noxious doctrines to expose; the evangelist in his often discouraging work; the far-away labourer, toiling in his loneliness and voluntary exile from home and friends. Then there are the afflicted, languishing on beds of pain, suffering sometimes almost more than the poor, frail frame seems able to endure. There are also the Lord's struggling poor to pray for; backsliders, and those ensnared by evil teaching; the young, beset with so many dangers; our unsaved relatives and neighbours; "all men," in fact, according to the Divinely given commandment. Rulers, too, should have a place in our intercessory prayers. Indeed, all these cases afford matter for ceaseless intercession on the part of Christians, and it is a service in which all can engage. All cannot preach or teach, some are too poor to give, and too busy with necessary duties to visit. But from this ministry of intercession none are debarred.