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The Canadian Independent.

"ONE IS YOUR MASTER, EVEN CHRIST, AND ALL YE ARE BRETHERN."

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REV. W. MANCHEE, *Managing Editor.*

REV. JOHN WOOD,

" R. W. WALLACE, M.A.,

" JOSEPH GRIFFITH.

} *Associate Editors.*

REV. J. B. SILCOX, *Business Manager.*

EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT.

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THE Free Methodist and Bible Christian Conferences of England, were in session at the end of last month and the beginning of this, the former in Sunderland, and the latter in Truro.

WE have heard with sorrow of the death in Africa of the Rev. Dr. Mullens, Foreign Secretary of the London Missionary Society. He had gone to Africa, with two missionaries, to establish a mission near Lake Tanganyika.

THE Bristol Institute, of which the Rev. E. J. Hartland was principal until recently, has at once found a head. The gentleman selected for the place is the Rev. J. P. Allen, M.A., of Gloucester. Mr. Allen will also be the pastor of the Sneyd Park Church, Bristol.

It is likely that Professor Robertson Smith will be a candidate for the chair of Mathematics in Glasgow University. If he is elected, he will be rid of the trouble which he has borne for some time past. Probably, he is becoming weary of fighting. It is somewhat remarkable that the man should have no liberty even in matters of historical criticism. Professor Smith's offence has been of the mildest character even when tried by a pretty orthodox standard.

THE Rev. Dr. Crosby expresses, in the "Christian at Work," his protest against the nude in art. "God has clearly shown us," he says, "that the human body is to be covered. Art comes forward and declares in direct opposition to God that the human body shall be stark naked. Christians leave God and follow art. Then when we tell these Christians that they are aiding vice, they ridicule our verdancy, and call on the world of culture to join them in the laugh."

OUR readers must have seen something of the work done by the Rev. R. W. McAll in Paris. He has been very successful in preaching the gospel to the workmen of that metropolis. Now, he has begun to do something in Lyons, which he regards as "the metropolis of Ultramontane intolerance." Four evangelistic stations have been opened, with seats for six hundred persons, and already more accommodation is needed. Several conversions have occurred and the work is going on very well.

It is worth while to call attention to the progress of Christianity in Japan during the last seven years. There are now 43 Protestant churches in the country,

with a membership of 1,500; 54 Sunday schools, with 2,000 scholars; 3 theological schools, with 175 students; 81 missionaries, 93 native assistants, 10 native pastors, and 150 preaching places. Much of the work done in the Empire has thus far been of a preparatory character; but the results have been very gratifying, and there is no doubt that they will be more so in the future.

"THE SALVATION ARMY" is the title of an organization that is making some stir in England just now. It is under the leadership of a man calling himself "General Booth." It has its stations in all parts of the country. The members of this army give themselves to evangelistic work, chiefly among the ignorant and degraded classes. Their literature and methods are of a very peculiar character. They could not well be otherwise, for the men engaged in the work are "converted" clowns and fighters and so on. It would not be right, however, to say that they are doing no good. They may benefit men and women who cannot be reached very easily by other means.

COLONEL INGERSOLL'S attacks on the Bible have called forth many replies from the advocates of Christianity. One of the best, if not the very best, is an address delivered by the Rev. S. V. Leech, D.D., in one of the Methodist Episcopal Churches of Baltimore. Dr. Leech takes up the Colonel's objections to the Scriptures point by point and disposes of them pretty effectually. If there is anything that mars the address, it is a little tendency to approach to Colonel Ingersoll's own spirit of bitterness and scorn. We Christians can well afford to leave that to our opponents. We can well afford to treat the Colonel and every one like him, as the late Dr. Alexander Clark did, with pity for their errors and follies and tenderness toward themselves.

"SUNDAY EXCURSIONS"—this was the "heading" in large, distinct letters. The sub-headings were "A Fight," "Drunkenness and Profanity." A little further down is a description of the "Fight," which was accompanied with a flood of "obscene language." On another boat a drunken man was knocked down by the "bar-tender." On another there was fighting "all the time," and one man "fatally shot." This is the Sabbath as it is spent in the waters around New York. A traveller in Scotland, whose words have just met our eye, describes the scene quite the reverse: "Here one realizes the proverbial sanctity of a Scottish Sabbath morn, as you see the people from distant parts gathering in groups around the church, and then joining in worship just as their fathers did a hundred years ago." Which of these is to be the Sabbath of Canada?

ON the 24th ultimo, the English Wesleyan Conference, meeting in Birmingham, received a deputation of non-conformist ministers headed by the Rev. R. W. Dale. In an address delivered before the Conference, Mr. Dale referred to the Methodist class-meeting, and stated that he heartily wished that the institution could be transferred to the soil of Congregationalism. We are ready to echo his wish. It seems to us that something of that sort would answer well in any and every section of the Christian Church. And, then, there is another feature that we wish we could transfer from our Methodist brethren, and that is, their successful use of the lay element in church work. But, by the way, would it not be a good thing for us to look over the fences which divide us, and see what good things there are to be found among our neighbours? There has been a great deal of the other thing going on, a watching for some defect and something to condemn. Suppose we try to go on the other principle for a while.

ESTHER AND RUTH.

There are two books in the Bible which bear women's names Esther and Ruth. Different in their cast and their scenery, they possess in common one striking peculiarity, in teaching the most important religious lessons without any profession of doing so.

The peculiarity of the book of Esther in omitting all mention even of the name of God, has been suggested to my mind in looking over the map of North America. Wherever the Spaniards settled, we find such names as *Vera Cruz*, or "True Cross;" *Trinidad*, or "Trinity;" *Santa Fe*, or "Holy Faith;" *Santa Maria*, or "Holy Mary;" and a multitude of saints' names, as *San Francis*, or "Saint Francis." Wherever the English settled, on the contrary, we find mostly only unconsecrated names, secular, or of heathen origin; only here and there a name like Salem or Providence. But when we look for religion, we do not find it chiefly where the religious names are found. The *thing*, as contrasted with the name, we find not in Spanish but in English America.

The Jews, for reasons of their own, hold the book of Esther in high esteem, according to an old saying of the rabbis, that when all their other sacred writings have perished the book of Esther will remain.

May we not also accord a high rank to this book in the sacred volume for its teaching a lesson so needful at all times, and still as needful as ever, against that tendency to be influenced by names more than things, which is the bane of religious life? It strikingly illustrates God's control of events without mention of His commandments, or even His name. It is held by theologians to be an inspired book, while looking precisely like any piece of secular history. In fact, Luther condemned it as full of "heathen unnaturalities." It carries none of those phrase-marks by which it would now-a-days get into the "religious department" of a denominational newspaper, rather than the "secular department." And yet it is a part of Holy Scripture.

Such a book reads us the lesson to depend less on labels and more on conscience; to read the lessons of religion in all history and all science as well as in manuals of devotion; to recognize religious truth outside of the catchwords of our own creed. . . .

In the light of this book the common distinction between "sacred" and "secular" is worth remarking on. This is a proper enough distinction, if properly used. "The law is good, if a man use it lawfully." But in the nature of things this distinction is accidental and temporary, serving merely to educate our thought to penetrate the profounder realities, where all secular things become sacred, as all controlled by God, working under His providence towards ends divine, and sanctified in the regard of religious souls. And yet how easy to forget the educational intent of this distinction, and to use it for a permanent mark between what is God's and what is not God's. So men give the name of "divine service" to stated exercises of worship, but not to their daily calling. They put religion apart from business and recreation, in a way that makes heathen through six days, and hypocrites on the seventh. They regard the church as consecrated by and for stated public worship only, and desecrated by the admission of any innocent and wholesome entertainment; making curious distinctions between the degrees of sacredness which belong respectively to the lecture-room and the main auditory, as formerly to the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies in the Jewish Temple. . . .

Against this false discrimination, against the human tendency to place the distinction between sacred and secular in forms, phrases and names, the book of Esther utters so strong a protest, that we might well

pronounce it, on that account alone, worthy of its place in the Bible.

The main lesson of the book of Ruth chords well with this key-note of the book of Esther.

In Ruth we see the closest constancy of affection beautifying a relation against which the satirist often directs his bitterest jibes. We see the hardest times brightened by the flowers of the purest love. We see a virtuous self help sensibly accepting a trying situation, and honestly winning its due recognition and reward. We see the providence which feeds the sparrows aiding the pious and industrious poor. This is just such a story of common life as would instruct a rude people in some of the primary lessons of morals and religion; just such a story as a divinely guided prophet might have written for such a purpose. In the primitive age it was a lesson which the divine teaching of the rare could hardly have failed to give in some form or other. Common as is the lesson now, it is not yet well learned. It is common life, domestic life, not among rude Hebrews merely, but in all times, that needs just such sanctifying as an example like Ruth's. This world, our homes, our daily work, make the circle where just such examples need to shine.

The book of Ruth is a standing protest against the besetting error of putting religion only in doctrines, institutions, ceremonies. Ruth insists on its being put into the life, the home life, the work life, the social life, in all pure and sweet morality. In view of the fatal facility with which men forget this, we may well believe that our divine teacher, the Spirit of God, secured such a book its place in the glorious company of prophecy, gospels and revelation. For so we are taught that the sublime doctrines of an incarnate God and an opened heaven are of no avail except we embody the spirit of religion in the fitting form of moral beauty, amid whatever burdens and trials God calls us to glorify Him by well doing.

In such lessons these two books, however diverse in special colouring, blend in impressive harmony. We find their details in similar accord, in exhibiting the spirit of piety in practical and moral forms, rather than devotional and religious.

Compare, for instance, the dutifulness of Esther toward Mordecai, even after she became queen, and the dutifulness of Ruth toward Naomi. Compare again, the combined energy and prudence of each in her time of need, Esther employing all of woman's tact in conducting her perilous and delicate part with the king and with Haman, Ruth (in concert with Naomi) declining the privilege of the law of inheritance until she had established her character by industry and filial piety.

Compare each again in her relation to those unknown elements in the hands of providence which are the reliance of the righteous and the dread of the wicked. Of Ruth, as she went to glean, we read that "her *hap* was" to light on the field of Boaz. Concerning Esther we read, in combination, the singular postponement of the fatal day by her adversary's superstitious use of the lot, and the unexpected blasting of Haman by the sudden disclosure of the fact that his revenge had ignorantly struck at the queen.

Peculiarly intense in colouring is the picture of providential control as it appears in Esther's record. Wrath fell on Haman as a thunderbolt from a clear sky, when Esther in her supreme moment simply said, "The adversary and enemy is this wicked Haman." The fact, to him before unknown, that the queen was of the race he had struck at, saved them and destroyed him. How striking this suggestion of the unknown elements by which providence operating through law destroys the wicked and delivers the Godly! The success of any selfish scheme depends on an indefinite number of particulars, some of which he cannot know, and any of which, when reckoned in, may change the whole result. Hence he is ever at the mercy of the unknown elements by which the omniscient disposer of events controls the issue. The unknown elements in human calculations! Never forget them. These are the avenging and recording angels by which every soul is made, sooner or later,

to realize that the supreme power works for righteousness.

The very position which these books respectively occupy in the Bible between those which precede and follow carries the analogy between them still further. It is singular to find the book of Esther, so intensely secular in its form and its phraseology, inserted between books so intensely religious in external expression as the books of Ezra and Nehemiah preceding it, and the book of Job which follows. Equally singular, though in another point of view, is it to find that peaceful scene of rural innocence and piety, which the book of Ruth depicts, between the book of Judges and the books of Samuel, so full of bloodshed and mourning, and fierce struggles and wild cries of victory. It intervenes like the even-song of shepherds in a lull of battle-drums and trumpets. It teaches us the comforting belief that even in calamitous times earth's happiness has not all been spoiled. The world's past is not so dark as history pretends. Our thoughts may always turn from that record of strife and crime and suffering, which it often seems the chief task of the daily newspaper to spread before us, to contemplate those unpublished ministries of virtue and goodness which are covered from the eye of the reporter to smile in the sight of the recording angel.

In exhibiting the analogy between these two books this feature ought not to be omitted, that each is the story of a good woman in a hard place. Less need be said of that here, because that seems to be a characteristic of most Bible biographies,—stories of good people in hard places, the moral victories of constancy and faith amid sore trials. In this respect the account of Esther demands especial notice. She held only the rank of the best loved one in a polygamous household, whose arrangements were as repugnant to our moral sense as is the odious peculiarity of Mormonism. To Esther's moral sense—confessedly noble as was her character—it can hardly have been thus repugnant, with the polygamous precedents set in her own nation by sovereigns from David's time, and equally common in the foreign land of her birth. Such is the revelation of moral progress which the Bible history gives, by incorporating such usages of the best men and women of earlier times, in the same record with the teachings of Him who made known to later times the divine intention of the fact, that the first family consisted of a wedded pair.

To conclude: the lesson of *inclusiveness* which Esther gives by ignoring the outside distinction between "sacred" and "secular," Ruth gives in another way by ignoring the distinction elsewhere recognized between the chosen people and the heathen. Moses had pronounced a curse on the race of Moab, which after a thousand years Nehemiah kept in force. From this accursed race, and against the prohibition of inter-marriage with them, came "Ruth the Moabitess."

The Jewish Church, as narrow and exclusive as any church that ever existed, was obliged by the necessities of its position to be such. The feeble light amid fierce winds must be within a lantern. Something was needed to offset this, and to show that this was not the divine ideal, but a temporary arrangement for an exigency. Hence, in remarkable contrast with the exclusiveness of the people and their institutions, the repeated testimonies of the prophets to the truth which we find embodied here in the living example of this woman. The name of the foreigner from the accursed race is here inscribed in the national record beside the names of Moses and Samuel, as a silent testimony that God is the God of all mankind, and that all have an inheritance in Him. Thus, side by side with the exclusiveness of temporary religious forms, the Old Testament places the inclusiveness of the abiding spirit of religion. While the Moabite was debarred from the national sanctuary, the Moabitess is enrolled in the holy volume which that sanctuary enshrined. And so long as creeds and sects and religious forms estrange men's sympathies, so long will her story repeat the timely lesson, to seek in the religious spirit the inclusive bond, the essential unity.

It is not unworthy of notice that the two books of the Bible which bear women's names are wholly occupied with present duties, and things near at hand in

a narrow range, while over all there plays the light that comes from afar and from above. Nowhere is the great consequence of some little things more impressively displayed than in the incidents of these books—the king's sleepless night saving Mordecai from the gallows; Ruth's casual entrance of Boaz's field conducting her to the place in history which is hers. Nowhere is the supreme worthiness of uprightly, dutifully, and bravely living the lot which providence assigns more persuasively set forth. What worthier lessons could women, or men, teach mankind than the lessons of these books, in which the distinction between royal Esther and humble Ruth is lost sight of amid the light that glows in the simple goodness of both?

"Honour and shame from no condition rise;
Act well thy part; there all the honour lies."

"What shall I do to be forever known?
Thy duty ever."

—Sunday Afternoon.

INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY OF CHRISTIANS.

Never have there been such wide-spread opportunities for Christian usefulness as at present. Christians need scarcely ask, "Lord, what wouldst thou have me to do?" for the work lies all around, and presses upon them and claims their active zeal. Sad it is that so many are found negligent or forgetful of their individual responsibility to be co-labourers in hastening on the triumphs of the Redeemer's kingdom. The whole world is now the gospel field, and already "white to the harvest." India and Japan, the islands of the South Seas and of the far-off Western Pacific, are having the gospel preached to them; and Ethiopia and the partially explored African continent stretch forth their hands for the Christian labourer. Yet many, even in our own Zion, are ignorant of the fact that thousands all over these heathen lands have heard the Word of Life and rejoice in a risen Saviour; and, as gleams of light shining in dark places, show so sadly the millions who are passing from time to eternity in worse than Egyptian bondage, because the coffers of the Lord's house are not overflowing with the free-will offerings of every individual Christian.

Our home work suffers, too, from the lack of this individual responsibility. How many waste places might "bloom and blossom as the rose," if in sparsely settled parts of our country, individual Christians would gather themselves weekly in the Sabbath school and prayer meeting! God would soon bless such efforts by sending them an under shepherd.

Even in our towns and cities—with their beautiful churches and softly-cushioned seats, where the Pauls and Apolloses in the pulpit tempt the passers-by—how many professing Christians are satisfied to be in their places only on pleasant Sabbath mornings. How many vacant seats, at the evening service and prayer meetings, to pain the heart of the faithful minister, instead of each and every professor being Aarons and Hurs to hold up the hands of the pastor in his labourious work!

Is not this a true picture of too many in all the churches of this Christian land? What is the secret of this sad apathy? Is it not found in the individual inner life? Christian reader, do you appreciate the high privileges of your calling? *Your* Christian life is called a race, and you are enjoined to "so run that you may obtain;" "to press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." You are called to be a soldier of Christ, and to "gird yourself with all the panoply of the gospel armour" and then "fight the good fight of faith." The Saviour says to you, "Go, work in my vineyard." Will you go, or leave others to do the work? Christ is King in Zion. He has "girded on his sword, and in His glory and His majesty he rides prosperously." Would you, Christian reader, share the triumphs of Christ's kingdom? Then work; and whether ten talents, or five talents, or only one talent have been committed to you, let not your Lord, when he comes, find yours laid away in a napkin. Would you wear an incorruptible crown, and shine as the stars for ever and

ever?" Then labour in faith to "turn many to righteousness." It is the grandest work that human hands can do; and the reward is on high.—*Christian Observer*.

FENCED CITIES FOR THE LITTLE ONES.

What will we do with the children? This was the question under consideration one day in the tribes of Reuben and Gad. These two tribes had decided to ask as their inheritance a portion of the country east of the Jordan. It had already been conquered, but before they could settle down in it for good, all of them who could carry arms must go over Jordan to aid their brethren in the conquest of Canaan. They knew it would not do for them to leave the children unprotected, and what to do with them in the circumstances was a serious question. They finally came to this conclusion: "Our little ones shall dwell in the fenced cities because of the inhabitants of the land."

What will we do with the children? is a question that is always turning up. Fathers and mothers have often wept over it and carried it on bended knees to a throne of grace. Sabbath school conventions and institutes, ministers and church courts, boards of education and State Legislatures have had it before them again and again as a subject for grave consideration, and the answers that have been given to it are as varied as the circumstances which call the question up. But where will we find a more suggestive answer than this one given by the men of Reuben and Gad: "Let the little ones dwell in the fenced cities." The cities in which the children are kept ought to be "fenced" or rather "walled" cities.

The home should be a fenced city. Around it should be the strong wall of parental authority—a wall so real, so good, so strong that when it is tried by those within or by those without it will stand the test. It is not necessary to have it unsightly and forbidding. No, let every stone in the wall from the top to the bottom be covered over with the flowers and fruits of an honest, undoubted affection. Let prayer and faith bind stone to stone with the power and presence and blessing of God. Within such a walled city the children should dwell. Getting out from behind the home walls, breaking away from the wholesome restraints of parental authority too soon, has resulted in the ruin of thousands. These walls should not only keep the little ones in, but they should keep the "inhabitants of the land" out. These foes come sometimes as "friends of the family," sometimes as playmates, sometimes in the shape of books, papers and magazines, and sometimes in the garb of fashion. Oh, parents, keep the door closed against folly and sin. By the love ye bear to these young immortals, by the awful dangers to which they are exposed, do your very best by God's help to have your home and theirs walled on every side, and covered over by the sheltering shield of an almighty Saviour.

So too, the school should be fenced—the public school and the Sabbath school. The first should be fenced or walled by the State, and the second by the Church. Around the great public school system should be a good strong wall of common law, so good and so strong that opposers could not get their fingers in to meddle with it. We thought we had the wall strong enough, but it seems we have been mistaken. It is natural for Rome to be trying to take care of her own interests, but we must give her to understand that we have rights that must and shall be preserved.

The walls round about the Sabbath school are not strong enough. It is the only fenced city that many of the little ones know anything about. The inhabitants of the land in many cases break through and snatch away the precious souls which Christian men and women are trying to save. By God's help the walls of truth, love, faith and prayer must be made higher and firmer.

The Church should be a fenced city for the little ones to dwell in. It is heartrending to see the world reaching into the sacred enclosure and taking the young captive at will. Let the house of God be made an attractive place for them. Let them be brought to it early in life, and let them have a place of their own in the family pew. Let those who are older show

their appreciation of it by dwelling within it themselves, and above all let the prayer of all be "build Thou the walls of our Jerusalem."

* Let us watch carefully the walls—the walls about the home, the school and the Church. Instead of weakening or lowering them, let us aim at making them higher and stronger, so that our precious little ones may be safe. Let us teach them early in life their need of the Saviour, and labour to have them "in Christ." With Him for a habitation for ourselves and for them, all will be well. None shall be able to pluck the lambs out of His bosom. Then when we are called to go over Jordan with our brethren, we can leave the little ones behind us with the confident hope of seeing them again.—*Central Presbyterian*.

"TWENTY MINUTES FOR SERMONS."

The recent announcement by a Chicago preacher, that henceforth he shall take but twenty minutes for sermons, has a sound like the notice given by express train conductors at certain stopping places along the route—"twenty minutes for refreshments," and the notice which has to do with fixing the limit in both cases seems very much of a piece; namely, to give as short a time as possible to a necessary but rather irksome duty, which at best is an interference with one's plans, and must be done up with despatch. In connection with the twenty-minute sermons in this case, we are informed, the other services are not to be abridged. The organist will take his usual indulgence at his key-board; the choir will sing to their uttermost, and the long prayer will continue long. Expenses (in time) must be cut down, and a beginning is to be made with the sermon. Such a considerate attention to the preferences of the average church-goer is expected, no doubt, to stimulate church-going; and this ecclesiastical conductor who is henceforth going to compel his people to stop only "twenty minutes for sermons" evidently counts upon a large increase of passengers.

A good sermon may be preached in twenty minutes; but that does not justify the use of any such device as this to attract men to church. We do not know how the exact announcement may have sounded under what may have been peculiar circumstances; but, judged abstractly, the fisher of men who baits his hook with "twenty-minute sermons" will next be advertising two-minute prayers. Such expedients are undignified, unmanly, unbecoming. They tend to lower the name of religion, to cheapen the instrumentalities of the church, to put the Gospel before the world in the attitude of a beggar instead of the messenger it is. Let a minister preach twenty-minute sermons if he wants to—and can; but not attempt to make capital out of the practice by advertising it.

It is very doubtful whether this preacher, whose name we do not even know, will succeed in making his sermons short by confining them within twenty minutes. Some sermons would be long even at twenty minutes, while others are short even at an hour. Some subjects demand longer treatment than others; some occasions allow it; and for a preacher to measure out his "meat" in due season "in portions of uniform size, is sometimes to over-feed his flock and sometimes to starve them." Old Dr. Emmons used to say: "No conversions after the half-hour;" and he rigidly regulated the length of his famous theological essays called sermons according to this maxim; but we venture the opinion that a good many conversions have attended the last part of sermons which have stretched a good deal beyond the half-hour. We know of a minister who, when he sits down to the composition of a sermon, takes so many sheets of paper—no matter what the subject and no matter what the occasion, and writes till he has filled them out. Then his sermon is done. Nothing could be more fatal to the best preaching than any such mechanical ways of sermon-measuring. Not the d-stick, nor the hour-glass, should be the preacher's guide, but common sense. When his sermon's length begins to exceed its breadth and its depth, then it is getting too long, and it is time for him to put a stop to it.

A good motto for preachers is, Stop when you have

finished. It is one also which applies to editorial writers.

Enough said.—*Christian Union*.

MANY WAYS OF DENYING CHRIST.

It is a fatal mistake to suppose that there can be no apostasy from Christ where we are not absolutely called on to deny His name, or to burn incense to an idol. We deny our Lord whenever, like that Demas, we, through love of this present world, forsake the course of duty which Christ has plainly pointed out to us. We deny our Lord whenever we lend the sanction of our countenance, our praise, or even our silence, to measures or opinions which may be popular and fashionable, but which we ourselves believe to be sinful in themselves or tending to sin. We deny our Lord whenever we forsake a good man in affliction and refuse to give countenance, encouragement and support to those who, for God's sake and for the faithful discharge of their duty, are exposed to persecution and slander.—*Bishop Heber*.

THE Ultramontanes in Belgium are coming into open collision with the government in the matter of elementary education. The bishops have published a collective pastoral letter condemning the new school law, and commanding all Catholic parents not to send their children to the reformed schools, nor to participate in any way in its execution. They wind up their letter, after stating that all the resources which the Catholics possess must be devoted to the creation of Catholic schools in opposition to the public schools, with the old crusaders' cry, *Dieu le veut!*

FOR many years the Provinces of our Dominion have been flooded with impure literature emanating from the United States. Our own Governments have endeavoured to prevent the importation of such matter, but with only partial success. We rejoice to find that steps are being taken by the American Government to shut off this deleterious stream at its source. A publisher who has been in the practice of disseminating literature of an improper kind throughout the United States and Canada, has recently been sentenced to thirteen months' imprisonment; and although the case was appealed to the President, and much pressure brought to bear upon that functionary to have the sentence commuted, he inflexibly sustained the decision of the court and left the culprit to undergo his well-deserved punishment. We hope the example thus made will have a beneficial effect.

IT is just about time that people should cease amusing and entertaining themselves and others under cover of giving extra attention to religion. We have now before us a poster which, while bearing unmistakable marks of authenticity, would be in good place as a keen satire on the religious summer gatherings so much in vogue at present. When so-called religious services get to be of such a nature as to necessitate or encourage Sabbath breaking it is time to enquire whether they ought not to be abolished. The advertisement to which we refer invites all and sundry to an "Evangelical Camp Meeting" at a certain place in Ontario, describing it as "the attractive spot of the season for pleasure and profit," and directing particular attention to the facts that "special trains will run" from about a dozen stations along a certain line of railway on three specified days, one of which is a week day and the other two Sabbath days, and that "a steamer will be in readiness, on the arrival of each train, to take excursionists down" a certain "beautiful" river to the "evangelical meeting," which, it is stated, "promises to be the most attractive and immense of the kind ever held in Western Canada." The principal attractions set forth are "superb location," "fresh breezes," "blue waters," "nature's temples," "every pleasure and comfort," "boarding hall," "provision store," "baggage room," "book store," "post office," "rare chance to hear the most clever men of the continent," "trifling expense" (including ten cents taken at the gate), "songs of praise" led by "the Indian jubilee singers, thirty-five in number," and to sanctify the whole enormous piece of wickedness and folly, a series of religious services opened by a Bishop.

THE
CANADIAN INDEPENDENT.

TORONTO, THURSDAY, AUGUST 28th, 1879.

HARVEST-HOME.

DRYDEN sings,

"Come, my boys, come,
And merrily roar out harvest-home."

The last sheaf tossed out of the rack was the signal for the merriest glee in the land where Dryden sang. The toil of the ploughman and the sower had culminated in the joy of the harvester. And the evening of the last load was a time for general rejoicing in the home. The table groaned with delicacies. Songs made the hours ring. And amid the festivities, let us hope that the Divine Donor was not forgotten, but that His bounty was a theme for grateful remembrance.

It seems a pity that we—sober-minded Canadians—have forgotten this pleasant custom of our forefathers. The ingathering is a season of sufficient gladness to justify neighbourly mirth. And provided that the season be conducted Christianly, and the accessories be pure and simple, such an occasion would leave a blessing with those who observed it.

Our Canadian harvest has been reaped. And it has been gathered with gladness, for—the country over—the crops have been good. While the motherland has been grieving over the grain rotting in the fields from the excessive rains, our people have been enjoying good harvest weather. The barns are now filled with plenty, and God has again redeemed his pledge to us that seed-time and harvest should not fail. He has answered afresh the prayer of our hearts, "Give us this day our daily bread."

Who shall fail to see God's hand in the present good? Who of the many toilers will fail to look above the sheaves to Him who gives the sun and showers? Ingratitude is an unworthy possession, and blights the soul which shelters it. If ever the grand old doxology,

"Praise God from whom all blessings flow,"

is in place, it is when the loaded wains are cautiously creeping towards the sheltering barn. How many sing it? It should be as universal as the love of Him who plans His seasons for the good of His numerous family.

We do not know the prevailing custom in our many churches. But we would suggest that in them all a Sabbath should be set apart for reflection upon the ingathering. Let the hymns be full of praise. Let the prayers teem with thanksgiving. Let the sermons deal with the matter of gratitude, or any other useful theme suggested by the season. And let this Sabbath be observed as well in our city churches as in the rural churches, for both city and country are interested in crowded barns and groaning granaries. The effect would be to lead us to connect the blessings of life more closely with Him who giveth

all, a state of mind to which we are not unduly prone.

"Be not too narrow, husbandman! but fling
From the full sheaf, with charitable stealth,
The liberal handful. Think, O think!
How good the God of harvest is to you,
Who pours abundance o'er your flowing fields!"

THE GOSPEL OF CLEANLINESS.

THE fever-scurge has again fallen upon the city of Memphis. It was hoped by all that the terrible experiences of a twelve-month ago were exceptional in their character. But with the return of the heated term, the devourer recommences his work of destruction. Every day fresh victims are reported, and the fever has become epidemic. Thousands deserted the smitten city, making their exit as informal and hasty as possible. And now since other cities have in self-protection closed their gates against the fugitives, they must stay and brave the plague.

Our American exchanges have raised the inquiry whether the people of Memphis have sufficiently observed the laws of nature as regards cleanliness. Mr. Keating says that "the soil is reeking with the offal and excreta of ten thousand families," that the city is without any "organized scavenger system," and that "the accumulations of forty years are decaying on the surface." A lady missionary writes to a Boston paper that "filth and vermin reign supreme." The "Christian Union" says that "It may be anticipated as an established fact that *any community on low land and in a temperate climate can render itself liable to the fever by want of cleanliness*; and, on the other hand, that the yellow fever *cannot be taken in a really pure air from persons, clothing, trunks or anything else*. The fever is absolutely impossible as an epidemic in a well-drained and cleanly kept community."

It would seem then that Memphis needs to have preached to it the gospel of cleanliness, or it must remain the victim of devastating disease. Nor is it the only place which needs plain talk on this subject. For we are convinced that much of the poor health prevalent may be traced to neglect of the simplest rules of cleanliness. Many are inherently dirty both in their persons and surroundings, and they not only suffer personally, but they bring suffering to others. And filth is to be found oftentimes in quarters where it would not be expected. Outhouses and sinks and yards are allowed to taint the air and breed diseases of various forms.

In our remembrance of religious duties, we must not forget to be clean. "Cleanliness is next to Godliness," so the proverb runs. Hyper-religious people may talk so much of the soul, as to forget that meantime that soul is linked to a body that needs some care. And such need to remember that a pure and healthy body is a grand environment for the soul. A sermon occasionally on the duties we owe to our bodies, to form pure habits of

living, to eat and drink without gluttony, and to keep all our surroundings cleanly, would be justifiably seasonable. A western minister, seeing that the civic authorities were neglecting sanitation, preached such a rousing sermon on the subject that the city was cleaned up, and that summer the death-rate was lower than ever before. And who shall say that that sermon was not as justifiable and prudent as it was practical?

ONE SERMON A DAY.

THIS is the freshest topic *up* for discussion. It is going the round of the United States Press. Surely there must be something in sermons after all, that they should set on fire the editors of papers the world over. There is bound to be a yearly run upon the subject of pulpit discourses. At one time, it is the question of extempore preaching; or at another, of the length of a sermon. In some form or other the discourse proves itself to be a matter of general interest. This year it comes before us in the shape of the enquiry, whether it would not be better for all parties concerned that there should be only one sermon in every church on the Lord's day. The continual discussion of the subject of sermons ought surely to enforce the conviction that the pulpit is not after all losing its power.

To some it may appear useless to argue against this new proposal. It is self-evident, they say, that a minister will be able to prepare better discourses, if he be allowed more time for study, and not to be distracted by the necessity arising from the preparation of two or more sermons for the one day, of having several concurrent trains of thought in his mind at one and the same time. The pastor it is alleged would certainly have more leisure for the discharge of parochial duties. There is doubtless some truth in this. It is illustrated in the ministerial life of Dr. Guthrie, who divided the labours of Free St. John's with Dr. Hanna. Never were there two such colleagues in the one charge. What the one had to perfection was almost entirely wanting in the other. The people enjoyed the privilege of listening to two preachers, who were eminent in opposite directions. Dr. Guthrie by his powerful eloquence and panoramic pictures drew the masses together and moved them to the heart. Dr. Hanna by such learned and exquisitely beautiful lectures as those which make up his classical work, "The Life of Our Lord," attracted the thoughtful and educated. While there was in the former the thrilling power that crowded the aisles, there was in the latter that which a refined audience could highly appreciate and enjoy. There was also in Dr. Hanna a simplicity and directness which was edifying to every person. And so between them they kept together one of the largest congrega-

tions, and their intercourse was entirely free of jealousy.

What is wanted for a minister to conduct two services on the Lord's day, and perhaps one during the week, is to preach the Gospel in several different ways. Let him give an exposition in the morning, a sermon at the second service, and a running commentary on the Wednesday. The result will be that each contributes some valuable element to the other. The exposition and sermon prepared concurrently will not exhaust the mind. The study of Scripture which exposition renders necessary will give richness and fulness to the sermon; while the sermon will prove an antidote to the prolixity which might result from a purely expository style. But we should say that the attempt to prepare two discourses of a similar kind would prove exhausting both to the preacher and his hearers.

There is something to be said for two sermons from the people's point of view. It is seldom that a whole family can be present at one and the same service. The mistress and maid in many instances must go to church time about. In others, the husband and wife must divide spiritual privileges between them. And while in country charges, where pastors have to supply several stations on the same day, such must go to church on alternate Sabbaths, it is evident that, in the city, congregations could not be kept together upon this principle. The two services in the latter case are necessary to give the members of working families their proper share of religious ordinances. The one sermon plan would entirely fail to accomplish this end.

News of the Churches.

WE are glad to learn that the Rev. Prof. Fenwick's health is improving.

THE Rev. Edward Ebbs preached in the Northern Church of this city last Sunday.

THE pastor of the Western Church, J. B. Silcox, has returned from Montreal and Kingston.

THE Rev. W. H. Warriner, B.A., of Yorkville, is spending this week in Portland, Maine.

LAST Sunday at the morning service of the London church, the Rev. R. W. Wallace withdrew his resignation.

WE understand that Mr. C. H. Keays has ended his vacation work at Unionville. He will spend some time at his home in Hamilton.

REV. W. M. PEACOCK, of Kingston, is visiting Brattle Creek Sanitarium, in Michigan, with a view of regaining his health. He has been unable to do any work since the first of March. The last report states that he was somewhat improved.

WE learn that the Rev. W. J. Cuthbertson intends to leave home in some two months' time. He has delayed his departure for a while on account of the building scheme in Shedden. The cause is thriving in this field. Here is an opening for a good man, and here is a good man for an opening.

ECONOMY, N. S.—The new parsonage here is nearing completion. When finished it will be a most comely residence, while the view of Economy Mountain in front and the Bay of Fundy in the rear is most beautiful. Mrs. Rose, when leaving to attend the Union meeting with her husband, was presented with a fine "Teacher's Bible" by the members of the Young Men's Prayer Meeting, as a token of gratitude

for her kindness in preparing a room for them to meet in. On Thursday, August 7th, a social was held at Deacon James Hill's. A most pleasant evening was spent and \$26 realized towards the building fund.

WINNIPEG.—The members and adherents of the Congregational denomination in this city, held a meeting August 1st, there being a good attendance. After opening with devotional exercises, the following resolution was moved by John Villiers, seconded by K. F. Lockhart: "That we present believe that the time has come for the formation of a Congregational church in this city, and that we give our hearty support to the establishment of the same." Those present made short addresses, expressing themselves strongly in favour of the resolution, which carried unanimously. Rev. Mr. Ewing read several letters from the Rev. Dr. Wilkes, LL.D.; George Hague, general manager of the Merchants' Bank, Montreal, and others interested in the work of establishing a Congregational church in Winnipeg. In his first letter, Dr. Wilkes said that he had just received word from the Colonial Missionary Society, London, Eng., stating its willingness to assist the work of establishing a Congregational church in Winnipeg. Dr. Wilkes requested full information from Rev. W. Ewing in regard to the field and its prospects. In his next letter, dated July 11th, Dr. Wilkes said that substantial assistance would be given to the cause, by the Colonial Missionary Society and brethren in Canada. Another letter was read from Dr. Wilkes, dated July 22nd, written in a most encouraging strain, strongly urging the vigorous pushing forward of the work. A letter from George Hague, of the Merchants' Bank, dated July 12th, was read, expressive of his regret at being unable to visit Manitoba at present, but stating that he hoped to later on. Mr. Hague stated his willingness to assist the cause, if the friends in Winnipeg would do the same. Another letter from the same gentleman, dated July 22nd, strongly urged the necessity of making a beginning at once, and closed with the words, "meet every trial by prayer and faith, but on no account give up—'Fear not, I am with thee.'" Several other letters were also read. Much satisfaction was expressed by those present at the substantial support promised, and the interest manifested by Dr. Wilkes, Mr. Hague, and the others. Much enthusiasm was also manifested during the meeting, which then adjourned until the 8th inst., Rev. W. Ewing pronouncing the benediction. On Friday, August 8th, another well attended meeting took place, the Rev. W. Ewing in the chair. After the devotional exercises, some encouraging addresses were given in regard to the work. It was moved by John Villiers, seconded by Mr. Dodimeade, "That this meeting deem it important that a church of the Congregational denomination be established at once; and to accomplish this, that the Rev. Mr. Ewing communicate with Rev. Mr. Cobb (of Minneapolis), Missionary Superintendent of Minnesota, inviting him to come and assist in the formal organization as early as possible."—Carried unanimously. Moved by George Claire, seconded by Mr. Wellband, "That John Villiers and Edward Pim be a committee to inquire as to the location and price of suitable building lots for a site on which to build the church; said committee to report at the next meeting."—Carried. Moved by Mr. Arnott, seconded by Mr. Brown, "That Messrs. Villiers, Lockhart and Wellband be a committee to draft constitution and by-laws, and to receive applications for membership until the Church has been formally organized; said committee to report at the next meeting."—Carried unanimously. After some discussion the meeting adjourned.—*Winnipeg Times.*

UNIONVILLE.

LAYING THE FOUNDATION STONE OF A NEW CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.

On Friday afternoon, 22nd inst., the ceremony of laying the foundation stone of a new Congregational church at Unionville was performed by James Fraser, Esq., of Toronto. There were present on the occasion Revs. T. W. Handford, of Toronto; W. F. Clarke, of Guelph; J. Allworth, Paris; A. F. Mc-

Fadyen, Montreal; E. D. Silcox, pastor of the church, and several ministers resident in the neighbourhood. After appropriate introductory services, in which Revs. J. Allworth, E. D. Silcox and T. W. Handford took part, papers, coins, etc., were placed in a cavity of the stone, it was duly adjusted, Mr. Fraser gave it the usual taps and declared it to be well and truly laid. An address was then delivered by Rev. W. F. Clarke, of Guelph. He set out by saying that it was not the foundation stone of the Unionville Congregational church that was being laid to-day. That was laid ages ago, not in Unionville but in Zion, not by human but by Divine hands. It and every other Christian church were built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone. It was really a perverted use of the term church to apply it to a building. In the New Testament it had only two meanings, a local church, and the Church universal. Now-a-days it has two other meanings. One that of a whole denomination, as the Methodist Church, the Presbyterian Church, etc., and the other to signify a building. Usage in course of time establishes the meaning of words; and sometimes greatly changes them, e.g. the word "prevent," which in olden times meant to help, but now means to hinder. We may not be able to check the incorrect uses of the term church, but we can at least point out its original and true signification. Mr. Clarke then went on to show what was distinctive in Congregationalism as compared with other denominations. All Christians belonged to the one family of God, and there was a family likeness among them. The distinctions of sect were illustrated by Bungay's "Creeds of the Bells." But there was another bell which the poet did not seem to have heard, though it was making quite as much noise in the world as some of the others characterized. He (Mr. Clarke) had taken the liberty of adding another stanza.

"Of man-made creeds we toll the knell,"
Rang out, distinct and clear, a bell,
"One is our Master, Saviour, Lord,
And be His name by all adored;
Christ Jesus came to make men free,
Ring out the chimes of liberty;
'Tis time all false pretensions fell,"
Pealed forth the Congregational bell.

This was a free church. Its members had full exercise of the right of private judgment, and of the ecclesiastical franchise. The church was free to choose its own minister and other officers. The minister was free from dictation as to his creed, and as to his movements generally. He was responsible only to Christ and the church of which he was pastor. Mr. Clarke closed an effective address with some general remarks on the prospects of Congregationalism in Canada, and some special counsels to the Unionville church. At the close of the address, the friends present were regaled at a peach festival, which really consisted of an excellent tea-spread. The tables were set in the old church lot just opposite. After tea an hour's recess was taken prior to a lecture announced to be given by Rev. T. W. Handford. The company scattered for walks and talks, in various parts of the pretty little village and its surroundings. Just before the time set for the lecture, a sudden and furious storm of wind, rain, thunder and lightning set in, which had the effect of driving many people to their homes, and of detaining them there. It subsided, however, before very long, and quite an audience assembled to hear Mr. Handford. The subject of his lecture was "Martin Luther," and for two hours the eloquent lecturer kept his hearers enchained and enchanted. No brief resumé can give an idea of the lecture, which sparkled with wit, and was full of practical wisdom suited to the times we live in. At the close of the lecture, Rev. E. D. Silcox, in lieu of formal votes of thanks, presented the grateful acknowledgments of the Unionville church and congregation to Messrs. Fraser, Clarke, Handford, and all who had aided in making the proceedings of the day successful. Special mention was also made of the friendly spirit shown by members of the Bond Street Congregational Church, Toronto, who to the number of twenty had made an excursion to Unionville on this occasion. The pecuniary proceeds of the festival, etc., were \$82.

The Sunday School.

INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

LESSON XXXVI

Sept. 7, 1879. } THE COMING OF THE LORD } 1 Thess. iv. 13-18.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"And so shall we ever be with the Lord."—1 Thess. iv. 17.

HOME STUDIES.

- M. Matt. xxiv. 29-42. The elect gathered.
 T. Matt. xxv. 31-46. The last judgment.
 W. Acts i. 1-11. Christ's second coming.
 Th. 1 Thess. i. 1-12. Glorified in His saints.
 F. 1 Thess. iv. 13-18. The coming of the Lord.
 S. John xiv. 1-13. Many mansions.
 S. 1 John iii. 1-8. "We shall see Him as He is."

HELPS TO STUDY.

Few of the places to which the epistles of Paul were sent are now in existence. Thessalonica, to the church at which the epistle that contains our lesson was sent, not only exists but is at the present day one of the most important cities in the Turkish Empire. Even its name—Salonica—is nearly the same as it was in Paul's time. He visited the city twice, first in company with Silas and Timothy on his second missionary tour (Acts xvii. 1-12), again on his third missionary journey (Acts xx. 1-3), perhaps also after his release from his first imprisonment at Rome, Phil. i. 25, 26; ii. 24; 1 Tim. i. 3; 2 Tim. iv. 13; Titus iii. 12. Jason, Gaius (Acts xix. 29), Secundus (Acts xx. 4), Aristarchus (Col. iv. 10; Philemon 24; Acts xix. 29), were natives of this city, and among Paul's most efficient helpers. In Acts xvii. 1-9 we find an account of the founding of the Thessalonian church by Paul in company with Silas and Timothy. The message of Paul was joyfully received by a great multitude of devout Greeks, and by chief women not a few. The majority of the Jews, however, rejected his message, and very soon compelled its deliverer to fly for his life. They also prevented his return to the city to finish the work which he had begun, ii. 18. He afterwards learned that the believers there had dwelt too much upon the speedy coming of Christ, had even neglected their business (2 Th. ii. 1; iii. 6, 11, 12), and were in distress of mind lest their Christian friends who had already fallen asleep in the Lord should fail to share in the blessings of the advent, and in the passage before us he puts them right on these points. The topics of the lesson are, (1) *Asleep in Jesus*, (2) *Alive with Jesus*.

I. ASLEEP IN JESUS.—VERS. 13-14. The Thessalonian Christians and others are here taught that there is no occasion for hopeless sorrow regarding them which are asleep in Jesus, or for any fear that they shall not participate in the benefits and advantages of the Lord's coming just as fully as those who may happen to be alive when He comes. The believer may sorrow over the death of Christian friends but not as others who have no hope—not as the heathen or the infidel, or the sceptic. To the Christian death is but a sleep—a state from which there shall be an awakening—and even this refers only to the body; the soul of the departed believer is not dead nor even asleep, but fully alive, awake, and in the enjoyment of happiness. At the resurrection the body shall be raised—a glorified body—and reunited to the happy soul. And what is the foundation of the Christian's hope in this respect? It is the fact that Jesus died and rose again, the "first fruits of them which slept," the promise and earnest of a universal resurrection; for even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him. Their souls are not in the grave; they are in heaven; and when He comes He will bring them with Him. If we believe in the resurrection of Christ, we must also believe in the resurrection of those who are Christ's. "If there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen," (1 Cor. xv. 13). Because He lives we shall live also. All comfort concerning departed friends, and concerning the future for ourselves, rests upon our belief in a resurrection through Christ.

II. ALIVE WITH JESUS.—VERS. 15-18. It is supposed by some, from the use of the word *we* in the fifteenth verse, that Paul expected to be alive at the coming of Christ. But it does not necessarily so indicate. It does show, perhaps, that he thought there was a possibility of such a thing, but nothing more. The fact that it was taught by him that the Saviour might come at any time, rather sustains his view. And yet, from his second letter to them (ii. 3), it is plain that he did not regard that event as immediate. Whether he thought that it might happen before he was taken to be with Christ through death does not appear. The time of His coming was one of the things that was not revealed to him, nor to any one of the inspired writers. One commentator says that this "we" was an affectionate identification of himself with the Christians of all ages. It is equivalent to saying: "Whichever of us are alive." Shall not prevent: The word prevent literally means *come before or precede*; and it was so used by English writers at the time that the Bible was translated. The Psalmist, in Psalm cxix. 147, says: "I prevented [came before or preceded] the dawning of the morning and cried." In the lesson it evidently means that those who are alive at the second coming shall have no precedence or advantage over those who may have fallen asleep in Jesus before that event takes place. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout: *Himself*—not a deputy, not a phantom—"This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven" (Acts i.

11). The word here translated "shout" occurs but once in the New Testament, though it is frequently met with in classical Greek where it denotes the command or signal given by a general or admiral or captain of rowers. "The hour is coming in the which all that are in their graves shall hear His voice and shall come forth" (John v. 28). The last clause of verse 16 reads along with the first clause of verse 17: And the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds. The apostle's argument is that the living believers shall have no advantage over the dead in Christ, for before the former are caught up the latter shall rise, and they shall all be caught up together. There may or there may not be two separate resurrections—one for the righteous and one for the wicked—but this passage says nothing whatever about the matter; though, when the last clause of the sixteenth verse is improperly read out of its connection, it may appear to do so. And so we shall ever be with the Lord: The anticipation of that fact is the believer's greatest joy now, as the actual enjoyment of it will crown his happiness then. Many questions arise in connection with these great events the answers to which have not been revealed to us because it is not needful for us to know them; but enough has been revealed to teach us how to live for Christ now so that we may meet Him with joy when He comes, whenever that may be, and be with Him where He is, wherever that may be. This is the time for work. Let us work like those who expect the Master—nay, let us work like those upon whom the Master's eye is now fixed.

Around the Table.

THE LITTLE CAVALIER.

He walks beside his mother,
 And looks up in her face;
 He wears a glow of boyish pride
 With such a royal grace!
 He proudly waits upon her;
 Would shield her without fear—
 The boy who loves his mother well,
 Her little cavalier.

To see no tears of sorrow
 Upon her loving cheek,
 To gain her sweet, approving smile,
 To hear her softly speak—
 Ah! what in all this wide world
 Could be to him so dear?—
 The boy who loves his mother well,
 Her little cavalier.

Look for him in the future
 Among the good, the true:
 All blessings on the upward way
 His little feet pursue.
 Of robed and crowned and sceptred kings
 He stands the royal peer—
 The boy who loves his mother well,
 Her little cavalier.

—George Cooper, in *The Nursery*.

CHARLEMAGNE'S TABLE-CLOTH.

AIX-LA-CHAPELLE was one of the favourite resources of Charlemagne. There were often assembled the lords and ladies of his court, with his own family, which consisted of several sons and one beautiful daughter. He was the most intelligent and powerful monarch of his time; his dominions were more extensive than those of the Roman Emperors had ever been. It is more than a thousand years since his death, yet his fame will endure to the end of time.

In the midst of the splendour of his position he was quite simple in his tastes, and was particularly devoted to literature and science. Among his most intimate friends and admirers were men renowned for their learning.

One day, after a grand entertainment had taken place in the palace, the guests were amused to see a page enter, and, on bended knee, present to his royal master a salver, on which was carelessly folded a soiled white table-cloth. Charlemagne, not in the least surprised, threw it into a fire, evidently prepared for the purpose. All eyes were fixed

on the fabric, which did not smoke nor blaze, but only assumed a red-hot appearance. A few moments passed, and the monarch raised it from the furnace unharmed and white as snow.

"A miracle! a miracle!" they all exclaimed.

"No, good friends," answered the king; "this cloth is woven of a substance which fire purifies, but cannot destroy. It was known to the Greeks, who named it Asbestos, meaning, unchanged by fire; and an Italian writer, who had lived hundreds of years before our time, speaks of a cloth made from some vegetable product which could not be injured by heat. Another mentioned, with apparent sincerity, that it was manufactured 'from the hair of certain rats that lived in volcanoes.' We read, also, that the marvellous cloth was used to wrap the dead before placing them on the funeral pile, that their ashes might be gathered separate from those of the wood."

Thus spoke the mighty Emperor for the instruction and edification of his guests.

While Charlemagne did not quite partake of the wild fancies of the Southern nations, it is not probable that he had a clear idea of the real structure of this mysterious substance. As the time advanced, it was fully understood; and now that it has become of practical use, we cannot glance at a newspaper without seeing the advertisement, "Asbestos Materials."

Asbestos is a fibrous variety of a dark-coloured rock resembling iron ore; this is known by the name of hornblende. Pyroxene, another mineral, also assumes this appearance, but not so often as the former.

We cannot understand how one of the toughest stones can be transformed into a substance as soft, flexible and white as floss silk; neither can we comprehend how the sparkling diamond is produced from charcoal. Yet we must accept these facts and try to learn all about them.

When the hard rock took this beautiful form, it was called by the Greeks amianthus, meaning undefiled, in reference to the ease of cleansing it by fire. This name is now used to distinguish it from the coarser and more impure varieties known as asbestos. It occurs in narrow seams in the rock, and is occasionally found in fibres two-thirds of a yard long. These have a rich satin lustre, and the slender filaments can easily be separated one from the other. A single one, if thrown into the fire, changes into a drop of enamelled glass, while a quantity can be heated without producing any change.

The silk-like appearance of amianthus gave to some ingenious ladies the thought of carding, spinning and weaving it into cloth of different degrees of fineness. Purses, gloves, caps, handkerchiefs and napkins were made of it, and sometimes articles were knitted from the soft, exquisite thread. The inhabitants of the Pyrenees wore girdles made of this substance, mingled with silver, which they

esteemed not only for their beauty, but for some mysterious charm which they were thought to possess.

When Napoleon went to battle he wore a shirt made of amianthus, which he easily cleansed by throwing it into the fire. In France and Bohemia firemen's clothes and gloves for handling hot iron were made from it. The Russians have also attempted the manufacture of incombustible paper. At one time it was hoped that an important branch of industry might be established for the manufacture of this delicate and useful fabric; but the rarity of amianthus and the difficulty of carding it into durable thread, in consequence of its brittleness, have caused them now to be regarded only as curiosities.

Asbestos, besides being of a coarser texture than amianthus, differs from it in colour. The latter is a creamy white, while the former is brown, green and grayish white. It sometimes occurs in thin interlaced sheets between the cracks and fissures of rocks, and feels something like kid. It is then known as mountain leather; when in thicker masses, it is called mountain cork, referring to its elasticity. It is also found very hard and compact, and then receives the name of ligniform asbestos, from its resemblance to petrified wood.

Asbestos is found in many parts of Europe and various localities in the United States, Staten Island, N.Y., especially yielding large quantities. It is now mined and transported to factories, where it is assorted, cleaned and prepared for the various purposes for which it is used.

It is made into paints of different colours, which are used to protect surfaces exposed to heat or water. Steam pipes and boilers are covered with some preparation of it that prevents the escape of steam; it is also very valuable as packing in the joints of machinery, and is extensively used in the manufacture of fire-proof roofing and flooring.

Chemists find it very useful as a medium for straining acids, which do not affect this substance.

Asbestos steps aside from its useful career to surprise us by its appearance in one of the precious stones. The peculiar floating light in the gem known as cat-eye is due to filaments of asbestos passing through a greenish-gray chalcidony. In the east it is much worn as an amulet, because it is imagined to have the power of enriching the wearer.

This is a slight illustration of the manner in which the apparently useless objects in nature may become of service and ornament to man.

DOING GOOD.

EMMA GRAY, on her way to school, passed a little boy whose hand was through the railings of a gentleman's front garden, trying to pick a flower.

"O little boy!" said Emma kindly, "are you not taking that without leave?"

"Nobody sees me," answered the little boy.

"Somebody sees you from the blue sky," answered Emma. "God says we must not take what does not belong to us without leave; and you will grieve Him if you do so."

"Shall I?" said he; "then I won't."

He drew back his hand and went away. One way of doing good is to prevent others from doing wrong.

CHRIST PLEADING WITH THE SOUL.

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock."—Rev III 20.

"Lo! I am waiting, waiting,
And patient evermore;
I knock, and still I suppliant stand
Before thy fast-closed door;
Knocking with a wounded hand,
Hands wounded by thy sin.
Child of My unchanging love,
Fain would I enter in."

"No room, no room have I for Thee,
My soul is full of care:
A weary life of toil and strife
Is mine—no rest, no prayer,
There is no silence in my heart;
Amid its strife and din
I could not hear Thy gentle voice,
Thou canst not enter in."

"O weary one! dost thou not know
The soul that harbours Me
Hath rest in toil and peace in strife,
From care not wholly free?
It still can feel the burden light,
And washed from guilt and sin,
The heart hath joy. Child of My love,
Wilt thou not let Me in?"

"I will, and will not: doubts and fears
Are struggling in my heart;
I cannot bid Thee welcome yet,
I will not say depart.
The shades of night are deepening round,
But darker yet within
My sinful soul. All fair and pure,
How canst Thou enter in?"

"O doubting heart! I am 'the Light,'
Where'er I enter in,
My presence makes it pure and bright,
Though red as blood thy sin;
Though stain'd with deepest guilt thy soul,
Pure as the drifted snow
My blood can wash it. Child of My love,
Thou wilt not let Me go?"

A HAPPY SEASON.

AN intelligent, pious teacher, is a great blessing. Young people and children so favored, should resolve to make the best of their special advantages, and improve them, ere they pass away. Study the lesson at home, and, provided there are many points in which you feel interested, but which have not been brought out by your teacher, call attention thereto. Your teacher will be pleased and greatly encouraged, and the class will be benefited by the answers to your questions. Every scholar should strive to make the school session a good, happy season. The following will be a great help:

1. Be sure you are in your place before the exercises commence.

2. Heartily join in the singing exercises, and conduct yourself with all seriousness during prayer.

3. Be ready to recite your verses correctly.

4. During the time allowed for the study of the lesson, show constant attention, and promptly answer any questions proposed.

5. By your example, teach others the good and the right way.

Thus doing, you will show that you appreciate the kindness of your teacher and the officers of the school, and you will also have the testimony of an approving conscience, without which there can be no real happiness.

WHO WAS HE?

WHAT man was guilty of arrogance and presumption, and punished in a most unusual manner?

2. He complained of a servant of God.

3. He led many into sin and two others perished with him.

4. They came suddenly to their end; but neither by fire, flood, nor the sword, nor by famine nor pestilence. They were neither hung nor shot. How did they die?

5. His children were spared, but most of his confederates punished, though in a way different from himself.

6. His fate is cited as a warning, in the New Testament.

7. A whole chapter is given to this narration.

A BEAUTIFUL answer was once given by a little girl in one of the London Homes for the Destitute. The question was asked, why Jesus is called an "unspeakable gift." There was silence for awhile, and then, with trembling voice, this dear child said, "Because He is so precious that no one can tell all His preciousness."

A GENTLEMAN visited an unhappy man in jail awaiting his trial. "Sir," said the prisoner, "I had a good education. My street education ruined me. I used to slip out of the house and go off with the boys in the street. In the street I learned to lounge; in the street I learned to swear; in the street I learned to smoke; in the street I learned to gamble; in the street I learned to pilfer and to do all evil. O, sir, it is in the street that the devil lurks to work the ruin of the young."

A LITTLE boy, the son of an artisan, who resides in one of the villages in the neighbourhood of Halifax, was one day amusing himself with bowling a round stone—a very common mode of amusement among the juveniles in that locality—when it chanced to strike against the edge of a slightly elevated flag in front of some cottage, bounded against a window and broke a pane of glass. The tenant, a labouring man, who happened to be then in the house, immediately ran out, and seeing no one near but the boy, asked him who had broken the window. "I did," answered the little fellow, "and I will pay for it," and then he told how it happened. The man was, for a short time, speechless with astonishment at the fearless honesty of the boy, and recovering himself, he said, "but you shall not pay for the window, for, as you have neither run away nor told me a lie to save yourself, I will pay one half of the expenses;" and so he did. Boys, always be truthful.

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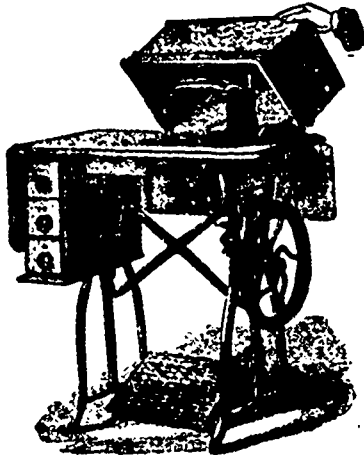
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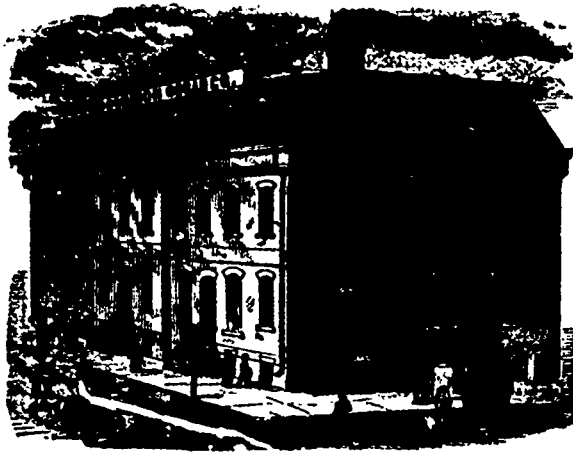
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INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION. (No. 235.)
 PHILADELPHIA, 1876.

The United States Centennial Commission has examined the report of the Judges, and accepted the following reasons, and decreed an award in conformity therewith.
 PHILADELPHIA, December 5th, 1876.

REPORT ON AWARDS.

Product, REED ORGANS. Name and address of Exhibitor, DOMINION ORGAN CO., Bowmanville, Canada.

The undersigned, having examined the product herein described, respectfully recommends the same to the United States Centennial Commission for Award, for the following reasons, viz:—
 "Because they have produced in their instruments a pure and satisfying tone, by their method of voicing, and have a simple and efficient stop-action, with satisfying musical combinations, an elastic touch, and good general workmanship."

H. K. OLIVER, *Signature of the Judge.*

APPROVAL OF GROUP JUDGES.

J. SCHNEIDMAYER, WILLIAM THOMPSON, E. LEVASSEUR, JAMES C. WATSON, ED. FAVRE [PERRET] JOSEPH HENRY, GEO. F. BRISTOW, J. E. HILGARD, P. F. KUKA, F. A. P. BARNARD
 A true copy of the Record. FRANCIS A. WALKER, *Chief of the Bureau of Awards.*
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