

tinguished from dogmatic or doctrinal religion. When Dr. Caven said in his opening sermon that the greatest feature of the reformation was the "quickening of souls into a new life," putting this before the "renewal and advancement of theology" as its necessary antecedent and source, he enunciated a great truth, which has not always, we think, been so clearly seen. Are we mistaken in fancying that to a somewhat similar cause is due the present-day movement in the direction of essential unity, the unity of a common aim and effort, with or without visible approach towards union, or uniformity in creed formulas and church politics? Is it not a new and still more hopeful outcome of this tendency to lay increased stress upon the experimental and the practical in religion, that the relation of the Christian churches to the great social, economic, and moral problems of the age is coming into unwonted prominence as a subject of discussion at the great church councils? In other words, religion as a life, rather than as a creed, and the church as an aggressive and altruistic, rather than as a separative and self-propagating organization, are just now being emphasized as never before. The experimental side of Christianity has already had full recognition in the meetings of the Council. May we not hope to have some noteworthy deliverances touching its relations to the crying vices of the age and to the condition and needs of the great masses of humanity during the days which are yet to come?

SINCE the preceding paragraph was written, the Pan-Presbyterian Council has discussed with commendable freedom some of the great practical questions to which we referred. Especially has it spoken in no ambiguous terms of the treatment of Chinese immigrants and would-be immigrants by the United States, Canada and Australia. From the theoretical point of view, the spectacle of these so-called Christian nations, in which the churches are doing and attempting so much by way of sending missionaries to Christianize the heathen, meeting, at the very thresholds of their respective countries, such representatives of these heathen peoples as may desire to come within their borders and prove for themselves the blessings of Christian civilization, either with a decree of absolute prohibition, or with what is almost its equivalent, an exorbitant fine, is one which merits the strongest denunciation of every Christian assembly. Nor is it easy to show that what we may call the Christian instinct, is not a trustworthy guide in this matter. The burden of proof may certainly be thrown upon those who affirm the contrary. The argument in defence or palliation of the hostile and most inhospitable legislation in question, so far as any was advanced at the Council, was two-fold. First, the Chinese are pagans, whose vile and vicious practices are full of contamination for those amongst whom they come. This plea reflects so severely upon the strength of the Christian system and the courage of its adherents that it will hardly be pressed and need not be seriously answered. The second argument is much more cogent. It is the familiar one that, by reason of their cheap but utterly unsavory modes of life, the Chinese are enabled to work at rates of wages on which our own workmen could not live in decency, and that, therefore, the influx of these people means the driving out of the native workmen. This is a practical objection which it will be necessary for the Committee which has been appointed to frame a deliverance to meet fairly. As we have often said, it seems to us that it can be met and ought to be met, not by an un-Christian policy of exclusion or fine, but by the rigid enforcement of such sanitary and other regulations with regard to personal and social habits, and especially with regard to domiciles, and restriction of the numbers who may live within a given space, etc., as would compel the raising of the standard of Chinese living more nearly to the level of Western civilization. Such regulations for self-protection could hardly be considered harsh or unjust, and would have in themselves a direct and powerful elevating influence. It is one thing for a Christian people to say to the pagans whom they deem it their mission to evangelize, "You shall not enter our country or share our Christian civilization, on any terms." It is quite another thing to say, "We welcome you amongst us, but you must conform your modes of life to the standard which we deem indispensable to our social and moral safety and well-being." It is, by the way, to be hoped that the press reports have done injustice to Dr. Waters, in representing him as cautioning his fellow-delegates against pushing their views on this question too far, lest they should alienate the labouring masses.

Such a truckling to expediency would be unworthy of the churches, and would, we venture to say, do more to repel the honest and intelligent workmen than the boldest opposition to their views, for righteousness' sake. It is also worthy of note that if Dr. Roberts' statement that one of every two adult persons in the United States is a professing Christian be within bounds, it is vain for the Christian churches to attempt to shift the blame for any unrighteous legislation in the Republic to the shoulders of the wicked politicians. The fact obviously is that the professing Christians in every English-speaking country are numerous and influential enough, if they wished it and would take the trouble, to control the whole course of national legislation and policy.

THE highest judicial position in the Dominion is vacant. The death of Sir William Ritchie can scarcely be said to have been unexpected. True, the accounts which have from time to time been given to the public in regard to the gradual failure of his health were generally of such a nature as to leave room for the hope that his life might be prolonged for a few years, though without any reasonable prospect of his being again able to resume the duties of his high and responsible office. But whatever hopes of such a result may have been entertained by his friends, *dis aliter visum*. On the verge of four-score, after thirteen years of efficient service as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada, superadded to a previous lengthy and honourable record in lower grades of the profession, he passed peacefully away last Sunday morning. It is characteristic of our political system, or rather let us hope, of its faulty administration, that the occasion of his death has been the signal for much eager speculation as to who shall be his successor—speculation based, unhappily, not on differences of opinion as to who, of all those in the Dominion who may be considered eligible, is most worthy of being exalted to this responsible position, but as to what disposal of the vacancy will be deemed most likely to commend itself to the Government as subserving best the interests of the party. Upon this question we can throw no light. In view of present exigencies it seems somewhat improbable that Sir John Thompson, who has long been credited with an honourable ambition in this direction, can now be spared from active political service. There would, too, seem to be, to say the least, some indelicacy in what would be virtually his self-appointment to such a position. Yet, on the other hand, it is possible that Sir John's retirement from the Administration at the present juncture would be accepted as a convenient means of freeing the Government from the undoubtedly perplexing position in which it finds itself, in consequence of his rather indiscreet reply to the memorial of the Roman Catholic prelates, touching the Manitoba School question. There is this consoling reflection, that should Sir John be appointed to the Chief-Justiceship, however largely the choice may be determined by considerations which should not enter into it, the result will still be to give the Dominion a Chief-Justice possessing in large measure many of the qualities needed for the discharge of its duties.

THE Ottawa cablegram to the effect that a British warship has been ordered to a Russian seaport in Behring Sea, to enquire into the capture and treatment of Canadian sealers by Russian cruisers, is, on its face, highly improbable. But it is none the less clear that it is high time that some decisive steps were taken, as is very likely being done, to put a stop to the highhanded treatment of Canadian vessels by Russian commanders in those waters. It seems almost incredible that the American Government can have stooped to move Russia to reassert a claim against which a former American Government emphatically and effectually protested, yet it is hard to account for the sudden revival of the Russian claim, and the unwonted energy in enforcing it, on any other supposition. At any rate, if Lord Roseberry favours, as is believed, a continuous foreign policy, he can hardly hesitate to pursue in regard to Russia the same course which Lord Salisbury adopted with regard to the United States. But he will, no doubt, proceed diplomatically by first asking an explanation in courteous terms. The case is, nevertheless, one that will hardly admit of the slow movements of ordinary diplomatic routine.

WHEN the capitalist turns philanthropist or the millionaire mounts the rostrum to give good advice to the bread-winner, there is not unnaturally, perhaps, some tendency to suspicion in the public mind. Whether justly

or unjustly, people are more or less disposed to ask if there may not be some ulterior object in view, some personal end to be served. And yet it is evident that no other man is in so good a position to speak words of worldly wisdom to his fellows as he who has risen from the ranks and had personal and successful experience in various grades of industrial life. The name of Erastus Wiman has of late years become very familiar to Canadians, and there are few men concerning whom opinions more widely vary, according to the standpoint of the observer. Nevertheless it cannot be denied that Mr. Wiman is entitled to speak as an authority on many economic questions, and when he stands up to talk to the working men of the city of New York on such a subject as "Why Bread-winners should own their Homes and how to do it," his words cannot fail to carry much weight. Such an address he delivered lately to a large audience on Staten Island, and the gist of his answer to this question is worth reproducing for the consideration of all to whom his remarks may be applicable. His address on this occasion was prefaced by some singularly bold utterances with regard to the condition and rights of workmen in the United States. As the preface constitutes a very large and important part of the address, it may not be amiss to cull a few samples of Mr. Wiman's epigrammatic statements and put them before our readers, as giving a vivid picture of the state of things now existing in the great Republic, as he sees it:—

The struggle for existence intensifies. The ability to get food, clothing and shelter by the great army of bread-winners, for themselves, their wives, and their children, diminishes rather than increases. An industrial revolution impends, whose lurid sign every morning paper makes painfully apparent. The number out of work, or rather the number that need work, is in larger proportion to those employed than ever before. This, too, while the strain on those already employed to provide for the necessities of life is excessive.

The question is, how far labour, scattered all over the land, massed and organized perfectly, is to be in continuous conflict with capital, and through capital in conflict with an armed force controlled by officials who for the time being are controlled by capital. Such a conflict would be the most terrible in history, and is full of the direst results to the country at large.

There are more people in the big cities with incomes of \$25,000 and upward a year than in any country in the world. Equally, in the big cities, there are more men finding it a harder struggle to make ends meet than ought to be, in proportion to the wealth acquired through their efforts.

There is an unrest among the workers of the land that can be compared only to the vast unrest of the ocean. Thus, instead of a placid and heavenly calm, there is a constant wave of discontent breaking upon the shores of time, with ominous warnings, and, now and again, a storm threatening, such as to destroy the whole fabric of civilization in its vicinity.

The greater the development of natural resources, the larger the commerce, the more enormous the fortunes made by a few, the harder becomes the struggle for existence by the many, among the vast army of workers.

THESE are ominous, yet in the main, it is to be feared, true words. After statements so strong, we watch eagerly for the announcement of a way of relief and safety, and are, perhaps, a little disappointed to find that the remedy proposed bears no proportion, sensationally at least, to the dire disease. Mr. Wiman was not talking politics else he would, perhaps, have had more to say about causes and remedies of a semi-political, semi-economic kind. As it is, he contents himself with simply giving his answer to the question which constituted the theme of his lecture. His answer may be given in a few words, and taken for what it is worth, which is undoubtedly a good deal for those who have the strength and patience to follow out his advice. Here it is:—

There is a tax heavier than all other taxes that the bread-winner can himself obliterate. It is not a political tax; it is a purely economic tax. The heaviest of his burdens is his rent. Rent absorbs one-third of the winnings of the workman in the only race he can run. Is it possible to lay this burden down? . . . There has been a movement, and a vast and glorious movement, in this direction, in this country. It is known as the Building Loan Association movement. Just reverse these words—Building-Loan Association—Association making loans to encourage building. The Association is a creation of the workman, one that is authorized by a most liberal law of each of the States, into the Treasury of which is poured not only the rental, but the savings of its members. With this accumulation of funds a purchase of homes is possible, which, by gradual payment, becomes the property of the members. In Philadelphia alone, last year, ten thousand houses were built by these associations. In Reading, in Rochester, in all the Western cities, even in