

NOTHING IN IT.

The Presbyterian Banner, on the strength of newspaper articles and the reports of travellers, believes there must be some genuine sentiment in Canada in support of union with the United States. This view is based largely on the angry tone of articles which appeared in a few Canadian papers on the Alaska boundary award. Our contemporary, however, notes that few of even these angry articles savored much of union with the American republic. There may be some latent annexation sentiment in some places in Canada; but our contemporary may rest assured that it is very small—so small that it rarely attracts attention. The Banner is on better ground when it says: "What is most wanted is a more kindly, neighborly, reciprocal spirit between the two English-speaking countries of the North American continent. Better this if political union never comes." It is not the fault of Canada that such desirable relations have not been established long ago.

The veteran Dr. Cuyler of New York, with forty-four years of pastoral work and experience behind him, regards it as an "idle waste of breath to predict revivals." He says that during his pastoral experience the most copious outpourings of the Holy Spirit came upon his church when he and his people were not expecting them. He says—and Christian people should mark his words—"While neither pastor nor churches can predict the seasons of the Spirit's peculiar presence, it is their imperative duty to be preaching God's whole message, to be praying without ceasing, to be doing Christ's work after Christ's personal fashion of personal effort, and then trust our promise-keeping God for showers of blessings, as Elijah did on Mount Carmel." Pentecost came to the little band of Christ's followers in the "upper room" in Jerusalem while they were "waiting" upon God in compliance with the Master's command. We may not "predict," but may we not "expect" a rich blessing to come with faithful use of the privileges given to us in the week of prayer. It is a good way by which to inaugurate the new year.

We frequently complain that the best men do not offer for civic positions in the gift of the people. Are the electors not themselves to blame for the state of affairs? One of the Ottawa ministers, Rev A. E. Mitchell, offered a word in season to his people last Sunday, on his subject. He urged the members of the church to go out in their respective wards and take an active part in the municipal campaign. In the interests of good government and civic righteousness they should work for candidates who could be depended on. While it was not his place to name the candidates, they all understood who were fit and proper men for mayor and aldermen.

IAN MACLAREN'S SUGGESTIONS.

Dr Watson, of Liverpool, has been advocating that there should be a marked difference between the morning and evening service, and that part at least of the prayer should be liturgical. The Christian World has invited several representative ministers to give their views; and in the replies of these competent men there is a substantial agreement. They are almost of one mind, that the morning should be devoted to the worship and edification of the Church, the believers and communicants. The evening service should not be a repetition of the morning, but rather evangelistic addressed to outsiders, and calculated to attract such by variety, life, and popular interest. As to the prayers they are agreed that free prayer is best if it comes warm from a sincere heart, even though it may be imperfect. On this the Belfast Witness, remarks: Yes, but free prayer should not be so very imperfect as Dr. Watson shows it often is. We believe the Doctor's somewhat caustic criticism will do good. A mustard blister must bite if it is to be of any use.

A prominent Baptist pastor in New York, as the result of experience and observation, recently gave utterance to the following significant words: "In the salvation of the young the writer has found his chief joy in a comparatively long ministry. Those converted in youth are vastly more loving and loyal to the Christ and the Church than those converted in middle life or in later years. When the Church does her full duty there will be no unconverted nor unchurched men and women in our communities. The hope of the Church in the future is in greatly increasing numbers in our Sabbath schools, and bringing all of them into the Master's service." This is a thought which cannot too frequently or too forcibly be impressed by pastors on parents and Sabbath school children. "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness," the injunction of the Divine Master who loved and blessed little children, cannot be too prominently kept before the young of the Church. They are the hope of the Church and of the world.

The Michigan Presbyterian says a timely and much needed word in a wise way: "Prayer for divine healing is all right as far as it makes God's will supreme. We have a right to ask for ourselves and for our friends recovery from sickness, and to unite in such prayer. But let us not make too much of what Christ himself always put into a minor place. There are so many things more important to us than restoration to health and prolonged life. These things may or may not be a blessing to us, and through us to the world. As Christians we are under the highest obligation to take the very best care of the physical well being of ourselves and others; but this is not after all the supreme concern of life. We may even neglect the building up of symmetrical Christian character in this over anxiety as to sickness and health."

"PARADISE LOST."

The manuscript of Milton's immortal work is now for sale, and the Belfast Witness thinks that it would be nothing short of a scandal if it is allowed to go out of the country. The MS ought to be in the British Museum, but failing that, surely some rich man or patriotic coporation will buy it. It is not, of course, in the poet's handwriting, he being blind then; but it is the "copy" from which the work was first printed and published, "Paradise Lost" was begun in 1658, and was ready for the press in 1665. It had to be submitted to the censor, Rev Thomas Tomkyns, a Chaplain of the Archbishop, and through the narrowness of that creature "the world had nearly been deprived eternally of this treasure by the ignorance or malice of the licenser, who would needs suppress the whole poem for imaginary treason." Milton by agreement, was to receive not more than £20 for the work (equal to £50 to-day); but as a fact he got only £10, and Mrs. Milton accepted a final £8 for all. But the grand old Puritan tells us in his prose works that his motive in writing was much higher and holier than cash recompense. Who will now come forward and purchase for the nation this noble relic? It is stated that £50,000 is offered by the foreigner. Where are the British millionaires?

The Churchman, the organ of American Protestant Episcopalians, discusses the educational situation in England with vigor and discrimination. While naturally in sympathy with the English Established Church, it does not sympathize with the effort to bring the schools sustained by the State under Church control. It says: It has already become a question of plain ethical bearing whether a religious education which does not harmonize with the acknowledged maxims of social justice is not by that very fact incapable of giving a Christian training worthy of the name. The Church of England schools under the so-called Settlement of 1902 are "maintained" by public taxation. They are, on the other hand, controlled by bodies of managers and taught by a staff of teachers over whose appointment a citizen as such has no control. If this is not a distinct violation of the recognized principles of modern democratic government, we do not know what it is. The quicker the English Church removes herself from this reactionary position, the better will she prepare herself for those greater opportunities of leadership, which her catholic traditions and her apostolic creeds have imposed upon her."

In The Nineteenth Century for December, (Leonard Scott Publication Co., New York) Edward Dicey leads off with an able article on the Rival Empires, which shows the position Russia is attaining and her rivalry with England. Then follow a number of articles on a great variety of subjects, including the following: British East Africa; History and War Office Reform; Impressions of Korea; The Foreign Fruit Trade in Britain; and English Style and some French novels. Sir Wemyss Reid review of the events of Last Month is as readable as usual.