

not least among the young people, and he was considered by the Socialists as their special hero. In April this year Hr. Strindberg became seriously ill, and the doctors soon gave the verdict that he would only have a few weeks left to live. His illness was of a most painful character, and gave him no peace day or night, except through the use of morphia. Still there was a serenity about him which was most surprising. He never gave expression to any fear of death. He was often seen to read the Bible, and those who had an opportunity of talking to him about spiritual matters, said that he read with a heart hungering after the Gospel.

The day before he died he beckoned his nearest relatives to his bedside and took the Bible from the table, lifted it with both hands and said: "All personal grudge is now gone. I have settled with life, my accounts are closed, this (meaning the Bible) is the only true guide." He then pressed the Bible to his heart, and announced as his last will that, when life had ceased, the Bible should be placed on his breast together with a small cross which he used to wear round his neck. He ordered that at his funeral no speeches should be made, but that only the funeral rite of the Church of Sweden should be carried out. To this rite belongs singing of hymns, and one of those that were sung contained words which may be literally rendered as follows: "No more like a prodigal son do I roam in far countries; my soul, which longs to part from this world returns gladly to the Father. He meets me lovingly and grants me His grace for Jesus' sake, and there will be joy in heaven." This verse was found to have been specially marked by Hr. Strindberg in his hymn-book.

Remarkable as this testimony was in itself, it was no less remarkable in the echo which it found among those who, while admiring Strindberg, are very far from taking the view of Christianity which he proclaimed so clearly in his last words and had expressed many times in various writings. In an In Memoriam poem which was written immediately after his death the seeking of his soul after God was effectively pictured by a transcription of the now so famous hymn "Nearer, my God, to Thee," which, after the "Titanic" disaster, was often played by Strindberg. This poem was sung by a large choir composed of workmen, who probably to a man were Socialists—which in Sweden implies a deliberately indifferent, if not antagonistic, position towards Christianity.

The solemnity of death brings out the truth, even in spite of theories which for a time may have "darkened the counsel of God."—(The Bible in the World).

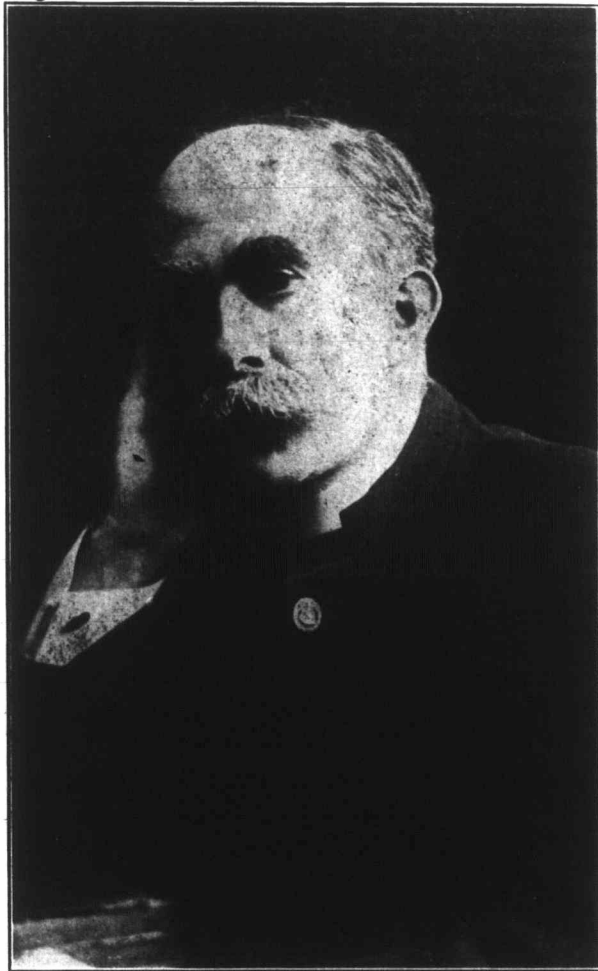
THROUGH MY STUDY WINDOW

The Musings of "Criticus" on Passing Events.

It is an expensive business to carry on Foreign Missions. The Board of Management of M.S.C.C. found this out at its recent session in Montreal and the Church at large will find this out increasingly as the years roll on. In the past we have been merely playing at missions. We accepted the few volunteers who offered, and we sent them into the field of some other Society, we being responsible only for their stipends, and the other Society being responsible for forming the plans, providing the equipment, and reaping the fruits. This was a good beginning, but it was a cheap and easy way of doing an extremely large and difficult work. Now, however, we have entered on a new course. We have chosen our own fields, we have formed our own dioceses, we have appointed our own Bishops, and we have made ourselves responsible for the management and equipment of the work. This is as it should be; for if we are to justify our existence as an independent and self-respecting Church we must take our proper place in the world-wide work for which the Church of Christ was called into being. But it is an expensive undertaking. The Church must be prepared for increased contributions and the Board of Management for increased apportionments. As it is, we are among the least of the missionary forces in the heathen world. We are far behind the other religious communions in our own country that are our equals in numbers and in wealth. We are bound to put our hand to the plough in pain of the forfeiture of our spiritual titles. Having put our hand to the plough we dare not look back lest we should be judged unworthy of the Kingdom of God. The object that is set before us is worthy of our greatest efforts and sacrifices. It is the work for which Christ died. It is the object for which martyrs, saints and missionaries in all ages counted not their lives dear unto themselves. The privilege of joining such a company and aiding in such a work is worth more than can be reckoned in

dollars and cents, worth to us as well as to the world. We can make no better investment of our money which will be repaid to us a hundredfold in spiritual blessings. But is it not mockery to talk of crushing burdens and sacrifices when the whole Church is called to give a paltry \$75,000 towards no less a task than the regeneration of three great Empires, India, China, and Japan? Why, \$75,000 is less than some of our smaller cities are giving for automobiles.

The Synod of the Province of Canada suddenly awoke to two days of active and vigorous life after eight years of quiet and peaceful sleep. The notable utterance of the Bishop of Huron at the opening service showed the progress which the Church has made while the Synod slumbered and slept. Of the many subjects that came up for discussion but few pertained exclusively or even especially to the Province of Canada. Newfoundland is always with us; so is Church Unity. There seemed to be no special urgency for these



REV. J. E. WATTS-DITCHFIELD, M.A.,
Vicar of St. James-the-Less, Bethnal
Green, London, E.

At present lecturing in Toronto. He will also address a Mass Meeting of Men in the Church of the Redeemer at 4 p.m., Sunday next.

questions at the time; although acts of courtesy and friendliness must always do some good. The position of the Church in Wales, and that of Ulster, however much they might command the sympathy of individual Churchmen, seem to be outside the jurisdiction of any Canadian Synod, which clearly has no mission to pass judgment on the actions of the Imperial Parliament. In all such matters it may be well for us to reflect that whatever bolts our Church assemblies may forge regarding political issues in Britain, if they are ever heard of by the British Cabinet, will fall innocuous at their feet. For as a distinguished prelate said of all the meetings of the week, "We have spent a few crowded days and I trust we have done no harm." Strange to say, the one question that fell strictly within the province of the Synod, and for the settlement of which the Synod was specially called was decided without discussion. Possibly the subject had been threshed out in the assemblies, and nearly all the members had come prepared to accept the inevitable. Possibly, too, this happy result may have been due to skilful management. In all assemblies the legal profession has a field day, when legal and constitutional questions are under discussion. The fine distinctions that are drawn may sometimes be trying to the ordinary mortal though they may greatly conduce to peace and progress in the end. At the recent Synod the learned gentlemen seemed to waive all technicalities and unite in expediting the business

of the house. The round table conference suggested by the Bishops soon led to a unanimous decision, and who should dare to differ when the lawyers are agreed? For this happy and speedy solution of a question that might have led to a long and tedious debate, we are indebted to the wise guidance of the Bishops.

A resolution was moved in the Lower House looking to the participation of the Bishops in joint deliberations between the two Houses. The large and influential part taken by the Bishops in the proceedings of the Board of Management, which deals with matters as weighty and important as any Synod, was in favourable contrast with their absence from the proceedings of the Lower House. The loss was felt to be very great. The ability which, as a rule, wins for the Bishops their elevation to the Episcopate, and the wide experience which they acquire in the discharge of the Episcopal Office gives them special fitness to take part in united deliberations for the welfare of the Church; while the high regard in which their office is universally held would suffice to protect them from any untoward consequences which might ensue, and under all circumstances the special rights of the Episcopate would be safeguarded. The mutual benefit would be great. Clergy and laity alike would greatly profit by the presence and counsel of the Bishops, and it is an open secret that some of the Bishops do not view with unmixed satisfaction their translation to the serener air of the Upper House. What the fate of this resolution is likely to be is perhaps possible to foretell from the fate that has overtaken similar resolutions in the past. It is a happy circumstance that its introduction was due to a desire to make our Synods more efficient and to a conviction that the ability and experience of the Bishops would be a powerful influence to that end. Criticus.

VARIA

From time to time topics arise which while they can hardly be discussed editorially, are nevertheless of sufficient interest to warrant attention by both clergy and laity. It is therefore proposed to call attention to some of these matters as they arise, and if any of the laymen and laywomen among our readers are led to make any suggestions for this column they will be given careful consideration.

An article appeared the other day in the New York Nation, asking what books a man should read who has but little time for reading, especially because of the thousands of men in business and professional life to whom the question is very real. President Butler, of Columbia, took up this subject not long ago and urged his hearers to "resolve to pass the year in company with some one of high and noble character. Then he went on to say:—

Let the year be made noteworthy by passing it in company with the poetry of Alfred Tennyson. Or, if in another mood, pass the year in close and familiar company with the essays of Emerson, or with that masterpiece of biography, Lord Morley's "Life of Gladstone." The nineteenth century left no nobler or more inspiring life than that of Pasteur. Perhaps you may prefer to pass the year in company with that life as told by Vallery-Radot.

The idea is that a man should select some large and important book for companionship, and then spend a year in its company because of the moral, educational, and recreative influence and value of such an exercise. No man can spend such a time with the works of Gibbon, or Macaulay, or Carlyle, without experiencing intellectual profit and expansiveness, and even the busiest men might presumably be able to undertake one such work a year.

The war in the East has reminded us very definitely of the ancient Church, too long a Mosque, of St. Sophia in Constantinople. It has been called "the finest flower of Byzantine art," and it would seem it is in imminent danger of destruction. Mr. T. G. Jackson, R.A., examined it for the Turkish Government two years ago, and reported that not only are the walls and columns out of the perpendicular, and some of the vaults of the roof in danger of collapse, but that the escape of the dome is "due to the singular stability of that form of construction." No wonder that grave concern has been shown for what would certainly be "a catastrophe of unparalleled consequence," for notwithstanding the possession by Islam, the place which St. Sophia holds in Christian history makes it of the deepest possible interest to all the Churches. We do not know whether the Mohammedan authorities would welcome help from Christian people, but certainly action should be taken before it is too late.