

course of statement and argument in this case points to Christian morality, as this is usually understood, very speedily, or at any rate in the course of a generation, sharing the fate of that which prevailed in Greece and Rome and other countries during what may be styled the ages of heathen faith. During those ages when men really believed in the religion they professed, there was, as Mr. Smith states, more or less of practical morality in their lives. When that faith universally disappeared then the morality which rested on that basis also took its departure. When this departure was complete then we are to believe the "interregnum" began, for it was only then that the king was actually dead—not sick and feeble—and this "interregnum" would naturally continue till the uprise and success of another religion with its own morality based upon its own peculiar sanctions. Now let us notice here another of Mr. Smith's ambiguities. He draws the parallel between the absolute and final collapse of Greek and Roman heathenism with the disappearance once and for all, and everywhere, of the morality which rested on it, and the more or less noticeable decays, not collapses, of Christian faith and morals. For Greek or Roman heathenism there was no revival, no resurrection. It died, and remained ever afterwards dead and powerless. As in every true *interregnum*, this moral executive, absolutely, universally and finally ceased. There has been no corresponding experience in the history of Christian morals and consequently no such "interregna" as Mr. Smith adduces as parallels. The decay of Christian faith never reached the stage of universal death; the collapse of Christian morality has never been so complete as was that which, if it did not suppress, it at any rate supplanted. Mr. Smith ranges over the nineteen Christian centuries, and fixes on this, that and the other season of partially prevailing unbelief and immorality, calls them "moral interregna" comparable each with the final and universal fall of classical heathenism, and then points out what he regards as the infallible signs of another and very possibly final collapse of Christian morality being at the door. We object altogether to the correctness of his parallels. The Christian system whether doctrinal or practical, never suffered such an eclipse as, confessedly, heathenism did. It was never universally scouted as a found-out cheat, or quietly and regretfully laid on the shelf as a thing no longer held and never to be so more. All the cases adduced by Mr. Smith as "moral interregna" during all these past generations were limited in their range and anything but absolute in their intensity. The morality which again and again reappeared was the same morality, and it had never, even at the worst, ceased to have a place in human hearts, and a restraining, elevating influence on human lives. There never has been in all the period to which Mr. Smith refers, such an "interregnum" as that which took place between the period when heathen morality was smitten through and through, and when that which was formally and characteristically Christian reigned in its stead.

It is quite true that very frequently the parallel has been drawn between the state of faith and morals at the time when Christ appeared and that which very generally prevails in Christendom at the present hour. It has often been attempted to show that there is the same hollowness of religious profession; the same eager and unscrupulous pursuit of wealth; the same general relaxation of morals, and that resulting from a similar decay or eclipse of faith; the same cynical selfishness and cruelty which the thin veneering of culture, instead of concealing, only made more manifest and more offensive; the same scoffing at patriotism as only worthy of a prig; the same estimate of virtue as a mere haggling about the price; the same worship of harlotry with corresponding practice and appropriate temples; the same readiness to sacrifice liberty for rest and to glory in manacles if they only happened to be of gold. But surely if in many respects the similarity is noticeable, the points of contrast are even more so. The indictment brought by Mr. Smith against the England and English of the present day is terrible as it is striking,—painful as in many respects it is true. But the generalization is all too sweeping; the evidence quite insufficient fully to substantiate the charge, or to justify the fear. English and American *litterateurs* may as a class be as hard, cold, selfish, cynical and cruel as they are represented; the statesmen as unscrupulous; the "golden youth" as debauched; the men of science generally as sceptical; the leaders of fashion as impure; the believers in

mere success however immoral and unscrupulous, as numerous and as base; and mammon worship as undisguised and brutal as it is said to be. But there is another side of the shield, never for a moment to be lost sight of. England, even when the pimps and bawds, the parasites and prostitutes of the Second Charles were flaunting out their short and disgraceful hour of triumph, was still greatly Puritan and religiously sound to a far greater extent than many onlookers might have supposed. Far more is this the case with the whole English-speaking population of the present day. The evils which lie on the surface are not so discouraging as they have been, while, after making every allowance for the amount of ostentatious hypocrisy which undoubtedly so far prevails among many professing Christians, this is to be said without fear of successful contradiction, that there are at present more intellects genuinely swayed by faith in Christian doctrine, and more lives effectively influenced for good by Christian morality, than perhaps there ever were at any former period in the world's history. Amid the confusion and restlessness on every side there may, with some, appear much reason for anxiety as to the morality of the future. The Christian finds far more for exultant hope. The triumph of the right and the true and the pure may not be at the door, but it is coming, and rapidly.

#### MR. GEORGE MULLER.

TORONTO has been favoured during the past week by a visit from the widely known and greatly loved George Müller, of the Orphanage, Bristol, England. He has laboured in connection with the Young Men's Christian Association in this city during these past days of united prayer, and has done so with great power and universal acceptance. As is well known, Mr. Müller has for a very long period carried on a system of enlightened and most successful Christian benevolence on behalf of orphan children of both sexes. He has systematically, and on principle, repudiated all solicitation for funds, whether by direct appeal or indirect manipulation. His plan has been to make his own and his *protégés'* needs the subject of earnest and persevering prayer to God, and as the result of more than forty years' experience, he declares that he has found it the best, most efficient and most satisfactory of any. He has never, he says, really needed money or other help, but he has got it, "good measure, pressed down and running over." In this way he has been enabled to spend more than half a million of pounds sterling on his schemes of benevolence, has educated, fed and clothed thousands of orphans, and has had the satisfaction of seeing very many of these leading prosperous, honourable and Christian lives. In old age, he is as eager, energetic and successful in his work as ever, and is still as abundantly bringing forth fruit to the honour and glory of that Master whom he has served so long and whom he loves so well. His addresses in Toronto have been characterized by great simplicity, marked directness, occasional pathos, uniform seriousness and unobtrusive spirituality. It would be too much to expect that every one should have been satisfied with every word he spoke or with all his views of truth and duty. But his quiet words of earnest appeal, tender affection, and honest admonition and entreaty will have power in the hearts of not a few in this locality, for a far longer period and with far more beneficial results than ever had the boisterous declamation and the somewhat turgid and bizarre eloquence of much more pretentious revivalists. Amid the great outcry about the want of funds to carry on religious and benevolent enterprises, it might almost be worth while to inquire if Müller's plan had been honestly, earnestly and perseveringly put to the trial, and if, after all, it has been so far found wanting that God's people have been fain to fall back upon church soirees and bazaars, to say nothing of concerts, oratorios, raffles, and other instrumentalities even more grotesque and equally equivocal.

It is reported that the missionaries of the American Board have been compelled to leave Austria. The government has fined some men for reading the Bible to their neighbours, and has imprisoned others for allowing their neighbours to be present at family worship.

It is curious to be told that the proceedings of the Peace Congress which met at Naples on the 26th ult., to promote a general disarmament throughout the

world were characterized by indescribable confusion. The meeting terminated with hissing, applause and other demonstrations.

THE Greenock Presbytery, U. P. Church, Scotland, has voted unanimously to suspend five of the elders of the Gourrock church, Mr. Macrae's old parish, for refusing to return to their allegiance, and referred to the Edinburgh Presbytery for action, with marks of disapproval, the report of a sermon by the Rev. J. S. Mill, of Leith, in which he expresses sympathy with Mr. Macrae and "reflects on the whole Church."

WE are glad to hear that a memoir of the late Principal Harper, D.D., of the Seminary of the United Presbyterian Church, Scotland, is in course of preparation by the Rev. Dr. Andrew Thomson, of Edinburgh. Any letters or reminiscences of Dr. Harper, which his friends in Canada may please to forward, will be gratefully received by Mr. E. Erskine Harper, and, if required, returned after the book has been completed. There may be some among our readers who were students under the late Principal, and who may have some characteristic reminiscences to convey. Letters should be addressed to Mr. Erskine Harper, care of Mr. Elliot, publisher, Edinburgh.

THE thirty-eighth public meeting of Knox College Metaphysical and Literary Society was held in Convocation Hall of the College on the evening of this day week. The weather was unfavourable, still the audience was a very large one, the hall being all but quite full. The Glee Club opened the proceedings with "The Three Chafers." Mr. A. B. Baird, the President, then read his inaugural, taking as his subject "*Esprit du Corps*." The subject of debate was "Is war a lawful means of settling national disputes?" Both sides acquitted themselves very creditably. The Chairman (Prof. Maclaren) said he could not say who had the best of it. The next public meeting of the Society is to be held on the 5th December.

THE Presbytery of Montreal met in St. Paul's Church on the 30th ult., and considered the hymn book as sent down to Presbyteries by the General Assembly. There was also reported a call from St. Hyacinthe, Que., as moderated in there on the 27th by the Rev. C. A. Doudiet. The call was in favour of Rev. Mr. Pelletier, who signified his acceptance of the same. The Presbytery arranged that his induction take place on the 10th of November, at seven p.m., the Rev. A. B. Cruchet to preach and preside, Rev. Jas. McCaul to address the minister, and Revs. R. H. Warden and C. A. Doudiet to address the people. The Presbytery met in the evening of the same day in Canning street church, and inducted Rev. A. B. Cruchet to the pastoral charge of that congregation. The Moderator, the Rev. George Coull, presided. Mr. Doudiet preached and put the usual questions to Mr. Cruchet, Professor Campbell addressed the newly inducted minister, and Mr. Brouillette concluded this very interesting induction service by an address to the congregation present.

It is sometimes claimed that THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN is too high-priced. The complaint is not well-founded. This journal, considering size and make-up, is as low priced as any religious paper in the Dominion, while it is considerably cheaper than several which could be mentioned. Will the reader, who may fancy that he pays too dearly for his religious paper, look at the following points among many which might be urged in favour of the subscription rates for denominational papers: "The difference between the price of the religious journals and that of the large secular weeklies, is explained by the fact that the latter are made up chiefly out of matter taken from the dailies with which they are connected, without additional cost of composition. The matter is transferred from the daily to the weekly without any re-setting of type. Besides the weekly issue is a help to the daily, in many respects, and may often be afforded at a price below its actual cost. The religious weekly enjoys no such advantages, and must rely wholly on its own income for support." Besides, as a general rule, the secular weekly has a much larger advertising patronage than falls to the share of the religious paper, another reason why the former can be furnished at a lower rate than the latter. Our club rates are certainly liberal enough to bring THE PRESBYTERIAN within the reach of every man who cares to place a religious journal in the hands of the members of his family.