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THE CANADIAN INDEPENDENT.

(NEW SERIES.)

VOL. I.]

TORONTO, APRIL, 1882.

[No. 4.

EDITORIAL JOTTINGS.

THE following is from a leading editorial in the *Victorian Independent*, and is worth studying in connection with the paper published in this issue on the "Weakness of Independency," specially as it regards what Mr. McHardy describes as a "denominational temper": "In looking at our special work in this colony in the light of past experience, there is one thing that stands out before us with the clearness and definiteness of a revelation, and that is the necessity of increased effort to maintain and extend our principles. We must put forth a vigour and an energy to which we have for some time been strangers. If, as some of us contend, we are not going back, we are certainly not advancing with that firm and manly step which our freedom and large-heartedness should prompt. There are occasional defections in our ministerial ranks, and suspicious whisperings are heard that we have not seen the end of such unseemly and scandalous proceedings. *There is a lamentable want of a denominational spirit amongst us. Churches, ministers, and members do petty much as they like, without respect to the interests of the body at large.* Our institutions are languishing for the want of funds, and for the still more serious deficiency of Christian workers. In the presence of the princely liberality of other Churches, we are cast down sometimes, but we are not in despair. The time has come when we must arise and shake ourselves from the dust. We have been asleep while others have been awake and working." We have italicised two sentences of our Australian contemporary, offering a few remarks. Similar words might be culled from our own columns at different times, from various pens. Why should this complaint come from all points of the compass regarding our Congregational Churches? Is it true? and if so, why? Without ventur-

ing dogmatic replies, we submit a few reflections, assuming that there must be some ground, imaginary or real, for the complaints so persistently made.

All movements that have a history and continuity carry with themselves in a greater or lesser degree the traditions and habits of the past. Congregationalism has a continuous history, and has been in the forefront of the battle on English ground for religious liberty, which liberty in the colonies has been secured, and in growing measure is being enjoyed in the old land. That struggle necessarily exaggerated the import of individual rights and liberty, whilst the common struggle compelled co-operation and fellowship unconsciously, just as upon a raft, mid-ocean, lord and servant, peer and peasant, passengers and crew, know no difference in the one common danger and struggle to sight a vessel and drift to some hospitable shore. The struggle is over; it has of necessity left its temper and tradition. Now, that liberty gained, the question of the hour is, Have we wisdom and grace to use our liberty, adapting ourselves, under Divine guidance, to the needs and calls of the hour? The belligerent attitude was a necessity, has now become a tradition; for under the changed circumstances, to talk of *compulsion, ecclesiastical legislation* in a land like ours, where even a "secular society" holds its Sunday evening concerts unmolested, is simply buncombe—nothing more. Having won our rights, we need to try an old path and strike again a grand old strain, which in the din of battle was scarcely heard, viz., fellowship—"fellowship one with another," because we are partakers of the "fellowship of the blood of Christ." In *this* respect we have a denominational right to exist, believing in the communion of saints, not on the ground of ritual conformity, creed subscription, ecclesiastical oneness, but upon the simple ground of faith in Christ and loyalty to His kingly law. The

steady pursuit of this ideal will give us cohesion and spiritual power, purge our fellowship of things which disgrace, and of walks that are disorderly, and give us a definite work, which, whether it brings wealth to our treasury or not, will make us earnest in every good word and work, and cause us to rejoice without complaining in that liberty which has been gained—the liberty of the truth, the liberty wherewith Christ's people are free, the liberty of co-operation and love of Christ and of God.

WE offer no apology for inserting the following, clipped by us from our exchange, the *N. Y. Independent*. Whether we have the same ignorance and besotted bestiality under which society, crowded and emerging from its old condition in the old land, groans or not, we will not stay to inquire; but the adaptation of the Gospel to the masses, not by clap-trap advertisements, "laughter" and "applause," but by plain men speaking words of earnestness to plain men, is a fact worth the study of all who seek to raise their fellows to "the heavenlies in Christ Jesus." We confess ourselves at present learners regarding the movement of the Salvation Army, and give from time to time such facts as may aid our readers also in coming eventually to some conclusion regarding their work:

A SALVATION ARMY TROPHY.

"One of the Crowd" who contributes very skilfully prepared sketches to the *Daily Telegraph*, fills two columns of that journal with the account of a visit paid to a service in the People's Hall, Whitechapel Road. We quote the concluding portion:

"There was an exceedingly devout couple on a seat not far distant from me, and it was evident that the woman wished her husband to rise and say something, and that he was equally anxious that she should do so. And presently she did. Her speech was briefer than that of any one who had spoken previously. 'I thank God for His goodness to me, but more especially I thank Him for the blessed change that, through His servants who worship in this place, He has made in my husband. I beseech the prayers of every one here that he may hold fast to the good cause.' To tell the truth, the husband she was speaking of was not a likely-looking subject. Though decently dressed, he was still a rough-

looking fellow of the bull-necked and heavy-jawed type, with a countenance expressive of anything but gentleness of spirit and meek submission to any amount of persecution for religion's sake. Yet there could be no doubt, whatever the strange means by which the miracle had been wrought, that the man was thoroughly enthralled and made captive, for the time being, at all events, to the principles of Salvationism. More frequently, perhaps, than any other, was his deep, gruff voice heard uttering loud and, to those near him, startling sudden ejaculations of approval at particular points and periods of the preacher's discourse. When the congregation knelt down to pray, he was not satisfied to bow the knees and cover his face with one hand, but he must turn bodily round, with his fists clenched and his arms encircling his head, while his forehead pressed against the hard seat. He groaned and sobbed so and made such dismal noises that his wife did her best to comfort him, patting his broad back with her work-worn old hand, and whispering to him to bear up and be glad, though all the time her own cheeks were wet and her eyes red with weeping. So strangely did the man seem affected that, when the service was at an end and the congregation departed, my curiosity was roused and I kept the pair in sight. Walking down the Whitechapel Road by their side, I took the liberty of questioning them as to how long it was since they joined the Salvation Army, and how they had been induced to turn their religious attention in that direction. After what I had witnessed of the behaviour of both, I was not surprised to find that they were disposed to speak with freedom on the subject. For a moment the woman hesitated; but her husband, who still occasionally applied his pocket-handkerchief to his eyes, exclaimed: 'Tell him, old gal; tell him all about it. Don't hide nothing. I didn't, when at last I was marched off my legs and cried out to the Lord to catch hold of me. And He put forth His hand and did it, bless His holy name.' He spoke these words aloud, and with his hands clasped and raised above his head. 'Well, you must know, sir,' the woman began, 'my husband and me were not brought to see the light of truth and glory at the same time. How I came to seek it——' 'How she come to seek it,' the man interrupted her, 'was because she had for her husband as hard and as cruel a beast as ever a poor soul was tethered

to. That was me. I was the curse of her life, sir. I'm a slaughterman by trade; but half my time I used to be too lazy to work at it, and I used to make this poor little bundle o' bones work for me at the washtub, or at scrubbing, or at claring—anything. What did I care, so long as I could wait on her for a shilling when she came home at night, to find me in beer and 'bacca? And I didn't let her off at that. I used to fist her. It is to the glory of the Lord that I confess to it. He can wash white as snow the heart of such a wretch as I used to be; and I confess, sir, that I used to fist her often. I fisted her wuss than ever when I found out that she used to come on the quiet to the Hall here. I was that mad jealous of her doing it that I used to feel like killing her sometimes. It used to seem to me that she did it on purpose, to show me up and make me feel ashamed of myself. It didn't seem half so bad to do as I was doing when she fired up at me, and swore back when I swore at her, and sometimes caught up something and fetched me a clout with it when I came home drunk and began fisting her. But when she began to go to the Hall, sir, she took a turn—a turn that raised the devil in me that strong that it was a wonder I did not murder her. No matter how I fisted her, she took it meek, and wiped the blood off her mouth, and said: 'May the Lord forgive you, as I do, Jack.' I used to be furious then, and go at her and fist her till she hadn't got any voice left to crow over me. But next morning, sir, she'd be bright and cheerful, and, if I said anything taunting, she'd make answer: 'I can wait, Jack. It is not you and me that is rustling (wrestling), lad. It is the devil in you fighting against the Lord in me. The victory may be far off; but I can wait, for it is certain.' Praise be to His glorious name, sir, the victory was not far off. It was nigher than she thought. It come sudden, sir, as I'd fell a beast with the axe. I'd been fisting her cruel, for I was malicious drunk that night, till I thought I had done for her quite. She lay on the floor so still, with the blood a trickling from her forehead, and I was growing frightened and sober, when she comes to her senses and pulls herself up on to her knees by catching hold of the bedstead, and sez she: 'Oh! Lord, don't be too hard on my poor husband. Take pity on him, for my sake, and loosen the hold the devil has on him.' And as I sat there on the

chair, sir, staggered and wandering, she managed to get up, and she put her arms around my neck, and sez she: 'Oh! dear Jack, I may be dying. I think I am. Let me hear you say 'Oh! God, forgive me!' and I shall die happy.' But I didn't say it. I couldn't. I was so took aback and 'mazed that I was dumb. I was dumb all through the night, sir, and she never let me go; and it wasn't till morning's light that I found a voice to say what she asked me hours before. There's the story from first to last, sir, and that's how I came to join the Salvationists, and the reason why I mean, with my wife's help, to stick to them while I've got living strength. I don't know who you are, sir, or your meaning for getting me into talk; but I'll make bold to ask you one question, now I'm done: 'D'ye blame me for sticking to 'em?'

Under the circumstances, there was, of course, but one answer to the question, and I gave it unhesitatingly.

MR. PROCTOR, the astronomer, has been playing the alarmist. He argues for the identity of one of the comets of 1880 with that of the great comet of 1843, and that again with the comet of 1668, which by its near approach to the sun was retarded by that luminary's corona, and had its period of return shortened from 175 years to about 35. He argues that at its next return it will fall into the sun. This may cause such a blaze in the solar furnace that our earth may be dried if not burnt up thereby. There is this consolation, however, for those that may hope to live till that day: the identity is not proved, being only more probable than Anglo-Saxon identity with the lost ten tribes, besides which astronomers have estimated as of very little mass the body of comets; and allowing a very liberal estimate, the falling of such a cometary mass into the sun would simply bring back the fuel supply to what it had been some twenty-four hours before. In other words, the mass of the sun, as compared with the mass of the comet, is so great that it would affect its temperature little more than a house cistern of water would the flow of the Clyde. At least such is the opinion of some astronomers who have as great opportunity of knowing as Mr. Proctor. Nevertheless, the end will come for us soon; therefore, what the hand findeth to do, let it hasten diligently.

MR. OSCAR OWERS, an evangelist from the English Evangelistic Society, a man of reputed earnestness and moral worth, in his labours in Kingston is reported to have made statements which have startled the community. Some ladies asked him to give his opinion regarding modern bazaars. He denounced them as being devoted to frivolity, dress, and levity—in fact, they were almost sinks of iniquity. He also stated that the churches of to-day were too frequently governed by the law of expediency, and not by the law of God. Such charges are serious if true, and that they are in measure true must, we fear, be acknowledged. We have had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Owers, and believe him to be a true friend of the churches, not their enemy, in telling the truth. Unless we mistake his purpose—and we shall deeply regret to learn that we are mistaken—that gentleman desires to build up the churches, utterly repudiating the work of a destroyer; but he, with many others, does desire the churches to be clothed with beautiful garments, to arise in the strength of holiness, to trust no meretricious adornment, but to put on the Lord Jesus in his integrity, love, and self-sacrificing power. There are certain business lines upon which all church externals must run; but the business management of the quack, of the lottery and the opera should be foreign to our church work, which must depend upon the Saviour's promised gift, "power from on high." We rejoice at the signs of impatience in many quarters with the questionable methods Churches and Church members tolerate for favour and financial success. We have no sympathy with the querulousness that marks the complaining of many, we do not believe that chronic grumbling has any place in the kingdom of heaven, but we do sympathise with the awakening conscience that moves the will to resolve, "the kingdom of God and its righteousness first; other things follow, as in God's good pleasure they may."

PROF. MASPERO is excavating about the pyramid of Meydum, which is the next in size to those of Ghizeh, and which is believed to have been erected by Snefru, the last king of the Third Dynasty, and the predecessor of Khufu, or Cheops. He has now cleared the pyramid down to the level of the desert, to which it descends in a series of great steps of

beautifully fitted masonry of fine white limestone. The joints of the masonry are so close, that it is often difficult to trace them; they are more like cabinetmakers' than masons' work. This pyramid must have been covered up from the remotest time, for it looks quite new. The central chamber is tent-shaped, the walls contracting to a point at the top, so as to support the immense weight. Some pieces of heavy timber were found in the room; it is possible that there may be other chambers, as in the pyramids of Ghizeh, not yet discovered, in which the sarcophagus exists. No inscription has yet been found on the pyramid; but Mr. Stuart has found one but five minutes' walk distant, on the tomb of Nofre-Maat, which reads in archaic characters, "Resting-place of Snefru." No confirmation is yet received of the astonishing statement, published in Berlin some months ago, of the discovery of the pyramid of Menes, the first mythical king of Egypt.

THE R. C. Archbishop Lynch, of Toronto, has left for Rome, conveying to the Pope the contributions of the faithful. The Sunday evening before he left, the city he delivered an address in his Cathedral, upon Tolerance and Intolerance. Tolerance is explained clearly as the endurance of that "which we cannot help; we endure what we cannot cure. Something that is evil steps in, and we cannot expel it without incurring a more grievous evil, and we tolerate its presence;" it is the exercise of "the grace of patience." Tolerance may be a grievous wrong. "An evil steps in; it can be expelled easily, and a great deal of misfortune prevented. It is a serious dereliction of duty and weakness to endure and tolerate. Toleration is therefore a virtue or a vice, according to circumstances." The Archbishop does not define "circumstances," though reviewing history he notes, "When once the Catholic religion was established and became part of the State, the rulers became intolerant. They were sure the Catholic religion was the true one, and they punished all those who openly preached another doctrine." A few reassuring sentences follow:—"Good Catholics, from charity and humility, respect the honest convictions of their Protestant fellow-citizens; they were educated from their infancy in those tenets, and they leave them to the judgment of God, the Master

and Judge of us all. No man can pronounce whether he is worthy of love or hatred either before or after death. Whilst the Catholics strongly adhere to the doctrines of their own faith, and would not change them for worlds, they are far from condemning their neighbours." Nevertheless, we remain painfully in doubt as to the attitude, "according to circumstances," to be assumed should the "Catholic Church" be preferred by a decided majority, "sure that that Church is the true one," to the exclusion of all others. Specially do these suggestions rise when we remember the Syllabus of the last Pope, which provides for the anathematizing of those who deny the right of the civil magistrate to enforce observance of the true religion. We sometimes recall John Bunyan's giant Pope, and the old man biting his nails, with the scarce audible growl, "You will never mend till more of you be burned." We respect our Roman Catholic fellow-citizens, but not their exclusive theology, which ever leaves us uneasy as to what may be the next demand when their first "reasonable" concession has been gained.

THE following is from the *Mail* of March 6th. We draw attention to the italicised words, where the main issue is declared to be *revenue*, not principle:—"A deputation of the Dominion Alliance waited here upon Mr. Wurtele, the Provincial Treasurer, and presented a petition asking for some changes and modifications in the license laws, as well as for their consolidation. The Treasurer stated that he was in favour of some of the changes required, and he would consult his colleagues with a view of introducing a Bill to carry them out, but he gave the supplicants to understand that *he would not pledge himself to any measure that would damage the revenue arising from license duties.*"

THE following, from a contemporary, may suggest that the Church is not guiltless quite in the raising of this false standard, where truth and purity are at stake; we endorse every word as our own:—"The 'Interior' says: 'When we talk about popularity only, or measure communion rolls only, or figure up pew rents only, we are far too low down among worldly standards to measure the work of the Spirit. It will not always respond to those tests.' And yet these are the standards

too often applied to the work of the Spirit in Canada as well as in the States. A preacher who 'draws' is assumed to be doing a great work, though the crowd drawn is little more devotional than the crowd that attends a circus. A large annual addition to the communion roll is considered evidence of progress, though many of the additions could not have been made if regeneration were a term of communion. A full treasury is a good thing, but men may and do pay high pew rents in many churches who are not, and do not themselves profess to be, converted. The 'Interior' is right. The application of 'worldly standards to measure the work of the Spirit' is having a most disastrous effect in many directions. This business of trying to figure up spiritual results as men add up their accounts is fast reducing the Church to the level of an ordinary business concern. Are there enough of spiritually-minded men to frown it down?"

DR. EGERTON RYERSON is no more, having passed away at the advanced age of seventy-nine. His life has been eminently Canadian, and few men have done more than he in shaping the present of our growing Dominion. As a public man he had his enemies—who has not?—but Canada will not forget him as the founder of her great educational system, in which even his mistakes were experiences by which men rise to higher things. The heroic independence of the man is seen in his early religious choice. He was turned to Christ decidedly by Methodist instrumentality, and cast in his lot with that people when so doing seemed the loss of social prestige and the inviting of constant discouragements. He lived to see the Church of his choice an acknowledged power in the land. All classes hastened to pay the last tribute to his worth, and he rests in hope of the resurrection of the just. His remains lie in the Mount Pleasant cemetery, north of Toronto, his coffin-plate simply recording—"Egerton Ryerson, born 21st March, 1803; died February, 1882."

THE following, clipped from a contemporary, is not without its interest as a relic of early English Congregationalism. It is interesting also as indicating the name "Congregational" rather than "Independent" as that

which was borne by the pioneers of our liberty in Reformation times:—

[COPY.]

CHARLES R.—Charles, by the grace of God, King of England, Scotland, France, and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, etc.—To all Mayors, Bayliffs, Constables, and other Our Officers and Ministers, Civil and Military, whom it may concern—*Greeting*:—In pursuance of our Declaration of 15th March, 1671-2, We have allowed and do allow of a Roome or Roomes in the house of George Bendall, of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, to be a place for the use of such as do not conform to the Church of England, who are of the persuasion called Congregationall, to meet and assemble in, in order to their publick Worship and Devotion. And all and singular of Our Officers and Ministers, Ecclesiastical, Civil, and Military, whom it may concern, are to take due notice hereof: And they, and every one of them, are hereby strictly charged and required to hinder any tumult or disturbance, and to protect them in their said Meetings and Assemblies. Given at our Court at Whitehall, the fifth day of September, in the 24th year of our reign, 1672. By His Majestie's command.

ARLINGTON.

THE Manitoba craze continues. The level will be found by-and-bye, and then —. We were enthusiasts about our North-West, believing that we have a glorious possession in those thousands of miles of rich prairie lands, the future wheat-producing and cattle-raising fields of America. We have the same belief still; but the wealth must come from the soil, which is not to be developed by trading lots at fancy prices, and marking paper cities on seemly-looking maps whose best use is as wall paper. We deprecate the mad spirit of speculation where fortunes are made at the expense of others. Such enterprise can never develop a country or build up an enduring nation, and must bring disaster in its train. For honest toil, *beginning* with agriculture and its accompaniments, there is a fair field and most hopeful prospects; but beware of *mania*, of *hasting* to be rich, which still leads, as of old, many into snares and miseries, and drowns men in perdition.

THAT Mr. Gladstone's Land Act can be appreciated by some is manifest from the

following remarks of Sir C. G. Duffy, former editor of *The Nation*, which we cull from a London contemporary. He declares that the Land Act should be received gratefully, and goes on to add that "all the productive energy, if the generous enthusiasm of our people should be directed to the task of utilising it to its utmost possibility of good. If I were a bishop," says he, "I should write a pastoral; if I were a priest, I would deliver a discourse; if I were a journalist, I would make myself heard from the rostrum; if I could do no better, I would beat a drum on the highway in order to fix the attention of our people on the splendid opportunity they possess of becoming prosperous and peaceful."

FAITH'S ROLL CALL.—IV.

ABRAHAM.

As Noah, Abraham believed concerning things not seen as yet; but the brighter faith shines forth on Abraham. Noah trusted under the dark cloud of storm, of judgment, and with his house fled for refuge, escaped for his life. To Abraham was given a broader and more cheering prospect—the city which hath the foundations, the country, the heavenly, which God hath prepared for home. To Noah the world was doomed, and, as from a stranded vessel, the duty was—escape; to Abraham the world was a possession, the earnest of an inheritance, a pledge of the brighter more enduring blessings of heaven. In his seed all nations of the earth were to be blessed. Noah here had no immediate prospect but the curse about to fall in dire vengeance upon the world in its vileness; to Abraham more clearly shone the promise. All nations of the earth were to be blessed in him. Abraham's faith must have been the more joyous, though not more real than that which for years toiled, preparing the ark for the saving of his house. It is worthy of note that we are called to be the children of faithful Abraham (Gal. iii. 29). Therefore, whilst possessing the *reality* of Noah's faith, the *brightness* of Abraham's is our privilege—we may look away from judgment to the clear shining after the rain, to Jerusalem the heavenly, the home of God's elect. We do, or ought to, possess that seed in whom all nations of the earth are to be blessed; and in the strength of that faith which is the faith of the children of faithful

Abraham, cheerily "pitch each day our moving tent, a day's march nearer home."

Of all the characters of the ancient world none stand out with more distinctness, none have apparently left a more enduring influence, than "faithful Abraham" "the friend of God," unless we except Moses, the voluntary outcast from Egypt's palaces, the faithful leader of the heritage of God. Evidently the world was prevailingly idolatrous. Nature—especially the heavenly bodies—would be objects of worship; the sight of the sun when it shined, and of the moon walking in brightness, would call forth adoration; and there would be hero-worship, as the monuments of Egypt and Assyria testify by those colossal statues of the Pharaohs and Nimrods, those mighty priests and hunters. From out of this idolatry Abraham was called, whether by audible voice or by an inward impulse it matters not; and his call has left its impress religiously upon the world ever since. The three great monotheistic religions—the Jewish, Christian, and Mohammedan—are Semitic: Ishmael and Isaac, with Esau or Edom, are children of Abraham. "How," asks Max Müller, "is the fact to be explained that the three great religions of the world, in which the unity of the Deity forms the key-note, are of Semitic origin? (Gen. xxv. 1-4 are probably the beginning of the Arab tribes). Mohammedanism, no doubt, is a Semitic religion; and its very core is monotheism. But, did Mohammed invent monotheism? Did he invent even a new name of God? Not at all. How with Christianity? Did Christ come to preach faith in a new God? Did He or His disciples invent a new name of God? No. Christ came not to destroy, but to fulfil; and the God whom He preached was the God of Abraham. And who is the God of Jeremiah, of Elijah, and of Moses? We answer again, "the God of Abraham." Thus the faith in the one living God is traced back (historically) to one man—to him in whom all families of the earth are to be blessed. No wonder that from earliest childhood we have looked upon Abraham, the friend of God, with love and veneration. His figure will assume still more majestic proportions, when we see in him the life-spring of that faith which was to unite all the nations of the earth, and the author of that blessing which was to come on the Gentiles through Jesus

Christ. And if we are asked how this one Abraham passed through the denial of all other gods to the knowledge of the one God, we are content to answer, that it was by a special divine revelation, granted to that one man, and handed down by him to Jews, Christians, and Mohammedans—to all who believe in the God of Abraham. We want to know more of that man than we do; but even with the little we know of him, he stands before us as a figure second only to the one in the whole history of the world."

To us, as the father of the faithful, faithful Abraham, he is specially significant; and yet the record of his life is not other than what in outward circumstances has been, and is conceivably, the life of many an Arab chieftain—a Bedouin sheik—wealth in flocks and followers, skirmishes with other tribes, strife among retainers for wells, and a wandering life. But it was a life of faith. From the old home (though we are not to imagine "home" to a nomadic people had the strictly local associations that it has with us, though practically our migrations seem to rival the wanderings of old) he went forth, obedient to a divine command, "not knowing whither he went."

The event in history that in character and consequences seems to be the parallel to this, is the departure of the Pilgrim Fathers, seeking in the wilds of the West—to them unknown—a home with a faith's pure shrine—freedom to worship God. But the same act is repeated by unknown social heroes, who, because they will not tell a lie or commit a wrong, go out they know not whither. The associations of youth, the friends of life were all left behind when the voice of duty called "away," and he journeyed on content to sojourn in a land by promise his, but in the actual possession of others, from whom even a burial plot had to be bought. Here is the true trustfulness of faith—no self-seeking, nor worldly prudence, no *policy*, but straightforwardness, no matter what consequences might be, assured that nothing could really harm the friend of God—the Judge of all the earth would do right. Would that Abraham's faith were more manifest in the marts of life, in municipal affairs, and political spheres; integrity, straightforwardness, truth, heedless of what the future has in store, knowing well none can harm if we be follow-

ers of that which is good. Read Gen. xiii. 7-12, specially 8, 9. What were well-watered plains and thriving cities compared with peace among relatives? Too often now property curses by causing discord. The seen and time-bounded destroys the unseen and eternal. Sense is more than spirit—sight more powerful than faith. Not so with Abraham. His treasure was in heaven—a country of his own for permanent possession. The well-watered plain turns to a lonely desert—the fair cities dens of fierce iniquity. Time wrinkles the freshest scenes that earth may spread; the allies of to-day may be the bitter foes of the morrow; but he who has an inheritance in the city which hath the foundations need fear no change, nor sin, nor carking care. There

“All is tranquil and serene—
Calm and undisturbed repose;
There no cloud can intervene,
There no angry tempest blows.
Every tear is wiped away,
Sighs no more shall heave the breast.
Night is lost in endless day—
Sorrow, in eternal rest!”

Cheerfully sings the mariner even in the storm that is driving him to his haven. Earnestly toils the traveller up the hill on whose top gleams the light in the window of home. Abraham walked the land, in promise his, as a sojourner—stood up from beside his dead to purchase a tomb—gave Lot freely the choice of pasturage, knowing that through and beyond it all was a better country—a heavenly.

“There was his house and portion fair,
His treasure and his heart was there,
And his abiding home.”

2 Peter iii. 13. Does this refer to the present earth, or the future habitation of the blest? And if so, is there not yet in store for Abraham's seed and for Abraham himself, in the resurrection, the actual possession of that land which he trod as a stranger, and in which almost by sufferance his bones were laid in a family tomb? It may be so. We do not deny, we cannot affirm; but of this we are sure, the Apostle's commentary on Abraham's faith cannot ultimately refer to anything short of the final and eternal inheritance of the saints in light. Abraham and Abraham's children may look to this earth as the scene of final triumph or not, but to the final and blessed state of the ransomed dead Abraham certainly did look forward, for this state is but a pilgrimage. Lev. xxv. 23; Ps. xxxix.

12, take up that strain, and imply a pressing on for life and home; and the whole argument of the writer of the Hebrews lies in the contrast between this transitory sojourning state and the permanent abode of heaven. “Now, therefore, believers, behold your father Abraham. In virtue of the two promises he by faith received—the imputation of righteousness and the hope of an enduring inheritance, he was equipped from head to foot, furnished at all points, for pilgrimage and warfare now, for rest and triumph hereafter.” He had his “feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace, and for an helmet the hope of salvation.” Be ye likewise prepared. The Gospel of peace—the Gospel which gives peace, even peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ—that blessed Gospel will prepare your feet, as Abraham's, for walking as strangers, warring as soldiers, and suffering as pilgrims here. The hope of salvation—the good hope of everlasting life will guard and adorn your head. Raised erect above the smoke and din of this earthly scene, you will fix your steadfast and ever-brightening and kindling eye as heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ, on the glory to be revealed at the Lord's second coming, being in the meanwhile changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

A BRIEF RESUME OF THE LIFE OF CHRIST.

IV.—THE FIRST YEAR OF CHRIST'S MINISTRY. —LOWLINESS.

“He shall grow up before him—a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, no beauty that we should desire him.” So sang the evangelical prophet of Jehovah's servant, in whom Israel trusted as the coming Messiah. Thus commenced His life—obscure, humble, for the most part despised, and therefore easily men rejected Him.

The synoptic gospels begin the Saviour's ministry, at Galilee (Matt. iv. 12; Mark i. 14; Luke iv. 14). But the events of John i. 19; iii. 36, seem only to fit in anterior to the Galilean ministry, at which the other records begin. We dwell upon them briefly. They comprise: John's testimony to the Christ, i. 19-34; the call of the earlier disciples, vs. 35-37, 43, 44; with the gathering by

those disciples of two others, vs. 38-42, 45-51; the first miracle, ii. 1-12, the Passover and cleansing of the temple, vs. 13-25; the night interview with Nicodemus, iii. Why are the synoptics silent?—especially since they all imply a residence elsewhere than Galilee (Matt. iv. 12; Mark i. 14; Luke iv. 14). The following suggestion may afford an answer. The time of seed-sowing is apparently as nothing in comparison with the season of ingathering, and yet where would the harvest be were the quiet days of spring to pass unimproved? Was it that the events of those months were—as we suppose the earlier years of life to have been—the ordinary events of life? So thoroughly did the Son of man become one with us that even His Messiahship was of the people; and John, true to his intent of giving the *inner* life of Christ, records what outwardly has little of note. The first miracle would indicate as much. Mark its characteristic and “its divine unselfishness. His ministry is to be a ministry of joy and peace; His sanction is to be given not to a crushing asceticism, but to a genial innocence; His approval, not to a compulsory celibacy, but to a sacred union. He who, to appease His own sore hunger, would not turn the stones of the wilderness into bread, gladly exercises, for the sake of others, His transforming power; and but six or seven days afterwards, relieves the perplexity and sorrow of a humble wedding feast by turning water into wine. The first miracle of Moses was, in stern retribution, to turn the river of a guilty nation into blood; the first of Jesus to fill the water-jars of an innocent family with wine.”

The gathering of the first disciples, too, was of the same ordinary character—no martial music or recruiting service such as the more material view of Christ's kingdom requires. It “cometh not with observation”—with outward show (Luke xvii. 20, 21). “Come and see,” said brother to brother, friend to friend. “Follow me,” said the Christ, and the voice was recognized (John i. 43)—the disciples followed.

That midnight interview with Nicodemus, too, was very prosaic: a rich man, a ruler, with influence yet timidity—a character often seen—closeted almost incognito with the young Galilean teacher, and departing leaving scarce a trace behind.

Only one notable public act is recorded of

this period—the driving of the traders out of the Temple. Of this Farrar speaks—

“We have already seen what vast crowds flocked to the Holy City at the great annual feast. Then, as now, that immense multitude, composed of pilgrims from every land, and proselytes of every nation, brought with them many needs. The traveller who now visits Jerusalem at Easter time will make his way to the gates of the Church of the Sepulchre, through a crowd of vendors of relics, souvenirs, and all kinds of objects, who, squatting on the ground, fill all the vacant space before the church and overflow into the adjoining street. Far more numerous and far more noisy must have been the buyers and sellers who choked the avenues leading to the Temple, in the Passover to which Jesus now went among the other pilgrims; for what they had to sell were not only trinkets and knick-knacks, such as now are sold to Eastern pilgrims, but oxen, and sheep, and doves. On both sides of the gate Shusan, as far as Solomon's porch, there had long been established the shops of merchants and the banks of money-changers. The latter were almost a necessity: for, twenty days before the Passover, the priests began to collect the old sacred tribute of half a shekel, paid yearly by every Israelite, whether rich or poor, as atonement money for his soul, and applied to the expenses of the Tabernacle service. Now it would not be lawful to pay this in the coinage brought from all kinds of governments, sometimes represented by wretched counters of brass and copper, and always defiled with heathen symbols and heathen inscriptions. It was lawful to send this money to the priests from a distance; but every Jew who presented himself in the Temple preferred to pay it in person. He was therefore obliged to procure the little silver coin in return for his own currency, and the money-changers charged him five per centum as the usual *kolbon* or *agio*.”

Had this trafficking been confined to the Temple precincts no fault would have been found; but the profitable trade had evidently encroached upon the courts of the Gentiles, as the mercenary spirit constantly does, regardless of others: hence the cleansing by the Prophet of Nazareth.

“Why did not this multitude of ignorant pilgrims resist? Why did these greedy chaffer-

ers content themselves with dark scowls and muttered maledictions, while they suffered their oxen and sheep to be chased into the streets and themselves ejected, and their money flung rolling on the floor, by one who was then young and unknown, and in the garb of despised Galilee? Why, in the same way, we might ask, did Saul suffer Samuel to beard him in the very presence of his army? Why did David abjectly obey the orders of Joab? Why did Ahab not dare to arrest Elijah at the door of Naboth's vineyard? *Because sin is weakness*; because there is in the world nothing so object as a guilty conscience, nothing so invincible as the sweeping tide of a Godlike indignation against all that is base and wrong. How could these paltry sacriligious buyers and sellers, conscious of wrongdoing, oppose that scathing rebuke, or face the lightnings of those eyes that were enkindled by an outraged holiness? When Phinehas the priest was zealous for the Lord of Hosts, and drove through the bodies of the prince of Simeon and the Midianitish woman with one glorious thrust of his indignant spear, why did not guilty Israel avenge that splendid murder? Why did not every man of the tribe of Simeon become a *Goel* to the dauntless assassin? Because Vice cannot stand for one moment before Virtue's uplifted arm. Base and grovelling as they were, these money-mongering Jews felt, in all that remnant of their souls which was not yet eaten away by infidelity and avarice, that the Son of man was right."

Yet with this *public* teaching there was no straining for effect. Which thought shall form our closing meditation on this the lowly year of Christ's life. No vicissitude seemed to move the purpose of Him whose heart, as an Æolian harp, was set to the faintest cry of human misery. It was not Stoicism that endured Jesus with that marvellous calm which carried Him on to the end. The immediate success or failure of His work appeared to make no difference in His claim for absolute, undivided homage. He did not lower His standard when men left Him, nor raise it when the full tide of popularity set in. Men came and went; He remained ever the same. The honour might not be rendered now; it would be at last. In the days of His lowliness He anticipated the time when men would say, "Lord, Lord," and deprecated such

honour. Standing on the verge of time, with the eternal weight of glory within His reach, He stooped to wash His disciples' feet. "Never dazzled by earthly splendour, He was never humbled by earthly lowliness." Son of man and Son of God, may His spirit, life and heritage be ours; with Him may we walk humbly, and thus securely, under the shadow of the Cross to stretch onward for the Crown.

CONGREGATIONALISM.

"And certainly Discipline is not only the removal of disorder; but, if any visible shape can be given to Divine things, the very visible shape and image of Virtue, whereby she is not only seen in the regular gestures and motions of her heavenly paces as she walks, but also makes the harmony of her voice audible to mortal ears. Yea, the angels themselves, in whom no disorder is feared, as the Apostle that saw them in his rapture describes, are distinguished and quaternioned into their celestial principdoms and satrapies, according as God Himself has writ His imperial decrees through the great provinces of heaven. The state also of the blessed in Paradise, though never so perfect, is not, therefore, left without Discipline, whose golden surveying-reed marks out and measures every quarter and circuit of New Jerusalem."—MILTON.

In the presence of the deeper controversies which are now agitating the thought of Christendom—controversies threatening the very foundations of Christian Faith and Hope—there are some who imagine that all questions relating to ecclesiastical polity should be suppressed as absolutely insignificant. Even those who are not alarmed by the tremendous perils which menace the fortunes of the Church, appear to suppose that the discussions concerning ecclesiastical organization, which two or three centuries ago created such keen excitement in this country and in other parts of Protestant Europe, are quite obsolete. It is the temper of what is commonly called Liberal Christianity, to regard forms of Church polity with indifference, and to insist with constant reiteration and vehement emphasis, on the supreme importance of spiritual life.

True, the interests which should be nearest to the heart of every Christian man in these days are not those which are involved in the triumph or defeat of any system of Church government. Our chief concern should be to strengthen the hearts of all who are loyal to the common Faith, under whatever banner they may fight, and whatever may be their ecclesiastical traditions or their ecclesiastical discipline. Hooker and Cartwright, Jeremy Taylor and Robert Robinson, John Calvin and John Milton, are all ranged in peace on the shelves of our libraries; we love and honour them all, for we see that they

all received the illumination of the same Spirit and served the same God; their descendants should be regarded by us with hearty affection as brethren in Christ. But if such men as these believed that controversies concerning the external organization of the Church are of very grave importance, it hardly becomes us, without due deliberation, to pronounce these controversies trivial. Hooker may have been wrong in contending for Episcopacy; Calvin may have been wrong in contending for Presbytery; Robinson may have been wrong in contending for Independency. In refusing to follow any one of them, we can appeal to the sanction of names as great as the greatest names that we reject. But were they all wrong in their common conviction, which John Milton—poet, statesman, and theologian—has expressed, with an eloquence and vigour all his own, in the passage at the head of this paper, that the Discipline of the Church, the type of its organization, is most intimately related to its very life, and that for the perfection of spiritual vigour, freedom, and purity, there is necessary the perfection of ecclesiastical polity? It is possible, of course, that those who differed so widely from each other were all wrong, not only in the points about which they differed, but in that common conviction which, to themselves, made their differences so significant. They may have been mistaken—some of them must have been mistaken—in the particular theories for which they contended so earnestly; but I cannot easily persuade myself that the question itself on which they exhausted such treasures of learning and genius can be unimportant.

It is impossible to draw a sharp line between the polity of the Church and its theology, or between its theology and its spiritual life. In the very ground-plan of the noble church buildings with which the architects of the Middle Ages covered a great part of Europe, they acknowledged the Cross of the Lord Jesus Christ as the foundation of Christian hope. The architecture of ecclesiastical systems bears still more distinct and emphatic testimony to the theological creed of their builders. In determining the form of organization which a Church should assume, it is necessary to discuss some of the deepest questions concerning the relations of man to God, and the character and effect of the redemptive work of the Lord Jesus Christ. Congregationalism has its roots in a definite theological Faith.

It is, I know, sometimes said that as Congregationalism is only a system of Church government, Congregationalists might drift into Socinianism, or might accept all the doctrinal definitions of the Council of Trent. Of course, there is no external power—synod, assembly, or episcopate—which can restrain or control the theological development of a

Congregational Church; but if any Church received Socinian or Tridentine doctrine, it would cease to be Congregational. It would cease to be Congregational, not merely because for three centuries Congregationalism has been historically identified with Evangelical theology, but because, with the rejection of that theology, the theory of the Congregational polity would be rejected too.

It is of the essence of Congregationalism to affirm the existence of a transcendent distinction between the Church and the World. Historically, as is well known, Congregationalists founded what were called "separate Churches," for the express purpose of vindicating this distinction. The parish, in their judgment, does not constitute a true Church, for many of the parishioners may be destitute of the supernatural life. Baptised persons do not constitute a true Church merely in virtue of their baptism, because the founders of English Congregationalism did not believe that all baptised persons are regenerate. They denied that the children of those who are in the Church have an hereditary claim to Church membership, because they did not acknowledge that natural descent conveys the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. "Separate Churches" were created because, according to the faith of the early English Congregationalists, the divine life is not conferred upon all men, nor upon all who receive Christian baptism, nor upon all the children of Christian parents, but only upon those who by their own consent are made one with Christ.

This, it may be said, is an historical accident, and the Congregational polity would be preserved if some other condition of membership were adopted than the declaration of personal religious faith. But the objection cannot be sustained in the presence of the power and prerogatives which, according to the Congregational scheme of Government, belong to every separate Church and to all the members of every Church. *Our polity is incapable of defence, except on the hypothesis that those who constitute the Church are regenerate persons, and are under the supernatural control of Christ and the Spirit of Christ.*

I was discussing ecclesiastical questions with a very able and distinguished Broad Churchman. We were walking together from the head of Ulleswater up towards Grisedale Tarn, and he asked me, with an expression of astonishment and incredulity, whether I really thought that if the shepherds of Patterdale—a dozen or a score of them—determined to constitute themselves a Congregational Church, it was possible for such a Church to fulfil the purposes for which Churches exist. In the towns, he thought that Congregationalism might work very well; but he could not see how it was possible for it to work in

districts where the population is very scattered, and, for the most part, very uncultivated. As a Congregationalist, I was quite free to reply that it might be expedient for the shepherds of Patterdale not to organize a separate Church for themselves, but to include in their organization all the Christian people living round Ulleswater who could conveniently meet together—not necessarily every Sunday—for purposes of Christian worship and communion. But the question admitted of no real answer, except on the ground of the supernatural qualities and endowments which are attributed in the New Testament to regenerate men. Ignore all that is involved in regeneration, refuse to acknowledge that wherever two or three are gathered together in the name of Christ, Christ Himself is present, and then nothing can be more inexpedient than to invest a dozen or a score of illiterate persons with the administration of the affairs of a Church. The most ordinary sagacity would suggest the necessity of some external control. It would be expedient that their minister should be appointed for them by a bishop, a conference, or a synod, or that at least some external ecclesiastical authority should be able to prevent them from making a foolish choice. A tribunal ought to exist for the ultimate decision of practical questions of Church administration—a tribunal where a keener sagacity and a calmer judgment might be found than would be likely to exist among a few shepherds, whatever might be the uprightness and excellence of their character. It would be impossible—so it might be argued, for such a Church—if cut off from communication with Christian men having larger intellectual resources, to maintain to any good purpose the institutions of worship.

To these objections to Congregationalism there is, so far as I can see, but one answer: Our system of government is the expression of our faith, that those who believe in Christ and enter His Church have received the very life of God, possess the direct illumination of the Holy Ghost, and have the special and supernatural presence and help of the Lord Jesus Christ whenever they meet together in His name. This is the ultimate vindication of what would otherwise be an irrational and monstrous form of polity. We believe that the presence of Christ is assured, not to a large number of persons gathered together in His name, but even to "two or three." It is not necessary that they should have among them men of great natural sagacity or of high intellectual culture; it is enough if, when they meet, they really meet in Christ's name—but "no man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost." When Christ was visibly present with the fishermen of Galilee, it was very unnecessary that they should submit to the council of the ecclesiastical rulers at Jerusalem. Or,

to take a fairer illustration, when Christ was present with a score of obscure disciples in a Galilean village, there was no need of appealing to Peter, James, and John, who might have happened to be preaching in Capernaum. And Christ's presence with the shepherds of Patterdale would be sufficient reply to all who challenged their competency to discharge the functions of Church government.

The differences between Congregationalism on the one hand, and all modifications of the Episcopalian or Presbyterian system of Church organization on the other, are not merely formal. Our polity is indissolubly associated with a characteristic theology. We decline to surrender the independence of separate congregations to a bishop, a synod, or a general assembly; it is enough that in the obscurest and smallest of Churches we have Christ with us; it is enough that all the true members of such a Church have been made partakers of the Divine nature, and received the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. What they bind on earth is bound in heaven; what they loose on earth is loosed in heaven. For a Church to declare its incompetency to determine the form of its worship, to terminate disputes among its members, or to make a wise appointment to the ministry, is to renounce its faith in the mystery and the blessedness of that most intimate union with Christ which is realised in the communion of saints.

It does not follow that a Church should refuse to avail itself of the counsel which it may derive from other Churches, or from Christian men who may not be among its own members. The light that God gives both to individuals and communities comes to them in many ways. It comes through the authoritative teaching of apostles preserved in the New Testament. It comes through the illustration of the laws and principles of the kingdom of heaven contained in the history of the Church. It comes through the counsels of those who have had a large experience of human life, and have long dwelt in the presence of God. For a Church to avail itself of all the assistance it can obtain in arriving at a right decision on questions which may perplex it, is an obvious duty. It should receive the teaching of Christ, from whatever quarter that teaching may come. But for a Church to declare that it cannot rely on the certainty of receiving the light of God, and to remit the ultimate government of its affairs to an external authority, is an act which corresponds very closely to the blind surrender of our individual life to the control of a priest.

The temper of our times is hostile to the theology which constitutes the basis and justification of Congregationalism. There is a deep reluctance, even in the hearts of Christian men, steadily to confront the sterner aspects of the moral and spiritual condition of

our race. That there is a kingdom of Heaven established on earth into which all may enter, we maintain most earnestly; but we shrink from the consideration of the guilt and perdition of those who refuse to enter into it. We are unwilling to confront inexorable facts. Some receive Christ, but others reject Him. Some are forgiven, but others remain under condemnation. Some are saved, but others are lost. We try to forget this. In the name of Charity, we pass very lightly over the very words of our Lord: "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God;" "He that believeth on Him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."

There is also a great reluctance to believe in the existence of any supernatural relations between God and man. We have imprisoned God Himself within a vast and immovable system of natural laws. To many of us He has almost ceased to be a Person, and become a mere Force, whose movements may be made the subject of definite and infallible calculation. He has no history, but only a complicated series of necessary developments. About His free and personal relations to the human soul, the reality of Divine inspiration, His immediate action on the moral and spiritual nature of man, we are very incredulous. Men pray, not because they heartily believe that God will answer them, and that His volitions will be affected by their prayers, but to secure for themselves the reflex influence of acts of devotion.

I value the Congregational polity, because it is a strong and perpetual testimony against the effeminate and unspiritual temper of our age. When we establish a "separate" Church, we declare frankly, and in the most unequivocal manner, that there is a distinction of infinite gravity between the regenerate and the unregenerate. When we claim for such a Church—however small may be the number of its members, and however destitute it may be of all those elements of power which command the confidence and consideration of the world—absolute ecclesiastical independence, we express our confidence in the illumination of the Holy Ghost granted to all the regenerate, and in the supernatural presence of Christ among "two or three" gathered together in His name.

All discussions on ecclesiastical polity in these pages will be governed by these great principles. It will be the constant endeavour of *The Congregationalist* to develop a heartier and more intelligent faith in them among Congregationalists themselves. The name of this Magazine fairly expresses its purpose.

* We adopt this resolve as our own in the Editorship of the CANADIAN INDEPENDENT.—E. C. I.

There is no need to be ashamed of it. Other names might have been chosen, more musical, more picturesque, more attractive; but—

"Doth not the ear try words?—that inward ear
That with a golden sense is satisfied,
When the smooth vocable, sought far and wide,
Is sought in vain for it? If words are dear
For what they represent, not what they are;—
If by some other name the garden's pride
Would smell as sweet, if dewdrop, or if star,
As pearly show, as beautiful appear;—
Then, gentles all, let what is brought you here
Out of God's treasury, both old and new,
Please you as truth should please, how'er my name,
Unrhythmic, seem with rhythmic truth to jar:
So neither book nor reader shall have blame,
Or true work fail of recompense as true."

R. W. DALE, in *Congregationalist*, 1872.

THE WEAKNESS OF INDEPENDENCY.

[From a Paper read by Rev. George M. Hardy, M.A., at a Conference of Ministers and Deacons of the Edinburgh District, Edinburgh, Tuesday, 17th October, 1881.]

The ungracious task is allotted to me of speaking on the weakness of Independency. But it seems to be a peculiar foible of modern Independents to criticise their own deficiencies. Christian honesty demands, however, that we should look at both sides of our position. It is always a service rendered to truth when the defects of any system are clearly pointed out, and when some means are suggested as to the possibility of overcoming them; and especially when this is done with a wise consideration of the interests at stake, and with an intelligent grasp of the varied elements and facts which the case involves. I am bound to say that much of the self-criticism which prevails among us does not appear to me to be of this character. I have listened occasionally to speeches, even from the platform of our Union Meetings, enlarging on the weaknesses of Independency, but in such a loose, superficial, and inconsiderate way as certainly to convince me of the weakness of some Independents, and of the strength of Independency itself that it could survive such folly.

That there are elements of weakness in the state of things among us, it would be contrary to our interest either to conceal or deny. It is open to question, however, whether these elements of weakness are inherent in Independency itself, or whether they are not rather due to the imperfections and mistakes of the men by whom it is worked. The latter alternative, I think, comes nearer to the truth. It is not too much to say that we have not yet exhausted the resources of our system. There are modes of operation which we have never yet adopted, but for which the elasticity of our polity affords ample scope. The objection is fre-

* The Sonnet is by the Rev. William Thorp, formerly of Shrewsbury.

quently raised against Independency that it does not provide for this or the other emergency of Church life or action. We might as reasonably raise an objection against the British Constitution on the ground that it does not specially provide for this or the other form of Parliamentary obstruction. The special provision may not actually exist, but the British Constitution is elastic enough to admit and embrace within itself any such arrangements as changing circumstances may require. That is one of its peculiar excellences. So is it also with Independency. It has sufficient elasticity in it to adopt and embody such provisions and modes of procedure as the requirements of the times may call for. Great stress must be laid on this consideration. If it were kept more in view, there would be less grumbling against the system itself. The system itself is expansive; and the fault lies not so much in it, as in our want of wisdom and enterprise in introducing into it the modifications which the varying contingencies of our position render expedient. Who can prove that Independency is incapable of embodying any arrangements which are really essential to the true work of the Church of Christ?

As matters at present stand, however, there are some elements of weakness.

1. These are partly due, in the first place, to the *accidents of our position*. In Scotland our churches are scattered, and our members limited. This of itself has a depressing effect. It lays a weight on the spirits and energies of those who adhere to our polity. The enforced isolation it entails deprives both pastor and people of the inspiration and stimulus to be derived from frequent association with others of similar principles. And not only so, but the *smallness* of many of our congregations limits the development of preaching power. There is a large amount of truth in the common saying, that the audience makes the orator. It is only a very few of our ministers in the chief towns who can have the gift of vigorous, racy, popular speech drawn out and cultivated by the stirring influence of a large audience; and without such a gift we cannot make the impression we should wish on a lively age like the present. Our young pastors, settling down to preach, as so many of them have to do, to a congregation of a hundred or two hundred people thinly scattered among the pews, fall into a calm, sound, and solid style of preaching, which, while really excellent for the edification of those in attendance, lacks the attractive power necessary to secure an increase of numbers. This feature of style, which becomes confirmed in the great majority of our ministers, I have repeatedly heard mentioned by friends of other denominations as a manifest hindrance to our numerical success; and it is in great part due, I believe, to the circumstance which I have indicated. Indeed, the want of the stim-

ulus of numbers does both repress and dispirit a large section of our ministers, with the result that they either fall into a somewhat monotonous, though conscientious, routine in their work, or seek the excitement they need by taking a desperate leap across the border or into a more popular communion. That is simply an incidental disadvantage, not the effect of any fault in our ecclesiastical system. And it is important that that should be understood more clearly; for if it were, many unreasonable murmurings of discontent would be silenced.

2. Then, secondly, some of the elements of weakness in the existing state of things are due to our *traditional methods of action*. Here again we have ourselves to blame. We have clung too long to many of the old arrangements, and have not taken sufficient advantage of the freedom our polity affords to adopt provisions and safeguards more suited to the times. It is to be feared that our old mode of admitting members, when too strictly adhered to, has acted injuriously in limiting our numbers. Our old methods for combined action and for carrying on denominational work are also in many respects out of date and unfavourable to our progress. Yet now at last a movement is discernible, and the changes which are gradually taking place among us give hope for the future.

3. But in the third place, some of our elements of weakness are due to *certain infirmities of denominational temper*. One of these infirmities has been a dogged resistance to anything like organization. Of course I am free to express my conviction without the suspicion of reflecting on any who may differ from me; but I have a decided belief that we have seriously suffered from not organizing sooner and organizing more. I think that we might have better methods of combined action than we have hitherto possessed, and that too in perfect consistency with our independent principles. But it so happens—and that is just one of our incidental difficulties—that our enjoyment of liberty has fostered among us a dread or impatience of anything approaching to an organized form of denominational life. The only way of meeting such a difficulty is by a wise, brotherly discussion of the proposals in this direction which from time to time may be made.

Another infirmity of denominational temper, closely akin to the one just referred to, is a tendency to excessive individualism. This is sometimes seen in the case of ministers who voluntarily isolate themselves and their work, and take a somewhat exclusive stand apart from their brethren. But such an attitude is neither sound Independency nor sound Christianity. It is the bounden duty of an Independent, as it is the bounden duty of a Christian, to find as much common ground as he can for mutual sympathy and united action with those who maintain the same principles as

himself, and who are contending for the faith under the same banner.

Then there is the excessive individualism of churches—an individualism which occasionally shows itself in wilful choice of unrecognised and unaccredited men for the pastorate. It is one of our advantages that we can avail ourselves of the services of men whose natural gifts and force of spiritual character qualify them for pastoral work, even although they have not undergone a complete academical training. And we have often derived great benefit from the labours of such men when they have been accepted by churches on the ground that they have already given proof of their worth in less prominent forms of Christian usefulness, and when they have been reliably recommended as having done so. But that is a different thing from the rashness of some churches in calling men who are not known, and in regard to whom there is no guarantee of fitness for the pulpit beyond the power to preach a few racy discourses calculated to produce a temporary impression. Considerable injury has been done by this evil in the past, yet there are signs apparent that it is to some extent being checked. The results of former mistakes have rendered our churches on the whole more cautious. The wise action of the Committee of the Union in making their grants of money conditional on the choice of the churches receiving aid of men whose character and fitness are reasonably accredited—a course which is not only legitimate within the lines of Independency, but is even obligatory if the rights of those who contribute the money are to be consulted—this wise action of the Committee is telling to a very encouraging degree. Our best safeguard is to sustain the Committee in their procedure, and to do our part in spreading a healthy denominational opinion on this point.

I have thus endeavoured as cursorily as possible to introduce the subject of our conversation this evening. I have a great love for the principles of Independency; and I have a firm assurance that if we can only take advantage of the expansiveness of these principles, and apply them energetically to the varying requirements of Christian life and work, we shall make our power more widely felt, and play a still larger part in advancing the cause of Christ in our land.

THREE SCENES.

BY MISS C. W. BARBER.

SCENE THE FIRST.

It was a balmy night in June. The stars were out in the deep azure above, shedding over the wide, green earth quiet beauty, and the streets, in town and country, were filled with loiterers, who, won by the beauty of the night, had come out from hot offices and pent-up workshops to enjoy the hour.

In a stately country house, scarcely an hour's walk from the godly city of C——, there were brilliant eyes, flashing mirrors, rose-wreathed vases, and a party of young and happy revellers. Young gals, clad in white, with artificial flowers twined among their braided hair, or sunny curls stayed here and there, leaning upon the arms of their gallants, or chatting merrily upon the sofas and cushioned chairs, which were strewed plentifully through the rooms.

It was one of those scenes which make the young forget, for a brief time at least, that earth has cares and trials; that it is not what it seems—the residence of truthful and happy hearts. Beside a centre table two persons stood leaning gracefully over the leaves of a richly-bound album, admiring the engravings and sentiments which they found there. Howard Greenleaf and Edith Hastings were pronounced, by all, *the stars* of the evening. There was something that proclaimed him to be “one of nature's nobility.” His hair was very black, and curled over a high, white forehead; his eyes were lit up by the fires of genius; his voice deep-toned, yet musical, as he turned every now and then, with an admiring glance, to the fair creature at his side. Edith was exactly the reverse of her companion, and yet none could have said that she was less beautiful. Her curls were light, almost flaxen, in their hue; her complexion was clear, even to transparency; and her large blue eyes, and sweet, rosebud-like mouth, formed a face as innocent and pure in its expression as that of a little child. She was clad in a robe of muslin not more snowy than the rounded arms, which were ornamented by heavy bracelets of gold. She was the only, the idolized child of the banker in C——.

A servant came in, bearing a waiter, upon which were refreshments. Among the stately pyramids of cake flashed several glasses, filled to the brim with wine. Howard was interrupted in the middle of one of his best speeches, as the ebony-faced attendant stopped before him; but he helped his fair companion bountifully to the tempting things before them, and then, as a crowning act to his politeness, he took two sparkling glasses from the waiter, one of which he gave into the hand of his lovely companion. Both quaffed off the ruby tide without the shadow of a fear.

SCENE THE SECOND.

There was a wretched pallet of straw in the corner of a cellar in one of the most loathsome streets of the city. One old tin lamp, covered with lint and grease, stood on a rude pine table in the middle of the room, shedding a ghastly blue light over the scene, and “making the darkness more visible.” Upon the pallet of straw there was a dying man, and beside it stood a child with flaxen hair and mild blue eyes. He was the exact portrait of Edith Hastings. The dying wretch was Howard Greenleaf: that child was

all that was left him by the broken-hearted creature whom he called his wife—all that was left of the beautiful and accomplished Edith. She has been for months in her grave, "where the weary are at rest."

It was terrible to look upon the sufferer—terrible, for conscience was at work, and the contortions of his face were visible to the boy in the faint light of the lamp, as he stood with compressed lips and listened to his incoherent murmurings. Once only a gleam of reason shone through his eyes: then, reaching up his clammy hands, he grasped the white fingers of the child, and said, as if to himself: "He is like his mother; like her, as she stood beside me at the table and quaffed the fatal poison from the cup I gave her. That very night she became my affianced bride; that very night there were interwoven about her young and innocent heart those cords which dragged her down to misery and woe. I wedded her; I squandered her wealth, and abused her until her heart was broken. I did; no, not I, the poisonous wine-cup did it all. By nature I was noble and good; kind even to a fault; and gifted as the wise men of the earth.

'—Forswear the bow;
For one rash moment sends you to the shades,
Or shatters every hopeful scheme in life,
And gives to horror all your days to come.'

SCENE THE THIRD.

The wind whistled through the streets, carrying with it wreaths of snow, and biting the cheeks of even the fur-clad, until they grew chill and numb in its icy breath.

The wealthy stayed in their comfortable palaces, and shut carefully every door and window, to exclude the piercing wind. The man of business hurried over the ringing pavements, as if anxious to reach the shelter of a comfortable home.

On the marble stone of a stately residence a poor beggar boy sunk down, overcome with cold and fatigue. His cheeks were sunken, and upon the long silken lashes that veiled his blue eyes there were two frozen tear-drops. As he glanced up to the warm crimson-curtained windows above him, something like a groan came through his blue and quivering lips. From that mansion his mother went forth a young, beautiful and richly dowered bride; but the child knew it not. His recollection was misery and woe: he only knew that he was a drunkard's child!

As he sat there with his stiffening hands clasped over his naked bosom, he slept, and dreamed that the black, sullen clouds parted above, and an angel face looked brightly and smilingly forth, and beckoned him away. He caught the glitter of the silvery wings, whiter even than the falling snow-flakes beneath them, and then he knew that it was his mother beckoning him to the land of rest.

Before morning, the beggar boy lay upon the marble steps, as white, and cold, and senseless as they. Life had fled, and those who lifted the stiffened corpse from the steps of "the gentleman's" door, wondered over the exquisitely chiselled features, wasted as they were by misery. Hastings Howard, Edith's beautiful and only child, slept then "the sleep that knows no dreaming."

THE WILD ROSES.

"Dans la vie, garde-toi de rien différer."
(In life beware of delaying aught.)

I walked in the joyous morning,
The morning of June and life,
Ere the birds had ceased to warble
Their sweetest of love and strife.

I walked alone in the morning,
And who so glad as I,
When I saw the pale wild roses
Hang from the branch on high?

Fairer than stars were the roses,
Faint was the fragrance and rare;
Not any flower in the garden
Could with those roses compare.

But the day was all before me,
The tumult of youth's delight;
Why bear a burden of roses
Before the calm of night?

Let them stay a while to gladden
The air, and the earth below,
With tender beauty and sweetness
They cannot choose but bestow.

So I kissed the roses, and lightly
I breathed of their breath divine;
It is time when I come back, I said,
To make the sweet roses mine.

I went in the glad some morning—
I said, we part for an hour;
The branch of wild roses trembled,
The dew was on every flower.

I returned in the joyless evening;
I yearned with passion then
For the pale and peerless roses
I never should see again.

For another had taken delight
In colour and perfume rare,
And another hand had gathered
My roses beyond compare.

I may wander east, may wander west,
Wherever the sun doth shine;
I shall never find the wild roses—
The roses I thought were mine.

—Elizabeth D. Cross (Mrs. E. D. Bullock).

To suppose that there is any way of preaching the Cross so as not to offend the world is to know nothing of the subject.

Mission Notes.

THE Rev. Griffith John, whose address on Missions was one of the features of the great Manchester Jubilee ere his departure for China, has written a letter to the English brethren in which he says, regarding his visit as a missionary to the churches which unite in sending missionaries forth: "Were matters as they ought to be, the missionary would go among the churches in order to get inspiration, and return to his work strengthened in soul. The reverse, however, is the case. He is invited to go and deliver a missionary sermon or address, because 'my people want to be stirred,' or because 'the missionary spirit of my church is so low,' or because 'we are not doing as much as we used to do for Foreign Missions.'" In other words, missionaries on their return from their practically solitary struggle with heathenism to their brethren, instead of finding an inspiring atmosphere, are called upon to fan religious stupor, and, with the burden of heathenism upon their heart, to put forth their wearied energy in arousing an interest where enthusiastic life the rather should be found. Upon the whole, we are the more disposed to pity the churches than the missionary. To a benevolent nature the presence of need is a constant stimulus to action, and action which is a result of life is also its greatest pleasure and strength. The heroic soul somehow pines away in inglorious leisure, and revels in the struggle which calls forth its self-denying virtues. Such a soul dwells in Griffith John, and whilst our heart goes forth in sympathetic admiration towards his talents, work and spirit, we confess we have no commiseration to expend upon him, of whom we may urge upon Christian sluggards, "whose faith follow." But his implied charge against the home churches has its stern and faithful lessons. The functions of churches as centres of missionary power is in many cases, the most perhaps, not altogether ignored, but placed in the background. We do need educating in the first principles of the doctrine of Christ, and to read more constantly the great charter of our rights and functions. Go, the command; teach, the function; every creature, the extent of its exercise; and, *lo I am with you*, the privilege and reward; nor can that privilege and reward be expected or claimed where the command is unheeded and due preparation for the function not sought. And just now, as our Dominion is beating with the pulses of a future national life which the great lone land of the North-West, soon to be lone no longer, is creating, let us not forget the populations that are, and the work that calls for present energy, in our homes, at our doors, abroad, wherever the eye rests, or attention is called.

THE American Board of Foreign Missions is push-

ing its way into Zululand. A Mr. Richards, on behalf of that board, has visited Umzila, and after a journey which, with consequent sickness, occupied four months, reached the king's kraal. We extract the following account of the interview from the *Missionary Herald*:—

INTERVIEWS WITH THE KING.

"I found the king sitting under a large tree, and one of his Induna with him. I spread a fine blue blanket for him to sit on, but he made me sit on it, saying the 'ground was accustomed' to him. Umzila is the finest-looking black man I have ever seen. His face is full of intelligence, and is genuinely pleasant. He is tall, somewhat spare in flesh, yet he is well proportioned, and might be called a handsome gentleman in any country, if gentlemen ever are handsome. I told him my whole story at once,—who sent me, what for, and what I expected him to do. He listened very attentively, and at the close said he would call Magajou, his chief Induna, and, having talked with him, in a few days he would return me an answer. The next day it rained hard all day, and for two days more the water came so fast that we were nearly swept out of our tent: the rainy season had commenced in earnest. However, the rain did not deter Umzila from remembering us, for about ten in the morning he sent down four fine bullocks, telling us to shoot one immediately for food. I chose the finest, of course, and we had plenty of food that day. The next morning he sent two tusks of ivory to say 'good morning' with; one weighed twenty pounds and the other six pounds. The weather did not clear till Saturday, and he sent word he would see me that day; but he did not come, and I sent word that I would not see him the next day (Sunday). So our final meeting was held on Monday morning, the 17th of October. The result is that the king sends greeting to Dr. Means and the people of America, and invites five missionaries and their families to come at once, or as soon as convenient, into his kingdom, and begin mission work. Magajou, chief Induna, insists on our teaching him to make powder; but this is a side matter, and can be easily managed. The king did not urge this point, though doubtless it would please him much. The king seemed in a great hurry, and sent a boy to bring a 'good-bye' tusk, weighing forty pounds, which he gave me, and we shook hands and had our good-bye in as good faith as if we had all been Christians. I was so reduced by sickness that I could not look about for a station. There are excellent places for a mission almost anywhere,—wood, water, and people being in fair abundance."

CHINA is gradually breaking down its wall and

opening itself to Western ways. We note the following from Dr. Porter at Shantung, on the Yellow River, dated last September: "I met a little steam-tug, which had towed two barges with telegraph wires for the submarine cable for crossing the Yellow River. This was the first steamboat on the Grand Canal. It went without difficulty on the summer's high water to Szeching-cho, the point where the canal really begins. I learn to-day that the southern half of the telegraph line is completed. The northern half still waits completion. There are only four stations between Shanghai and Tientsin. A proclamation says it is for official use only. The people cannot use it until they get familiar with it. At Te-cho there is no station, and we shall not be able to use the line for some years I suppose, although it is so near us." As the Zulu chief desires the secret of "powder" from the missionary, and invites the Gospel with a side glance to the benefits brought, we are not hastily to conclude that steam and telegraph are signs that China is won. The following will make manifest how much has yet to be overcome from the prejudices of the people, at which we need feel no surprise if we only remember the strength and folly of our own: "It has come our turn at last after long prosperity to feel a touch of official interference in our work, and of official persecution. You recall the widow Wu at Ti-chi, and her gift of house and land for a chapel. On my arrival in September I learned that the Te-cho mandarin was annoyed at learning that we were building. He inquired of all his constables where land had been sold to foreigners. He then arrested the Ti-chi constable for not reporting the case of Mrs. Wu. To ward off difficulty I went to the city, called upon the mandarin, was politely received, and was promised that if the woman gave the house willingly he would stamp the deeds. I left a native writer, Teacher Lu, to wait for the deeds. The officials wanted a copy of the deed to keep on file, which of course seemed a proper thing. I was somewhat annoyed to find the next week that the official had hoodwinked the helper, or perhaps forced him to rewrite the deed, expunging all the important sentences, and changing entirely the character of the gift. Thus, the words: 'Believe in the doctrine of Jesus,' was changed to 'Believer in doctrine.' Again, 'Gives for preaching chapel and church school-room,' was changed to read, 'gives for a government free school.' This changed document he consented to put on file, but at last failed to stamp it. In the meantime he had stirred up the gentry to refuse to make any sale of goods to us, and we had to give up some bargains we had made, the persons being scared out of them. Then the mandarin issued an order, a copy of which I have, demanding that all Christians be registered to ascer-

tain if they were hypocrites or not. A saying that all who entered the church were men of character, he insisted that if they did not register they were presumptively bad. He ordered that all constables, village elders, and neighbours should spy out and report the names and numbers of Christians, and threatened severe punishment if any secretly refused to register. The consternation of all the villages in the Te-cho district was great. Church members flocked to me to report and ask advice. To add to our dismay, an expelled church member at Ti-chi, a woman of ill repute, out of anger and jealousy, because of a family brawl, threw a lot of gunpowder into the chapel, or rather house, the gift to the church, which blew down a partition, and set the house on fire. It was saved from destruction by the neighbours. Two days later the old mandarin heard of it, and thinking it a chance to implicate the native Christians, arrested the constable again, and had him horribly beaten, ostensibly for not reporting the fire, really with hope of injuring the church." Dr. Porter has already made such representations in this case both to Chinese and American officials, that he hopes redress will be obtained, and that no barrier will long be put in the way of any who wish to seek Christian instruction.

The following is an imperial decree from China, dated July last:—"For several days past a comet has been visible in the Northwest, which we reverently take to be a warning indication from heaven, and accept with feelings of the deepest and most respectful awe. At the present time there are difficulties of many kinds to contend against, and the people are not at ease. It only remains for ourselves and our ministers mutually to aid each other in the maintenance of an attitude of reverential watchfulness, cultivating a spirit of virtue, and examining our shortcomings in the hope of invoking blessings and harmonious influences from heaven, and securing comfort to the black-haired race. Do all ye ministers at our court, then, each and all strive to be diligent in the exercise of your respective functions, and with all your might put away from you the habits of pertunctoriness so long indulged in, assisting us with true sincerity of heart, and uniting in a common effort to rescue your country from her difficulties." The decree still further urges reformations, that "heaven" may prove propitious. The Chinese idea seems to be not so much to appeal to a personal god for protection as to escape the influences which destroy the "good luck."

The following note, also from the *Herald*, has its own interest:—"A CHRISTIAN RAJAH.—Rev. David Young is reporting a series of communications to the *Missionary Record* of the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland, a visit he has made to India. Among

the notable persons he met was a Rajah, or native chief, near Todgurb, of whom he gives the following interesting account: 'Rajah Rao is the chief of three tribes of Rawats, a clan inhabiting Mairwara, but distinct from the Mairs. He lives on his hereditary farm, at a distance of fourteen miles from Todgurb. Fifteen years ago, when he was fifty-two years of age, he had only heard of the *name* of Christ, but had never conversed with any Christian teacher. One night, while lying on his bed awake, as he solemnly avers—and he is a sane and sober-minded man—he had a vision of the Saviour, who directed him to go to Ajmere, where he would find instruction. He went; inquired for a Christian *guru* (teacher); was directed to Mr. Robson; was sent to Mr. Robb, in his own neighbourhood, but of whom he had no knowledge; awakened Mr. Robb's interest by his intelligence and evident earnestness; became an eager student of the Scriptures; and, a few weeks later, on a solemn occasion, when, at the head of the Rawats, he was expected to take part in an idolatrous procession, he publicly renounced heathenism, and declared his resolution to be a Christian. He forthwith broke off all his heathen practices, sought admission to the Church, and in due time was baptised. Now, I have no theory about the alleged vision of the Rajah. Every reader may form his own opinion about it, remembering, however, the Acts of the Apostles, and remembering that Rajpootana is not Scotland, before he makes up his mind that such a story is simply incredible. But the Rajah himself is a fact: has been a notable Christian fact before the eyes of intelligent men for fifteen years. We saw him in Todgurb, where he arrived on Saturday evening to be present over the sacramental occasion. We saw him on the Sabbath, distributing the communion elements with all the propriety and gravity of a Scottish elder. He has been seen of all men, during all these years, bearing the white flower of a spotless reputation, and standing so high in the esteem of the very tribes whose idolatry he renounced that no member of these tribes refuses to share with him the hookah. Visit him at home, and you will find him poring over his Bible, which is all thumbed and lamp-stained from incessant use. Converse with him, and he will show the familiarity with sacred things of a ripe and experienced Christian. Hear him at prayer, and, as the missionaries say, you will wonder how full of the Spirit he is, and how near he gets to the throne. Is he not a trophy of grace; and shall we call a gospel effete which, in our own day, is producing such marvellous transformations? We were much struck with Rajah Rao; his fine bearing, his earnestness, his humility, his warmth of Christian love.'

To kindle our zeal at home and abroad in Christian work, we need to keep ever before us these principles: This is a lost world; Christ Jesus came to save the lost; to the Church is committed the gospel of reconciliation.

Lews of the Churches.

No column is more eagerly scanned by our readers than this. Will not pastors and members aid us in the work of stimulating mutual interest by forwarding to us, regularly, items of interest in their respective churches?

PINE GROVE. —Rev. R. Hay has decided to accept the call to Watford, and enters at once upon his new-old field of labour. The church he is leaving has had some tokens of true Gospel work. Several young friends have been led to publicly profess their faith in Christ, and our brother Mr. Hay leaves them with confidence unbroken, and mutual prayers for mutual blessings.

KINGSTON FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.—The annual social of the members of this church took place on the 22nd ult. The Rev. S. N. Jackson presided, and gave a review of Church affairs during the past year. Mr. Geo. Robertson, Treasurer, submitted the financial statement, in which it appeared that \$4,151.10 had been raised for all purposes. He regretted that the consolidated debt of the Church amounted to \$928, and he hoped an effort would be made to wipe off the debt. It was done that evening, and a committee was formed, consisting of Messrs. George Robertson, G. S. Fenwick, L. B. Spencer and John McKelvey, who succeeded in getting subscriptions to the amount of \$710, so that the committee will have no difficulty in raising the balance. Mrs. George Robertson, on behalf of the Ladies' Association, read her report, which showed that they had \$2,250 on hand. They had a small bazaar that evening realizing \$50, which was handed over to the Treasurer of the Debt Fund. The report of the Sunday School was read, showing a prosperous condition, and a balance of \$22.42. The choir contributed to the evening's entertainment. A vote of thanks was accorded to Mr. K. Hendry for his gratuitous services as organist, and to the choir, under the leadership of Mr. T. Savage, for their services. Dr. Jackson, in his address, said that many changes had been made during the past year, through the removal of members, as in former years; but, on the other hand, valuable accessions had been made from the outside, so that the Church census had not been materially affected. "The busy hand of death," said he, "has not spared our fold, and among those gathered to the heavenly land were two young and beloved members, Robert Hendry and Jennie Hewton, while our faithful sexton, Erastus Sanford, who for so many years almost dwelt in the courts of the Lord, has, after an ordeal of painful suffering, gone up higher." There were on the roll at the beginning of the year 103 members; died, 3; removed, 4; dropped, 2; renewed, 8; number on the roll at the close of the

year, 102. During the year he had baptized 8 children, performed 7 marriages, attended 6 funerals, preached 87 sermons, given 83 addresses, attended 291 meetings and made 666 pastoral visits.

BETHEL CONGREGATIONAL.—The annual social meeting of this Church took place the same evening, and was the best ever held in the new church. Rev. Mr. Hall occupied the chair. At 7 o'clock refreshments were served. After an opening hymn, Mr. Hall said he was very much pleased with the prosperity of his Church during the past year, and hoped that he would be able to do his duty for a number of years to come. The Secretary of the Church, Mr. J. Nicolle, was next called upon to read his report, which showed a steady increase in membership. Being Superintendent of the Sunday school, he spoke of the new school-house about to be erected, which would cost about \$1,200, towards which nearly one half was already guaranteed. He hoped the full amount would be raised before the building was started. The Treasurer, Mr. B. W. Robertson, handed in his report, indicating that the Church was in a good condition, and that there was a balance to its credit.

We take pleasure in chronicling the good work of our Kingston churches. Regarding Bethel we may be permitted a personal reminiscence. Enjoying the hospitality of the late Professor Mackerras, whose house was immediately opposite the then new church, under its late pastor Mr. Peacock, the Professor said, "I view that as the best piece of mission work done in this city; that church found a neighbourhood neglected, entered in, and has gathered a self-reliant working church." We send both churches our editorial greetings—peace and prosperity.

TORONTO.—The annual meeting of Zion Congregational Church was held on the 18th of January last. In reviewing the events of the year just closed, Rev. H. D. Powis acknowledged the good hand of God in granting a season of spiritual growth and prosperity, with a hopeful outlook for the future. Reports were presented by the Deacons, the Secretary, the Treasurer, the Superintendent of the Sunday School, the Ladies' Aid Society, the Literary Society, the Treasurers respectively of the Benevolent Fund, the Fellowship Fund, the Sunday School, and the Foreign Mission Fund, all indicating a year of activity and progress in the various departments of work referred to. Twenty-two new members have been added to the church during the past year; six have been removed, including two by death, making a net gain in membership of sixteen; total number received into Church fellowship since the formation of the Church, on the 23rd of November, 1834, 1,127. The total amount of money subscribed during the year is \$4,191, including subscriptions of \$1,000

towards the new church site, also \$400 realized by the Ladies' Aid Society for the furnishing of the new church, and \$368 contributed to denominational objects and foreign missions. The Church having decided, in March last, that it was desirable to sell the present church premises and remove to a more eligible location, a new site has been secured, having a frontage of 93 feet on Grenville street and College avenue, by 210 feet on Elizabeth street extension, at a cost of \$5,580, and a payment of \$1,000 has been made on account of the purchase, as above stated. The old church premises on the corner of Adelaide and Bay streets have been sold for \$16,000—\$5,000 cash and mortgage for \$11,000; the Church being at liberty to worship in the present building until the new one has been built.

DANVILLE.—The Rev. J. G. Sanderson was presented by the members of his congregation with a very handsome fur coat on New Year's Day. A purse of money was also presented to Miss Mary McKillican as an acknowledgment of her services as organist.

MONTREAL.—The seventh annual meeting of Emmanuel Church was held on February 1st. The pastor, Rev. Dr. Stevenson, in the chair. After the pastor's address, the Annual Reports of the Church Board, of the Board of Trustees, of the Sunday school, of the Ladies' Aid Society, of the Building Fund Union, of the Committee on Psalmody, and of the Young People's Association, were severally read and received. These reported encouraging growth in the membership of the church and congregation, and gratifying progress in other departments of the church's life and work. During the year 1881, forty-five were admitted to fellowship; fourteen on profession, of whom several were from the Sunday school, and thirty-one by letter. The removals were four by death, and eight by transference, etc., showing an increase of thirty-three. The church was organized in March, 1875, with a membership of 114, since which date the number received into fellowship, including the original members, is 314; from which number seventy-one have to be deducted—removed by death, transference, etc.—thus leaving a membership on January 1st of 243. The Treasurer's statement shows: receipts from all sources, \$8,931; disbursements, \$8,880; leaving a balance to credit of \$45. In the items of receipts, collections for the College, Home and Foreign Missions, the Union, and other objects are not included. The report of the trustees showed a special expenditure of \$1,577 for cleaning and painting the walls of the building, and for necessary repairs. The Building Fund Union has for its object the reduction of the debt on the building to the extent of \$20,000; of which sum \$11,710 have been subscribed, and \$6,200 paid. The Ladies' Aid Society

continues in vigorous operation, rendering valuable service in many ways, and setting a good example of self-denying and zealous interest in all things relating to the welfare of the church. Special mention was made in the report of the Church Board of the obligation the church is under to the Rev. Prof. Fenwick for his valuable services in conducting an adult Bible class on Sunday afternoons, with much profit and appreciation on the part of those attending. In the report of the Sunday school grateful reference was made to the assistance rendered by Mrs. Stevenson and Mr. Hague in holding Bible classes for the elder scholars, and to the liberality of Mr. Scholes in finishing and thoroughly furnishing the infant class room. The pastor and church, thoroughly united and encouraged, have, we trust, a long and prosperous future before them in Christian sympathy and usefulness.

MIDDLEVILLE.—Rev. R. Brown, on account of failing health, has, after nine years' labour, resigned the pastorate of the church here, intending with his family to remove to Manitoba some time in May. There is a field of usefulness thus opened to the right man—a faithful, earnest worker. Any correspondence regarding this field, meanwhile, may be directed to Mr. Brown himself.

ST. FRANCIS ASSOCIATION.

This Association will meet in Melbourne, Que., on the second Tuesday in May (9th), at four p.m. In the evening of same day Rev. B. B. Sherman, of Sherbrooke, will preach, or his alternate, Rev. Geo. Purkis, Waterville. On Wednesday, May 10th, the Association will meet at 9 a.m. for prayer, and at 10 for business. Essays: "On Second Coming of Christ," by Rev. S. McKillican; "On Baptism," by Rev. J. G. Sanderson; "On Association Meetings," by Rev. W. McIntosh; "On Church Discipline," by Rev. A. Duff. Essays by Messrs. Purkis, Black, and Adams, on subjects left to their own selection. Discussion on "Evangelists and Evangelistic Services," to be opened by Thos. Robertson, Esq., Hatley. State of the Congregational College to be discussed. Public meeting, with addresses by the brethren, in the evening. Text for general plans, Isa. lv. 10, 11.

CENTRAL ASSOCIATION.

This Association met, as announced, in the church at Yorkville. The arrangements as intimated in the notice last month were followed, with the exception of the part allotted to Mr. Unsworth, who was prevented from being present by imperative duty. The afternoon on which Mr. Unsworth's essay was to be read was occupied with earnest consideration of the College question and our Mission fields. Mr. Kinmouth,

of Stouffville, supplied Mr. Unsworth's place in the evening programme. The meetings throughout were of the most cordial and pleasant character. Rev. E. Ebb's was elected Chairman, and Rev. J. Hindley, M. A., re-elected Secretary.

A letter of dismission was given to our brother, F. Wigley, who is labouring now in Michigan, and a minute recorded expressing esteem and confidence in him as an earnest, wise, and faithful worker. Rev. A. C. Kaye, of Caledon, was received into the membership.

A resolution was passed pledging the individual members of the Association to renewed efforts in the support of the college, and expressing gratification at the interest recently manifested therein by the Colonial Committee.

A pleasing feature of the meeting was a tea given by the ladies of the Yorkville Church to the members on Wednesday afternoon, which afforded an opportunity for the interchange of social sympathy and kindly congratulations.

The poem read by the Secretary called forth quite an interest, opening up a field of research in the legendary lore of the American aborigines.—*Com.*

THE WESTERN ASSOCIATION OF CONGREGATIONAL MINISTERS AND CHURCHES.

The semi-annual meeting of the above Association was held in Douglas, March 7th and 8th, Rev. J. R. Black, B.A., presiding. On Tuesday afternoon Rev. W. H. Allworth read a paper on "The Reasons for Our Denominational Existence in Canada." In the evening Rev. D. McGregor preached on "The Walk of Faith," which was followed by the Association uniting with the Church in the communion service. On Wednesday morning Rev. C. Duff, M.A., read a paper on "Revival Efforts—When should they be made, and how conducted."

In the afternoon, "Our College, and its Present Claims upon Our Churches" was discussed, as also the circular addressed to the Association by the College Board.

On motion, the following resolution was carried: "That while this Association would prefer Toronto as a more suitable place for our college, yet, in view of the liberality of the Colonial Missionary Society, and that of the Montreal brethren, and the necessity of immediate action in response to the proposals now submitted, we pledge ourselves to do all we can to make the new departure a success."

A Sunday-school "Question Drawer" was then opened, and an hour devoted to the consideration of the questions asked, Rev. D. McGregor presiding.

"Our Missionary Society and its Present Needs" was then discussed. At the closing session, on Wednesday evening, short addresses were made on the

general subject, "Christian Life and Work," by Revs. W. H. Allworth, Wm. F. Clarke, J. B. Saer, C. Duff, Mr. Ritchie, and Miss I. Templeton Armstrong.

After a few words from the Pastor of the church and the Secretary, the Association adjourned, to meet in Paris in October next.

Revs. J. B. Saer of Wingham and Enoch Barker of Listowel were received as members of the Association.

The papers read were timely and pointed, and the discussions throughout were earnest, able, and profitable. The brethren agreed to differ on several points. In discussing "Our Denomination in Canada" there was entire unanimity respecting the fundamental principle of the autonomy of the individual Church, but divergence of views as to our organized denominationism. It was felt by all present that important issues were now pending, and that it behoved every one interested in our denomination in Canada to be true to their principles and conscientious convictions.

D. MCGREGOR, Secretary.

Guelph, March, 1882.

Literary Notices.

MESSRS. ADAMS, BLACKMER & LYON PUBLISHING CO., of Chicago have lately sold out their *National Sunday School Teacher* and other Sunday school periodicals to the *Sunday School Times* of Philadelphia. The Adams, Blackmer & Lyon Publishing Co. will continue to supply their Sunday school requisites, and to publish their large lists of School and Township Records, Daily Registers, Class Books, Reports, Schedules and School Blanks of all kinds, and will give special attention to their largely increasing book manufacturing business.

We notice that "I. K. Funk & Co." have changed their style to "Funk & Wagnalls," New York, under which name we mark the following publications:—

THE HOMILETIC MONTHLY for March is exceptionally good. "Job's Comforters, or Scientific Sympathy," by Joseph Parker, D.D., a republication of a brochure we remember meeting with several years ago, is of itself worth the price of the number, and the sermon of Dr. Leyburn, on "Religion and the Medical Profession," is eminently suggestive. Then there is a variety of interesting articles under "Sermonic Criticisms," "Living Issues," "Preachers Exchanging Views," etc. Price, \$2.50 per year; single number, 25 cents.

PULPIT TALKS—46 pp., price 25 cents—are seasonable pamphlets on questions of the day, by Dr. J. H. Rylance. Two numbers are issued, embracing the following topics: "Evolution and Theology," "Social Organization," "Popular Literature and Amuse-

ments," "Competition, Communism, Co-operation and Socialism." These lectures can hardly be called models of English composition, are really the poorest we have seen issued by this house, whose publications are boons to the reading public, yet they are well worth reading, and present in a popular and cheap form truths which very many would do well to read and ponder.

FUNK & WAGNALLS have issued the first volume of Spurgeon's "TREASURY OF DAVID," with the great preacher's special sanction. It is therefore no pirated American reprint. Special advantages are given to subscribers to their *Homiletic Monthly*, but the regular price of the work is \$2 per volume. There will be six volumes in all, and the next is to be issued April 28th. The paper, printing, and cloth binding are of first-class quality. We shall note the Commentary next month.

THE CENTURY and ST. NICHOLAS are still to the fore. We frequently cull from their pages, and the gems which thus are given to our readers tell better than comment the class of reading with which their columns are filled, though they can say nothing of the further attraction of slightly illustrations therein abounding.

LITTELL'S LIVING AGE—Littell & Co., Boston—comes regularly to our desk. The number before us as we write, March 4th, has several instructive and amusing articles. Among the latter class, though written with a most earnestly serious spirit, is one from "Spectator," on the projected Channel Tunnel between Dover and Calais. The insular position of England, to which much of her immunity from war on her own field is due, is thereby to be destroyed. The French could send in one hour two thousand picked men to hold the English end till a *corps d'armee* within twelve hours would arrive with reinforcements; London would be endangered, occupied, universal panic ensue, bankruptcy, ruin, subjugation, no telling the evils in the train. And all because some capitalists may have another mass of shares to manipulate, and that the President of the South Eastern may have a great reputation. The "Spectator" had better flee to our great North-West, where he will be free from French invasion—unless it come in the form of blizzards and mosquitoes.

OUR LITTLE ONES (The Russell Publishing Company, 149A Tremont street, Boston, Mass.) is an illustrated monthly for the children, \$1.50 per annum. A worthy candidate for public favour, full of happy reading and illustrations. The pictures are not scratches, but executed in the first style of the engraver. We can hardly endorse its claim to be "the most beautifully illustrated magazine for the little people," but we unhesitatingly place it on an equality with the very best we have seen.

International Lessons.

The following cut, which illustrates chap. 5: ver. 9 in the lesson for April 2, was to have been inserted in its place in our last issue, but did not reach us in time. We trust that it will be in the hands of our readers before the lesson is used, so that it may help to illustrate the portion indicated.*



SCRIP, STAFF, AND SHOES.

April 9, 1882. } **DEATH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST.** { Mark 6: 14-29.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"The wicked plotteth against the just, and gnasheth upon him with his teeth."—Ps. 37: 12.

TIME.—Following the sending out of the twelve.

PLACE.—The Castle of Machaerus, on the east coast of the Dead Sea.

PARALLEL.—Matt. 14: 1-13; Luke 3: 19, 20; 9: 7-10.

Notes and Comments.—Ver. 14. "Herod" Antipas, brother of Archelaus (Matt. 2: 22)—sons of Herod the Great by one of his ten wives, Malchace. He was only king by courtesy; he was what Luke correctly called "tetrarch" (3: 1); he had but a fourth part of his father's kingdom; "heard:" it took a long time for Herod to hear of Jesus; "he said:" so did others (Luke 9: 7)—he was alarmed; "therefore mighty works:" John had wrought no miracle; "do show forth:" lit. energise, or, work mightily in him.

Ver. 15. "Others said Elias:" he was expected to reappear (Malachi 4: 5); "a prophet, or as one:" if not Elias, one of the other prophets, or certainly he was like one of the prophets.

Ver. 16. "Herod—said:" his guilty conscience adopted this as the best explanation of what he heard. Note the emphatic "whom I beheaded." As there were those who believed on Christ in the household of Herod, it is likely that it was to them he talked. See Luke 8: 3; Acts 13: 1.

Ver. 17. Not the first nor the last instance of what power

* For this and other cuts to appear in our Notes on the Lessons we are indebted to the courtesy of Messrs. W. A. Wilde & Co., of Boston, the publishers of "Peloubet's Notes on the International Lessons," to the excellence of which we gladly bear testimony. We have consulted them since the first issue.

will do to the fearless speakers of truth. Neither class have ever wanted successors. "Herodias:" an infamous woman—she was first married to her uncle, Herod Philip (not the tetrarch); him she left and married another uncle, this Herod Antipas, who, for her, put away his first wife; "Philip:" said to have been a man of honour and justice the best of the Herodian family.

Ver. 18. "John had said:" brave truth-speaker; "not lawful:" opposed to the God-given Levitical law.

Ver. 19. "Herodias had a quarrel:" Rev., "set herself against him." She knew not how far the influence of John might go with Herod to repent of his sin and put her away; "would have killed:" the idea is that she sought opportunities for this—kept it before her.

Ver. 20. "Herod feared John:" Matt. 14: 5 says, "feared the multitude." Both correct, doubtless, as a result: he set himself to guard John against Herodias, for "observed him" is more correctly "preserved him." Rev., has "kept him safe;" "did many things:" Rev., "was much perplexed"—picture of a man whose passions would go on sinning, but whose conscience says "no;" "did many things:" but not the one all-important thing.

Ver. 21. "Birthday;" not necessarily birthday; the word thus translated may mean any anniversary or festival; "lords—captains:" men in official positions; "chief estates:" chief men—men of influence.

Ver. 22, 23. Little doubt that this was all arranged by Herodias; she knew Herod and his weakness; "daughter:" Salome, her daughter by her first husband, "danced:" a sensual, disgraceful exhibition at such a feast; "unto the half:" an oriental mode of expressing liberality, so Ahasuerus, Esther 5: 6; in a mere satrap like Herod an idle boast.

Ver. 24, 25. O mother! fiendish mother! see the power of hate, of bitter revenge; luxury, enjoyment of all kinds were within her reach, but malice triumphed, and she said, "The head of John the Baptist," and the daughter understood her mother—she lost no time—she returned "straightway"—immediately—with haste—perhaps fearing that the king might repent; "by and by:" Rev., "forthwith;" "charger:" old English for a large dish.

Ver. 26. "Sorry:" likely enough he feared the consequences, but he is not the only one that rash folly has made sorry (Judges 11: 35; Dan. 6: 14); he was very sorry; "his oath's sake:" how sensitive such men are on some points; he could live in adultery and commit murder, but could not break a rash oath. We have his counterparts to-day.

Ver. 27, 28. "Immediately:" the whole story points to the feast having been held in the same place where John was imprisoned. There was no lapse of days; the hideous object was placed in the daughter's hands, and by her given to her mother.

Ver. 29. "Laid—in a tomb:" so the next New Testament martyr, Stephen, was buried by "devout men" (Acts 8: 2); yet we don't read that they kept any relics of the dead to worship. Matt. 14: 12 relates that this done they went to tell Jesus; perhaps so instructed by John, for he doubtless foresaw the possibility of such an ending.

HINTS TO TEACHERS.

Dangers.—Classes of younger girls, particularly, will want to be telling about their birthday parties; who they had, and what they did. While you need not stop this entirely, don't let it take up too much time, and do not neglect to turn the talk into the channel of the right use of birthdays: to be made seasons of gladness because of God's mercies, and of fresh dedication of life to Him in loving gratitude. So also about dancing; if you have nothing else to say, don't justify it by saying that modern dancing is different to that of Herodias'; it may be, but is nevertheless sometimes as perilous to body and soul.

Topical Analysis.—(1) A guilty conscience (14-20). (2) A rash oath (21-23). (3) A terrible request (24, 25). (4) A cruel murder (26-29).

This whole lesson is a parenthesis in the history of the work of Jesus. The circumstances narrated had occurred previously, how long we are not sure; probably, from the evident freshness of the thing in the mind of Herod, quite recently. While it is in some respects a sad lesson, telling as it does of guilt, the success of crime, and the sudden, cruel death of a good man, it may be relieved by showing that John's work was done. Paul said that he "fulfilled his course," and the executioner's sword was only the passage into the glories of his Master's kingdom.

On the *first* topic, we may show what a whip of scorpions is a guilty conscience. Here was a man who had succeeded in his wickedness; he was in the enjoyment of his sensual pleasures, and the man who had dared boldly to reprove him had been laid in the tomb. But had Herod rest? No! the ghastly sight of the head in the charger was before him continually. So the tyrant who ordered the massacre of St. Bartholomew; he also, under the influence of a bad woman, heard to the end of his days the shrieks of his victims, and at night had to be lulled to sleep by the strains of music. This man, it is thought, was a Sadducee; if so, how vain his creed to keep down the terror to which his guilt gave birth. Teach that sin is the seed of sorrow, of fears, of torment; that the reaping sometimes follows the sowing with terrible rapidity, as it did here; but come sooner or later, come it will. A guilty conscience gives a dreadful form and voice to everything, even that which is beautiful and musical; it is to live

"Like a scorpion girt by fire:
Darkness above, despair beneath,
Around it flame, within it death."

Pray with and for your scholars, that their consciences may be kept tender; that even the smallest sin may cause them sorrow until pardoned and washed away.

On the *second* topic, you may briefly point out the dangers of sinful pleasures: how one sin leads to another, and how what might have been not only an innocent but a helpful celebration—an occasion of gratitude—became a snare and a pitfall. Is it not so with many of our youthful gatherings to-day—"parties," as they are called? Is there not too often much in them that is appallingly like the first downward steps of sin? If men and women, boys and girls, willingly breathe an atmosphere of impurity and improper excitement, moral disease will certainly follow, and, unless God's mercy prevents, moral death. Teach here, then, that there must be no dalliance with sin in any shape. Balaam did, and it cost him his life; Samson did, and the loss of his sight, a prison, and violent death followed.

On the *third* topic it will be sufficient to point out how sin and hatred, secretly nourished, deaden all that is gentle and pure in the heart. Here was a woman, a mother, so filled with bitterness and murder that she could deliberately plan that her daughter should be the means of bringing her enemy within her power, and could instruct that daughter to ask for the bloody proof of his death. We may well join in the prayer of Ps. 71:4. Show how hatred leads to murder, and what a comment this history is on 1 John 3:15.

On the *fourth* topic we see the moral coward, and how he shelters his cowardice under the guise of conscientiousness—miserable subterfuge. How much more to his honour and peace if he had disregarded his rash promise when he found that it was going to land him in murder. Tell your scholars that there is a higher conscientiousness in violating sinful promises, if they have been led into making them, than in keeping, and that what is most acceptable to God is obedience and love. You may also instil the truth that a false shame—the fear of what men will say—should never

cause them to "do the wrong or neglect the right. Herod sacrificed conscience to courtesy; conscience was violated in the promise; the oath was a crime which the breaking of it would not have been. Next and not far from the crimes of the thoroughly bad man—the black-hearted scoundrel—are those of the weak man, who knows the right but does not dare to do it, and knows the wrong but does not dare to avoid it. The names of Herodias, the bold planner of the murder of the Baptist, and of Herod, the weak instrument of its accomplishment, are linked together in eternal infamy.

Incidental Lessons.—The danger of toying with known sin.

That worldly festivities are a time of temptation.

That the wicked will hate the good.

That the moral coward, though on a throne, is a slave.

That no promise, nothing can bind us to commit sin.

That good men may die for the truth: Stephen, James, Paul, the Master. See almost every page of Church history for 1800 years.

Main Lesson.—On Conscience.—Sin is the parent of a troubled conscience. Shun the one, you are spared the other.

A guilty conscience is a hell upon earth.

We may shut the mouth of the preacher, but conscience will speak.

Our sins are the ghosts that will fill us with terror here and hereafter.—Lev. 26:17, 36; Psa. 53:5; Prov. 28:1; Isaiah 48:22; 57:20, 21.

April 15, { 1882. } **THE FIVE THOUSAND FED.** { Mark 6: 30-44. }

GOLDEN TEXT.—"I will abundantly bless her provision: I will satisfy her poor with bread."

—Ps. 132:15.

TIME.—Soon after the events of the last lesson, and preceding Christ's second passover.—John 6:4.

PLACE.—On the north-eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee, near to Bethsaida. There are two Bethsaidas shown on the map—one on the western shores of the lake, about half way between Capernaum and Magdala, the other at the north-eastern end. Some writers think that there was only one town of that name, situated just where the Jordan falls into the lake on both sides of the river. If there were two, the eastern one is the scene of our lesson.

PARALLEL.—Matt. 14:13-21; Luke 9:10-17; John 6:1-14.

Notes and Comments.—Ver. 30. Comparing Matt. 14:12, we see that two parties of men came to Jesus nearly together—the disciples of John, who had buried their master, and His own disciples rejoicing in their work—sorrow and joy. "Told all:" a grand narrative; but were they not somewhat elated, like the seventy?

Ver. 31. It would almost seem so. "A desert place:" where they could "rest a while" and become calm. "Yourselves:" He often went alone into privacy; now He says, "Come ye." "Many coming and going:" a graphic picture of continuous bustle and excitement. "Not to eat" (so chap. 3:20.)

Ver. 32. "Departed:" from the dominions of Herod to those of Philip—not from fear, we may be sure, but possibly that there might not gather around and become identified with Him the popular indignation against Herod, which needed little encouragement to break out into a tumult. "Desert:" uncultivated, solitary.

Ver. 33. "Saw them," "knew him." REV. reads "them" here also. The crowds who had been listening to Jesus and witnessing His miracles, and who knew the disciples, would soon recognize them in their boat. "Ran about:" round the head of the lake, only six or eight miles. "Outwent:" they could do this with little difficulty, if not much, or contrary, wind.

Ver. 34. "Came out:" from the boat. "Compassion:" how like Him (see Matt. 9: 36; 20: 34; Luke 7: 13; Heb. 5: 2, 7). "Sheep," etc.: none to care for, guide, or teach them. He came for rest, but compassion conquered.

Vers. 35, 36. "Day—far spent;" or, as Matt. 14: 15, "evening." "Disciples came:" John tells (6: 5) that Jesus had previously asked Philip, "Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?" This was said to "prove him." Philip had lately mentioned this to the others: hence, "send them away—buy bread:" as *Bishop Hall* says, "a strong charity, but a weak faith."

Ver. 37. "Give ye them to eat:" seemingly impossible, yet God never bids us do impossibilities. Through Christ all things can be done (Phil. 4: 12, 13). "Two hundred pennyworth:" likely just named as a round sum. Some have suggested that this was all they had in the treasury. This is fanciful. Value was about \$30.

Ver. 38. "Five loaves and two fishes:" it was Andrew who so replied, and that they were in the possession of a lad present (John 6: 8, 9). The barley loaves were only what we should call cakes, or biscuits—hard baked; the fishes would be dried.

Vers. 39, 40. "Companies" of "hundreds, and fifties:" an orderly arrangement, so that the work of distribution might be simplified. "Green grass:" it was "Nisan"—the month of flowers. "Sit down:" lit. reclined. We must remember that the Jews always reclined at meals; they sat at work. "In ranks:" the original is a word borrowed from the idea of the orderly arrangement of flower-beds.

Vers. 41, 42. "Looked up," to the Giver of all good, "and blessed." Luke adds, "them"—*i.e.*, the loaves and fishes—our pattern of thankfulness. "Gave to His disciples:" typical of the distribution of the heavenly bread—God to Christ, Christ to His servants, they to the world. Don't trouble yourself or your class how this miracle was performed; there it is: that is sufficient. "Did all eat:" no stint—more than enough for all.



JEWISH BASKETS.

or this, on the idea that they did it so as not to be defiled with Gentile food. The word used here signifies wicker baskets; while the word used in the feeding of the four thousand signifies rope baskets. "Five thousand men," Matthew says (14: 21), "beside women and children." Likely there would be in all ten thousand at least. How stupendous the miracle!

What and How to Teach—Dangers.—In notes on verse 41 we have indicated one danger that may arise—fruitless discussion. As to the *mode* of this miracle we cannot tell; and even if we could, we should have to fall back on the one thought, that by whatever means accomplished it was a miracle. Rest on, and show that. Neither spend time (as we have known some do) in imagining what the disciples may have thought or said one to another—impetuous Peter, doubting Thomas, covetous Judas. There is more in the facts than you can teach, without any imaginings.

Topical Analysis.—(1) The need of the multitude (vers. 31-36). (2) The miracle of supply (37-44).

It has been well remarked that the importance of this miracle is testified by the fact that it is the only one recorded by all four of the evangelists. It marked the culminating point in the popularity of our Lord. We find from John 6 that the teachings which arose out of this miracle were a cause of stumbling and offence to many who heard, and that as a result (verse 66) many of His disciples walked no more with Him—a fact that gave occasion for that sad utterance to the twelve, "Will 'e also go away?"

On the *first* topic—the need of the multitude—we must dwell briefly on the circumstances which led them into the "desert place." They had just returned from their first missionary tour. Doubtless they needed bodily rest, but more, spiritual quiet. They had been very successful in their work. To save them from pride and self-sufficiency they needed retirement with the Master. He, too, weary with constant labours—His life in danger—needed rest; and so they would withdraw to solitude. This, however, was not to be. The multitudes saw Jesus and His disciples departing; ran round the head of the lake; were on the shore when He stepped from the boat, as we take it; and He, "moved with compassion" because they were as "sheep not having a shepherd," taught them "many things." So He taught—this Divine Teacher—and so they listened, that they took no note of time, and the day was far spent. The disciples would have sent them away, but Jesus said no, "Give ye them to eat"—a suggestion which brought forth the fact how unprovided they were for this. Teach here—(1) The compassion of Jesus. (2)—The unwearied labour of Jesus. (3) The consciousness of Divine power that dwelt in Jesus. Get from your class the motives of these people in following Jesus. This will lead on to inquiry as to the motives of men and women, boys and girls to-day in calling themselves Christians; and you can show that there may be an improper following of Jesus—that a service right in itself, if done from an improper motive, will not be acceptable to God.

On the *second* topic, we see first *conscious power*. The perplexed disciples thought it an unanswerable question, "Shall we go?" etc., and that there was nothing for it but to send the multitudes away; but Jesus knew what He would do, and He bids them bring word what provisions they had, not that a few loaves more or less would make any difference, but that they, and from their testimony others, might be assured of the reality of the miracle. Then notice the *order*. There is no confusion in the arrangements of God's Providence; and though this may be thought a small thing in such a lesson, it will be well to point it out (see I Cor. 14: 33). Further, there is *blessing*. Looking up to heaven, the source of the every-day miracle of life, He blessed (John, "given thanks"). We can only ask the blessing, but we may be sure that He who set the example will accept our prayers and acknowledgment. Next came *increase*; in the hands of Jesus a small meal for the disciples was made to feed the multitude. Like the widow's barrel of meal and cruse of oil (I Kings 17: 16), the loaves and fishes wasted not. Enough for each, enough for all, so that there was *satisfaction*, for "they did all eat"—this large number, probably not less than ten thousand in all—"and were filled." Not only so, but there were *fragments*, so many that twelve baskets full were taken up. Draw this marvellous picture vividly as you should be able to do, but be sure you make the central figure Jesus. You may note that, as one result of this miracle, the people were wrought to such a pitch of enthusiasm that they would have taken Jesus and made him king by force.

But your lesson will be incomplete if you stop here. Read the Saviour's own sermon following the miracle, in John 6: 26-58, and show your scholars that there is a bread of life, of

which "if any man eat, he shall live for ever." Fill your mind and heart full of the Master's teachings there; then can you speak of the *Bread of Life*. Now to gather up the teachings.

Incidental Lessons.—That compassion for others may cause us, like the Master and His disciples, to forego the rest we need.

That they who wait upon the Lord will not be sent empty away.

That Jesus can use the small things of His people as instruments for His mighty works.

That, like Jesus, we should thank the Giver of our daily food, and seek a blessing upon it.

That our Daily food is a daily miracle.

That this miracle illustrates the spirit of Christianity in ministering to the physical as well as the spiritual wants of man.

That in all things order and economy are well pleasing to God.

Main Lesson.—*The Bread of Life*, given by God, all may take—he who takes shall live for ever. See John 6, as noted above, in connection with Matt. 5 : 6, and James 1 : 17.

April 23, } **CHRIST WALKING ON THE SEA.** { Mark 6 :
1882. } 45-56.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee."—Isaiah 43 : 2.

TIME.—Night following the day of last lesson.

PLACE.—The Sea of Galilee.

PARALLELS.—Matt. 14 : 22-36 ; John 6 : 15-21.

Notes and Comments.—Ver. 45. "Straightway : " immediately after feeding the multitude ; "constrained : " the disciples did not want to leave the Master ; "other side : " of the Lake, from whence they had come, though not exactly to same place ; "to Bethsaida : " marg. "over against." We agree with *Meyer* as against *Lange*, that it was the western Bethsaida. John says (6 : 17) Capernaum and the places were nigh.

Ver. 46. He needed rest, but sought it in prayer rather than sleep. He would not even have His disciples with Him in His communion with His Father. Do you need strength for your work? seek it as the Master did.

Vers. 47, 48. "When even was come : " the second evening—the first commenced at 3 o'clock, the other at sunset. "In the midst—sea." John says, 6 : 19, that they had rowed twenty-five or thirty furlongs, about three miles ; "toiling in rowing—wind contrary : " Rev. "distressed in rowing"—lit. tormented—wind violent, sailing out of question. It is supposed they had been seven hours rowing that short distance. "Fourth watch : " which began at 3 a.m. and ended at 6 a.m. This was the Roman division of four watches—formerly the Jews had three. "Cometh : " the night had not hidden them from Him, nor were they for a moment beyond His care. "Walking upon the sea : " a new miracle, one that would come to the disciples with as mighty a force as stilling the storm ; "would have passed : " to let them call for Him ; so the two disciples—Luke 24 : 28.

Vers. 49-51. "A spirit : " a phantom ; Rev., "apparition." Their fears were excited, and in the darkness and tempest they did not recognize the dim outline of the Master ; besides, walking on the sea was thought impossible, and was, in fact, the old Egyptian symbol for an impossibility. Their weak faith made the approach of their Deliverer the climax

of their fears. "Be of good cheer : " take courage ; "it is I." and there need be no fear where I am. They might mistake the form of Jesus, but they could not His voice and words of cheer. "The wind ceased : " there is present deliverance with a present Christ. "Amazed—wondered." Should this have been? How "slow of heart to believe!" John adds (6 : 21) that they willingly received Him, and immediately the ship was at the port where they went. Safety and success with Christ.

Ver. 52. "Considered not : " did not understand or value as they should have done ; "for their heart : " not now alone, but through the life of their Master, right along there was dulness, hardness, unbelief.

Ver. 53. "The land of Gennesaret : " a small strip at the north-west end of the lake, embracing Capernaum, said to be at that time very fertile.

Ver. 54. "When they : " Jesus and the disciples ; "straightway they : " the populace.

Vers. 55, 56. These two verses describe a state of intense excitement attending the movements of Jesus right through the district. The description is most vivid, and can easily be made telling by a skilful teacher. For "streets," the Rev. reads "marketplaces," the special places of resort in Eastern towns. "Might touch—but the border : " as chapter 5 : 27, "touched him," or "it," *i.e.*, the hem. *So Bengel.*

HINTS TO TEACHERS.

Dangers.—Ver. 49, if not guarded, will be an open door for a profitless talk on apparitions, ghosts, etc. Children are fond of the marvellous, and are as fond of telling as of hearing. The wise teacher will check this, and save the precious time for more profitable talk. So verse 48. Don't let your scholars for a moment imagine that there was anything unkind or deceptive in the action of Jesus.

Topical Analysis.—(1) Jesus alone in the mountain (vers. 45, 46). (2) The disciples alone on the sea (vers. 47, 48). (3) Fear, recognition, safety (vers. 49-52). (4) The Healer at work (vers. 53-56).

On the *first* topic—Jesus had taught His disciples that prayer was to be in secret—that they were to enter into their closet (Matt. 6 : 6) ; and often to we find Him practising what He thus taught. He made the desert His closet—the mountain His secret chamber. Even Jesus felt constantly the need of being alone—of communion thus with His Father in heaven. Man He was, truly and really ; and as man He needed the support and strength that God alone can give. So we may teach, that as the Master, is the disciple. If we would do the work we have been given to do—if we would be strengthened for the trials and battles of life—we must go where alone strength can be found—in lonely intercourse with God. Public prayer is right—ought never to be neglected (Jesus set us an example there) ; but it is in the special needs that every soul feels, and in the way of receiving, that we come into special sympathy and fellowship with our elder brother.

On the *second* topic—The teaching here is in some respects similar to that in Lesson X., yet there are points of difference you may note. In that, Christ was with them, but asleep ; in this, He is absent, but through the darkness sees them toiling and rowing. In both trials they were crossing the sea by His command, and should have felt that in that was safety. In the first miracle they went to Him in their danger ; in this they do not appear to have thought of Him, and did not recognize Him even when He came to their help, as He did. We may teach from these verses that though, while in the path of duty, we may be overtaken by trials and danger, yet the eye of our Lord is upon us, and we must toil on, as did the disciples—sure that Christ will come, and watch for the coming.

On the *third* topic we can show how the very methods

God uses to aid and bless us are sometimes so strange to us that we cannot understand them. The coming of Jesus, which was really the safety of the disciples, was a cause of terror to them. They were "troubled," and "cried out." They never thought of the Master coming to them thus. Weak faith, like blind unbelief, is sure to err. But there came recognition. The blessed "It is I" was heard through the darkness and storm, and it told them that they might banish fear, for He who had before stilled the storm was with them now. But they knew the voice; and we must teach that if the voice of Jesus is to bring comfort, we must have come to make Him our Saviour—to love and to trust Him. Those only who are Christ's know His voice (John 10: 4, 27). Doubtless there were other boats out in that storm; they shared in the safety, as the world shares in the blessings Christ gives to His people, but they had not the comfort of His voice and presence.

The fourth topic is a wonderful picture of the healing power of Jesus. Show that "whithersoever he entered" there came healing, recovery of the sick, and a blessing to the place. So we may point out, wherever His gospel enters to-day, it carries blessing—it enlightens the dark and ignorant, heals the soul-sick, and gives life, even life everlasting. Pray and strive that your scholars may touch and be made whole.

Incidental Lessons.—That even the Master needed His seasons of retirement and prayer, and do not His servants?

That Jesus sometimes leaves His people to themselves, that they may find their own weakness.

That the path of duty is not always the path of ease, or even of safety.

That an absent Christ always means a present storm.

That we may be sure the eye of Christ is upon us in our hour of darkness and danger (Acts 7: 56).

That "man's extremity is God's opportunity."

That He will come to our help in His own way. Our duty is to wait and watch for the coming.

That the presence of Jesus brings deliverance and peace.

Main Lessons.—We are all upon the journey of life, and need the presence and guidance of the Saviour (Ex. 33: 13-15; Deut. 32: 10-12; Ps. 31: 3; Luke 1: 73, 79); Jesus is still a present help in time of need (Rom. 8: 6, 13; Eph. 2: 18; Heb. 4: 14, 16; 7: 25; Is. 63: 9).

April 30, 1882. } **THE TRADITIONS OF MEN.** { Mark 7: 1-23.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"In vain do they worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."
—Rev. 7.

TIME.—In the early part of A.D. 29. The ministry of Jesus in Galilee was drawing to a close.

PLACE.—Capernaum.

PARALLEL.—Matt. 15: 1-20.

Notes and Comments.—Ver. 1. "Then came:" this appears to have been a deputation sent from Jerusalem to watch and, if possible, entangle Jesus. He had not been to the capital for twelve months. The persecution originated there with the Pharisees.

Ver. 2. "Eat bread with:" text both of Common Version and REV. says "defiled;" both give in the margin "common," which is better, but not exact. They ate, it may have been, with perfectly clean hands, but without the ceremonial washings of tradition. "Found fault" (of course they did—that's what they came from Jerusalem for).



WASHING HANDS.

Vers. 3, 4. These verses are a parenthesis, explaining the customs of the Pharisees as to washing. The writer would show us the ceremonial exactness of these hypocrites. "Wash their hands off" (see margin, describing either the character or the mode of action). "Tradition:" which they regarded as of more importance than actual revelation, more especially the traditional injunction of washing hands before meals; and they carried this ceremonial washing to the small things of daily use.

Ver. 5. "Elders:" not simply the fathers—the ancients—but the living teachers of the law. "Unwashed hands:" which was regarded by them as a greater sin than gross immorality.

Ver. 6. "Esaias prophesied" (Is. 29: 13). Read that context: as the father so the children. "Lips—heart:" outward—inward; form—reality; as wide as the poles asunder. If the life is not in accord with the words, the sentence is, "Hypocrites!"

Vers. 7, 8, 9. "In vain:" utterly useless the pretence of worship when connected with such "teaching;" REV. "as their doctrine," lit. "teaching teachings commandments of men." "Laying aside:" or leaving, or having thrown away "the commandment," which was Divine, they held fast to tradition, which was human. Worse than that, when the Divine opposed their tradition, they boldly rejected it (so the Talmud: "The words of the scribe are more noble than the words of the law").

Vers. 10, 11. "Moses said" (Matt. 15: 4—"God," He spake through Moses), "Honour," etc. (Ex. 20: 12). "Whoso curseth" (Lev. 20: 9); "die:" death without mercy. "Corban—a gift:" to God. *Girik* says, "The utterance of the word "Corban" sequestered everything absolutely and irreversibly to the Temple. It might be spoken under the influence of death-bed terror, or in the weakness of superstitious fear; but if once uttered, the Church threw round the money or property the impassable barrier of her ghastly claims. God said one thing, the Pharisees another, violating natural duties.

Vers. 12, 13. Christ turns the tables on His accusers. They said that He violated tradition; He shows them that they "make the Word of God of none effect."

Vers. 14, 15, 16. "Called all the people:" turning, as if with loathing, from these hypocrites to the instruction of

those "sheep without a shepherd." "Without : " sin is not from without, but from within. The Psalms are full of recognition of this truth. The Pharisees, on the contrary, taught that defilement came from without. "Come out : " His words, actions, showing what was within. "Ears to hear : " a significant proverbial expression ; omitted in REV.

Ver. 17. "Disciples asked Him," Matt. says (15 : 15) "Peter ; " "parable : " it was a "dark saying" to them, though to us clear as sunlight.

Ver. 18. "Without understanding : " appreciation of this plain, spiritual truth. What can be plainer ? How can food for the body defile the soul ?

Ver. 19. "Not into the heart : " How can it ? The food that a man takes is divided by the working of his system ; that which is nutritious is assimilated—that which is not needed is thrown off.

Vers. 20, 23. "The heart : " our Saviour puts His finger on the spring, the source of evil ; it is the heart—the soul. Look at the fearful catalogue, the outcome of an impure heart, and teach the fact that the only way to stop this pouring forth of evil is to "get a new heart."

HINTS TO TEACHERS.

Dangers.—This is a long lesson, and may easily be made wearisome and uninteresting by a teacher who does not catch the thoughts and spirit. Some verses may give rise to profitless talk, and some to unseemly talk, unless you promptly suppress either. Beware of diversion.

Topical Analysis.—(1) Tradition and formality (vers. 1-8). (2) The Word the rule of life (vers. 9-13). (3) The heart the fountain of evil (vers. 14-23).

Notice that the circumstances under which the narrative of our lesson occurred sprang from the bitter and increasing hostility of the Pharisees. The sect at Jerusalem had opposed and persecuted Him ; so likewise in Galilee. Now their forces are joined, and they seek to overawe and win to themselves the support of the multitude, by denouncing Christ as a transgressor of what they set forth as of more importance than the Word of God—the traditions of the elders ; and so our Saviour in reply sets before the people the eternal contrast between traditional formality and the righteousness acceptable to God.

On the *first* topic you will have to note and caution against the tendency to formalism. The heart and life need carefully guarding against this. Even the youngest may fall into the evil ; they may get into a habit of attending school or church, of reading their Bibles and saying prayers, but it may be a habit and nothing more—a dead form. Forms are useful in their place—God gave them to His Church at the first ; but they were to help, not to supplant, the spiritual life. A form without the spirit is a shell without the kernel—a body without the soul. It is like a scholar never going beyond his alphabet. As for any teachings of men, traditions, such as the Romish Church delights in—these are the things our sinful natures like, because they invariably take the shape of doing something to merit the favour of God—saying, in action, that the teachings of God are not sufficient for eternal life.

Through the *second* topic our Saviour emphasized this fact again and again. In His conflict with the Tempter, in His battling against His enemies, in His teachings of the people, and in His time of agony and suffering, it was the Word of His Father to which He looked. Emphasize this : the Bible is our rule of life ; it is the Word of God ; and whatever would dare to assume its place is an invention of the adversary, and is the way of death, not of life.

The *third* topic is one which, in various shapes, you will be constantly teaching : As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he ; if the fountain sends forth impure water, it is

impure ; if the life is carnal, selfish, devilish, it is so because the heart is foul and unrenewed. A heart filled with the love of God will be shown in a life of purity, gentleness, and love.

Incidental Lessons.—That forms are useful only for the sake of what they represent and preserve.

That men are willing to do much that does not involve a change of heart.

That no outward service can atone for want of religion of the heart.

That outside religion alone—formalism—is offensive to God.

That true worship is the union of the heart with God.

That sin is defilement : as filth to the body, so is sin to the soul.

Main Lessons.—On the first topic—Forms and traditions are not to take the place of the commands of God—Deut. 4 : 2 ; Gal. 1 : 8 ; 2 : 4 ; Titus 1 : 13, 14.

Truths of the second topic—2 Tim. 3 : 16 ; 2 Pet. 1 : 19 ; James 1 : 22-25.

Truths of the third topic and its opposite—Prov. 4 : 23 ; Is. 29 : 13 ; Jer. 17 : 9, 10 ; Matt. 12 : 35.

May 7, 1882. { **SUFFERERS BROUGHT TO CHRIST.** } Mark 7 : 24-37.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"The Lord is good to all : and His tender mercies are over all His works."—Ps. 145 : 9.

TIME.—Following close upon the last lesson.

PLACE.—Jesus had left Galilee. The first half of the lesson is in the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, north-west of Palestine. Leaving there the Saviour comes down south-east, below the Sea of Galilee, to Decapolis, the scene of the second half of our study.

PARALLEL.—Matthew 15 : 21-31.

Notes and Comments.—Ver. 24. "From thence—went : " with the renewed desire of rest and quiet, as He "would have no man know it : " it is uncertain if He actually crossed the borders—from Matt. 15 : 24 it would appear not. "Tyre : " an important centre of commerce and manufactures, frequently referred to in O. T. ; "Sidon : " north of Tyre, one of the oldest cities in the world. They are generally named together.

Vers. 25, 26. In Lesson XII., last quarter, we had a father pleading for his only daughter ; now it is a mother. "Heard of Him : " the fame of His miracles had spread to these remote parts ; "fell : " with the deepest humility and reverence. "A Greek," margin ["Gentile ; " Matt. says (15 : 22) "a woman of Canaan : " the Jews called all foreigners "Greeks," as to-day they are called in the East "Franks." She was one of the Phenician race in Syria, as distinguished from the Carthaginians. The Phenicians were included among the ancient nations of Canaan (Judges 1 : 31, 32 ; 3 : 3). "Besought" (see Matthew's account). She had not only heard of His miracles, but had learned to look to Him as the promised Messiah. "The devil : " another demoniacal possession.

Ver. 27. "Jesus said" (Matthew supplies these facts : that, first, Jesus kept silence, "answered her not a word ; " whereupon the woman continuing her importunities, the disciples besought Him to send her away ; to which He replied, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep," etc. She cried again, "Lord, help me" : then follows this verse. "First : " only first ; "not meet—children—dogs : " under the old covenant the Israelites were God's children (Matt. 8 : 12) ; the "children's bread" is, therefore, the peculiar blessings to them, not yet made common (Heb. 8 : 7-13). "Dogs : " lit. little dogs—house dogs, not the wild dogs of the street.

Ver. 28. The tones of the Master's voice and His looks

must have given hope, for she catches at the thought, these very dogs may eat of the fallen crumbs; the children's father was at any rate their owner. As *Trench* says, "From the very word which seemed to make most against her, with the ready wit of faith she drew an argument in her own favour."

Ver. 29. And she succeeds. Matthew prefixes, "O woman, great is thy faith;" and so this second great commendation of faith is, as the first, to a Gentile (see Matt. 8: 10). "Gone out:" she went home with the joy of confidence.

Ver. 30. She was not deceived; "she found the devil gone out," and her daughter free, resting in quiet peace on her bed. Another instance of healing at a distance, as in Matt. 8: 13; John 4: 50-53.

Ver. 31. The narrative of the healing following is special to Mark "Decapolis:" the region thus called lay mostly beyond Galilee, east of the Jordan; it was chiefly inhabited by Syrians and heathen.

Ver. 32. "One that was deaf—impediment—speech." *Meyer* tells us that the correct translation is that he was deaf and dumb; "put his hands:" that was their idea as to what the mode of cure should be, but Jesus will heal in the manner He sees best.

Verse 33. "Took him aside." Why? Several reasons are assigned by different writers—none satisfactory. We can only fall back on the infinite knowledge of Jesus, and be assured that He followed that course best suited to the spiritual needs of each individual case. The motions of Jesus would be in the place of speech to the deaf man; they were symbolical—designed to call out his faith.

Ver. 34. "Looking up," lit. into, "heaven—sighed:" surely the sigh of prayer, and yet of loving sympathy. "Ephphatha:" Mark has preserved to us the very word Christ used, and translates it for the benefit of his Gentile readers, "Be opened."

Ver. 35. "Ears opened—tongue loosed:" immediately, in a moment, as the word was pronounced, the healing was perfected; he heard the voice, and could speak the praises of Jesus.

Vers. 36, 37. "Charged them:" he was there for quiet retirement, in addition to which He would not have these half-heathen champion Him, and deepen the gulf between Him and the Jews. "The more:" they could not, did not, care to understand any reason for the prohibition, and it only quickened their eagerness to publish the miracle. They were bewildered, "beyond measure astonished." "He hath done all things well:" evidently from this, as from "the deaf," which is plural, he had wrought other miracles, some similar. This the refrain of the saved throughout eternity.

HINTS TO TEACHERS.

Dangers.—There are rocks and shoals in all waters to careless navigators; and in every lesson there are dangers, sometimes to all, sometimes only to the thoughtless teacher. In these narratives it is possible to pay too much attention to the mere narrative, and miss the underlying truth, which missed, the teaching is in vain. Use the narratives as the Master used His parables, to illustrate spiritual truths, and for nothing else.

What and How to Teach.—Topical analysis: (1) The faith and reward of the Gentile mother (vers. 24-30). (2) The healing of the deaf-mute (vers. 31-35). (3) The testimony of the people (vers. 36, 37).

It is a remarkable fact in the history of Christ, that of His thirty-three recorded miracles, twenty-four were worked for the relief of the suffering. We have studied several of them already; and while there are certain great truths about the Master which each and all alike teach, there are special and

marked characteristics in each, which set forth special and individual truths.

On the first topic note the two central figures—Christ and the Gentile mother. In the actions of the woman show the evidence of her earnestness: she fell at His feet and brought Him to help Her daughter. Why? Because she saw and realized the terrible sufferings of her child. The lesson is not far to seek. Note further, her faith—faith in Jesus as the Messiah; for Matthew tells us that she addressed Him as the Son of David—the expected one; and she had faith that He was both able and willing to heal her daughter. Then we see her humility. Even when Jesus spoke of her as belonging to the dogs instead of the children of the house and home, she did not resent it, but meekly accepted the position, and from it found a fresh argument for her suit; and then there came her reward: such faith, such humility, such importunity, could not be turned empty away, and her heart was filled with rejoicing and gladness.

The action of the Master in this narrative is instructive. Outwardly it appears rough, hard, shaped by prejudice; but underneath is the loving heart of Him who sits as the refiner of silver, aptly illustrating how often we may misunderstand His dealings with us, and think that He has for ever turned away from us, when the clouds are ready to break and the showers of blessing and mercy to descend. While He appeared to repel, He really gave the inward grace to persevere.

The second topic shows an entirely different class of circumstances. The first miracle was public; this was private. The first was performed at a distance. Christ never saw the Gentile woman's daughter; this man he not only saw and touched, but went through certain symbolic forms. In the first there is the innate power; in this there is the looking up to heaven and sighing, as if seeking for help; but in each the grand picture of the Great Healer, the merciful High Priest, is the same.

The summing up of the third topic is in the sentence, "He hath done all things well." To get your scholars to show the truth of this, from the present lesson and any which have gone before, will be the best method of impressing on their minds the glory and excellence of Jesus. You will not rest on these displays of His miraculous power, but lead your scholars on to His unceasing work of pardoning, cleansing, renewing, sanctifying, and fitting for the kingdom of His Father. Every member of your class may feel the hand and hear the voice of Jesus healing and blessing them.

Incidental Lessons.—Learn the teachings of the delays and silence of God. (1) It does not mean denial; (2) nor rejection; but (3) trial of faith, to lead us to place ourselves unreservedly in His hands.

That none are beyond the reach of a Saviour's love.

That beneath the seeming "nay" of God there may be a deep-hidden "yea."—*Trench*.

That the trial of our faith may result in blessing to us and glory to God (1 Peter 1: 7).

The faith of this mother the conducting link between Christ and her daughter. So the nobleman's son (John 4: 50; the centurion's servant (Matt. 8: 15).

As in the days of His flesh, so now, "My Jesus hath done all things well."

Main Lessons.—In coming to God, there must be (1) humility (Ps. 9: 12; 10: 17; Luke 14: 11). Examples: Abraham, Moses, John the Baptist, Paul.

(2) Earnestness (Ps. 145: 19; Rom. 12: 12; Eph. 6: 18). Examples: Wrestling Jacob, Moses, this woman.

(3) Faith (Matt. 21: 22; Heb. 11: 6; James 1: 5-7). Examples: The Gospel histories are full of them.

PRIZE BIBLE QUESTIONS.

We intend giving monthly a series of Bible Questions, for correct replies to which, during the year, we shall give

THREE PRIZES

in books of the value respectively of FOUR DOLLARS, THREE DOLLARS and TWO DOLLARS. The replies are not to be sent until the close of the year. With the December number forms will be sent out for the use of any who desire to try.

The conditions are that those who send replies must not be more than twenty-one years of age, and they must not have been assisted in the questions. The Scripture reference or references must always be given.

For the first three questions see THE INDEPENDENT for January.

For the second three questions see THE INDEPENDENT for February.

For the third three questions see THE INDEPENDENT for March.

PRIZE QUESTIONS FOR APRIL.

10. Who was the first Old Testament missionary to the Gentiles?

11. To what things does Jesus liken the connection between Himself and His people?

12. Name a runaway slave who became a Christian, a companion of an apostle, and a messenger to the Churches.

A MARRIAGE HYMN.

"From henceforth no more twain, but one,"

Yet ever one through being twain.

As self is ever lost and won

Through love's own ceaseless loss and gain;
And both their full perfection reach,
Each growing the full self through each.

Two in all worship, glad and high,

All promises to praise and prayer,

"Where two are gathered, there am I;"

Gone half the weight from all ye bear
Gained twice the force for all ye do—
The ceaseless sacred Church of two.

One in all lowly ministry,

One in all priestly sacrifice.

Through love which makes all service free,

And finds or makes all gifts of price,

All love which made life rich before,
Through this great central love grown more.

And so together journeying on

To the Great Bridal of the Christ,

When all the life His love has won

To perfect love is sacrificed,

And the New Song beyond the Sun
Peals, "Henceforth no more twain, but one."

And in that perfect Marriage Day

All earth's lost love shall live once more;

All lack and loss shall pass away,

And all find all not found before;

Till all the world shall live and glow

In that great love's great overflow.

—Good Words.

THE most efficient canvass that we can make in favour of the Sabbath as a rest day will fail, unless we show that we regard and love it as a holy day.

DOMESTIC RECIPES.

CREAM OF TARTAR BISCUITS.—One quart of flour, 1 teaspoonful soda, 2 teaspoonfuls cream of tartar, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of butter, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of lard. Mix with milk or water, not too stiff, and cut in round cakes one inch thick. A good breakfast cake can be had by adding 1 cup of sugar, and 1 of currants.

QUEEN OF PUDDINGS.—One pint bread-crumbs, 1 quart of milk, 1 teacupful of sugar, yolks of 4 eggs, rind of 1 lemon, 1 teaspoonful of butter. Beat the yolks, sugar, and butter together; stir in the milk and crumbs; bake till a light brown. When the pudding is done, beat the white of the 4 eggs to a stiff froth, with 4 tablespoonfuls of sugar; lemon juice to flavour. Spread currant jelly over the top of the pudding; then spread over the whites of the eggs. Put in the oven and bake to a very light brown.

CURE FOR WARTS.—A correspondent of the *Scientific American* writes as follows: "Some years since a corn-doctor advised me to use coal oil. My hands were covered with them. Having little faith I tried it, putting a drop on each of common kerosene and letting it absorb; where there was a hard crust, scraping it to facilitate absorption. In a fortnight, after twice daily treating them, they began to lessen, and finally disappeared without scar. Then the right hand, in part, leaving one which remained after all others had passed away, and then that one. Have advised others to try it, with like effect on persistent use. Simply soften the top, drop the oil on and let it lie for some minutes to absorb."

HOW TO DETECT ADULTERATION IN GROUND COFFEE.
—Take a little of the coffee and press it between the fingers, or give it a squeeze in the paper in which it is bought; if genuine, it will not form a coherent mass, as coffee grains are hard and do not readily adhere to each other; but if the grains stick to each other and form a sort of "cake," we may be pretty sure of adulteration in the shape of chicory; for the grains of chicory are softer and more open, and adhere without difficulty when squeezed. Again, if we place a few grains in a saucer and moisten them with a little cold water, chicory will very quickly become soft like bread crumbs, while coffee will take a long time to soften. A third test: Take a wineglass or a tumblerful of water, and gently drop a pinch of the ground coffee on the surface of the water without stirring or agitation. Genuine coffee will float for some time, while chicory or any other soft thing will soon sink; and chicory or caramel will cause a yellowish or brownish colour to diffuse rapidly through the water, while pure coffee will give no sensible tint under such circumstances for a considerable length of time.—*Food and Health.*

Children's Corner.

HAPPY HEARTS.

A loving heart finds full employ,
In sharing other's grief and joy;
And brings a sunlit peace to home,
That follows us where'er we roam.

The memory sweet of blessings past,
A fragrant joy will o'er us cast;
Will help to lighten life's brief day,
And smooth its rough and thorny way.

A happy heart 'mid toil and care,
Will calmly try life's ills to bear;
Will in God's love and power confide,
And ever seek His grace to guide.

He dwells in peace with all below,
Who loves in fear of God to go;
Is ever gentle, true, and kind,
And ever to His will resigned.

"THEY HAD ALL BEEN MAD."

A missionary writing from China says: "In Yen-san we were able to baptise two men, one of whom supplies a good illustration of the value of even the simplest preaching. He heard two addresses delivered by one of our men in the open air. Both were mainly directed against the folly of idolatry. The first aroused his curiosity. After hearing the second he went home, took down the idol-shrine and picture out of his room, and, to the horror of his old mother, burned them in the court-yard. His neighbours concluded that he was mad; but his answer was that he and they *had all been mad*, and that he had now come to his senses. Since then, for more than a year, he has never missed a Sabbath service.

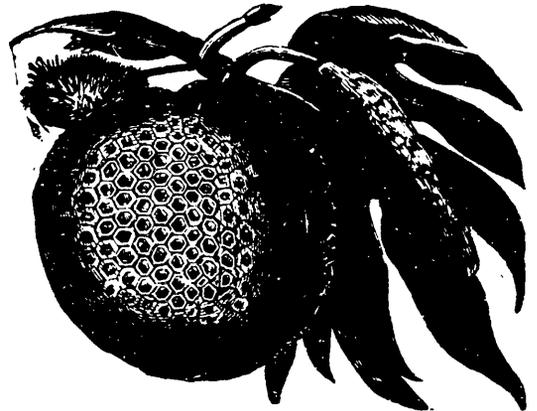
BREADFRUIT.

Early navigators, visiting the Ladrone and South Sea Islands, found a tree growing in some of them the fruit of which, with very little preparation, furnished the chief sustenance of the inhabitants. On that account

they called the fruit breadfruit, and the tree the breadfruit tree.

The botanical name of the tree is *artocarpus incisa*. It grows to the height of forty feet or more, and its leaves are about eighteen inches long and eleven inches broad. The fruit is a large green berry, resembling a cocoanut or a melon in size and form. When ripe it becomes soft, tender and white, but it must be eaten while fresh or it becomes hard and choky. It is usually cut into several pieces, and roasted or baked in an oven in the ground. The flavour is said to be somewhat like roasted potatoes.

By planting a grove of breadfruit on a



tropical island, a man provides for the support of his family as sufficiently as he could do by years of toil on a farm in a more temperate climate; but in the latter case hard work would be good for his health, whereas in the former violent exercise would be injurious or even impossible. In the geographical distribution of plants in such a way as to meet the wants of man in different climates, do we not see the wisdom and goodness of the Creator?

LITTLE words, little deeds, not one great act of mighty martyrdom, make up the time of life.

CHRISTIANS are often employed in digging wells to find comfort, and the deeper they go the darker they get; the Fountain of life, salvation and comfort is above.

ANGELS HEARKENING.

Psalm cxiii. 20.

Why are the Lord's holy angels so strong,—
Wings never weary, though journeys be long?—
Ah, my child! couldst thou but see the white throng,
They are hearkening, hearkening!

Why are the Lord's holy angels so swift
Up their bright ladder our loads to uplift,
O'er earth and sea to bear blessing and gift?—
They are hearkening, hearkening!

Why are the Lord's holy angels so sure
Aye where to go?—Ah! their eyes are so pure,
How can they smile, and earth's darkness endure?
They are hearkening, hearkening!

So, my child, wouldst thou for God's work be strong?
Swift at His bidding, be way short or long?
Sure-eyed and pure-eyed, 'mid darkness and wrong?
Oh! wouldst thou join in the angels' sweet song?
Then be hearkening, ever hearkening!

BREAD BETTER THAN PEARLS.

I shall first tell you a story, and then teach you a lesson from it. The story I shall translate from a German book, and the lesson I shall teach, as well as I can myself.

An Arab once lost his way in a desert. His provisions were soon exhausted. For two days and two nights he had not a morsel to eat. He began to fear that he should die of hunger. He looked eagerly, but in vain, along the level sand for some caravan of travellers from whom he might beg some bread.

At last he came to a place where there was a little water in a well, and around the well's mouth the marks of an encampment. Some people had lately pitched their tents there, and had gathered them up and gone away again. The starving Arab looked around in the hope of finding some food that the travellers might have left behind. After searching a while, he came upon a little bag, tied at the mouth, and full of something that felt hard and round. He opened the bag with great joy, thinking it contained either dates or nuts, and expecting that with them he should be able to satisfy his hunger. But as soon as he saw what it contained, he threw it on the

ground, and cried out in despair, "It is only pearls." He lay down in the desert to die.

Pearls are very precious. If the man had been at home, this bagful of pearls would have made his fortune. He would have received a large sum of money for them, and would have been a rich man. But pearls could not feed him when he was hungry. Although you had your house full of pearls, if you have not bread you will die. The Arab knew the value of the pearls he found; but he would have given them all at that moment for one morsel of bread—would have given them, but could not, for there was no bread within his reach. So, although he was very rich, he was left to die of want.

Pearls and gold cannot preserve the life of body, far less can they satisfy the soul. Bread is more precious to a hungry man than pearls; and the bread of life is more precious still. Christ has expressly said, "I am the bread of life." How foolish it is to spend oneself in gathering things that cannot feed us if we are hungry, and cannot save us from our sin! "Seek first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness," and keep other things in a lower place. The chief thing for each of us is to get in Christ the life of our souls for ever; and then we may gladly accept whatever good things in this life God may be pleased to give us. "What is a man profited if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"

He who is rich, when he comes to die, but is still without Christ for his soul, is like the Arab in the desert, with his bagful of pearls, but perishing for want of bread.

PETER the Great, Emperor of Russia, was one day in a sailing boat, when he became so angry with one of his companions that he seized him with the intention of throwing him overboard. "You may drown me," said his subject, "but your history will tell of it." The reminder was effectual, and the Emperor pardoned the man.