

several sermons in "National Preacher" and HOMILETIC MONTHLY, and several orations and addresses on great public occasions. We suspect that Dr. Butler has culled from all these sources and others we know not of, as nothing escapes his Argus eyes.

"U. S. S. M."—Under what circumstances, if any, should a minister apply to a vacant charge to become its pastor?—A.: No general rule can be given. It must be left mainly to the discretion of each minister in view of the circumstances. It is safe, however, to say that it is better every way to make the application, not in person or by letter direct, but through the agency of some friendly minister or layman who knows you and can say a good word for you. If you know of none such, it is always proper to send your name and address to a vacant pastorate, stating your wish and referring them for information to some particular person or persons.

"C. E."—What is the meaning of the silent letters in the proper names in Max Muller's "India"?—A.: This query we referred to the editor of the American edition, who answers as follows:

"These letters are not silent, but are used by modern Indian scholars to express a somewhat modified sound of the letter thus italicised. It was the practice to print such letters with a dot beneath, which made much trouble, and led to this substitution of the Italic letter instead. The sound *c* is almost like *ś*, as Asoka, Asioka. The *n* as in Panini is similarly modified into Paninyi, etc. There are forty-two letters in the Sanscrit alphabet to be expressed by twenty-three in the Roman.

"A. WILDER."

"MIXED MARRIAGES."—Cardinal McCloskey's recent Pastoral Letter opposes mixed marriages, i. e., the marriages of Roman Catholics and Protestants. Will you give us your views on the subject?—A.: In some quarters this letter has been severely criticised for its opposition to such marriages, on the ground that the tendency of such teach-

ing is to exaggerate and inflame "sectarian differences," instead of ameliorating them. But we believe this view is based on a misapprehension of the facts of the case. Such marriages, as a rule, add bitterness to religious differences, and introduce into the family circle the worst elements of division and contention. So that, for social and economic reasons, we should discourage such ill-assorted marriages.

"J. K. L."—(1). At my admission into full connection with the Conference, to the Bishop's question, "Will you wholly abstain from the use of tobacco?" I replied in the affirmative. If, now, a good physician advises me to use tobacco, would I be justified in so doing? (2). In my congregation there are several laymen who pronounce the benediction at the close of every meeting they lead. Is it wrong?—A.: (1). If you do not violate your pledge until a "good" physician gives such advice, we think that your bishop will be satisfied. If it should ever turn out that tobacco, like whiskey, has medicinal properties, that would alter the case. But be sure that the physician so advising is a "good" physician, and then follow his advice under the direction of your common sense. (2). The benediction, in almost all denominations, is regarded as an official act of the clergy. It might not be wise, however, to take exception to the action of your laymen, if they are "disposed to make a point of it;" that is, unless there has been a ruling in your Conference, district or general, touching the matter. It is largely a question of order, to be determined by the higher officials in your denomination.

"W. A. Y."—I acknowledge myself a moderately slow reader. I crave rapidity. How shall I and the many thousands of your readers acquire the coveted power?—A.: It is impossible for all to become rapid readers. Practice can do much, but not all. Training may quicken the step even of a Clydesdale draught-horse, but it can't make a St. Julien of him. Quick think-