

Toronto in particular, or about Divinity School in general. What does this Hibernian mean?

ENQUIRER.

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EASTERN CUSTOMS AND BIBLE TEXTS

BY REV. RICHMOND SHREVE, M.A.

No. II.—(Continued.)

On the morning of the wedding day, the servant who had already been sent with the messages, came again, informing each one who had been invited, that all things were now ready, and they were being awaited (St. Luke xiv., 16, 17).

A remembrance of this fact will help us to understand what would otherwise appear like great harshness, in asking people to an entertainment and giving them no option, but even punishing them for their refusal. But, in reality, all had already been invited, and at this first invitation, had the choice in their own hands, and because of their acceptance preparations had been made (St. Matt. xx., 4). It was for this reason that any paltry "excuses," or "making light" of the invitation naturally aroused the wrath of the entertainer.

The young people who were to be married on this occasion scarcely knew each other, for, as is and was customary, the momentous "question" had not been asked by the young man, his heart meanwhile fluttering between hope and fear, but as a business sort of operation, this matter had been arranged for the young couple by their parents, (Gen. xxiv., 4). In some cases, the husband that is to be, may have expressed his feelings to his parents beforehand, (Judges xiv., 2), but not to the bride. When the matter was arranged satisfactorily to the parents, the espousal or engagement took place, which was carried on with considerable solemnity, a part of the ceremony being to place a crown upon the head, as is mentioned in *Song* iii., 11. At this time also presents were made to the young woman, Gen. xxiv., 53. From the time of this betrothal, or engagement, until after the end of the first year of married life, the young man was, in olden days, exempt from war-service, (Deut. xx. 7 and xxiv. 5.)

Just as we arrived at the court-yard gateway of our host's house—it was already growing towards evening—we met a procession of young men and women, mostly mounted, though some were on foot, coming out to go to the bride's house, distant nearly two miles, to fetch the bride. Neither our host, hostess, nor the bridegroom were with them, for the marriage ceremony takes place at his father's house, and he awaits the bride there. We, of course, wishing to see all, went with them. Arrived at her house we found her ready, and in a few moments, accompanied by the young lady, now leading the procession, and her relatives supporting her, some on each side, we began the return march. Having secured the bride the whole company became cheerful—at least there was a great change in their spirits in this respect; and those who were afoot, especially one young fellow, clad in pink and blue, would now and then dance in front of the procession, beating at the same time a sort of tambourine. We had not yet seen a little figure seated upon the foremost horse, and entirely concealed in a white cotton mantle, with a handkerchief of red gauze thrown over her head. The formation or plan of the house has already been described, so that we will be understood when we say that on our return we were led at once to the second floor, where there was handed to each guest, male and female, a garment, simply ornamented, but differing in this respect according to the rank of the one to whom it was offered. To have refused to put this on would have been to have insulted our host, and we can again by this fact—that a garment was offered to every one—understand why a man who, in that instance, had been brought in from the street should have been cast out from the pleasure of the feast because he insolently refused to wear it. (St. Matt. xxiv. 11, &c.) Where the bride had meanwhile disappeared to, I know not, but when thus clad we were ushered into the large upper room; there she was standing, with the bridegroom by her side, under a silk canopy at the west end of the room. As we entered it was half

amusing and half painful to notice how the careless, joyful faces of the guests changed their expression to one of eager earnestness as they each one passed forward to obtain the positions nearest the bridal party as being the posts of honor. At this moment our host, an elderly man, with long, flowing beard, entered the room, and saluted the guests by bowing to them, passing the whole length of the room, evidently observing their positions as he did so. When little more than half way up he put out his hand, and took by the sleeve a comparatively young man and led him along courteously, but authoritatively, nearly to the west end of the room. How fully before our very eyes were echoed in action our Saviour's words in St. Luke xx. 10, and their truth was sufficiently attested by the looks that were hastily bestowed upon the honoured guest by the others. The bridegroom was very young (that is, to our ideas); he was not more than sixteen; but this is a usual age in the East for a young man to be married. He looked very nervous, as was natural. And the bride? Well, she was very small in figure, but we had not seen her face, and one of our company anxiously remarked that under these circumstances a man could never feel certain that he was being married to the right woman. He was by no means reassured when we reminded him that on one occasion, at least, (Gen. xxix. 18, 19, 25) and perhaps on many more, deception was actually practised in this way.

(To be Continued.)

DIOCESE OF NOVA SCOTIA.

HALIFAX.—The day set apart by the Church of England Sunday School Institute of London for a special commemoration of its work and for special prayers in its behalf was observed in this city by an early celebration at the Cathedral at 7.30 o'clock, and by a very large and enthusiastic meeting of the Clergy and Sunday School Teachers in the evening. The Chair at the meeting was filled by Rev. F. Partridge, Chairman of the Synod Committee on Sunday Schools, who explained its objects and invited discussion. After several resolutions sympathizing with the work of the Institute had been adopted, a motion that an Association be formed in Halifax, was carried unanimously, and the officers immediately elected as follows:—Patron, His Lordship the Bishop; President, Rev. F. Partridge; Secretary, Rev. F. R. Murray; Treasurer, Mr. J. G. Smith; Executive Committee, the Clergy and S. S. Superintendents of the city. The following Constitution was adopted:—

CONSTITUTION OF S. S. ASSOCIATION.

- I. NAME.—The name of the Association shall be "The Church of England S. S. Teacher's Association for the City of Halifax."
- II. OBJECTS.—The objects of the Association shall be:—
 1. The advancement of the interests of Sunday Schools.
 2. The promotion of Christian fellowship among Teachers.
 3. Mutual improvement, especially with regard to S. S. Teaching.
 4. The holding of United Services for Teachers and children, and devotional and other meetings for Teachers.
- III. MEETINGS.—1. Regular meetings shall be held bi-monthly, one of which on the third Monday in October shall be the annual meeting.
 2. At the annual meeting the Superintendents shall be requested to render Reports and Statistics of the Schools for the preceding year.
 3. The regular meetings shall be for the devotional study of Holy Scripture, reading of papers, and discussion of all matters relating to Sunday Schools.
 4. All meetings shall be opened with Hymn and Prayer, and the reading of Holy Scripture, and closed with Hymn and Prayer.
- IV. OFFICERS.—The Officers shall be a President, Secretary, and Treasurer, who shall be elected at the annual meeting by a majority of votes; and all the clergy of the city, if members of the Association, shall be Vice-Presidents.
- V. MEMBERSHIP.—All Officers, Clergy, and Teachers in the city may become members by signing the Constitution.

VI. The Officers of the Association and Superintendents of Sunday Schools shall form an Executive Committee, which shall have power to call and arrange for special meetings, temporarily fill vacancies, and prepare the programme for all meetings. The Secretary of the Association to be Secretary of the Executive Committee.

VII. Meetings shall be held at such places as the Executive Committee may appoint.

VIII. In the absence of the President, the Chairman shall be Rector of the Parish in which the meeting is held; or any other Vice-President whom he, or in his absence, the meeting may appoint.

IX. Visitors may attend the meetings if introduced by a member.

X. No alteration or addition to this Constitution shall be made, except at the annual meeting, or at a special meeting to be called for that purpose by the Executive Committee, and then only by a vote of two-thirds of the members present, notice of alteration having been given at some preceding meeting.

THE editor of the GUARDIAN acknowledges \$5 from J. G. E., and \$25 from T. A. Brown, Esq., for Bishop of Algoma's Steam Yacht Fund.

BOOK NOTICES, &c.

THE CHILDREN'S SAVIOUR—Instructions to Children on the Life of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. By EDWARD OSBORNE (of the Society of St. John Evangelist), Assistant Minister of the Church of the Advent, Boston, Mass. New York: E. & J. B. Young & Co., Cooper Union, Fourth Avenue.

This little work has very much to recommend it. It is written with great reverence and great simplicity, containing in a course of brief instructions, for the Sundays from the First in Advent to the First after the Ascension, a consecutive story of our Lord's life. It is well calculated to awaken the reverence and arouse the interest of children in its holy theme, and we should like to be able to express our unqualified approval of it. But to state among the solemn facts of our most holy religion things which can be only regarded as pious opinions, or, at the most, traditions, and to state them with the same air of authority as the great truths of Christianity cannot be wise or well, and must result in some instances in loosening the hold upon those truths which are of vital importance. To state for instance in relating the history of the Blessed Virgin, that her espousal to Joseph meant simply that "she might have a protector," because "it would not have been right for a young girl to live and grow up alone;" "She was never married to him," and similar statements certainly not to be found in Holy Writ, must take from the dignity of the Sacred History, and would tend, when the child's mind awakened to the fact of their uncertainty, to instil distrust in the absolute truth of the rest. There is so much that is excellent in the work, that we regret to have to enter our protest against what we consider this weakness. "The Children's Saviour" is well and clearly printed and excellently illustrated with pictures of the various saints and of our Lord Himself in the different periods of His life.

HUMBOLDT LIBRARY, No. 37, contains six lectures on Light by Prof. John Tindall. These lectures were delivered in several places in the United States when the Professor visited this country a few years ago, and are truly models of beauty, both in diction and in their treatment of the subject. The experiments are extremely clear and intelligible, and if not beyond criticism, as some have recently maintained, seem to the ordinary reader to be so. This Library issues in Monthly parts at \$1.50 a year, the very best thought of the age upon the engrossing subjects of science and letters such as Canon Rawlinson's "The Origin of Nations," Dr. Wilson's "Facts and Fictions of Zoology," Archbishop Trench's "Study of Wards," R. A. Proctor's "Hereditary Facts and other Essays," Prof. Caird's "Oriental Religions," Prof. Huxley's "Lectures on Evolution," and others. McGregor & Knight, Halifax, will supply the numbers at 18 cents each, a price which brings them within reach of all.