

Our Contributors.

WHAT MAKES THE DIFFERENCE.

BY KNOXIAN.

Mr. A. retired late on Saturday night and rested poorly. When his wife woke him up on Sabbath morning telling him that it was very near church time he was all out of sorts. Two great problems presented themselves to Mr. A.'s mind, demanding instant solution. The first was whether he should get up or not, and the second, whether he would go to church that morning, even if he did drag himself out of bed. Being a good man and anxious to set a good example to his family, he pulled himself together and made an effort. An effort was needed for Mr. A. was really very tired. When he assumed a perpendicular position and examined his watch he became reasonably certain that he must hurry if he intended to get to church in anything like time. When he began to hurry, his little boy came upstairs and told him that "Ma said if he did not hurry he would be late at church." Then he hurried some more. Presently Mrs. A. came to the foot of the stairs and called, "Hurry, pa, the first bell is ringing." Then he hurried still more. His razor pulled—it always does pull when one is in a hurry. There would have been no use in him telling anybody that day that he "never shaves on Sunday," for he had two or three well-defined marks on his chin. In the next important operation a button flew off his shirt—they always do fly off when one is in a hurry. His collar would not fit, nor his tie lie kindly—they never do when one has to hurry, especially on Sabbath. Having finished dressing, Mr. A. went down to breakfast. To put the matter mildly he was not in a devotional mood. Nobody could complain about the length of the prayer he offered before he came down. Breakfast did not improve his mood. The steak was cold and the tea weak. The last bell began to ring before he was half done. The children were not ready for church and their mother was hurrying in fact everybody was hurrying. There was no time for family worship. Mr. A. came to the foot of the stairs and shouted two or three times to those getting ready above. "Hurry up, the bell has stopped." His voice had not a very devotional ring and it did not help the devotional mood of those upstairs. At last the family got in motion and started on the half-trot towards the church. They were not in a devotional mood at the start, and a hot pace does not promote devotional feeling. They are late, of course. Standing at the door through the "long prayer" does not mend matters. Mrs. A. is one of those good souls that stand up for her church and minister under all circumstances and against any odds, and being on good terms with herself and her surroundings she manages to worship with a fair degree of comfort and profit. It is different with Mr. A. He is nervous, uncomfortable, fidgety, and does not enjoy anything. He imagines everything about the church is going wrong. He is glad when the service is over. He thought the sermon three hours long—it was only forty minutes. He forgot his envelope and that riled him some more. On the way home he made this little speech to his wife. "Why on earth can't that stupid church officer keep the church at a right temperature. My feet were freezing all day and my head roasting. What did the choir sing that miserable rant for? I could not make head or tail of that sermon. It was too doctrinal, too practical, too long, too, too, too, too everything. We must have a new church-officer, a new choir, a new minister—the church is going to the bad."

The church was about as usual. The trouble was with or rather in Mr. A. He needed quiet, rest, sleep, fresh air, some good devotional reading and, perhaps—a blue pill.

Mr. B. held the theory that preparation for a pleasant and profitable Sabbath service must begin on Saturday. His rule was to stop work at the usual hour or earlier if possible and rest long and well on Saturday night. His family were not allowed to promenade late on Saturday evenings because they could lie long on Sabbath morning. His daughters were not permitted to run through the stores every Saturday night. On Sabbath morning the family breakfasted not quite so early as on other mornings, but in good time. There was no hurry nor bustle nor excitement. Family worship was a little longer than usual. Household duties being over the family sat

down for "a good read" Mrs. B. got a little startled when she saw her husband taking his daily *Globe*. The good man was going to read Spurgeon's sermon. His eye may have rested just for a second on the "parliamentary proceedings" but he took it off immediately and read the sermon with care. It had a fine devotional effect upon his mind and when he finished he felt like worshipping. As church time approached the family filed out quietly and walked leisurely to their place of worship. Of course they were in time—they always are. They sat in the same church, heard the same singing, and sermon as Mr. A.'s family. On the way home Mr. B. said to his wife, "I enjoyed the service very much to-day. The hymns were very suitable and I thought very well sung. We owe a great deal to the choir for leading the service of song. I enjoyed the reading of that chapter very much. I thought the minister rendered it with fine effect. The first prayer lifted me right up and put me in a good frame of mind for hearing. That was a real good sermon. I think our minister improves every day. What a privilege it is for our children to be connected with the church. I have enjoyed this morning service very much. I hope I shall be able to do some good work in the Sabbath school this afternoon, and no doubt we will have a good service again in the evening."

What made the difference between the estimate of Mr. A. and that of Mr. B.? Mr. B. prepared for worship and Mr. A. did not. And Mr. A. was prevented from making preparation, partly by the demoralizing practice which prevails all over Ontario of keeping places of business open until very near Sabbath morning.

BI-CENTENARY OF THE REVOCATION OF THE EDICT OF NANTES.

A CHAPTER IN THE HISTORY OF THE HUGUENOTS.

This year being the bi-centenary of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, a pastor of the Reformed Church of France has commenced a series of small publications, for the purpose of bringing before the Protestants of France, events in their history, which, in the case of many, are known only by name to the present generation, though their bitter consequences are still felt throughout the land. The Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, for example, had as its two most prominent results, the success of clerical despotism, and the ruin of national industry in France. The means by which these ends were effected, and the sufferings endured by tens of thousands of French Protestants, in seeking to protect the rights of conscience against the tyranny of the King and the fanaticism of the priests, deserves to be better known than they are, not only in France but in other lands. In learning the extent of the persecution inflicted by the direct inspiration of the Roman Catholic clergy—the heroism exhibited by the Huguenots of other days, as well as the nobility of the resistance offered, will be better understood. My object, in this letter, therefore, is to give a clear though necessarily very imperfect historical sketch of the Edict of Nantes, and of the unjust and cruel acts which culminated in its revocation.

On the 13th April, 1598, Henry IV., five years after leaving the Protestant faith, signed the

EDICT OF NANTES,

his intention being to put an end to the civil and religious wars which had so long agitated the kingdom. Louis XIII., on coming to the throne, confirmed this edict (1629) which consecrated liberty of conscience, and ordered that its terms should be "kept inviolate," as he wished his Protestant subjects to enjoy "the free exercise of their religion." At the commencement of his reign even Louis XIV. gave the Protestants, who had shown themselves to be faithful defenders of his rights, the most positive assurances of his protection. "We wish," said the young monarch (1652) "that they be kept in the full and entire enjoyment of the Edict of Nantes." No treaty, then, could be more solemn than that whose execution the Kings of France had sworn to enforce, and which they had declared to be "perpetual and irrevocable." For many years before this, the Protestants had ceased to form a political party. Being active and intelligent they had developed industry, and increased the commerce of France. Amongst their number were eminent warriors, intrepid sailors, illustrious savants, so that Cardinal Mazarin called them (1659) "good

servants and subjects of the King," nothing, therefore, indicated that the law would be revoked by those whose duty it was to have it respected. The

TOLERATION OF THE PROTESTANT RELIGION, the recognition of liberty of conscience, was, in the eyes of the Roman priests, an unpardonable crime. They never ceased, therefore, to protest against the terms of the Edict which were favourable to the Reformed, and openly to demand that they should not be observed. In Louis they found the help they needed, for he, notwithstanding his promises, did not delay to organize against his faithful subjects, the most skilful and bitter persecutions.

On the 11th April, 1651, Choiseul, Bishop of Comminges, presented himself before the King, still a boy, and speaking in the name of the clergy of Rome, demanded not only the banishment from the kingdom of "liberty of conscience which destroys the liberty of the children of God," but also, if in his power, "to suppress the heresy at a single blow," or at all events, "to extinguish it gradually." From this time forward, the bishops never came into his presence, without imploring "from his piety," vigorous measures against the Reformed, without this pressure from the priests, and these incessant requests from the bishops the Edict would not have been revoked, and France would have been spared that terrible blow to its glory and its power, which followed. To the accusations brought against them by the clergy, the

PROTESTANTS REPLIED TO THE KING

that "they only asked permission to live and die in the service of his majesty, in the just liberties which had been granted them, especially those in regard to their consciences and the exercise of their religion, without which life was not only indifferent to them but bitter and death desirable." But Louis—now absolute sovereign—had come to believe what the priests and courtiers had been in the habit of telling him—that he had power to rule over the consciences of his subjects. He, therefore, ordered that the faith he professed, should be the only one allowed in his kingdom. The great purpose of his reign there after was to convert Protestants into Roman Catholics, and to effect this he resorted to atrocious measures, some of which are about to be named.

The Protestant congregations had at this time become numerous and flourishing. The churches were united together by the common bond of Synods. By its simplicity and purity of doctrine, the Reformed Church of France bore close resemblance to the primitive church. Everything was favourable to its extension and success. This decided the action of the priests, who, by means at once able and perfidious, secured its ultimate ruin. For twenty-five years, without truce or relaxation, at the instance of Rome, royal Edicts, and decrees of the Council of State (more than 400 in number, inflicted upon the French Protestants, every possible evil.

THE EDICTS OF THE KING

commenced by isolating the Reformed in the country, by depriving them of all public functions, thereby declaring them, in consequence of their faith, unworthy to fill any office of state, and thus giving them only the choice between starvation and Romanism. This was the very thing which Henry IV. wished to prevent by the XIXth article of the Edict, which declared that in his kingdom every one, irrespective of his faith might aspire to any office or position in the kingdom.

On the 15th June, 1682, notaries and ushers who were Protestants, were called on to resign their offices in favour of Romanists. On 4th March, 1683, all the Protestant offices attached to the royal palace, received orders to change their religion or to resign. On 21st August, 1684, it was forbidden to name "Experts" who were not Catholics. On 21st January, 1685, Protestant grocers had to shut their shops under a penalty of 3,000 francs, and on 9th July, same year, all Protestant book-shops and printing offices were closed by order of the King. On 11th July the profession of law was forbidden to Protestants; and on 6th August, the King, seeing that the Reformed, excluded from other functions, entered in great numbers the medical profession, gave orders that on no pretext whatever, were they to be admitted under a very heavy penalty. Some weeks later even those who had been practising all their lives, were deprived of the right.

Protestants were forbidden to engage Catholic domestics or to have them in their service. In contracts made with the State, preference was given to those of the King's religion, and to carry on almost any