

THE CRITIC'S CORNER.

I am constrained by the course of events to defer the further consideration of the important subject, the Bible in the Colleges in order to face the question of the Bible in life and that from a present practical standpoint. Ontario is well supplied with churches, in many towns and villages we have buildings and organizations that would meet the needs of a far larger population. In our churches the Bible is placed in the pulpit and the preacher is supposed to base his utterances on its teachings. But what is the meaning and end of all this, it is surely not a mere Sunday exercise, it is meant to exert a living influence on both private and public life. Christianity has made many noble conquests in the past, but it is ever face to face with new problems, and if it cannot conquer, in the more complex life of to-day, both business and politics for Christ, we must confess with shame that for want of intelligence and loyalty on the part of its disciples it has failed. We are not yet prepared to make that final confession though some times the battle goes hard.

As I have often pointed out the great evil is "the double standard." Men will do things for a corporation or a party that they would not do for personal reasons and in private life. Great men do or allow things in foreign politics that they would not tolerate in home affairs. Hence without troubling ourselves at present about outsiders, we have to confess that the political record in Britain and Canada has been tarnished. What we advocate is not shallow sentiment or cruel kindness, it is simply justice in all departments and all circumstances. We repeat the old adage "Honesty is the best policy" but unfortunately we do not believe it. We glorify the Golden Rule but we delight in the more brazen form "Do to the other fellow what he would do to you, and do it first." The trouble with us is unbelief using that word not of the rejective of old traditions about the Bible, but to mean neglect of its real living principles. There is nothing that the Bible denounces more than civic corruption and political trickery. Sometimes we declare in a self-complacent mood that these things were rampant in Oriental States. But every now and then we are reminded that the old temptations have still tremendous force and that the old vices die hard. What we need is to realize more fully that "righteousness exalteth a nation and sin is a reproach to any people." Let us leave the question of "paying" to one side and try to believe that righteousness, that is honesty and cleanness, can be carried into all departments of our life. One could easily give illustrations from the life of cities and countries to show that righteousness is the only thing that does pay in a real broad sense. But that argument has not the noblest power to uplift and strengthen, we must believe in righteousness as the will of God and as the only thing that is worthy of a man. Because there is an intelligent righteous order behind all things and because manhood at its highest reflects the life of God, it is possible to bring "the city of God" from heaven down to earth, and for this the true saints will work and pray. VERAX.

WEEK OF PRAYER FOR FOREIGN MISSIONS.

At a Conference of Foreign Mission Boards held in New York on the 13th and 14th January at which from thirty to thirty-five boards were represented, it was unanimously agreed to fix upon Easter week April 5th to 12th as a prayer-week for Foreign Missions. Please note the following points in connection with the proposal:—

1. It has been discovered by experience that these calls for special prayer are fruitful. Both men and money came in response to such appeals.

2. All Christian people are asked to co-operate in this ministry of prayer for the evangelization of the world—especially during that week.

3. The open doors and increased hopefulness of Missions in all lands calls for special effort now.

4. In our own Canadian Presbyterian Foreign Missions there has been expansion in every department. In Formosa, Honan, Nanamio, India, and amongst the Chinese in Canada the work has grown. Whilst we are thankful that the revenue for the past year has been sufficient, a very much larger revenue will be necessary next year in order to meet increased obligations.

5. The General Assembly has appointed the second Sunday in March as the day for the collection for Foreign Missions. It is asked that a month later the 12th April, the close of the Week of Prayer, be substituted as the day for a foreign Mission collection.

6. As the Honan Mission is the one most urgently calling for more men, and increased expenditure, it is asked that the collection upon that day, the 12th April be devoted to Honan.

7. The General Assembly appoints a collection day specially for congregations that have no Missionary Association. Would it not be possible for all congregations to take on the 12th April an offering for Honan and thus provide the total estimate for that Mission of 1903, which amounts to \$23,000? The opening of two new important centres, the erection of necessary buildings, and the willingness of the people to hear the message the Missionaries bring with the consequent call for more men, makes the claims of Honan peculiarly urgent.

8. A Prayer Card has been issued that will give unity in prayer during that week in all the leading Protestant Churches in the United States and Canada.

R. P. MACKAY.

Toronto, March 7th, 1903.

The Table of Contents of the February Blackwood's is as varied as usual. Among the articles are: National Strategy, A Policy for Ireland and Our Food Supply in Time of War. The Dower-Chest of Ann Ponsford is a decidedly clever and unusual story, while Letters to a Literary Aspirant contain many good hits at the modern novelist. In A River of Cathay, Ernest Dawson describes the Irrawaddy, and in Musings Without Method we are shown too conclusively the sad fact that nowadays "nobody reads" in spite of the vast number of books and periodicals published, or perhaps because of them. Leonard Scott Publication Company, New York.

FOR DOMINION PRESBYTERIAN.

THE AWFULNESS OF KNOWING.

BY C. H. WETTERBE.

There is one aspect of human knowledge of certain momentous truths which is invested with awfulness. It is unspeakably awful for one to know that God so loves him that he does all that he possibly can to save him from eternal death, and yet that person continually refuses to let God's love save him. He who dies unsaved, having known in this life that he might have been saved, must necessarily be tormented by an awful memory of rejected salvation. It is a widely recognized fact that very many people experience the pangs of profound regret that they did not when they knew of a brief opportunity for securing a valuable business advantage, make prompt use of it. How severely they upbraided themselves for not having made use of their knowledge when it would have counted profitably in their favor! It is the memory of a past knowledge, now useless, which torments and tears them. So, I am sure that one of the elements of the punishment of a lost soul in the eternal world is a steady reflection on the fact that the person had known in this world that he might have obtained a glorious salvation of both spirit and body, yet refused it. This is the fire which burns the soul, yet never consumes the soul. The fire of hell is not material, but it is spiritual.

A remorseful memory of having spurned the most important knowledge that a human being could have in this life is an awful fire. The worst kind of suffering is mental. A memory which is fully awake to the loss of an opportunity that bore direct relation to a heaven of unending joy, is a hell of terrible endurance. The inspired Peter, referring to those who had lapsed from a favored condition to one of degradation, sadly says: "It were better for them not to have known the way of righteousness than, after knowing it, to turn back from the holy commandment delivered unto them." O, those words: Better not to have known! The awfulness of knowing the way of life, yet fatally refusing to walk in it!

Homiletic Year Book. By G. B. F. Hallock, D.D., Cloth 8vo. 285 pages. Price \$2.00. F. M. Barton, Cleveland, Ohio.

The progress of months and seasons of the year requires the preacher to select texts, and prepare discourses suited to special times. Anniversaries, memorial, rallying, decision and temperance Sabbaths, Easter, Christmas and communion services have also to be provided for. So the preacher often is glad of even a hint, that will start the right line of thought and save valuable time.

Such a repertory of texts, themes, analysis, brief discourses, suggestive thoughts, illustrations and literary references has been prepared, by an acknowledged expert in homiletic work.

Dr. Hallock has cultivated this gift with diligence, so he finds texts, suggestions and hints that would not be noticed by one without this training, and presents matter of interest in a telling way.

There is here ample evidence of accurate observation of men and things, as well as large acquaintance with general literature and keen discernment of that which is most suitable for the purposes of public address. The volume is richly freighted with material which the preacher may use with advantage to stir his own thought into active exercise.