

WICKEDNESS IN HIGH PLACES AND LOW.

As a general thing we should scarcely allow the names of individuals so to appear in our correspondence columns as that of the late Attorney-General Clarke figures in the letter from Winnipeg, which will be found in this week's issue. That case, however, seems so scandalous, the facts are so notorious and undeniable and our correspondent is in every way so reliable, while the whole has been written with so different an object in view from that of merely pillorying this worthless fellow and exposing his infamous proceedings, that we let the whole stand as it has come into our hands. Indeed, the time has come when great plainness of speech will have to be used in reference to a good many iniquities and a good many disreputable characters both in high places and low, both in Winnipeg and in cities much nearer the rising sun. In these days of so-called liberality of sentiment and breadth of view, when everybody is a philosopher, and all "advanced thinkers" are sure that they have a protoplasmic origin and that monkeys were their immediate ancestors, or, if not immediate, at least, only once removed, it is not at all surprising that as the old-fashioned regard for dogma and religious truth has been got quit of, the old-fashioned regard for practical uprightness and honour and decency should also be in danger of taking its departure. Why should it not? The idea of God, it seems, is an absurd superfluity as unthinkable and as unnecessary as anything well can be. Morality, it appears, is a mere unmeaning word. Manly honour is a delusion, except it may be that the something that is called by that name may happen occasionally to be useful; and female virtue is a found out fraud, so that Charles the Second was simply right when he declared that it was merely a convenient way of haggling about the price. Such opinions will not remain long as mere abstractions, indeed, are not doing so. There are plenty of people quite ready to carry them to their logical and practical conclusions, and every day's newspapers are telling what these conclusions are. In such circumstances it behoves all well-wishers to Canada's future to hold very high the old grand principle of Christian morality and to insist very strongly on the old high standard of Christian practice. Things have got to be called by their right names, and doings have to be stigmatized as they deserve according to the law of Heaven and not after the mere conventionalities of earth. We suppose this man Clarke has long ago learned all the current pitiful slang about "spiritual affinities," and "compatible" and "incompatible temperaments" so that he could talk of them with all the glibness of a Dickens and all the solemn grandioseness of a George Eliot or a Westminster Reviewer. Why not? It is not so very long since David Hume said that a man who did not commit adultery did not avail himself of all the innocent pleasures of life, and the philosophers of the present day are far too practical to allow their opinions to remain in the cold cloudland of mere abstractions. Professed Christians may sometimes be all that is morally bad, and alas have too often been so, but this has come to pass in spite of their religious opinions, not because of them. It is different with those who hold that chastity is as meaningless when used in reference to human beings as when applied to the beasts of the field, and that to speak of an immoral woman is as great an absurdity as to think of a virtuous cow. It is as plain as that two and two make four that this is the practical issue towards which certain forms of the so-called philosophical teaching of the day irresistibly tend, while the outcries ever and anon heard against marriage, with the advocacy of a divorce law so loose and so accommodating as almost to allow wives to be had by the half year and marriage to be as easily dissolved as a provisional contract, point all in the same direction. No one can read the all but daily accounts in the newspapers of scandals in high life which are not regarded as scandals at all; of abandoned prostitutes flaunting themselves and their doings in the face of the world and having their little "accidents" and escapades only turned into material for advertisements so as to make them the means of these "don't know whats" becoming more the favourites of "society" and

having money more rapidly and more abundantly put into their pockets; of mothers who have never been wives; and of daughters who are without a blush practically knocked down to the highest bidder as if they were marketable articles under the auction hammer, and all these things taken simply as matters of course—without feeling that a certain section, at any rate, of what is still called Christian "society" is terribly honey-combed with vice, while even that which is still professedly virtuous has scarcely a word to say either in denunciation or protest. Let Sara Bernhardt come to Toronto and so-called "society" in the veriest agony of baseness and from an idiot desire to be thought "aesthetic," would grovel in the dust and ask to be permitted to kiss the foot of one whom no honourable man or honest woman ought to touch even with something much more protective than gloves. Things are surely come to a poor pass if either in England or Canada so-called "culture" has led men who claim to be Christians, and women who glory in being virtuous, to worship in the outer sanctuary of a courtesan, even though she be, in the wretched cant of the day, fifty times a "consummate artiste," or to take the law, whether on morals or manners, whether on politics or piety, at the lips of those who are both drunkards and debauchees, nay, in some cases, as everyone knows, a little more and a little worse than either or both. Nor even in our own Canadian "society" without the importation of any outside fashionable immoralities can anyone say that matters are as they ought to be, or as they would be if public opinion were as strongly moral and unmistakably Christian as many claim that it is. The personal character and conduct of some others of our public men may not be quite so disreputable as those of this hero of the North-West; but will any one have the courage to say that they, in too many instances, are very much better? And yet (Christian men, ay, and Christian women too, have any number of apologies for their conduct, and ready defences for their characters, though these are utterly and notoriously indefensible.

The time has come, we repeat, when the Christian people of this Dominion must speak out in unmistakable terms in reference to much which has too long been winked at, if it has not been actually condoned and commended, among those who ought to have maintained a better character and presented to the world a better example.

Christianity, it is to be hoped, has not yet lost so much of its power, in this Dominion at least, as not to be able to make all respect at any rate the outward conventionalities of morality and decency. If some seem to act, as they do, as if a dispensation in the other direction had been issued in their favour so that they can say, "Nice customs sometimes curtsy to smaller people than great kings;" so much the more discreditable to that Christian moral sentiment through whose languid and culpable inactivity alone such a state of things is either possible or can be permanent.—*Canada Presbyterian.*

JEHOVAH'S GUIDANCE.

See the completeness of Jehovah's guidance! It is very different from human guidance. "God guided them on every side" (2 Chron. xxiii. 22). How seldom we feel that a human counsellor has seen our difficulty from every point of view, balanced all its bearings, and given guidance which will meet all contingencies, and be right not only on one side, but on every side. "His work is perfect," in this, as in all other details. He will guide "when ye turn to the right hand and when ye turn to the left." Perhaps we have gone about as Elymas did in his mist and darkness, "seeking some one to lead him by the hand," putting confidence in earthly guides, and finding again and again that "it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps, and getting perplexed with one-sided counsels. Let us to-day put our confidence in His every-sided guidance. Very often the very recoil from an error lands us in an opposite one: because others, or we ourselves, have gone too far in one direction, we thenceforth do not go far enough, or *vice versa*—excess reacting in defect, and defect in excess; a received truth overshadowing its equally valuable complemen-

tary one; the fear of overstepping the boundary line of the narrow track of truth and right on the one side, leading us unconsciously to overstep it on the other side. How intensely restful is this completeness of guidance. Not only the general course, but the steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord; and what is less than a single step? Just realize this; every single little step of this coming day ordered by Jehovah!

The guidance is conditional. He says, "I will guide thee with mine eye," but, then, we must look up to meet His eye. "Thou shalt guide me with Thy counsel," but then we must listen for and listen to His counsel. "He shall direct thy paths," but it is when we acknowledge him in all our ways. He does not lead us, whether or no!

Suppose a little child is going with its father through an untracked wood. If it walks ever such a little way apart it will make many a lost step, and though the father will not let it get out of sight and hearing, he will not let it get lost; yet he may let it find out for itself that going just the other side of this tree leads it into a hopeless thicket, and stepping just the other side of this stone leads it into a muddy place, and the little steps have to be retraced again and again, till at last it asks the father to hold its hand, and puts and leaves its hand in his. Then, and not till then, there will be no lost step; for it is guided on every side.

Need the little child go on a little longer by itself first? Had it not better put its hand into the father's at once? Will you not do so from this time? Give up trying to pick your way; even if the right paths in which He leads you are paths which you have not known, say, "Even there shall Thy hand lead me." Let Him teach you His paths, and ask Him to make not your way—but "Thy way straight before my face." So shall you find the completeness and the sweetness of His guidance. "For the Lord shall guide thee continually; by the springs of water shall He guide thee." He shall be the guide of your youth, and carry you even unto your old age. He will be your guide even unto death, and beyond; for one strain of the song of the victorious ones that stand upon the sea of glass mingled with fire shall be, "Thou hast guided them in Thy strength unto Thy holy habitation."—*Frances Ridley Havergal.*

ROMAN CATHOLIC DOCTRINES AND AIMS.

The following extracts from Roman Catholic writers are taken from a cotemporary. We have neither the time nor the opportunity to verify them all, though we have no doubt they are given accurately enough. They are entirely in the spirit of Roman Catholic teaching for all the past. If it can be shewn that any of them are garbled or falsified, we shall be glad to afford all reasonable space to make the necessary correction and to allow the evidence in its support to be adduced. If they correctly indicate, as we believe they do, the spirit and aspirations of all the most energetic minds in that Church at the present day, it is just as well that Protestants should be on the alert. Will any Roman Catholic in Ontario say that he repudiates such sentiments? If so, which of them?

To give the Bible to the laity is to cast pearls before swine.—*Cardinal Hosius.*

There is no other remedy for the evil but to put heretics to death.—*Bellarmino.*

The laity have no jurisdiction and power over the clergy.—*Council of Constance.*

Let the public school system go to where it came from—the devil.—*Freeman's Journal.*

We hate Protestantism; we detest it with our whole heart and soul.—*Catholic Visitor.*

It is utterly wrong to circulate the Scripture in the vulgar tongue.—*Archbishop Ximenes.*

We are not advocates of religious freedom, and we repeat we are not.—*Shepherd of the Valley.*

Religious liberty is merely endured until the opposite can be carried into effect.—*Bishop O'Connor.*

God's tribunal and the Pope's tribunal are the same. All other powers are his subjects.—*Muscovius.*

We will take this country and build our institutions over the grave of Protestantism.—*Priest Hecker.*

There is, ere long, to be a state religion in this