

"Well, n—no!" said he, "I can't honestly say that I do."
 "You believe in prayer, and yet never pray," said I; "is that it?"
 "It is so much a matter of mere habit, Mr. Laicus," said he, "excusingly; and I never was trained to pray."

"All your life long," said I, taking no heed of the excuse, "you have been receiving the goodness of God, and you never had the courtesy to say as much as 'thank you.' All your life long you have been trespassing against Him, and never have begged His pardon, never asked His forgiveness. Is it so?"

There was a moment's pause. Then he turned on me almost fiercely.

"How can I thank Him, Mr. Laicus," said he, "when you say that I do not love Him, and cannot love Him."

"Did I ever say that you do not love God?" said I, gently.

"Well then," said Mr. Gear, "I say it. There is no use in beating about the bush. I say it. I honour Him and revere Him, and try to obey Him, but I do not particularly love Him. I do not know much about Him. I do not feel toward Him as I want my children to feel toward me. What would you have me do, Mr. Laicus? Would you have me play the hypocrite? God has got flatterers enough. I do not care to swell their number."

"I would have you honest with Him as you are with me," I replied. "I would have you kneel down and tell Him what you have told me; tell Him that you do not know Him, and ask Him that you may; tell Him that you do not love Him, and ask Him that you may."

"You orthodox people," said he, "say that no man can come to God with an unregenerate heart; and mine is an unregenerate heart. At least I suppose so. I have been told so often enough. You tell us that no man can come that has not been convicted and converted. I have never suffered conviction nor experienced conversion. I cannot cry out to God: 'God be merciful to me a sinner.' For I don't believe I am a sinner. I don't pretend to be perfect. I get out of temper now and then. I am hard on my children sometimes, was on Willie to-night, poor fellow. I even rip out an oath occasionally. I am sorry for that habit and mean to get the better of it yet. But I can't make a great pretence of sorrow that I do not experience."

"You have lived," said I, "for over thirty years the constant recipient of God's mercies and loving kindnesses, and never paid him the poor courtesy of a 'thank you.' You have trespassed on His patience and His love in ways innumerable through all these thirty years, and never said so much as 'I beg pardon.' And now you can look back upon it all and feel no sorrow. I am sorry if it is so, Mr. Gear. But if it is, it need not keep you from your God. You can be at least as frank with Him as you have been with me. You can tell Him of your indifference if you cannot tell Him of your penitence or your love."

There was a pause.

"You believe in prayer," I continued. "You are indignant that I suspected you of disbelief; and yet you never pray. Are you not living without God; is it not true of you that 'God is not in all your thoughts'?"

He was silent.

"Will you turn over a new leaf in your life-book?" said I. "Will you commence this night a life of prayer?"

He shook his head very slightly, almost imperceptibly. "I will make no promises," said he. But still he spoke more to himself than to me.

"Mr. Gear," said I, "is it not evident that it is no use for you and me to discuss theology? It is not a difference of doctrine that separates us. Here is a fundamental duty: you acknowledge it, you assert its importance, but you have never performed it; and now that your attention is called to it, you will not even promise to fulfil it in the future."

"Mr. Laicus," said he, "I will think of it. Perhaps you are right. I have always meant to do my duty, if my duty was made clear. Perhaps I have failed, failed possibly in a point of prime importance. I do not know. I am in a maze. I believe there is a knowledge of God that I do not possess, a love of God that I do not experience. I believe in it because I believe in you, Mr. Laicus, and yet more because I believe in my wife. But may be it will come in time. Time works wonders."

My very words to Jennie. And Jennie's answer was mine to him.

"Time never works, Mr. Gear. It eats and undermines and rots and rusts and destroys. But it never works. It only gives us an opportunity to work."

And so I came away.

(To be continued.)

ANCIENT AND MODERN GREEK.

What is true of all else which the Athenians shaped—their architecture, their sculpture, their tragedy—is peculiarly true of their language. It is the most delicate, harmonious, artistic form of expression that ever lived on the lips of men. When we talk of the study of Greek, we mean, first and chiefly, the dialect and literature of Athens in the fifth and fourth centuries. B.C.

As long as men escape from the turmoil of the workaday world, and strive to live the intellectual and contemplative life at all, there will always be some who will reverence what is noble and beautiful in the far-away past. As Socrates says: "The treasures of the wise of old, which they have left recorded in their scrolls, my friends and I unroll and con together, culling whatever good we find, and counting it a great gain, if thereby we 'grew dear one to another.' Perhaps it will not matter so much after all, if the throng of callow striplings sent up every year to the university shall no longer have made Xenophon's romance of the March to the Sea a *verpus rite* for painful grammatical dissection. It will be just as true as before that an earnest student of language, or of literature, must always find in Attic Greek the very crown and glory, the very heart and soul of his desire. The true lovers of Greek will hardly be fewer or less earnest. To take a fair parallel case, there are some to whom the great Tuscans are the closest of friends. And

how many of those who say to Dante: "Tu sei lo mio maestro e il mio autore!" would wish to hear the Italian tongue (or even the Commedia itself!) taught in every girls' boarding-school, after the same fashion as French is now treated there. Perhaps those who can love the grim Turcan will be sure to find their way to him; neither he nor Aischylos is within the reach of school children.

In the endless array of later writers, from Aristotle on, there is no longer anything peculiarly beautiful or noble in the mere form of expression. The life and colour have suddenly faded out of words. The syntax is growing stiff and artificial. And the reason is not far to seek. Attic was so strong because it was alive. Its literary forms had their roots deep and firm in the spoken language of the day. We hear at least the echo of that living dialect of the Athenian streets in the lighter Platonic dialogues, in Aristophanes' iambs, in Xenophon's recollections of his master's conversations, in pleas like the first oration of Lysias, which is put into the mouth of a simple peasant. It could not be an ignoble nor a stagnant dialect, any more than Elizabethan English could be; for in it the thoughts and aspirations of a free, enlightened and ambitious people are hourly striking out for themselves fresh and fit forms of expression. It was in this same living dialect, refined and ennobled but living still, that even Oedipus and Antigone appealed straight to the hearts of all Athens.

But the very greatness of Attic helped to check all vigorous growth thereafter. As the life of Hellas became more and more ignoble, its dialects inevitably shared in the general decline. They were by no means incapable of cultivation, as the example of Theokritos sufficiently proves. But the writers choose instead to ape the Attic masters. In thus becoming the universal literary model, Attic became conventional and artificial; that is, dead! Any one who has occasion to read much Greek of, say, the second century A.D., must feel that most of it is as artificial, and not half so clever as the Attic of Professor Jebb. Even at its best in Lucian, we have simply a laborious scholarly patch-work, made up by studying ancient authors. Of course, Pansanias, the traveller, for example, could read a whole library of classics now lost; and besides his avowed quotations, he overflows with precious material drawn from them. But his own Greek, as Greek, is poor, clumsy stuff. He cannot fiddle easily enough to make himself intelligible; not because he is dull or ignorant, but because he is trying to compose in a dead language.

There is no need to continue further on a line of argument which no Philhellene enjoys following. Even in Byzantine Greek, there is a ghastly likeness to Greek. A mummy is horribly human still. A race that, sinking lower and lower with the centuries, became the slaves of the Roman, the Venetian, and at last of the Ottoman, could not but drag its language down with it into that utter degradation. *William Cranston Lawton, in September Atlantic.*

THE BUILDER.

Love built him a bower
 Of blossom and flower;
 It breathed out its fragrance and faded;
 Fame nursed him a tree
 Earth's glory to be,
 By the yew of the tomb it is shaded,
 The pillar and tower
 Of imperial power
 An earthquake has suddenly crumbled;
 Pride thundered along
 With shout and with song,
 One flash, and its heart was humbled.
 Fair pleasure drank up
 Joy's vine-wreathed cup,
 And revelry danced in the palace;
 But the weed's in the floor,
 And the grass at the door,
 And a worm's at the mouth of the chalice.
 So passes the chime
 Of the bells of old Time,
 With a yesterday's glory and sorrow;
 Wrong fades from the night,
 And the star of the right
 Is the pledge and the hope of the morrow.
 And a wonderful morn
 In the East shall be born
 When from earth the usurper is driven;
 Thrilled nature be dumb
 When the mighty shall come
 With the blessing and beauty of heaven.

—George Paulin, in *Christian Leader*.

GRANT'S EPIGRAMS.

His style was clear and terse, with little or ornament. He used Anglo-Saxon words much more frequently than those derived from the Greek or Latin. He seldom indulged in metaphor, but when he did employ a figure of speech it was original and graphic, as when he spoke of the commander at Bermuda Hundred being "in a bottle strongly corked," or alluded to our armies at one time moving "like horses in a balky team, no two ever pulling together." His style inclined to the epigrammatic without his being conscious of it. There is scarcely a document written by him from which brief sentences could not be selected fit to be set in mottoes or placed upon transparencies. As examples may be mentioned: "I propose to move immediately upon your works;" "I shall take no backward step;" the famous "I propose to fight it out on this line; if it takes all summer;" "Let us have peace;" "The best means of securing the repeal of an obnoxious law is its vigorous enforcement."—*Gen. Horace Porter, in Harper's Magazine for September.*

MR. CREIGHTON, the new canon of Worcester, is the Dixie professor of ecclesiastical history at Cambridge, the author of several historical works, and an occasional contributor to *Atlantic*.

British and Foreign.

THE late Dr. Irenaeus Prime was the author of forty published books.

GENERAL LOGAN has nearly completed a work on the campaigns of the rebellion.

DR. JOHN MACLEOD, of Govan, has been granted four months' leave of absence on account of illness.

MR. SANKEY has finally decided to remove from Newcastle, Pa., to Northfield, Mass., to be near Mr. Moody.

It is reported that the writer who signs himself "Step-mak" is Prof. Dragomanoff, who formerly held office in the university of Kiev.

THE attempt to celebrate the anniversary of Pope Gregory VII.'s birth as a great Roman Catholic event for Germany has proved a complete failure.

GENERAL and Mrs. Logan were so well pleased with their visit to the Thousand Islands last year, that they are to spend a month there this year.

DR. THAIN DAVIDSON was the preacher of the anniversary services at Ramsay, Isle of Man. His "Talks to Young Men" has reached a second edition.

THERE are three churches in London where more than half the members have been gathered in by the primitive and apostolic method of street-preaching.

REV. C. H. LITTLE, younger brother of Canon Knox Little, has resigned the chaplaincy of the English Church at St. Petersburg which he has held since 1880.

THE first of the three essays on the Sabbath mentioned by the adjudicators as of "distinguished merit," and, therefore the fifth of the whole 240, was by Rev. J. Smith, M.A., Tarland.

THE Gaelic Church at Greenock has given a unanimous call to Rev. John Campbell, missionary at Plantation, Govan, to the pastorate vacant by the translation of Mr. Macaskill to Dingwall.

REV. JAMES WILSON, a probationer of the U.P. Church, has been received by Greenock Presbytery as a minister of the Church of Scotland in accordance with the decision of last Assembly.

WHEN Rev. T. Nichol, B.D., Tolbooth Church, Edinburgh, addressed St. Andrew's Presbytery on the subject of evangelizing the Jews, his plea was warmly supported by Principal Tulloch.

AT Hamilton, new mission halls to cost \$10,250 have been commenced in connection with the church. They are planned in the shape of the letter L to suit the triangular shape of the ground.

LOCAL option is gaining ground in Georgia. It gives communities a chance to rid themselves of drunkenness and a great proportion of crime, with great satisfaction to the respectable majority.

THE Synod of Moray has lost one of its most scholarly members and the Presbytery of Strathlogie its clerk by the death of Rev. John Annand of Cairney. He died suddenly at the age of fifty-five.

ONLY three printer's errors have yet been discovered in the various editions of the Revised Bible issued by the Oxford press—"e" left out of "righteous"; "shafts" for "shafes"; and "overflowing" instead of "everflowing."

ALREADY the missionaries on the Congo have penetrated a thousand miles into the interior. Fourteen Protestant and four Roman Catholic stations have been erected, and in connection with each of these from £2,000 to £8,000 have been judiciously disbursed.

PROFESSOR DAVID SWING proposes to limit suffrage to those who can show, at least, \$500 worth of property. There is something wiser than wit in the Cleveland *Tribune Dealer's* comment: "This would have ruled out Christ and all the apostles, except Judas."

THE Irish Presbyterians protest against the assumption of the name of "The Church of Ireland" by the Episcopalians. The Roman Catholics have for once joined them. Lord Plunket contends for the exclusive title, but his arguments are very weak and bigoted for so clever a prelate.

MR. JOHN BRIGHT, in proposing the health of Lord Harrington at the Spencer banquet, said he drank it in a beverage much more ancient than wine, and much more wholesome, and that he would think better of those who followed his example than of those who did not.

TWO memorials, the one signed by 970 members of the congregation of Holy Trinity, Hornsey, and the other by 1,266 residents of the parish, have been sent to Mr. Gladstone, urging him to induce Rev. Robert Linklater, the Ritualist he appointed, to withdraw from the living.

DR. NORMAN MACLEOD, of Edinburgh, assisted at the communion in Morven lately, officiating in the pulpit from which his ancestors preached for upwards of a century. A profound impression was made upon the multitude of worshippers of the Gaelic preaching of Mr. Macraury of Tiree.

FREE St. Matthew's congregation, Glasgow, are at present erecting a handsome hall, with all modern improvements, in their mission district at Springbank. The memorial stone was laid on Saturday by Rev. C. A. Salmond, the pastor, in presence of a large assemblage of people belonging to the congregation and the mission.

IN St. Elvan's Church, Aberdare, a member of the choir, has resigned rather than obey the order to come to the confessional, and a daughter of a leading tradesman of the town has left the congregation on account of the revolting questions put to her in the confessional. At Merthyr a pronounced Ritualist has been appointed to the vacant living.

SINCE the close of 1884 the Rev. Narayan Sheshadri has been privileged to receive into the Church of Christ by baptism more than twenty persons, fourteen of these being adults. In his next missionary tour towards the city of Patnan, in the native State of Hyderabad, he expects to admit about a hundred who are under training for baptism.