

Pastor and People.

FOR THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN.

SONNET.—THE LAST ENEMY—DEATH.

BY JOHN IMRIE, TORONTO.

Death comes to all, no man can stay his hand,
If he but calls, the proudest in the land
His summons must obey, and then he led
By his cold icy hand 'mong silent dead;
There to remain till Death himself shall die,
And He who conquered Death shall reign on high.
Oh, Death, where is thy sting if Jesus save?
Where then thy victory, oh, cruel grave?
Thou hast no power o'er him whom God defends,
For him all things subserve most glorious ends.
Death but relieves from earthly pain and woe,
A friend, though in the guise of mortal foe.
Oh, may the grave to me be but a door
To that bright land where Death shall reign no more.

THE VALUE OF QUESTIONING AS A MEANS OF INSTRUCTION.

BY THE REV. HUGH ROSE, M.A., ELORA.

Strictly speaking, questioning as a means of instruction has no value whatever. By a series of questions you may find out the amount of the knowledge or ignorance of a given lesson that a pupil has. This kind of questioning I would call tentative or preliminary; it is most important as showing where you may begin to teach or instruct; but as a means of instruction, beyond this all-important one of finding out your pupil's standpoint, it is no value whatever.

A second class of questions might be called the developing, or "Socratic," in which you ask questions on the answer given by the pupil, and so develop and enlarge his knowledge. This is not teaching. By means of it, you get the pupil to give you a definite, explicit answer, and make sure that he fully understands what he is speaking about. This, of course, is instruction, but it is not by imparting knowledge, as by bringing it out and developing it, and as a rule, can only be done effectively in a class of one. The real value of questioning is that of testing, in, first, repeating, second, recalling, and, third, reviewing.

By means of judicious questioning, you get exactness, definiteness and accuracy. You make sure that the information either imparted by yourself or acquired by study of the lesson is sent home, is thoroughly understood by the brain and held accurately by the memory.

The art of questioning is by no means an easy one. It is undoubtedly an all-important one, and to do it approximately well demands these two things: First that the teacher knows his lesson in its general bearing and its minute details most thoroughly. Secondly, that he knows as well as possible—and the more the better—the gifts and qualifications and characteristics of his pupil. A question equal to the capabilities of a lad, and calculated to make him think, will always be appreciated and command attention. Questions either above or beneath the lad's knowledge will certainly fail to do anything but cause inattention, carelessness and noise.

I repeat, be master of the lesson yourself, and be not content till each pupil knows what you want him to know of it; that is, has a clear definite idea of its meaning and has got the facts well in hand, so that he could give the substance or it to another.

The kinds of questions that are most frequently used, and are the least profitable are:

1. The elliptical, where the sentence has a part omitted, to be filled in by the pupil.
2. The suggestive, where the answer is indicated by form or inflection; leading questions.
3. The alternative, answered by "yes" or "no," "black" or "white."

All questions of this kind should be used sparingly and then only, or at least chiefly, when you want a simultaneous answer in "repeating" or "recalling."

In order to make questioning, even the best, of any use to the class I would suggest these rules:

1. Do not ask questions in rotation.
2. Do not name the pupil who is to answer a question until after it has been stated.
3. Do not indicate by pointing, looking, or in any other way, which pupil is to be called up to answer a question, until after it has been stated.
4. Give easiest questions to backward and diffident pupils.
5. Give most questions to backward and diffident pupils.
6. Do not form the habit of repeating the answer given. Pupils often learn most from other pupils.
7. Give a question promptly to an inattentive pupil.
8. State every question to the whole class.
9. In review or repetition questions, do not wait an instant for an answer.
10. When a question demands independent thought, wait a sufficient time after stating it before naming a pupil to answer it, but pass rapidly to some one else if the first-named cannot answer.

THE BOSTON MONDAY LECTURE.

After preliminary devotional exercises, Mr. Joseph Cook began the present series with the accustomed PRELUDE.

It was on the Religious Promises and Perils of the Hour. Mr. Cook said: Do not mistake the weather-vane for the compass, nor your environment for the world. The arctic voyager cannot resist the impression that the ice-fields extend to the equator. My mood is, on the whole, one of exultant hope. Unsound opinions are being undermined, especially by those who are trying to put them into practice, and sound views are growing from the results of their work. This is important not alone for ourselves, for the buzzing of the bee of heresy in America is heard in the Orient. Settling the faith for America has much to do with settling it for the world. Our faith must, therefore, have its roots in the past. Let us be thankful that Lotze's philosophy is coming to the front, and that agnosticism is declining. We are passing through a spent wave of scepticism. Lotze was never carried off his feet by evolution. I endorse as much of the doctrine as he did, but no more. Spencerianism is being superseded. One or two in this country, formerly classed as Spencerians, are coming upon theistic ground. One of them seems to have discovered a Supreme Being, and is to be congratulated. The tone of Cambridge is changing to one of devout theism. Concord philosophy has been conquered. Martineau and Lotze are fit leaders for those who would find the truth. Rationalism is declining in Germany and evangelical sentiment is growing. Let us be thankful for missions like those held by Mr. Aitken and Mr. Moody. There is an increase of unity among evangelical people. The twentieth century is likely to dawn upon a world approaching regeneration.

Among the perils of the hour Mr. Cook referred especially to the influence of the two doctrines, conditional immortality and probation after death, which, he said, are contradictory, but which we are urged to accept on the authority of the Christian consciousness. The great danger arises from trying to push into churches and pulpits men who are practically Universalists. The speaker expressed his conviction that there will be two organizations, and that it is unsafe to ordain men as foreign missionaries who hold erroneous views. In closing he referred to the fact that the new theology is nowhere producing revivals, and urged the need of the central doctrines of grace.

During the interlude Mr. Cook gave a list of best books on revivals and current theological discussion, and endorsed Mr. Gladstone's view of an Irish Parliament, which, however, he would not have run by Irishmen educated politically in American cities.

THE LECTURE.

The lecture was on the subject of "Saving Faith," from the standpoints of axiomatic science, the spiritual or intuitional philosophy, and the Scriptures, with the general aim to show that regeneration may occur without a knowledge of the historic Christ. Faith was defined as an act of the whole being, a changing of eyes with God, an affectionate trust in him as a person. First, a long series of axioms was given, leading up to a benevolent First Cause to whom affectionate reverence is due, and in whom alone spiritual rest can be found. A similar series of intuitions was then given leading to the same result. These results were then compared with the teachings of Scripture, and declared to be in sufficient harmony with them to justify the hope that if one, without the knowledge of the historic Christ, should yield affectionately to the highest light in reason and conscience, he might be regenerated and saved. Such a doctrine is not for us, but for cases like Socrates. If any such are saved, it is through Christ and by the Atonement.

SORROW NOT AN ACCIDENT.

Sorrow is not an accident, occurring now and then—it is the very woof which is woven into the warp of life. God has created the nerves to agonize, and the heart to bleed; and before a man dies almost every nerve has thrilled with pain, and every affection has been wounded. The account of it which represents it as probation is inadequate; so is that which regards it chiefly as a system of rewards and punishments. The truest account of this mysterious existence seems to be that it is intended for the development of the soul's life, for which sorrow is indispensable.

Every son of man who would attain the true end of his being must be baptized with fire. It is the law of our humanity, as that of Christ, that we must be perfected through suffering. And he who has not discerned the divine sacredness of sorrow, and the profound meaning which is concealed in pain, has yet to learn what life is. The cross manifested as the necessity of the highest life alone interprets it.—F. W. Robertson.

THE Saturday half-holiday is being advocated by many papers, religious and secular. They regard it as humane, generous, economical, and as one of the ways by which the claims of the Sabbath may be more easily attained.

THE SOCIAL GLASS.

And now cannot we say a word about offering, in a social way, the glass to young men. There are many to whom the bar-room is no temptation because of its coarseness, but there is in their blood a morbid craving for stimulants. The glass of intoxicating drink has a charm in the warm, bright room, where company and laughter drive back reflection, that it could not have alone, or in bad company. Ladies, wives, mothers, sisters, you suffer most when the demon intemperance has been aroused. Will you, in thoughtlessness, tempt any to commence the way of shame? It may be only one in a hundred to whom the glass may prove the opening wedge, but you will risk that. There may be no harm in a glass of wine; there may be no danger in an occasional glass of beer. There is, no doubt, a temperate use of it that leaves hundreds none the worse for it. But that is not the question. "If meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no meat while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend."

Do not mar these pleasant days by making the path of sin more dangerous and attractive to the young men to whom your house is a welcome substitute for home. Whatever your own views may be in the matter, this you can resolve that no one will say of you that the first wrong step was taken at your house, when, for the first time, the charm of wine and drink was made familiar to those gathered at your board. The life in America is so active, restless and one-sided; the hurry after the one thing—money—is so absorbing that intemperance is a sin more common than it would be likely to be in a less stirring land. Then there are so many born wanting in will power, because their parents have destroyed it by generations of self-indulgence, that there is no knowing when the passion may be aroused, and a useful, earnest life, blighted by the gratification of an appetite, end in destruction. Even those who may choose to run the risk themselves, should think and pray ere they recklessly expose those in whom, as friends, they should have an interest. The risk is too great, the danger too near, to permit of any tampering with it. For the sake of your own peace, beware!—*Christian Hour*.

PIETY THAT IS SEEN.

While being a Christian is in some respects a private matter, it is essentially and emphatically a public matter. To all who would be acknowledged as Christians, inspired words are addressed with reference to the ungodly, saying: "Among whom ye shine as lights in the world." Their light is for others as well as for themselves. Kept to themselves, it is of comparatively little value, being as a light under a bushel which is exceedingly worthless. The great Teacher plainly requires of His disciples a display of their light by those bearing His name, for the good of others and the glory of God. This is according to the analogy of light, one of the most distinguishing properties of which is that it does not exist for itself, and that its mission is mostly, if not wholly, benevolent. Light exists for all created beings and things, and exerts its influence for the good of all existence, while it irradiates all worlds and pours forth its effulgence everywhere.—*The Watchman*.

THE American Board is about sending an accomplished nurse to Japan to establish a training-school for nurses at Kioto.

A LAWYER being asked what he thought of the preaching of a somewhat sensational expounder of the Gospel of a neighbouring city, answered: I've nothing to say about the preaching; the prayer was enough for me. If any lawyer had addressed a country judge in the free and easy manner in which this man addressed the Almighty, he would have been fined for contempt of court.

NARYAN SHESHADRI baptized lately twenty-five in individuals in one village on his field near labua. Mr. Sheshadri says: "Hitherto, our catechumens were in the habit of resorting to headquarters to make a profession of their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; but some of them expressed a wish to do so at their own respective villages, in the presence of their relatives and friends, and in the presence of their provost and town-clerks. We thought the request was proper in itself and accordingly complied with it."

THE practical training of students for the work of the ministry is receiving much attention in the Scottish Churches. At the last meeting of the Edinburgh Free Church Presbytery, the Rev. Dr. Wilson read a report containing a number of suggestions for the training of students. It was proposed that, in addition to those prescribed, at least two pulpits should be prepared, delivered and criticised in the course of each session, and that occasional conferences should be held in the different colleges between students and professors and a certain number of ministers, at which attention might be directed to the work of the ministry, both pulpit and pastoral. The suggestions were remitted to the College Committee.