

ATTACK ON THE BISHOP OF
NIAGARA.

A CONTEMPORARY, whose title is a satire on his policy, has recently made a bitter attack upon the Bishop of Niagara. The incident is so uncalled for, unprovoked, unreasonable, that it reminds one of a person troubled with nightmare slashing wildly in bed at an enemy who only exists in the sleeper's disordered brain. We do not propose to give in detail the charges made by this eccentric accuser of the brethren. We all know how such indictments come to be drawn up, and how the framers of these partisan charges make a minute dose of fact tincture many gallons of the mere water of a weak imagination by the concentration of bitterness.

That Dr. Hamilton has joined the Church Union may be true or not, it is a matter touch which any person of refined manners, or with honourable respect for the personal affairs of others would as soon think of meddling as criticising the good Bishop's tastes in puddings or pastry. But if Dr. Hamilton has joined the English Society, he has simply put himself on record as one who objects to State prosecutions of our clergy by malicious zealots who differ with their victims' taste and judgment in affairs of ritual. Surely any Churchmen, Bishop or laborer, is free to do that without being made a target for a shower of poisoned arrows? As to the administration of the Niagara diocese it has won for the Bishop universal and affectionate honour, his fairness, justice, tender regard for, and sympathy with all classes of persons over whom he has oversight, has made for Dr. Hamilton a name that is a synonym for reverential love.

One incident humourously but significantly illustrates the power of this warmheartedness. A layman who fancied that he had some grievance against the Bishop of Niagara, with most commendable frankness went to ventilate his trouble in person, expecting a probably disagreeable interview. He, however, came away so pacified, cheered, and inspired by the Bishop that he vowed henceforth that nothing can ever induce him to give pain or anxiety to so noble a man! Would that all our Bishop's could say as much of the result of personal interviews. We have heard from the Niagara clergy of both sections, and from those wiser ones to whom the Church is their only "party," that their Bishop is above reproach.

We trust this unfortunate episode will be quickly forgotten. It was, we believe, the result of some temporary mental or bodily sickness on the part of the accuser of Dr. Hamilton, and we hope to see such a restoration to health as will be evidenced by a Christian like without a word of the offensive words, which have only hurt the utterer, and of which he must be, *if conscientious*, heartily ashamed.

We ask our contemporary to study Dr. Allnatt's comments on St. Matt. chap. xviii. v. 15, 17, (see "The Witness of St. Matthew," by Rev. Dr. Allnatt, p. 196.) His duty was to see the Bishop so that by brotherly remonstrance he might have turned the sinner from the error of

his way, "thus saving him from public exposure and censure." It is not too late, he will be received with apostolic charity. But it is certain that he would retire from an interview with the Bishop of Niagara so enlightened, *and so much more truly an evangelical churchman, that his vocation as a strife-raiser would be gone*, much to his own happiness, much also to the advantage and prosperity of the Church.

CHURCH THOUGHTS BY A LAYMAN.

THE DRINKING HABITS OF THE LAST
CENTURY.

THE Bishops at Lambeth in one of their deliverances paid a just tribute to the work of the Temperance reformers, to whose labors they attribute the happy revolution in drinking habits which has taken place in this century. There are so many who imagine that the work which has achieved such noble results cannot be furthered in these days without the aid of repressive legislation, that it may be well to turn their attention, as well as our own, who trust to the same moral weapons that have hitherto been so victorious over the habits prevalent before this reform set in. Some time ago, we depicted the customs in England in our early days. A work has just been published that gives a graphic account of the drinking habits of Scotsmen in the early part of the last century. From a very interesting article in the *Quarterly Review* for July, we gather the following passages. The book is compiled "from the M.S.S. of John Ramsay, Esq., of Ochertyre, edited by Alexander Allardyce." This Mr. Ramsay is described by a living acquaintance as wearing "a blue coat, metal buttons, high collar, and laced wristbands, hair powdered, pig tail, breeches, blue stockings, and silver buckles." The costume is as antiquated as the social customs he describes. Having seen both in England, we can testify to the dress and manners being drawn from life. The general description of this work we shall not quote at any length, but, it will be of interest to the young to learn, that in their great grandfathers' days there were no roads, nor carriages in Scotland. Sledges were the farmers' waggons. Even horses' backs were made to carry produce, coals, lime, and manure. For saddles sods were used, occasionally covered with a plaid. The pleasant custom common in Canada of a "raising bee," is derived from those times, for even when a gentleman's house was being built the neighbours gave help in labor and materials.

Curiously enough the funerals were festivals, sometimes lasting a week at a ruinous cost, and the drinking was excessive. At a laird's burial the English Dragoons remarked, "A Scot's burial is merrier than our weddings." A very respectable gentleman giving orders about his own burial said:—"For God's sake, John, give them a hearty drink." A person staggering home from a house where his friend lay dead was asked whence he came, and answered, "From the house of mourning." Of a highly distinguished lawyer, afterwards a "Lord President," or as we say, Chief Justice, it is told

that at the funeral of his mother, he and his brother were so drunk that in going to the Church yard they left the house without the corpse! What seems to us of this generation almost beyond belief is that this gentleman was "emphatically a good man." At a later period of his life when President, it is recorded that he drank to the verge of sobriety, yet he was a religious man, devoting great part of Sunday to solitude and meditation. Possibly a more cheerful Sabbath would have led to his keeping a further distance in the right direction away from the verge of sobriety, for gloom and drink are mutual friends. Other judges are named as Tavern heroes, yet of the highest characters. With the Episcopalians, Christmas was the special season of festivity, and the Presbyterians on such occasions seldom objected to commune with their Episcopal neighbours. In this we cannot but think the Presbyterians were blameable. Eating a Christmas goose and drinking Christmas toddy, must on their principles have been akin to eating what was offered or consecrated to idols. But doubtless a good dinner and a hearty drink left their Puritan consciences somewhat sleepy. Indeed the Puritan conscience is an inscrutable mystery. Not long ago, a Canadian lady when visiting relatives in Scotland was sharply rebuked for singing airs from the Messiah on the Sabbath night—it was thought sinful. Yet the elders who censured her spent their Sabbath evenings in heavy drinking, going as near as possible to the outer verge of sobriety, often indeed with one foot over the brink! Our theory is that drink had stupefied them so far that they could not distinguish between "I know that my Redeemer liveth," and "We are na fou," or, "Ye bank and braes." But we do not dogmatise on a matter so incomprehensible as Puritan prejudices against Art in the home and in Temples sacred to Him from Whom come the good gifts of artistic taste and talent.

Hard drinking was the climax of their banquet, after the Restoration indeed it was an evidence of pious loyalty. There is a well known song that consigns to the company of dead men, those who decline a loyal toast. It would have been esteemed unkind and disrespectful of a landlord not to make his guests quite fou. Lord Kames related that after a dinner, on some of the guests taking their horses, Mr. Hamilton was found dead drunk among the horses' feet muttering, "Lady Mary, sweet Lady Mary," alluding to the legend that the Virgin once in response to a prayer lifted a drunkard to the saddle. There was an old law in existence which made the adulteration of wine a capital offence. It might be re-enacted with considerable advantage to temperance. Ladies and tea-sots in general will be shocked to hear that tea was regarded as not only a very costly but disagreeable drug. If the organ of the tea trade is to be believed tea is not only a drug, but frequently a highly poisonous one, for it is adulterated with the vilest substitutes, hence the low prices quoted by certain dealers.

Although the prevalence of hard drinking would, as we think, indicate a coarse, brutal