

The title "Sir" was formerly prefixed to the name of every person in holy orders. Dominus, the academic title of Bachelor of Arts, was usually rendered by Sir in English, so that a Bachelor who in the books stood Dominus Brown, was in conversation called "Sir Brown." As most clerical persons had taken that first degree it became usual to call them "Sir." David Laing, in one of his valuable notes to "Knox's History of the Reformation," Vol. I., pp. 555-6, says: "This title appears to have been given to persons in priest's orders, who had taken their Bachelor's degree. Those priests who received the appointment of chaplains were chiefly persons who, either from want of means or influence, had not been able to prosecute their studies the full time at the university to obtain the higher rank of Master of Arts; and therefore the title 'Sir' was given them, simply to mark the absence of that academic rank." He mentions "Mr. Thomas Pittlock" and "Schir Lawrence Lavsone, chaplains," as parties to a deed in 1522.

Correspondence.

All Letters containing personal allusions will appear over the signature of the writer.

We do not hold ourselves responsible for the opinions of our correspondents.

N. B.—If any one has a good thought, or a Christian sentiment, or has facts, or deductions from facts, useful to the Church, and to Churchmen, we would solicit their statement in brief and concise letters in this department.

Information Wanted.

SIR,—In nearly all the ancient liturgies of the Christian Church the reading of the Gospel at the ante-communion service was left to the deacon. Will you kindly inform me through the CANADIAN CHURCHMAN when and why this primitive practice of the Christian Church was changed. If I am not mistaken, by the universal practice of the Church of England in Canada, the deacon is made to read the Epistle, while the priest himself reads the Gospel. At least this has been the experience of your humble reader.

H. E. BENOIT.

Sabrevois College, Montreal, Dec. 20th, 1895.

A Correction.

SIR,—By misplacing one or two of my Greek words (which, by the way, I see you print in English type) and omitting another, you destroy all sense in my note on the Revised Version translation of Acts xxvi. 28, 29. For four of the lines as you have them, I wrote: "Now, *en pollo*, contrasted with *en oligo*, can mean nothing else than the reverse of it, i. e., at 'length,' 'in detail,' Latin, 'in extenso'; *polla euesthai* means 'to play long and earnestly'; and therefore," etc. As I don't want to appear to write nonsense, even in Greek, and I am sure not even a classical scholar would know what I mean from your compositor's unauthorized version, I must beg the favour of this correction.

A. W. SAVARY.

Annapolis Royal, N.S., Dec. 30th, 1895.

Reforms Needed.

SIR,—Mr. Symons pointed out in his three important letters that revision and reform were badly needed in the Canons and laws of the Church; he, however, only touched one point, where he deemed an improvement could be made, and from my standpoint only gave one side of the question; yet, no matter how far I may agree or disagree with Mr. Symons, I am fully convinced that many alterations and amendments are necessary on the lines which he indicates, and taking the changes that are taking place from year to year, I think that not only revision and amendment, but total recasting of many of the Canons is absolutely necessary, and this, to my mind, is especially and notably the case with the Canons on the Widows' and Orphans' Superannuation and Commutation funds. I will not undertake to point out in this article what changes I think ought to be made, but may do so in a future communication.

JURIS.

Help Wanted.

SIR,—The youngest mission at present in this diocese is that of Wapuskaw. It is situated on one of a series of lakes far into the interior, and very difficult of access. To enable our missionary there, the Rev. Chas. Webber, to receive and board Indian children, we are erecting a larger building than would otherwise be necessary. The Indians are ready to send their children. But we have no Government help at all for this mission for school work. We can

only appeal to the Church in Canada to come forward and assist us in this good work. Receiving Indian children when young and at an early and impressionable age, teaching them Christian truths and inculcating Christian morality, honesty, truthfulness, purity, cleanliness, etc., is one of the most hopeful branches of our work. Mr. Webber appeals for help. Thirty dollars per child might, with clothing, etc., from the bales, be sufficient. The building is also costing much more than we have available funds for. The low water of last season just at the time when material and building supplies were being shipped in, and the consequently increasing difficulty and expense of freighting, have seriously added to our difficulties. We sorely need help to meet this outlay. I can only remind friends of the missionary cause, who have taken a deep interest in our work in Athabasca, of the old Latin saying—*bis dat qui cito dat*. My commissary in Manitoba, the Rev. W. A. Burman, Winnipeg, Man., will gladly receive subscriptions for Wapuskaw.

RICHARD ATHABASCA.

Athabasca Landing, Dec. 10th, 1895.

"Regeneration."

SIR,—I have read, with much interest, the controversy which has been going on in your paper under the heading "Life in a Look," and in response to your kind solicitation I wish to offer a few remarks which I believe will be useful to the Church and to Churchmen. From what has been said we should learn to pity those that are heated with a mistaken zeal in the lesser points of religion, whilst this greatest and mightiest doctrine of Christianity (being born of water and of the Spirit) is neglected. Never was there more reason for the exercise of such a compassion than in the present age, when party zeal is raised to such a height and true piety sunk so low. Are there not many who would now be thought the only prophets of the Lord, that lay more stress upon outward forms and ceremony than upon faith and repentance? and make more to depend upon their own way of administering baptism and the Lord's Supper, than upon those qualifications without which no administration of the sacraments can be available? Nay, are there not those who have laid the whole stress of our acceptance with God upon a point of civil government, as if it was of more importance to embrace a set of notions of that kind, than to observe such a doctrine as that of "Regeneration," which our Saviour thought fit to prefer to all others? Conversion and sanctification have been slighted; and contempt thrown upon those who are most in earnest in recommending these things. By some they have not been believed, nor by others understood, and by very few insisted on as they ought to be. And shall we not pity those who are going on confidently in an opinion of themselves, upon some outward advantages; when at the same time they are strangers to the true and only way to heaven? Alas, man! your crying up the Church, and being of this or the other party in it, will not stand you in stead at the bar of God, if you know not what it is to be born again. Many despise this way of preaching and writing. You may despise it, if you please, only know this, that in so doing you do not despise man, but God; and you must blot out these texts from the Bible before you can justify such a contempt. "Jesus answered, 'Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.'" It is at thy peril, man, whoever thou art that hearest or readeest these words, if thou darest to show a disgust or even a disregard for them. This text stands in thy Bible, as with a hand pointing to it; and a double seal (verily, verily,) set upon it, that declares it one of the unalterable edicts of heaven. Let the profaneness of the world, or the vain religion of the world, suggest what they will—if thou art not born again thou art not in a state of salvation.

T. B. R. W.

Church Losses.

SIR,—Taking the first article upon "Church Losses" seriously, one is moved to ask what the writer means by his remedy, "Convert the people." The word "conversion" is not strictly scriptural, but very popular—indeed, regarded with superstitious reverence, whilst repentance is a thoroughly scriptural word, and regarded as more popish than evangelical. Since the article under discussion has laid blame upon a number of clergy who avoid preaching conversion, for neglecting their most important duty, may I try to write an apology for my own practice. Conversion has at least three meanings. In that system which teaches election to life and election to death, conversion is the operation of God giving to a soul its assurance of election to life; without such assurance we remain among the lost. In another system, which insists upon perfect holiness being attained upon earth, conversion is the work of God cleansing away the old Adam so that the convert

becomes a new man. After conversion it is the easiest thing in the world to live without sin. Those who say, "Have mercy upon us miserable sinners," are not converted. In a third system, conversion is the influence of God inducing absolute repose upon the finished work of Christ. They who are careful about good works are not converted. In which of these three senses are we to convert the people? We must see clearly before walking vigorously. Surely any ordinary Churchman will say all these meanings imply false doctrine, and therefore work along any of these lines must be injurious, because a great prophet has said, "the truth shall set you free." The truth we believe is taught by the Church. In all men there is some light, for He lighteneth every man that cometh into the world; man's thoughts either accuse or excuse (St. John i. 9, Rom. ii. 15). In all, there is not only conscience, but some room for the exercise of choice, for it is written of Jews: "I set before you life and death, therefore choose life" (Deut. xxx. 19); and of Gentiles it is said: "When the Gentiles which have not the law do by nature the things of the law, these are a law unto themselves," Rom. ii. 14. Thus God by nature is helping His creatures to be ready to accept grace, and so real is this assistance that Christ could say, "When the Holy Spirit is come, He will convict the world of sin because they believe not on Me." Therefore, because of this antecedent help given to every creature, God commands us to repent and believe the Gospel (St. Mark i. 15, I. St. John iii. 23); that man should everywhere repent because of the judgment day (Acts xvii. 30). Judgment is based upon the fact that all men everywhere have some light and some degree of free will for choosing. Therefore, St. Peter called the Jews, St. Paul the Gentiles to repentance. Repentance is possible for every creature, for He willeth that all should come to repentance. Allowing much to the influence of the Holy Spirit, still repentance is accomplished, not by passive reception, but by active co-operation on the part of man. The revised version helps us to catch the right idea by changing the words "be converted" into "turn again." "Unless ye turn again, ye cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven." This turning again is reckoned among the principles of Christ's doctrine, as repentance from dead works to serve the living God. But the mere turning from dead works does not enable us to accomplish God's will on earth as it is in heaven. A carnal nature cannot produce spiritual works. However desirous, apart from the True Vine we can do nothing. Therefore, we must be born again to receive our spiritual nature, be engrafted into the Vine, that our souls may receive His spiritual sap. "By the one spirit we are all baptized into the one Body"; in other words, taken out of the bad Adamic vine and grafted into the Good Vine, and made partakers of the fatness of the sound stock and root, or born again, receiving a spiritual nature from Christ, who is "the Everlasting Father" of our new race. Now it does not necessarily follow that proper fruit will infallibly be produced. For He hath said: "Every branch in Me which does not bear fruit, shall be taken away"; again, "If a man abides not in Me, he is cast forth and burned." Moreover, St. Paul reminds us that the flesh lusts against the spirit, and the spirit wars against the flesh, and that we have our choice to make: "If ye live after the flesh ye shall die, if ye through the spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." In how many cases the fruit did not infallibly come, I must leave the reader to remember or find out. We have an excellent case in point in I. and II. Corinthians. St. Paul says: "Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in you." Yet some of them were living in drunkenness, some in uncleanness. To us he preaches: "Unless ye be converted," like a rousing evangelist (?) He bids these members of Christ repent, II. Cor. xii. 21. Moreover, our Lord addresses the same warning to the churches in Asia—"Repent and be zealous." It must be manifest then how entirely different this turning is from the conversion preached as necessary by sectarians of various classes, and from the grace bestowed in baptism and confirmation. It is a wilful act upon the part of a creature assisted by the Holy Ghost, in turning from the service of Satan and self to the service of God, whether the moral attitude be assumed before or after reception of His spiritual sap, His spiritual blood, when we are engrafted into His Mystical Body by the Holy Spirit in baptism. To convert the people, according to popular theology, is to render repentance almost impossible, since it destroys the sense of responsibility, reduces the need of will power to almost none at all, relieves the sinner from the pain of confession, and renders him shameless in the public profession of his evil state. Moreover, pride fills the converted soul so that it complacently despises sacramental union with Christ. Work along these lines is certain to cause loss—not so much of numbers as of spiritual manhood.

S. W. HAGUE.