

T H E

Canadian Independent.

VOL. XV.

TORONTO, JANUARY, 1869.

No. 7.

THE WORLD'S PRAYER MEETING.

Our American brethren have always been noted for their large ideas, as well as for their enterprise and liberality in carrying them out; and among the latest born of their noble conceptions is that of a National Prayer-meeting. Conventions for political, scientific and missionary purposes are, of course, no novelty, either to them or to ourselves, but a National Congress for Prayer, of christian men and women, from all parts of the great Republic, without distinction of creed or sect, such as was recently held in the City of New York, is a conception that does credit alike to the zeal and the devotional spirit of those who originated and sustained it.

The National Prayer Meeting, however, was only the complement of the State Prayer Meeting, which is fast becoming one of the "institutions" of the country, and is one which we should be glad to see introduced into Canada. Each religious denomination among us has its annual assembly for its own denominational purposes, and these are doubtless greatly promotive of the spiritual life, as well as of the subordinate interests of the churches represented. But a gathering of christian men and women with no *ism* to serve, and with the sole object before them of prayer and conference for the advancement of the kingdom of God, could hardly fail, if properly conducted, of being productive of the happiest results.

The agreement of universal Christendom, however, to spend the first week in January in simultaneous supplication for specified objects, as has now been done for a number of years past, affords to each one of us the opportunity of joining in a grander gathering still—a WORLD'S PRAYER MEETING—in which are to be found, as truly as in the Conferences of the Evangelical Alliance which projected it, representatives of almost every nation under heaven, each employing his own tongue wherein he was born, but all speaking the "one language" of praise and prayer. Such a gathering is as properly a *meeting* for prayer as if we could look into each other's eyes, and hear the swell of the unnumbered voices that ascend together, with one accord, to the throne of mercy; for it is no less true than poetical, that

“There is a scene where spirits blend,
Where friend holds fellowship with friend;
Though sundered far, by faith they meet
Around one common mercy-seat !”

The superficial on-looker may be much more impressed, perhaps by the sight of a large assembly, strangers to each other, but visibly fused into one by the fervour of religious enthusiasm. There is no one, indeed, who is altogether independent of the influence of *numbers* in such cases ; for while the Lord is as really in the midst of “two or three” who are “gathered together in His name,” as He is in the concourse of as many thousands for the same purpose, there is undoubtedly something in the presence of a *crowd*, which, if it cannot kindle devotional feeling, has the power to lay hold upon our social and emotional nature, and quicken it. But if the company with which it may be our privilege to meet in the observance of the week of prayer, be comparatively small, they are yet the representatives to us of a vast assembly, drawn to a common centre by a common attraction, with whom, by faith, we join our hands, in spite of the oceans and continents that separate us.

Philosophers declare that the earthquakes which have recently shaken portions of both hemispheres, were caused by an enormous subterranean wave passing from the one to the other, and producing the commotions and upheavals of sea and land of which we have read. Whether well founded or not, the theory is not wanting in sublimity. But sublimer still is the conception of a great tidal wave of devotional feeling, rising with the dawn of the Sabbath morning, and rolling round the peopled globe, day by day, for a week together, and lifting up upon its bosom one nation after another, till the very earth is moved by its swelling influence! Would that it might never cease its course until the ruin of the kingdom of Satan shall be as complete as that of the cities on the South American coast!

Even while our readers are scanning these lines, this annual concert of prayer is commencing, and one may almost distinguish amid the universal chorus the grand and inspiring strains with which we are so familiar. *Here* they are transported with a glimpse of millennial glory as they sing Dr. Watts' majestic rendering of the 72nd Psalm—

“Jesus shall reign where'er the sun,” &c.

there they are shouting Montgomery's coronation hymn—

“Hail to the Lord's Anointed !”

and *there*, again, they are moved to the very depths of their spiritual being, by Bishop Heber's impassioned appeal—

“Shall we whose souls are lighted,” &c.

while Frank and German, Italian and Russ, Turk and Indian, are joining with Anglo-Saxon in the cry, “O Lord, revive Thy work !” “How long, O Lord, holy and true !”

And shall we altogether hold our peace? Surely not! Never have we been

more in need of a baptism from above, and seldom have there been more encouraging indications than at the present time, particularly in this Western Province. The extraordinary religious interest that has existed in the Town of Gwit for some weeks past, and which has resulted, it is believed, in a very large number of conversions to God, seems to be spreading to neighbouring towns and villages; and we have reason to hope that it may prove but the beginning of a very great and precious work. "There is a sound of abundance of rain;" and if, as the Lord Jesus has taught us, "men ought *always* to pray, and not to faint," how much more when a Pentecost is nigh! These pages have, in former years, borne most gratifying testimony, from many brethren, of the seasons of refreshing which they and their churches have enjoyed in connection with the week of prayer; and we trust, therefore, that every Congregational church in the country will make arrangements for its observance, either separately or in conjunction with those of other denominations, as may be most convenient. The divine challenge is still held out to us,
 "PROVE ME NOW!"

We subjoin the programme of topics suggested by the *Evangelical Alliance* as suitable for exhortation and intercession.

Sunday, January 3.—SERMONS. Subject: The intercession of the "High Priest over the House of God" the motive and model of united prayer. Heb. x: 19-22.

Monday, January 4.—CONFESSION OF SIN, and THANKSGIVING for special and general mercies during the past year, to nations, churches and families.

Tuesday, January 5.—NATIONS: for their temporal and spiritual prosperity; edifying intercourse and the maintenance of Peace; for increased openings for the Gospel; for the removal of social evils; for the better observance of the Lord's Day; and for kings and all in authority.

Wednesday, January 6.—FAMILIES: for children of Christian parents; for a blessing on home influence; for all Seminaries of Christian learning—Universities, Colleges and schools; for Sunday Schools, and private instruction; for our youth abroad; and for a blessing on Christian literature.

Thursday, January 7.—THE CHURCH: for more knowledge of God's Word and increase of spiritual life; for sound and faithful preaching adapted to rich and poor; growing love to Christ; a more earnest love to Christians of every name and of all nations; and for the sending forth of more laborers into the harvest.

Friday, January 8.—MISSIONS: for the conversion of the Heathen and Mohammedans; for the growth of Missionary zeal; for the removal of hindrances to preaching the Gospel among all nations; for recent converts; and for all who are suffering persecution for the truth.

Saturday, January 9.—GENERAL: for the conversion of Israel; for the circulation of the Holy Scriptures; for Christian and Philanthropic Societies; and for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Christians and Christian Churches throughout the world.

Sunday, January 10.—SERMONS. Subject: The duty of the Christian Church in relation to the religious wants of the world.

SECTARIAN COLLEGE GRANTS.

Our readers will hardly need to be informed of the result of the recent agitation upon this question. Never was there a more ridiculous illustration of the "*montes parituriunt*," &c. The petitions presented in favor of such grants were far outnumbered by petitions far more numerously signed against them. Several members of the Legislature declared that many persons who had signed petitions in support of these grants, had done so through misrepresentations made to them, and had, on discovering their error, signed the counter-petitions. And, still more remarkable, the *Globe* declares that, "not a single member of the House had a word to say in favor of the Collegiate grants as distributed for the last fifteen years and more. Both the mover and the seconder of the resolution which brought on the debate distinctly avowed this; as did all those who spoke on the same side of the question. The fact of itself is very gratifying, and taken in connection with the resolution, as amended by Mr. Blake—which was adopted all but unanimously in a full house—tells very unmistakably, as we anticipated, that the days for state subsidies to religious denominations have, in Ontario, come to an end. Even the four who finally voted *Nay* to the motion carried, were careful to proclaim that they did not do so because they were favourable to the principle that "Denominational Colleges ought to be supported by State aid." On this then—the all-important point involved in the whole discussion—there is not a dissenting voice in the Legislature of this Province. The Premier is supported in his resolution of last session, not by an overwhelming majority, but by the whole House." A defeat so overwhelming and ignominious has, without doubt, settled the vexed question forever!

THE ENGLISH NEWSPAPERS.

Mr. Leeming writes us to say that the responses to his letter in the December number have been truly gratifying. "I have made arrangements," he says, "by which I hope every minister who has written to me will receive either the "*Christian World*," or the "*English Independent*" during 1869. Many of the letters are very touching and valuable." There has been, as formerly, a good deal of irregularity in the transmission of the papers from one to another, most of which Mr. Leeming thinks rests with the Post-Office, although some of it is evidently chargeable to the neglect of ministers in not mailing them promptly according to rule. It is to be hoped that brethren will be more careful in time to come.

Mr. Leeming still kindly offers to furnish the English "Year-Book" to ministers at 25c. per copy (below cost,) if application be made in time. But as the Canadian postage is very heavy (26c. per copy,) these must be called for at his office at Montreal.

UTTERANCES : ARE THEY WORTH ANYTHING ?

SOME speak and act as though they were not. "Actions speak louder than words," and "Words are but wind," are familiar proverbs, which have, perhaps, deterred some from speaking out what their hearts have felt. Professions are sometimes worthless. Words are sometimes the vehicles of falsehood and the expressions of hypocrisy. Sometimes, however, they are sincere, and when they are the honest declaration of the heart's feelings, they stimulate those feelings by a reflex influence on the speaker.

The influence of utterances on the speaker is often overlooked. Our words often feed and influence our emotions, while by silence we stifle them.

As fire must smother, and eventually be extinguished, without vent, so emotions unuttered languish. Smoke is not fire, but when the smoke finds vent the fire burns the better. A person in grief will augment his sorrow by his own wallings. Our hearts are affected by sounds of distress or the voice of entreaty in others; so the sounds of our own voices will re-act on our own hearts. Persons who talk much over their sorrows increase the sense of them. Those who frequently recount their wrongs exaggerate them. Joys unexpressed by laughter or songs are dwarfed and languishing. It may be, nevertheless, true that the deepest grief is sometimes silent, and the most loquacious shallow. There is some truth in the language:

“Passions are likened best to floods and streams,
The shallow murmur, but the deep are dumb;
So when affection yields discourse, it seems
The bottom is but shallow whence they come.”

Our position is not affected by such statements. Utterances may sometimes be loud where there is shallow feeling, but the utterances do not make them shallow—they tend to deepen them.

Unuttered prayer is real; it reaches the ear of the Eternal One:—

“Prayer is the burthen of a sigh,
The falling of a tear,
The upward glancing of an eye,
When none but God is near.”

But if prayer never finds utterance in words, desire will become faint, and fervour be wanting.

Christians should seek to cultivate fervour in devotion. Mere words, spoken ever so loudly, accompanied with ever so much gesticulation, do not constitute fervour. They may be but exaggerated attempts to appear fervent. Yet articulate sounds, where there is sincerity, stimulate the emotions. There are avenues to the heart through the ear as well as through the eye; the hearing of the sound of our *own* voice in prayer will inflame the very emotions which the sounds express. Let the Christian in his retirement employ terms of endearment and love in his devotions. If Christ is really dear to him, if the love he bears him is anything more than a name, let his tongue talk of it in his secret communings with God. We do not propose that he shall show his love less by his outward actions, but that he shall speak of it more in his private conferences.

There are not wanting scripture examples for this in the book of Psalms and in Solomon's Song. The language of love is not natural to some; they say they exhibit their love by their actions, and feel quite as much as those who profess more. This may be, and yet words and even tones affect us. Who does not feel the difference at a prayer meeting in following the prayers of those who lead us? One man in his prayer presents a number of petitions, with thanksgiving and confession, very precise, but very *cold*; no warmth, and but little feeling; as frigid and clear as a stream from the sunny side of an iceberg; while another carries you along with a torrent of loving, burning eloquence. It may or it may not be correct; you scarcely think of diction and arrangement; your soul is inflamed with the fervour—you are fused, and flow in with the speaker. Perhaps when he commenced you had anger, but half subdued, in your soul; you had bitter thoughts of some one who had injured you; or, it may be, hard thoughts of even God himself: the tres-

passes of your fellow men were not cordially forgiven, and you were unreconciled to the dealings of your Maker with you. With a heart unsubmissive, and but partially attuned to prayer, you went with others to the throne of Grace, but the loving, burning words of prayer melts every hard iron knot in your soul; you glow in sympathy with the speaker; you are carried with him to the very throne of God; you are abased, and abhor yourself in the confession; your heart teems with grateful emotions in the thanksgiving; human words have struck off Divine scintillations, and a flame of sacred love is enkindled within you. You taste of heaven, and blaze, for the time, in seraphic ecstasy. At such moments you may, perhaps, weep out the gratitude and love which words have helped to awaken, but which no terms can fully express; your desires are so earnest that you feel you can take no denial to your petition. And earnest, loving, fervid words, have thus drawn out your soul; while the tame, cold, correct, words of another have not succeeded in drawing one thought heavenward.

Many of the devotional hymns awaken lively emotions. Who can read, without feeling, the hymn beginning "Jesus, I love thy charming name," or "Do not I love thee, O my Lord?" or "Thou dear Redeemer, dying Lamb." We pity the apathetic souls who can repeat such hymns, or hear them repeated, without being stirred with emotion. We may induce apathy by stifling emotion. We may let the fires of love go out by withholding the fuel. We may persuade ourselves that utterances are *worthless*, because, under some circumstances they have been so; but the natural organs which God has given us—the words, and even tones, all designed to be expressive of the different kinds of emotion, love, hate, joy, sorrow, &c.—seem to determine otherwise. "There are, it may be, so many kinds of voices in the world, and none of them is without signification" or importance. Hortatory utterances have always been acknowledged to be effective, and useful to the hearer; why then should they be considered useless to him who employs them?

It is not duly considered how much a good orator is affected by the sound of his own voice. The suppression of impassioned words and tones must lead to a tame and lifeless delivery; while a strain of fervid declamation—giving full expression to all that is felt—will certainly increase the emotions and add to the glowing fervour of the utterer. Wrath poured forth in bitter words and angry tones becomes inflamed and uncontrollable, while it may be subdued (if not extinguished) by silence.

It is not advocated by the foregoing remarks that any should speak what they do not feel, or that they should assume to be under influences to which their hearts are strangers; but that, by giving utterance in language and tone to the heart's varied affections and desires, the strength of whatever emotion is pervading the heart may be thereby augmented. Silent prayer may be sincere, but it is better, when opportunity is afforded, to express the devout feelings in articulate sounds.

The manner and matter of utterances, both on ourselves and on our hearers, in praying or preaching, exert a valuable influence. Let every feeling of the heart come out. Choose words and tones that most distinctly express the emotions. Avoid affectation, the certain seed of hypocrisy, and let every word and tone be natural. Let dumb christians open their mouth in praise of their King, and every word spoken will react on their hearts and make way for others; "Many shall hear it and fear, and shall trust in the Lord."

PARSONAGES A NECESSITY.

By request, we call attention to the fact that many of our Churches have no suitable dwelling for their minister. A comfortable house in connection with each Church would go far to prove that the Congregational Churches of Canada mean to live, and mean that their pastors should live also, instead of *abiding*, as many pastors do now, in most uncomfortable and unsuitable quarters.

It is our firm conviction that many Churches could have a home for their pastors if they would set about the matter in earnest. We know that some will shrug their shoulders and speak of difficulties; we know, too, that very often "where there is a will there is a way," and that difficulties as often exist in imagination, not in fact. Yet we venture to affirm that all our friends would like to have such a home for their pastor as would give them pleasure to say to the stranger, "This is where our minister lives."

The point then, is, how can such a home be secured? We will endeavour to tell you:

1. Look the work squarely in the face, and listen to no quibbles about impracticability.

2. Do not heed what everybody says as to what you ought to build. Think what kind of a house your minister should have, and then devise the best means to raise the necessary funds.

3. Let each lover of Zion sit down and ask, concerning this matter, How much do I owe my Lord? And as surely as that question is fairly met, will an appropriate sum be placed to the credit of the Parsonage Building Fund.

4. As few Churches could raise the needed amount in one year, let the sums subscribed be paid in two or three annual instalments. These, promptly paid, would preclude the necessity of a succession of tea meetings to pay up deficiencies.

Here permit a suggestion or two to those who desire to move in this matter. First, as to *size*. It should be sufficiently large to accommodate an ordinary family—not a castle nor yet a cabin. Secondly, in reference to *style*. It is not necessary to a respectable appearance that all sorts of fancy work be introduced. Let neatness and comfort be the ruling idea; then, however plain it may be, it will not offend the eye. From \$600 to \$800, exclusive of site, would build a neat and commodious cottage in most villages and country places.

It would not be out of place should pastors kindly press this matter. It has to do with the stability of the Churches. It is the Lord's work, and, accomplished, would be a great blessing to pastors and Churches.

As a practical illustration of what can be done, we give a

PAGE FROM OUR NOTE-BOOK.

In September last, we were visiting among our people, when a brother expressed his wish that a parsonage could be built, so as to relieve the pastor of rent. To prove his sincerity he said, "*I'll be fifty dollars towards it.*" We therefore could not help telling it to the very next brother we met, and to the next, and the next. Thus, by the time we had made the round of our visitation, we had subscriptions most cheerfully promised, payable in two years, amounting to the handsome sum of *seven hundred dollars*. The contract is now let, and the house to be ready for occupation next August. Cannot others go and do likewise?

There are over thirty Churches, (*vide* Statistical Table,) that seem to be about the same size as our own, that have not, so far as we know, parsonages. Brethren beloved! will you not attempt this good work? It would be not only a step, but a stride towards the "*Bolder Policy*" our Editor advocates.

What if some opposers should ask, "What is this thing that ye do?" Answer them boldly: "The God of Heaven, He will prosper us; therefore we, His servants, will arise and build." It only needs determination and Christian coöperation to accomplish this much-needed work.

Finally: Let every Christian and friend of Zion come up to the mark at once, giving as much, not as little, as he can afford. In this way others will be encouraged. The more earnestly and vigorously the work is pressed, the more speedily will it be forwarded, and paid for. We trust the day is not far distant when every Church, specially every Congregational Church, will have a neat and comfortable Parsonage for its Minister.

Lanark, Dec. 11th, 1868.

R. L.

AN AID IN PASTORAL VISITATION.

Whoever or whatever can help them in the work of pastoral visitation will be hailed as a god-send by all earnest ministers. We have often thought that a *vade mecum* like a physician's visiting-list would be useful in this direction, and have wondered why some one did not prepare something of the sort. In this age of "Pastor's Hand-Books," "Minister's Portfolios," "Liturgies," and "Orders for the Solemnization of Marriage," &c., it seems rather strange that, long ago, a Pastors' Visiting-List was not got up. At last, however, we have it. Messrs. E. P. Dutton & Co., 135 Washington Street, Boston, have just published, "The Clergyman's Visiting-List; a Parochial Directory." Having sent for a copy on seeing it advertised in an American religious paper, we will give our brethren some account of it. It is of convenient pocket size; forty-eight pages are devoted to call records and are indexed like a pocket-ledger; next follow 139 pages devoted to cataloguing in detail the individuals and families according to districts; then a few closing pages are headed, "Addresses of absent parishioners and others," "List of Sunday-School Teachers and substitutes," "Wants, Employment, &c.," and General Memoranda. We think this arrangement might be improved, but it is quite easy for each party who uses the publication to modify it so as to suit his own wants. Convenient abbreviations are suggested to make the columns last as long as possible, and the list carefully kept would not only do for a number of years, but furnish when filled up a convenient and valuable "conspectus of parochial life."

The publication has one glowing and silly defect,—that of taking pains to ignore all pastors except "clergymen" in the Episcopalian sense. The title snacks high-churchish, some of the abbreviations plainly shew that the Editor only meant genuine clerics to use his book, and there is a very invidious set of signs to indicate early religious training, no sign being provided for Episcopalian training, which still more plainly indicates that non-Episcopalian pastors were not thought of as participants in the benefits of this publication. It is very easy to adopt other abbreviations and additional signs, and we can assure the specimen of high church-exclusiveness who got up the work, that one copy of it at least is in hands that will so transmogrify its get up, as to

obliterate all trace of high-churchism, and make it "handy" for the use of a pastor who abhors priestly pretensions as he hates the devil.

Messrs. Dutton & Co. have either committed a great oversight, or a great folly in getting out a work that has the mark of bigotry so plainly stamped upon it. The natural result will be a limited sale for what might have been in demand among ministers of all denominations, and the production in some other quarter of a "Pastor's Visiting-List" which will be adapted to general use, and will not remind Congregationalists and others that they are out of the true apostolic succession.

The advantages of such a list are obvious. It will help to an orderly, systematic discharge of ministerial duty. It will render it less likely that particular families or individuals will be overlooked. It will give a bird's-eye view of one's flock, to be thought over and prayed over. Last but not least it will enable the minister who uses it to produce proof of the visits actually made, so as to defend himself against that chronic trouble, complaint of neglect in the matter of pastoral visitation. People's memories are very treacherous often on this point. An invaluable member of our own charge remarked, when we called upon him, "Why, you haven't been to see us in a twelvemonth," whereas the interval had been just *four months*. We heard lately that one of our people should have said we had paid them no pastoral visit in three years,—a simple impossibility. A ministerial neighbour belonging to another denomination, who has unfortunately had a time of trying contention with his charge, which has ultimated in a secession, was accused of not visiting a particular family for five years, whereas he was able to prove that he had visited that family *eight times* during the period specified. We shall never be able to visit our people enough to satisfy them, that is certain. Dear good souls! they are very exacting in this direction, and are so fond of their minister, that they cannot bear to have him out of their houses very long at a time. But we can try our best; be orderly and systematic; keep a list, and be able to prevent exaggeration of our short-comings. "In many things we offend all," and especially in this thing. If we can lighten the offence in any way, and perform an important duty more satisfactorily to ourselves and our people, by all means let us do so, and that we may, we shall do well to avail ourselves of any and every help.

W. F. C.

THOUGHT VERSUS IMAGINATION.

"A Correspondent" sends us a communication on this subject, altogether too lengthy for our space, but from which we make an extract or two, containing the gist of the matter:—

"DEAR EDITOR,—I was highly delighted a short time back, while looking through an admirable work entitled "Christian Character—a Book for Young Ladies—by the Rev. H. Newcomb," to find the following: "Keep a constant watch over the imagination, since this is the medium through which temptation comes; never suffer your fancy to rove without control. If you mortify this faculty, it may be a great assistance to your devotion, but if you let it run at random you will be led captive by Satan at his will."

"My mind having long been impressed with the idea that imagination was regarded by Christians and others as a high or elevated order of thought, I was therefore pleased to meet with a Christian writer whose estimate of imagination seemed to assimilate so closely with my own.

“I have long regarded thought as one of the greatest gifts of God, and that it ought to be employed more than it is to His glory. Imagination I regard as a counterfeit, a spurious imitation of thought, closely resembling it in most, if not all, its operations and functions, except a very important one, “lifting the soul to God.” Imagination wanders through chaos, seeking rest but finding none. I have therefore looked upon it as having been insinuated into the heart of man by the devil, and that it is used by him to divert thought from its proper channel.” * * * *

In support of his view of the subject he then quotes a number of passages of Scripture in which the word “imagination” occurs, and concludes:—

“Dear Editor,—Much has been said in my hearing of late about the Bible, and much has been said against the Bible. The Rev. H. W. Beecher has declared that novels and fictions may be read because the parables of the New Testament are novels and fictions, and a member of a Christian church, an admirer of that reverend gentleman, told me a few days back that the whole Bible is such. Can we wonder that we have sceptics and infidels? * * * Should this meet his eye, I will again ask him to publish the true definition of the word “novel.” We know that “a fiction” is “a lie.” We therefore feel it very difficult to receive the statement as to the parables being either novels or fictions, and again we say, give us the plain definition of the word “novel.” If novels are novels, as apples are apples, let each variety have its name, so that we may know whether we have got hold of something sour or sweet, without eating it.

“We know that God used similitudes, and that the Saviour, when speaking to the people, compared spiritual things with temporal or natural, that his meaning might be understood, but the language of a parable is very different to that of a modern novel, the first being a comparison or illustration, the latter a statement purporting to be a fact. We must have this subject fully ventilated. We must pronounce the Bible true. God has declared it so, and we are bound to believe it. *God cannot lie.*

“My dear Editor,—There never was a period in the world’s history when there was a louder or stronger call for Christians to stand up for the truthfulness of the Bible. If the Bible be not true, where is our hope of heaven? “Great is the mystery of godliness,” but its mysteriousness does not undermine its truthfulness. Imagination cannot see “standing in the midst of the throne, and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, a *Lamb*, as it had been slain”—imagination cannot picture such a scene. Fancy cannot produce one faint or feeble sketch of redemption’s work. It cannot portray Gethsemane. It has no power to describe the scenes of Calvary. It does not draw near the cross of a crucified Redeemer. Imagination knows nothing of salvation. Its pencil and its colours are all of earth. There is not one tint of Heaven to be seen amid all its gay scenes and pictorial illusions.

“This communication is not intended to provoke controversy, but it is designed, and it is the prayer of the writer, that it may bring the question of imagination and thought properly before the Christian community. And may God bless this feeble effort to glorify Him, and put it into the heart of a more talented servant to shew that truth can be established by truth, and that the high colourings of imagination impede the spread of the Gospel. Our good old poet has said :

“Nothing but truth, before His throne,
With honour can appear.”

SPEECH OF THE CONTRIBUTION BOX.

An agent had addressed the congregation, a contribution had been taken, and the pastor was about to pronounce the benediction, when all were startled by a voice from the Contribution-Box, which the deacon had just placed on the table:

“Wait a moment, good friends, and give me a chance to speak. I have long had something on my mind, and must unburden myself. The truth is, I am much abused. Sometimes for weeks together I am allowed no part at all in your Sunday services, though prayers and *alms* should come up together for a ‘memorial before God.’ But I am tucked away out of sight where I get only dust and cobwebs.

“Worse still are my grievances when I am allowed to come round from pew to pew in aid of your devotions. I always come with a heart full of good will, ready to confer on you all the the great blessing of giving. Yet, oh, what treatment!—I don’t mean now the tricks of fun-loving boys who give me old buttons for pennies. I can put up with their mischief, especially as I never get so full but that I can carry a few buttons extra.

“But I do mean you, for one, Mr. Blind. Why do you never see me when I come? Your face is turned toward the orchestra, or you are hunting for something in the hymn-book, or your head is down as though you had just then an extra touch of devotion. If it had been by accident you would have sought me after service. But you hurried out right after the benediction. How much of the benediction did you carry home? You’re rightly named Blind, for none are so blind as those who won’t see. (Mr. Blind here put his head down out of sight.)

“And what were *you* doing last night, Mr. Keptight, after your clerks left the store? Why did you look over the money drawer for that counterfeit bill, in anticipation of the collection to-day? You thought nobody would know who put it in. But I saw you, and I’m not bound to keep your secret. I wonder if you think God doesn’t know counterfeit money and counterfeit charity, too. I shall give your bill to the church mouse for his nest. That’s all it’s good for. No, stay; I’ll keep it as a witness when God shall put you on trial for passing counterfeit money. (Mr. Keptight turned very pale when the box spoke of a ‘trial.’)

“Closefist, you put on this *torn* bill. You knew it would be at a discount at the bank. Don’t tell me it was accidental. You have done the same thing before, and it isn’t for want of whole ones, either. You had better go home and read what Rev. Dr. Malachi says in one of his discourses, about the man who brought that which was ‘torn’ as an offering to the Lord.

“Have you lost your large pocket-book, Bro. Prudence? (Prudence clasps his hand suddenly on his pocket.) Don’t be alarmed. You left it at home, and brought only a little wallet, for fear, as you said, that your feelings would get the better of your judgment. You needn’t be so prudent. Your benevolent feelings are the last things to get beyond your control.

“Loveself, why did you instinctly feel for your cigar case first when I came? Confess the truth, now, that you have spent more for cigars the last three months than you have contributed during the whole year.

“Where’s Demas, jun.? Oh! he isn’t here to-day. He is generally missing when a collection is expected. His father, I remember, forsook Paul for love of the world.

“Drop that rich veil over your face, Mrs. Display. You’ll need it to hide your blushes while I tell the congregation that you have not given me so much this year as you have paid out for those ear-rings and that point-lace handkerchief; and here, to-day, you have been thinking about buying a \$500 diamond ring. And you profess to love the Saviour, and the heathen who are perishing for want of His gospel!

“What now shall be said to you, the richest man in the whole society, a member of the church, a teacher in the Sunday-school, a regular attendant at the prayer-meeting? I see I don’t need to name you. (Dr. Penurious is hitching nervously in his pew in the broad aisle.) You speak and pray well. You have much to say of sound doctrine and liberality and consecration to Christ. But, whenever you are asked to give, you always say, ‘I have too many calls, too many calls.’ Yes, but they get no answers. If you answered any of them liberally, I could excuse you. To-day, you have given me one dollar, when fifty dollars would be nearer your share. You have a ‘call’ to study that book which says, ‘covetousness is idolatry.’ And soon you’ll have another ‘call’ which you must answer to leave those money bags and go and settle accounts with Him who owns them all. (The perspiration starts out on the doctor’s face, he wipes it vigorously, but had nothing to say.)

“Now I have something for you all to hear. When, at the end of last year, you footed up the contributions of the church, and said it was quite a fair sum, I ached to tell you that your pastor and a ministerial secretary in the church from their slender incomes, had given full one-third of the whole. It would have been still more but for Bro. Whole-souled and Bro. Generous, who are always liberal. And, Mrs. Humble, too, dear good woman, let me not forget her; the five-dollar bill she put in was fragrant with prayer and love and self-denial, and shed a sweet perfume through the whole. ‘She hath done what she could.’ There was a quarter, too, that dropped most lovingly from little fingers that had made themselves weary in earning it. Ah! dear Mary, we shall want you for a missionary by and by.

“My good friends, the agents (turning toward the pulpit) often mortify me. They are dry—don’t give fresh facts—don’t feel the facts they do give, or affect to feel them so much they whine and disgust folks. Or they don’t know when to stop—talk an hour or more when forty minutes would open purses wider. I’ve seen many an X at forty, change for a V at fifty, and for an I at sixty.

“The dear pastor is sometimes too timid, and instead of seconding the agent’s appeal with all his eloquence, will say that he hopes the people, though they have given to so many objects, have a little left for this good cause, when the truth is few of them have denied themselves a pin for their contributions.

“I have one more secret to tell. I am something more than I seem to be. You think me only a wooden box—a convenience for gathering up your donations. Know, then, that a messenger from your Saviour is here. Yes, I represent His pierced hand outstretched towards you, and your returns to me are registered as an index of your love for Him. As I pass from pew to pew I gather something more than money. These talks of your secret history, and a thousand others, are all put on record, and will be read ‘in that day’ before the great congregation.”

The voice ceased, and the good pastor, in tones trembling with emotion, said, “Let us all pray for pardon before the benediction.”—*Advance.*

REV. HENRY WARD BEECHER ON PRAYER MEETINGS.

(From the Daily Witness.)

Mr. Beecher said there was some foundation for the popular opinion that the prayer meeting was the stupidest of all the exercises of the church, yet it might be made one of the most, or perhaps the most, interesting of all. It should indeed be the collective experience, piety, and talent of the whole church. You can never make a fire with one stick, although as dry as a minister; and a number taking a part in a meeting was the best way to make it lively and interesting. It was an excellent opportunity for the minister also, as many things could be said in the prayer-meeting that could not be said in the pulpit. Unhappily, pastoral theology was not now learned at college as it used to be when students studied with an old pastor, and practised what they learned. Hence a young minister of the present day, when he takes charge of a church, knows not what to do about prayer meetings. He doubtless expects that christians will be able to speak and pray when the opportunity is offered, but he will find himself mistaken. And it is his business to train his people to take part in the exercises to edification. If he cannot do this, what is he a pastor for? In a school some scholars are bright and some dull; but all have to learn their letters, and then all have to go on to easy words, and afterwards to writing and arithmetic. Now in prayer meetings it was expected that men should begin with comprehensive and elaborate prayers. All should be in a rapturous frame of mind that they have not got, but which they wish they had. Instead of this sort of stereotyping of prayer, there should be all the variety in it that there is in feeling and circumstances and attainments. And here he must say that commonly women's prayers were the best, for they had most feeling. Hence it is the greater shame when women are not Christians, and it is the shame of the Church to exclude them from praying in prayer-meetings. To do so and leave all the praying to deacons and elders, is just like gnawing the bones at a meal and throwing away the fat. Many a man could cry with tears in a prayer meeting, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" who could not tell all about the creation and the fall, and doctrinal theology generally, and then end with a hallelujah; and the short prayer would produce the better effect of the two. Those who could not pray aloud, and there were many such, should use litanies, and he had no objection to prose litanies though he greatly preferred those of the hymn-book. What more appropriate prayers than to sing such hymns as the following? (Here Mr. Beecher read some ancient and modern supplicatory hymns with great effect, such as "Jesus, Lover of my Soul," "Weary of this World of Strife," &c.) As there were many who could not pray in their own language, let them sing prayers. Singing is not an exercise merely to give an opportunity for the sexton to carry up messages to the desk, and for the minister to arrange his notes, it is the very embodiment of the soul's devotion; and a minister expert in the hymn-book, and watching the turn the speaking and praying at a prayer meeting were taking, could lead the meeting through every phase of devotional experience of the most eminent Christians of past ages. The speaking at prayer meetings was important as well as the praying; and he thought the best speaking was, generally speaking, the worst, and the worst best. A man who can say but a sentence will often produce a better effect than a voluble speaker that you can find no fault with, but who does you no good. Every new voice you can get out in the prayer meeting is a new power in the church; and how can a seed spring through

the ground without pushing up dirt? Christians are too selfish. They go to church and prayer-meeting to get their ears tickled, and they find fault with anything out of the common course. One of the great difficulties of the prayer meeting is the old priestly theory. The sacrificial idea is gone, and the vicarious character of the priest in obtaining grace for the people. Indeed, he never saw a priest yet who had more grace than he needed for himself; but though the dogma is gone, the feeling remains, and all want the minister to do something for the people in their stead. Now, the prayer meeting is a meeting of the brotherhood, and not for the ministrations of the pastor. Taste in speaking is good, but sincerity is far better. "I believe in grammar," said Mr. B., "though few would think it; but there is much sincerity where there is very defective grammar. If your prayer meeting must be empty, swept, and garnished, it will just be like ordinary prayer meetings. If you rebuke rude utterances, you will have no more of them. You may as well go to the woods and fire a pistol and then tell the birds to sing. If you say everything must be done in order, you stop all but the accustomed speakers. The prattle of children, with all its mistakes, is the sweetest thing that parents hear, and the little ungrammatical sentences are repeated over and over to every friend of the family. Do not be afraid of a smile in a meeting. It is the nearest way to crying. If you are carrying a pail of milk and it spill on one side, it will spill all the quicker on the other. A minister who goes into the desk in a stately official way, and gives out a hymn in solemn tones, at once diffuses a chill throughout the meeting, and the natural expression of the feelings cannot be hoped for. In prayer meetings the conversational tone is far best. This is seen by the fact that there is often a meeting round the stove before the prayer meeting begins, at which all is life and interest, but when the prayer meeting commences all is formality and deadness. The deacon who has confessed the sins of the congregation for the last fifteen or twenty years, goes through his usual routine, and the deacon who has exhorted for a similar length of time goes through with his exhortation; and after the hour has expired everybody draws a long breath with a sense of relief, and goes back to the stove again, where the real social meeting of the church goes on for perhaps half an hour longer. Brethren, can we not get the stove into the middle of the prayer meeting?

Another mistake is for each to get into a sort of stated prayer, which every one knows. One man's is a dilution of the pastor's prayer; another learned his from his Sabbath-school superintendent or class-leader. Let prayer embody in one's own language his own feeling at the time, and it will be living and powerful. God is in this matter, giving us lessons on all hands, why do we not heed them? One great mistake in prayer meeting is that the room is too large. A small meeting for prayer may be as interesting as a large one, but the people must sit together. Scattering has the most chilling effect possible. There is something in contiguity, call it magnetism or what you will, that makes a meeting in a well-filled room, however small, earnest and lively, whilst a meeting of the same number scattering over a large room would be quite lifeless. Another mistake is that most meetings are like most prayers,—too long. Meetings should not exceed an hour, and the meeting should go right straight through, being filled up all the time. With reference to his own prayer meeting, which numbers about 1,100, he had begun with as small prayer meetings as anybody, but had worked steadily up to the top; and his present numbers were the result of 21 years' labor. He felt himself bound to make more preparation for the prayer meeting than even for the

pulpit. He could sometimes preach without much preparation, and without being detected; but he could not cheat his prayer meeting. If you carry your prayer meeting in your heart all the week, it will become the very marrow of your church services. After a very good meeting he had tried to make the next like it; but this is a mistake. Every meeting has its own distinctive character, which the pastor must watch, and make the hymns and remarks to suit it.

REPROVING HER MAJESTY.

The High Church papers are greatly offended at the Queen, for expressing sympathy with Lutheran Protestantism. At the inauguration of the Luther monument at Worms, at which a score of princes, hundreds of the nobility and great men, and many thousands from all parts of Germany and Europe, with numerous visitors from distant America, were present, the King of Prussia received a congratulatory telegram from Queen Victoria. And the organs of Ritualism are full of indignation, that Her Majesty should send such words as these to Germany:—

“PRAY EXPRESS TO THE COMMITTEE FOR THE ERECTION OF THE LUTHER MEMORIAL, MY MOST HEARTY CONGRATULATIONS UPON THE SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF THEIR TASK. PROTESTANT ENGLAND CORDIALLY SYMPATHIZES WITH AN OCCASION WHICH UNITES THE PROTESTANT PRINCES AND PEOPLES OF GERMANY.”

The *Church Times* does not hesitate to insult and abuse our noble PROTESTANT QUEEN, as in the following quotation from that bigoted journal:—

“Although the Queen cannot find time or inclination to discharge her duties as the chief officer of the State, it seems that she is able and willing to make herself prominent in matters which lie completely out of the sphere of her obligations. In a very uncalled for telegram to the King of Prussia, on the occasion of his unveiling the Luther Monument at Worms, she attempted to pledge the nation over which she rules to sympathy with the apostate and profligate, albeit able and courageous, Augustinian. In so doing, she needlessly insulted all her loyal Anglican subjects, who are pledged to resist Lutheranism to the utmost, all her Roman Catholic subjects, and, finally, all her Scottish Calvinist lieges, the maintainers of a creed which Luther stoutly anathematized. And, considering that she holds the title of “Defender of the Faith” on no other ground than that an ancestor and predecessor of hers controverted Luther, she ought either to have checked her pen or abdicated the distinctive appellation.”

It is as well, perhaps, that this rampant ritualist should damage his own bad cause, by allowing himself to be so far carried away, as to commit the indiscretion of publishing such a paragraph; thus frantically belching a torrent of treason against the Reformation, and of vile abuse of the best beloved of British queens.

The above paragraph scolds the Queen for spending part of her time in Scotland, instead of spending it all in ministering to the fashionable follies of London society, and indirectly scoffs at a grief that is respected by the entire nation—an irrelevant piece of abuse which betrays anger that is incapable of reasoning. The *Church Times* speaks foolishly in saying that the Queen’s sympathy with Protestantism “lies completely out of the sphere of her obligations.” As the Protestant Queen of a Protestant nation, she has sworn to be true to the Reformation; it was therefore eminently proper for her to express her congratulations on the grand occasion. Even the Mayor of the city of Worms, though a Roman Catholic, could not refrain from publicly acknowledging the indebtedness of Germany to Luther.

The Roman Catholic Mayor's testimony is a sufficient rebuke, to a Church of England organ that can call the great Reformer "apostate" and "profligate." Such expressions ought to open the eyes of the really Protestant members of the English Church, making them see clearly the treacherable designs of Ritualism. The *Church Times* speaks foolishly in saying that the Queen insults the "Scottish Calvinist," by expressing sympathy with Protestantism. There are no more determined opponents of Romanism, than the descendants of those who signed "the Solemn League and Covenant;" and there are none who have more distinctly asserted the two great principles of the sole authority of the Bible as a rule of faith, and justification by faith only. The Scottish Calvinists will be as forward as any of Her Majesty's Protestant subjects to thank her from their hearts.

The *Church Times* is right, however, in respect to two classes of Her Majesty's subjects. Doubtless "Her Majesty's loyal Anglican subjects," meaning by that the High Church Ritualists, will be offended. But who respects their wishes, on such a subject as this? A party which has subscribed the Thirty-nine Articles, and which is paid to teach and defend them, and yet is seeking to bring England under Romish superstitions, and to undo the whole work of the Reformation, have neither confidence nor respect from either Protestants or Roman Catholics. A Puseyite is a traitor and enemy within the camp, and should be dealt with in the most summary manner. The *Church Times* is probably right in saying, also, that the Queen's telegram will not please the Roman Catholic Church. Reasonable men in that Church will, however, be able to see that the claims to supreme authority made by the Pope, over nations and individuals, is incompatible with the free political constitution of Britain. They will confess that, while they enjoy political and religious liberty as British subjects, they cannot properly object to the political consequences of Protestantism, by which their own liberty is guaranteed. Britain must renounce its liberty before it can renounce its protest. Even Austria is Protestant so far as it is free. We rejoice greatly that Queen Victoria is not ashamed to say "Protestant England!" These are glorious words, that must never be given up. They reveal the secret of England's freedom, enlightenment, and greatness, by which her example has powerfully aided the emancipation and progress of all nations.—*Christian Guardian*.

The Home Department.

A LESSON TO PARENTS.

I had been married fifteen years. Three beautiful daughters enlivened the domestic hearth, the youngest of whom was in her eighth year. A more happy and contented household was nowhere to be found. My wife was amiable, intelligent and contented. We were not wealthy; but Providence had preserved us from want; and we had learned that "contentment without wealth, is better than wealth without contentment."

It was my custom, when returning home at night, to drop into one of the many shops that are constantly open in the business streets of the metropolis, and purchase some trifling dainties, such as fruit or confectionary, to present to mother and the children. I need not say how delighted the little ones

were at this expression of paternal consideration. On one occasion I had purchased some remarkably fine apples. After the repast, half a dozen were left untouched, and my thrifty companion forthwith removed them to the place of deposit, where it was her custom to preserve the remains of our nick-nacks. A day or two after, when I had seated myself at the table to dine, she said to me, smiling. 'So, father has found the way to my safety-box, has he?' I was at a loss to understand the meaning, and desired her to explain.

'Have you not been in my drawer?' 'What drawer?'

'The upper drawer in my chamber bureau. Did you not take therefrom the largest of the pippins I had put away from the girls?' 'No—I did not.' 'You did not?' 'Not I! I have not seen an apple since the evening I purchased them.'

A slight cloud passed over the countenance of my wife. She was troubled. The loss of the apple was in itself nothing; but we had carefully instructed our children not to appropriate to their use any article whatever of family consumption, without permission; when the demand was at all reasonable, it had never been denied them; she was loath to suspect any one of them of the offence; We had a servant girl in the family, but as she was supposed to know nothing of the apples, my wife hesitated to charge it upon her. She at length broke the silence by saying:

'We must examine the affair. I can hardly think one of the children would so act. If we find them guilty, we must reprove them. Will you please look into it?'

The girls were separately called into my presence; the eldest one first.

'Eliza, did you take from your mother's drawer an apple?' 'No, sir.'

'Maria, did you take from your mother's drawer an apple?' 'No, sir.'

'Mary, did you take from your mother's drawer an apple?' 'No, sir.'

'It must have been taken by the servant; call her to me,' said I, addressing my wife.

'Nell, how came you to take from the drawer of your mistress, without permission, the largest of the apples she had placed there?' 'Wot apples?'

'Did you take no apples from the drawer of your mistress?' 'No, sa.'

Now, it was evident that falsehood existed somewhere. Could it be that one of my children had told me a lie? The thought harassed me. I was not able to attend to business. I went to the store—but soon returned again. Meanwhile, the servant girl had communicated to the mistress that she had seen our youngest go into the garret with a large apple, the morning before. On examination, the core, and several pieces of the rind were found upon the floor. I again called Mary to me, and said to her affectionately.

'Mary, my daughter, did you not go into the garret yesterday?' 'Yes, sir.'

'Did you go there with an apple?' 'No, sir.'

'Did you notice anything on the floor?' 'No, sir.'

I was unwilling to believe my sweet child capable of telling me a falsehood, but appearances seemed against her. The fault lay between her and the servant, and while I was desirous to acquit my child, I did not wish to accuse unjustly the negro. I therefore took Mary into a room alone, I spoke to her of the enormity of lying—of the necessity of telling the truth—of the severe punishment I should be compelled to inflict upon her, if she did not confess the whole to me, and with tears in my eyes urged her to say that she had done it, if indeed she had. Gradually, I became convinced of her guilt; and now I felt determined she *should* confess it. My threatenings were not with-

out effect. After weeping and protesting her innocence, and weeping and again protesting, my threatenings seemed to alarm her, and falling on her knees, she said, 'Father, I *did* take the apple.'

Never shall I forget that moment. My child confessed that she was a liar, in my presence!

Suppressing the emotion, I retired; and Mary, rising from her position, ran to her mother, and in a paroxysm of grief cried out:

'Mother, I did *not* take the apple; but father has made me confess that I did.'

Here was a new aspect of affairs. Lie multiplied upon lie. Could it be possible? My dear Mary, who had never been known to deceive us—so affectionate—so gentle—so truthful in all the past—could it be possible that she was a confirmed liar! Necessity was stronger than the tenderness of the father. I chastised her for the first time in my life—severely chastised her! It almost broke her heart—and I may add, it almost broke mine also.

Yet Mary was innocent! After-events proved that the negro was the thief. She had conjured up the story of the garret, knowing that Mary would not deny having been there, and to make the circumstances strong against her, had strewn apple-rinds on the floor. I never think of the event without tears. But it has taught me a useful lesson, and that is, never to threaten a child into a lie, when it may be he is telling the truth. The only lie I ever knew Mary to tell me, I myself forced upon her by threatenings. It has also fixed in my mind the determination to employ no servant in my family, whom I can possibly do without.—*Hall's Journal of Health.*

THE CLEANSING BLOOD.

A visitor among the poor was one day climbing the broken staircase which led to a garret in one of the worst parts of London, when his attention was arrested by a man of peculiarly ferocious and repulsive countenance, who stood upon the landing-place leaning with folded arms against the wall. There was something about the man's appearance which made the visitor shudder, and his first impulse was to go back. He made an effort, however, to get into conversation with him, and told him that he had come with the desire to do him good, and to see him happy, and that the book he had in his hand contained the secret of all happiness. The ruffian shook him off as if he had been a viper, and bade him begone with his nonsense, or he would kick him down stairs. While the visitor was endeavoring with gentleness and patience, to argue the point with him, he was startled by hearing a feeble voice which appeared to come from behind one of the broken doors which opened upon the landing, saying;

"Does your book tell of the blood which cleanseth from all sin. For the moment the visitor was too much absorbed in the case of the hardened sinner before him to answer the inquiry, and it was repeated in earnest and thrilling tones;

"Tell me, oh, tell me does your book tell of the blood which cleanseth from all sin?"

The visitor pushed open the door and entered the room. It was a wretched place, wholly destitute of furniture, except a three-legged stool and a bundle of straw in a corner, upon which were stretched the wasted limbs of an aged woman. When the visitor entered she raised herself upon one elbow, fixed her eyes eagerly upon him and repeated her former question, "Does your book tell

of the blood which cleanseth from all sin?" He sat down upon the stool beside her and enquired, "My dear friend, what do you want to know of the blood which cleanseth from all sin?" There was something fearful in the energy of her voice and manner of her reply, "What do I want to know of it? man I am dying! I am going to stand naked before God. I have been a wicked, a very wicked woman, all my life. I shall have to answer for everything I have done," and she groaned bitterly as the thought of a lifetime's iniquity seemed to cross her soul. "But once," she continued, "once, years ago, I came by the door of a church, and I went in—I don't know what for. I was soon out again, but one word I heard there I have never forgot. It was something about the blood which cleanseth from all sin. Oh, if I could hear of it now! tell me, tell me, if there is anything about that blood in your book?" The visitor answered by reading the first chapter of the first epistle of St. John. The poor creature seemed to devour the words, and when he paused, she exclaimed "Read more, read more." He read the second chapter—a slight noise made him look around: the savage ruffian had followed him into his mother's room, and though his face was partly turned away, the visitor could perceive tears rolling down his cheeks. The visitor read the third, fourth, fifth chapters, before he could get the poor listener to consent that he should stop, and then she would not let him go till he promised to come again the next day. He never from that time missed a day reading to her until she died, six weeks afterwards; and very blessed it was to see how, almost from the first, she seemed to find peace by believing in Jesus.

Every day the son followed the visitor into his mother's room and listened in silence but not indifference. On the day of her funeral he beckoned him to one side as they were filling up the grave, and said: "Sir, I have been thinking there is nothing I should so much like as to spend the rest of my life in telling others of the blood which cleanseth from all sin."

Thus the great truth of free pardon through the blood of Christ sinks into the soul and saves it. Thus grasped when all else is gone, it has power to sustain the drowning spirit, and lift it up above the floods that are going over it. Thus it breaks the heart of stone, which nothing else could touch, and turns the abandoned persecutor into the zealous teacher of Christianity.

HOSPITALITY.

One day Tommy rushed into the kitchen, crying out, "Mother, mother, there is an old woman down in the road, sitting on a log; shall I set Pompey on her?"

"Set Pompey on her!" said his sister; "what for?"

"Oh, because," answered Tommy, looking ashamed, "because—perhaps she is a thief."

"Go out, Esther, and see if the poor woman wants anything. Perhaps she's tired with a hard day's travel among the mountains," said the mother.

Esther ran down the green, and, peeping through the gate, saw the woman resting under the old oak tree.

"Should you like anything?" asked Esther.

"Thank you," said the old woman; "I should be very thankful for a drink of water."

Esther scampered back to the house, and soon procured some cool water from the well, and hastened with it to the poor traveller.

"I thank you," she said, after drinking. "It tastes very good. Do you know what the Lord Jesus once said about a cup of cold water?"

Esther was silent.

"I will tell you. He said, 'Whosoever shall give to one of his people a cup of cold water only, in the name of a disciple, he shall in no wise lose his reward. May the Lord himself bless you, little girl, as I am sure I do.'"

And a happy feeling stole into the young child's bosom at the old woman's words, for the blessing of the poor fell upon her.—*Children's Friend*.

WHAT IS YOUR DAUGHTER THINKING OF?

You are very careful of her dress, you attend personally to its purchase and fit. You go with her to see that her foot is nicely gaitered, and you give your milliner special instructions as to the make and becomingness of her bonnet, but do you ever ask yourself what she is thinking about? In other words, do you know anything of her inner life? Many who are esteemed most excellent mothers, are as ignorant on this all important point as if they had never looked upon their daughter's face. They exact respectful obedience, and if the young creature yields it, and has no need of a physician's immediate services, they consider their duty done. Alas! what a fatal mistake! These are the mothers who, never having invited the confidence of these young hearts, live to see it bestowed anywhere and everywhere but in accordance with their wishes. Is it, can it be enough to a mother worthy the name, to be satisfied that their daughter's physical wants are cared for? What of that yearning, hungry soul, that is casting about here and there, for something to satisfy its questions? Oh, give a thought sometimes to this. When it sits there by the fire or by the window, sit down by her and lure her thoughts out of her. Cast that fatal 'dignity' to the winds, which has come between so many young creatures and the heart to which they should lie nearest in these important forming years. Respect is good in its place; but when it freezes up your daughters soul-utterance—when it sends her for companionship to chance guides, what then? A word, a loving, kind word, at the right moment—no mind can over estimate its importance. Remember this when you see the sad wrecks of womanhood about, and amid the sweeping waves of life's cares and life's pleasures, whatsoever else you neglect, do not fail to know what that young daughter of yours is thinking about.—*Exchange*.

HARRY'S PRAYER.

Little Harry C. had just been folded into his warm crib. "And now, Harry," said his mother, seriously, "say your prayer." To her surprise the child refused.

"Harry," she asked, "who has taken care of you to-day?"

"Mama, I s'pose."

"Can mother keep her little boy alive?"

"No, mamma; God does that."

"And yet my little boy will not thank him. When your father and mother are asleep, who will watch over you to-night?"

His blue eyes were full of thought, and tears gathered in them as he said, "I will ask God to take care of me to-night, for it will be all dark and still; but to-morrow Harry can take care of himself."

"Harry," said the mother, "you could not take care of yourself for a moment."

"Yes, mamma, in the daytime, I could."

"If God saw fit to take your life, could you prevent it?"

"No, mamma."

"Yet you will not pray to that kind Father in heaven who gives you your life, your father, your mother, everything you love or enjoy. No, you can take care of yourself."

"I can't mamma, I can't." His eyes were full of tears, as, closing them, he folded his small hands and prayed: "Please God take care of me to-night and to-morrow. Please take care of poor Harry, for Jesus sake, for he can never, *never* take care of himself."

A simple prayer, for Harry was but three years old. A true prayer, for it came from the heart. Harry will never be more truly wise than while thus feeling his entire dependence upon God.—*Exchange*.

THE PARISH POOR-HOUSE.

And what is this, do you ask? In three-fourths of the congregations throughout our land it is the *parsonage*. This is outspoken, bitter truth, but truth, which can be easily demonstrated, so demonstrated as to show that the title is by no means a fancy one. I am credibly informed that the country poor are allowed from five to ten cents per meal for their support. But many a minister's family are obliged to live on less than eight cents per meal. I have in mind a minister's family consisting of eight persons, who have no servant,—so much needed,—nor can have one without taking the bread out of their children's mouths, as will be presently seen. The salary of this minister is less than \$800 per annum; but we will allow that it is \$800. We will further allow that he receives in the way of donations \$150 more, making a total of \$950. Now three meals a day for eight persons at eight cents per meal, for three hundred and sixty-five days, amounts to \$700.80,—leaving a balance of say \$250 for the education of the children, for the clothing of eight persons, for books and papers, postage and stationery, for travelling expenses, for horse-keeping and horse-shoeing, for wear and tear of harness, buggy, and sleigh, for household furniture, and the many nameless items of expense to which a family is constantly subject. Now it may be said that this is an extreme case. By no means. I am acquainted with another worthy brother, whose family numbers seven persons, and whose salary is only \$500. I know there are families smaller than the one I have selected, but I know, also, that there are smaller salaries.

Notwithstanding so small a sum is left for clothing, and the other expenses enumerated above, the pastor must never appear out in a threadbare coat, nor his wife and little ones go less neatly dressed than their wealthy neighbours, without incurring the charge of being slovenly. Moreover, his hospitality must be unbounded, and with the immense salary of \$800 a year, he must be an example of liberality to the whole church. If, after all this, the pastor don't keep out of debt, and save \$200 a year, he is an extravagant fellow. He may be a good preacher, but he has no idea of *economy*.

And now, if with no hope of ever making ends meet in the pastorate, he, in despair turns his attention to something else—even though it be the sacred calling of teaching—he commits the unpardonable sin—he *has become secularised*. Elder A. and Deacon B., and scores of his parishioners, grow wealthy while he grows poorer, and is left to struggle on at the rate of \$800 a year.

Would he better his condition, he must seek another field of labor where he can be *more useful*—that is, where he can perhaps feed his family at the rate of at least ten cents a meal, and pay all his other necessary expenses at the year's end. Here is the secret of the many changes and short pastorates.

With such a picture of self-denial and struggle for existence constantly before the young, is it any wonder that there are no more to study for the ministry?—*Correspondent Christian Intelligencer.*

AN ILLUSTRATION.

Some time since Prof. Morley of England, published an article in the *London Times*, announcing the fact that he had discovered a short poem by John Milton. He sent the poem with the communication. It had been found on a blank leaf of an early copy of John Milton's works in the British Museum, and was signed apparently J. M.

The discovery at once brought the critics down upon the poem. One able critic was sure it was Milton's. He only could have woven "the subtle melody" of its lines. Another, Lord Winchelsea, considered the poem mere rubbish, and that if Milton wrote it at all, it must have been "in his dotage."

So the fight goes on, and opinions are divided. Authorities, critics, experts, fight on both sides. The case probably will never be decided.

It is suggestive as illustrating the value of a great deal of knowing and conceited learning, so-called, which has imposed on many unsuspecting people.

There are learned gentlemen in Germany, philologists, critics, Biblical scholars, etc., who claim to be able to tell the world, by internal evidence, and comparison of style, every chapter and verse which St. Paul or St. Peter wrote. They have decided what is the "Pauline style," what the "Petrine method," what the "Johannian arrangement." Such is their jargon—and they will reject this verse because it is clearly not "Petrine," and this chapter because "it is evidently not the method of John," and some wise Englishman or American will take these German doctors at their word, and will inform us that "it is decided that this chapter was not written by Peter," or "that the ablest critics have proved that this epistle is not by John."

And this sort of stuff has imposed on a great many well-meaning and harmless converts, when put forth in a learned jargon by a great many very shallow sciolists. Now it is worth considering that Greek and Hebrew are not the native tongues of any regularly-born German. He speaks, naturally, guttural "Hoch-Deutsch." He learns Greek and Hebrew painfully out of grammars and dictionaries. He has the birch applied to the process, and digs away patiently under that stimulus to attain the requisite modicum of each tongue to enable him to talk and write about "Petrine," and "Pauline," "Jehovistic," "Elohistic," etc.

And this man, wearily picking up the dried bits of a dead tongue, out of grammar and vocabulary, utterly unable to pronounce a word of it as the men who spoke it did, will take it on him to tell us that a production, universally attributed to St. Paul, from the earliest day to his own, for some fancied peculiarity in construction or phrase is not his, and cannot be his because "criticism has decided the question!"

And now, here, as if to make "inextinguishable laughter" over the whole learned nonsense, comes a poem in English—the plain English we all speak—English a child can read—written certainly, in London itself, by some one cotemporary with Milton, and Englishmen, fellow countrymen of Milton, fellow

townsmen of his, familiar with every line he ever wrote, critics, experts, poets, even themselves, like Lord Winchelsea—they cannot tell us whether this short poem, in the language they learned in their cradles, is John Milton's or not!

It gives us a good notion of the value of the German "Petrine" and "Pauline" dialect, and its high authority. But what does it suggest as to the value of the poor echo of that talk that one hears in the United States?—*Exchange.*

THE GREATER FOOL.

I have read an old story of a lord who kept a jester in his house for his amusement, as was often the custom among great men of olden time.

To his jester the lord gave a curiously carved staff, which he was charged to keep until he should meet with one who was a greater fool than himself, when the jester should deliver it over to such a one.

A few years passed, and the lord fell very sick, so that it seemed quite likely he would die. His jester came to see him, and as he stood beside his bed, the lord told him he must shortly leave him.

"And whither art thou going, my lord?" "To another world," was the reply. "And when wilt thou return? Within a month?" "No," answered the lord. "Within a year?" "No." "And when, then, my lord?" "Never." "Never? Then what provision hast thou made for thy journey whither thou goest?" "None whatever."

"None at all! Ah! here, take thy staff, then," said the jester. "Going away never to return more, and no provision made for thine entertainment there! Take thy staff again, for surely I never will be guilty of such great folly as this."

We are none of us too young to die. Let us learn wisdom from the foolish lord, and see that our sins are forgiven, and our trust is in Jesus; and so, whenever he shall call us to himself, we shall be ready to meet him in joy and peace.

"Better is a poor and wise child than an old foolish king."—*The Appeal*

GOT TO JESUS.

Dear children, I want to tell you of a little boy who went to the Sunday-school with which I am connected. As I was going out one day last winter, when there were many awakened ones asking, "What must I do to be saved?" a little boy, nine or ten years old, put into my hand a slip of paper a couple of inches long, which I have carefully preserved. As children were in the habit of handing me papers in this way, I did not read it till I got home. I then found upon it, written in a very crooked manner, these words: "Mr. Wells, I've got to Jesus! I've got to Jesus!" I don't know who the boy was; I never could find out; but he had found the sum and substance of the whole gospel. That little boy had got to Jesus.

BEAUTIFUL SNOW.

How many thousands have let their tears fall over these beautiful lines, as their touching pathos called into recollection the sad story of other and similar victims to man's wanton cruelty! In point of smooth versification, and

easy flowing rhythm, through which is almost heard the plaintive wail of woman's ruined honor, our knowledge of English literature brings to mind no single poem of such thrilling interest.

In the early part of the war, one dark Saturday morning in the dead of winter, there died at the Commercial Hospital, Cincinnati, a young woman over whose head only two and twenty summers had passed. She had once been possessed of an enviable share of beauty; had been, as she herself said "flattered and sought for the charms of her face,"—but, alas! upon her fair brow had long been written that terrible word prostitute! Once the pride of respectable parentage, her first wrong step was the small beginning of the "same old story over again," which has been the only life history of thousands. Highly educated and accomplished in manners, she might have shone in the best of society. But the evil hour that proved her ruin was but the door from childhood; and having spent a young life in disgrace and shame, the poor friendless one died the melancholy death of a broken-hearted outcast.

Among her personal effects was found in manuscript, "Beautiful Snow," which was immediately carried to Enos B. Reed, a gentleman of culture and literary tastes, who was at that time editor of the *National Union*. In the columns of that paper, on the morning of the day following the girl's death, the poem appeared in print for the first time. When the paper containing the poem came out on Sunday morning, the body of the victim had not yet received burial. The attention of Thomas Buchanan Read, one of the first American poets, was soon directed to the newly-published lines, who was so taken with their stirring pathos, that he immediately followed the corpse to its final resting-place.

Such are the plain facts concerning her whose "Beautiful Snow" will long be regarded as one of the brightest gems in American literature.

Oh! the snow, the beautiful snow,
Filling the sky and earth below,
Over the housetops, over the street,
Over the heads of the people you meet.

Dancing,

Flirting,

Skimming along;

Beautiful Snow! it can do no wrong,
Flying to kiss a fair lady's cheek,
Clinging to lips in frolicksome freak.
Beautiful snow from heaven above,
Pure as an angel, gentle as love!

Oh! the snow, the beautiful snow,
How the flakes gather and laugh as they go,
Whirling about in maddening fun,

Chasing,

Laughing,

Hurrying by.

It lights on the face and sparkles the eye!
And the dogs, with a bark and a bound,
Snap at the crystals as they eddy around:
The town is alive, and its heart in a glow,
To welcome the coming of beautiful snow!

How wild the crowd goes swaying along,
Hailing each other with humor and song!
How the gay sleighs, like meteors, flash by,
Bright for a moment, then lost to the eye;

Ringing,
 Swinging,
 Dashing they go,

Over the crust of the beautiful snow ;
Snow so pure when it falls from the sky,
To be trampled and tracked by thousands of feet,
Till it blends with the filth in the horrible street.

Once I was pure as the snow—but I fell,
Fell like the snow-flakes from heaven to hell,
Fell to be trampled as filth on the street,
Fell to be scoffed, to be spit on, and beat ;

 Pleading,
 Cursing,
 Dreading to die,

Selling my soul to whoever would buy,
Dealing in shame for a morsel of bread ;
Hating the living and fearing the dead.
Merciful God, have I fallen so low ?
And yet I was once like the beautiful snow.

Once I was fair as the beautiful snow,
With an eye like a crystal, a heart like its glow ;
Once I was loved for my innocent grace—
Flattered and sought for the charms of my face !

 Fathers,
 Mothers,
 Sisters all,

God and myself, I have lost by my fall ;
The veriest wretch that goes shivering by,
Will make a wide sweep lest I wander too nigh ;
For of all that is on or about me I know,
There is nothing that's pure as the beautiful snow.

How strange it would be that this beautiful snow
Should fall on a sinner with nowhere to go !
How strange it would be, when the night comes again,
If the snow and the ice struck my desperate brain ;

 Fainting,
 Freezing,
 Dying alone,

Too wicked for prayer, too weak for a moan,
To be heard in the streets of a crazy town,
Gone mad in the joy of snow coming down,
To lie and to die in my terrible woe,
With a bed and a shroud of the beautiful snow !

Exchange.

GOOD THINGS FROM THE CHILDREN.—A busier set of children were never seen than those in Lake Forest a few weeks since, and \$117 79 were never more fairly earned than was this. Begging money was not resorted to. Here is the way some of the dimes were earned: "Digging up dandelions 40 cents;" "picking up old nails, 5 cents;" "two sisters' bantam hens, \$3;" "making wash cloths, 12 cents;" "green corn sold, 75 cents;" "scrubbing stairs, (child nine years old), 50 cents;" "not speaking a cross word the whole week, 50 cents;" corrected a fault, \$2;" "girl four years old picking up baby's playthings and turning stockings, 11 cents;" "boy of ten years unloading car load of lumber, \$1;" "sold pet chickens, \$2 50;" "three little girls' Fair under a tent, \$9;" "a nurse girl's earnings, 25 cents;" "weeding the flower bed and taking care of the baby, 30 cents." "They have done what they could."—*Advance.*

THE FIFTY-SEVENTH PSALM.

Be merciful to me, O God!
 Be merciful to me!
 No more to wander far abroad—
 My spirit flies to Thee!
 Beneath the shadow of Thy wings
 My soul in peace and safety sings
 Till past are these distressing things;—
 Be merciful to me!

O God I cry to Thee, most high!
 To God, and shall prevail;
 Who doth perform to me, when I
 In mine own strength shall fail.
 He sends from Heaven in danger's hour,
 And saves from foes who would devour,
 And shall His truth and mercy pour:—
 O God, I cry to Thee!

My soul is sore distressed among
 The lions of the earth;—
 I make my bed where guilt and wrong
 Like fire are breaking forth;—
 E'en sons of men, whose gnashing teeth
 Are spears and arrows set for death;
 A sword their tongue, and fire their breath,
 My soul is sore distressed!

Be Thou exalted high, O God,
 Above the heavens of light!
 And let Thy glory shine abroad
 O'er earth's sublimest height!
 A net they for my steps prepare—
 And while my soul of help despaired,
 In pits they digged themselves are snared—
 Be thou exalted high!

My heart is fixed; O God, my heart
 Is set upon Thy praise!
 With voice of psalm, and tuneful heart,
 I'll bless Thee all my days!
 Awake my heart! awake, my tongue!
 Awake, my psaltery and my song!
 With harp I'll join the early throng—
 My heart is fixed, O God!

I'll praise Thee, O my God, among
 All people of the earth;
 And show Thy praise with joyful tongue
 To every nation forth!
 For high as heaven Thy mercies are,—
 Thy truth, not height of clouds declare,—
 O'er heaven and earth exalted far!—
 I'll praise Thee, O my God!

Literary Notices.

Among the subjects discussed at the Church Congress in Dublin, was "The Church and the Periodical Literature of the Day." A paper by the Rev. J. Erskine Clarke, editor of the *Parish Magazine*, gave the following interesting statistics as to the circulation of the most popular serials. There are published in London, about 350 monthly Magazines, 70 quarterlies, and 400 weeklies. The circulation of *Good Words* is 130,000; of the *Sunday Magazine*, nearly as large. The Magazines which deal with political and social questions, adding an element of fiction, and those of a still lighter character, range from 10,000 to 25,000. The *People's Magazine* of the Christian Knowledge Society, issues 30,000 copies; the *Leisure Hour*, 45,000 weekly, and 55,000 monthly; the *Sunday at Home*, 40,000 weekly, and 85,000 monthly; *Chamber's Journal*, 8,000 weekly, and 35,000 monthly. The writer's conclusion was that these Magazines failed to reach the poor and uneducated, and that the young people of those classes, now able to read, were supplied with an inferior, often an injurious, order of literature. For example, a weekly publication, *Bow Bells*, at a penny, sold 300,000. Its staple was fiction of the sensational stripe, with some useful information, fashion-plates, work-patterns, &c. The *London Journal*, with more objectionable features, circulated 250,000; the *London Reader*, about as many; the *Boys of England*, and *Young Ladies of England*, and many more, had a large body of supporters. The *Family Herald*, of much superior character, had a list of 150,000. But below the *London Journal* and *Bow Bells* was a class of periodicals, especially appealing to the young, and composing "a literature of vice," with a weekly issue of a quarter of a million. In these, robbery and murder were the staple of the stories, often set off by glaring woodcuts. There was still room for a cheap weekly for working people, pure in tone, interesting in style. The *British Workman*, with its admirable pictures, had done good service—circulating 200,000 a month, but did not compete with the weekly *Bow Bells*. The writer's own half-penny serial had a circulation of 50,000 weekly; and his *Children's Prize* one of 100,000 a month. The *Band of Hope Review*, issued 300,000; the *Children's Friend*, 150,000; the *Christian World*, 100,000; the *Child's Companion*, 80,000; and the *Cottager*, 80,000. The circulation of the denominational periodicals failed to reach what are called in the trade "long numbers."

Another book from Rev. F. D. Maurice claims the attention of thoughtful readers. It is called *The Conscience*, and consists of the Lectures on Casuistry delivered by the author in the University of Cambridge, of which he is the professor in that department. (London: Macmillan.) Mr. Maurice is more noted for the ability and independence of his thinking, than for its clearness, although his style is pure and graceful, and an earnest, sympathetic spirit pervades all his writings. The present volume is considered to be one of the most lucid of those that have come from his pen. "What is a Person?" is the first inquiry to which he addresses himself—what is meant by the word "I?" A very simple question, some may think, until they try to answer it. Next, he gives as a definition of conscience, "that in one which says I ought or I ought not." But he does not put forth any decisive theory as to whether conscience is a separate faculty of the mind or not, or as to its origin and

development. Nor is the whole volume not occupied with the metaphysics of the subject. It contains many beautiful illustrations, from various sources, of the workings of conscience, and rules for its proper government.

Rev. Henry Alford, D.D., Dean of Canterbury, continues to present the results of his New Testament studies in varying forms, intended to meet the wants of readers of every class. First, we had the *Greek Testament*, with a revised text, various readings, verbal and idiomatic parallels, prolegomena and commentary, for the use of students and ministers. (London: Rivingtons. Four vols. 8vo., £5 2 0.) Next came the *New Testament for English Readers*, containing the authorised version and a revised English text, with marginal references and commentary. (Same publishers. Two vols. 8vo. £2 14 6.) Then followed the *Greek Testament*, with English notes, for the upper forms of schools and passmen at the universities. (Same publishers. One vol. 8vo.) And now there is announced (by Strahan & Co.) the *New Testament, a Revision of the Authorised Version*, to be issued in various forms. The value of Dean Alfred's labours is recognised by scholars everywhere. He is painstaking in research, truth-loving and candid. Much learning has not dried up his heart, or frozen his tongue. His endeavours to popularize for the many the results of studies possible only to the few, are worthy of all praise.

Robert Carter & Brothers, of New York, have done good service in republishing the works of English divines, but they have sometimes marred it by following old and incomplete editions. We hope this is not the case with their recent announcement of the *Works of the Rev. John Howe*, with life by Edward Calamy, D.D., in 2 vols. 8vo. A full edition of the great nonconformist's writings was published not long since by the London Tract Society, with an admirable memoir by Henry Rogers.

We mentioned recently the advent of a new poet in England, by name William Morris. His latest work is the *Earthly Paradise*, in which are recited the wanderings of certain pilgrims from Northern Europe in search of the Happy Land. On this thread the poet hangs a rehearsal of the choicest classical and mediæval legends. His previous publication was the *Life and Death of Jason*. A copiousness of learning that makes him perfectly at home among the charming legends of Greece and Rome; a vividness of imagination that arrays each scene and character that he depicts with a new beauty or terror; a wealth of diction that can marry every glowing thought to as glowing a word; and a musical ear that modulates these thoughts and words into stately rhythm, are the qualities ascribed to this new candidate for the poet's crown. If he have all these, is he not fit to wear it?

Two ministers of the Scottish Establishment, Rev. G. W. Speott and T. Leishman have published *The Book of Common Order of the Church of Scotland, commonly known as John Knox's Liturgy, and the Directory of Public Worship agreed upon by the Assembly of Divines; with Historical Introductions and Illustrative notes*. (Edinburgh: Blackwoods.) Such a volume will be worthy of the attention of those whose tastes lead them into liturgical researches.

British and Foreign Record.

ANOTHER CHRISTIAN CONVENTION, called by the executive Committee appointed by the last convention at Peoria, and by a great number of the leading ministers and laymen throughout the State, met at Bloomington, Ill., Oct. 20, 21 and 22. Our readers are so familiar with the scope and the spirit of these Conventions that we need not describe them. The following topics were up for discussion:—

1. What are the best methods of organizing and developing the Christian activities of the entire membership of a church?
2. How can the influence of Christian homes be increased?
3. How to conduct children's prayer meetings.
4. The importance and best method of organizing and prosecuting systematic visitation.
5. How can the people in rural districts, remote from churches, be reached by gospel influences?
6. Why do so many churches fail to reach the poor?
7. How can our devotional meetings be made more profitable?
8. By what means can we secure a better observance of the Sabbath?
9. Are there any obstacles that stand in the way of a general revival, and what shall be done to secure the waking up of the churches to action in behalf of such work in Illinois?
10. Who should engage in lay preaching?
11. What is practical Christian Union?
12. How can we organize and keep up Daily Union Prayer-meetings?

The *Advance* says:—"The Convention was all that had been hoped for. Hour by hour we saw growing the spirit which shall find its expression in the conversion of many during the coming year. It is no surprise to us to learn that even now, before this report is in type, a revival at Normal is one of the first fruits. Those who have attended such gatherings know that the feeling becomes so tender that the farewell meetings are apt to be characterized by the expression given to brotherly affection and the sorrow that comes of separation. It was the remarkable feature of this convention, that while brotherly feeling reached its full intensity, the farewell meeting had in it but few farewell words, the great question taking precedence of everything else—"What are you going to do?" "

THE AMERICAN NATIONAL CHRISTIAN CONVENTION.—We condense from the *Congregationalist* an account of the above Convention, held in the Reformed Dutch Church, corner of 5th Avenue and 29th St., New York, November 17-19th.

Dr. Howard Crosby of N. Y., presided very admirably. All sections of the country, including the far South and West, were represented, and the presence of some Canadian brethren gave an international character to the gathering. The sessions were all well attended, the preliminary prayer meetings each morning spirited and tender, the discussions generally well opened and sustained, and the proceedings seem to have increased in interest and power towards the close. Upon many of the fourteen topics considered, nothing was said which has not been said again and again. Upon others there was a freshness and unanimity of remark quite noticeable.

The first step aside from the common place, was initiated by Rev. George Washburn of Constantinople, in opening the discussion of "Woman's work in the Churches." This duty he performed in a most admirable manner, apart from the nature of the views which he advanced. He advocated the revival of the office of *deaconess*, and the establishment of institutions for the training of women for various branches of Christian work.

The relations of our churches to the poor, and to the neglected portion of the community, was a theme which called forth a very hearty and general protest

against the present system of selling and renting pews. It was very evident that the sense of the Convention was strongly in favour of the theory of Free Churches. Why some of the city pastors who espouse this theory do not put it into practice, remains to be explained. Mr. Moody stated, in this connection, that Chicago had been divided into fifty-two districts, and that through united effort on the part of the churches, every family in the city was visited with religious papers once in thirty days.

In indicating the "best methods of conducting Sabbath Schools," Ralph Wells urged, among other things, direct contact with the Bible, two-minute prayers, plenty of singing, and object-teaching.

Great interest, the greatest perhaps, centered on the first session of the 3rd day (Thursday) when Henry Ward Beecher discussed the question, "How to make the week day meetings of the churches effective for spiritual purposes?" To hear him a vast audience had assembled, filling every seat on the floor and in the galleries, and crowding the aisles two-thirds of the way up to the pulpit. Mr. B. was in one of his best moods, and occupied three-quarters of an hour in a most capital talk on the "prayer and conference meeting."

This subject is one of such vital importance to the churches, and was handled so ably by Mr. Beecher, under whose presidency the prayer-meeting at Plymouth Church, has become the largest, probably, on the continent, that we have transferred to our pages elsewhere a very excellent report of his address from the editorial correspondence of the *Daily Witness*.

An interesting discussion on the "personal and social study of God's Word," followed, opened by Dr. Hall, who warmly advocated a Bible class conducted by the pastor, social meetings for the reading of Scripture, and expository preaching.

The evening of the third day was devoted to the closing session of the Convention, with addresses by Dr. McCosh and others. If the deliberations of this Convention have not been so inspiring as those of some that have preceded it; they cannot fail of being to some extent profitable. The voices of Moody, Crosby, Hall, Beecher, Mingins, Wells, and such men, of whom there were many present, cannot be lifted up wholly in vain.

THE CHRISTIAN TEMPERANCE CONVENTION was held in Boston, Mass. in the Meionaeon, on the 2nd & 3rd December, the Hon. W. A. Buckingham presiding. The meetings were very largely attended, and the proceedings unusually interesting, partly because of the reaction in public feeling in Massachusetts since the repeal of the *prohibitory*, and the enactment of a *license* law, in 1867; and partly because of what is so unusual at such gatherings.—a fair and square opposition to the whole total-abstinence movement by a member of the Convention.

One of the resolutions reported by a Committee appointed for that purpose, affirmed it to be the duty of Christians to abstain from intoxicating drinks; whereupon the Rev. Dr. Blagden, the senior pastor of the Old South Church, joined issue very earnestly, and even vehemently. In the course of his speech he advanced all the principal arguments that were brought against the temperance cause at its commencement forty years ago, and though the rule was five-minute speeches, it was voted that he should have all the time he wanted to state his views and objections fully. He accordingly occupied nearly half an hour in attempting to prove the following points:—

1st. That intoxicating drinks were good creatures of God, and therefore to be received and used with thanksgiving.

2nd. The Apostle said that in the last times some infidels should arise "forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats." Now, argued the Doctor, Roman Catholics have committed one of these errors, and total abstinence men the other, as intoxicating drinks can be fairly included in the word meats. He would be sorry to see Massachusetts going over to Rome.

3rd. We had no right to make anything a crime that the Scriptures did not condemn, and it condemned neither the making nor selling of intoxicating drinks but only drunkenness. We should therefore make strong laws against drunkards,

but none against manufacturers nor vendors, many of whom were most excellent men. There should also be reformatories for inebriates.

4th. He assumed and affirmed that the wine made by Christ at Cana was intoxicating, and, consequently, that they who condemned the use of wine condemned the Saviour.

5th. Prohibitory laws could not be carried out, and therefore only tended to bring law into contempt; but less stringent legislation would effect more.

He did not deny but that total abstinence might be advisable in some circumstances, but it could not be laid down as a general rule binding upon Christians, as was done in that resolution.

We hope that most of our readers are better informed than to need that we should give at any length the replies with which the Doctor's arguments were promptly met. It was, however, triumphantly shown,—

1st. That everything was a good creature of God for the purpose for which it was made, but that alcoholic stimulant was no more intended for an article of diet than opium or arsenic. Furthermore, alcoholic drinks were an artificial production from the decay of wholesome grain or fruits, and were no more a creature of God than any other artificial article, say, for instance, a revolver or bowie-knife. Again, alcohol was in no sense food, being incapable of digestion; it was an irritant of the human system, and not a supporter of it.

2nd. That legislating against the sale of alcoholic drink had no connection with the prophecy of the apostle; and if it was going over to Rome, it was singular that every Roman Catholic priest in Massachusetts was strongly opposed to it, and as strongly on Dr. Blagden's side.

3rd. That the Scripture does denounce a woe on those who put the bottle to their neighbor, which is as much authority against the vendor as could be found for legislation against the drunkard, and that reformatories for inebriates would not rescue the one-hundredth part of those whom the traffic would make.

4th. The assumption that the wine made by Christ was intoxicating was entirely unwarrantable, all the circumstances of the case and the analogies of his life and conduct being against it.

5th. Prohibitory laws could be carried out wherever the people were in earnest, just as easily as the licensing laws, which first admit the disturbing element and then try to regulate it. But the "unkindest cut of all" was given when the Doctor was told by one of the speakers that it was the very same party who now opposed prohibitory legislation, who had all along opposed to the uttermost emancipation, and who were never tired of shouting, "Cursed be Ham;"—that Dr. Blagden had every drinker, every rowdy, and every vendor with him, but that if the Lord Jesus were here in person, he would not be found on the same side of the question with them.

The resolution was then put and carried unanimously, there not being a solitary vote for Dr. Blagden's views.

It is gratifying to find that these "moderate" views are well antidoted at the Old South by Dr. Manning, the junior pastor, who declared himself an unhesitating advocate of both abstinence and legal prohibition.

On the question of medical prescriptions of alcoholic liquors, the Convention took the same ground as that held at Cleveland in July, an account of which we gave in our September number.

The speakers on this topic were nearly all physicians, and all condemned the extent to which alcoholic prescriptions were carried, and deplored the consequences of the practice. Some had discontinued altogether to prescribe liquors; others thought that in bad fever cases they must still be used to some extent. The chief speaker said that the dangerous practice was diminishing in various ways. Homœopathic practitioners never prescribed alcoholic liquors, and they were multiplying fast. Female practitioners, who are also increasing rapidly in numbers and practice, are on the same side. He asked one female doctor, whose practice was so extensive that she kept four horses, "How much alcoholic stimulants she prescribed?" and she replied, "Not a drop." Hydro-pathists and herb-doctors also eschewed alcoholic liquors, preferring other extracts; and the

regular practitioners, of whom he was one, prescribed liquor for fewer diseases now than they did forty years ago.

Another doctor thought that the prescription of intoxicating liquors was still fearfully common, and led to the most disastrous results, of which he gave several instances. The fact is, when a stimulant is prescribed at regular intervals, a craving is soon felt at those times, and a distressing sensation if that craving is not satisfied. Then, if the patient has the strength to break off, he is saved; if not, the appetite masters him, and he is lost, and this has been the fate of thousands and tens of thousands of both sexes through medical prescriptions.

Mr. Gough, the celebrated lecturer, was present, and made a soul-stirring address at the closing session. "To the temperance cause and to my wife," he said, "I owe, under God, all I have and all I am; and never can my allegiance diminish to either. I have come here, therefore, expressly to declare in the midst of you all, and in this public manner, that I am out-and-out in favor of total abstinence and prohibition."

PLYMOUTH CHURCH.—The annual meeting of Henry Ward Beecher's church was held on Friday evening. The pew rents for the year have been \$50,000, and donations for various benevolent purposes, \$40,000. The church has also during the year built a school-house for its mission school. On motion of Mr. Beecher, three deaconesses were elected, to assist the deacons as visitors of the sick and poor, Mr. B. saying, among other things, that the office of deaconess was one that had been known in the Christian church from the earliest period, and ought to be revived wherever it had been allowed to go out of use. It cannot be denied that there is a strong flavour of common sense in these remarks of the pastor of Plymouth Church.

THE N. Y. INDEPENDENT.—Six out of the seven sponsors for the *Independent* have made their report in two calm and dignified documents, the first signed by Rev. Drs. Magoun, Bartlett and Chapin, and the second by Rev. Drs. Sturtevant, Beecher and Gulliver, and more recently still, Dr. Post, of St. Louis has reported personally. They agree substantially in declaring that Mr. Bowen, the proprietor, has failed to make the paper what he promised it should be, but deal very leniently with the offenders, and call no hard names, forbearing to express much which no doubt the writers deeply feel. As these orthodox endorsers of the *Independent* have now withdrawn their names, it remains to be seen how long Eastern brethren, such as Cuyler, Spear, Ray, Palmer, Cheever and Rankin, will consent to be used to sugar-coat the pill!

Correspondence.

WHAT CHILDREN CAN DO.

DEAR SIR,—In one of the late numbers of the *INDEPENDENT* I was pleased to observe a statement to the effect that in connection with one of our small country churches, the ladies of the congregation had by their own efforts raised the sum of \$300 towards the erection of a new place of worship. This is worthy of notice, and opens our eyes to the fact that there is oftentimes more help within our reach, and among ourselves, than we turn to practical account. There are mines not being worked, are worse than wasted; there is machinery which is left to rust, instead of being profitably employed, and which would not only yield a return if used, but be improved and kept brightly the exercise. As an illustration of what may sometimes be done, perhaps the following fact is worth mentioning: At one of our stations in Oro, the people lately began to build a house of worship, but the prospect of finishing was not one o

the brightest. It was felt that every possible help must be pressed into the work, and that even the Sabbath School must do its share. In the spring of the present year the pastor brought the matter before the school, and stated that it was expected the scholars would do something towards helping forward the building—that the proposition was made, not simply because their aid was needed, but because it was a privilege of which no one had a right to deprive them—that it was an opportunity for them to do something as an acknowledgment of allegiance to the Heavenly King—that the lesson could not be too early impressed upon their minds, that they must devote part of what they receive to the cause of God; and that the act of giving would awaken in them a deeper interest in the prosperity of Christ's Kingdom. They were reminded that it was no small thing that they, as children, could share in the honor of building a house for the service of God, and that God would accept the services of their little hands, if offered in sincerity to him. He wished, therefore, that as they had the whole summer before them, each one would earn something with his or her own hands, it being understood that it must not be begged from others, but laboured for, and whilst doing so should remember that they were working for Jesus. He wished, also, that on the next Sabbath, they would come prepared, after consultation with their friends, to state that they would give something, and how they intended to earn it. On the Sabbath named, almost every child was found ready with a plan, well matured, for raising money for the new building.

A favourite plan with the boys was to plant, or sow, a piece of ground, the whole produce of which, be it little or much, was to be sold, and the price brought to the treasury. The girls were to earn their's chiefly by knitting, sewing and raising chickens. The time when the proceeds were to be brought in was looked forward to with a great deal of interest. On the day appointed the school assembled, each child having his little sum of money. The pastor took his seat, pencil in hand, prepared to note down the amounts as they came in; the children gathered around, and for a little while it was a busy scene. All were anxious to give in their earnings, making it a constant effort to get them to wait their turn. The sums varied from five cents to \$5. After all was taken, and the various amounts added up, the whole came to over \$40. And this from about fifty children, many of whom may be said to belong to the infant class. The evening was spent pleasantly and profitably. The money was placed on the table, and prayer offered that God would graciously accept the gift—then tea, singing and addresses made up the evening's entertainment, for it had been arranged that the offerings should be brought in on the day of the annual Sabbath School celebration. The children were all alive with enjoyment; in fact the anticipation had been a source of enjoyment all the summer, and was the subject of much thought and conversation. As their little patches of potatoes and onions grew, they were carefully watched, and when the crop was ready, with great glee it was carried to market and sold, and the proceeds brought home to be presented to the Lord.

Who could not see that those children were spiritually benefited, besides giving substantial help towards the new building? It was a new experience to them. They were practically taught a great lesson, viz., that they were not too young to work for Jesus, and they found by experience that it was "more blessed to give than to receive."

J. G. S.

JOTTINGS OF A RECENT TOUR IN THE PROVINCE OF QUEBEC.

When the writer was present, in October last, at the annual meeting of the American Board, then convened in Norwich, Connecticut, he saw, among other venerable and honored men, the Rev. Dr. Cox. On learning the writer's mission, he said, in his own emphatic manner, "*To put down the throne of Antichrist, I say Amen! Hallelujah!*" No doubt many of the readers of this widely read magazine will concur in this expressive wish, and all

must do so who love and honor the Saviour, and appreciate Bible and Protestant principles.

In closing our present engagement with the French Canadian Missionary Society, not knowing what awaits us in the future, and in what direction our energies may henceforth be directed, we have thought a few jottings of our tour so far, may not be uninteresting to some who read these pages.

We first visited Three Rivers, a Roman Catholic city, where we held a public meeting in the Wesleyan Methodist church, aided by the Wesleyan and Presbyterian ministers residing in that city. Considerable interest was awakened, a Committee was formed, and several subscriptions obtained when the agent called. The Society have two missionaries settled here, recently from France, whose labours we trust the Lord will honour and bless, amid difficulties incident to their peculiar work.

We passed from thence to the ancient city of Quebec, where we spent two Sabbaths, addressed meetings in the week, and made *personal calls for subscriptions*, the most laborious and self-denying part of the agent's employ, but in which he has been, through the divine blessing, somewhat successful. The annual meeting was well attended, but did not yield as much in the collection as the previous year. The *subscriptions*, however, were in *advance* by several dollars, excepting two larger amounts given under special circumstances. One merchant in Brantford, however, is far in advance of the largest subscriber in Quebec. "These things ought not so to be." We preached in the Free, Congregational, and Wesleyan Methodist churches. Our brother Powis, the Congregational pastor, we found, had received a present from one of his hearers of a handsome gown and bands; and not being averse to this clerical garb, we appeared in that attire when performing our sacred duties. This is no innovation, for two previous pastors did the same. The gown is worn by the minister of Old South, Boston, and many of our brethren wear it in England.

On leaving Quebec, we regret having been obliged to pass by several places we had on our programme, as we were prevented from giving the facts at our disposal, and of adding to our pecuniary returns. One brother after another wrote discouraging letters, telling us of others in the field in behalf of the Indian Mission, the Bible Society, the Congregational Missionary Society, or some meeting of Association, &c.; and thus we were prevented visiting Inverness, Danville, Durham, Cowansville and other places.

We at length reached Richmond, and spent the Sabbath there and at Melbourne, and did better than on any former occasion, notwithstanding the storm which raged during our stay. We were kindly received by the Rev. Mr. McKay, the Professor of Gaelic in the Richmond College, by Dr. Webber and his wife, the Mayor and Mayoress of that village, and by Bro. Campbell and his wife, of Melbourne; and we found among our hearers and friends Dr. Graham, the Principal of Richmond College, and other celebrities.

We passed on from thence to Sherbrooke, presided over the prayer meeting in brother Duff's church, and preached for him on the Sabbath, there and at Lennoxville, in the evening addressing the Sabbath school concert. We were surprised, as we walked through the town of Sherbrooke, to observe the changes in the population since we were last there. The English element is becoming less apparent, and the French is gaining ground. Here, however, our subscriptions were in advance of last year. We were pleased with the appearance and attendance of brother Duff's congregation, but think there should be *more general* singing there and elsewhere, and greater care not to

introduce too rapidly new tunes. Older times were far better than the present in this respect. Modern changes are in nowise improvements, when they interfere with hearty singing on the part of the congregation.

Our last place of visitation, so far, is the village of Waterville. Here we were kindly received by the Rev. G. Purkis, the Congregational minister of the place. We addressed a meeting last evening, and took up a collection, but, like most collections, it was small. We hope the visit will enlist the sympathies and prayers of many in behalf of our mission. We were pleased to find our brother is to have a Donation visit shortly. We hope it may be ample and encouraging, and that this laborious brother may be blessed in all his labours in this missionary field.

In closing these jottings, we trust the good Editor will allow a remark or two. Amid the Conventions, of frequent occurrence, ought there not to be one to confer on *the best division of labour among the various sections of the Christian Church?* As we travel from place to place, we observe a *multiplicity of organizations*, many of them very small; and we cannot help thinking, that with all our wisdom, we are at fault in this respect. Money, time, talent and energy might be employed to greater advantage, were we to stand by great principles, make concessions on minor points, agree to differ on non-essentials, and work together for the interests of vital Christianity.

The manner in which appeals for help are met, has also struck our attention. Some, who have experienced slight reverses, *diminish* their benevolent contributions, but not their general expenditure. Some tell us "there are so many calls;" "they must be just before they are generous," &c. But does the Bible warrant these pleas? Justice and generosity should harmonize. The *money* calls are often exaggerated, and when it is true, how many are the calls we make upon the Lord? Does He tell us they are too many? Does He refuse to help? But I will not enlarge.

Dec. 15, 1868.

JAMES T. BYRNE.

Official.

MISSIONARY MEETINGS, ONTARIO WESTERN DISTRICT.

Monday, Jan. 18, 1869.	Stratford.....	} Rev. Messrs. Smith, McColl, Wood, Snider—at all but Stratford.
Tuesday, 19,	Listowel	
Wednesday, 20,	Molesworth	
Thursday, 21,	Howick	
Friday, 22,	Turnbury	
Monday, 18,	Guelph	} Rev. Messrs. W.F. Clarke, J. Brown, R. Brown.
Tuesday, 19,	Garafraxa	
Wednesday, 20,	Douglas.....	
Thursday, 21,	Green Settlement	
Friday, 22,	Eramosa	
Monday, Feb. 15, 1869,	Brantford	} Revds. Messrs. Allworth, Dickson, Wood.
Tuesday, 16,	Paris	
Wednesday, 17,	London	
Thursday, 18,	Southwold	
Friday, 19,	Westminster.....	
Monday, 22,	Watford	} Rev. Messrs. Dickson, Salmon.
Sabbath, 23,	Sarnia	
Sabbath, 21,	Tilbury	
Monday, 22,	Tilbury	
		Rev. W. W. Smith.
		Rev. Messrs. Smith, McColl.

Tuesday, Feb. 23, 1869,	Warwick	} Revs. Messrs. Salmon, Dickson, Smith, McColl.
Wednesday, 24,	Plympton.....	
Thursday, 25,	Forest	
Friday, 26,	Sarnia	

W. H. ALLWORTH,
Sec. Ont. W. D.

Paris, Oct. 15th, 1868.

MISSIONARY MEETINGS, 1869—ONTARIO MIDDLE DISTRICT.

Zion Ch., Toronto,	Jan. 19,	Tues.	Revs. J. G. Sanderson, J. Wheeler, D. Macallum.
Thistletown.....	" 20,	Wed.	} Revs. J. G. Sanderson, J. Wheeler, J. G. Manly.
Pine Grove	" 21,	Thu.	
Albion	" 22,	Frid.	Revs. J. G. Sanderson, R. Hay.
Newmarket	" 24,	Sun.	" "
Whitby	" 18,	Mon.	" F. H. Marling, T. M. Reikie, J. Unsworth.
Bowmanville.....	" 19,	Tues.	" S. T. Gibbs, J. Unsworth.
Markham	" 20,	Wed.	} Revs. T. M. Reikie, S. T. Gibbs, B. W. Day.
Unionville	" 21,	Thu.	
Stouffville	" 22,	Frid.	" " " D. Macallum.
Manilla	" 21,	Thu.	Rev. F. H. Marling.
Georgetown	" 25,	Mon.	Revs. J. G. Manly, R. T. Thomas, R. Hay.
Churchville	" 26,	Tues.	" " R. Hay.
Alton.....	" 27,	Wed.	" " " M. S. Gray.
Orangeville	" 28,	Thu.	" " " H. Denny.
South Caledon ...	" 29,	Frid.	" " " "
Newmarket	" 25,	Mon.	" B. W. Day, D. Macallum.
Oro.....	" 26,	Tues.	" F. H. Marling, B. W. Day, D. Macallum.
Bethesda	" 27,	Wed.	" " " "
Vespra	" 28,	Thu.	" " " "
Meaford.....	" 18,	Mon.	" R. Robinson, M. S. Gray.
Owen Sound.....	" 19,	Tues.	" " J. McGregor.
Colpoy's Bay.....	" 20,	Wed.	" " "
Kincardine	" 21,	Thu.	" J. McGregor.
Osprey	" 27,	Tues.	" D. McGregor.

1. The Churches will please have the subscriptions all collected when the deputation visits them.
2. The Pastors will have the names on the lists legibly written out, with all sums less than 50 cents headed "small sums."
3. The first name on each route will be expected to furnish "notes" to the Magazine.
4. The brethren are willing to hold a prayer meeting the morning following the Missionary Meeting, where desired and practicable.

J. U., *Sec.*

MISSIONARY MEETINGS—1868-9.

1869.	<i>Ontario Eastern District.</i>	
Martintown	January, 19,	Revs. R. Lewis and McGregor.
Roxboro' & In. Lands	" 20,	Do. Do.
Vankleek Hill	" 21,	Do. Do.

ALEX. MCGREGOR, *Sec. Ont. E. D. Com.*

Canada Congregational College and Missionary Society.—I shall be glad to receive applications, as soon as possible, for the pulpit services of the Theological students, during the coming College vacation, commencing not later than the first Sunday of May, 1869. The attention of the District Missionary Committees to this matter is particularly invited.

J. G. MANLY,
Home Secretary.

Toronto, Dec. 21, 1868.

Western Association.—The Western Association will meet at Warwick, on Tuesday, the 2nd day of February, at 2 p. m. The friends at Warwick will have conveyances at Watford Station, on the G. W. R., both on Monday evening the 1st of Feb., and Tuesday morning, the 2nd, to convey the members to their temporary homes near the place of meeting.

The Associational Sermon will be preached on Wednesday,—the hour to be fixed by the Pastor. The exercises, as agreed upon at last meeting, are as follows:—Sermon, Rev. W. W. Smith; alternate, Rev. J. Brown. General Plan, (Col. iii, 4, "When Christ, *who is our life*, shall appear.") Review, "Man's Renewal," (Prof. Phelps,) Rev. W. H. Allworth. Essay, "Pulpit Preparation," Rev. T. Pullar. Essay, "Best means of promoting a Revival in the Churches," Rev. S. Snider. Paper on the question of "Combining lay representation in the constitution of the Association," Rev. W. W. Smith. Plans of Sermons, Rev'ds. J. A. R. Dickson, and John Brown. Exposition, The "Wheat and the Tares," Rev. J. Salmon.

W. W. SMITH, *Sec., pro. tem.*

Congregational College of British North America.—The Treasurer acknowledges having received the following sums from the several undermentioned churches, viz.:

Sheffield, N. B.	\$14 26	Southwold	\$42 00
Brantford	25 75	Danville	8 00
Burford	10 25	Union, N. S. & N. B.....	32 00
New Durham	10 25	Ottawa	41 40
Scotland	11 00	Whitby	8 00
London	26 42	Garafraxa	3 00
Toronto	34 10	Albion	3 00
Milton, N. S.....	18 50	Liverpool and Brooklyn	10 00
Manilla	19 60	Lanark Village	29 00
Oro.....	8 00	Montreal to date	439 87

JAMES P. CLARK,
Treasurer.

Montreal, 19th Dec., 1868.

News of the Churches.

London.—The lecture-room adjoining the Congregational Church has been much enlarged and improved. It is well lighted, heated and ventilated. The walls are perfectly white, the windows frosted, and the outside painted a drab color. The room is well seated, and is now one of the cosiest halls in the city. The work has been done by Mr. Harwood in a most satisfactory manner. On Tuesday and Wednesday last it was used by the ladies of the church for a bazaar in aid of the parsonage fund, the proceeds of which amounted to the handsome sum of \$400.

Warwick.—The new Chapel at Warwick is to be opened on Sabbath, 31st January; and a tea-meeting in connection with the occasion will be held on Tuesday evening, 2nd Feb., during the sittings of the Western Association at that place.

Garafraxa 1st.—The handsome and commodious new church edifice in this place was to be opened on the last Sabbath of the year,—the Rev. W. F. Clarke, of Guelph, to preach on the occasion. It was arranged also that a tea-meeting should be held on the following evening. We shall doubtless be furnished with a full account of the services for our next number.

Belleville, Scotland.—We learn that the Rev. W. Hay has at last yielded to the importunity of his former much attached people in Scotland, Ont., and returns to his first and life-long charge in that place, about the beginning of the year. We suppose it was hardly possible in this case, but perhaps the line may apply even here,—

“Absence makes the heart grow fonder.”

Rev. E. Barker, whose return to Ontario we chronicled last month, has received a unanimous call from the 1st Garafraxa Church, and another from that at Eramosa, where he formerly laboured, and which the Rev. W. F. Clarke, of Guelph has been steadily supplying for several years past. Mr. Barker has not yet announced his decision. May the Lord guide our brother!

Mr. Douglas Russell, the evangelist, whose labours have been so signally blessed in Galt, Ont., is at present engaged in London, occupying in turn several places of worship belonging to different denominations, and appears to be creating a wide-spread interest in religion in that city. The following extract from the correspondence of the London *Advertiser* will show how the good work is spreading.

GALT, Dec. 12, 1868.

“DEAR ADVERTISER:—Two weeks have transpired since you had tidings from Galt. Last week was one of noted power and success in the work of revival. The presence and work of Rev. Mr. Inglis, Hamilton, on two evenings, were opportune. Speaking from the heart, his words reached the heart. The attendance was so large that we noticed some standing in the vestibule, who had driven nine miles to be present. This week, owing to the protracted snow storm, followed by keen frost, fewer have attended. Last night, however, (Friday) the house was again filled; throughout the week sinners have been coming to Christ.

“He alone, who has declared that His thoughts and ways are not as ours, knows when and what the end shall be.

“*Branch Revivals.*—People and pastors coming from neighbouring sections are being filled with a desire to *live* and *work* as they have never done. Already similar meetings have been opened in East Puslinch, Ayr and London, besides initiative steps in Hamilton, Toronto and other places. We believe that at East Puslinch a most blessed work is going on under the efficient hand of Rev. Mr. McDonald, Presbyterian minister in charge, from whom we were favored with a word in season in Galt some time since. Rev. Mr. Smith has spent the last two nights in Ayr, conducting the first of a series of meetings, and we are glad to say that his labour has not been in vain. The first night several anxious persons enquired: ‘What they must do to be saved?’ Last night nearly the body of the church remained for the second meeting. This is cheering to all and perhaps to none more so than to Rev. Mr. McRuar, who has been with us in Galt while Mr. Smith was among his people in Ayr. Let the work become general and Canada shall realize how “happy that people is whose God is the Lord.”

Gleanings.

THE BEST THAT I CAN.

“I cannot do much,” said a little star,
 “To make the dark world bright!
 My silvery beams cannot struggle far
 Through the folding gloom of night!
 But I’m only part of God’s great plan,
 And I’ll cheerfully do the best that I can!

“What is the use,” said a fleecy cloud,
 “Of these few drops that I hold?
 They will hardly bend the lily proud,
 Though caught in her cup of gold!
 Yet am I a part of God’s great plan,
 So my treasures I’ll give as well as I can.”

A child went merrily forth to play,
 But a thought, like a silver thread,
 Kept winding in and out all day
 Through the happy golden head:
 “Mother said, ‘Darling, do all you can,
 For you are a part of God’s great plan!’”

She knew no more than the glancing star,
 Nor the cloud with its chalice full!
 How, why, and for what, all strange things were?
 She was only a child at school!
 But thought: “It is part of God’s great plan
 That even I should do all that I can!”

So she helped a younger child along,
 When the road was rough to the feet,
 And she sang from her heart a little song
 That we all thought passing sweet,
 And her father, a weary, toil-worn man,
 Said, “I too will do the best that I can.”

Our best! ah! children, the best of us
 Must hide our faces away,
 When the Lord of the vineyard comes to look,
 At our task, at the close of day!
 But for strength from above—’tis the Master’s plan—
 We’ll pray, and we’ll do the best that we can.

Episcopal Methodist.

VERY LITTLE FOLKS.—What is the smallest house to live in? Do you say, a drop of water? Yet millions of living creatures live in a drop of water. What mites they must be! Yes, mere items—a thousandth or twenty-thousandth part of an inch in size: and such queer shapes! They look like bottles, funnels, fruit, wheels, crabs, serpents, eels, worms. Some are soft, like leeches; others have a hard, flinty shell. They are of all colors, green, red, yellow, and no color at all. The green scum you see on stagnant water is formed of them. Some emit light like a glow-worm. A ship sailing on the ocean at night often seems to leave a trail of light behind her in the waters. It is caused by millions and millions of these little creatures. They are called in-fu-so-ri-a. Not a drop of water from the ocean, not a drop from the clearest spring, pool, or running brook, but has millions of them in it. You cannot see them with the naked eye, only by a microscope. They have horns, claws, bristles, ears, paddles, and move swiftly about, as if time was short, and there was a plenty to do. So there is; and they do their part.

Deposits of the shelly in-fu-so-ri-a form the fine sand which is used in making the beautiful porcelain ware. The famous pyramids of Egypt are built of them; for what is limestone but the dead bodies of these little creatures? Charleston, in South Carolina is built on a bed of them; and they are at work all along the coast, filling up the harbors and forming shoals.

What pains God takes in making even the smallest things. Nothing is too small for his care and notice. Nothing is too small to be of use in his wide kingdom. Some of his greatest works are done by the powers of littles. Let nobody despise little folks; no, no.—*Selected.*

A little girl sends the following letter, the juvenile style of the writing, showing that her tiny fingers are more familiar with the needle than they are with the pen :

DEAR SIR :—Enclosed is one dollar which I wish to send to the foreign missions. I received it as a premium on a quilt that I sent to the fair. The reason why I could not send you any money, was because I had none, I have often thought about the missions, and wished that I could send some money, and I hope the Lord will bless it in its work. Yours, from your friend,

ELLA.

P. S.—I hope E. L. & W. can soon send you the price of this year's "missionary pig." L. & W. send enclosed the 13 cents received for their dog they sold when I was too sick to take care of it for them ; also 6 cents pop-corn money, and 15 cents of E.'s that she worked for. I hope she will live to be a missionary.

MOTHER.

—*Advance.*

AMUSEMENTS.

TEST QUESTIONS.—Amusement may be accurately tested by a few very simple questions :

Are they costly?—Young people should be thrifty—saving up something for a good start. Amusements that use up what should be savings, are evil.

Are they refreshing?—The amusement that makes you less able to go on with your work is badly chosen.

Are they healthful?—If after any party, play or dance, you have a headache, backache, cold, or a restless appetite—that amusement was evil. Avoid it.

Are they pure?—Purity is a matter of thought quite as much as of fact. To the pure all things are pure. But alas, few of us men are pure. And plays that are innocent as the frolic of lambs, become to some persons stimulants of evil and unspeakable thoughts. Beware of those plays.

Are they well earned?—Except a man workn, either shall he play. All plays and all dances are wicked for a lazy, idle man. Only the industrious can safely amuse themselves in any way.

WHAT MUST YOU DO?—Reader, do you feel the slightest drawing toward God, the smallest concern about your immortal soul? Does your conscience tell you this day that you are not forgiven, and have not yet felt the Spirit's power? Listen and I will tell you.

You must go at once to the Lord Jesus Christ in prayer, and beseech him to have mercy upon you. You must go direct to that open fountain of living water, the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall receive the Holy Ghost (John vii. 39). Think not that you are shut up and cut off from hope. The Holy Ghost is promised to them that ask him. Give the Lord no rest until he comes down and creates in you a clean heart. Cry mightily unto the Lord ; say unto him, "Bless me, even me also ; quicken me, and make me alive."

I dare not, for my part, send anxious souls to any one but Christ. I cannot hold with those who tell men to pray for the Holy Spirit in the first place, in order that they may go to Christ in the second place. I see no warrant of Scripture for saying so. I only see that if men feel they are needy perishing sinners, they ought to apply first and foremost, straight and direct to Jesus Christ. I see that he himself says, "If any man thirst let him come unto me and drink" (John vii. 37) I know it is his special office to baptize with the Holy Ghost, and that "in him all fullness dwells." I dare not pretend to be more systematic than the Bible. I believe Christ is the meeting place between God and the soul ; and my first advice must always be, *Go to Jesus and tell your wants to him.*

Reader, remember this. I have told you what to do. You are to go to Christ if you want to be saved.