

with a scourge of cords. Were he personally to visit some of our churches to day he might find occasion to apply the lash to those who desecrate his sanctuary by kissing plays, and raffles, and theatricals, and other questionable practices. In their eagerness to increase the church funds there is a disposition among too many persons to adopt and countenance the principle that the end justifies the means, and so they sanction almost any method that will attract the multitude and unloose the purse-strings. But certainly this subordination to the worldly taste and appetite in order to fill a depleted treasury, or this rage for church entertainments, has gone too far, and it is time a reformation was introduced. The craze in this direction is bringing the Church into disrepute, and leading to excesses most reprehensible. Christ would rather have the plain dwelling and pure heart and life than the rich and costly building paid for at the sacrifice of womanly modesty and through pandering to worldly customs and gratifications. He never asks for an edifice which the people cannot pay for by voluntary contributions. Let his ordinances be sustained as well as his churches be built on Christian principles, and in a way that neither our Lord nor the world can take exception to.—*Sci.*

THE EARLY AND THE LATTER RAIN.

In the climate of Palestine there are two rainy seasons on which the harvest especially depends—the autumnal and the spring rains, called in the Scriptures the early and the latter rain. The early rains of the Scripture usually commence in the latter half of October or beginning of November, not suddenly, but by degrees, which gives opportunity for the husbandman to sow his fields of wheat and barley. The rains come mostly from the west or southwest, continuing for two or three days at a time, and falling especially during the nights. The wind then chops round to north or east, and several days of fine weather succeed. During the months of November and December the rains continue to fall heavily; afterwards they return only at longer intervals, and are less heavy; but at no time during the winter do they entirely cease to occur. Snow often falls in Jerusalem, in January and February, to the depth of a foot or more, but it does not last long. Rain continues to fall more or less through the month of March, but it is rare after that period. At the present time there are not any particular periods of rain, or succession of showers, which might be regarded as distinct rainy seasons. The whole period from October to March now constitutes only one continued rainy season, without any regularly intervening time of pro-

longed fair weather. Unless, therefore, there has been some change in the climate since the times of the New Testament, the early and the latter rains for which the husbandman waited with longing, seen rather to have implied the first showers of autumn, which revived the parched and thirsty earth, and prepared it for the seed; and the latter showers of spring, which continued to refresh and forward the ripening crops and the vernal products of the fields. In ordinary seasons, from the cessation of the showers in spring until their commencement in October and November, in never falls, and the sky is usually serene.—*Sci.*

THE MORAL RESULTS OF CURRENT FICTION.

It is undeniable that, outside of a certain limited class of scholarly and thoughtful people, the great majority of all who read anything except the newspapers read books of this description. Statistics of popular and circulating libraries show that seventy-five per cent. of all the books taken out are novels of recent production. A library for the general public that did not furnish them could not be sustained, whatever real treasures of knowledge and literature it might offer. Probably the most numerous readers of novels are to be found among women, because, perhaps, they have more time and fewer other diversions than men. In the large class of them who derive their ideas of life and of the world from its source, the result is seen in the enormous and increasing business of the divorce courts, of which they and their husbands are the principal patrons. Aside from the loose and vague notions of morality that become familiar to them, unconsciously, from the books they read, they enter upon married life with ideas and expectations so false and theories so absurd that nothing but disappointment and unhappiness can follow. Instead of the impossible and self-sacrificing heroes of their dreams, they awake to find themselves married only to men, with the imperfections common to humanity. They perceive that the perfection they are in search of is to be found in other women's husbands, not in their own; on which point they would be speedily undeceived if they could exchange situations with their apparently more fortunate sisters. It is not long before both parties to the union that has proved a disappointment are ready to escape from it; or it is not long before one or the other is determined to break away. It is probable that all other causes put together are not so prolific of divorce among the class in which it commonly takes place as the fact that its