

police from desecrating the Sabbath Day in the city parks as stump orators, judged by the spirit shown. It is better, perhaps, that opinions should be aired than cherished silently when they are poisonous.

One honest fellow says:—

"I am a working man, and as a rule sleep an hour or two longer than on ordinary days. Once up I usually help prepare breakfast and put things to right, so as to gain a little more Sunday rest to those upon whom the household duties usually fall."

Were we a Methodist we would say: "Give us your hand, brother! That's right"; for he tells us afterward that he goes to church. A man of so much sweet reasonableness might be expected to keep the Sabbath Day holy. We confess to a strong fellow-feeling when the same writer says further:—

For the man who works all the week, and on Sunday attends a school class or prayer meeting, 10:30 preaching service, 2:30 Sunday School, 6:30 Christian Endeavor, and 7:30 preaching, we have sincere sympathy and consider him as much 'out of whack' with his duty and just as waseful of his vital energies as is the man who, working hard all the week, devotes Sunday to mere pleasure."

This was the case of a mechanic, who is up betimes every work-day and who, therefore, is not astir so early on Sunday morning. In our opinion his hour or two longer in bed than usual is in itself, for him, part of the keeping of the day holy, for by this seeming indulgence he recuperates both vital and mental energy necessarily, and fits himself for the discharge and enjoyment of the religious duties of the day.

Alongside of this we will consider the case of a mother of a family who, evidently, has more leisure than our friend the mechanic. She is up rather earlier on Sunday mornings than on other days, not being driven by necessity on week days as he is. A chapter from the Bible with prayer for a blessing upon the day, marks the day's beginning. We will venture to say that her minister and the congregation, and the great congregation, and the sinner are not forgotten in that prayer. What a holy Sabbath will it be for her! and how much holier a Sabbath will it be to many because of her. It needs not to be recorded that, in that family, the day that began with prayer and the Word of God, ends with prayer. Let us give her experience in her own words:—

"We have brought up a family of sons and daughters thus to spend the Lord's Day because we believe the Bible. We believe God meant one day in seven to be a holy day, a day of rest, of worship to Himself, to bring His creatures near to Himself. We have found it a day of rest, of delight, of help for the week days of toil and care."

She is a grandmother now. Strange would it be if the children of sons and daughters did not "honor father and mother," and "remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy." So does holiness of life tend to holiness; and so does the honor and success of a nation become enwrapped with the strict and honorable observance of God's one day in seven.

It struck one at first as something new when a thoughtful writer in defence of the Sabbath day spoke of "higher duties" than attendance upon the public worship of the Church. But we are of the same mind, that it is possible for conditions to arise in which a higher form of Sabbath keeping is possible. "Looking after and assisting the sick," was the form of higher duty instanced, and we were reminded of Ian Maclaren's Highland doctor. But one would need to be "far ben" in spiritual life to appreciate with nicety the conditions contemplated. Pastors are apt to suspect indifference if absence from public worship is a frequent thing.

Space fails us in an attempt to show in how many ways the holy Sabbath Day is an uplift to spiritual life in the individual, the family and the commonwealth. On the Sabbath Day the hard-pressed busy man reviews acquaintance with his family, dismissing from his mind, like a sea bather, every distressing thought and worldly care, men and women meet God where He has promised specially to be. New impulse is given to life, and better things follow.

The General Assembly, recently in Session, found that one of the chief disposing causes of Sabbath-breaking among us is over-work during the six days. It is not without reason therefore that one critic says: "A Saturday half holiday would do more to fill our empty churches, and induce healthful Sabbath rest among the people, than can ever be accomplished by pulpit fulmination against Sabbath desecration, or pleadings for the sanctity of the day." Happily we are not much

distressed by empty churches in Canada, but we know enough about them to appreciate the logic of this critic.

After all is said *pro* and *con* upon the subject of the Sabbath Day, it remains only to be reaffirmed that the day is to be religiously kept as a matter of principle if it is to be well and profitably kept and kept always.

### RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION IN THE COMMON SCHOOL.

IN dealing with this subject in two preceding issues we have referred to some principles which must determine the amount and kind of religious instruction, so far as that can be imparted in the common school; and also to some practical difficulties which the subject presents, such that many, on account of them, demand that the public school should be entirely secularised, and every attempt at religious instruction of any kind be abandoned as an impossibility in a national system of education. We have not yet arrived at that stage, and we hope it may never come, when this last alternative must be accepted and carried into practice.

There remains to be noticed another consideration of a practical kind which is most vital to the whole question. It may be called the *personal element*, and is found in the character of the teacher. This, it will at once be seen, is of first importance. It makes but little difference how much or how little religious instruction in the school the regulations of the Education Department may call for, or the time or manner or means by which it is imparted, if the teacher who is to impart it have no sympathy with it, is indifferent about it, has little religious knowledge himself, and is one whose spirit and character are but little if at all influenced by religion. Hence this personal element is all important, it is most practical, and is to a certain extent within the power of school trustees to deal with and bring to bear at once. There is nothing about which, for the sake of the youth committed in so far to their care, trustees require to be more careful, we would even say so careful, as that of the character, morally and religiously, of the teachers whom they employ, and to whom they entrust the formation of the character of the children. For character is by far the most vital part of any child or man.

On the other hand it matters little what may be the technical amount of religious instruction required to be imparted in the school, or by what means this work is to be done, if the teacher's own character and spirit are sound and right religiously. Not only will the portions of Scripture to be read, or other religious exercises to be engaged in, be a wholly different thing in the hands of the one teacher and the other in their effect upon the character of the youth under their care, but the teacher whose own spirit and character have been formed and are dominated by sound religious principles will, whatever be the religious exercises, or even should there be none at all prescribed, be imparting religious instruction in various ways, planting in the minds of the young sound principles of life, and forming right character. Nothing can prevent the teacher, possessing the average amount of common sense, who has religious convictions, whose own character rests upon a solid religious basis, from influencing his pupils aright and powerfully, and no amount of religious exercises in the school will have a like effect upon the scholars in the hands of a man whose own spirit, life and conduct are a daily violation or ignoring of the so-called religious exercises prescribed by law. In fact they cease to be religious in their character in any proper sense, and, in the case of such an one as we have just referred to, may have the effect upon the young of weakening their regard and respect for religion or altogether their faith in it, unless this evil influence is neutralized by the sight of something better, something true and consistent either in their own home, or somewhere or in some one else. Here then in this most important matter, and in so far as it affects the youth of the land while at the common school, is a simple, practical, all-important consideration which it is in the power of all school trustees to note and regulate their conduct by, one which is of more importance than any legally prescribed religious exercises, for it is upon this element of the personal character of the teacher upon which their whole value for good depends.

## Books and Magazines.

THE ESTRANGEMENT OF YOUNG PEOPLE FROM CHRISTIANITY. Translated from the French of Eugene Bersier, by J. E. Rankin, D.D., LL.D., President of Howard University, Washington, D.C. New York, London, and Toronto: Funk and Wagnalls Co.

When we opened this dainty little volume and saw that it was written by Rev. Eugene Bersier, the eminent French preacher, we felt that it contained something well worthy of perusal. But the title of the book struck us as somewhat peculiar, and we cannot but feel that the author was unfortunate in its selection. It implies that the young people are estranged from Christianity; and while it is sadly true that to many Christ is but a root out of a dry ground, and His Gospel an unattractive thing, yet the reports from Baptist Young Peoples' Unions, Epworth Leagues, Boys' Brigades, King's Daughters and Christian Endeavor Societies all indicate that the heart of many million young people are truly loyal to Christ. Our first thought on looking at the title was: Here is a book which will show ministers and other Christian workers how to deal with those who are drifting away from Christianity. A study of the little volume showed that we were quite mistaken, and yet we cannot say we were disappointed. The work, instead of showing how to deal with the young, is a very direct and helpful address to the young people themselves. For this reason we gladly call attention to it, because we believe that if intelligent youths and maidens read this book, it must tend to keep them along the "old paths where is the good way." The author shows how natural it is for them to think, to reason, and to question truths which are generally accepted. He calls attention to the saying of Bacon: "A little philosophy destroys religion; much restores it." And then he proceeds to show how true the expression is. He does not profess to deal with the objections to Christianity, but he points out with a master hand and with a tender sympathy how the young may be led astray by a proud will, by an unscientific process of reasoning, by perverted views of life, by partial and imperfect conceptions of Christianity, and by an unwillingness to curb fleshly passions.

The first of Anthony Hope's new series of Zenda stories, in *McClure's Magazine* for August, reciting a heroic love passage between the beautiful Princess Osra and brave Stephen the Smith, is most charming. The new Jungle story by Kipling is also notable. Only one or two of the previous Jungle stories approach it in strength and ingenuity. In the same number are stories by Stanley J. Weyman and Bret Harte, as also a very interesting account of Bishop Vincent and his work in founding and developing the Chautauqua Assembly. Numerous portraits and other pictures accompany the paper. The life of the circus performer as it shows itself behind the scenes, is the subject of an illustrated article by Cleveland Moffett. Moltke's manner of carrying on war is described by the English war correspondent, Archibald Forbes. The romantic story of the robbing of the Northampton (Mass.) Bank of upwards of a million dollars in money and securities, and of the long pursuit and ultimate conviction of the robbers, is related from the records of the Pinkerton detective bureau. [S. S. McClure, Limited, 30 Lafayette Place, New York.]

*Godey's Magazine* for August is an issue of beauty and interest in every page. Among the dozen illustrated articles and stories are "The Princess Zora," by Dr. S. M. Miller, who has collected some intensely interesting facts about an Egyptian who is hardly mentioned in history; "Virginia Beauties," adorned with portraits of some of the most famous of the beautiful women of the Old Dominion; "Cupid's Ways in Many Climes," "A Cruise on a House-boat," which gives valuable hints for a jolly good summer trip at small expense; and the true and laughable story of the Cardiff Giant Hoax, by Albert L. Parkes, the manager of this gigantic fraud. The fiction, poetry, and fashions all go to make up a very attractive number of this popular ten-cent magazine. [The Godey Company, 52-54 Lafayette Place, New York.]

The August number of *Frank Leslie's Popular Monthly* appears in a handsome new cover, of appropriate artistic design, which will be permanently retained. This new cover is embellished with a portrait of the late Frank Leslie, founder of the magazine, and the father of illustrated periodical literature in America. The present number of this long established magazine presents an unprecedented display of over a hundred charming pictures, including a full-page plate in colors. These pictures illustrate more than a score of articles, stories and poems all of a timely and seasonable nature, contributed by some of the favorite writers of the day.

The following fully illustrated articles are the special features of *Harper's Magazine* for July: "Some Imaginative Types in American Art," "In the Garden of China," "The German Struggle for Liberty," the first of a series in this very interesting subject by Poulney Bigelow; "Bear Chasing in the Rocky Mountains," "Americans in Paris," "The University of Pennsylvania," Owen Wister's story "Where Charity Begins," "Annie Tousey's Little Game," "Risamonds Romance," "The Horoscope of Two Portraits," "Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc" and "Hearts Insurgent" [Harpers Brothers, New York.]

Early in the fall a new juvenile magazine, of a bright, wholesome character, fully illustrated, will be made of *Frank Leslie's Pleasant Hours for Boys and Girls*, at 10 cents a copy and \$1 per annum.