

is not a gentleman among ourselves who would not be called a Puritan if he were to be dropped among the men of the Elizabethan or Jacobean age. We have been led to these remarks by some excellent observations in the English "Spectator." Speaking of the circulation of some books of no great literary merit, but of a Puritan tendency, the writer says: "The great majority of the English-speaking peoples are still, thank God, Puritans. Puritanism has not yet touched the lowest class—they are too uncivilized to stand its discipline. It has become ineffective in the upper class—there are some of them too frivolous, and some perhaps too thoughtful, to bear its regulations, but it is the ideal of the majority. The only difference between the new Puritanism and the old is that the ordinary man has now less time for thought than formerly, and he is less interested in abstract theology. Schemes of salvation and justification, apart from justice, have no meaning for him, but he still hungers and thirsts after righteousness. . . . Too many of the upper classes have played until they are useless, too many of the intellectual class have thought until they are paralyzed by agnosticism; but the great class below them, who are surging up to swamp them, are not going to play too much or to think too much. They are going to act, and to act—if only the Puritan spirit keeps alive—according to their conscience. For our race the Puritan road leads to salvation; all others deny the genius of the people, and lead to—perhaps France." In a recent history of the Anglican Reformation, some remarks are made, which, as far as they go, fall in with these comments of the "Spectator." The writer, referring to the common notion that the influence of Wycliffe and the Lollards was of short duration in England, remarks: "It is impossible to acquiesce in this opinion. It is not merely that the opinion and writings of Wycliffe were circulated in Bohemia, and were accepted by Huss and Jerome; that these men, in their turns, exercised a very powerful influence on the German Reformation; and this again on the Reformation in England. But it is almost demonstrable that the teaching of Wycliffe lived on in a kind of undercurrent among the people of England, and may probably be still the very heart of that Puritanism, which has, for centuries, been so large an ingredient in English religious life."

A SENSE OF DUE PROPORTION.

In some quarters the lavish expenditure on flowers as decorations in our churches at Festival seasons has been deprecated, and it is added that the cost of the flowers might be better spent on missions. There is a precedent in the Gospels for such a murmur, but, unless our memory fails us, our Lord commended, instead of condemning, a costly outlay made for the anointing of His own sacred Person. But beyond all doubt this is an age of extravagance, in which the lines of due proportion are apt to be overlooked. In some churches undue prominence is given

to music, with the effect of turning the House of God into a chamber for the display of musical talent, at the sacrifice of the liturgy. In one leading church in Canada at morning service on Easter Day, two of the three proper Psalms, one of the two proper lessons, the Te Deum and the Athanasian Creed, were "side-tracked" to make room for an elaborate anthem. Surely lawlessness of clergy, and contempt of the rights of the laity to have the liturgy of the Church in its entirety, could scarcely go further. A lack of sense of due proportion is also conspicuous in our churches on the two solemn occasions of marriage and burial. A bride in well-to-do circles of society is not thought to be fittingly attired for plighting her troth at the altar unless she is dressed in much the same costume as Court rules require of a debutante, on presentation to Her Majesty at a drawing-room in Buckingham Palace, and the church is turned for the time being into a theatre for sightseers to indulge their eyes with a display of costly costumes, priceless jewellery, and rare flowers; the last thing thought of is the solemnity of the service. In the old days of the Church, times of family rejoicing were made occasions of lavish expenditure, not on personal adornment, but on "largess" to the poor, through the almonry of the Church. Is it not time that the Church should seek to regain some of the ground which she has lost in this direction. Probably the greatest sinners against the law of due proportion, on the occasions of weddings, are to be found exactly in those circles of society in which the obligations of the marriage vow are the least regarded, and in which divorce is most prevalent. The sense of due proportion is also conspicuously absent at funerals. It was a beautiful custom when near relatives of a lost loved one sprinkled a few flowers on the bier at the grave-side; it is a vulgar travesty of this edifying custom, which has now come into vogue, when neighbours and acquaintances vie with each other in extravagance in purchasing costly decorations from the florists' shops, for display in the house of mourning, and on the outside of the closed grave after the service. And have not funeral orations attained undue proportion in these days. Surely the good deeds of a respected townsman, or parish Lady Bountiful are best recorded in the columns of the local newspaper; the Church has her own sacred office, to preach comfort to the mourners (that they sorrow not, even as others, which have no hope), to warn the thoughtless (Be ye therefore ready), to exhort all to let their light so shine before men, that God, not self, may be glorified in and through their good deeds. It would be unseemly for any clergyman to deplore from the pulpit the vices of any departed member of the congregation; is it not equally unseemly to anticipate the final judgment, and accentuate the (apparent), virtues of any man or woman in a set funeral oration? we use the word apparent advisedly, the hearts of all are open to God, but to God alone.

OUTLINES OF TEXTS FROM THE FIRST SUNDAY LESSONS.

BY REV. PROF. CLARK, LL.D., TRINITY COLLEGE  
Fifth Sunday after Trinity.

I. Samuel xv., 22. "To obey is better than sacrifice."

The superstitious sentiment involved in the act of Saul ineradicable—the feeling that certain external acts may be a substitute for interior good. In heathenism—in Israel—everywhere.

- i. Glance at the case of Saul.
  - 1. A character with traits of nobility. Appreciates goodness—shows devotion.
  - 2. All marred by self-will. (1) Offering sacrifice. (2) Agag, (Best of spoils).
  - 3. Plausible in each case.
  - 4. Yet setting man's will against God's.
- ii. The same principle still at work.

Might expect different under Gospel. And we imagine ourselves free from this heathenism—of Louis XI., for example, who thought to atone for a crime by building a church.

- 1. Are we sure that we are free from such superstition? Ceremonialism of acts—of words much the same.
  - 2. Forgetting the true nature and use of offerings. (1) Sacrifice good—as expression of devotion—as means of grace. (2) But not as substitute or compensation for obedience. This only is blessed.
- iii. Explanation simple.

1. Difficult because of our unspirituality. Imagine the will of God arbitrary.

- 2. Because we ascribe to God a character like our own. Self-interested—capricious.
- 3. And this to deny the very character of God—absolute holiness—love. Nothing could be so good as this. Nothing could usefully suspend it. Every act the outcome of love and productive of good; nothing arbitrary or uncertain.

Conclude. Thus we learn that the will of God is man's goodness and man's blessedness. (1) Goodness, for man can be good only as he is God-like. (2) Blessedness; for only as God reigns can there be unity and harmony in the heart and life of man. "Teach me, O Lord, the way of Thy statutes."

REVIEWS.

The Amateur Cracksman. By E. W. Hornung. Price, \$1. Toronto: Morang, 1899.

This is a very cleverly conceived and well-written book. It is a story of a "gentleman," who became a very accomplished housebreaker, and induced an old school-fellow, who was in difficulties, to join him. Frankly, we do not like such subjects for fiction. It is said that Ainsworth's novels of "Rockwood" and "Jack Sheppard" produced very bad effects among the young men of the period. We do not say that this book will produce thieves; but we would rather that young men were not familiarized with such subjects.

A Drama of Two Lives and other Poems. By Dr. E. J. Chapman. London: Kegan, Paul & Co., 1899.

The author of these poems is well-known in Toronto, as an eminent man of science, and a welcome presence in all social circles. Probably few were aware, during his residence and work in the University of Toronto, of the great poetical gifts of which the volume now before us gives evidence. The first of the poems was privately printed at Toronto, some years ago, under the title of "East and West." Subsequently it appeared in the Canadian Magazine and elsewhere. Other poems having appeared under the same title, Dr. Chapman has substituted the new title, "A Drama of Two Lives." It is a very powerful and touching poem. The second poem, "The Snake Witch," is an undertaking requiring no small amount of courage, some would say auda-