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IMPORTANT!

In order to meet the wishes of many friends who have not yet completed their canvass, on account of the absence of snow and other causes, we have decided to extend the time during which names will be received on club lists to the *first day of February next*. This will also apply to renewals. In both cases all who remit for 1878 by the 1ST FEBRUARY, will be entitled to the Presbyterian YEAR BOOK—the premium offered to all subscribers.

We hope that agents will push the canvass vigorously during January. Thousands have not yet been asked to subscribe who would freely give their names, if called upon. The season has been very much against canvassers in country districts; but an effort should now be made to reach every family connected with our Church.

The YEAR BOOK will soon be published. The last sheets are now passing through the press; and as soon as it is out of the binder's hands everyone entitled to a copy will be supplied. The present issue is unusually interesting and valuable; and we hope to be asked to send out thousands of copies.

NOTES OF THE WEEK.

MR. MOODY'S meetings in Providence are engaging the earnest attention of all classes. Music Hall, the largest audience room in the city is crowded to its utmost capacity.

THE Rev. George Muller disclaims any connection with the Plymouth Brethren. He occupies an independent position as an evangelical preacher and pastor. Among the helpers in his institution at Bristol, England, there are representatives of eight denominations, and he receives a cordial welcome to the pulpits of all branches of the church.

THE Free Presbytery of Aberdeen has finally adopted the charges against Professor Robertson Smith, having added one to those reported by the committee to the effect that the Professor, by his writings, through neutrality of tone and rashness of critical construction, had tended to disparage the Divine authority and inspired character of the Scriptures.

We learn that the lecture on "LUTHER," to be given by the Rev. T. W. Handford, of this city, in Oak-

ville, in aid of the Manse fund, will be delivered in the Presbyterian Church, Oakville, on Thursday evening, the 10th inst., instead of Friday, the 11th, as originally intended. We bespeak for the friends of that Church a large attendance, more especially by those living in the adjoining sections.

"THE Evangelization of Cities and the Adaptation of Presbyterianism Thereto," was the subject of a recent address by the Rev. Dr. John Hall before the Presbyterian Association of Baltimore. It was held by the speaker that the Presbyterian system is especially fitted for reaching the masses by reason of its independence of civil power, its theory of educating the people, its facilities for co-operating with other denominations, and its doctrine of equality.

SPAIN appears once more to be on the verge of revolution. Alfonso's reign has been peaceful as compared with the years of civil disorder which preceded, but taxation has been overwhelming, and the old hatred of the Bourbons has revived throughout the land. It is said that only two parties, the Monarchists and the Liberals, now exist in Spain, and a Liberal triumph, the downfall of the monarchy and the establishment of a republic are expected by some of the Liberal leaders.

ONE of our daily papers reports that in a lecture delivered by Archbishop Lynch in St. Michael's Cathedral, on Sabbath evening last, "His Grace concluded by saying that he was glad to be able to state that the bad spirit which prevailed against the image of the Mother of God was fast disappearing. He had seen it of late years in the houses of many respectable Protestants, and even in the Normal School in this city the Blessed Virgin embracing her Son occupied a prominent position." Is it really necessary to have a Roman Catholic Archbishop for the purpose of pointing out their errors to Protestants?

THE Christmas concert by the young ladies of the Presbyterian College, Brantford, was given on Wednesday evening, the 19th ult. The large dining room of the college was filled to overflowing with the friends and guardians of the college. Dr. Kemp presided on the occasion, and with him on the platform were Dr. Cochrane, the President of the college, Rev. D. D. McLeod of Paris, Rev. John Thomson of Ayr, and others. Among the audience were Hon. D. Christie, and many other prominent office-bearers of our church. The entire performances—music, and dialogues in English, French, and German, were exceedingly satisfactory, and gave evidence of careful training.

A CONTROVERSY has been going on for some time in the columns of the "Globe," between the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Toronto and Rev. Robert Ker, Episcopal minister, Chelsea, Que., on the Bible as the rule of faith. Besides the great advantage of having truth on his side, Mr. Ker is intellectually much more than a match for the Archbishop. The following, which are the concluding sentences of his last letter may be taken as a sample of the way in which he handles him: "We don't for a moment doubt Dr. Lynch's heart, but we entertain very grave doubts about his head. He is like many others in his Church, a good deal better than their system. The almost childish simplicity of Dr. Lynch's character is manifested by his gravely telling the public that

some Protestant of an enquiring turn of mind solemnly asked him, "Why do Catholics believe in what they do not understand?" He then takes and jots it down in a book, and in giving this question a first place in his catechism Dr. Lynch writes himself down as an excellent, kind-hearted citizen, but a hopelessly bad theologian."

ON Sabbath morning last, Rev. Principal Grant of Queen's College, Kingston, preached in St. Andrew's Church, in this city, from Matt. xvi. 19: "But whereunto shall I liken this generation? It is like unto children sitting in the markets and calling unto their fellows, and saying: We have piped unto you and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you and ye have not lamented. For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say he hath a devil. The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a wine bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. But wisdom is justified of her children." The doctrines which he deduced from that passage were: (1.) God's wisdom in seeking to educate man into a right method of life and the highest culture by bringing to bear on him different moral influences according to his need. (2.) Man's folly and perversity in resisting both kinds of teaching, and for contradictory reasons, although he needs both kinds of teaching and example. (3.) That the highest model of life is that presented to us in the example of Christ, and therefore, that in studying His life the Christian gets the only possible answer to the practical question, "What is the right kind of life for a Christian to lead?" In the evening the Reverend Principal preached to an overflowing congregation in the Central Presbyterian Church.

THE latest news from the seat of war in the East are the most hopeful that have reached us for some time. They certainly indicate a temporary cessation of bloodshed; and they also seem to point in the direction of peace. The hopelessness of the Turks as to receiving aid from England—a hopelessness manifested by their having now at length ceased to ask the question, "When will the English army arrive?" together with the disasters recently experienced by them in the loss of Kars and Plevna, are supposed to have brought them to that quiet and subdued state of mind which is favourable to the making of treaties. The great expense and difficulty of transporting troops to the limits of his vast empire under the severity of a Russian winter, the stoppage of the railways in Roumania, and the carrying away of bridges on the Danube, are considered to have exercised a similar influence—though not perhaps to the same extent—on the mind of the northern potentate. Accordingly, Mr. Layard, the British Ambassador at Constantinople, has been instructed to sound the Porte as to its views on peace; and the Ambassador at St. Petersburg has received similar instructions with regard to the Russian government. Whether these negotiations will lead to the desired result or not is very uncertain. But in the meantime the destruction of bridges on the Danube by ice has hindered the forward movement of Russian troops; and it is also reported that the Turks are about to ask for an armistice. It is therefore to be hoped that the campaign is at an end for this season, and that another campaign may be rendered unnecessary by the conclusion of a peace consistent with civil and religious liberty, and at the same time precluding the gratification of a grasping ambition.

PASTOR AND PEOPLE.

EMMANUEL.

"They shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted, is God with us."—MATTHEW I. 23.

This is a prophecy taken from the writings of the great evangelical prophet, Isaiah. It is a prophecy which was intended to apply to and describe the birth of Messiah. It is not a mere accommodation of another historic event to this one, on account of a general resemblance between the two. It may have had its fulfilment in the birth of a child not long after, and the deliverance of Judah from the yoke of invasion. But even if so the chief reference is none the less to the heavenly child, born of the Virgin Mary, in the fulness of time, for the world's redemption and salvation. "They shall call His name Emmanuel," that is, they shall have good cause and occasion to call Him so; He will be signally entitled to bear the name. They never did actually call the Saviour by this name. He never either assumed or received this name in public, and among men. He was known by the name "Jesus," and by the compound designation "Jesus-Christ." The name Emmanuel is more comprehensively and more grandly descriptive of His nature, His coming, His work among men. A meditation on this subject, if it has truth and wisdom in it, ought to help us to keep our great Christian festival with joy and profit, both to ourselves and others.

There is a sense in which this descriptive title might with propriety be applied—indeed, we find it was so applied—to other persons than Jesus Christ, living in times long before His. It is worth while looking at some of the Old Testament scriptures which bear this out. Genesis xxvi 24 says, concerning Isaac, "And the Lord appeared unto him the same night and said, I am the God of Abraham, thy father; fear not, for I am with thee" in a lower and relative sense Isaac might have been named Emmanuel by his people and by his neighbors—and will bless thee and multiply thy seed, for my servant Abraham's sake." Indeed, this presence of God with His servant was so manifest a thing, that Abimelech and his friends came to him and said, in explanation of their change of disposition and behavior towards him, "We saw certainly that the Lord was with thee, and we said, Let there be an oath betwixt us, and a covenant." So, too, it is said that "the Lord was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man." And Jacob said in dying, "God shall be with you, and bring you again unto the land of your fathers." Of young David, while yet in his father's house, it is said, "He is cunning in playing, and a mighty valiant man, and a man of war, and prudent in matters, and a comely person, and"—to crown all with immaculate charm, and to bind all together in undecaying strength, it is called—"the Lord is with him." Solomon prayed at the dedication of the Temple, "The Lord our God be with us, as He was with our fathers." And the prophet Zechariah represents ten men of different nations taking hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, and saying, "We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you." So that the idea is not revealed for the first time in the birth and coming of Jesus Christ. There is reason to suppose that even the fact of incarnation was, in a sense, and for some particular occasions, antedated by himself. But how greatly He advances the idea, how singularly and divinely He illustrates the fact, the Gospel history tells us, and this season of the year brings joyfully to our memory.

Emmanuel is a word which natural man could not make, for the idea contained in it is not natural in the bosom of humanity. God above us, away from us, gone up from the earth in displeasure; God ruling the world, and watching His occasions to come forth upon men with reproofs and sudden judgments—these are our instinctive thoughts. They are thoughts, too, which never vanish away; and they are not peculiar to any one age or nation. You find them everywhere, and among all people. A God all smiles, and with nothing but favors in His hands, has never been imagined by man. And is not imagined now. Let some men say what they will, they cannot persuade the mass of men that such a God exists. The human conscience testifies for truth and justice, has respect to some unalterable law, points to God as the source of the law, reproves for sin, calls for moral judgment, and will not accept superficial remedy. If the thought, "God with us," were easy and natural, we should not have our attention called to it in this passage as to a great wonder: "Behold—and they shall call His name Emmanuel." In Him God comes nearer. Or say if you will that He reveals in Him the nearness to which, by our estrangement and sin, or through our natural dullness and incapacity, we are blind and insensible. Say, if you will, that God is naturally near to man, notwithstanding man's natural thought that he is not. It is quite true. He besets us behind and before. He feeds with His own bountiful hand every living thing. He cannot "come down," it may be said, since He is always, in His essential thought and being, beneath all depths. He cannot become merciful, since He is eternally merciful, and kind, and pitiful. Still, if men will not believe this, if they go on repeating to their own hearts that He must also be full of justice, and truth, and holiness; while of themselves they can see no method of harmony by which these apparently diverse and almost opposite qualities in God can act together beneficially for men; we come to the same conclusion practically, that there is a need for some divine interposition of a quite peculiar kind, by which God shall come actually nearer, or by which the nearness that already exists may be revealed in such forms and to such effects as will constitute man's salvation. The entire truth comprehends both ideas. There is a natural nearness of God to man which does not need to be constituted and made, but only to be revealed and explained; and there is also a new and gracious nearness of God which is constituted and made by Him whose name is thus Emmanuel. This last is the nearness into which God "comes," for which there has been moral locomotion; which is, necessarily, a thing of degrees, and is regulated in each particular case by the

amount of readiness existing. This is "coming down" indeed. This is "drawing nigh" by traversing vast moral distances, distances quite measureless by us, and may well, on contemplation of condescension so wonderful, be hailed, as it is in our passage, with an exclamation of surprise:—"Behold—Emmanuel!"—God with us.

God with us in wonderful condescension.—For, what is the coming thus announced and signalled, that is to be for ever above all other Divine comings among men? It is not an advent illustrated by any visible glory on the heavens. It is not the "rending" or "bowing" of the heavens that He may come down, as He once did, in fire and storm proclaiming His majesty and holiness to a sinful, trembling world. Nor is it a swift passage round the earth in whirlwind—cloudy dust scattered from His feet. It is not even the shining of God through the angel face nor the appearance of the Divine power in the person of some virtuous and mighty monarch gathering the splendours of this world about him while he reveals a far greater. It is the virgin's womb, the manger-cradle, the lowly conditions, the poor estate. Of course the great step in Divine condescension is for God to be in human nature at all—to take truly a human body and human soul as the shrine, and residence, and organ of the Deity. The incarnation is the great miracle of love, holding all miracles in itself. But it is quite conceivable that the incarnation might have been accomplished by means of very different earthly circumstances, and so as to be divested of all those special marks of condescension which, as we know, impart to it, as it is presented to us in the Gospel history, such considerateness, such tenderness, such grace of love and thoughtful sympathy. How beautifully touching are all the circumstances of the case! The Church never wearies in recalling them. The story of the Saviour's birth is told, is read, is listened to every year afresh without the least abatement of interest. A new edition of the book is as it were published every year. There have been eighteen hundred editions, and the interest is growing and not waning. Why does the story thus find its way so surely to the common heart? In part, we cannot but imagine, because it is a story which has its unfolding from first to last amid scenes of common life. The simple maiden-mother from the village among the hills; the birth on a journey away from home, the birthplace among the cattle in a baid stable, or as probably in a limestone cave used for stable and for shelter for pilgrims when the inn was full; the worship of the shepherds, the condescension in all that is not only striking, but tender and beautiful. It appeals to the common heart. It interests the simple. It comforts the poor and fills them with a wonder they cannot express, as they see how near God has come, not to humanity alone, but to them. They—all the simple and the poor, and the villagers, and the shepherds, and the tillers of the ground, and the country-folks, and all mothers, and all young children, can put a special emphasis if they will into the word Emmanuel, and say God with us; while also, in proportion as the learned, and the wealthy, and the great are in disposition simple and childlike, they will sympathize with their humbler and poorer brethren, and be glad of the mode as well as of the fact of the great manifestation, since thus without compromise of dignity or shadowing of true glory, there is as it were a touch of favour given to those who numerically constitute the great mass of mankind.

II.

Emmanuel—God with us to take away the sin that hinders us from being with God, and from believing fully that God can be with us. Evidently this is one of the special things that needs to be done by the coming of God among men. If this were not done, nothing else, of any real or permanent worth, could be done. If sin were not taken away from us, no matter what might be brought, Heaven itself might be brought, in description and picture, but of what avail if the elements of hell are left all through the world, and brooding in the individual breast? In a hospital filled with sick and wounded men you may put coloured windows, you may hang pictures on the walls, and you may fill the air with soft music; and the wounded weary men would probably, most of them, look and listen for a little while with some interest, and then they would say, with only a deeper weariness, "You are very kind, but oh if you could only make us well!" Then, this descent of God in Christ, this drawing near to us in the moral and vital relations of our life in Him, what is it in relation to sin? Certainly no merely artistic treatment of the matter. He does not come as a monarch with a great procession. He does not come as an artist to open galleries of celestial pictures, nor as a philosophic describer and teacher of recondite things, nor as a poetic singer of heavenly lays to be chanted by angelic choirs. He comes as a physician. Right into the heart of the sick, weary, heavy-laden world He comes; and looking round with profoundest sympathy, and as though almost made sick Himself by the sight, says, "I am come to heal you, but I cannot do it by prescription, or by good advice, or by showing the example of perfect health in Myself. No way but one—I must die that you may live." We are presuming thus to put words into the mouth of Christ, but they are words only feebly descriptive of the facts and deeds of His life and history. He is here, as an Infant, introduced into the world by the angels in their brightness and with their songs; but we know that when the years of His youth and opening manhood shall have sped, He will go away, and will have no angels to attend Him then. See, He goes away in anguish, in deep death-sorrow, in loneliness, and with a cry, "bearing our sins in His own body on the tree," "making an end of sin by the sacrifice of Himself." Emmanuel, also, to make an end of sin in us, and to give us a living part in His own holy life. Emmanuel to be born in us, reproducing Himself, a true Christ in every believing breast: thus making thousands of Bethlehems in every part of the world, some higher and some humbler than the first. Christ in us the hope of glory. Christ changing us into His own image, and ever more and more, "from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord.

III.

Emmanuel—God with us to change weakness into strength, and to keep the strength from falling. After the fever are the days of convalescence. The death-sickness has gone, but the full life-strength has not yet come. That comes slowly, and in part fitfully. To the personal consciousness the strength at times is no more than that of the bruised reed or the bending willow. To will is present, but how to perform that which is good—how to perform the very thing that has been willed—is not found. How to find that secret, how to get practical daily strength for daily need and duty, for the carrying out of the practical convictions, for the doing of what the hand has found to do? That is the great discovery. It was never fully made until Christ came; or by those who were expecting His coming. It could not be made. There was no strength anywhere to be discovered. No sealed fountain of energy lay in human nature ready to rise at the first unceasing touch. Not in natural virtue or courage did the secret lie. Not in blood, not in flesh, not in the will of man—all these are but the terms of weakness and insufficiency considered in themselves; and there needs to be in them and through them, the strength of all strength, the thought of all thought, the steadfast willing which never changes, nor ever fails of accomplishment. Well, but all this is but to say that our need is a present God, a Lord Jehovah in whom is everlasting strength, in whose power we may work, on whose arm we may lean, by the breath of whose Spirit we may live and move, and have this our better being. Jesus is Emmanuel for this end among others—to enable us to say that when we are weak then are we strong, because His strength is ours, and because it is made perfect in weakness.

IV.

Emmanuel—God with us, to wipe away our tears, and to comfort us in our sorrow. This is the child who is to be "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." His human life is to be a burden to him rather than a joy. He is to weep at graves, to groan and shudder in dark gardens of agony, raise the piercing death-cry on a cross—and yet, or rather, we might say therefore, He is to be such a comforter of others, as never has been in the world before. His voice in sick rooms and on lonely paths will be softer than summer breeze, sweeter than a lover's voice. He is to stand by the bed that holds the dead child gazed at and sorrowed over by the weeping mother; by the bier of the young man carried out to his burial; by the grave after it has received its tenant, and say to every stricken mourner who will hear his words—"Let not your heart be troubled." Is not all this some fulfilment of the beautiful promise—"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

It is also true that Emmanuel brings sorrow into the world with Him. He teaches us what to be sorry for, and how to weep. "Our affliction aboundeth by Christ." But all such sorrowing ends in joy. The consolation runs quickly and fully along the very channel which has been opened or deepened by the affliction. This weeping endures for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.

V.

Emmanuel—God with us, to relieve and soften the deep dark mysteries of this life—mysteries which, without Him and His grace, would completely overcloud and, in the spiritual sense, overwhelm us. The real mysteries of this life are, substantially, as deep and as dark now as they were thousands of years ago, indeed, ever since the human world began. Here they stand around us, some of them quite close to us, others farther off making a dim and sad circumference to our life; and all this world's great progress flashes no light upon them, furnishes nothing which approaches or promises even an intellectual solution of them. The Gospel itself is not an intellectual solution of them. It is a moral victory over them; but they are not annihilated or made less. Sin still works in every rational soul. Evil stalks abroad in the light of day, and there is none to hinder it. Monarchs and mighty men who turn whole nations into battle-fields, and whole peoples into armies, are largely on the side of evil. They call evil good, and there is none to rebuke or answer. Pain racks many gentle sensitive frames, tenanted by gentle and sensitive spirits which have sinned far less than multitudes of the strong and healthy to whom pain never comes. And disaster sweeps like a desolating flood over many a field of human industry. And death, sudden and unexpected, darkens many a happy home. And the grave is as silent as when Abel was buried, as when patriarchs were gathered to their fathers. And hearts may break with anxiety, and the air may, at times, be full of sighs and questionings. But there is no reply. Not a grave stirs. Not a star from on high gives answer. Not the flash or the wafting of an angel passing anywhere; nor the softest words spoken to us by any who have died. It sometimes grows awful. And the more, that your wise men can do just as little as your foolish men, as little as the babes in your cradles, to give explanation.

But now listen—"God with us"—not to reason with us until we shall declare ourselves satisfied; not to explain to us all we might desire to know; not to institute schools of celestial philosophy, or higher systems of theology all over the world; but God with us to say: "It is I, be not afraid; to tell us that the world is not fatherless, is not forsaken, is not neglected, that all things are ruled, that nothing is happening by chance, and that we must trust and wait. Yes, the substance of the Divine revelation on the mysteries of our life and of this world is this—and the more we consider it, the greater it will appear—"You do not know, but I know—let that be enough. Keep near to me. Be afraid of no darkness when you grasp my hand. Possess your soul in patience, and watch for the morning."

VI.

God with us, to prepare us for going to be for ever with Him. Out of birth comes death; but out of death comes birth again. Out of change comes that which itself must change and pass away. But all this transiency, and wasting sickness of the world, and perpetual passing away of men, is furnishing to immortal spirits the secret elements of perma-

nence and unchanging life. Time is travelling in pain towards the birth of eternity, and earth will soon pass away in flames, in order to give place to incombustible and incorruptible heavens, where the great Father will make eternal home for His children.

WORDS FOR THE HOUR ON TEMPERANCE.

The approach of the holiday season furnishes not only a fitting occasion for a fresh protest against offering intoxicants upon New Year's Day, but for a bird's eye glance at some of the present aspects of the temperance reform. The pernicious custom of setting out wine, punch, etc., before visitors on the birthday of the year deserves no quarter from pulpit or press. It is a flagrant sin against social morality, and without a shadow of excuse. Hospitality does not require intoxicating beverages, as long as ample supplies of coffee, lemonade, and other harmless drinks can be so easily provided. Many a young man takes his fatal first glass of wine on New Year's Day. Many another has had his incipient appetite for alcoholics confirmed by the temptations held out by female hands. It is not too strong an affirmation to say that the woman who deliberately offers an intoxicating glass to a man deserves to suffer the woes of a drunkard's wife or a drunkard's mother. Nor is it too much to say that no one has a right to ask God's blessing on his home while he makes that home a place of perilous temptation to unwary feet and to those which easily "stumble."

2. During the year now closing a considerable discussion has arisen over the question whether spiritual conversion can take away entirely the physical appetite for strong drink. The position that a change of heart does often produce this physical effect has been stoutly affirmed at some of Mr. Moody's temperance meetings and elsewhere. That sporadic cases of this kind have never occurred we are not prepared to deny; but surely they cannot be frequent enough to establish such an extraordinary hypothesis. The appetite for alcoholic stimulants is a bodily craving, often amounting to a confirmed disease. Sometimes it is hereditary; sometimes it is produced and deeply-seated by long indulgence in stimulants. Certain bodily tissues become affected by drink, and so affected that they inevitably thirst for more drink. Now, that the supernatural grace of God may give a man the power to resist the cravings of a physical appetite is in accordance with the Bible and with human experience. The enemy is not obliterated. He is conquered and kept under. This is the glory of divine grace that it "giveth us the victory," not over foes which have no existence, but over those which have a terrible vitality. When Paul struck hard blows to "keep under" his physical appetite he was not fighting a man of straw. John B. Gough—in a late address in Lafayette-avenue Church, Brooklyn—affirmed most distinctly his utter disbelief in the new theory that a spiritual conversion has any such physical effect as to obliterate the appetite for liquor. There is no better authority than this, after thirty-five years of wide observation and severe personal experience. His own appetite for drink is only a tiger chained up by vigilance and the Divine strength.

Every theory is a dangerous one which leads people into the delusion that they can safely tamper with intoxicants. The worst thing about alcohol is its infernal subtlety. It can deceive the very elect. Thousands of Christians have fallen by its sorcery. I knew an otherwise excellent church-member who was often so overcome by his wine-bottle that he could not conduct his family worship intelligibly. A man who had been apparently converted from inebriety has often exhorted and prayed in my own church-meetings, and has then been tracked to the dram-shop, on his way home from the service! A very large number of those who have signed the total abstinence pledge in Mr. Murphy's mass-meetings have already gone back to their cups. All such facts—and we could multiply them indefinitely—only confirm the Bible truth that strong drink "is a mocker," and whosoever once puts himself under its power discovers that it bites like a serpent and stings like an adder. We do not deny that many inebriates have been soundly converted; we have the names of such on our church-roll to-day. But every such man should write on the palm of his hand: *I cannot trust God too much, and I cannot trust myself too little.* The vast majority of persons, male or female, who ever become drunkards go down at last to the drunkard's doom. This is one of the most overwhelming and unanswerable arguments in favor of entire abstinence from the ensnaring glass. Is it not about time to stop quarreling about disputed Bible texts, and to rest this moral reform upon the basis of common sense and Christian philanthropy? *I dare not drink for my own sake. I ought not to drink for my neighbour's sake.* This is a total abstinence platform strong enough and broad enough for all to stand upon.

3. Female inebriety is on the increase. When women are once enslaved by liquor or opium they are even more difficult cases to reform than men. Among the occupants of tenement-houses and in the by-streets female drunkenness is appalling. Baillie Lewis testifies before a parliamentary commission that in Edinburgh the principal factor of intemperance among females is the licensed grocer's shop. What is true of Edinburgh and Glasgow is equally true of New York and Brooklyn. The great mass of drinking women (with the exception of prostitutes) procure their drams at the grocery. This fact gives fresh emphasis to the wisdom of the efforts now being made by Dr. Crosby's Society, by the State League, and by the Brooklyn "Brotherhood" to break up the corner drinking-dens. And the further we push this matter the more hideously illogical and suicidal it seems for the civil authorities to license a tippling-house of any kind or under any circumstances. But the refusal to license or to allow tippling-houses of all grades means practical "prohibition." So that Dr. Crosby and his co-workers will soon find themselves confronted with the question: Are we ready for that?

The last twelve-months has witnessed a decided progress of agitation and discussion among the thoughtful classes in Great Britain. The "Church of England Temperance Society" numbers among its supporters the Bishops of Oxford, Exeter, and several more of its influential leaders.

The brilliant Canon Farrar (author of the "Life of Christ") is delivering radical teetotal sermons in Westminster Abbey! Basil Wilberforce is agitating Britain with as much eloquence for total abstinence as his celebrated grandfather did for Negro emancipation. These two clergymen are the most popular orators in the Established Church. The British reformers are far more thorough, scientific, and statistical in their philanthropic movements than we are. They have great faith in parliamentary commissions.

Before the present "Committee of the House of Lords" a very interesting series of answers has lately been rendered by Sir William Gull, the eminent physician of Guy's Hospital. Sir William agrees with Dr. Richardson and Sir Henry Thompson in denouncing the too free use of alcoholic medicines. He testifies that he treats fever patients without alcoholic stimulants; that the use of wine, ales, and brandy by overworked people is useless and dangerous; and that in regard to intellectual labour all such drinks are positively hurtful! Even the moderate use of alcoholic drinks he pronounces to be injurious to the nerve-tissues and deleterious to health. In reply to the question of the Archbishop of Canterbury and Lord Penrhyn, he boldly said that "there is a great deal of injury done to health by the habitual use of wines even in so-called moderate quantities." This is rather radical doctrine to be heard in aristocratic quarters. He denies that alcoholic beverages either improve the intellect, or impart strength, or add nourishment, or supply warmth to the body. He makes a proper distinction between "heat and the feeling of heat." Sir William closed by advocating the immediate abandonment of intoxicating beverages on the same principle that he would the prompt abandonment of poisons.

When such wholesome teachings are heard from such influential quarters, it is time that American physicians began to reconsider their practice of freely using and recommending alcoholic tonics. Some of them do give the weight of their influence in opposition to such tonics; but it is still an undeniable fact that an immense amount of drunkenness is produced by the use of wines and Bourbon as restoratives. Alcohol covers up a great deal; but it cures very little. In medicine, as in the social circle, "wine is a mocker. Whoso is deceived thereby is not wise." A "Happy New Year" would it be if it banished the decanter from every house in our land.—*Theodore L. Cuyler, D.D., in N. Y. Independent.*

THE HEM OF THE GARMENT.

He walks in the earth and the heaven,
The Lord in his raiment bright;
His robe is crimson at even,
It is gold in the morning light;
And it trails on the dusky mountains
With a silver fringe at night.

High over the people thronging
Is the light of his pure, calm face;
Can the uttermost need and longing
Come fronting that awful place?
But to touch the beautiful garment
Is a comfort and a grace.

The tender sweep of the grasses
Is smoothing away the smart;
And the light, soft wind that passes
Is a balm to the very heart.
Only the hem of his garment—
But I kiss it for my part!

The seamless blue and the border,
Where the earth and the heaven meet,
And the colours in mystic order
In the broderies round his feet;
It is but the hem of his garment,
But virtue is there complete.

He turns, and I am not hidden;
And he smiles, and blesses low;
Did the gift come all unbidden?
Oh, to think he would not know
(Through even the hem of his garment)
It was faith that touched him so!

"BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD."

This passage ought to be printed in great letters in the memory of every reader of the Bible. All the stars in heaven are bright and beautiful, and yet one star exceedeth another star in glory. So also all texts of Scripture are inspired and profitable, and yet some texts are richer than others. Of such texts this is pre-eminently one. Never was there a fuller testimony borne to Christ upon earth, than that which is here borne by John the Baptist.

Let us notice the peculiar name which John the Baptist gives to Christ. He calls Him "The Lamb of God."

This name did not merely mean, as some have supposed, that Christ was meek and gentle as a lamb. This would be truth no doubt, but only a very small portion of the truth. There are greater things here than this! It meant that Christ was the great sacrifice for sin, who was come to make atonement for transgression by His own death upon the cross. He was the true Lamb which Abraham told Isaac at Moriah God would provide. (Gen. xxii. 8.) He was the true Lamb to which every morning and evening sacrifice in the temple had daily appointed. He was the Lamb of which Isaiah had prophesied, that He would be "brought to the slaughter." (Isaiah liii. 7.) He was the true Lamb of which the passover lamb in Egypt had been a vivid type. In short, He was the great propitiation for sin which God had covenanted from all eternity to send into the world. He was God's Lamb.

Let us take heed that in all our thoughts of Christ, we first think of Him as John the Baptist here represents Him. Let us serve Him faithfully as our Master. Let us obey Him loyally as our King. Let us study His teaching as our

Prophet. Let us walk diligently after Him as our Example. Let us look anxiously for Him as our coming Redeemer of body as well as soul. But above all, let us prize Him as our sacrifice, and rest our whole weight on His death as an atonement for sin. Let His blood be more precious in our eyes every year we live. Whatever else we glory in about Christ, let us glory above all things in His cross. This is the corner-stone, this is the citadel, this is the rule of true Christian theology. We know nothing rightly about Christ, until we see Him with John the Baptist's eyes, and can rejoice in Him as "the Lamb that was slain."

SOURCE OF MINISTERIAL POWER.

Among the truths which with special earnestness you should ask God to reveal to you by the light of His spirit, so that you may have a direct and original knowledge of it, is the truth of Christ's presence with you in your work, His own words—"Lo! I am with you always"—words which express a fact rather than a promise, are directly connected with the command to disciple all nations. It this presence is revealed to you, all your ministerial work will be transfigured. The weight of anxiety which, if you are alone will almost crush you; the consciousness of weakness, which, if you do not see that Christ is near, will sometimes force from you a bitter and despairing cry for release from the responsibilities of the ministry, will vanish. Saturday night comes, and you are thinking of the services of Sunday. Your heart will leap when you say to yourself: "Christ will meet the congregation with me." You may be troubled by the fear that the fervor of your earnestness for the salvation of men has cooled; but, while seeking to rekindle it, your trouble will be lessened, for you will say: "Christ will be with me, and Christ's earnestness will be intense as ever." You have done your best in the way of preparation; but perhaps you have been interrupted in your work, or your brain has been sluggish, and you know that in what you have prepared there is less than the usual force and fire; but you will not be despondent. You will say: "I have done what I could. Christ will be with me, and he can invest this poor discourse of mine with power." Your own sense of Christ's presence may not be so vivid as it has been; but you will say: "Still he will be with me, and he will bless the people beyond my hopes and theirs."

It would be of no avail for us to preach at all if he were not with us. We shall preach to little purpose if we do not believe that he is with us. It is still true that "he that soweth the good seed is the Son of Man." Only as we are filled with his life and his thought shall we preach anything that will deserve to be called a gospel. If we always have the consciousness of Christ's presence, our congregations will discover it, and the discovery will assist to strengthen their faith in him.

It may be that there are laws which determine the manifestations of the supernatural power of Christ. It is clear that these manifestations are related to the truth which is preached, to the spirit and manner in which we preach it, and to the earnestness and faith with which we treat him to have mercy on mankind. We have to discover and to satisfy the conditions on which the success of our preaching depends. But, after all, the quickening of the souls of men and their sanctification are as truly the personal acts of Christ as were any of the miracles of his earthly history. It is he who must forgive the sins of which we speak to our people; it is he who must renew their hearts; it is he who must give them strength for right-doing. It is not truth merely, no matter how sacred; it is not spiritual motive merely, no matter how urgent, how pathetic, how glorious, how appalling; it is not our own earnestness, no matter how deep and how impassioned, that will move men to penitence, draw them to God, enable them to keep the Divine law. We have to rely ultimately on the power of the Spirit, and the power of the Spirit is the revelation of the presence of Christ. The presence of Christ is assured to us by his own words. To disregard it, to think only of how we ourselves can stir the hearts of our hearers and instruct their understandings, is to be guilty of an atheistic presumption which will utterly destroy the effectiveness of our ministry.

Gentlemen, yours is a noble vocation. To be the ally of Christ in his great endeavour to save the world; with him to assert the authority of the throne and law of God; with him to support human weakness in its vacillating endeavours to do the divine will; to inspire the sinful with trust in the divine mercy; to console sorrow; to awaken in the hearts of the poor, the weak, and the desolate, the consciousness of their relations to the infinite and Eternal God; to exalt and dignify the lives of old men and maidens, young men and children, by revealing to them the things unseen and eternal which surround them now, and the mysterious, awful, glorious life which lies beyond death—this is a great work. There is nothing on earth comparable to it. Whatever genius you have, whatever learning, whatever native moral force, whatever energy of spiritual inspiration, will all find their freest and loftiest service in the work to which you are consecrated. And in the ministry even the humblest faculties, if used with devout earnestness, may, through alliance with the power of God, achieve great results.

However obscure your ministerial position may be, to whatever discomforts you may have to submit, however bitter may be your disappointments, I trust that your work will be always invested with the dignity and glory which now invest it, when in your noblest and most sacred hours you anticipate in imagination the years which are stretching before you. Give Christ your best. Be faithful to him, be faithful to your people, be faithful to yourselves, and you will not have to exclaim, when your life is over: "All is vanity and vexation of spirit. You will thank God that he appointed you in this world to a service which was the most perfect preparation for the larger life, the loftier activities, the everlasting glory of the world to come."—*Dale.*

The greatest sinner, who trusts only in Christ's blood will assuredly be saved. The best man in the world, who trusts in his own goodness, will be lost.

MINISTERS AND CHURCHES.

REV. J. SOMERVILLE, M.A., Presbyterian minister of Owen Sound, has been presented with \$100 by his congregation.

THE result of the several congregational votes on the organ question at Knox Church, Toronto, is that the advocates of instrumental music have won the day by a majority of thirty-seven votes.

FROM an Oakville friend we learn that Mrs. Meikle, the wife of our much respected friend, Rev. Wm. Meikle, of that town, was made the recipient of a beautifully illuminated photographic album, and a purse of money, from the friends of the congregation, on Christmas Day. We trust the album, especially, may long serve as a reminder of the regard in which both Mr. and Mrs. Meikle are held.

AT a meeting of the Presbytery of Quebec held at Melbourne on the 19th December, on intimation received of the acceptance of the call from the congregation of Winslow, to the Rev. William Mathieson, of North Arthur in the Presbytery of Saugeen, his induction into the former charge was appointed to take place on the 23rd of January, next; Rev. J. McDonald to preside and address the people, Rev. Mr. McLeod to preach, and Rev. Mr. Lindsay to address the minister.

A SURPRISE party of the young people of part of the Widder congregation, met at the manse and presented their pastor, the Rev. Hector Currie, B.A., with a very flattering address, appreciative of his labors amongst them, also with a valuable present. The Rev. gentleman replied in suitable terms. One very pleasing feature was, that the party was composed of many who are connected with other churches, showing the spirit of friendship and good feeling existing in the neighborhood.—COM.

THE annual missionary meeting of St. Mary's congregation was held on Thursday evening last, the Rev. Mr. McAlpine in the chair. The attendance was unusually large and very great interest manifested in the proceedings. After the usual reports for the year had been read and adopted, and the collectors appointed for the several districts, addresses were delivered by Principal Caven on "Theological Education and the Claims of our Colleges," and by Dr. Cochrane on the "Home and Foreign Mission Schemes of our Church." It is anticipated that the best results will follow this meeting, and that St. Mary's will give a larger amount this year than ever before, to the schemes of our Church.

ON Monday evening, 24th ult., the congregation of St. Andrew's Church, Glencoe, held a festival in the Town Hall, principally for the entertainment of the Sabbath School children. Mr. Gregor McGregor presided, and addresses were delivered by Rev. Messrs. Fraser, Donaldson, and Kennedy, and Mr. Munro, B.A. Vocal and instrumental music enlivened the proceedings; books were distributed among the children, besides a variety of beautiful and useful articles which had formed the fruit of a splendid Christmas tree which stood on the platform. Among the books were a New Testament for each pupil in the junior classes; these were the gift of a lady member of the congregation.

THE congregation of Knox Church, Goderich, held their annual soiree on the evening of Tuesday, the 18th inst. The weather was unfavorable; still there was a large attendance; the meeting was a pleasant one; the addresses were instructive; and the financial results were satisfactory, amounting to the sum of \$138. After an excellent repast in the basement of the church, an adjournment to the audience room took place; the chair was taken by Rev. James Sieveright, and addresses were delivered by Rev. Mr. Musgrave of McKillop, Rev. J. B. Mullan of Fergus, Rev. J. C. Smith of Guelph, and Rev. Mr. Fraser. On Wednesday evening, the children of Knox and St. Andrew's Churches were entertained; and the efforts put forth to contribute to their enjoyment were eminently successful.

ON Christmas Eve, the Presbyterian Congregation in Napanee, met in the basement of the church—Hon. John Stevenson in the chair. The meeting was opened with prayer. An address was then presented on behalf of the congregation to the pastor, Rev. Alexander Young, accompanied with a purse of \$55, as a small token of respect and esteem. After Mr. Young's reply,

a deputation from the Orange Associations of the town presented him with a sum of money, as a slight acknowledgement of the services he had cheerfully rendered them during the past year. The meeting was closed with the benediction. These gifts were supplemented by various others from members of the congregation. The Rev. gentleman has not only won the esteem of his congregation, but of the public generally, and while these tokens of respect will strengthen him in his arduous duties, his people are encouraged by the feeling remarks that he made in reply to the address.—COM.

THE annual festival of the mission Sabbath school in the King's Ward, Brantford, was held on the evening of Wednesday, the 26th ult., in the comfortable school house recently erected by the congregation of Zion Presbyterian Church, under whose auspices the school is conducted. Mr. Charles Duncan, the superintendent of the school, presided on the occasion; and after the children had partaken of a bountiful tea, interesting addresses were delivered by Messrs. H. B. Leeming, John Montgomery, George Wallace, B.A., Head Master of the Weston High School, and Rev. Dr. Cochrane, D.D., who had been absent during the early part of the proceedings, at the mission school on the Flats, but arrived in time to speak. Prizes of books were afterwards given to those pupils who had attended most regularly, and the Christmas tree was stripped of its fruit. The proceedings were closed with devotional exercises conducted by Dr. Cochrane.

DURING the three months' pastorate of Rev. J. R. Battsby, St. Andrew's congregation, Chatham, has made marked progress. Already a recess has been built for the organ, at an expense of \$600, while at the same time the sitting capacity of the church has been greatly increased. Not only has this been done, but the attendance on the Sabbath services has been greatly increased, the church being crowded morning and evening. There is evidently a religious interest awakened and manifested, such as this congregation has never experienced before. Not one, but, many have been enquiring "what must I do to be saved," and God's own people have been greatly quickened. The communion services of last Sabbath were very refreshing to God's people, as well as the preparatory exercises in connection therewith. No fewer than fifty-eight were added to the communion roll, forty-two of these being received on profession of their faith. May the great Head of the church still continue to bless the work, and manifest His presence more powerfully yet.—COM.

A VERY successful tea-meeting was held in the church at Brighton, on the evening of Tuesday, 18th December. The church was well filled, and after those present had been served with an excellent tea, which had been prepared by the ladies, the intellectual part of the programme was commenced. This consisted of singing by the choir, and speeches by several resident ministers, and a lecture by the Rev. John Smith, minister of Bay Street Church, Toronto. The subject of Mr. Smith's lecture was "Elements of a Living Church." Having explained the difference between a living and a dead church, he gave as the elements of a scriptural and living church, "Hearty Union," "Incessant Work," "Genuine Liberty," and "Earnest Prayer." He spoke for over an hour and a quarter to a very attentive and delighted audience. The meeting was opened with prayer by the pastor, the Rev. Mr. Duncan; Mr. Dawson, the Principal of the High School, presiding as chairman. Altogether, the meeting was a great success and Mr. Duncan may be congratulated on the progress of the Lord's work at Brighton.

THE Rev. T. V. Roy, who has of late been lecturing in Toronto and neighborhood, was advertised to speak in the Presbyterian Church of Oakville, on Monday evening, 24th ult. Rev. Dr. Cochrane, of Brantford, happened to be visiting friends in that place and attended the lecture. At the close, Dr. Cochrane rose and stated that the audience should know, that although Mr. Roy appeared in a Presbyterian Church, he had never been recognized by the body, and had no credentials whatever from any church court. Further, that instead of seeking the sympathy and support of Presbyterians, it would be better for Mr. Roy to explain and refute certain statements affecting his character, which were current in the newspapers and other quarters. The remarks of Dr. Cochrane created quite a sensation in the audience, and called up Mr. Roy, who, in a very frantic and angry attitude, asserted

that he was a Christian, and did not care what anybody said about him. It is time that before our clergymen took by the hand itinerant lecturers such as Mr. Roy, they took a little trouble to find out their antecedents, and above all, have a look at their credentials.

THE annual soiree of the congregation of Ashburn was held on Wednesday, 19th December. The weather was very unfavorable, but, notwithstanding this, the large church was well filled. After tea had been served, the meeting was called to order by the pastor, the Rev. Walter Roger, taking the chair and commencing proceedings by singing and prayer. During the evening, excellent music was discoursed by a choir connected with a Methodist Church in the neighborhood. The Rev. Mr. Reid of the Methodist Church, gave a short address. After singing by the choir, the Rev. John Smith of Bay Street Church, Toronto, was called upon to give his lecture on the "Elements of a Living Church." He said that in the year 1848, some years before he had finished his studies in Knox College, he had been sent to supply the stations in Brock and Reach. But arriving at Ashburn on Saturday, and finding that no intimation of preaching had been sent to Reach, he remained at Ashburn and preached on Sabbath. This was Mr. Smith's first sermon; it was the first sermon by a Presbyterian minister at Ashburn and it originated the Ashburn Congregation. He had watched this congregation with great interest ever since. Mr. Smith's lecture, which occupied more than an hour in delivery, was listened to with the utmost attention by the large audience. Mr. Roger's earnest and faithful labors are bearing abundant fruit in this corner of the Lord's vineyard.

IN Knox Church, Scarboro', on the evening of the 17th inst., a missionary meeting was held, presided over by the Rev. R. P. McKay, M.A., the pastor. The attendance was large, the church being well filled by an attentive and appreciative audience. Addresses were delivered by the Rev. D. J. McDonnell, of Toronto, on behalf of Home Missions and Colleges, and by the Rev. Walter Amos, of Aurora, on behalf of Foreign Missions and French Evangelization. Both addresses were well received. On the following evening a meeting was held in Melville Church, Highland Creek, when the claims of Home Missions were advocated by the pastor, the Rev. Mr. McKay, and those of Foreign Missions and French Evangelization by the Rev. Mr. Amos. The attendance was small, but the interest all that could be desired. An incident occurred at these meetings worthy of special mention: Mr. McKay appealed to his people at both meetings on behalf of two mission stations in Muskoka, to which the Rev. Mr. Andrews has been ministering, where the people themselves were willing to do the work necessary to erect two churches, but were without the means of procuring the materials. The result of the appeal was the raising at once of over \$100, to be divided equally between the two stations. This special effort is not intended to lessen the contributions of these congregations to the several schemes of the Church at large. This is an example that might well be imitated by other wealthy charges throughout the country.

A NEW church at Woodbridge was dedicated on Sabbath last. Altogether the weather was disagreeable, and the roads almost impassable, yet the church was filled at each of the diets of worship. The forenoon service was conducted by the Rev. Principal Caven, of Knox College; the afternoon, by Rev. J. M. Cameron, of Toronto; and the evening, by Rev. W. Aitken, of Vaughan. These services were most impressive, and will not soon be forgotten by the people of Woodbridge. On the Monday evening following, the church was again filled, though the weather was most unfavorable. The Rev. R. Pettigrew, pastor of the congregation, occupied the chair. Dr. Grant, Treasurer of the Building Committee, reported that the building would cost about \$3,000. More than half of this amount has already been paid, and the remainder is covered by subscriptions with the exception of about \$200. The neighboring Congregations of other denominations, as well as Presbyterians, have given their contributions. Congratulatory addresses were delivered by Rev. Messrs. Grey, York Mills; Nicol; Smith, Independent; Cameron, Toronto; Mackintosh, Markham; and Bruce, St. Catherines. The choir of Gould Street Church, Toronto, under their leader Mr. Douglas, were present, and contributed largely to the enjoyment of the evening. The

Woodbridge congregation was organized by authority of Presbytery, on the 1st April, 1875, a little over two years and a half ago. The erection of such a building and the circumstances connected with it are most creditable to them.—COM.

LAST winter, Rev. Mr. Little, of Bowmanville, gave his congregation a course of lectures on the Reformation; tracing its course from its first beginnings, through its trying struggles, to its final triumph, and introducing graphic and most life-like sketches of the leading princes, statesmen, and divines who figured in the great revolution of the sixteenth century. This season he is delivering a course of lectures on the Confession of Faith, a subject wisely chosen at the present time, when not a few who arrogate to themselves the title, "advanced thinkers," are ready to remove the old landmarks as obsolete and unsuited to the enlightened liberality of the present age. In the present course he has already treated of the state of religious parties at the commencement of the civil war in England in the time of Charles the First, the occasion of the calling of the Westminster Assembly, with an account of some of its leading members; a general outline of the various creeds and confessions, and the occasions on which they were formulated; and, the definition of the term Church, given in the twenty-fifth chapter of the Confession. Lectures on such subjects as these are very useful. Our people are not sufficiently grounded in the knowledge of the doctrines and polity of our Church. And those ministers are rendering a very important service to the cause of truth, who take pains to show that those Bible doctrines, revived to new life by the illustrious fathers and confessors of the fifteenth century are still vigorous and potent as guiding principles in Christian life; and that these confessions—the work of the most learned and pious of former generations are still applicable to the present age.

THE fourth anniversary of the opening of Knox Church, Elora, was observed on the 23rd and 24th ult. The services, on Sabbath 23rd, were conducted by the Rev. J. James, D.D., of Knox Church, Hamilton, who preached two very able, eloquent and impressive sermons that will not be forgotten by them that heard them for many a day. On the Monday evening a successful tea-meeting was held, which was addressed by the Rev. E. Kershaw, Canada Methodist; the Revs. — Cameron, Palmerston; J. C. Smith, of Guelph; D. Smythe, of Eramosa; and J. James, D.D., of Hamilton. Considering the state of the roads, and the time—Christmas Eve—and the hard times, the audience was large. Had there been good sleighing, large as the church is, it would have been filled to its utmost capacity. All the speakers congratulated the pastor, the Rev. A. D. McDonald, and the congregation, on the noble effort made to remove the debt on the church. There is \$12,900, debt on the church, but by the pastor's personal canvass of the congregation, \$14,115 has been subscribed. This covers the entire debt, leaves a sufficient margin to make the scheme a success, and gives reason to entertain the hope that by this subscription, after the debt has been paid, there will be enough over to paint and fence the church. There is one principle involved in this scheme which is of great importance, and to which it is well to direct the attention of the Church generally. Congregations often involve themselves in heavy pecuniary obligations in church building, but they expect the public to pay the debt by attending tea-meetings, socials and so forth. But here, in the instance before us, the congregation make the effort themselves. They call in no outside influence. They try what they can do themselves, and the result is a decided success. In money matters, ministers should deal as little as possible, but there are times and circumstances, when the welfare of congregations and of the cause of religion demand of them exertion and application. And this case is an instance which goes to prove that if a minister is judicious and has sufficient tact and good nature, he may do a really good work by taking up the matter, and working it out. We commend the principle, to the careful consideration of congregations generally.

PRESBYTERY OF BRUCE.—This Presbytery met at Walkerton on the 18th Dec. There were twelve ministers and four elders in attendance. Mr. Tolmie's term of Moderatorship, having expired, Mr. Cameron was appointed moderator for the ensuing six months. Dr. Bell and Mr. Tolmie addressed the court in the interests of Queen's and Knox Colleges. Messrs.

Blair, Millar, Bell and Duff, elders, were appointed a committee to devise the best manner of raising funds to meet the current expenses of the Colleges. The Committee in their report recommended the Presbytery to instruct its finance Committee to ascertain the amount required from this court and to levy the same on the several congregations of the bound, according to their strength. The report was received and its recommendation adopted, from this deliverance Mr. Bethune dissented. The Committee appointed at last meeting of Presbytery to enquire into the condition of St. Andrew's Church, Paisley, reported that the church property is still in the hands of the anti-unionists. That they had only two or three services in the church during the year. That the union party informed them that if they were to secure the services of an acceptable minister and receive aid from the Home Mission Committee for one year a self-sustaining charge could be gathered by holding meetings in the Town Hall. The report was received, the Committee thanked for their diligence, and it was resolved to wait for the further action of the congregation. There was read a communication from the Rev. John Fraser tendering his resignation of the pastoral charge of Knox Church, Kincardine, owing to ill health. The resignation was laid on the table and Mr. McQueen was appointed to preach and cite the congregation on Sabbath, the 13th day of January, to appear for their interests at a meeting of Presbytery to be held in Knox Church, Kincardine, on the first Tuesday of February at 2 o'clock p.m. A circular letter was read from the Foreign Mission Committee informing this court that Messrs. MacMillan of Mount Forest, and McLean of Blyth, were appointed to address the congregations of the bounds on the subject of Foreign Missions and asking that arrangements be made accordingly. On motion of Mr. Strath it was resolved, "That the Presbytery recognizes the great importance of Foreign Missions and agrees to give them that pre-eminence which in its judgment they deserve, but inasmuch as arrangements for missionary meetings have been made at a previous meeting and cannot now be changed, the plan proposed by the Foreign Mission Committee, is in the circumstances impracticable. The Presbytery is therefore constrained respectfully to decline the offer contained in the circular now read." Messrs. Millar and Andrews were heard in relation to the Mission Stations of Riversdale and Enniskillen respectively asking for supply of preaching. It was agreed to obtain the services of a probationer to labor between these congregations. Agreeable to petitions from Salem Church, Elderslie and Chesley, the pastoral tie hitherto existing between Mr. Bethune and Salem Church was dissolved and his services confined to Chesley. Chesley promises to pay the same stipend as hitherto raised by both congregations, viz., \$700. Mr. Smith was appointed to preach and declare Salem Church vacant on as early a Sabbath in January as practicable, he was also appointed moderator of its session. A petition and complaint of Mr. Wm. McLaughlin was read complaining of an action of the session of Chesley in suspending him from the privileges of the Church. After hearing parties in the case it was resolved to sustain the action of the session of Chesley, complained of, notwithstanding certain irregularities in the proceedings in the case, and that Mr. McLaughlin be required to sign a paper apologizing for his conduct before the Session, and withdrawing statements made by him which might imply charges against members of the Session, and that Mr. McLaughlin on subscribing such a paper receive certificate of membership. Mr. McLaughlin having signed the paper of apology received his certificate accordingly. There was read a call from Prince Arthur's Landing addressed to Mr. D. McKerracher, missionary, signed by sixty-nine members and adherents and accompanied by a promise of the congregation that his stipend should be \$500 per annum with manse. The call was sustained and ordered to be forwarded to Mr. McKerracher. The Rev. D. Cameron, minister, and Messrs. Blair and Millar, elders (Mr. Millar, convener), were appointed a Committee to visit all the supplemented congregations of the bounds, with the view if possible to reduce the rate of supplement for the next year and to report to next meeting of Presbytery.—A. G. FORBES, Pres. Clerk.

P. S.—Kirk Sessions are requested to forward answers to the questions on the state of religion to the Convener of the Committee, Rev. A. Sutherland,

Dingwall P.O., so as to enable the Committee to prepare their report for the next meeting of Presbytery. The remits of General Assembly are to be considered, and commissioners to the General Assembly appointed at next meeting of Presbytery.—A. G. F.

PRESBYTERY OF LONDON.—The Presbytery of London met on December 18th, Rev. Neil McKinnon, Moderator, in the chair. The minutes of last meeting were read and sustained. A petition from the congregation of Hyde Park was read and supported by Rev. D. McMillan. The Presbytery agreed to receive the petition, and to cite Hyde Park congregation to appear for its interests at the next meeting—Rev. Mr. Henderson, of Hyde Park, to supply Komoka, as formerly. The committee appointed to enquire into the condition and relationship of church property in Zorra reported, and the report was received. The Rev. Mr. McPherson, of Stratford, appeared on behalf of the Stratford Presbytery. After a lengthy discussion in reference to the right of jurisdiction over the property, which the several Presbyteries claim, it was unanimously agreed to refer the matter for settlement to the Synod of Hamilton and London. A call was presented from the congregation of Aylmer and Springfield, addressed to Rev. Mr. McIntyre, promising a salary of \$700. The call was sustained, and ordered to be placed in Mr. McIntyre's hands. A call from the congregations of Mandaum and Moore Line, addressed to Rev. Abraham Beamer, promising a manse and \$700, was presented. The moderator's conduct was approved, and the call sustained and ordered to be forwarded to Mr. Beamer. A committee, consisting of Rev. Messrs. Camelon, Thomson, Abraham, and Murray, was appointed to allocate the Foreign Missions Committee to address the various congregations throughout the Presbytery bounds. A letter from Rev. Mr. Gaid, addressed to the Presbytery, in reference to alleged arrears of stipend, was read, and it was unanimously agreed that the letter be allowed to lie on the table. Rev. Geo. Sutherland was granted permission to moderate in a call at Port Stanley. Rev. Mr. Camelon asked permission to moderate in a call for the congregation of Dorchester and Crumlin, and also for Belmont, which was granted. A report from the Committee of Presbytery appointed to meet with the congregations in Westminster, with the object of uniting them into one charge, was read by Rev. Mr. Camelon. The report was received and adopted, and the Presbytery agreed to declare the congregations of the third and eighth lines, Westminster, one charge, under the designation of North and South Westminster. The Presbytery resumed its sitting at 7.30 p.m., last night. A letter from Rev. Peter McDiarmid, of Bear Creek and Burns' Churches, was read, tendering the resignation of his charge on account of ill-health. The Presbytery agreed to accept his resignation, and expressed their sympathy with Mr. McDiarmid in the present circumstances. The resignation of Mr. Ferguson, of Alveston, Euphemia and Brooke, which had been laid upon the table at a previous meeting, was accepted, and Rev. Mr. McKinnon was instructed to preach to the congregations vacant on the second Sabbath of January next. Leave was granted the congregations of Point Edward, Lobo, English Settlement, and Proof Line, for moderations at an early date. The circumstances of Mrs. Scott, widow of the late Rev. Robert Scott, of Jane Street, New York, who, for fifteen years, labored in connection with the Canada Presbyterian Church, were brought before the Presbytery, and it was unanimously agreed to recommend her case to the consideration of the committee in connection with the Widows' Fund. A committee, consisting of Rev. Messrs. Murray, Frazer, Rennie, Goodwillie, Thompson, ministers; and Messrs. Cowan, Thompson, Nisbet, and Henderson, Rev. Mr. Murray, convener, was appointed to arrange for a Sabbath school convention. Rev. Mr. Thompson, of Sarnia, gave notice that at the next meeting of the Presbytery he would move for a division of the Presbytery. The Presbytery ordered all session records to be produced for examination at its next regular meeting. Mr. Farquhar McCrae, student of divinity, being present, read trial discourses for ordination. The discourses were approved, and Rev. Messrs. Thompson, Milloy, and Goodwillie were appointed a committee to examine Mr. McCrae in the various subjects appointed by the Assembly. His ordination was appointed to take place on the 3rd day of January, 1878, Mr. Goldie to preach, Mr. Wells to address the people, and Mr. Sage the Minister. The Treasurer's report was read and adopted, after which the Presbytery adjourned, to meet in the same place on the third Tuesday of March, 1878, at 2 o'clock p.m. The session closed with the benediction.

BOOKS AND MAGAZINES.

The Pilot at the Helm.

Boston: Eben. Shute.

A neat little paper-covered volume of sixteen pages containing a New Year's address to Sabbath school children, this book is just the thing to be bought by the dozen or by the hundred and freely distributed among the young.

Belford's Monthly Magazine.

Toronto: Belford Brothers. January, 1878.

In a bright gala dress suited to this festive season, the January number of the Messrs. Belford's popular periodical is before us. Its pages are never dull, but in the present, which is the Christmas number, they are enlivened to an unusual extent by humorous stories, and by illustrations not less humorous. The contents are: "Solomon Isaacs," by B. Farjeon; "The St. Lawrence," a poem, by "Constantine;" "Roxy," by Edward Egglestone; "How Five Little Midgets Spent Christmas Eve," by Geo. Stewart, jr.; "The North," a poem, by Charles Sangster, "Colonel Merritt's Cup," by Mrs. J. C.; "A Ghostly Warning," by E. C. G.; "The First Christmas," by S. J. Watson. Musical Department; "Canada," a song, with music.

He Will Come.

By A. McPherson, Emerson, Manitoba.

This pamphlet of fourteen pages, purports to be "A Review of the Tract on the 'Second Coming of the Lord,' by Rev. J. Laing, of Dundas, Ont." The writer of it wishes to be regarded as a premillennarian, but not one of the "Plymouth Brethren," whose "errors" he professes to hold in great "abhorrence." Notwithstanding this disclaimer, he says in another place that the said "brethren" have been "most terribly, most cruelly, and unrelentingly maligned and misrepresented;" and he does not seem to be at all well pleased with Mr. Laing for attacking them. He would also have us to understand that if there is heresy among the brethren, "the majority of people would never notice it," and that "it takes a man with some perception to discover it, it is so carefully concealed." If Mr. Laing's reviewer is not one of the "Plymouth Brethren," he is just the sort of material that they are made of, and will probable become fully developed by and by. The title of Mr. Laing's pamphlet justifies him in attacking all the doctrinal errors of the "brethren;" but it seems his critic had not sufficient "perception" to discover this. The full title is "The Second Coming of the Lord, considered in relation to the views promulgated by the Plymouth Brethren and so-called Evangelists." It seems to us that the principal object of Mr. Laing's pamphlet was to do the very thing that his critic accuses him of doing, that is, "mixing up the doctrine of 'the coming' and the doctrines of Plymouthism." His reviewer does not know "whether" this was done "intentionally or not;" but it seems to us that it was done intentionally, in the sense of showing that there is a necessary connection between these doctrines. The mode of Scripture interpretation by which a premillennial "Coming" is established, if applied to the Bible at large, leads to all the doctrinal errors into which the Plymouth Brethren have fallen, and to many other errors at which they have not yet arrived. Does not Mr. Laing's book plainly demonstrate to Mr. McPherson and other simple premillennarians that they are on the road to Plymouth? The last mentioned gentleman undertakes "to show wherein the assertions and imputations concerning the doctrine of the premillennial coming of the Lord, as made by Mr. L., are not in accordance with facts nor with the principles of sound logic." But that is exactly where the trouble is; it is the logic of the thing that makes him so uneasy. The error of the person who accepts the premillennarian theory leads by force of logic to the other errors of the Plymouth Brethren. No one can expect to be allowed to apply one principle of interpretation to a certain passage of Scripture, and another to another passage of the same kind. As long as he tries to hold on to premillennarianism and at the same time to reject the other doctrinal errors of the Plymouth Brethren, he is fighting against the "principles of sound logic," and the more logically he follows out the principle of the arbitrary interpretation of scripture by men who profess to be infallibly taught by the Holy Ghost, the sooner he will find himself, not in Plymouth, but in Rome.

RUSSIAN MONKS AND NUNS.

There are only about 7,000 nuns in the whole Empire, as against 9,000 monks; and the orders of both sexes are scattered among 800 convents. This would give each establishment an average of no more than twenty inmates; but a number of postulants and novices must be added who act as servants to those who have taken their vows. The four great lauras, as the large monasteries are called, contain about 150 monks apiece; two of the first class nunneries have more than one hundred sisters; but many country town conventual institutions boast but three or four friars or nuns, who are all scandalously fat and rich, and lead lives which one might think would tempt the lazy and good-for-nothing among the people to look upon them with envy. It is just the contrary, and the monastic orders are extremely difficult to recruit, notwithstanding that the bishops resort to coaxing and even to coercion for the purpose. Originally a man could only become a monk at thirty and a woman a nun at forty; and postulants for orders were obliged to prove that they were of noble or ecclesiastical family; but these conditions have been abrogated, and nothing is required now but a knowledge of reading and writing. Vows may be recanted after formalities which can be much simplified by the customary national talisman or a bribe in the proper quarters. On the other hand, monks and nuns are constrained to celibacy; they lose what property they possessed as civilians (it goes to their heirs, as if they were dead), and if they re-enter civil life they are debarred during a term of seven years from entering the service of the crown, inheriting or buying land, or inhabiting the cities of St. Petersburg and Moscow. It may be that these rules have something to do with the repugnance of Russians for monastic life, but one must rather attribute the feeling to the universal abhorrence and contempt in which the "black clergy" are held. They are wealthy, powerful, and arrogant, but pariahs for all that. However, a Russian who can surmount his objection to enter an execrated caste finds his lines cast in very pleasant places. All the high dignitaries of the Church—metropolitans, archbishops, archimandrites, abbots, and priors—are chosen from among the monks; and the nuns can rise to such dignities as abbesses, prioresses, and holy mothers. It is computed that the abbots of the lauras pocket £10,000 a year apiece, and those of the smaller monasteries at least £2,000. The abbesses are equally well off. About a year ago one who had held her office ten years created a scandal by going off to France without leave to get married, and the *Moscow Gazette* revealed that she had amassed more than a million of roubles. All this money is earned through the gross superstition which in Russia does duty for religion. Monks and nuns sell tapers, holy relics, images, wedding-rings, and indulgences; they sell prayers, blessings, and the right of burial within monasteries, which wealthy Russians prize highly and for which they pay by sums bequeathed in their wills. Then the monks are sturdy beggars, and it is considered unlucky to send them away empty-handed. If monastic property had remained inviolate through centuries, the Russian orders would by this time own half the land in the country; but Peter the Great, Elizabeth, and Catherine II. all laid ruthless hands upon their estates, and for this reason monks no longer care to be presented with lauds. Offer some productive acres to an abbot, and he will tell you plainly that he prefers cash or jewels, as "easier to distribute among the poor," the truth being that the friars never give away a kopeck. They live subject to no rule, and do not even eat or pray in common. Enter the laura of Troitz, some sixty miles from Moscow, which is the largest monastery of the country, and you find a regular city full of churches and image-shops. There are no fewer than five-and-forty churches within the walls, some large, some small, but all full of the tombs of noblemen, and also of shrines amazingly rich and beautiful. The chapel of St. Serge, the founder of the order, is one mass of gold, diamonds, and emeralds, which will sorely tempt the cupidity of the Government whenever Russia gets a needy ruler bold enough to brave the prejudice which has hitherto held monastic jewels more sacred than monastic lands. No man, however, becomes a friar in Russia from ardent spiritual vocation or from disenchantment at the vanities of this world; for the monkish life is one of money-making, turbulent imposture, intrigue, and notorious license. The Government has no present intention of meddling with the black clergy, because they serve it too well. The monks and nuns act as spies and propagators of religious fanaticism, which is often useful for political purposes. Despised as they are, the superstition which brings so much money into their hands is a great force; and they can work it like a lever for the doing of mighty things. Russians are quite aware that the inviolability of confession as understood by their clergy, but especially by the black clergy, is a mockery; but this does not make them more reticent; for they speak out of a terrified feeling that the unworthiness of the minister has nothing to do with the sacredness of his office, and that to tell a monk untruths would be to court ill-luck. The theology which bishops inculcate both in the pulpit and in the *boudoirs*, where they are admitted because of the tattle they would retail if kept out, is largely descriptive of pranks which Satan plays upon the unfaithful by the agency of ghosts, apparitions, crosses in love, and money. When the Government were minded to embark in the present war, the clergy were ordered to kindle public enthusiasm for a crusade against the infidel Turk; and they did so with remarkable zeal and unanimity. The pious movement, begun in the Empress's drawing-room through the Metropolitan of St. Petersburg, was carried into all the drawing-rooms of the nobility by the archimandrites, and among the people by the monks and nuns, who took care to be no losers by the general outburst of orthodox piety. For weeks and months the convent churches were crowded with officers and soldiers, who brought their swords or bayonets to be blessed by being placed, for money, upon some shrine; and at this moment the wives and mothers of the unlucky men at the seat of war are pouring more and more money into the hands of the monks by the purchase of amulets which are to render their beloved ones invulnerable.

SCIENTIFIC AND USEFUL.

CHEAP LEMON-PIE.—One lemon, one teaspoonful of sugar, one tablespoonful of corn-starch rubbed smooth in a little water; pour upon this one teaspoonful of boiling water, stirring it the while; then add salt, one egg, and butter the size of a walnut.

BREAD OMELET.—Put into a stew-pan a teaspoonful of bread crumbs, one teaspoonful of cream, one tablespoonful of butter, with salt, pepper, and nutmeg; when the bread has absorbed the cream, work in two beaten eggs; beat them a little with the mixture; fry on an omelet-pan, and roll up.

A SIMPLE CURE FOR CUT FINGERS.—Immediately the cut is made procure a large towbeeb, free from dust; and wrap it around the finger so as to completely cover the wound, and then bind a strip of linen over it. The towbeeb, by preventing the admission of air, stops the bleeding at once, and, in consequence, the wound heals much quicker than it otherwise would do. It is also of much value in keeping the edges of the wound together, for it adheres tightly to the skin, and cannot well be removed without the aid of warm water.

CRANBERRY SAUCE.—Perhaps some of our readers may like to have a recipe for making cranberry sauce, which is sure to be a success. It is called the "One, two, three rule," and is as follows: One cup cold water, two cups sugar—coffee, crushed is best—three cups cranberries, washed and picked. Put all in a porcelain or earthen saucepan and cook until the cranberries are thoroughly done. It may be turned into a mould at once, or strained to avoid the skins. In either case, it will form a jelly. Sometimes we use a small bowl instead of a cup.

COAL STOVES.—The necessity of observing caution regarding the management of base burner stoves should never be lost sight of by our citizens. It is a well-known fact that deleterious gases are generated in them, which, however, can do no harm when the stove is properly regulated. This is more especially important at night, when doors and windows are closed, and people asleep. The proper way to arrange a stove is at night, before retiring, to close the front dampers, but leave the back dampers open. By this means the fire will not burn too fast, and the gas will have full opportunity to make its way out without doing any harm.

A FACT IN VENTILATION.—If we remove air from an ordinary room, other air will flow in from some source to supply its place. If it finds no proper entrance it will come in from or through drains or sewers and soil pipes, or down dirty flues of chimneys, or from the cellar up through floors and carpets, bringing the dust with it. If the cellar floor is not made impervious, or nearly so, by coatings of concrete or asphalt, air may be drawn directly from the ground under the house; and it is easy to see that this source of supply, contaminated in various ways, may furnish a very unhealthy atmosphere. From one place or another the new air "has got to come," and it behoves us to regulate its source and quality. *Journal of Chemistry.*

TO DRESS SALT MACKEREL.—Take mackerel from the salt, and lay them inside downward in a pan of cold water for two or three days; change the water once or twice and scrape the fish clean without breaking it. When fresh enough, wipe one dry and hang it in a cool place; then fry or broil; or lay one in a shallow pan, the inside of the fish down; cover it with hot water, and set it over a gentle fire or in an oven for twelve or fifteen minutes; then pour off the water, turn the fish, put bits of butter in the pan, and over the fish, sprinkle with pepper, and let it fry for five minutes, then dish it.

CURE OF CORNS.—Soak the foot in warm water for about a quarter of an hour, every night; after each soaking, rub on the corn patiently, with the finger, half a dozen drops of sweet oil; wear around the toe, during the day, two thicknesses of buckskin, with a hole in it to receive the corn; continue this treatment until the corn falls out; and by wearing moderately loose shoes, it will be months, and even years, before the corn returns, when the same treatment will be efficient in a few days. Paring corns is always dangerous, besides making them take a deeper root—as will a weed, if cut off near the ground. Many applications are recommended to be made to corns, to burn, eat out or soften them, but the plan advised above is safe, is PAINLESS, gives most welcome relief in a few hours, and prevents a return of the corn for a longer time than any other remedy; and last of all, it costs nothing but a little attention: that, however, is the great draw-back.—*Hall's Journal.*

A CHAPTER ON STINGS.—The pain caused by the sting of a plant or insect is the result of a certain amount of acid poison injected into the blood. The first thing to be done is to press the tube of a small key firmly on the wound, moving the key from side to side to facilitate the expulsion of the sting and its accompanying poison. The sting, if left in the wound should be carefully extracted, otherwise it will greatly increase the local irritation. The poison of stings being acid, common sense points to the alkalies as the proper means of cure. Among the most easily procured remedies may be mentioned soft soap, liquor of ammonia (spirits of hartshorn), smelling salts, washing soda, quick-lime made into a paste with water, lime-water, the juice of an onion, tobacco juice, chewed tobacco, bruised dock leaves, tomato juice, wood ashes, tobacco ash and carbonate of soda. If the sting be severe, rest and coolness should be added to the other remedies, more especially in the case of nervous subjects. Nothing is so apt to make the poison active as heat, and nothing favors its activity less than cold. Let the body be kept cool and at rest, and the activity of the poison will be reduced to a minimum. Any active exertion whereby the circulation is quickened will increase both pain and swelling. If the swelling be severe the part may be rubbed with sweet oil or a drop or two of laudanum. Stings in the eye, ear, mouth or throat sometimes lead to serious consequences; in such cases medical advice should always be sought as soon as possible.—*Garden.*

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References:—Rev. J. K. Smith, M.A., Chairman of Board; Wm. Tassie, M.A., LL.D., Head Master of G.C.I.

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TORONTO, FRIDAY, JANUARY 4, 1878.

CHURCH DEBTS.

OUR Presbyterian friends in the United States seem to have been suddenly seized with a wholesome horror of debts and mortgages connected with their Church property. They have a Don Quixote, bearing the name of Kimball, who has discovered that his mission is to cut the rope of the millstone of debt which is dragging to destruction a goodly proportion of ecclesiastical buildings. This gentleman like warriors in general has a preference for Sunday as a suitable time for waging battle. He usually mounts the pulpit with the minister of the congregation whose mortgage is to be attacked. The pastor conducts devotional exercises as a fitting prelude to the work on hand. Mr. Kimball then turns up his coat sleeves, and commences his first round. He makes the conditional promise that, if half a dozen gentlemen will give five thousand dollars each, he will also contribute five thousand. Having succeeded in this and time being called, the second round commences, the auctioneer in the sacred desk calling for sums of four thousand, heading the list with four thousand himself. Having easily slain the giants—those who stand for values of say from five thousand to one thousand dollars—the Quixote has a more difficult task with the smaller fry who represent all possible sums embraced within hundreds of dollars and tens and fives. On the principle that it is easier to shoot an elephant than a lot of vermin, it now takes hours to foot up the hundreds for the one hour that secured the thousands. So slow indeed are the repeated rounds with the enemy, that Mr. Kimball is sometimes obliged to postpone the attempt at further liquidation till the following Sunday, when the laggards are generally obliged to capitulate. The work is then finished. The debt is extinguished. The congregation are called to sing, "Praise God from Whom all blessings flow."

We had thought that this pulpit auctioneering was confined to our Methodist brethren. But while our soul recoiled from the sight of

turning away the House of God from its proper object of worship, it seemed a redeeming qualification that this practice was almost confined to Methodists. Somehow it seems natural for them to do this kind of thing. But Mr. Kimball thoroughly beats the Methodists on their own ground. In the Bloor St. Methodist Church, a man of vast auctioneering ability was brought a long distance and was paid handsomely for the work. This Mr. Kimball, however, like a man, heads or foots the list with his five or ten thousand dollars. But here is the rub. Where does this gentleman get the money to do the handsome in this fashion? Mr. Kimball is not a man of wealth. Were he some eccentric millionaire, and taking this way of doing a nobly generous deed, the feeling of sacrilege caused by turning the church into a house of merchandise might be got over. The congregation would tolerate the thing for once, considering that the successful liquidation of their debts would make its repetition useless or impossible. But Mr. Kimball is neither rich nor eccentric, and how is the miracle accomplished? There is no other conclusion than that the whole thing is planned and pre-arranged. The leading spirits are let into the secret. They are ready to spring to their feet with their one, two or five thousands, and a whole lot more, like sheep whose leader has jumped the fence, rush to the subscription paper and write down their names for corresponding amounts.

Much as we like the idea of a Church being free of debt, we confess that the plan of Mr. Kimball is one not to be commended. It is not for us to say one word against his motives or the spirit which animates his work. The ends he has in view are excellent, and we doubt not he is a man of great practical wisdom, who realizes the fearful nature of debt and wishes to have the Churches relieved of such an incubus. But we do not admire the system which he has inaugurated. However well it may suit other denominations, it is not in our opinion adapted to our own. Our people do not like to be coerced into giving what is beyond their ability. They are not easily influenced by the impulse of competition. They like to consider what they are about, and not to be involved through an emulative spirit in a burden beyond their income or not in accordance with their inclination. Christians will always give from principle. They take the matter before the Lord, and in the conclave of the family they weigh well what is required for household expenses, and what may be the proportion of profit after they have paid their lawful debts. We do not say that Presbyterians as a rule come up to this standard. But we do say that this plan of giving is that which is generally pursued in our churches, and which has been endorsed over and over again by our Church courts. As to the Presbyterian Church in Canada, we feel safe in asserting that were this Mr. Kimball to appear in the manner described before any one of our congregations, however burdened with debt, instead of getting bids and succeeding by appeals to the competitive spirit in man, there would be the likelihood of the gentleman finding himself left alone in the church. Fancy one of our congregations assembling to worship God on the holy Sabbath, and instead of the usual

services of praise and instruction, being called out one by one as to who shall bid highest in the matter of the liquidation of debt. The people would leave in disgust, and the failure of the attempt would be manifest. This would be the case with our members, even at the opening of a church; but how much more would it be the case were an effort like that of Mr. Kimball made to take their pockets by storm?

And we say this in the full conviction that the Presbyterian Church is not behind in the matter of giving. Let our readers only consider the growth of this Church in Canada, its great enterprise in building churches and manses, its vast contributions to Home and Foreign Missions, its munificent support of schools and colleges, and they will see what a grand aggregate is yearly reached without resorting to questionable means and doubtful plans. To this subject of Church Debts we hope to return in another issue, and then we will consider the whole question in its bearings upon Church extension and Church work.

MANITOBA COLLEGE.

THE following circular has been addressed to pastors of congregations. We sincerely trust that a liberal response will be made to it throughout the Church generally.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,—The General Assembly, at its meeting, at Toronto in June, 1876, recognizing the importance to the Presbyterian Church of Manitoba College, unanimously agreed—"that it is entitled to the hearty support of the Church, and that it should be maintained efficiently in its various departments." A Special Committee was appointed with instructions to issue a circular to congregations, pointing out the necessity for the College and asking for a contribution towards its support. The Committee carried out the instructions of the Assembly, but the report, presented at the meeting in Halifax, last June, showed that only a few congregations contributed, thus leaving a large deficit in the funds of the College. The Special Committee was re-appointed with instructions to appeal urgently to our congregations, and to wealthy members of the Church on behalf of the College. The Committee after mature consideration of the present position of the College, its importance to our Church, and the necessity of maintaining it in a state of thorough efficiency, agreed to issue this circular in which they earnestly call upon all the congregations to show their loyalty to the General Assembly, and their interest in the prosperity of our Church in Manitoba, by contributing to the support of the College. If congregations generally contributed, a small amount from each would be sufficient.

The Committee would respectfully request you to bring the claims of the College before your Session and Congregation and to urge them to contribute to its support. They confidently hope that in the annual distribution of your funds, Manitoba College will not be altogether overlooked.

D. H. FLETCHER, *Convener of Committee.*

Hamilton, November 27th, 1877.

N.B.—Collections to be sent to the REV. DR. REID, TORONTO, or the REV. DR. MCGREGOR, HALIFAX.

OBITUARY.

Died on the 15th ult., at the residence of her son John, Mrs. Catherine McColl at the age of eighty-six. She was almost the last survivor of that generation that made for themselves homes in the Township of Esquesing, then a forest, in the year 1819. She was faithful in the discharge of all her relative duties to which it is not necessary to refer more particularly, for her piety, which was fervent and rational was conspicuous in her whole conduct, and in all her social relations. The Bible was her "one book," in the constant reading of which she took daily delight, and its influence on her whole conduct was obvious to all. The religious exercises which always accompany the taking delight in God's word was habitual to her. She resembled the good centurion, who prayed to God always. The weather must needs be very inclement, that would prevent her from "going up to the house of God." If others went to criticise, or from curiosity, or from a mere sense of duty, so did not she. She went to worship; and what was her duty was also her delight. Singularly free from ostentation in her profession, she was disposed to believe that others who made a high profession of Christian experience and character were superior to herself. Hers was a charity which was unsuspecting of guile. What she be-

lieved she was not ashamed to confess. She was not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, which was the power of God unto salvation to her. Attached to her own church, she was ever ready to receive into her affections all in whom she recognised a love to the Saviour. As cold water to a thirsty soul, so was to her good news from a far country of the progress of Christ's cause and kingdom. She was deeply grieved in hearing or witnessing irreligion and ungodliness. Her death was such as might have been anticipated from her life. Her health and strength gradually failed her. She was conscious that her end was approaching, and her confidence that He in whom she had believed would keep that which she had committed unto Him, was unabated. Suffering but little, if any pain she calmly yielded up her spirit unto God. Her name will not soon be forgotten by those who knew her, and to her surviving children, who were so long witnesses of her walk and conversation, she has left a name fragrant with recollections of what she was, and of what she did. She has left a character to admire, and an example to imitate.

PRESBYTERY OF WHITBY. This Presbytery met in St. Andrew's Church, Whitby on the 18th inst. The following items of business were disposed of:—Mr. Drummond, Newcastle, was appointed Clerk of Presbytery; Mr. Peattie was appointed Moderator for the next twelve months. The Records of the Kirk Sessions of Dunbarton, Claremont, Erskine Church, Whitby, and Oshawa, were examined and attested. Those sessions that had not yet produced their Records were ordered to do so at next meeting. Mr. Kennedy gave in his resignation of Dunbarton and Canton, and the Presbytery summoned his congregation to appear for their interests at next meeting of Presbytery, when the resignation will be considered. A committee was appointed to make arrangements for Missionary Meetings in all the congregations, at which the claims of the Foreign Missions would be specially presented. The Sessions were instructed to forward their reports on the State of Religion to Rev. W. M. Roger, Ashburn P.O. The congregation of Enniskillen and Cartwright petitioned for assistance from the Home Mission Fund; after a careful examination of their financial state, it was agreed to apply for \$150 per annum, provided they have a settled pastor. The College Fund was referred to a committee. The first hour of next meeting is to be occupied with a Conference on the state of Religion. Business from the Assembly and some other items were left over till next meeting which is to be held in Whitby, on the third Tuesday of March 1878. A. A. D.

PRESBYTERY OF PARIS.—The Paris Presbytery met at Tilsonburg, on Tuesday the 18th December, the Rev. R. N. Grant, Moderator, *pro tem*. The Presbytery after having been formally constituted and the minutes read, resolved itself into a conference on religion, when addresses were delivered by Dr. Cochrane on Home and Foreign Missions; by Mr. McEwen of Ingersoll, on Sabbath Schools, and Mr. D. D. McLeod of Paris, on Evangelical life. A large congregation was present and deep interest manifested in the subject of the addresses. Among the more important items of business transacted were the following:—The clerk read letters from Rev. Hugh Thompson, relating to certain moneys alleged to be due him from St. Andrew's Church, East Oxford, and the Home Mission Committee. In Mr. Thompson's absence the matter was left over for consideration, until next meeting of Presbytery. The committee appointed at last meeting to prepare a scheme for Presbyterial Visitation reported a series of questions to be put on such occasions, to the ministers and office-bearers of churches. The questions having been read by Mr. Grant the convener of the committee, and considered *serialim*, were, after a few slight amendments had been made—ordered to be printed, and circulated for the information of members—final action to be taken on the whole subject at next regular meeting of Presbytery. Mr. McMullen was appointed to visit the stations at Beachville, Sweabourgh and Old St. Andrew's, East Oxford, and enquire into their condition and prospects. A committee consisting of Mr. Lowry and Dr. Cochrane was appointed to arrange for the deputies of the Foreign Mission Committee and the Missionary Meetings of the various congregations within the bounds. Reports on the state of religion, not yet handed in, were ordered to be sent to the Rev. James Little, Princeton, on or before the 15th January, 1878. The committee to

prepare the Annual Report is as follows:—Messrs. Little, McLeod, and J. Thompson, ministers; and Messrs. Lillico, and Ronald, elders. Extract minutes of the congregations of St. Andrews, East Oxford and Shavers' Corners, were read, to the effect that a "Basis of Union between said congregations had been agreed to." The Basis of Union having been considered, the Presbytery after deliberation agreed to express its gratification at the proposed union, and give its cordial assent to the same, and further agreed to instruct Mr. Aull formally to announce the action of Presbytery, and declare the congregations of Shavers' Corners and St. Andrew's, East Oxford, united in one pastoral charge, to be known as St. Andrew's Church, Blenheim, and St. Andrew's Church, East Oxford, in terms of the Basis of Union submitted to and approved by Presbytery. A circular was read from the Convener of the Assembly's Committee on Sabbath Schools, proposing certain questions for consideration regarding the advancement of the work. On motion the matter was left over until next regular meeting. A committee consisting of Messrs. Grant, McMullen, and Little, ministers, and Mr. J. Rutherford, elder, were appointed to report to next meeting, on the Book of Forms. The Presbytery then adjourned to meet at Paris, and within River Street Church there on the first Tuesday of February, 1878, at 11 a.m. —WM. COCHRANE, Clerk.

PRESBYTERY OF OWEN SOUND.—This Presbytery held its last regular meeting in Division Street Church, Owen Sound, on the 18th inst. Mr. Somerville read his report on the Scottish National Bible Society, and the obligations of this Presbytery thereto, which was received, and a committee appointed to correspond with the different Depositories with the view of having the accounts closed, and the books on hand disposed of. A petition was read from the session and congregations of Kilsyth and North Derby, asking for a moderation in a call. The request was granted and Mr. Currie was appointed to preach at Kilsyth and moderate in a call on the 3rd prox. On the matter of the collection ordered to be taken up by the several congregations within the bounds, to aid the Warton Church Building Fund the following sums were reported: Division Street Church, Owen Sound, \$18; Latona, \$7; Chatsworth, \$12.70; Leith and Annan, \$13.25; Sydenham, \$1.50; Meaford, \$7.90. The Treasurer was instructed to forward to Warton what funds are on hand for this object, and Mr. Dewar to continue his diligence till, if possible, the sum of \$150 be raised by this Presbytery for the Warton Church. Messrs. Cameron and Stevenson were instructed to carry out the instructions of Presbytery at its last regular meeting, anent Ravenna and Collingwood Mountain Stations, as soon as possible. The Thornbury and Heathcote congregations, applied through their Moderator for leave to have a call moderated when they are ready therefor. The Presbytery instructed Mr. Whimster to procure and lay before it information as to the state of the Communion Roll, and the amount of stipend they are prepared to pay, before the request be granted. Professor McLaren's circular anent Foreign Missions was read, whereupon it was resolved, that having heard the circular anent the proposal of certain brethren to visit our congregations, with the view of stirring them up to give more liberally toward Foreign Missions, the Presbytery express the opinion, that in our circumstances we could not ask them to undertake such a journey with the hope of raising the contributions to that Fund, to an extent worthy of such a visit, but in the absence of these brethren, the Presbytery engage to do their best, each minister in his own way, toward the object in view, and in order to carry it out more efficiently appoint Mr. McDiarmid to take the oversight of our congregations doing their duty to this Fund. Mr. Somerville was appointed to discharge a similar duty in behalf of the ordinary College Fund. Mr. Currie was appointed to receive and tabulate answers to the questions on the State of Religion within the bounds of the Presbytery. Rev. Mr. Reeve intimated to the Presbytery that he would quit the Parry Sound Mission Field after the last Sabbath in May next. The Presbytery accordingly instructed its Home Mission Committee to look out for a suitable missionary for this Field. Mr. Stevenson was appointed Moderator of the Griersville Session. Mr. John Creaser gave in the report from the committee anent Mr. McNaughton's arrears, and the clerk read a letter from Mr. McNaughton. The report was received and the committee

instructed to continue its labors. The clerk's salary was fixed at \$50 per annum. A committee was appointed to draw up resolutions anent the present position of the temperance cause in this county. Messrs. Dewar, Cameron, Somerville, and McGill, to compose said committee. Messrs. Morrison, Somerville, Dewar, and Creaser, were appointed a committee to examine the remit sent down by the General Assembly anent Ecclesiastical Procedure, No. 7, and to report at the next regular meeting. Anent the remit regarding an agent for the scheme of the church in connection with the Home Mission Fund, the Presbytery resolved, that in the present position of the church's finances, it would not recommend such an appointment. The principle of a Common Fund for the maintenance of the Colleges in Toronto, Kingston, and Montreal, as set forth in Remit, No. 3, was approved of. Anent the status of retired ministers, the Presbytery resolved to recommend the General Assembly to enact that ministers who are allowed by the General Assembly to retire from ministerial work, and to have their names retained on the Aged and Infirm Ministers' Fund, shall have their names (if they wish it), on the roll of their respective Presbyteries, provided they engage in no secular calling. In reference to the 5th Remit, the Presbytery recommended that ordained missionaries who are in active service in Mission Districts have their names on the roll of the Presbytery within whose bounds they are laboring. In compliance with the injunction of the General Assembly the Presbytery instructed each of its congregations either to form a missionary association, or an equivalent thereto, for the systematic maintenance of the various schemes of the Church. The Presbytery then adjourned to meet in the same place, on Tuesday, January 15th, 1878, at 2 o'clock p.m.—D. B. WHIMSTER, Presbytery Clerk.

PARTIES who have not completed their canvass for THE PRESBYTERIAN are requested to notice that the time is extended till 1st FEBRUARY NEXT. Subscriptions for 1878 remitted by that date will entitle the subscriber to a copy of the YEAR BOOK.

THE Education Society of East Ontario met at Brockville, on the 27th ult. Professor Riddell of the Ottawa Normal School was elected President. From the reports given in the daily papers we gather that the subjects discussed were important, and that much ability and intelligence were displayed in their treatment. The benefits accruing to a school from the use of examination papers to which written answers must be given by the pupils, were well brought out. There has, of late, been a tendency to resort to this method, and it is undoubtedly of great value in so far as it secures accuracy on the part of the pupils, and tends to promote good penmanship and composition; but it should not be overdone. The oral method is best for teaching—using that term in the sense of communicating knowledge—and written answers to questions are quite as useful, in their own place, and for their own purpose, which is to test the pupil's knowledge and fasten it more firmly in his mind. In the course of the discussions, the evil of "cramming," or charging the pupils' memories with matter which they do not understand, was thoroughly exposed. Principal Dawson of McGill College, Montreal, was present and delivered an able address on "Discipline." We hope the address will be published. Professor Macoun made some telling remarks regarding the excess of legislation in educational matters. Some of the speakers expressed the opinion that inspectors ought to have power to make third-class certificates perpetual when the teacher who possesses such, shews himself to be gifted with talent greatly above the average. We think this suggestion ought to be acted upon. The natural talent for teaching is scarce, and ought to be secured wherever found. There are many men in the profession who can shew a very high certificate, but who have not this natural talent for communicating knowledge, and who are therefore laboring under a disadvantage; while there are perhaps quite as many who are in possession of the natural talent, but are destitute of the capacity for acquiring knowledge necessary to enable them to take anything higher than a third-class certificate; and who, under the present system, are on that account, turned out of that profession which is best suited to their peculiar mental conformation, and in which they would be found much more useful than many men of much greater attainments.

CHOICE LITERATURE.

MORE THAN CONQUEROR.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "ONE LIFE ONLY," ETC.

CHAPTER VIII.

Anthony Beresford had read to the last line of the document, which he felt had been written in the full belief that it would be seen by him and by him alone, and that from none other but himself would an answer be demanded to the solemn appeal with which it closed. He folded it up, laid it on a table by his side, and then, turning round towards his mother, he slowly raised his beautiful hazel eyes, and fixed them full upon her face. There had been a change during that last momentous hour when all the failing powers of her departing life had been strained to endure the tension of her terrible suspense, and the ominous grey shadow had crept now even over the eyes that seemed to look at him as through a veil. Her pale lips moved, but in her intense anxiety she failed to make any articulate sound. She joined her hands as in convulsive entreaty, and then lay silent and gasping.

It was a piteous sight, and Anthony was touched to the heart. He bent towards her, and spoke calmly and distinctly. "Mother, believe me that I feel for you in your cruel anxiety for your son with all my soul. If I do not at once relieve it by making you any promise, it is because the issues of the question as it now stands are to me of such tremendous importance that I dare not, even for your sake, answer hastily. I see perfectly well that if I accede to your demand I can only do so at the cost of a life-long sacrifice—a sacrifice that will not affect myself alone in the destruction of all my dearest hopes, but that will influence the destiny of many a hapless being, whom I might have had power to rescue from intolerable misery."

She interrupted him with a gesture of passionate entreaty, while a violent effort forced the words from her lips—"My Rex, my Rex—save him!"

He was all the world to her, in the hour of death as he had been in the days of life. She could give no thought to Anthony, or to the suffering thousands whom he had hoped to succour. She could only cling with desperate tenacity to the mortal existence that was passing from her, till she had won for her darling the boon she coveted, be the cost what it might.

"Give me a little time, dear mother," said Anthony, beseechingly. "I must weigh well all that your request involves before I answer you."

"Time!" she almost shrieked out. "What time is left to me? I am dying—soon it will be too late. Anthony—Anthony—as you would have peace when your own death hour comes, grant my prayer!"

He rose, and, tenderly placing his arms round her, he laid her back on the pillows, from which she had started, saying, gently, "Wait only a very few minutes longer, dearest mother, and you shall have my decision."

"Do not leave me," she exclaimed, clutching at his arm with the failing fingers that had not power to grasp it.

"I have no thought of doing so," he said, "I shall not quit the room;" then as she lay back passively, he went aside into the recess formed by the bow window, where he could feel himself to be alone for the few brief instants in which he must settle the question on which his whole future destiny depended. He stood with his arms folded on his breast, and his eyes almost unconsciously fixed upon the scene before him. It was about the same hour of the morning as that of the day before when he had been looking down from the mountain side over the fair Welsh landscape which had scarcely been more lovely than the view that now lay stretched beneath his gaze—far beyond the pleasure of its noble trees, and the green fields through which the river ran, he could see the sleeping waters of the deep still lake from which Darksmeere took its name; it lay in a hollow so that the hills on the one side, and the wood on the other, overshadowed it completely, and made it in truth a dark mere, which the sunshine seldom touched, while the solitude that surrounded it was unbroken for many miles. The contrast between this sullen gloomy lake, lying motionless within its narrow boundary, and the bright blue ocean wide and free that had sparkled beneath his eyes the day before, seemed to strike Anthony forcibly as bearing a singular analogy to the strangely different destinies which a few hours had placed before him, with the certainty that he must now make his irrevocable choice between them.

The golden vision which had shone on the horizon of his hopes when he stood on the mountain side had seemed to offer him a life of boundless energy and independent action, with sympathies wide as that ocean, and powers free as its waves that onward led to distant lands, bearing sunshine and fresh pure air upon its breast where thousands might rejoice in its brightness and its freedom; but the life to which his mother would bind him down in her exclusive care of her youngest born would be as restricted and isolated in its power of good as was that lonely lake within its narrow bed, while the dark dead waters that never leaped up to the storm or smiled to the sunbeams were indeed a fit emblem of the dull monotony of petty cares that would make up his existence from day to day if he gave himself to be nothing more henceforward save the unwelcome guardian of one weak boy. It was very certain that Rex, already grown to an age when he had a right to liberty of action and the control of his own property, would not desire the perpetual supervision of an elder brother, or easily endure it, and the whole aspect of the existence that must be his if he yielded to his mother's prayer, made Anthony Beresford grow sick at heart as he contemplated it with a certain foresight, while his eyes still rested on the solitary lake, but it was only for a moment that he allowed himself to look at the matter as it affected his own happiness. "It," he said to himself, was not the question. God had given him a life wherewith to serve Him, and he was bound to discover after what manner he could best and most surely render it back to the Giver,

in worthy and fruitful service. He had believed that a career had opened out before him which would have been most blessed and most glorious, alike for himself and many others; and now another path was shown him by the dying hand of his mother, where he could see neither glory nor blessing, but only the passive duty of standing between his younger brother and a possible danger. Surely it was nobler and more divine to unloose the heavy burdens and let the oppressed go free, to respond to the appeal of many-voiced anguish that rose forever from the slave-lands rather than to waste his youth and strength in guarding that one young man from an unseen enemy. Why should not Rex suffice to himself as other men were fain to do, and fight his own way through the trials and temptations which in some form or other dog the steps of every human being upon earth? why must Anthony fling all his life away upon him, and desert the cause of thousands for his sake? What better claim had Rex upon him than the fact that he was the son of a mother who had never loved him, and had not each one of these many slaves a stronger plea in their utterly defenceless misery?

Almost had Anthony turned round to tell his mother that he would warn Rex, and send him earnest counsel from his distant home, but that even at her prayer he could not give up his cherished dream, when it seemed to him as if a voice whispered in his ear, with mocking emphasis—"Am I my brother's keeper?" He started, as he remembered by whom those words were uttered, and while he stood irresolute, another sentence came sounding through his soul in that mysterious manner which most of us have experienced in the hour of temptation—"It is not the wish of your Father which is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish." "One of these little ones!" Even so. Was it not certain that one single soul was so precious in the sight of God that a thousand lives were well bestowed to rescue it from sin? Had not the one Life, which was of more value than that of all the human race, been given for each single soul? and was Anthony to withhold his own when it was claimed from him by the close tie of blood, wherewith God had bound them to each other, and the solemn obligation of a mother's death-bed prayer? Had there not been pride and arrogance in the idea that his work was required for the deliverance of the slaves whom their Father in heaven could set free at a word, if such were his good pleasure? "The work that is done upon earth He doeth it Himself." He might have permitted to Anthony the privilege of serving him by acts of mercy to the slave, if he had set no nearer duty before him to hold him with a prior and an irresistible claim. Rex had been given him as a brother, who sorely needed his support, before ever his eyes had fallen upon the dusky faces of the alien race that could claim no kindred with him. For a moment Anthony bowed his face on his hand, while his breast heaved with the struggle his inward resolution cost him; but when, with determined will, he had cast out of his heart the golden dream, the generous hope, that had been his light of life for three bright years, he slowly raised his eyes to heaven, and, folding his hands in calm submission, said, softly—"So be it, Father; I will be my brother's keeper."

Anthony Beresford's face was very pale when he turned to go back to the bedside of his dying mother, but it was beautiful with a serenity of peace such as it had never worn before—the peace of self-renunciation and pure devotion.

Mrs. Erlesleigh was lying just as he had left her, with such an agony of suspense marked in every line of her wan face that he blamed himself for his delay, short as had really been the interval in which so momentous a decision had been made. She turned her failing eyes toward him with a mute questioning, piteous in its entreaty, but she did not speak.

Then he knelt down at her side and pressed his lips upon her cold white hand, as he said, in a clear, sweet voice, "Be at rest, my dearest mother, with all the rest that I can give you; for I grant your request to its fullest extent. I renounce now and for ever all other hopes and schemes of life, and I give myself to you to be the guardian and friend and protector of your son, my only brother, so long as we both shall live."

A flood of joy, like the light of morning breaking on the cold grey sky, lit up the face of the dying woman as she raised her arms, and cried out aloud, "Oh Anthony, my son, may God for ever bless you!"

CHAPTER IX.

For a moment there was silence between those two—the son who in the prime of his youth and strength had surrendered all he held most dear to give that death-bed peace, and the mother who in the last hour of her mortal existence had not scrupled to take from his young life the one pure hope that gave it brightness.

Anthony remained kneeling, with his head bowed upon the dying woman's hand, and she was struggling with the emotion which made her failing heart beat so convulsively as almost to stop her breathing, in order that she might give him some last instructions, now that his obedience was secured. After a time she gathered up all her remaining strength, and spoke.

"I must see Rex in your presence, Anthony, but before you call him, I must ask of you a pledge that you will never reveal to him the contents of the paper you have read. I have been compelled to reveal to you the errors of my darling husband, though it was agony to do it—but it would be the cruellest treachery to him if I ever let that fatal knowledge come to his own young son. I have taught Rex unconsciously to love and revere his father's memory, and by no act of mine, living or dead, shall it ever be darkened for him with the faintest shadow of dishonour. Give me this promise also, Anthony, my good dear son, in addition to that which has made my last hour happy."

"After what you have won from me already, mother," he said, with a sad smile, "there can remain nothing I should wish to refuse you. Only I would have you consider for a moment whether it is wise to exact this pledge from me. Is not his danger likely to be much greater if he never knows he has an enemy? May it not become necessary for his

own safety that I should warn him of Dacre's insidious plans?"

"Not if he has you to guard him; you know all, and will stand between him and his secret foe. He will be safer when you have the responsibility of his well-being than he could be acting for himself, with his weak judgment and confiding disposition; nor could I ever consent that his young life should be poisoned by the knowledge that a deadly enemy was for ever following him unseen, and mysterious perils lurking about his path with which he could not grapple. Had I not the far stronger motive of sheltering my husband's memory from the contempt, and it may be, the abhorrence of his son, I still could not endure to quench all the brightness of my poor boy's youth, and crush his buoyant unsuspecting nature by the cruel revelations I have been constrained to make to you. Let him enjoy his light-hearted freedom, his unclouded hopes, while still the radiant dreams of youth can deck his unknown destiny with golden light. Not long will either youth or hope endure for any on this earth; let my poor Rex smile out his time unassailed by the clouds which we can see afar off gathering together to assail him."

"So be it, mother, I will obey you," said Anthony, calmly, feeling that this last request did but render somewhat heavier the burden she had laid upon him. Rex was to be left free and happy in his thoughtless youth, while Anthony, weighted with a terrible secret, was to have no respite night nor day from sleepless anxiety and unceasing watchfulness, lest evil should creep unseen into his brother's joyous life, but he was too true, in his generous devotion, to shrink from any condition that would make his sacrifice more complete, and he was rewarded by the look of complete rest with which his mother sunk back and closed her eyes.

Presently, however, she said, in a faint voice, "I feel very weak, and my sight is growing dim, let Rex come to me without delay."

Anthony went quickly to the door, and bade the nurse call his brother.

She had not far to go, for Rex had been waiting in an adjoining room, impatient and miserable, and, in spite of himself, jealous of his brother for monopolizing so exclusively their mother's last hours on earth.

Mrs. Erlesleigh's fatal illness had brought to her youngest born the first pang of real sorrow he had ever known. Hitherto he had led a careless, happy life, thinking of nothing save his own amusement, and feeling himself so absolutely—as his mother often playfully called him—the King of Darksmeere, that he appeared to expect even the vicissitudes of human destiny to be subject to his will, and that his whole existence was to pass in cloudless sunshine, as his early years had passed already. He had scarcely known, perhaps, how much his mother's ceaseless devotion to his happiness had really added to it, or how sharp would be the pain of final severance from the one person who had drawn out his affections, till he found himself about to lose her, and then he rebelled like a child against the unwonted suffering that had come upon him, and secretly held himself to be unjustly treated in being made to endure it.

Rex Erlesleigh was habitually swayed by feelings rather than by principles, for he had a loving, impulsive nature, without either strength of character or intellectual power, and although hitherto, under his mother's watchful care, it had mattered little that his actions never sprang from any deeper source than the fancy of the moment, it was very certain that when at last he had to engage in the real battle of life, it would depend entirely on the influences that had most attraction for him whether his impulses would tend to good or evil.

He came hurrying along the passage towards his mother's room so soon as he was called, with his fair face flushed with anger and impatience, and his blue eyes full of tears. He pushed aside the nurse, who had opened the door for him, and went quickly up to his mother's bedside, exclaiming, petulantly, "I think you are very unkind, Anthony, to have kept me away from our mother so long."

"Ah, not unkind, my darling," said Mrs. Erlesleigh, turning her dim eyes upon him with a passionate fondness in their gaze, which seemed piteous indeed in that parting hour; "he has been kinder than words can tell to me, and he will be to you, too, my Rex; in future he will take my place in caring for you when I am gone."

"I do not want any one but you," he answered, with a burst of grief. "Why are you taken from me when I need you so much; it is all very hard upon me, and I do not know how to bear it!"

The dying woman sighed heavily.

"Darling, heaven knows I do not leave you willingly. I scarce believed that any power could tear me from you; but Death is too strong for me, his grasp is on my heart; I must go. My Rex, my son, I shall see your angel face no more. I scarce can see it now. I have called you to hear my last words, to receive my last injunctions. I may trust you to remember them, may I not, my child?"

"Oh yes, mother, if there is anything I can do to please you still, I gladly will, tell me only what you wish."

"I wish that you should take your brother Anthony to be your friend and guide and counsellor, to trust him as you have trusted me, and follow his advice in all respects, as if my voice still spoke to you through his lips; he will love you truly, Rex—though it cannot be with such a love as I have given you—and he will labor wisely for your happiness; if only you will let him walk ever by your side through all the years of life that yet may wait upon you. Promise me, my Rex, that you will never part from your brother Anthony."

"I should be ready enough to promise that, dear mother, for I shall be so lonely and wretched without you I should be thankful indeed to have him near me, but you know I cannot hold him here against his will, and he means to spend his life in Africa, do you not, Anthony?"

"Not now," said Anthony, softly.

"No, Rex," said Mrs. Erlesleigh, "your noble brother has given up his cherished scheme for your dear sake. I could not die in peace until I had his pledge to stay always by your side, for you will find that life is harder and more difficult by far than you imagine, and you will sorely need a friend, let him be that to you, my Rex, in every hour that

you live henceforward; nothing must ever estrange you from him. Darksme is not his home by right of birth, but you must make it his by right of your affection, and count his presence in it your chief blessing. Say that it shall be so, my dearest son," she added, faintly; and Rex bent down and kissed her fondly as he said, "It shall be as you wish, my mother, do not fear; Anthony and I will never part." A radiant smile lit up the dying woman's face, and her lips moved, but the power to speak seemed to have left her, and the young men, terrified, called quickly for the nurse.

"This is complete exhaustion!" exclaimed the woman, as she raised Mrs. Erlesleigh's head. "She may rally from it for a time, if she is left perfectly quiet, but I must ask you gentlemen to quit the room now, and let me do the best I can for her."

"Must I go?" said Rex, reluctantly. "I will not speak a word."

"Indeed you must, sir," said the nurse. "I shall give her restoratives, and fan her to sleep; but I can do nothing while you remain here."

"May we rely on your calling us if there is the slightest change?" asked Anthony.

"Most certainly, sir! I shall summon you instantly if I see her at all worse; but pray take your brother from the room now," she added, as Mrs. Erlesleigh moved uneasily at the sound of Rex's uncontrolled sobbing; and Anthony put his arm affectionately round his brother's shoulders, and drew him away.

The rest of that bright autumn day passed very drearily for both. Anthony himself was worn out by his fatiguing journey and the long painful conversation with his mother which had followed so closely upon it; and he lay back silent in an arm-chair, while Rex wandered restlessly from place to place like an unquiet spirit.

It was midnight before the summons came, and then the sharp sound of a bell ringing from their mother's room echoed with hasty peal through the silent house, in an instant the brothers were both at her bed-side, and saw with the first glance at her white marble face that the death-hour had indeed come. She did not seem to notice her sons, and Rex cried out, passionately, "Mother, we are here, Anthony and I!"

Then a quivering of the eyelids showed that she had heard him. They had each taken one of her cold hands, and with a great effort she drew them together, till involuntarily they clasped each other's fingers, then she feebly pressed their hands thus joined, smiled softly, and straightway expired.

(To be continued.)

AN ORIENTAL CITY.

Cairo, the capital of Egypt and of the Arab world, is also a cosmopolitan capital of Mohammedanism and the East, second in importance only to Constantinople. It is the precise counterpart of Paris, London, and New York, the cosmopolitan cities of Christendom and the West. It has a thoroughly Oriental character, though not so exclusively as Damascus; but, like Constantinople, with a considerable infusion of European life and civilization. The great mass of its 400,000 inhabitants are Egyptian Arabs, and Mohammedans by faith. The rest are Copts (or Egyptian Christians), Turks (who are, of course, all Mohammedans), Bedouins (or Arabs of the desert), Jews, Italians, Greeks, French, German, English, and a few Americans. The last class occupy high positions in the army or spend the winter there for health and pleasure.

The greatest charm of Cairo is the street-life. It is intensely interesting to a traveller from the West and makes an indelible impression. It is a moving panorama of all nationalities, creeds, languages, and costumes, with a strong preponderance of the Oriental and semi-barbarous element. It is a perpetual carnival, which defies description. The boulevards of Paris, London Bridge, and New York Broadway cannot compare with it. You may enjoy this unique spectacle quietly sitting on the verandah of Shepherd's Hotel; but still better in the old town, especially the Muske. The streets are alive with gaudily-dressed men and veiled women, water-carriers, peddlers of all kinds of wares, braying donkeys, growling camels, barking dogs, horses and carriages—all jostling against each other in endless confusion. In Muske the crowd is so dense that it seems impossible to get through, and the noise so loud that you cannot hear your own voice. A German called it a veritable *Hollensandal*. Every carriage is preceded by one or more fleet runners, crying to clear the way. The men wear the red fez or turbans of all colors. The green color marks a descendant of the Prophet or a pilgrim to Mecca. Mohammed's banner was green, and, hence, to unfold "the green banner of the Prophet" means to declare a religious war against the infidels. The women are veiled in white or black or blue, according to rank, the veil being fastened to a pin over the nose and leaving the dark eyes free to satisfy their curiosity. Many of the lower women carry naked babies on their shoulders. Not many years ago it would have been dangerous for a female to appear unveiled on the street; now you see plenty of Europeans in their usual dress.—The old fanaticism of Islam has been hopelessly undermined under the liberal regime of the present Khedive.

My first excursion was to the Citadel. It affords a commanding view of the city, the Valley of the Nile, the distant Pyramids, the sands and hills of the desert beyond. It is one of the finest pictures in the world and can never be forgotten. On this spot Mohammed Ali, by a treacherous massacre, destroyed the power of the Mamelukes (1811), whose chiefs he had invited to a military parade. One only escaped death by a bold leap on horseback over the wall. Within the limits of the Citadel is the beautiful alabaster Mosque of Mohammed Ali, with the tomb of this great but unscrupulous tyrant, who died in insanity (1849). It was completed in 1857. It is certainly one of the noblest structures of that kind, and, being new, it is exceptionally clean and elegant. The Mosque of Sultan Hassan, at the foot of the Citadel, completed in 1359, is called "the splendid"; but neglected and in a state of decay, like many other tem-

ples of Islam. Opposite to it is the unfinished mosque of the mother of the Khedive.

The Moslem architecture grew out of the round form of the tent, the habitation of the Bedouin, and combines with it the cupola of the Byzantine churches. The mosques are covered with carpets or rugs, for kneeling and prostration, and a pulpit or reading desk; but have no seats, no benches, no altar, no pictures, and betray the inconoclastic character of Mohammedan worship, which consists simply of prayers and occasional preaching from the Koran. The Arab music is monotonous and dull.

The Koran has no idea of an atonement, and, hence, no room for sacrifice, except the commemoration of Ishmael's (Isaac's) sacrifice by Abraham. Allah is, indeed, "all merciful" and forgives sins; but arbitrarily and directly, without satisfaction of his justice. The devotions of the pious Mohammedan are impressive and put many Christians to shame. He says his prayers and goes through his bowings and prostrations regularly and punctually five times a day, in the mosque, or at home, or on board a ship, or in the street, or wherever he may be, regardless of his surroundings, being alone with his God in the midst of the crowd, his face turned toward Mecca, his hands raised to Heaven, then laid on the lap, his knees bent, his forehead touching the ground. His usual prayer is the first Surah of the Koran, which serves him the same purpose as the Lord's Prayer does the Christian, but bears no comparison to it in beauty and comprehensiveness. Sometimes a few other verses are added, and the ninety-nine beautiful names of Allah which form the Mohammedan rosary. There are three stated hours of prayer: four minutes after sunset, at night-fall, at daybreak, or after sunrise, a little after noonday, and in the afternoon. The Prophet fixed the time of prayer a little after sunset and sunrise to avoid the appearance of sun and star-worship, which he had to contend with in Arabia. The muezzin of the mosque announces the time of prayer from the minaret by singing the "Adan," or call to prayer, in these or similar words: "God is most great! I testify that there is no deity but God. I testify that Mohammed is God's apostle. Come to prayer! Come to security! Prayer is better than sleeping. God is most great. There is no deity but God." Besides prayer, the Koran enjoins fasting, almsgiving, and pilgrimage to Mecca at least once in a man's life, as the chief exercises of piety. The power of the Mohammedan religion and the secret of its success lies in its intense monotheism. Its fundamental dogma is the ever-repeated "There is no deity but Allah, and Mohammed is his apostle," (*la ilaha ill' alla, wa Muhammad rasulu llah*).

In entering a mosque, you may keep on your hat, but must take off your shoes, or cover them with socks or put on slippers, in commemoration of the divine command to Moses: "Take the shoes from off thy feet, for the ground on which thou standest is holy." Slippers or sandals of straw are always provided at the entrance of the mosques, and must be paid for. There are always half-a-dozen claimants for back sheesh.

Women are seldom seen in the mosques. The Koran does not command them to pray, and some Mohammedan philosophers doubt whether women have souls. Yet they are necessary for the sensual bliss of Paradise, where the humblest believer is allowed 50,000 slaves and seventy-two wives besides those he had in this life, if he chooses to keep them.

Islam is a religion of men, while Christianity has more followers among women. The one keeps woman in a state of slavery and ignorance; the other raises her to true dignity and equality with man. In nothing is the superiority of Western or Christian civilization over Mohammedanism so manifest as in the position of women and in the home-life. Polygamy is a fruitful source of domestic and social misery. Every Mohammedan is allowed to have four wives, besides slave concubines, although most of them can only support one. Pashas and sultans may keep as many as they like. Mohammed was comparatively temperate, and had fifteen regular wives. Many of his successors have surpassed Solomon in the extent of their harems. He despised a throne and a diadem, and lived on dates and water, in a poor cottage, surrounded by the cottages of his wives. The Khedive of Egypt has sixty palaces. Mohammed and the savage sons of the desert, by a fanatical faith, extreme simplicity and temperance, and the power of the sword conquered the fairest portions of the Old World, plundering, enslaving, destroying. The Mohammedans of the present day have to live at the mercy of Christian Europe. They have shamefully wasted their opportunities and the time of reckoning has come.

One of the most instructive sights to me was the old Moslem University, founded in 957, in the Mosque El Azhar. It is the largest in the world and numbers over 10,000 pupils and 320 professors, from all Mohammedan nations. Many, however, attend it to escape conscription to the army, which in Egypt and Turkey is feared more than death. It is the hot-bed of Mohammedan fanaticism. The Koran is the only text-book for grammar, logic, and philosophy, as well as theology. The University has the appearance of a huge Sunday-school. The students sit cross-legged on the floor, in small groups, reading or listening to the instruction of the teacher. There they also eat, and sleep on a blanket or straw mat. They support themselves, or are supported by the alms of the faithful. The professors receive no salary, and are supported by private instruction, copying books, and presents from rich scholars. There are no benches, no chairs, no beds, no comforts of any kind. The simplicity and self-denial of this student-life is something marvelous. Our theological students could not stand it a week. Attached to the Mosque is a chapel for 500 blind scholars. I visited the University twice, in company of Dr. Lansing of Cairo, and Dr. Hogg, of Onslow, who familiarly conversed in Arabic; but some scholars looked rather suspiciously at us. We had first to get permission from the headquarters of the police, and to wait nearly an hour till the formalities were gone through. The head of police—formerly a Circassian slave—sat there in his dignity and politely treated us to a litte cup of dark coffee and a cigar-

ette, the usual manifestation of Oriental hospitality. He wrote his orders not on the table or the divan, but on the knee, to the many servants who passed in and out. The Orientals do everything the wrong way, according to our Western notions. They write from the right to the left; they eat with the fingers; they keep on the cover of the head and take off their shoes in the mosques and in their houses.

In striking contrast to this Old University is the New University, founded by the Khedive and superintended by Mr. Doer, the minister of public instruction, a very intelligent Swiss by birth. He gave me much information about the schools in Egypt and complained of the want of funds. The New University represents the modern system of secular education, without religion, and affords instruction in all modern languages; while in the Old University the Koran and the Arabic are the exclusive object and organ of teaching. It numbers, however, only 300 pupils and is looked upon with suspicion by the genuine Moslems. Time will show whether the new civilization is able to conquer the old fanaticism.

Near the New University is the library of the Khedive, founded in 1870. It numbers already over 25,000 volumes, mostly Arabic, Turkish and French works. It is especially rich in old copies of the Koran (*musahifs*), collected from the various mosques of Cairo. They are of large size, written with the greatest skill and care, well bound, and present the finest specimens of Arab calligraphy, equal to the best medieval manuscripts of the Bible. The student of the Koran and its commentators will scarcely find a more favorable opportunity than here. The obliging librarian, Dr. Spitta, is an excellent Arabic scholar, a pupil of Professor Fleischer, in Leipzig, and a son of the sweet German singer, the author of "Psalm and Harp." A brother of his is a theologian and superintends the Tholuck stipend at Halle.

No one interested in Egyptian history and antiquities will fail to visit the Museum at Bulak, a suburb and harbor of Cairo, on the right bank of the Nile. Although of recent origin, it has already, by the indefatigable zeal of its founder and superintendent, Mariette Bey, become one of the richest collections of Egyptian antiquities and can favorably compare with the collections of Turin, Berlin, the Louvre, and the British Museum. The building is too small, and a larger one is in course of preparation, on the other side of the Nile. The original locality of all the articles is known. A French catalogue, prepared by Mariette Bey, gives a full description. Among the most interesting curiosities are the wooden statue of a civil officer, of striking individuality, which contrasts favorably with the petrified stiffness of Egyptian art. Biblical scholars will be interested in a statue of Rameses II. (the Pharaoh of Israel's oppression), and the head of his son, Menephthah (the Pharaoh of the Exodus, who perished in the Red Sea).—Philip Schaff, D.D.

WONDERFUL THINGS ABOUT ANTS.

Sir John Lubbock has been known to be devoting his attention to ants for the last three years. He has clever assistants in his little daughter and her governess, who watch the proceedings in the ant room during the day and report progress if he has been absent. Living on a farm adjoining that of Charles Darwin, he has the benefit of consultation with that great man. Sir John's story is most extraordinary. He declares that, though the ape ranks next man in form, the ant ranks next to him in intellect, and, if the ants should ever be able to make up by numbers for their deficiency of size, they might be able to cope with man on no unequal terms. There are 700 known species of ants of which there are thirty in this country, and Sir John has based his researches on twenty species, which are now sharers of his hospitality. For a liberal and moral man, Sir John does not seem to observe rigid principles with these tiny creatures. He sees some as slaves to others, and on one occasion gave an ant-company of thirty so much to drink that they were reduced to hopeless intoxication. On this last occasion the sober ants pitched five of the inebriated into the water and took twenty-five into the nest to recover. But of a similar party of "strangers" (i. e., not belonging to their nest) the sober ants pitched twenty-five into the water, took five into the nest; but presently brought four of these out and pitched them into the water too. The ants know their comrades after long separation. Sir John separated one from his nest for a year, then brought him back and with him a "stranger" of the same species, marking them with paint for recognition. The ants treated the stranger acerbically; but welcomed their long-just brother and wiped the paint off him. There is a little yellow ant in England which regularly raises poultry. It stores up through the winter the eggs of aphides, which, being hatched in spring, give them a good supply of provisions. The differentiation of labor among them is remarkable—some being developed into soldiers, others of the same nest as laborers, and others as commissariat agents. Sir John found that two particular ants were invariably set out to bring in food placed at the door, and when these were removed by him, two others were appointed, who came just as invariably, and so on, as often as the special officials were removed. The ants keep a more various stock of animals for their provisions (than Englishmen do), and there are two tiny creatures (an aphid and a beetle) always found in their nests, and never eaten or used, apparently their cat and their dog. Slavery prevails, and there is no anti-slavery society. But Sir John remarked the evil effects of the system. The most determined slaveholder is called "Polyergus," a queer misnomer, since the hatched creature doesn't work at all. By employing slave (which are very black), this big red ant has lost all cleverness, all strength, and even his mandibles. He is, perhaps, the only animal in Nature that can not feed himself, but will die amid plenty unless Sir John sends in slaves every day to cram the food down his throat. It is the great middle class, who hold no slaves, who develop the marvellous intelligence and enterprise displayed by ants. After the lecture, I asked Sir John if he had heard of the Texan species, said to sow and reap. He said he had, and could well believe the report, which, however, American observers should investigate. M. D. Conway.

OUR CONTRIBUTORS.

THE SABBATH SCHOOL SYSTEM.

MR. EDITOR,—In your issue of the 14th inst., you favored your readers with a paper read at a Sabbath School Conference entitled, "The Home Sabbath School." The writer sets out with statements as to the duty of the parent and the church to instruct the young, he bewails the carelessness of parents in this matter, and the incompetency of the average Sabbath School Teacher to do this work for the parent.

He then questions the hopeful results to the well-being of the rising generation from the present method of carrying on Sabbath School work, and closes the first part of his paper with this compact and very intelligible paragraph:

"There are no overmastering reasons why the church should carry on the present colossal Sabbath School enterprise; but, on the other hand, there are evils resulting from this system which demand immediate consideration and remedy."

This *resumé* of the paper is clearly a challenge to the Sabbath School workers of the Presbyterian Church, if not of the world. If the writer is fully in earnest, and deeply alive to the so-called dangers of the Sabbath School SYSTEM, he will be prepared patiently to listen to an exposition of its history, its foundation facts, and its controlling principles, as held by those who believe quite the opposite; and with your permission we will in a few letters outline the fruitful principles and facts that enter into this System.

In our opinion there are in the paper three great assumptions.

1. That the present Sabbath School System is INHERENTLY IN ANTAGONISM to the best interests of home life. This is assumed by almost all who take exception to the power of Sabbath School operations. Such persons have their eyes specially open for such tendencies; it seems as if this was the only object of their search; and of course every community and congregation furnish not a few sad examples; but *does the cause* lie in the nature, and organization of the System, or does the seat of difficulty exist in an altogether different direction. This is the question open for discussion. And it can be settled, not by an induction of cases of parental neglect—and that under the better kind of Sabbath School work—but by a careful and minute examination of the history, the principles, and aims, and a proper representation of the place the church has in that work, as contrasted with the parent.

2. That the church travels beyond her commission and proper work in taking a portion of the Lord's Day for the instruction of the *people and their children*, old and young, in the School form, and by Catechetical methods. We regard it as an unfair representation of the Sabbath School movement that it is only for children, who should, could, or would be taught at home during the School Session.

3. That by this undue attention to Sabbath School work, parents have been crippled in their preparation and fitness for imparting home instruction. These assumptions when linked together are irresistible. The System is inherently antagonistic to the home, the church has unwisely stepped in to remedy the evil by the System; and the sad consequence is that the parent as such has been unfitted for his own proper work, and thus between crippled and wronged parents and incompetent Sabbath School Teachers the condition of our children must necessarily be deplorable, and ten years hence these children will be anything but desirable citizens, or strong useful members of churches. The prospect is indeed, in this view, discouraging.

The causes of parental neglect we believe lie deeper than the Sabbath School System,—viz. in the over eager anxiety of fathers to make riches—the luxurious sloth that comes of the fashion of this world—and in not a few instances from a style of pulpit ministrations whose tendency with the hearers is away from the unexplored riches of the word of God. Sentiment, and not salvation, occupies their attention. With this review of what we regard as an inadequate representation of the present state and tendencies of Sabbath School work, we go on to our more immediate purpose in these letters, viz.—An exposition of our Sabbath School System.

FIRST FACT.

The Sabbath School work of the present century had its origin largely, if not mainly, in a movement

outside of church organization. It was purely philanthropic in its design, and only contemplated local results. The success that followed the endeavours of Robert Raikes in 1781, was followed up by other men of like philanthropic spirit. In 1785 the Society for the Promotion of Sabbath Schools in the British Dominions, was organized in London, under the leadership of William Fox. Schools were opened in many of the more populous centres of England, but they did not become universal until a higher idea than that of philanthropy took possession of the promoters. From being devoted to secular instruction, it became religious; from being done by paid teachers, it was done by voluntary effort, and the Bible became the central source of instruction. The itinerant life of John Wesley gave large opportunity of promoting this work, and judging from its influences, it received his most hearty co-operation. Under the guidance of Bishop Asbury the work was inaugurated in Charleston, S.C., in 1790. A year later the First day, or Sabbath School Society was formed in Philadelphia, and officered by men from all the denominations. The work has kept steadily on, growing in influence, in wisdom of methods and machinery, in depth of life and experience, and in settled principles of action; it has become a recognized part of the church's life and work. This movement in modern life will soon enter on its centennial, and it will not be out of place, to examine our foundations, the worth of our controlling principles, and how far we are in true harmony with the being and well-being of society, how far we are working in the line of duty inculcated by the Master, and in the genius of His life and ministry.

JOHN McEWAN.

THE NEW YEAR.

It comes in darkness as the others came,
Hiding its secrets from our longing eyes;
The profit and the loss, the praise and blame,
The disappointment sore, the glad surprise.

"O God what will it bring us?—us and ours?"
We ask with trembling as we forward gaze;
Shall it be sunshine bright and fruitful showers,
Or nights of sleepless care and weary days.

We can but wait with patience till the hour
Unfold the mystic doors and bring the light;
But blessed be our God, our weal is sure,
The Lord is ever near—our guide and might.

Let us but hear His voice and we are calm,
Though tempests rage and darkness shroud our path,
Through the drear gloom shall rise the joyous psalm,
And faith shall thrive amid the signs of wrath.

His love that led us safely through the last
Shall lead us safely through the coming year,
His kindly bounty that supplied the past
Shall fill our lives with good, our hearts with cheer.

He never failed us yet, He never will,
Eternal Truth can neither faint nor fail;
Whate'er betide us, be it good or ill,
His boundless mercy shall in all prevail.

"Glory to God"—we thus begin the year,
"Glory to God" shall be on earth our song,
And when our pilgrimage is ended here,
Eternity shall still the strain prolong.

C. INNES CAMERON

IMPROVED CONGREGATIONAL SINGING.

MR. EDITOR,—Your kindness in the acknowledgment of my letters, your deep and avowed interest in every point affecting the welfare of our Church, and your readiness to devote a column to practical hints on church music, has led me to embrace the opportunity of expressing thoughts which may be useful to those interested in psalmody. It is gratifying to find that so many ministers now-a-days know music well and seek to further its development in their churches, and that so much is being accomplished in connection with our Sabbath Schools in the musical education of the young. One feature in Sabbath School singing is that in most Sabbath Schools the children *stand* while engaged in the service of praise, and if we could induce all our Sabbath Schools, and indeed all our churches to adopt the standing posture in praise, one good point would be gained, and one formidable obstacle removed out of the way of improvement. It seems that good taste, the discomfort of singing in a sitting position, the thoughts of reverence and adoration which the service inspires, point to the standing posture as the one we should assume when publicly engaged in praise whether in the church or in the Sabbath School. It is of the utmost importance that

the best specimens of sacred poetry be selected for these services. Many weak and effeminate effusions are to be found in our Sabbath School Hymn Books, treating sacred subjects in a manner not conducive to the edification of the children, and unworthy of the Being we seek to adore. Even in the metrical version of the Psalms the force and beauty of some of the finest passages is materially damaged by being strained into English rhyme. The want of hymns bearing (as directly as possible) on distinct Scripture subjects is much felt by ministers and Sabbath School superintendents in conducting the devotional exercises in both Church and Sabbath School services; and although not by any means a matter to be easily rectified, is very important and deserving of very special attention in any collections which may be compiled for our use. The prevailing tendency to introduce secular music in our sacred services is a matter of regret to all who have carefully considered its degrading consequences. That revival hymns set to such tunes as "Home Sweet Home," "Robin Adair," "Tenting on the Old Camp Ground," "Annie Lisle" and others, may have proved serviceable outside the educative organizations of our Church, we willingly admit; but that these should be introduced into the praises of our Sabbath Schools, nay, and even of our sanctuaries, is an *innovation* which we trust our Church (with all its liberality) is prepared to resist. Such melodies, however good in themselves, carry with them secular associations which do not in any way harmonize with the spirit of our Sabbath services. How passing strange then is it, that many of our people will rise up in arms at the introduction of a good old "Metrical Chant" because it seems to flavour of the "Church of England," forgetting that chanting is a return to the simple form of ancient Hebrew worship and quietly acquiesce in the introduction of secularisms which insidiously seek to sap the vitals of our sacred associations, and thus Pharisee-like, "strain at a gnat and swallow a camel." Truly, "truth is stranger than fiction." That we have abundance of good sacred music; and that the principles and plans for furnishing good sacred music are still within our grasp without the adoption of secular melodies, we hope to be able to prove in future papers. Yours etc. J. McL.

REVISION OF THE AUTHORIZED VERSION.—The Company appointed for the revision of the Authorized Version of the Old Testament concluded their forty-seventh session on Friday afternoon, Nov., 24th, in the Jerusalem Chamber. The following members attended during the session, which continued for ten days:—Mr. Bensly, Dr. Chaner, Mr. Cheney, Mr. Elliott, Mr. Geden, Dr. Ginsburg, Dr. Goth, Archdeacon Harrison, Dr. Kay, Professor Leathes, Mr. Lumby, Canon Perowne, Professor Robertson Smith, and Mr. Aldis Wright (Secretary), fourteen in all. Communications were received from Dr. Lindsay Alexander, Dr. Douglas, and Dr. Field, who were unable to be present. The Revision was continued from 1 Chronicles xx. 1 to 2 Chronicles xx. 33.

MEETINGS OF PRESBYTERY.

TORONTO.—Knox Church, Toronto, on 3rd January.
LINDSAY.—At Woodville, on 26th of February.
BARRIE.—At Barrie, 1st Tuesday of February.
STRATFORD.—In Knox Church, Stratford, on 29th January, at 10 a.m.
KINGSTON.—In St. Andrew's Hall, Kingston, on Tuesday, 8th Jan., 1878, at 3 p.m.
OTTAWA.—In St. Andrew's Church, Ottawa, on Tuesday, 5th February, at 3 p.m.
PETERBOROUGH.—In the Mill Street Church, Port Hope, in the third Tuesday of January, at 1.30 p.m.
PARIS.—Presbytery of Paris meets in River Street Church, Paris, on first Tuesday of February, 1878, at 11 a.m.
LONDON.—Next regular meeting in 1st Presbyterian Church, London, on the last Tuesday in March, 1878, at 2 p.m.
GUELPH.—In Knox Church, Acton West, on January 8th, 1878.
GLENGARRY.—At Alexandria, on Tuesday, January 8th, at 11 a.m.

Births, Marriages and Deaths.

MARRIED.

At the residence of the bride's father, on the 25th Dec., by the Rev. D. B. Cameron, Acton, John Riddick of Tecumseth, to Sarah Maria, eldest daughter of Benjamin Anderson, Esq., Esquimaux.

December 31st., at the residence of the bride's father, 201 Sherbourne St., by the Rev. A. M. McClelland, B.A., brother of the bride, assisted by the Rev. Dr. Robb, James W. O'Hara to Lizzie, eldest daughter of Alexander McClelland, Esq.

On Wednesday, 26th ult., at the residence of the bride's father, by the Rev. John McAlpine, assisted by the Rev. Principal Caven, D.D., John Eastwood Hodgson, B.A., Head Master of High School, St. Mary's, to Bella, eldest daughter of John Sanderson, Esq., all of St. Mary's.

SABBATH SCHOOL TEACHER.

INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

LESSON II.

Jan. 13, 1878. } ASA FAITHFUL TO HIS GOD. { 2 Chron. xiv. 1-11.

GOLDEN TEXT:—"LORD, it is nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power."—Verse 17.

HOME STUDIES.

- M. 2 Chron. xiii. 1-12.....Abijah succeeds Rehoboam.
- T. 2 Chron. xiii. 13-22...His victories over Israel.
- W. Ps. cxv. 1-18.....Folly of idolatry.
- Th. 2 Chron. xiv. 1-11...Asa faithful to his God.
- F. Ps. iii. 1-8.....The Lord a Shield.
- S. Ps. xx. 1-9.....Trust in the Lord.
- S. Jer. x. 6-13.....God's name mighty.

HELPS TO STUDY.

Rehoboam died after a reign of seventeen years, and his son Abijah reigned in his stead. He was a warlike king, brave in action, but imperfect in service. He proposed to himself to re-establish his dominion over the ten tribes; and, backed by a military force of 400,000 chosen men, he marched into the dominion of Jeroboam, and stationed himself on Mount Zemaraim, in the mountainous region of Ephraim. Here he was met by Jeroboam, who could muster 800,000 warriors. Abijah, after the frequent manner of the East, made a haughty harangue to Jeroboam and his army. But, while he was talking, the wily Jeroboam was acting, and flanked Abijah's army with an ambush from behind. The Judahites raised a cry of dismay and a prayer to God; the priests sounded their silver trumpets; and with a shout the army of Judah rushed upon Israel, and utterly defeated them. It is said that they slew 500,000 men. After Abijah's short reign of three years, Asa, his son, reigned in his stead. His name means "physician," singularly appropriate to one who was the healer of his country's ills. Our lesson brings Asa before us as an example of

I. THOROUGH REFORM: verses 1-5. He did that which was good and right in the eyes of the Lord: Deut. vi. 18; James i. 22; Ps. xxv. 12.

To realize the Divine Presence continually with us is the best safeguard. "He who sees upon himself God's eyes will not stray far from God's ways."

He took away the altars of the strange gods: Deut. vii. 5; Ezek. xiv. 6; Acts xiv. 15. Ever since Solomon's decline idolatry had flourished. Asa strikes at the root of the evil, by destroying everywhere its outward symbols and instruments. (Note 1.) He removes temptations out of the way of the people. This is still the duty of rulers, for instance, in regard to the evil of strong drink.

Commanded Judah to seek the Lord: Isa. viii. 19; Amos v. 6; Jer. xxix. 13. It is not enough to remove temptation; instruction in the way of righteousness must be given.

The goal of all true leading is God. No human guide can be followed wholly. Asa sinned in his old age, but his people were safe if they obeyed his command "to seek the Lord."

The kingdom was quiet before him, there was neither invasion from abroad nor strife at home. Here was a grand opportunity, and the king improves it and sets us an example of

II. EARNEST WORK: verses 6-8. He urges upon the people their opportunity. The land had rest. The land is yet before us. The way to avoid danger is to make preparation for it. "Walk while ye have the light." John ix. 4; xii. 35. He recognizes God's hand in their opportunity. It was the Lord who had given him rest on every side. Israel, on the north, was too closely absorbed in civil strife to trouble others; Egypt was as yet restrained. But the king further traces God's gift to the people's penitent return from their idols. Because we have sought the Lord. Godliness is the only fountain of national peace and prosperity. God does acknowledge and bless the people that seek Him.

Therefore, let us build.—Industry and religion go hand in hand. Faith stimulates to activity. So fenced cities were built, and the army organized and equipped. Judah furnishes the spearmen, and Benjamin the archers. God's warfare requires the varied weapons and abilities of every Christian soldier.

Asa's preparations were not made any too soon. Not only the strength of his cities and valour of his army, but his faith is now put to the test.

III. FAITH AND PRAYER: verses 9-11. Another Egyptian invasion threatens the land. King Shishak had entered Jerusalem in triumph, and carried away the treasures of Solomon's temple. Then he had returned to Egypt, and caused his expedition to be commemorated upon the walls of the great temple at Karnak, little thinking with what eager interest that inscription would be deciphered 2,800 years afterward, as illustrating the truth of the sacred books of the nation he had despoiled! No wonder his successor (as is supposed), (Note 2) Zerah, the Ethiopian, was fired with emulation, and resolved to see what he could get out of so rich a city as the capital of Judah.

But the result was very different. Zerah and his army "were destroyed before the Lord, and before His host," and the people they thought to plunder enriched themselves with the spoil.

Asa went out.—Although his army was greatly inferior to the foe he did not hesitate. He had One with him who was greater than all that were against him. Having done his best, he cried unto the Lord: Ps. xviii. 6; xxxiv. 6. Nothing with Thee.—Great and small are both alike.

In Thy name: Ps. xx. 7.

Against Thee.—What a bold plea this is. It assumes that the Lord's cause and theirs were so much identified, His honor so much involved in theirs in this matter, that man's triumph over them would be triumph over Him. If this

notion rested not on strong foundations, it were egregious presumption; but, if it were well founded, it was faith.

Asa's victory was the *victory of faith*. 1 John v. 4. The practical question, therefore, is How may we acquire this faith?

But is this a practical question? Does it concern us and our Sabbath scholars? To show them that it does is one chief task before the teacher in this lesson. Now every one of them has most real enemies. First, There are the tempters to evil, whether it be bad companions, or the corrupt tendencies of their own hearts—in either case directed by the great enemy of souls. Secondly, There are the influences that hinder any disposition in them to do right, any persistence in good resolutions and holy plans, the formation of any good habits. A lad whose heart is to some extent touched by religion may resist many temptations to actual sin, and yet he may yield to the less obvious temptation to timidity or weariness or discontent in the active service of God. These are our Shishaks and our Zerahs: how shall we meet them?

Let us meet them as Asa met Zerah.
1. He did not underrate his enemy's strength, or overrate his own. The whole tone of his prayer in v. 11 implies that he felt as Jehoshaphat did afterward before the Moabites and Ammonites, "We have no might against this great company that cometh against us." (Chap. xx. 12.)

2. Yet he had no intention of submitting. *He meant to fight.* He "went out against him and set the battle in array." How few of us do that! How ready we are to yield to temptation, and then excuse ourselves because the adversary was so strong, without testing his strength by striking a single blow!

3. And then, not in lazy despondency, but in cheerful courage, he laid it all before God. It is, indeed, a beautiful combination of prayer and effort, of resolve and trust, that we have in the eleventh verse. "We rest on thee"—and, therefore, sit still? Nay, but "in thy name we go against this multitude."

That is true faith. Once more, how can we get it? Does not the very fact that Asa had it, and Rehoboam had it not, suggest the answer? *It comes of a perfect heart.* Not a sinless heart, but a sincere heart; a heart really set upon serving God, notwithstanding all weakness and all besetting sin. Paul could say, "Whose I am, and whom I serve;" and because he could say that truthfully, he could trust God even in the sinking ship.

The wavering, uncertain, half-hearted Christian has no real sense of God's love, therefore no faith in His presence and help, therefore no strength against spiritual foes. But enlist under Christ's banner, put on the whole armor of God, take the shield of faith, and then we shall be able to withstand in the evil day, and, having done all, to stand.

FOR THE LITTLE ONES.

How many of you would like to have me read one thing from the Bible about Asa? (V. 2.) "Asa did that which was good and right in the sight of the Lord." Would you like to know just what good things Asa did? I will help you to know. Some of Asa's people worshipped idols instead of the true God. What do you think Asa did? "Made them stop." (Teacher reads v. 3 and 4.) Now who can tell me what King Asa did that was good and right in the sight of the Lord?

Let us go back and think about King Rehoboam a moment. Did he command the people to obey God's law? Did he obey it himself? When King Shishak with his mighty host came up to fight against Rehoboam, what did God say? "Ye have forsaken me, and therefore have I also left you in the hand of Shishak." Then came a king and his mighty host to fight against Asa; would God say to Asa, I have left you in his hand? Why not?

When King Asa saw the great army gathering to fight him, he began to pray to God: Help us O Lord, our God, for we rest on Thee, and in Thy name, we go against this great multitude. When the battle came, what do you think God did? Helped them. Yes. God made King Asa and his men very strong and they won the victory. The enemy ran while Asa and his soldiers chased them, and they threw away their clothes, and food and treasures. Asa and his men picked up these and took them for their own, and took their sheep and cattle also. Why was Asa victorious? Why was Rehoboam defeated? What did obedience to God bring to Asa? God's help.

If you had to fight a great giant, what would you do? Pray to God to help me. Well! there are giants, many of them for you to fight; the giant Illtemper is one. If he conquers you, he will twist your face into hateful wrinkles, and twist all you do into hateful ways.

There is the giant Selfishness; if he conquers you, he will make you love yourself better than anybody else. Yes, even better than you love God.

There is the giant Intemperance, if you let him conquer you, he will make drunkards of you and take away all your happiness on earth and in heaven. There are other giants, "ten thousand" of them, that I might tell you about who will surely come up to fight against you. I am pretty sure some of them will come to-morrow if not to-day. They will try in every way they can to make you love the evil and hate the good. Do you not know who is their King? Satan. What will you do to get the victory over Satan and his host? Let us repeat together Asa's prayer: "Help us, O Lord God, for we rest in Thee, and in Thy name we go against this multitude."

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. There is an apparent contradiction between the statement in this verse and that in chap. xv. 16, where we are told that "the high places were not removed." But it is obviated when we observe that the high places he removed were those in which idols had been worshipped, whereas those consecrated to the Lord himself were suffered to remain. The historian obviously notes this as a shortcoming to be deplored, yet not as a wilful or doom-bringing sin.—*Killo.*

Groves is literally Ashtaroth, which were the vile symbols of the basest idolatry.

Zerah was probably Usarken II., fourth king of the 22nd dynasty of Egypt, who began to reign about the same time as Asa. Usarken may have been by birth an Ethiopian, for he was the son-in-law, not the son, of the preceding monarch, and reigned in right of his wife.

Zephathah at Mareshah. Mareshah means "place at the head or top," and Zephathah, "vale of the watch tower." A deep valley near the site of Mareshah, running down to Beit Jibrin (Eleutheropolis), and thence into the plain of Philistia. Mareshah is a city in the low country of Judah, twenty-five miles south-west of Jerusalem.

WHERE IS OUR CHARITY?

Is it not most lamentably clear that LOVE is the most wanting of all the Christian graces, where we should have expected to see it enthroned in majesty and ruling in power—I mean in the Christian Church? What do we see in Christendom? A vast complication of ecclesiastical machinery, churches established, and churches unestablished; a vast accumulation of doctrines to be believed, duties to be performed, and rites to be observed; a vast array of Biblical learning and criticism, in which every word is examined, weighed, and defined. We have creeds, confessions, liturgies, prayer-books, catechisms, and forms of faith and discipline. We have bishops, priests, pastors, and teachers. We have councils, convocations, synods, conferences, assemblies, and other ecclesiastical bodies, without number. We have commentaries, reviews, magazines, religious newspapers, and journals of all kinds, and thousands upon thousands of religious books, from the four-page tract to the quarto volume. We have cathedrals, churches, and schools—in short, a wondrous and complicated mass of means, instrumentalities, and agencies—but WHERE IS OUR CHARITY, without which all these things are but as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal? Where is that love which is more excellent in the sight of God, not only than all our natural endowments, but than all our spiritual gifts? Where is that love which suffereth long, and is kind even to those who are unkind to us, which seeketh not her own, which thinketh no evil, but rejoiceth in the truth—that love which believeth all things to the credit of others, and which covereth, with its mantle, all things that are faulty—that love which hopeth where there is no evidence to convict, and which, for the sake of others, cheerfully endureth all things in the way of labour, sacrifice, and self-denial?

"TO-DAY IF YE WILL BUT HEAR HIS VOICE."

How simple and how mighty an argument is here to persuade you to turn to God *this day*. This day we hold out to you all the benefits to be found in Christ—for *forgiveness* through his blood—*acceptance* through his righteousness—*sanctification* by his Spirit. Reject them, and you add not only another act of sin to the burden of your guilt, but you add another hardening crust to your impenetrable heart. *This day* refuse Christ, and by all human calculation, you will more surely refuse him *the next day*; so that, without at all meaning to question the sovereignty of the Spirit of God, who worketh whensoever and on whomsoever it pleaseth him, the only conclusion that any reasonable man has a right to come to, is, that this day, of all days between this and judgment, is the best and likeliest for your conversion; and your dying day—that sad season of tossings and heavings, before the spirit is torn from its earthly tenement—is, in all human calculation, the worst day of your life for turning unto God. When the minister of Christ pulls aside the curtains of your bed, to speak the word of Jesus Christ, the ear that for a whole lifetime has heard the glad message of salvation all unmoved, will, in that hour, hear as if it did not hear: The heart that has so long turned aside the edge of the Word of Life, will then be like the nether mill-stone. "To-day, then, if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts."—*McCheyne.*

DIVINE TEACHING.

Bishop Jewell, in his defence of his Apology, well observes:—"As the Scriptures were written by the Spirit of God, so must they be expounded by the same; for without the Spirit we have neither ears to hear, nor eyes to see. It is the Spirit that opens, and no man shuts; the same shuts, and no man opens. The same Spirit prepared and opened the heart of Lydia, that she should give ear to and consider the things that were spoken by Paul. In respect of the Spirit, the Prophet Isaiah says, 'They shall be all taught of God.'"

EVERY thing in the last few years has shown us, that a deeper tone of divine truth in all who profess to hold that truth, is needed to meet the growing corruption of religion, and the infidelity and lawlessness which casts off all religion. God's own light, as given us in His Word, must be more and more our guide through the darkness and conflicts of these days. We are assured also, that "when the enemy shall come in like a flood, the spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him." We may expect, therefore, fresh truth to shine out from the Sacred Volume. The word of prophecy in general, and especially the hope of the Lord's coming, is as a "light shining in a dark place."—*Rev. E. B. Kesteth.*

THYSELF FIRST.—Let us all adopt the sensible conclusion of Dr. Taylor's little girl. We give it as related in *Zerah's Herald*. Dr. Taylor relates that after preaching on the text, "He brought him to Jesus," his little daughter said she liked it. "And who do you propose to bring to Christ," continued the father. "I think I will bring myself first," was the reply. Go thou and do likewise. Bring yourself. The Lord will not refuse other offerings, but no other will be complete without yourself. Religion is a personal consecration, and all efficient work has its root in a deep personal experience. Give yourselves to the Lord, and He will show you what more to do and how to do it.

OUR YOUNG FOLKS.

"THAT'S THEE, JEM!"

A TRUE AND TOUCHING STORY.

I WAS some few years ago sojourning at a very beautiful and much frequented English watering-place. I met with an earnest Christian tradesman of the town, whose labors in the cause of religion are many and great. Although his occupation was not in selling books, yet he had, in a prominent place in his shop window, an assortment of Bibles, with an illuminated card containing this announcement: "Luther's Sword sold here!" With one of these "swords" that Christian soldier, whom I shall here call by the name of Mr. Carr, fought and won the following battle:

A band or "troupe" of young men with hands and faces blackened, and dressed in very grotesque costumes, arranged themselves before this gentleman's door one day for an exhibition of their peculiar "performances." These people used to be called "Ethiopian Serenaders." After they had sung some comic and some plaintive melodies, with their own peculiar accompaniments of gestures and grimaces, one of the party, a tall and interesting young man, who had the "look" of one who was beneath his proper station, stepped up to the door, tamborine in hand, to ask for a few "dropping pennies" of the people. Mr. Carr, taking one of the Bibles out of his window, addressed the youth:

"See here, young man," he said, "I will give you a shilling and this book besides, if you will read a portion of it among your comrades there, and in the hearing of the bystanders."

"Here's a shilling for an easy job!" he chuckled out to his mates, "I'm going to give you a public reading!"

Mr. Carr opened at the fifteenth chapter of St. Luke's Gospel, and pointing to the eleventh verse, requested the young man to commence reading at that verse.

"Now Jem, speak up!" said one of the party, "and earn your shilling like a man!"

And Jem took the Book and read, "And he said, a certain man had two sons; and the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living."

There was something in the voice of the reader, as well as in the strangeness of the circumstances, that lulled all to silence; while an air of seriousness took possession of the youth, and still further commanded the rapt attention of the crowd.

He read on: "And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living."

"That's thee, Jem!" ejaculated one of his comrades, "it's just like what you told me of yourself and your father!"

The reader continued: "And when he had pent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land, and he began to be in want."

"Why, that's thee again, Jem!" said the voice. "Go on!"

"And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would fain have

filled his belly with husks that the swine did eat, and no man gave unto him."

"That's like us all!" said the voice, once more interrupting; "we're all *beggars*, and might be better than we are! Go on; let's hear what came of it."

And the young man read on, and as he read his voice trembled: "And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father."

At this point he fairly broke down, and could read no more. All were impressed and moved. The whole reality of the past rose up to view, and in the clear story of the Gospel a ray of hope dawned upon him for his future. His father—his father's house—and his mother's too; and the plenty and the love ever bestowed upon him there; and the hired servants, all having enough, and then *himself* his father's son, and his present state, his companionships, his habits, his sins, his poverty, his outcast condition, his absurdly questionable mode of living—all these came climbing like an invading force of thoughts and reflections into the citadel of his mind, and fairly overcame him.

That day—that scene—proved the turning-point of that young prodigal's life. He sought the advice of the Christian friend who had thus providentially interposed for his deliverance. Communications were made to his parents, which resulted in a long-lost and dearly-beloved child returning to the familiar earthly home; and still better, in his return to his Heavenly Father! He found, as I trust my readers will, how true are the promises of the parable of the "Prodigal Son," both for time and for eternity.

"Yes, there is one who will not chide nor scoff,
But beckons us to homes of heavenly bliss:
Beholds the prodigal a great way off,
And flies to meet him with a father's kiss."

Robert Maguire, M.A., in *British Workman*.

WORDS TO BOYS.

I THINK I would ask permission, if I had happened to be born in a city, to have the opportunity of passing all my vacations in the country, that I might learn the names of trees and flowers and birds. We are, as a people, sadly ignorant of all *accurate* rural knowledge. We guess at many country things, but we are *certain* of very few.

It is inexcusable in a grown-up person, like my amiable neighbour Simpkins, who lives from May to November on a farm of sixty acres in a beautiful wooded country, not to know a maple from a beech, or a bobolink from a cat-bird. He once handed me a bunch of pansies and called them violets, and on another occasion he mistook sweet peas for geraniums.

"What right has a human being, while the air is full of bird-music, to be wholly ignorant of the performer's name? When we go to the opera we are fully posted up with regard to all the principal singers, and why should we know nothing of the owners of voices that far transcend the vocal powers of Jenny Lind and Christine Nilsson?"

A boy ought also to be at home in a barn, and learn how to harness a horse, tinker up a waggon, feed the animals, and do a hundred useful things, the experience of which may be of special service to him in after-life as an ex-

plorer or a traveller, when unlooked-for emergencies befall him. I have seen an Ex-President of the United States, when an old man, descend from his carriage and rearrange buckles and straps about his horses when an accident occurred, while the clumsy coachman stood by in a kind of hopeless inactivity, not knowing the best thing to be done. The Ex-President told me he had learned about such matters on a farm in his boyhood, and so he was never at a loss for remedies on the road when his carriage broke down.

I would keep "better hours," if I were a boy again; that is, I would go to bed earlier than most boys do. Nothing gives more mental and bodily vigour than sound rest when properly applied. Sleep is our great replenisher, and if we neglect to take it regularly in childhood, all the worse for us when we grow up. If we go to bed early, we ripen; if we sit up late, we decay, and sooner or later we contract a disease called *insomnia*, allowing it to be permanently fixed upon us, and then we begin to decay, even in youth. Late hours are shadows from the grave.

If I were a boy again I would practise *perseverance* oftener, and never give a thing up because it was hard or inconvenient to do it. If we want light, we must conquer darkness. When I think of mathematics I blush at the recollection of how often I "caved in" years ago. There is no trait more valuable than a determination to persevere when the right thing is to be accomplished. We are all inclined to give up too easily in trying or unpleasant situations, and the point I would establish with myself, if the choice were again within my grasp, would never be to relinquish my hold on a possible success if mortal strength or brains in my case were adequate to the occasion. That was a capital lesson which Professor Faraday taught one of his students in the lecture-room after some chemical experiments. The lights had been put out in the hall, and by accident some small article dropped on the floor from the Professor's hand. The Professor lingered behind, endeavoring to pick it up, "Never mind," said the student, "it is of no consequence to-night, sir, whether we find it or no." "That is true," replied the Professor; "but it is of grave consequence to me as a principle, that I am not foiled in my *determination* to find it." Perseverance can sometimes equal genius in its results. "There are only two creatures," says the Eastern proverb, "who can surmount the pyramids—the eagle and the snail!"—*Field's Underbrush*.

BOYS AND TOBACCO.

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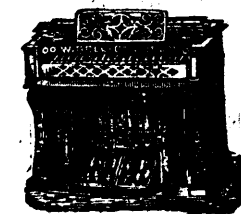
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