

festivals, she is but grudgingly allowed to approach near the object of veneration, and in some bigoted families the contact of a widow is supposed to pollute the materials requisite for the performance of marriage ceremonies. The widow is, in fact, looked upon as the "evil one" of the house. If she has no son or daughter to comfort her, or if she has to pass her whole life, as is often the case, with her husband's family, her condition truly becomes a helpless one. During any ceremony or grand occasion she has silently to look on, others around her enjoying and disporting themselves, and if some kind relation does not come to relieve her tedium, she has hardly anything to do but to ruminate on her present sad, wretched condition. Every female member of a family, whether married or unmarried, can go to parties, but a widow cannot, and if she expresses any wish to join the family on such occasions, it is instantly repressed by the curt rebuke of her mother-in-law, or some other relation, that "she is a widow, and she must not have such wishes."—*Daveudra N. Das, in the Nineteenth Century.*

ENGLAND'S NATIONAL VICE.

For the sake of brevity, the capital employed in the drink trade may be called a monopoly held in the hands of some hundreds of distillers and wine merchants, some thousands of brewers and publicans, and all these with their servants, covering the whole country, and numbering altogether nearly half a million of persons. It is obviously the interest of these capitalists to drive onward their trade with all possible activity and expansion. The greater the demand the better for them; the greater the supply the greater the multiplication of the places and the facilities of sale. They do not intend to make the population of the United Kingdom drunk, but in the prosperity of their trade the facilities of drunkenness are necessarily multiplied and the increase of drunkenness is inevitable. The statistics of the police in cities and boroughs and throughout the country are often quoted to show that intemperance is not upon the increase; but such statistics really prove nothing. They exhibit only what may be called criminal intemperance, that is, drunkenness coupled with contravention of the law. The police are instructed not to interfere with man or woman, however drunk, if they are quiet and their feet can carry them home. They are charged only to arrest those that are "dangerously drunk" or "helplessly drunk." Such statistics are absolutely valueless in the inquiry we have before us, namely, as to the extent of the moral, personal, private and public vice of intemperance. It is enough to call attention to the fact of the steady increase, far exceeding the ratio of the increase in the population, both in the places where intoxicating drink is sold, and in the capital which is employed in the trade. In the year 1829 the places of sale were about 30,000; they are now nearly 200,000, that is fourfold; but the population has hardly doubled. Eighteen years ago, that is about the year, 1868, the capital employed was estimated at \$82,000,000. In 1880, it was estimated at \$138,000,000. Some years ago, in the time of commercial prosperity and of high wages, the amount was estimated at between \$140,000,000 and \$150,000,000. Among all the trades in this country there is only one that always prospers. Every trade at this moment is depressed, but the drink trade is always increasing; fresh capital is always ready; and the commercial interests of the great capitalists in this monopoly must always prompt them by all efforts to take advantage of every opening to increase their profits. On one side are ranged the interests of this monopoly, the capital of which exceeds the capital employed in our great staples of iron or cotton or cloth; on the other are ranged the welfare of the people of the United Kingdom, the sobriety of our race, the order and well-being of homes, without which no commonwealth can long endure, for the political order rests upon the social, and the social order rests upon the domestic life of men. This is a great controversy and a vital issue. It is on its trial before the supreme tribunal of the public opinion and of the popular will of the nation; and for the last thirty years the public opinion and the popular will has been rising and spreading, resolved to try this issue against the powerful and growing drink trade in behalf of the life and homes of the people.—*Cardinal Manning, in the Fortnightly Review.*

CICERO'S LETTERS.

There are nearly 800 letters of Cicero now extant, besides at least ninety letters addressed to him; and we know that this large collection is a mere fragment of the immense correspondence that he left behind him. It extends over a period of less than twenty-five years—i.e., it gives us on the average a letter for about every eleven days of the last twenty-five years of his life. The letters are written to all sorts of people and are of all varieties of style. Only in a very few instances does the writer seem to have had any thought of their being published. Their charm is their naturalness, their frankness, their outspokenness. It is difficult to imagine what our notion of Roman life and manners, of Roman history, would be without this unique correspondence; and all this astonishing letter writing went on in the midst of every kind of engagement, and of such claims upon the writer's time and thoughts as few men that have ever lived are exposed to. Cicero was deeply immersed in politics, in lawsuits, in foreign affairs, in building houses, in writing books, and making collections of art treasures, in travelling, in actual warfare, yet in the midst of it all he was writing letters, long and short, at a rate which only a professional journalist nowadays could think of turning off. Sometimes pedantic and sometimes affected in his other writings, Cicero is never so in his letters. There he is always natural, and there you have the best side of the man shown us. The letters were written from his heart—I mean the familiar letters. He writes because he had a longing to communicate his thoughts to his friends—in other words, because he had a craving for the sympathy of those he loved. I believe that will be found to be the real secret of all good letter writing. If a woman sits down to write as Mme. de Sévigné did, or as Pope did, with a

view to an outside public, and only half a thought for the friend or relative addressed, you will never get really natural letters. There will always be a false ring about them. More than one book has been published during the last few years, the author of which has been extremely careful to tell us in his preface that it was never intended for publication; that he was very much surprised indeed, when it was urged upon him that he should actually print his letters! Nothing had been further from his intention. The letters were written in the first instance to X, or Y, or Z, etc. Yet we can hardly read a page without feeling quite certain that X, or Y, or Z, was only a peg to hang the letters on, which were most surely addressed to a larger outside public, whom the author never lost sight of from the moment he took his pen in hand till the moment he laid it down.—*The Nineteenth Century.*

NONE WILL MISS THEE.

Few will miss thee, Friend, when thou
For a month in dust hast lain.
Skillful hand, and anxious brow,
Tongue of wisdom, busy brain—
All thou wert shall be forgot,
And thy place shall know thee not.

Shadows from the bending trees
O'er thy lowly head may pass,
Sighs from every wandering breeze
Stir the long, thick, churchyard grass—
Wilt thou heed them? No; thy sleep
Shall be dreamless, calm and deep.

Some sweet bird may sit and sing
On the marble of thy tomb,
Soon to flit on joyous wing
From that place of death and gloom,
On some bough to warble clear;
But these songs thou shalt not hear.

Some kind voice may sing thy praise,
Passing near thy place of rest,
Fondly talk of "other days"—
But no throb within thy breast
Shall respond to words of praise.
Or old thoughts of "other days."

Since so fleeting is thy name,
Talent, beauty, power and wit,
It were well that without shame
Thou in God's great book were writ,
There in golden words to be
Graven for eternity. —*Chambers's Journal.*

DANIEL DEFOE.

Daniel Defoe is the first of modern novelists, or, to speak more correctly, he is the connecting link between the ideal romance and the novel of real life. He was fifty-eight when he wrote "Robinson Crusoe." As Richardson all his life wrote letters, so "unabashed Defoe" throughout his career practised the art to which his novel owed its success. Realism was demanded by the age and was congenial to the character of the writer; an appearance of veracity was necessary to remove the prejudice to works of imagination. Taste had swung completely round in the violence of its recoil from heroic romance. Instead of choosing princes and princesses for heroes and heroines Defoe, in his secondary novels, seeks his characters among the dregs of the population. He writes without fire or poetry; makes little or no effort to analyze or develop character; rarely appeals to passion; creates no plot which his actors work out, and which, by its evolution, displays their motives and feelings. His greatest novel combines intense originality with the existence of commonplace. His power lies in producing illusion, in giving an air of authenticity to fictitious narration. The effect is produced by the frankness with which he takes the reader into his apparent confidence, the accuracy and superfluity of his details, his judicious silences, and the seeming carelessness with which he drops his unimportant stitches. Infinite pains are taken to divert the attention of the reader from the psychological and moral impossibilities of his stories, the mind of Robinson Crusoe or of the man Friday. A literary opportunist as well as a literary trader, he took a business-like view of his art. All his best compositions are *faits de circonstance* based on recent or contemporary events. The "Memoirs of a Cavalier" and the "Journal of the Plague Year" were suggested by facts which fell almost within his own recollection, and which were fresh in the memory of the public. "Robinson Crusoe" was, of course, founded on the adventures of Alexander Selkirk, who was rescued from the island of Juan Fernandez in 1709. Defoe's talent is that of circumstantial invention. In his own limited field he is unsurpassed; but the true novel could not thrive in soil which was barren of sentiment or of character. It was necessary to destroy before it was possible to build. In his object and in his choice and treatment of subjects, Defoe stands in the bald contrast to the writers of the heroic romance. The fantastic fabric of the old ideal tales of chivalry and sentiment was levelled to the ground; the foundations of the new construction were laid in the barest possible realism.—*The Quarterly Review.*

THE Rev. A. N. Mackray, M.A., of Torquay, who recently declined a call from Grange Free Church, Edinburgh, to the regret of many friends without as well as within the Grange, has received a most harmonious call from the Church at Croydon.

THERE are 146 Protestant agencies in the British Empire, the Continent and the United States, which spend annually at least \$12,514,005 on foreign missions proper to heathens, Mohammedans and Jews; while the Papal and Greek Churches spend about \$2,000,000 a year.

British and Foreign.

THE Rev. R. O. Young, of Fortrose, died recently in the eighty-fourth year of his age.

MR. DILLWYN, M.P., will move next session in favour of the disestablishment of the Church of England in Wales.

MR. WM. SUMMERS, M.P., is to move a resolution in favour of the removal of bishops from the House of Lords.

MR. MOWBRAY MORRIS is writing the volume on "Claverhouse" for the "English Worthies" series of brief biographies.

MR. MARK J. STEWART, M.P., opened a bazaar at Stranraer in aid of the zenana mission, at which a large sum was obtained.

THE Rev. Dr. Munro Gibson, of London, and Rev. Jas. Davidson, pastor, conducted anniversary services in Finuar Church, Greenock.

THE largest Sabbath school flower show in Great Britain is the one held in connection with the Aldenham institute in Goldington Crescent.

MR. GUNN, Caithness, has been appointed assistant to Mr. McKenzie, Beaulieu, in room of Mr. Wm. R. Calder, who has left for Halifax, N. S.

THE Rev. Dr. George F. Pentecost has been the guest for some days at Culzean of Lord and Lady Ailsa, and conducted religious services in the castle.

THE sum of \$37,835 has been collected this year by the Poor Clergy Corporation. Archdeacon Farrar testifies to the great suffering of the clergy from poverty.

A MEDALLION in marble of the late Rev. John Underwood has been placed in Kirkcudbright Church. It is the work of Mr. Stuart Burnett, A.R.S.A., Scot.

THE appointment of Mr. R. J. Kyd, assistant, Dalry, to Stevenson, has been sustained by the Presbytery, the objections being found invalid. An appeal was taken to the Synod.

THE annual Synod of the Old Catholics has been held in Vienna. Invitations were sent to many members of the Church of England and the pastors of the Evangelical Church in Austria.

It is alleged that although Government allows \$10,000 a year for the religious improvement of the Highlands and islands there is not a single Gaelic-speaking student missionary in any town in Scotland.

CARDINAL LAVIGERIE, of Algiers, is arranging with the Pope and the congregation of the Propaganda Fide the details of his plan for the organization of Catholic missions in Africa on a very comprehensive scale.

THE Rev. R. Lawson, of Maybole, is about to add to his rare local volumes a little work on the Covenanters. It is sure to be full of life—an independent study, and not merely a reproduction of old materials.

THE Presbyterian Alliance are requesting the Churches to select delegates for a meeting to be held in October in Edinburgh for the purpose of considering the question of co-operation in the mission field.

Two stained glass windows have been placed in Kirkcudbright Church, in memory of the late pastor, Dr. H. Wallis Smith. The designs have reference to the main divisions of his published lectures, "The Pastor as Preacher."

MR. PICTON, M.P., is to move the appointment of a committee by the House of Commons to inquire into and report upon the revenues of the Church, especially as to their nature, origin, total amount and local distribution and application.

DR. BLACK, of Inverness, and Mr. Mackenzie, of Kilmallie, opened the new Free Church at Strathpeffer. It will hold nearly 800, and has cost \$10,000. The collections on the opening day were \$400. The church is to be under the charge of Mr. McDougall, Fodderty.

THE Swatow medical mission hospital is the largest of the kind in China. From a report it is learned that no fewer than 3,867 in-patients have been treated during the year, while of out-patients there have been 1,770. Over eighty patients declared faith and desired baptism.

SIR GEORGE BOWEN states that, during a period of twenty years, when he was governor of three of the principal colonies of Australasia, he had some twenty ministers, of whom nearly one-half were Scotsmen, while out of eight or nine prime ministers three were Glasgow men.

THE southern section of Knockbain Free Church congregation, who opposed the erection of the new church at Munchy, have resolved to claim the old building, to ignore the pastor, Mr. Macleod, for what they allege to be his partiality for the north section, and to engage a minister to officiate.

MR. A. FULLARTON, an esteemed elder in Free St. Peter's, Glasgow, died lately in his seventy-first year. A native of Greenock, he was one of the earliest associates of the late Mr. John Dunlop in the temperance movement. For seven years he was a director of the Scottish Temperance League, and latterly he has been a director in the Free Church Temperance Society.

PROFESSOR GRAHAM, of London, and Dr. Alex. Wallace, the pastor, conducted special services in East Campbell Street Church, Glasgow, in connection with the inauguration of the new organ. The collections amounted to \$2,360. While the church has been closed the congregation worshipped with their next-door neighbours in East Campbell Street Free Church, of which Rev. John Russell, B.A., is pastor.

DR. M. S. JOHNSTONE, of Minnigaff, has been presented with a congratulatory address by his Presbytery on completing his fiftieth year as minister in the parish, and receiving the degree of D.D. from Edinburgh University. The Earl of Galloway presented a second address from the congregation, and Dr. Johnstone received another from the kirk session of Greenock, Cadzow and Torphichen, in which parishes his sons are ministers.