

Our London Letter.

(From our own Correspondent.)

Again, after a long silence, I resume my old occupation; but what to write about I am at a loss. It is no use to discourse upon the war, which is uppermost in our thoughts here, because you receive the news concerning that as soon as we do ourselves, or nearly so; besides, by the time my letter reaches you, or certainly by the time it appears in print, which is generally a good while after you receive it, I imagine the war will be virtually over. I do not think it is going to be as serious a matter to put down the rebellion as some of our croakers think. My own impression is that one sharp and decisive battle will cause the Egyptians in a body to lay down their arms and yield submissively to our superior force.

Of course you have heard of the Primate's illness. Great relief is felt to-day at the announcement of his partial recovery. No man has had more severe illnesses than he; twice he has looked through the very gates of Death, but on every previous occasion his illness has seemed to be but the starting place for a newly energetic life. At 71 a full recovery to the vigour of early manhood cannot be expected for the Archbishop, and his friends have seen for some time past serious indications of failing strength. The last time he spoke in the House of Lords his Grace, always deliberate, but hitherto showing the deliberation of conscious strength, seemed to be moving slowly from sheer weakness. At the same time, it is hoped that he will be spared to the Church and the country for some time to come. The following story will show how it is he gets on so well with his clergy and is so beloved by them. I may preface it by saying that he has great regard for legality, but he has never, as e.g. Bishop of London, made his regard amount to superstition. One of his clergy, moaning over a deadly indifferent parish, and fired by Dean Stanley's example of putting lay preachers to address the people from the lectern in Westminster Abbey, went to the Archbishop and begged permission to follow so excellent an example. "Who objects?" said his Grace. "Nobody," was the reply. "Who is likely to object?" was the next question. "Nobody," was the answer again. "Then why do you come to me?" was the Archbishop's final question. The clergyman was about to explain, but he was interrupted by the smiling Archbishop, who said decidedly, "Now, my dear brother, that is surely enough. Say no more—ask no more; for if there should be an objection I should be your judge."

Last week we heard of the sudden death of the Bishop of Grahamstown, and now we hear of the removal of another African Bishop. Dr. Steere is dead. He was Bishop of Central Africa, and has laboured in that region for eight years. A philosopher, a profound theologian, a student of history, a reasoner of great power, his peculiar gifts seem to have been thrown away in Africa; but he mastered native languages, wrote hymns in them for the people to sing and prayers for them to pray. He was their poet and their novelist. Then he could turn his hand to nearly every work. He printed what he wrote; he built the house in which he printed; and he was a lawyer. He was emphatically a great Missionary Bishop.

The Salvation Army is still to the fore, and now we have Cardinal Manning giving it his blessing; not perhaps without a feeling that to welcome the new agency is to give a back-handed slap to the English Church. He declares that the Army has come because of the spiritual desolation of England. "In a population full of faith and religious life," he says in his article in the *Contemporary Review*, "such an organization could have no place." In England millions are living without faith and in a sin; but the mass of them, nevertheless, have a sort of belief in right and wrong and judgment to come, and unto the masses Wesley appealed; to them also William Booth appeals. Thereat the Cardinal-Archbishop rejoices because Christ is preached. "In a wilderness where there is no Shepherd any voice crying a fragment of the truth prepares the way for the perfect truth." The Cardinal has nine hopes and five fears about the Army. He hopes in it because it has no secrecy, offers no nostrum, and is open as the light in word and act;

because it is not a compromise, but holds to the old-fashioned Gospel and the three Creeds; because it teaches that sin is sin, and deals with the terrors of the Lord; because it holds that we ought to lay down our lives for the salvation of others; because, its organization being military, it appeals to the two principles of authority and obedience; because its officers are continually moved from place to place to prevent local and personal attachments; because its General receives no money from the Army; because it insists upon sacrifice and excludes drones; and, finally, because it is not a sect. On the other hand, he fears for it since it goes arrayed in the pomp and circumstance of war, and offers as an addition to the offence of truth the offence of needless provocation; because it speaks of complete regeneration in a moment, whereas sanctification is a progressive work; because it makes every pseudo-convert a judge of his own state, and insists upon immediate public confession of it, instead of inculcating humility and self-distrust, and orders every man to mark himself with a badge as "saved"; because of the excitement of emotional self-consciousness which ends in the flesh; and, finally, because it must either become a sect or melt away. There is a sixth cause of objection—the demoralization caused by reckless language on sacred subjects; the religious rowdiness of the Salvationists. "Low words generate low thoughts; words without reverence destroy the veneration of the human mind." Levity and coarseness in preaching, prayers and hymns, such as are to be found in the *War Cry*, and still more in the *Little Soldier*, provoke blasphemy. Summing up, the Cardinal says that his heart's desire and prayer is that they who give their lives to save their fellows may be rewarded with eternal life. It is really worth while to transcribe all this, for, notwithstanding all its caution and reserve, this estimate of the Salvation Army, while not avoiding what is reprehensible, and being absolutely just, is the most wide-hearted and charitable that has appeared—so largely charitable that one is actually astounded to find it signed by a Cardinal Archbishop of the Church of Rome.

Correspondence.

THE CHURCH IN HALIFAX.

(To the Editor of the Church Guardian.)

SIR,—Last week's GUARDIAN has a foot-note to the article headed "Sunday Schools" specially referring to the Church in Halifax, and says "that the work of the Church is languishing." Is it a fact, sir, that the work of the Church in Halifax is languishing? Are its members less zealous in Christian work than the members of other religious bodies? If we are to judge from what we see, then we must come to a different conclusion, for, financially, each of the city churches is in a good condition—at least the Easter reports show them to be so. The Sunday services are attended by large and, seemingly, devout and sincere congregations. The Cathedral is increasing in numbers; St. Paul's is as well attended; St. George's is rapidly being filled up; St. Mark's has a larger membership than ever it had, and Trinity Church has a congregation which increases every Sunday; and in connection with each church there is a good Sunday School. I fail to see, sir, that the Church in Halifax is in a languishing condition. Beside individual work among our Church members we have a young men's institute and an "alms house" entirely supported by us. And if you examine the subscription lists of other charitable and religious institutions you will find that the members of our Church do not stand least in their subscriptions or unhonoured among the members of those societies.

The work of the Church is the work of Christ, and I have yet to learn that Churchmen in Halifax are languishing in that work. With the object of the article I am not much interested, believing that the less "machinery" we have to work the Sunday School the better and more effective will be that work. All such institutions entail upon the members a lot of unnecessary work and demand time and money, which can be devoted to the immediate work of the Sunday School with better results. If each rector would impress upon his congregation its duty respecting the Sunday School everything

would be done which could reasonably be expected. That which the rector or his curates cannot do cannot be done by organizations such as you recommend.

I am yours, etc.,

A CHURCHMAN.

CHURCH CONFERENCES.

(To the Editor of the Church Guardian.)

DEAR SIR,—Having long felt the need of holding Church Conferences, and having advocated them in the columns of the CHURCH GUARDIAN and elsewhere, I am glad to find that a movement in that direction has at last been made. At the same time I regret to find that it is to be confined to the clergy. May I ask why the laity are to be excluded? We are constantly hearing about the indifference of the laity, and the great difficulty of getting them to take an active part in the Church's work, and it has always appeared to me that one way of overcoming this would be to get them to come forward and take part in discussions such as those proposed for the Conference to be held at St. John. Take, e.g., the question of "How to interest the people in the life and work of the Church." Would it not be well to let some of the intelligent laymen speak their mind upon it? If the above mentioned complaint be well founded, there must be some cause for it. And who so well qualified to make known the cause and suggest the remedy as the laity themselves? And further, would it not have been more courteous to have consulted the clergy, as a whole, with respect to time and even place of meeting? There has evidently been a good deal of correspondence carried on among the favoured few. Why confine it to the few when a circular in the CHURCH GUARDIAN would have reached all? I presume the leaders consulted all whose opinions they respected. But a very high authority says "Be courteous." I hope you will publish the papers, &c., so that all may have the benefit of the Conference.

Yours,

W. J. ANCIENT.

MONTREAL DIOCESAN THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE.

(To the Editor of the Church Guardian.)

SIR,—"Churchman" must excuse me, but that cannot be an "accident" which is a matter "of necessity." "Churchman" said the Governors were "of necessity" neither members nor communicants. It appears from his last letter that he intended to say they were *not* "of necessity" either the one or the other; but to say "of necessity not so and so" is one thing, and to say "not of necessity so and so" is quite another. Consequently "Churchman" *did* represent that members and communicants were excluded, and necessarily excluded—another illustration of the unsatisfactory nature of such correspondence. The invitation to enter in is sincere; all efforts in the direction indicated will be met with consideration and sympathy. H.

A CHEERFUL GIVER.

"I was once attending a missionary meeting in Scotland," said a minister in making an address. "There it is the custom to take up the collection at the door, as the people go out. A poor woman, going out dropped a sovereign into the basket. The deacon who held the basket said:

"I'm sure you cannot afford to give so much as that?"

"O yes, I can," she cried.

"Do take it back," said the deacon.

"She replied: 'I must give it. I love to give for Jesus' sake.'

"Then the deacon said: 'Take it home to-night, and if, after thinking it over, you still wish to give it, you can send it in the morning.'

"In the morning I was sitting at breakfast with the deacon, when a little note came from this woman; but the note contained *two* sovereigns.

"'You won't take them?' I said to the deacon.

"'Of course I shall,' said he; 'I know that aged woman well. If I send them back, she will send *four* next time.'

"This indeed was 'loving to give.'—*Ex.*