

## THE DOMINION PRESBYTERIAN.

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OTTAWA, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 7, 1906.

Absence of rain and the consequent failure of crops in India is causing grave anxiety. Already a condition of famine has been declared in several districts.

Rev. Professor Orr is a teetotaler. On one occasion he took a stimulant to ward sea-sickness, and it made him worse. Naturally the Professor neither "tastes, touches, nor handles."

Much interest is shown in the return of the Earl of Aberdeen to Ireland as the Lord-Lieutenant. He has high aspirations for the welfare of the Irish people, and is extremely solicitous to secure their goodwill.

It has taken the United States Senate fifteen years to decide to pass a Bill forbidding the adulteration of foods, drugs, medicines and liquors. The bill passed on the 22nd inst. by a vote of 63 to 4.

It may be true, as suggested by the Christian Intelligencer, that mammoth evangelistic gatherings, with all the paraphernalia of organization, great choirs and elaborate preparations, do not give the practical and permanent results in a revival which are desired and expected, but there can be no doubt that genuine, whole-hearted surrender to the power and workings of the Holy Spirit, faithful persevering prayer and earnest personal effort wisely directed, will bring rich spiritual results. These are the key notes which Dr. Torrey, Dr. Chapman and other evangelists are pressing upon the attention of Christian people. "He that winneth souls is wise."

Some attention is being given in Toronto to the proposal for the formation of an Anti-treating Society, says The Pioneer. It was proposed some time ago in a letter to the Toronto News by Major Murray, one of the License Commissioners, who resigned his position because of the government's unfair treatment of Inspector Hastings. The movement is finding favor with a good many people. It is not new. A similar method was tried some years ago, but was short lived. If the new movement becomes popular it must accomplish a very great deal of good. The personal method of abstaining from treating is in harmony with the opportunities for treating. We believe the Alliance plan is more practical, but we shall hail with delight any help to the temperance cause that comes from the success of Mr. Murray's scheme.

### THE SOVEREIGNTY OF CHARACTER.

This volume of 360 pages, comprising some ninety-three short chapters on the every-day teaching and doing of the "Son of Man," cannot fail to prove a fascinating book, replete with interesting and instructive presentations of Christ's character and teaching. Each chapter is a beautiful pen-picture of the teachings and incidents, including the miracles, recorded by the four evangelists, and based on single texts from those portions of the New Testament. The author says: "Our theme has been approached here necessarily from the human view-point and with the attitude of loving discipleship. Learning of Jesus and living in the light of His Word, we shall not fail of strength, courage, and fidelity in this life in the concrete, and beyond all this we shall have an inspiring consciousness of the beginnings of a larger experience in the life which has no boundaries." Here are a few paragraphs from the chapter on "Birth from Above":

"The psychology of the new birth is very obscure. Statements about this experience are so often indefinite and inaccurate that while we may know the experience itself we cannot give any formal description of it. One chief feature which characterizes every birth from above is the consciousness of a world of spiritual environment. It is an unseen world, albeit it is a world of wonderful illumination, and 'light' is the best term with which to describe the new consciousness itself from a psychological view-point.

"A second feature of the birth from above is the flood of joy which so often irradiates the soul when the new life enters. This may not be felt immediately, but sooner or later there will be some accession of feeling and joyous satisfaction as the result of the soul's newly-found environment.

"A third feature, which is an essential part of the new birth, is the great moral uplift which ensues. So great is the impression received that some profound ethical change is sure to occur. So Jesus said, 'Ye shall know them by their fruits.' The character of this moral change will be determined by the tendency of the individual conscience, which is largely the product of education and heredity.

"It will be seen that these three features of change have their seat respectively in the mental, emotional and moral natures. The head has more light, the heart more feeling, and the hand new impulses to righteous endeavor.

"Can the new birth be hastened by the individual? It certainly can. There may be obstacles. Thus, though Jesus taught the lesson of the new birth to this eminent Pharisee (Nicodemus) we have no evidence that the latter experienced at this time any change corresponding to regeneration. . . . The experience will be greatly hastened by earnest conversation with persons who have entered into the spiritual environment, especially if such conversation is a discussion or a study of the life of Jesus.

"The distinction between regeneration and conversion, though so vital, is often lost sight of in indefinite thought and inaccurate statement. The wind bloweth where it listeth and we cannot tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth, but we can sail into the open sea where the spiritual breezes prevail and then fly with the winds of God whither they may take us.

"This is the primary lesson in the school of Christ, who was the life, the truth, and the way. This is the first step in the path of spiritual attainment having entered which there is no end but eternal progress."

"The Sovereignty of Character: Lessons from the Life of Jesus of Nazareth. By Albert D. Watson, M.D., author of The Sovereignty of Ideals. Toronto: Wm. Briggs.

### PRIESTISM.

It is within living memory that the priest has shown his face and lifted up his head in the congregation of professed Protestants, whether in Britain or America. Fifty years ago, the Anglican clergy, as a body, would have resented the appellation. As the Rev. G. M. Royce—for many years rector of the American Church in Munich—says in the "Nineteenth Century," "Not until the second quarter of the nineteenth century did any considerable portion of the English clergy assume priestly functions. . . .

Most persons past fifty now living can well remember when the term priest was seldom if ever applied either in England or America to clergymen of any Protestant Communion." Now, all this is changed. Ever since in the early thirties of the nineteenth century, when Newman and Pusey, and Keble began their work of sapping and mining the English Church there has been a marvellous craving, on the part of multitudes of illiterate and immature Anglicans after priestism, a burning thirst to be known and recognized as parish priests. And all this side by side with a claim to Apostolicity.

Now all scholars ought to know—as Mr. Royce reminds his readers—that Christianity, like Judaism, begins without a priesthood; that not till the third century till the time of Cyprian, do we meet with the priest or see him coming into prominence and power. He says there are some who see the priestly character and function in the Apostolic Church. But he adds and truly, no disinterested person would support such a contention. He might have added that the whole of the Epistle to the Hebrews conclusively takes the feet from under any such contention. Mr. Royce calls attention to the significant fact that in the office of the Holy Communion, as set forth in the book of Common Prayer, the words curate, minister, and priest are all used interchangeably. This must be gall and wormwood to those would-be sacrificing priests who are now making such a stir over and fight for their sacrificing vestments, that they may, as they say, rightly observe the Communion, or as they say, offer the Holy Sacrifice. The man has read the New Testament to little purpose who has not learned therefrom that it is through the Word read and preached—that it is by the foolishness of preaching, and not of priestism or priestcraft—that it pleases God to save them that believe. Even before the departure as a system of the Levitical and priestly ceremonial of the Jewish Church was made to see the superiority of the prophetic office to the priestly. Witness the summary manner in which Micah, the representative prophet, deals with the priest and his sacrificial offerings—"Wherewith shall I come before the Lord and bow myself before the High God? Shall I come before Him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams or with ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?" No, says the prophet, have done with these substitutes for personal righteousness. "He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly, to love mercy, to walk humbly with thy God."

As Mr. Royce truly says, Moses calls Israel a "nation of priests," thus destroying at one stroke not only the intermediary character of the priest, but all class distinctions; a point like this, as doubtless many of our readers will remember, to which Bishop Lightfoot, in his famous essay, attached to his work on the Epistle to the Philippians, gives due prominence. Those who affect to be sacrificing priests should bethink them whether they are not usurping the office of the one great High Priest of our profession, and, as far as their poor efforts go,