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Manager and Editor.

OTTAWA, WEDNESDAY, FEB. 17, 1909.

When a person really wishes to help the Lord's cause means to do so can be found. In an English village lives an obscure invalid who spends her spare time when her malady permits in knitting socks and as she knits she prays—prays for the man who will wear them. The socks are sent, two pairs at a time, to be given where they are most needed. This is a true carrying out of the injunction work and pray.

The Toronto City Council, after the decided expression of the people in favor of license reduction, do not appear to be disposed to throw any further obstacle in the way; and it will now devolve upon the license commissioners to decide who shall compose the fated forty. An effort is likely to be made to reduce the number in Halifax to fifty, or perhaps fewer. The Ontario Government will probably require temperance hotels throughout the province to take out permits, thus bringing them within the jurisdiction of the commissioners as to inspection, and assuring a better class of accommodation.

This year there occurs the hundredth anniversary of the birth of a large number of distinguished men. Poe, the poet; Mendelssohn, the musician; Lincoln, the statesman; Darwin, the Naturalist; Chopin, musician; Fitzgerald, poet and translator; Lord Houghton, statesman and poet; Tennyson, poet laureate; Oliver Wendell Holmes, poet and essayist; Gladstone, statesman; Kinglake, historian. If the anniversary of these, and others we may have overlooked, are duly celebrated the year will be one of continued jubilation; and before its close we should all be better acquainted with many of the writers and much of the best literature of the past century.

## "ARE YOU SAVED."

This serious and searching question was so put the other day, in our presence, by an earnest Christian man to a person whose attention he wished to call to the things that concerned his everlasting well-being. In our judgment it was not a wise question. The intention was good. The appeal was one of the most momentous character. In some sense it was according to the Apostle's direction, to be "in season and out of season." And yet it grated upon our sensibilities, and made us doubt more than ever the propriety of such a mode of address. The person to whom it was put was an entire stranger to the person who put it, and it was addressed to him in the presence of a third party—both circumstances, in our opinion, grave objections, unless in exceptional cases, to such a method of seeking to do good. We can scarcely conceive of our Lord, or of the Apostle whose words we have quoted, adopting such an abrupt mode of dealing with those whom they incidentally met upon the highway. We are enjoined to be "wise as serpents, and harmless as doves," and to us such a question addressed to a stranger in such a way seems far from wise.

But we object to the terms of the query as much as to the manner of putting it. To be "saved" is nowhere used in Scripture as the equivalent of believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, or of being forgiven. It means much more than that. It means the deliverance of the soul from sin and its delilement, as well as from the curse of the law, and therefore is used in the New Testament generally in the future tense—"He that believeth shall be saved."—"through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they." The exceptions to this use of the phrase are few, and quite consistent with the view we have expressed.

We believe in the final perseverance of the saints. The Saviour himself declares that he that believeth "hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life;" but He did not ask the blind man to whom He had given sight if he were "saved," or if he were "converted," but, "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" His enquiry directed the sinner's attention to the object of faith, not to the subject of it, or to the feelings within, which for the moment possessed him.

No doubt there is altogether too little of direct personal appeal to the unconverted to receive the Gospel, and we would not say a word therefore that could be construed into an apology for the guilty silence of many Christian professors in the presence of their friends. But let us carefully guard against giving occasion to any who may desire it, for resisting our entreaty, because of the unsuitable time or manner of our efforts to do them good.

We have much pleasure in calling attention to a very useful book just published by the MacMillan Co., (London, Toronto). It is a commentary on the Holy Bible by various writers edited by the Rev. J. R. Dummelow, M.A., of Queen's College, Cambridge. It is the kind of book that many Bible readers have been asking for. The great advantage of the book is that it is all in one volume and considering the limitations of space the work has been well done. The essays and comments are by a number of well known scholars; it is well bound and can be had for the modest price of seven shillings and six pence.

## SHOULD WE HAVE CHRISTMAS TREES.

A cry has been raised against the injury done the forests of the United States by the destruction of young trees at the holiday season—the number of Christmas trees required annually being estimated at four million. The Forest Service has been asked if the custom is not a menace to the movement for forest preservation.

Mr. Pinchot, chief of the Forestry Branch, whose address before the Canadian Club, at Ottawa, when he visited the Capital to invite Canada to participate in a movement to conserve the natural resources of the continent, leaves no doubt that he is fully impressed with the importance of the subject, says that it is consistent and proper that the custom of having Christmas trees should be maintained.

"Trees are for use," he says, "and there is no other use to which they could be put which would contribute so much to the joy of man as their use by the children on this one great holiday of the year.

"The number of trees cut for this use each year is utterly insignificant when compared to the consumption for other purposes for which timber is demanded. Not more than four million Christmas trees are used each year, one in every fourth family. If planted four feet apart they could be grown on less than 1,500 acres. This clearing of an area equal to a good-sized farm each Christmas should not be a subject of much worry, when it is remembered that for lumber alone it is necessary to take timber from an area of more than 100,000 acres every day of the year.

"It is true that there has been serious damage to forest growth in the cutting of Christmas trees in various sections of the country, particularly in the Adirondacks and parts of New England, but in these very sections the damage through the cutting of young evergreens for use at Christmas is infinitesimal when compared with the loss of forest resources through fires and careless methods of lumbering. The proper remedy is not to stop using trees, but to adopt wiser methods of use.

"It is generally realized that a certain proportion of land must always be used for forest growth, just as for other crops. Christmas trees are one form of this crop. There is no more reason for an outcry against using land to grow Christmas trees than to grow flowers."

What Mr. Pinchot says will also apply to Canada. For his opinion the Sunday schools and other institutions which look forward every year to their annual treat, in which the Christmas tree plays such an important part, will feel grateful. Germany has the highest developed system of forest management in the world, yet its per capita use of Christmas trees is the greatest. The cutting of small trees for Christmas is not there considered a menace to the forest, but the contrary, by a judicious thinning, and it is a source of revenue. Let the children have their Christmas trees.

Though Peter had no money to bestow upon the lame man at the gate of the temple, his successor, who lives at the Vatican, is not so badly off, or he would not have had it in his power to give \$400,000 to the sufferers by the earthquake in Southern Italy. It is pleasing to know that Pope Pius X has both the wherewithal and the charitable heart.