

of High Churchmen, they would stand out in sharp antagonism to an enormous array of Moderate Churchmen, belonging professedly to neither party, and tending, therefore to regard any party outside themselves as alien from the true spirit of the Church of England. If this rearrangement of parties were effected after the Ritualists had secured toleration, it might not greatly matter. But if it were effected before that time, it might make the conquest of toleration very much more difficult. The motive with which that toleration will be given will be, in most cases, a dislike of the possible consequences arising from the refusal of it, and the magnitude of these consequences will greatly depend upon the number of the clergy who regard themselves as in some sort mixed up and bound to make common cause with the Ritualists. As long as the party lines between High Churchmen and Evangelicals remain where they are, many of the former will regard themselves in this light. 'These men,' they will say, 'go very much beyond me; but, after all, they are High Churchmen, and it is not for me to desert them when they are oppressed.' But if the party lines are drawn differently—and the thing that comes most naturally to the mind of a Moderate High Churchman is his substantial identity with the Moderate Evangelical—he may be more inclined to look upon the Ritualists as simple disturbers of the Ecclesiastical peace. How the problem will work out depends mainly upon the extent to which Ritualism has really leavened the High-Church party. If the extent to which it has done this is considerable, the Moderate Evangelicals, on coming up to the point where the Moderate High Churchmen were yesterday, will find that they have moved a day's journey further on, and that the relative distance between them still remains what it was. Whether this will prove to be the case, nothing but time and experience can show. So far as merely *a priori* considerations go, the probabilities on both sides are curiously balanced.—*Spectator*.

OBITUARY.

On the 27th inst., at Toronto, Peter Paterson, Esq., of Blantyre Park, Township of Scarborough, passed to his rest.

The deceased had reached the age of 76 years. For a length of time his sufferings had been very severe, having for many months been in almost constant pain, which he bore with all Christian fortitude and resignation. Mr. Paterson had been very successful in his business enterprises and won for himself and as an heritage to his family not merely a good measure of this world's rewards, but the more enduring and the prouder recompense of an honoured name, a name which was a synonym for integrity. The Church at Norway will miss him; he there carried on the services as a lay reader when the mission was founded, and when no clerical help was at hand, naturally, therefore, he felt a deep interest in its welfare. Mr. Paterson devoted two of his sons to the priesthood, of whom one survives, the able and much esteemed Rector of Christ Church, York Township. He also leaves to mourn his loss another son and three daughters who, with his widow, have our deepest sympathy. The memory of the just is blest as a consolation to the bereaved.

ZEAL WITHOUT KNOWLEDGE.

THERE is no fact in religion plainer at the present day than the large number of persons who are honestly doing their best to spread Christianity around them, not only in admittedly heathen countries, but amongst the really worse and more degraded heathen of great European and American cities, and the duller class of pagans who still, as fifteen hundred years ago, throng rural villages. This fact is

one which has always to be kept in mind by those who at times feel despondent because of the active revolt against the supernatural on the part of a cultured section of society, for it helps to excite the sense of companionship, and to revive their drooping courage.

It is a most heartening thought that so many devout and earnest workers are trying to do all they can on the side of good, to make head against the forces of social evil all around them. And it may be confidently believed that all which is good in their work will last, and the evil prove to be only passing.

It has been our own line of teaching all along that no discouragement should be put by those of our school in the way of any honest attempt to make the world better, even if we could not altogether approve the methods employed. There is quite enough work cut out for us in fighting what is certainly evil, without exhausting our energies in resisting what is at any rate sincerely intended to do good. Thus, to take a couple of examples, while we never have been able to accept the theory of the Bible Society, that the Bible alone is the great missionary agency—since to think so would be impeaching Divine Providence for having sent Christianity into the world fourteen hundred years before printing—we have not thought ourselves justified in weakening the hands of those who are convinced that the world-wide distribution of Holy Writ is at least a powerful agency for enlightenment; and, similarly, while equally unable to accept Sabbatarianism, we are too thoroughly convinced of the moral value of Sunday to assail such as are eager to keep up that value, even by faulty methods.

But we fear that that this form of tolerance is rare by far than it ought to be. The surest mark of bigotry is hostility to what certainly professes and intends to be right, but whose type differs from that preferred by the bigot, while open evil is viewed with far less dislike. The story is well known how Louis XV. of France objected to a certain tutor being suffered to travel with a young man of high rank, on the ground that he was a Jansenist, but was at once satisfied on being assured that he was merely an Atheist. So, too, it may be fresh in the memory of some of our readers how the Church Association started with the professed intention of combating Rationalism as well as Ritualism, but that some of the leaders confessed at a public meeting that to attack Rationalism would drive away some of their best friends, and could not be wisely attempted, so that in fact nothing whatever has ever been done by the Association in the battle with unbelief.

The particular incident which has prompted these remarks is that a few days ago a slip of paper which we reprint was put into the hands of a person when coming out of a church, and presumably into those of all of the congregation who would accept copies. It is as follows:—"Are you born again? You may be Religious. You may go to Church. You may take the Sacrament. You may say your Prayers. But Are you born again? If not, You are Going to Hell. For 'Except a man be born again he cannot see the Kingdom of God.'—John iii. 3." We are perfectly ready to allow that the authors and the distributors of this slip are entirely convinced that they are doing good by spreading it as they do, not broadcast exactly, but amongst regular church-goers. We have not evidence as to whether it, or a similar one, is given to meeting-goers also, but we rather doubt it, and think the manifesto, from its wording, to be exclusively anti Church, and to emanate from the Plymouth Brethren who dislike the Church more even than they severally do the two or three rival sections within their own body.

Now, this seems to us to be going on the wrong tack altogether. In the first place, time, pains, and money would be better employed in striving to draw the attention and influence the acts of those who do not attend any place of worship. They are not so few or so hard to discover that there could be good reason for putting them aside in favour of other objects of interest.

Next, there is one perfectly true and possible interpretation of the slip, which is worth while impressing on every professed Christian—that formalism, lip-service, externality, is not religion, is not "saving faith;" is at best mere respectability and Pharisaism. But we much fear that no such meaning was in the minds of its authors. Otherwise, there might have

been added some warnings against spiritual pride, against narrow sectarianism, against bitter judgment of others, against rash prying into the Divine counsels, as not incompatible with loud claims to be in a state of grace and election, although directly opposed to the temper of the Gospel. It is not Pharisees at whom the slip is aimed, for it is in itself the outcome of some of the very worst parts of the Pharisaic spirit.

Further, it does not help in any way those whom it intends to disturb and alarm. A well instructed and steady minded Churchman would of course put it down with a kindly sigh of compassion for the writers and distributors; but imperfectly taught, nervous, or timid people might very probably receive a severe shock, and be seriously upset by reading it suddenly.

"Exactly what we want," the distributors would reply—"we desire to awake our readers to the conviction of sin." Perhaps:—our own fear is that which is chiefly hoped is that our readers may learn to view church worship and ordinances as sinful—but even so, there is no hint given by which the reader is to learn what is being "born again." He is told that his house is on fire and the doors locked, but is not told of any escape. There is a hard thoughtlessness about this, which is more akin to the temper of a Spanish inquisitor than the writer probably suspects. But underlying the whole is blank ignorance of the leading words of the slip. There can be no doubt whatever that the writers and distributors of the slip entirely misunderstand the phrase "born again."

And first of all, because it is a mistranslation of the original Greek of the New Testament, which is literally "begotten again," the word referring primarily to the act of the father, and only secondarily and indirectly to the position of the child. The term "regeneration" or "new-birth" occurs only twice in the New Testament, in St. Matthew xix. 28, and in Titus iii. 5. In the former of these, it is plainly equivalent to "resurrection," and denotes the time of the fresh quickening to life of all the dead before the Judgment. In the latter it is significantly coupled with washing, as more directly with water in the root passage of all, St. John iii. 5-6. The texts, 1 St. Peter i. 3 and 23, contain all the rest of Scripture directly bearing on the matter, and not one of all these passages is so much as capable of receiving the interpretation intended by the slip-writers.

Here is the true meaning, shown by a parallel from civil life. When a foreigner desires not merely to live in England and adopt English customs, but to become in all respects an English citizen, owing allegiance to the English Crown and laws, and obtaining in return certain civil rights, he has to send in an application wherein he formally renounces his original nationality, and asks to be received as an English subject. Hereupon a grant is made to him from the Crown, constituting him an Englishman for all practical purposes, and this grant is technically called "Letters of Naturalization," that is to say, letters which give him the status of one naturally born an English citizen—in short, conferring on him civil "new-birth." Exactly similar is the meaning of "new-birth" in the New Testament. It is that act of Divine grace whereby we are admitted into the visible fellowship of Christ's Kingdom as its citizens, renouncing our former citizenship. But there is only one way in which this act, so far as Scripture reveals, takes place, and that is in and by Holy Baptism; nor is any other notion of the Christian new-birth visible in history or literature till Calvin invented the theory that as no one but the elect could be regenerate, and as many of the baptized could not be supposed elect—on the further hypothesis of his invention, that no one can fall from election—therefore baptism and new birth could not be the same thing in any sense, and new birth must be taken to denote an inward change of mind and heart.

That, however, is not "new birth," but conversion—a word used as a noun in the New Testament in this one sense only, coming out of Heathenism into Christianity (Acts xv. 8), while the verb "convert" is used of turning from habitual sin to habitual holiness (St. Matt. xviii. 3, St. John xii. 40, &c.). Accordingly, even that word is inapplicable to people who have been brought up as Christians from infancy, and who, however weakly and stumblingly, are walking in the right way. They may need to go quicker, to keep more in the very middle of the path, to refrain from casting occasional looks aside and behind; but they do not need to be turned round. And one of the best tests of having turned round is observance, though not formally, far less hypocritically, of the very practices which the slip denounces as useless. What these people mean by being "born again" is, however, not even conversion, much less that growth in grace and goodness which is called "Sanctification," but is something which people do for themselves namely, professing to have accepted and applied to themselves certain promises of Holy Scripture, and to have been conscious of the exact time and manner in which

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