

centuries acted and reacted on the Eastern mind and now Christianity has entered into competition. What the coming centuries may have in store of mental conflicts and religious strife, no one can predict, but Christianity must close its ranks and be earnest in the fight.

#### The "Dime Novel."

It used to be the fashion to speak and write of the "Dime Novel" as one of the worst corrupters of youth that appeared in print. The exaggerated adventures of its heroes, the false-sentimentality, coarse humour, and veiled immorality with which its pages abounded, rendered it a ready mark for disapprobation from pulpit, press and platform. We question very much whether the "Dime Novel" can possibly have a more lowering influence on the morals of the youth of the country than the sensational and objectionable references to law breaking and unscrupulous characters that frequently appear in some of the newspapers that are published broadcast over Canada. In prominent position on the front page, it may be, appear from time to time, sensational references to unscrupulous men or women of doubtful reputation; whether in jail or fugitives from justice; with photographs, accounts of their doings, and jocular comments, not seldom of a personal character, on the habits and peculiarities of these unsavoury characters. Can there be any doubt that such journals are putting a premium on vice by thus giving to these criminal heroes this unenviable publicity and tacitly encouraging the impressionable youth of the country to follow in their footsteps? We believe that the so-called "respectable newspapers" to which we have referred, have been more influential in nourishing the growth of crime through the means referred to than have their rivals on the same plane, the "Dime Novels." Were the inmates of the prisons and penitentiaries of Canada to give their personal and unbiased testimony we have no doubt that our contention would be found to be only too well founded.

#### A Religious Revival in India.

It was reasonable to expect a religious congress in Edinburgh, but it was certainly unexpected to read of a convention of religions at Allahabad in India. The Maharajah of Barhanga was in the chair and said that he esteemed it a high honour to be called on for the second time to preside over such a gathering. Nearly two years ago such a convention was held in Calcutta and, he said, those present then would not soon forget the impression made by the widely diffused fraternal spirit which animated the members who realized that the outward vestures of creed, ritual and worship, which had acted as walls of separation, were as dust in the balance, compared with the spiritual ties which bound them together in the fundamental verities of all their religions. He was firmly convinced of a new life in Hinduism, but if it was to have a chance to regenerate the people, it must begin in family life by precept and example, be recognized in the teaching in primary schools, colleges and universities, and the practice of the presence of God be carried on in daily life. To a true Hindu a godless education was no education at all.

#### Advance Guards of Civilization.

A mine of absorbing and romantic interest is still to be opened out in the life story of the pioneers, trappers and adventurers of the old North-West. There are living to-day in Canada, a few men—their ranks are thinning with each passing year—whose record of personal adventures, if given literary form and publication, would surpass in vivid and graphic interest many a popular and romantic story. Some of these men were employees of one or other of the great Fur Trading Companies. Some were trappers,

hunters or explorers in government service, or on their own account. Their stories would be valuable contributions to Canadian Biography and would throw most interesting and instructive side-lights on the toils, privations and successes of our early missionaries; the habits and customs of the Indian tribes; the primitive modes of transport by trail and river; the gradual growth of settlement; the geographical and climatic characteristics of the vast territory over which they roamed; the undeveloped wealth of forest, mine and prairie; and the fauna and flora with which they were so familiar. Some of these old pioneers of the early North Land are veritable mines of information on the above and kindred topics. But the hand so skilful with the paddle and the rifle has not the cunning of the pen. And unless some of our younger writers—with a dash of the genius of Parkman—seek them out before it is too late, like great trees of the ancient forest through which they roamed, they will pass from the scene in which they were notable figures, and unrecorded, mingle with the soil of the land they loyally loved and faithfully served.

#### 'Tis the Voice of the Sluggard.

There are some strong and wholesome comments in the Scottish Chronicle "anent" a proposal in Aberdeen to postpone the hour of morning prayer from 11 to 11.30. The last critic is quoted as saying, "My experience is that people who have the root of the matter in them begin Sunday at St. Andrew's Church at 8 a.m., and these are not the leisure classes, but workers who have to put in their ten or twelve hours a day. Those who take their religion as the whiskey-drinker takes his tea—with a wry face—begin their Sunday at 6.30 p.m." And a Baptist minister says, "If people can stand late hours on their own pleasure, and yet be at business early to open shop, there is no reason why they can't be at church at eleven o'clock. There is a good deal of sawdust in the sainthood of our time." At this very time the great Trinity Church of New York is changing the hour from 10.30 to 11, simply because that is the hour of prayer of all the others and strangers are often mistaken. It is news to hear that the Aberdeen people are slothful; they have the reputation of being exceedingly wide awake, in business at least.

#### Motoring and Missions.

Mr. James Ryrie, a Baptist layman of Toronto, speaking at a banquet in London, made a pointed remark which will not fail to hit the target he had in view. He stated that any man who owned an automobile ought to give at least \$200 a year for missions, or else acquire "an enlargement of ideas." Many, very many, of those who are using automobiles are avowed Christians. They are, in many instances, church-goers and communicants, and the speaker, who is himself a motorist, has a right, therefore, to challenge their loyalty to Christ and to put it to a very practical test. As we see automobile after automobile careering around on the Lord's Day, we have often wondered whether its owner had consecrated the machine to God's service, and whether it would be used, as it might be much used, to advance God's work. Clergy who have long Sunday trips might sometimes be helped on their way, absent or careless ones might be brought by their motoring friends to God's house, but above all, the motorist who can lavish his money on an expensive automobile, should allow a corresponding liberality in supporting God's church. We think every well-disposed motorist will feel that Mr. Ryrie's standard is not an extravagant one.

#### The Future Life.

Rev. Dr. Paterson-Smyth's new work, "The Gospel of the Hereafter," was the subject of a

careful review by a well-known Presbyterian minister, at a recent meeting of the Sarnia and Port Huron Ministerial Association. This address and the lively discussion which ensued showed that "the future life" is a topic of absorbing interest to ministers as well as to others; and some of the opinions expressed show how much need there is for systematic teaching on this subject. One speaker expressed the opinion that there was no intermediate state at all, and that every soul passed at death to its final reward. Another remarked that we knew very little concerning any future life but something in us suggested immortality, and we were justified in believing in a future life of some kind, but knew little or nothing about it. Still another utterly denied any identity between our resurrection bodies and our earthly bodies, and attempted to justify this view by quoting 1 Cor. xv., which tells us "there is a natural body and there is a spiritual body." If, in a little group of ministers, there is so much uncertainty and diversity of opinion concerning "the future life," we may be sure there is much more haziness and ignorance among the rank and file of every congregation. Dr. Smyth has done a good service in fearlessly and clearly presenting his views on our future life in the book named, and every minister should at some time give his people the benefit of his careful and systematic study of so vital and absorbing a subject.

#### "A REASONABLE SERVICE."

On the threshold of Lent, the truth of those words come home to us with especial force and point. Christianity is a reasonable service in more than one sense. But it is emphatically so because it asks nothing from anyone, which is not for his best interests here and hereafter. That is to say it makes no unreasonable demands, when rightly understood, upon the "natural man." Its following, it is true, involves some suffering, but so does every other "service" to which a man can devote himself, and enjoyment with out some suffering is as impossible as a valley without a hill. We have then an exemplification of this in the institution of Lent. The keeping of Lent has the "promise of this world as well of that which is to come." It promotes his physical and natural, as well as his spiritual well being. The keeping of Lent, on the lowest grounds, is a thoroughly common sense practice, and it tends to increase a man's capacity for what is called "enjoying life." In the first place it makes pleasure more pleasurable, by suspending it for a time. It teaches moderation, and moderation is the soul of enjoyment. Thus it saves us from the bondage to our pleasures, one of the most grinding of all tyrannies. Nothing is more irksome than the thralldom of the so-called pleasures of life, nothing more wearing than "recreation" overdone. We become enslaved to these things without really getting any enjoyment out of them, and long after they have become a weariness to the flesh. And yet we have become so habituated to them that we are miserable without them. From all this Lent saves us. It trains us to the rational use of pleasure and recreation, and how to get in this lower, and quite lawful sense, "the most out of life." Again it is beneficial to the bodily health. It relieves the nervous strain of pleasure seeking. We take our pleasures far too strenuously. To a great many people they are far more trying and wearing than the ordinary business of life. Thus they often miserably defeat their own object. We have not the slightest doubt that many of the nervous diseases, almost peculiar to the present age, instead of being the result of "overwork," are the effect of "amusements" overdone. In this amusement mad age, therefore, a season like Lent, may be hailed with the sincerest feelings of relief. Then there is an ecclesiastical

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