

under twenty, and those who refused were liable to the censure of the authorities.

For this purpose many books and schemes of instruction were prepared both in England and on the Continent, nearly all in the catechetical form; the men of that day strongly holding that the "dinning in the ear," by question and answer, was the best way to impress youthful minds. One of the most elaborate, complete and noteworthy of these catechisms was set forth by Dean Nowell about the year 1570—a remarkable production in every way, simple and clear in its doctrinal statements and expositions, and one that, if revised somewhat to suit our modern speech and usage, and purged of its strong and ultra-Calvinism, would come near being the very thing of which we stand in need. For the catechism which we have on authority, good as it is, is, according to the Lower House of the Convocation of Canterbury, by no means complete. It touches on the Baptismal Covenant, the Creed, Ten Commandments, Lord's Prayer and Sacraments; but it says nothing, at least explicitly, upon the important questions of the Church, the Ministry, the Liturgy, the Sacred Scriptures, nor such doctrines as that of Justification or the Illumination of the Holy Ghost. Hence the key to much of the ignorance which exists among our people on these subjects; hence, also, the many attempts to supplement that which in itself is admirable, by works supplying its defects. In fact, it claims to be no more than an instruction preparatory to Confirmation; though, strange to say, it contains not one word concerning that rite. It does not aim at completeness; and while no clergyman could present to the Bishop one who denied any of its answers, he would, by the very tenor of its title, be found to present one who assented to them, even though that one should refuse to believe in any other doctrine which the Church holds apart from them. But Confirmation is not, and never was, the graduating point of religious instruction. It is distinct from that altogether. The Reformers confirmed children very young—oftentimes under twelve years of age—and yet insisted that up to the age of twenty every youth should attend the parish clergyman's Sunday afternoon instructions.

Now, from the days of Queen Elizabeth down to the days of Queen Anne, this system of instruction was carried out—carried out as our own Sunday school work is, more or less faithfully and thoroughly. During the time the Puritans were in power, it was still insisted upon; and throughout that century and a half, the youth of England were fairly taught the principles of the faith. When we consider the times, it is a matter of surprise that the people were as well read in Scripture and doctrine as they were; in truth, we should not like to match an average Churchman of that age—we have doubts as to the credit of our own times. But when Queen Anne died much of this old system passed away. In 1714 there came to the throne, to the general dislike of the country clergy and squires, a Hanoverian prince. He, finding the Church as a whole irreconcilable and opposed to his rule, placed in the bishoprics men who were his own partisans, and, therefore, little likely to be loved or willingly obeyed by the clergy.....

.....Under such a state of things, ignorance of a most alarming nature prevailed, and the instruction of the young was next to universally neglected. There were, of course, exceptions, many and noble exceptions, and one looks with more than common interest and delight upon such. A good and well-working Sunday-school was in existence in one of the parishes in the city of Canterbury in 1785. The rector of the parish, a Mr. Hearne, in a letter which we have before us, gives a sketch of the work in this school. Every Sunday morning the children met at 9 o'clock and continued in their classes, when they were taken to Church. During these two hours the teachers, who numbered five, and received a shilling a day for their trouble, taught their scholars the simple elements, and the rector taught the more forward ones to read and understand the psalms, collect, epistle, gospel and second lesson for the day. At half past one school began again, and continued till half past two, when the whole school attended evening service in the Church, and then returned to the school-room for a third session.

Sunday-school teaching meant something in that parish. The rector says the children were not only put through the Catechism and the Prayer-book, but also through books such as "Fox on Public Worship," "Crossman's Introduction," "Mann's Catechism," "The Divine Songs of the Pious and Excellent Dr. Watts," "Unwin's Sin and Danger," and "Stonehouse's Religious Instruction." Think of that course of theology! Nor did the good rector fail to seize an opportunity and improve it. One of his juvenile parishioners was hanged for house-breaking. He alluded to the melancholy event the following Sunday, and had the children unite in singing a doleful and lugubrious piece called "The Lamentation of a Sinner." He says it "had a wonderful effect upon every one who heard them." He further writes: "When I find any of them guilty of lying, the whole school is called together, and I read to them a little book called 'The Exercise against Lying,' concluding with the prayer at the end." Mr. Hearne is very well satisfied of the beneficial effects of his school, and concludes by saying that every clergyman should highly reverence the name of Mr. Raikes. Such was an exceptional Sunday-school and an exception to the general state of things in the latter part of the last century.

At the same time it ought not to be forgotten that the duty was recognized by the religious and moral writers of that day. Essayists, such as Sir Richard Steele, held that a child should be first of all taught "the fear of God, the love of virtue and the hatred of vice;" and some of the romance writers thought such things worthy of attention. One of them had a character who gathered her tenants' children together every Sunday evening, "to teach them their Catechism, and lecture them in religion and morality." But the theory was little practised. The clergy were negligent and the people ignorant; and if the eighteenth century could be blotted out of the history of the Church, no one would be very sorry. There were, indeed, many ignorant theologians, many mighty apologists, but with all their intellectual power they did not affect the moral and spiritual degradation of the people.

From then on, there was a slow but decided

improvement. More attention was given by the clergy to the young. The Church gradually awoke to a renewed and more vigorous life. Fifty years ago, in remote country places, devout clergymen were to be found carefully instructing their youth in the Scriptures and Liturgy. Classes were held in many a rectory parlor, school-room and chance, for this same purpose—some taught by laymen and women. The clergy, in their visitations, began to enquire after the little ones. Since then, within our own time, the school system has advanced and extended itself. On this continent it has, in some things, outstripped that of England; perhaps not in thoroughness of teaching, but certainly in emphasized importance.

This rapid sketch of the past may not be without its practical lessons and bearings now. Certain features common to those bygone days are decidedly worthy of attention. Note, first the attempted thoroughness of the instruction; secondly, the stress ever laid upon doctrines and principles; and thirdly, the ultimate aim and object of all—to bring the child to God; to make him wise, not only in things of Scripture, but above all, unto salvation. Whether these three points be insisted upon nowadays or not, their need is apparent. A religion without creed is an impossibility. Doctrine is the ground of it all, and an intellectual apprehension of the truth is necessary to the full development of the Christian man or woman. To know the stories of Scripture is excellent; but to be impressed with the facts of sin, and of man's sin, of Christ and of Christ's redemption, of faith and obedience, of justification, regeneration and sanctification, is to go far beyond that.—*American Church S.S. Magazine.*

News from the Home-Field.

Diocese of Nova Scotia.

WINDSOR.

A large congregation attended the special Choral service in commemoration of the 400th anniversary of the discovery of America by Columbus. Special Psalms and Lessons were used and hymns as appropriate as possible were sung. The sermon was delivered by the Rev. Professor Vroom, King's College, from Psalm cvii 43.

On October the 16th, there were no less than eleven clergymen present at Christ Church at the morning service, four taking part therein, the other seven being in the congregation.

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND.

The Bishop (the Rt. Rev. Dr. Courtney) has just finished his third tour of Prince Edward Island and has everywhere been received with love and loyalty by crowded congregations. At Charlottetown he confirmed 44; at Milton, 18; Port Hill, 14; Alberton and O'Leary, 19; Kensington, 18; Irishtown, 50; Summerside and St. Eleanor's, 20. His Lordship visited Summerside on the 16th, officiating at Holy Communion in St. Mary's at 8 a. m., and preaching in St. John's, St. Eleanor's, at 11 a. m., where he held the first Confirmation of the day. His Lordship read the Lessons in, says the local paper, (*The Journal*) "his own inimitable way, and his own incomparable voice." In his address to the candidates he referred to the principle of "growth" as essential in the spiritual life, and the means whereby such growth was produced and maintained, viz., food and exercise.