

of fact their claim is stronger, than that of the schools. The points of difference are in favour of the churches. The relative merit of church and school will determine the question, and few indeed will deny the immeasurable superiority of religion over education. "Ye must be born again," is a far higher condition of life than, "Ye must learn the three r's." The laws of Canada, the structure of society, are based on the claim that this a christian nation. To ignore the transcendent importance to the country of the work of the churches, or to deny it, would be ridiculous. That it is done voluntarily adds to instead of detracting from its value. There are many services rendered to the state by private enterprise and generosity which would otherwise have to be undertaken by the state, and it is not too much to say, that if voluntary effort in the cause of religion were to fail, the state would in self-interest have to come to the rescue.

Dr. Ryerson's bill deserves all the opposition it is receiving and it is to be hoped it will meet its just fate. It is an unfair bill and if passed would indicate that the state will have a toll from religion, a contingency that need not be feared. There are exemptions from taxation which might be fairly abolished. For instance, government property situated in a city but of benefit to the Province or Dominion, might well be taxed. The scope of the Ryerson bill is very narrow; it is clearly an ill-conceived measure, and showing neither grasp of the general question of exemptions nor of the principles involved in the exemption of churches, and its defeat ought to be sure.

**Sunday Street Cars.** Toronto friends are again engaged in guarding the sanctity of the Lord's Day against possible attacks from the few manipulators who would gladly impose upon the city a Sabbath service of street cars. A bill is before the Legislature fixing times on which a popular vote for and against the cars shall be taken and as a matter of course the Car Company and some others are endeavouring to secure a victory. Great vigilance is needed at present in this matter, and it behooves all who love the Lord's Day to be stirring.

**The John G. Paton Mission Fund.** Our readers will be glad to learn that Rev. Dr. Paton is meeting with marked success in Great Britain, up to January 18th, about £3,000 had been received on account of "the John G. Paton Mission Fund for the evangelization of the non-evangelized portion of the New Hebrides." Between four and five hundred pounds of that sum is toward the support of the proposed steam Auxiliary Dayspring. Dr. Paton has good prospects of securing pledges for the required £1,000 per annum for this purpose.

**Professor Bruce on the Historic Christ.** Speaking at Edinburgh lately, Rev. Prof. Bruce, of Glasgow, referred to the necessity for a study of the historic Christ for the development of a practical Christianity. Some said that if the Gospels were lost the Heavenly Christ could still draw men heavenwards in saintly devotion and Godwards in heroic virtue. He doubted that. Let them not listen to men who seemed to encourage indifference to the historic aspect of Christianity and to resolve piety into a mystic ecstatic communion with a Heavenly Christ, supposed to reveal Himself to the soul, through direct, immediate, transcendental intuition. It seemed a fine programme, but it ended in smoke, in

passional raptures, separated by intervals of languor and apathy, and possibly dying away finally into vulgar blindness. Let them prize the earthly Christ if they could feel the power of the Heavenly Christ to sustain their religious ardour and keep them unspotted from the world. What splendid materials the Gospels contained for nursing a pure simple worship in spirit and truth of God the Father, and for developing heroic character. When critics were trying to rob us of the angelic history, and mystics were telling us it did not greatly matter though they succeeded, we should turn deaf ear to both, and make the story of Jesus our daily companion, with bee-like industry gathering sweetness and light from every wise word and loving deed.

**Left the Free Church.** Rev. John Robertson, whose name is often associated with that of Rev. John MacNeill, as an evangelical preacher of peculiar methods and power, has left the Free Church and has set up a "City Temple" in Glasgow. He charged the Free Church with wholesale rationalistic teaching, and subversion of the Word of God. The circumstances of his withdrawal have drawn the attention of the country upon Dr. Robertson, whose services in his new quarters are attended by many thousands. The Glasgow Presbytery sent a deputy to the Church vacated by Mr. Robertson, and the position of the church, according to the deliverance of the General Assembly, was stated to be:—"That the Church steadfastly adheres to the doctrine of the Confession in regard to the inspiration, the infallible truth, and the divine authority of the whole Scriptures as proceeding from God, who is the Author thereof." Rev. Dr. Howie who made this statement added that he had been a member of the committee who had considered the Declaratory Act; and if he had any doubts about the orthodoxy or the evangelical position of the Free Church before he entered that committee, these doubts were effectively dispelled by the deliberations in the committee.

**A Happy Choice.** St. James Square Church, Toronto, is to be heartily congratulated on the happy choice they have made of a pastor, in the person of Rev. Lewis H. Jordan, B.D., whose acceptance of the call under the circumstances of the case are set forth in the report of the proceedings of the Presbytery of Toronto, published in another column. Mr. Jordan was born in Halifax, Nova Scotia, and is about 37 years of age. He studied at Dalhousie College and received his theological education at Princeton, under the Hodges. His first charge was in Halifax, but, after a short pastorate there, he succeeded Dr. Gibson in Erskine Church, Montreal, where he remained for six years, his ministry being very successful. He left Montreal to pursue his studies in Europe, but before doing so he made a tour around the globe, visiting the various mission stations of the Presbyterian and other Churches. He studied for two years in Leipsic and Berlin, and for one year at Oxford. He returned to Canada, and, by invitation of the congregation of St. James Square Presbyterian Church, became temporary pastor of that church for three months. During that time the congregation became so much attached to him that, at its termination, they were unwilling to part with him. Mr. Jordan is a man of fine presence, tall and of fair complexion. He is a polished, logical and forcible speaker,