

## OUR WATCH TOWER.

The air just now is full of birds of good omen for both the political and religious worlds. It was a deeply interesting sight to see so many representatives of the leading ecclesiastical organizations of our country meeting together in one place, even to talk of union. Union may not be near at hand, but this step will bring it nearer. The having speech of one another will hasten it by exchange of thought, by better understanding of each other's strong or weak points, by learning the false and the true in the conceptions that are now entertained. Acquaintance with each other's modes of thought will in a great measure cause the walls of separation to crumble and blow away like dust. The different parts of the army of Christian men are one at heart. Why should they not be one in hand? There is already in every true soul touched by God's Spirit a love to the Lord that is the bond of genuine union. Out of that essential oneness all unity comes. But the great question is: How shall it shape itself? What form shall it take on?

It was a peculiarly fortunate circumstance that Dr. Caven was invited to open the subject the representatives had met to consider. The first word usually gives the key-note to the meeting. And this Dr. Caven did. In his own loving judicious, skillful way he put the case before them, bringing them down to the true ground, the only safe ground from which to start and at which to end, namely, Christ Jesus, the centre of union.

The subjects discussed were in their order, as follows:  
A Corporate Unity.  
The Amount of Unity in Doctrine, Worship and Modes of Action between the Three Bodies.  
The Holy Scripture.  
The Creeds.  
The condition of Administration of the Sacraments.  
The Historic Episcopate.

Any one acquainted with the history of the Church and its internal conflicts, will see at once the nature of the field to be gone over. One bristling with ecclesiastical briars and thorns. An eager curiosity would like to see the report of the discussions. Was it not a mistake to keep out the reporters? Whatever was said, and no doubt true men would say true things, the conference was conducted with the best of feeling, and led all to entertain hope for the best results. This was the closing motion.

It was then moved by the Rev. Septimus Jones, and seconded by Rev. Principal Caven—

That we desire to record our devout thankfulness to Almighty God that we have been led to assemble together, and that we acknowledge the profit these meetings tend to develop, and believing that similar conferences would result in equal profit, we recommend them to our several churches.

Are we not at the beginning of a new era and of better times? How much is already won when a conference like this can take place? Where are all the old aversions and denunciations? Gone, we trust, for ever. As the Canadian Churches were the first to exemplify corporate union on a large scale, we hope it may be their peculiar honour to exemplify the higher and grander union of heart and spirit on a still larger scale!

Our times call loudly for some concerted action along spiritual lines against the thickening forces of evil that are laying siege to the Church, and sapping its very life. But man's extremity is God's opportunity. "When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him." How many hearts are being moved to fulfil this divine word? God shall not leave Himself without witnesses.

The meeting, presided over by Ex-Mayor Howland, in reference to "The Jesuit Estates Bill," was as intensely a political meeting as ever was held in our country, and *mirabile dictu*—it was opened with prayer. That is the right court into which to carry our appeal. Were that thought of ten thousand times more, we should have ten thousand times less to fear. Our fear of man and his machinations is proportioned to our forgetfulness of God. Use all proper means, of course, but prayer is the prime means. Why should not all political meetings be opened with prayer? Are there no Christian men members of the House or seeking to be? Or have they no faith in the righteousness of their cause? Or are they afraid of men? What is the reason? Our country is a professedly religious country, and why should not public men acknowledge God in all their ways, that He may direct their paths?

One important fact is being exemplified just now, which is not sufficiently recognized by the press of the country, and that is, that the ministers of the Gospel are, by virtue of their office, leaders of thought and leaders of men, while politicians are not. They come on in the rear and build upon foundations already laid down. Were politicians statesmen, they would know that they need not keep in this place, but press on into the van and lead, making law an educative force, as it is. But our present politicians see it only as a precipitate and crystallization of prevailing sentiment. The true statesman accepts the feeling, thought, tendencies in favour of the right thing, and through law seeks to settle them as the habit and custom of the people. Desire to keep in the Government for other than great public ends hinders the bringing forward of the legislation most necessary for the moral health and soundness of our country. Why are our politicians afraid of Prohibition and Jesuitism? They see in any direct movement against them, as they they think, the destruction of their party. And so the country suffers for party sake.

SENTINEL.

## Pastor and People.

## EASTER CAROL.

BY PRINCIPAL MCINTYRE, BRANTFORD LADIES' COLLEGE.

Awake to life! the hat comes,  
And nature hears the voice Divine.  
The slumbering earth, set free, obeys,  
And hails with joy the lengthened days.  
That bring the cheering beams of light,  
To waken life, long pent in night  
Now hills and vales to gladness born,  
Proclaim the song of Easter morn.

Awake to life! the spirit breathes  
On a weary world, found dead in sin.  
In beauty clothed, the quicken'd soul  
Awakes to light and joys unknown,  
To sing, all blessing, honour and praise  
To Him who conquer'd death and the grave,  
The lost is found, the angels sing,  
There's joy in heaven, loud anthems ring.

Awake to life! the Master calls,  
From the gates of heaven the message falls,  
A crown is given, at the close of the strife  
To him that o'ercomes in the battle of life,  
To duty rise, new victories win,  
The helpless help, though vile in sin  
New life is yours, to spend for Him,  
To whom we raise our Easter Hymn.

## LEISURE HOURS.

BY THE REV. J. A. R. DICKSON, B.D.

Leisure hours! When we hear the words we are inclined to ask this question: Are there any leisure hours in one's life now? Everywhere we turn we find a busy, bustling, boisterous world about us, that keeps on running and rushing along as fast as the crowd will suffer it to do so. Leisure seems to be almost entirely banished from human life. There is no longer in it the sweet and quiet dignity of repose. The musing, meditative mood of the old time is gone; and it has taken with it the beautiful and attractive graces with which it was wont to adorn character.

Is not the plaint of Matthew Arnold too true?

We chatter, nod and hurry by,  
And never once possess our souls  
Before we die.

The deep thought, long fixed upon a subject, that rooted principles in the nature, and made strong and stalwart men, who could lift their heads above any breeze that blew out of any quarter, is hardly possible now, unless there be a wilful forsaking the busy haunts of men, and a going into retirement for a time. Quietness is necessary for prolonged and fruitful thought. Our great dramatist truly speaks of

The sessions of sweet silent thought.

Strong souls need these for the nurture of their nature, and they will usually take them. But those who are not strong, and therefore need them most, what shall they do? They must win leisure. It does not come unsought; no, nor yet unbought. It must be purchased at the cost of toil and sleep and lots of money, and sometimes companions and friends. But it must be won if any great advance is to be made. If life is to spring up out of its present low conditions, leisure, as the loom in which a new existence-web is to be woven, must be somehow secured.

It is needed for thought, for prayer, for family intercourse for self-examination, for reading, and the culture of the interior life of the individual. It is demanded for the furnishing of the mind with materials for the exercise of thought and judgment and the creation of new ideas. These do not come to men uncaused. They are usually stricken from the mind as sparks are from flint. And when they do come they need opportunity to grow, and put forth their power.

How is leisure won? By an orderly arrangement of work so that it can be got through within a certain time. Order is heaven's first law, and its adoption by the toiling sons of men is one of the means by which they compass and accomplish great things. In all the different departments of life there ought to be, for the healthy continuance of effort, seasons of rest after seasons of work. There ought to be a system that will divide the time between, labour, leisure and sleep. It may be the eight or ten or twelve hour system, but whatever it is, there ought to come in between the time of service and the time of sleep, a time devoted to recreative quiet, or amusement, or study, in which the mind may be toned up with the fresh thought that science offers; or the heart-expanding considerations religion presents in the "thoughts that wander through eternity;" or the soothing and refining joys of family communion. Unquestionably Wordsworth was right when he sang in one of his sonnets:

The world is too much with us; late and soon  
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers.

What was true in his time, steady and slowgoing and easy as compared with ours, is trebly true now. It is time for young and old alike to call a halt, and take breath, and consider themselves; and whither they are drifting. Danger is ahead, if this outwardness continues to be cultivated. The mental nature will be starved, and the spiritual nature will be stifled. Even now relish for thought fails, and delight in the transcendent glories of divine revelation is passing away; what is left is the desire for some strong excitement, to counteract the heavy depression that weighs upon men through

over-devotion to the things of sense. He who can give the largest doses is the most sought after and sworn by. Alas! that it should be so, but so it is. The best clown carries the crowd. That is the downward grade. But there is an upward grade, and while few are found on it, comparatively, yet there are the choicest spirits. The wise man will join and keep company with them. They are marching under the banner that has "Excelsior" flashing in the sunlight that falls upon it. They fight the first great fight for bread within well-defined limits, and they mark off the remainder of time for leisure which is employed in the cultivation of the mind, the heart, the soul. They are not all of flesh; they are spirit too. And they seek to satisfy the demands of their whole nature, and their responsibility to others. They think of themselves, and they forget not their families.

How many families to-day are sacrificed on the altar of mammon? The father is too busy to take any interest in his own home. He is only a lodger there. He comes home at night full of business care, that carries him apart from all that touches the children. He may not read the Bible, or pray with the family. He may only give a passing glance at educational matters when asked for money for books. He lives in quite another world. The money-fever burns in his veins, and drinks up his vital energy, and absorbs all the love of his heart. He is becoming a prey to "covetousness, which is idolatry." Mr. Moody tells a thrilling story in relation to this experience which is so common to-day. He says: "I remember some years ago a man living in the Mississippi Valley. He had accumulated great wealth, had given all his faculties to gain it, and had prospered so far as worldly goods went. One day his son, his eldest born, was brought in dying, from the result of an accident. When the father found his boy could not live, he wanted the boy to be roused by the doctors, for he said, 'I don't want my boy to die without knowing me.' They brought him to, and the father told him he was dying. The boy said, 'Father, won't you pray for my soul? You never taught me to pray for myself.' The father began to weep and said he could not pray. The boy passed away, and the father has told me that he would give all his wealth, if he could bring him back, that he might fulfil his dying request and pray for him. He had no leisure to cultivate piety at home, and his boy's words left a sting no money could remove.

Parents, let the spiritual wants of the children have your care as well as their physical wants. While you dress the body, do not forget to dress the soul. Let not the superior part be forgotten by excess of attention to the inferior. You ought to do the one, and not leave the other undone.

What a field lies open to the young man, or the young woman, who will fill up leisure hours faithfully with well directed reading, meditation, enquiry! All the doors of the sciences are open through excellent popular books, by the masters of each department. No one can say, "I find nothing to suit me, neither to help me." Every taste, however fastidious, may find that that will just meet it and carry it on to a higher and a nobler development. The best masters offer themselves at every step of the way, so that no one need go on unattended, and unbefriended.

For those who find difficulty in laying out a course of study for themselves, "The Chautauqua Scientific and Literary Circle" course, is most excellent. It is one of the best ideas of our time. It will impart to the thoughtful reader a liberal tendency of thought, if it does not give a liberal education. Some, no doubt, will take out of it more than many a university graduate takes out of his university course. They will have an awakened mind, a mass of ideas on which the mind can act and a spur to future study and research. And this too under exceedingly pleasant conditions. They read apart, they come together in the circle and talk over what has been read; they enlarge each other's views, and impress each other's minds by new thoughts or the emphasizing of old thoughts. And they form friendships based on intelligence and virtuous aspirations. What so delightful a way of getting wisdom as this? The thousands of Chautauquas on our continent are doing more for the stability of the state, the peace and progress of the country, than they know. And they too are the seedplot out of which will come scientists, philosophers, ministers of the Gospel, moralists and large-hearted and intelligent-minded artisans. With all our heart we say, God bless the Chautauqua movement and the C. L. S. C.!

If leisure hours are not put to a good use, they are a great curse. They become hours of idleness, and Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do. "An idle brain is the devil's workshop. Strong, but alas too true. Beware of idleness! Be employed in some useful, remunerative, improving exercise of heart or brain. A good book is a good friend; and the best book, the Bible, is the best friend. It should never for a single day be forgotten, nor overlaid with newspapers, magazines, reviews, as we fear it very often is. It has in it light for the mind, love for the heart, peace for the conscience motive for the will, pictures for the imagination, fellowship for the soul. It stands in periphery around the human spirit, offering to it all it can crave and all it needs. It lifts the man up who accepts its revelation and obeys its teaching to his true dignity, and brings him into communion with all to which his spirit has kinship, and unveils to him glories and grandeurs and spheres of being which are made for him, and are his heritage.

He who omits the Bible from his leisure hours, loses what is unspeakable, in its power, inspiration, enlargement, and blessing. It is to be a lamp unto our feet, and light unto our path, the joy and rejoicing of our heart. And it is when we use it faithfully.