

## A TRIBUTE TO PRESBYTERIANISM

One of the greatest tributes to Presbyterianism which we have seen is that contained in an opinion prepared by Judge Barker, a member of the Christian (Disciples) Church, for the Kentucky Court of Appeals, in a Church Union case which recently came before the court in that State. The concluding paragraph of his opinion is as follows:

The question whether or not the various families of the Presbyterian faith must remain ever separated, although the causes which originally divided them have disappeared in the light of modern theological evolution, is one which must give solicitude to all who have the advancement of civilization at heart.

The history of the Presbyterian Church is the history of a very large part of what we know and enjoy of civil and religious liberty. The teachings of her faith are such as to have always attracted to her the most lofty minds and the boldest spirits; in following her path through the pages of history, whether her votaries be called Lutherans, as in Germany; Huguenots, as in France; Covenanters, as in Scotland; or Puritans, as in England, they will always be found to be among the bravest and the best.

As a religious organization, it had no compromise along the lines of conscience to make with power, and it could be deflected from the path of rectitude neither by the frown of authority, nor the blandishments of corruption. With the same indomitable courage, it confronted the haughty princes of the House of Tudor, and the crowned weaklings of the House of Stuart; with the same words of scornful condemnation it rebuked the sins of Mesallina on the throne and the wanton in the street.

Her path has led her oftener into exile than into favor with the great, oftener to the dungeon and the stake than the pleasures of king's houses, or the friendship of courtiers. But under her searching gaze the shackles have fallen from the human mind, and the divine right of kings has shrunk to the mean thing it now appears.

Wherever a battle was to be fought for human liberty, wherever a forlorn hope was to be led or a mine braved for conscience' sake, whenever the blood of a martyr was needed as a testimony to truth, her answer was always that of the prophet of old, "Here am I; send me."

Judge Barker is evidently well versed in the history of the world's struggle for civil and religious liberty, and has a keen appreciation of where the credit for securing it is due. The case before him did not necessarily call for such an expression of opinion, and coming voluntarily, carries the more weight and will be the more appreciated.

The annual meeting of the General Assembly's Committee on the Augmentation of Stipends (Western section), will be held in the Confederation Life Building, Toronto, Tuesday, March 23rd, at 9.30 a.m. Presbytery conveners are requested to send in quarterly claims and annual returns to the secretary, Rev. J. H. Edmison, Cheltenham, Ont., one week prior to the date of meeting.

He that sitteth in heaven and hath ten thousand thousand of angels to minister unto him, hath but two thrones, the highest heavens and the lowest heart.

—Thomas Hooker.

## CHRISTIAN CHARITY.

No subject is oftener invoked, more frequently misrepresented, nor more persistently perverted than Christian charity.

According to the notions of some it is charitable to commend everything which is uttered as religious truth, whether sustained by the Word of God or not, and to recognize all religious teachers whatever may be the character of their teachings. This idea of Christian charity is, in a bad sense, to be all things to all men, and to drift with the popular current.

True Christian charity is a noble sentiment, abounding in honesty of purpose and correctness of action. It is too strong a principle to be awayed by every popular breeze, too honest to be bribed into compliance with error in doctrine or incorrectness of practice.

"It rejoiceth" not in error, "but in the truth," and is exercised towards persons, not towards doctrines at all. It never calls evil good, and good evil, never puts sweet for bitter, nor bitter for sweet; but when dealing with opinions, it brings them to the test of God's word, and if they do not agree with this standard, it sweeps them away with an energy almost amounting to fierceness. But when it comes to deal with poor frail and erring man, it is as gentle and pitiful as a mother when handling her own darling child. It distinguishes between the erring and his errors, and never takes any stock in persecution for opinion's sake.

It never aids in erecting the stake, placing the fagots and kindling the fires, which are to be employed in the destruction of heretics; but says to the false teacher, "The Lord rebuke thee." Charity is not blind, but is wonderfully discriminating, distinguishing clearly between truth and falsehood, and is ever ready to approve the one and condemn the other.

This charity, while it is kind, is also faithful, and will not suffer sin upon a brother.

Jesus is the incarnation of true charity, and none ever denounced wrong with greater energy than he when dealing with the sophistries of false religionists.

He exposed the shallow pretensions and denounced the insincerity of the Pharisees with an energy and zeal which burned with a white heat.

He was the uncompromising enemy of all sham, and the fast friend of truth and honest conviction, and yet no one ever entered so fully into sympathy with the erring and penitent children of men as did Jesus. Fierce and unrelenting in his opposition to strongly fortified wickedness, He is tenderness itself when dealing with the broken in spirit, or when looking upon the bruised reed and the smoking flax. His example, in this respect, is worthy of imitation, and is the pattern by which we should shape our lives.

In spite of the financial depression which prevailed last year, the amount contributed for foreign missions in Canada and the United States was increased by \$602,000 over the previous year. This no doubt was due largely to the Laymen's Missionary Movement, but it is a hopeful and encouraging sign of the increasing interest and responsibility felt by the Church in the work of Missions.

## LITERARY NOTES.

The February number of Outdoor Canada shows marked signs of improvement, not only in illustrations but in the articles that go to make up the letter-press. Outdoor Canada worthily represents the clean, healthy games and sports of the country, and merits a large circulation. Monthly, \$1.00 per year.

"Little Folks," as the name implies, is intended for the younger members of the household, and should find a welcome in thousands of Canadian homes. The magazine is as good as it is beautiful, and a year's subscription will prove a delightful gift to any boy or girl. Cassell and Co., Toronto.

For choice stories and religious reading of a wholesome and elevating character we can always heartily recommend The Quiver, published by Messrs. Cassell & Company, London and Toronto. The February number is well up to the mark, both in literary excellence and beauty of illustrations.

Cassell's for February contains eight complete stories, three storeyettes, and a number of special articles, all of which go to make up an excellent literary bill of fare for the readers of this favorite magazine. In the "Special Articles" department "The Birth of a Battleship," illustrated by photographs, and "New Zealand's women Writers," illustrated by portraits, will claim immediate attention. Cassell and Co., 42 Adelaide St., Toronto.

"Hints to Student Missionaries and Some Others," by Rev. D. D. McLeod, D.D., of Barrie, is a booklet of little bulk but within its pages are garnered the fruits of much careful thinking and the results of a wide experience. It contains the substance of an address to a Presbyterian Conference in the interest of Christian Endeavor societies, and is now sent out at the suggestion of friends who considered that its publication would serve a useful purpose. Under the following heads important subjects are treated in a brief but very suggestive way: The Raw Material; Student Missionaries and Home Missions; On the Field; Personal Religion; Talents; On Dress and Manners; The Bible; Our Own Church. Later on we shall make two or three extracts for the benefit of our readers. Meanwhile the booklet, we have no doubt, can be furnished by Mr. J. M. Robertson of Upper Canada Tract Society, Toronto, or by the author.

The United States has frequently been credited with a desire to annex Cuba. Recent events do not seem to indicate that she is over anxious to extend her territory in that direction. Perhaps her experience in the Philippine Islands has not been in all respects happy. At all events Cuba, which came under the control of the United States after the Spanish-American war, has been allowed to organize as an independent republic. On January 23 General Jose Miguel Gomez was sworn in as president, and immediately thereafter the United States officials departed from the island. One of the chief dangers to be apprehended arises from the number of Cubans who are said to be seeking political preferment. If the experiment of an independent Cuba fails annexation to the United States will be inevitable.