

society, and which Scott portrayed with such admirable force in his novels, have, I am sorry to say, largely become effaced." Surely this is very far-fetched. The more popular novels, such as "Guy Mannering," "The Antiquary," "St. Roman's Well," are stories of Scott's contemporary life glowing like all his writings with a halo of romance. But his writings and those of his contemporaries and our observations show us that before and since his day there were great and continuous changes in the national manners and language, and it is as much a matter of historical interest to chronicle such changes in the present years of grace as at the beginning of last century.

Local Societies.

So far from throwing cold water on the well meant efforts of the Historical Society, it would have been more to the point had Lord Rosebery pointed out that the life of each parish, county and nation is continuously growing and that such life is always more influenced by local development than by national. We, in Canada, are, like most parts of America, interested in and proud of our historical societies, and those who think that our peculiar history or customs or manners come to an end by the substitution of railways, trolleys or motors for ox waggons and other older habits are to forget that we all are in our own way for good or evil making history.

Combines.

Toronto has had a mild sensation in the attack made by a Crown officer on what he seems convinced to be the illegal methods of a system of combines. The combine is the product of the tremendous pressure of competition in all departments of trade and manufacture and is designed to keep up prices. Where a combine is created the general public gravely fears that whatever financial loss is caused by it, and the consequent restraint of trade will come out of its pocket, hence the law regarding combines. There must be a strict observance of the law. It is the true safeguard of the people's rights. We must have fair play all round.

ADVENT.

What spring is to the year Advent is to the Church. The season when the heart begins to well with that moving joy of anticipation which brims over in its richness and fulness at Christmas tide. It is then that in the far off eastern sky to the eye of faith is first faintly discerned the tiny silver sparkle of that gracious directing star, which with each succeeding Advent Sunday begins to light and lead the willing pilgrim over the desert wastes of this weary sin-stained world till he come with his gifts of gold frankincense and myrrh to the lowly manger where the young child lies; and how truly the Church urges the wayfarer to fit and prepare himself for that great event, so that when he approaches the glorious day, which means so much to him and all mankind, he may enter it conscious of having given due regard to its solemn requirements by self-examination, amendment of life, cleansing out of the inner chamber of his heart from all evil thoughts, purposes, and desires, and by due forethought, supplication and preparation may be ready with guileless, childlike spirit to draw near in faith to the humble inn at Bethlehem, there to receive the spiritual first fruits of that great salvation, which is tenderly and touchingly commemorated with each recurring year. Advent to the devout mind suggests the promised second coming of our Lord. The Church makes no vain pretensions or empty promises as to when this great event will come to pass. Her attitude, however, is always one of due preparation and temperate expectancy. To her and her children it is as real an event as is the coming of

Christmas Day itself. Now hope begins to gild the horizon and a sense of subdued and increasing joy to warm the heart. Each of the necessary first steps in our approach, searching, trying, even painful though they be is relieved and sustained by the absolute conviction that they are requisite and salutary for the happy attainment, and full and deep realization of the end in view; and to those who ever rejoice to see through the veil of the Advent season, not only the pure abiding joy of the first coming but the absolute certainty in time of the far fuller joy of the Second Coming, of which it is the blessed type, happy, indeed, are they!

FROM WEEK TO WEEK.

Spectator's Comments on Questions of Public Interest.

Marvelous, indeed, are the changes that have come over the political situation in Russia within a few weeks. What British citizens won only after generations of conflict seems to have come to this people in a night. It is true they have suffered long and fought viciously at times, but their efforts to free themselves have not had the appearance of a well defined movement. They have fought as a mob and not as men pursuing a definite purpose in a constitution at or at all events a defensible manner. So far as we can learn it was almost an impossible thing to conceive of the Russian common people uniting for any great purpose. They were scattered over an enormous area. They were composed of many nationalities and possessed of many ideals of Government. But especially did they suffer from ignorance. The great labouring and peasant classes had no idea of what they wanted. If a leader gathered to himself a number of followers full of enthusiasm for the scheme before them, the chances were that a single rebuff would suffice to break up the whole movement. Men must see clearly what they want and be convinced that it is attainable before they will endure the hardships necessary to reach their desired goal. But now after an exhausting and disastrous war, with troubles multiplied at home, concessions are granted that astonish the world. It, of course, is not safe to take everything at the value that appears to be attached to it. But this would seem to have come to pass, namely, responsible government will now replace an absolute monarchy, if such a thing exists. One wonders if events are not running on too rapidly. Can a people pass in safety, right from a position of no political consequence into that of self-rulers? There is no tyranny like the tyranny of ignorance, and there is no intolerance like the intolerance mingled with resentment.

Right on top of the friendly offices of the President of the United States in bringing the Russo-Japanese war to an end comes a serious blow to the friendly relations existing between the American Episcopal Church and the Russian Greek Church. A Bishop of the Russian Greek Church, resident in New York, recently re-ordained a deposed priest of the Episcopal Church in face of a protest from the presiding Bishop. In this act there is a two-fold offence. It sets aside without cause or enquiry the ecclesiastical discipline of a friendly Church and it repudiates the validity of the orders of that Church. The priest in question had been canonically deposed by his Bishop. His case had been reviewed by several courts of the Church and in no instance was he sustained. To all outward appearances censure had been administered with justice, and yet he has been received into the ministry of a Church in communion with the one from which he was deposed. It would be an unfriendly act even if the man had been unjustly condemned, but when that judgment seems to have been sound and is set aside without enquiry the offence is, if possible,

exaggerated. Then the re-ordination of a man who had received admittedly regular ordination in the Episcopal Church is a clear repudiation of the validity of those orders. It is vain for the Greek Bishop to protest that there was no such intention, but that is the effect of his act. The points raised in this situation are exceedingly interesting and the whole Anglican communion will follow with interest the developments of the same. There is no occasion for panic or passion, but one of those grave issues between two friendly communions has arisen which cannot be lightly set aside. We shall look to our brethren of the American Church to vigorously maintain the position handed down to us through the ages. The interests of peace or the ultimate drawing together of the Anglican and Greek branches of the Catholic Church is not promoted by timidly enduring in silence. No settlement is secure unless it be sound.

The larger political issues between our national statesmen are evidently a negligible quantity since the Dominion by-elections are being fought out apparently on the question of indemnity to members. This is not a subject that will arouse enthusiasm in any one. There are one or two points, however, to which Spectator would like to refer while the question is still before the public. It would seem to him that the indemnity provided for a member of Parliament should possess two qualities. It should in a reasonable measure represent the dignity and quality of services required of our representatives, and at the same time it should not be so large that it offered an inducement for available men to seek public life. It not infrequently happens in a country like ours that men of small means are possessed of large capacity for public service. We do not want to close the doors of Parliament in the face of such men. We have to make it possible for them to serve us. But no country can afford to put its pay roll for legislators on a commercial basis. That would be reducing our national Parliament to the footing of a business corporation. When the country calls a man to its councils it puts itself under obligation to him, but it also honours him in a very marked degree. Its answer to the man who serves it is both material and sentimental. It offers him an indemnity, and it offers distinction among his fellow citizens. The finer quality of representative is more responsive to the immaterial than the material. It is a painful thing to hear a man called to a cabinet position bewail the loss of income which his acceptance will occasion. We cannot afford to be governed by men whose only measure of compensation is one of income. But men, of course, cannot live on sentiment. It would appear to Spectator that we must now have reached that point in the matter of indemnity when the necessities of the situation are met in a reasonable manner. We still have to respect ourselves sufficiently to say to the man who seeks more, go elsewhere. There are surely men who will gladly and ably serve their country under the conditions which now exist and the question need not be raised again for many years.

We have noticed the statement put forth in the press that out of 1,182 prisoners released on parole only twenty-four have resorted again to crime. That is a very remarkable record, and on the face of it would seem to be all the justification the experiment requires. We would like to know the percentage of those who having served out their time find their way back to gaols and penitentiaries. Whatever that may be, it is obvious that, if only one man in fifty shows himself unworthy, it is better that the forty-nine should have a chance to recover themselves than that their manhood should be broken in an attempt to exact the full penalty imposed upon all. The reclamation of criminals is a work that might receive even greater attention from the churches than it does.