

any way contribute to the elucidation of a question before the house, is always sure of an attentive and respectful hearing. Elders may occasionally feel that in appointments to standing and other committees they do not receive equal representation with their clerical brethren, but this is a matter which, after due consideration, might easily be remedied and rendered satisfactory to all. At present, it is true a layman is ineligible for the Moderatorship. It does not follow that no change in this respect is possible. At the American Assembly this year, Governor Beaver, of Pennsylvania, was elected Vice-Moderator, and when called on to preside, he did so with much dignity and efficiency. The other day the Presbytery of Whitby made a significant departure from immemorial usage. In making appointments for the induction of a minister, the duty of addressing a congregation was assigned to an able and respected elder in that Presbytery. Indications like these would lead to the hope that if the important service which the eldership has in its power to render would be fully utilized it must be more fully drawn upon than it is at present. What special hindrances stand in the way of elders taking the share of Church work for which they are best fitted?

THE SNEER AS AN ARGUMENT.

THOUGH not recognized among the regular implements of orthodox logic the sneer has a place much more prominent than that to which it is entitled in ordinary, every-day argumentation. It is one of nature's weapons of offence and defence. In its effectiveness it varies considerably. From the roughest Billingsgate to the refined and polished epigram it has wide range. Is it one of Truth's instruments, or is it ever useful in convincing any one of error? Darwin, in one of the many illustrations drawn from his observation, endeavours to prove the simian origin of man by the traces of animal characteristics yet discoverable in members of the human family. He instances the sneer of some men as being nothing else than the lingering snap and snarl of the dog. Whatever science may say about the descent of man, the scientist's suggestion as to the origin of the sneer is at least plausible. It has much more of instinct than reason in it; it is more animal than rational.

That telling though not ungenial satire and even scorching sarcasm have a place in legitimate argumentation few will deny. To be beneficently effective they must be skillfully and dexterously used. It is not absolutely necessary that satire should be cruel and stinging, holding its victim up to merciless ridicule and scorn. That it may be kindly and humanely employed one has only to glance over a bound volume of the most popular of the various comic serials that circulate among the people. When the events and incidents which suggest a telling cartoon have receded into proper perspective the acid has lost its sharpness and the kindly and humorous impressions remain.

What can be done with perverse stupidity, impervious to reason and insensible to every proper consideration? How are you to meet and expose the plausible sophism of a not over-scrupulous antagonist? What more effective aid than that supplied by nimble and good-natured raillery and delicate sarcasm? These have their place, and it is well to remember that they should be kept in their place. One skilled in the use of these weapons is but human after all and may be tempted to a too-frequent and cruel use of a weapon he can so cleverly wield. When the use of a satire is prompted by the primary desire to wound, mischief is sure to follow. The desire to inflict pain, for the mere sake of inflicting it, on another, springs from neither a Christian nor a kindly heart. By its employment you may or may not cure your friend of a defect, but you are certain to arouse resentment that will do neither of you any good. It is not a ringing but a soft answer that turneth away wrath.

Between delicate and polished satire and a coarse sneer there is a great difference, that bespeaks wide degrees of moral and mental culture. The assega of the Caffre or the poisoned arrow of the nomad is very different from the Damascus blade, and the difference is as great between the brutal sneer of the untutored tramp and the sparkling epigram of the travelled man of the world. But they may be alike in this, that both are equally heartless

and cruel. There are examples in Scripture of the employment of irony in behalf of the truth, and there are instances of the scoff and the sneer that should prompt every right-thinking and well-disposed mind carefully to avoid the use of what apparently in its nature is never aught but coarse and cruel. If one would see how loathsome the brutal sneer can become, look steadfastly at the cross of Christ during the weary hours of the crucifixion. The mocking, ribald jests and raillery heaped on the agonized Sufferer appear in their true character in the narrative of that stupendous event. The august Sufferer was unmoved by them. He had no word in reply. When He was reviled, He reviled not again. The young Christian may take courage from this. Who can tell how many young souls are kept in the bondage of evil for fear of the sneers and gibes of foolish companions? They are so afraid of ridicule that they will not follow what conscience says is right. After all a sneer is no argument. It is never employed except when a proper or convincing reason is wanting. The weakness is not necessarily with the intended victim of the sneer, but the one who employs it leaves no doubt that his case is weak as it is presumably wicked. Whoever fears a sneer directed against well-doing quails before a shadow.

Books and Magazines.

THE *Illustrated London News*, American Edition is deservedly rising in popular favour.

LITTELL'S *LIVING AGE* (Boston: Littell & Co.)—This, the first and the best of eclectic magazines, continues to give its readers the latest and most interesting contributions to the literature of the day.

OUR *LITTLE FOLKS AND THE NURSERY*. (Boston: The Russell Publishing Co.)—This universal favourite with the little folks keeps up its excellent reputation by continuing to give attractive reading and fine illustrations.

HARPER'S *YOUNG PEOPLE*. (New York: Harper & Brothers.)—This standard magazine is eagerly looked for and welcomed by its wide circle of readers. From week to week it presents a rich and varied array of interesting, instructive and pleasing articles, most of them handsomely illustrated.

THE *AMERICAN MAGAZINE*. (New York: The American Magazine Publishing Co.)—This magazine has made its way rapidly to the front rank of finely-illustrated periodical literature. The June number presents its readers with most attractive and miscellaneous contents. "My Dream of Anarchy and Dynamite" is concluded. There are various interesting descriptive articles richly embellished by the artist; fiction and poetry and short story are well represented and the customary departments will be scanned with pleasure by the reader.

SCRIBNER'S *MAGAZINE*. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.)—The attraction of the June number is the first of the promised series of papers on railways. The initial paper, extensively illustrated, gives much valuable information respecting the progress of engineering as well as numerous interesting details concerning railroad construction. A paper of a different sort but by no means less interesting, is on "Hospital Life." There is a short appreciative sketch of Cardinal Newman by Augustine Birrell, and Robert Louis Stevenson contributes his wonted paper. The serials, worthy the reputation of their respective authors, are continued. *Scribner's* is successfully holding its own.

HARPER'S *MAGAZINE*. (New York: Harper & Brothers.)—An excellent portrait of the late Dinah Muloch Craik forms the frontispiece of the June number of *Harper's*. The opening paper is one of great interest to the general readers. "London as a Literary Centre," containing as it does much information and a number of clear and well-defined portraits of those who have earned a place in the literary ranks. There are a number of descriptive papers copiously and beautifully illustrated, among them "Sketches in Capri," "The Central State," "Supplanted Choirs in New York," "Impressions in Burmese and Saddle," and Charles Dudley Warner's second paper on Chicago, in the "Great West" series. William Black, Henry James and William Dean Howells are the noted names in the fiction of the number, while short stories and poems by eminent contributors enhance its value. The usual departments are well supplied with good things.

THE MISSIONARY WORLD.

SMYRNA MEDICAL MISSION.

Writing regarding his work for another year, Dr. Prinski Scott says:

Perhaps you will be interested to know something about our patients. Out of the seventy-seven, fifty-six were Jews, sixteen of these being Jewish women. We had also nine Greeks, four Armenians, three Turks, three German and two English—not a bad year's work for a small hospital in the first year of its existence, especially if you take into consideration Jewish prejudice. By dint of perseverance and kindness to the patients we have overcome many difficulties, so that even the more bigoted Jews prefer coming to our hospital, where they will be more kindly treated than at their own. We have in no way given in to their prejudice, and every Jew on admission knew he had to conform to certain rules, and all through they had shown a spirit of toleration, and in many cases a desire to know the truth.

S—T—, a middle aged Jew, the father of a very respectable family, was sent to the hospital by a Jewish doctor, as patient could no longer pay for medicine and advice. The man was suffering from a chronic disease of the liver, with ascites. He was in the hospital for three months, during which time I tapped him eight times. Of course the disease was incurable, but still each operation gave him great relief and lengthened out his life. The doctor that advised him to come here told him he would have a better chance at the Mission than at the Jewish hospital. During his long stay of three months we had many opportunities for conversation. The members of his family—handsome young men and women—attended regularly at our meetings. This man and his family are other examples of very strict Jews who have been brought under the influence of the Mission through the hospital. They could have been reached in no other way. As this patient was a prominent member of the synagogue, and well known to the chief Rabbi, every effort was made to take him away from us, and they ultimately succeeded by threatening that, should he die in our hospital, burial in a Jewish cemetery would be refused. I was beside the man in his last hours, and have since continued to receive visits from members of the family. This burial question is a serious matter. I had some communications on the subject with some leading Jews, principally with the society that looks after the burying of the dead. It seems that the chief Rabbi's principal objection was, that in case of a death there was nobody beside them to say the "Shemah." Of course I was not considered qualified to say it, being a "Min." But the authorities told me that, should I be willing in case of a death, or rather in the case of a man about to die, to admit membership of the burying society to watch by the patient and perform their ceremonies, they would raise no further questions on the subject of burial. Of course I told them I could not subject myself or the other patients to the intrusion of strangers for an indefinite time; but should I have a case which I consider in a very dangerous condition, they would be welcome to come and remove him. I am glad that, with the exception of the one case to which I have alluded, we have had no case of death out of the fifty-six Jewish patients, which has done a good deal to make our hospital popular. I have no doubt that some of the bigoted Jews labour under the delusion that in case of death we shall try to persuade the patient and clandestinely baptize, but I have all through, in my dealings with the Jews, made it a point not to mention the subject of baptism. We are sent to preach, and once the man is really converted, and desires to make an open confession, he will seek of his own accord admission into the Christian Church by baptism. It is one of the commonest errors among the Jews that the missionaries only wish to baptize, and that it is the chief requisite in becoming a Christian. We must sternly fight against such an idea.—*Church of Scotland Home and Foreign Mission Record.*

At the annual meeting of the Woman's Missionary Society, held at Philadelphia last week, it was announced that Mrs. Henry D. Gregory had died suddenly while seated on the platform. She had been invited to a seat there, as she was to lead in the devotions of those assembled. In a few touching words, and a voice impressive with emotions, Mrs. Schenck set forth the work the deceased lady had accomplished for Christ.