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THE
CANADIAN PRESBYTER.

DECEMBER, 1857.

DESIDERATA IN MINISTERIAL EDUCATION.

Two articles have already appeared in this Magazine on the necessity and value of a liberal ministerial education. We cannot believe that any farther argument on these points is required. It is the universal desire of the Presbyterian Church to possess a learned as well as a godly ministry, and to raise rather than reduce the standard of education for the sacred office.

But is the present course of education satisfactory in its results? Is there such an adaptation of the preparatory studies to the actual exigencies of ministerial duty, as one might expect to find in this practical age? And, as a consequence, is it usual that the young men who issue from theological halls, give high satisfaction to the Presbyteries of the Church, or meet the expectations of our intelligent people? Now we are far from any thought of disparaging our own ministerial ranks as compared with those of other Churches. From such a comparison we might have nothing to fear; but it is vain to content ourselves with the poor reflection that our Church is as well provided as other Churches, and shut our eyes to the amendments that the present system of education may be proved to require. Granted, that unreasonable expectations are sometimes put forth, and by persons who are the least distinguished for liberality in ministerial support. We offer no excuse for people who provide for the minister of religion the income of a common mechanic, or of a subordinate clerk, and yet expect to obtain the services of a highly educated man. But, while there is no apology for unreasonable demands, and while the people are admonished to attend to their duty in providing for the ministry a more equitable support; surely at the same time heed should be taken to the best means of providing for the people a well-taught and well-bred, as well as active and pious ministry. It may not be a pleasant fact, but fact it is, that both in the mother country and in Canada, many of the young preachers who appear are unwelcome to the more intelligent congregations, and much difficulty is experienced in filling up the more important pastoral charges, when they become vacant.

Now it is quite possible to ask too much of education. Unless there be a sufficient ground work in the mind and breast of the student, unless there be intellect and judgment to *educate* and inform, the most admirably conducted College can effect very little. Colleges cannot give piety, which is confessedly the fundamental qualification for the Christian ministry. Neither can they impart, though they improve, native vigor of mind, obviously a great requisite in any one who is called to address, instruct, and influence the minds of others. We think it no more than just to say that the candidates for the Presbyterian ministry in the present day are well reported of for piety: but we do not find the estimate of their intellectual strength so high. It will scarcely be disputed that many weak, tame, and unproductive minds go with excellent motives to Theological Classes, and ultimately find their way into pulpits. This we may deplore, but we cannot justly cast the blame on Professors or Colleges, for their functions are to educate mind where it is, not to impart it where it is not.

The present education given to Theological students in the institutions of Colonial Presbyterianism is after the Scottish ideal and plan. It amounts to this,—a knowledge (generally limited) of the Latin, Greek, and Hebrew languages, an acquaintance (also limited) with some of the physical sciences, a more careful study of metaphysics and ethics, and a three years' course of instruction in historical, exegetical, and dogmatic theology. Besides various essays and other class exercises in writing, the student is required to prepare five discourses, termed the Homily, Lecture, Exegesis, (in Latin,) Critical Exercise, and Popular Sermon, all of which are read before his Professor and class-fellows, and subjected to criticism. Now this is much, and yet, we are convinced, it by no means constitutes a sufficient education for the ministry. It may form sound theologians, and yet egregiously fail in preparing accomplished and competent preachers and pastors. We think it right to illustrate our meaning by mentioning some of our desiderata, without which no ministerial education in our humble judgment can be considered complete.

1. *A thorough knowledge of modern language and literature.* Most heartily we recognise the worth of the old theology, and advocate the study of the old divines, both Continental and British. But with equal heartiness we deprecate the continuance in our time of the scholastic forms and cumbrous style in which so much of the old theology is expressed. It is surely possible and desirable to give to modern ears the theology of Owen and Boston in the language of the present day. Yet few preachers, educated after the Scottish fashion, are able to do this. Familiar with old books, they seem unconsciously to have formed a cumbrous antiquated style, which gives to their sermons a dull and technical character, wearisome to the alert and impatient minds of the present generation. We know no cure for this but a wider range of reading in modern literature, especially in the works of the best living masters of the English tongue. One may learn from them to combine with the sobriety and gravity which pulpit themes demand, something of the direct, terse, and vivid style which engages the attention of the popular mind. It is quite a mistake to suppose that a modern style is an index of imperfect acquaintance with the old divines. They give

most honor to those divines, who, having abstracted their sense from their language, know how to present the glorious doctrines of the 16th and 17th centuries, in the appropriate phraseology of the 19th. Thus McCheyne translated into this century the fervor of Rutherford and Baxter. Ryle reproduces the venerable theology of Jewel, and Usher, and Leighton, in the compact crisp sentences that suit the present time. Guthrie gives a more sound divinity than Jeremy Taylor, with an almost equal copiousness and beauty of illustration, and yet without that air of pedantry which mars, to modern taste, the charms of the famed "Shakspeare of the pulpit." And James Hamilton, both in his sermons and in his writings, has shown how to present the results of a thorough familiarity with the old Anglican and Puritan authors, in a style of singular freshness and adaptation to our own times. Indeed, in the work now issuing under his hand, "Our Christian Classics," Dr. Hamilton affords as good a specimen as can be desired of the hearty appreciation of old divinity, by one who is completely unfettered by antiquated theological forms. But this enviable attainment he has not reached without giving to his mind a literary range and culture, very much wider than is commonly aimed at by students, or found even among prominent ministers of the Church.

We think it no unreasonable suggestion that aspirants to the ministry in the present day should be well versed in the powers and treasures of their own English language; and should be encouraged to familiarise themselves also with French, and with the great homiletic models in that language,—models at least of rhetorical perfection. The study of rhetoric and the belles lettres has been most unhappily neglected among us, and a reformation cannot begin too soon.

Apart from the higher consideration of commending the Gospel, an improved literary style in the pulpit, not tawdry and ambitious, but lucid and terse, might do great service in correcting and purifying the language of the people. We look to this as one of the best means of discouraging that un-English 'lingo,' which threatens to overrun Canada, as it has already the United States. This is of course quite a subordinate use of the pulpit, but it is a use. As one has well observed,—“The sermons of a parish minister are the standard of literature to many in his society; his style is the model for their conversation and writing; his provincial and outlandish terms they adopt and circulate; and his mode of thinking is imitated by the school teacher and the mother, the merchant and the mechanic. You can see the effects of his chaste or rude style in the language of the ploughboy and the small talk of the nursery. He has more frequent communings than other literary men with the mass of the people, with those middling portions of society from which influence works both upward and downward; and he is thus a guardian of the language and the reading of the most sedate classes. His influence on the popular vocabulary is indeed overlooked, and is not always the same; but he often virtually stands at the parish gate to let in one book and keep out another; to admit certain words and to exclude certain phrases, and to introduce or discard barbarisms, solecisms, impropriety and looseness of speech.”

It is peculiarly difficult for students, whose native tongue is Gaelic, to acquire a real mastery of good English. From the constitution of their minds, and the custom of using very strong expressions in the Gaelic, they are apt to use English phrases, not only forcible, but rude and gruff to English ears. Yet, with attention to our language, as it is written by the best authors, and spoken in good society, they are quite able to become excellent and eloquent English preachers. But so long as the Gaelic language is required in the pulpit, why is it ignored at the College? Is it not possible to provide some instruction for "Gaelic students" in the best use of their mother tongue, which is reported to have its own classic beauties, as truly as the English, the Italian, or the French?

2. *The study of the theory and practice of Scriptural Exposition.* It is not the least glory of Scottish Presbyterianism, that it has ever cherished the best and most ancient mode of preaching,—discoursing, not on a detached sentence or clause, but on a comprehensive paragraph of the Word of God. So far as we are aware, intelligent congregations of Colonial Presbyterians are of the same mind with their ancestors, and set a high value on pointed and pithy exposition. Yet we doubt if the aspirants to the ministry know the importance of this sacred art, or make any sufficient efforts to acquire facility therein. Doubtless each composes a formal lecture for the approval of the theological Professor, and may profit by the criticism to which it is subjected. But we desiderate more than this—a careful training in the best modes of brief comprehensive exposition, suited to edify the 'week night' meetings of a congregation. It would certainly be more useful to a young minister to know how to expound a psalm with readiness and point, in a lecture of twenty-five minutes' duration, than to be able to write the best Homily or Exegesis that was ever read in a divinity hall. We may add that the gifts of students might be far more profitably employed in such expository efforts as we now indicate, than in the premature sermonising on texts in which some have been allowed to engage, to the utter detriment of their education.

3. *A better elocution.* There is reason in the popular demand for this. It is quite vain to bid men be content, because the matter of a sermon is good. All the more shameful to the preacher, and unfair to the hearers, that matter so good should be marred and obscured by an uncouth or monotonous elocution!

It is true that education cannot impart the gift of public speaking to those who have it not. But dull reading, mispronunciations, and ungainly gestures may surely be corrected. For this, however, a few months under an ordinary elocution master will not suffice. Indeed, some have so learned elocution as to lose their natural manner, and replace it by a mincing mannerism that is odious to all men of sense. What we desire is, that young men should be trained to avoid errors, and correct inelegancies in speech or gesture, that their natural and appropriate manner may have its just effect. If this is done, we ask no more from elocution classes; let every man then speak out in the way that best expresses his mind, and quit himself as a man, and a man in earnest. One preaches best by reading from his manuscript; another, by speaking memoriter a written

sermon; a third, by reading in part from notes, and in part extemporising in the pulpit. Let each plan be freely followed by the preacher whom it best suits, and followed with the appropriate elocution, more or less bold and vivid, as the style of address is more or less direct. Only let the preacher be in earnest, as one who seeks not only to instruct but to move and persuade, to 'compel' his fellow men 'to come in' to the great act of salvation.

4. *An education in worship as well as in doctrine.* The present routine of theological training seems to proceed on the assumption, that ministers must learn to preach, and no more. But what of public prayer and praise?

We take for granted, that the important matter of prayer in the public assembly of worshippers is not overlooked in the counsels addressed to theological students. But is this enough? At a time when no small dissatisfaction with the ordinary conduct of free prayer is expressed, and there is even a movement in favor of a Presbyterian liturgy, to remedy the defects of the present system, ought not students to be carefully instructed in the proper theory and practice of public ministerial prayer, its order, duration, and essential elements? In so saying, we do not forget, that the Lord only can teach how to pray. But that ordering of our desires and words, for which we now plead, is perfectly consistent with simple and entire dependence on the Spirit of grace and supplications.

The education of the ministry in the matter of public praise, involving the history, principles and practice of sacred music, has been long and utterly neglected. Accordingly the Presbyterian minister calls on the people to sing to the praise of God, but leaves them without any further care, on his part, to perform their psalmody as they please. Indeed his advice on the subject would be of little value, so long as he himself had not cultivated a taste for sacred music and song.

We may in a separate article treat of the state of psalmody in our Churches, and the need of a thorough reform. Meantime we simply express our conviction, that this very important and delightful part of Divine service could never have fallen to be performed in the deplorable way that is so common, had the ministers of the Church understood the subject, and interested themselves in the training of the worshipping assembly to sing. We hold the precentor to be only the delegate of the minister for the better management of this department of worship, while the minister himself is ultimately responsible for the entire conduct of worship in the Church, as truly as he is for the entire strain of doctrine that is inculcated there. The Priests of the Church of Rome are all carefully trained in ecclesiastical music. The Protestant ministers on the Continent of Europe are also in general versant in the theory and practice of music, and their congregational singing is sweet and harmonious. Why should not the aspirants to our Canadian Presbyterian ministry be taught the elements at least of sacred music, and have their tastes formed on the fine old ecclesiastical styles, so different from the jingling secular airs that seem to have been imported into the church from the street and the concert room, if not from the boards of the opera house?

5. *A measure of acquaintance with Church law and policy.* It is surely not enough that young men, in preparation for the ministerial office, hear a few lectures on the principles of Church Government, with a sketch of the argument held by Presbyterians against diocesan Episcopacy, and congregational Independency. As a general rule, our students in Canada, so soon as their College course is completed, pass very rapidly through the intermediate state of probationers, are ordained as pastors, and take their seats in Session, Presbytery, and Synod. How many of them, when they assume their seats, have any sufficient knowledge of law and polity? We do not wish to judge our brethren; but we are sure that many of the younger ministers in Canada have found themselves called on to decide questions of ecclesiastical right and policy, with a most slender knowledge of principles and precedents in the case. It is no answer to say, that the senior ministers, educated in Scotland and Ireland, never received the training which we desiderate. We write in favour of "reform and progress." Our wish is to see the rising race of ministers equipped with sufficient knowledge for the proper discharge of their duties as rulers and administrators in the house of Christ. We therefore suggest, that they should be informed of the course of Church legislation in our own and other ecclesiastical communities, and especially be carefully instructed in the teaching of Scripture respecting the office-bearers of the Church, and in the powers, limits, practice, and appropriate functions of our ecclesiastical courts.

We trust that no one will be so unreasonable as to attribute to this article an unkind or censorious spirit. We have written from no other motive than an unfeigned desire to do service to the great cause of ministerial education, which affects so intimately all the interests of our Church, and which it is necessary to review in the light both of past experience and of present wants. That our article omits several momentous 'desiderata,' we are perfectly aware. We have thought it superfluous to expatiate on the need of godly sincerity, pure motives, prayerful habits, and a competent acquaintance with the recognised branches of theological study; because these needs, in view of the evangelic ministry, are known and admitted on every side. Our object has been to mention a few points, that are not so generally recognised, and yet the neglect of which may greatly defeat in a modern congregation, the efforts and influence even of a sincerely pious and learned ministry. ✕

THE TWENTY-THIRD CHAPTER OF THE CONFESSION OF FAITH.

Perplexing, unfortunate chapter! By what perversity of human will hast thou been placed in so conspicuous a niche in the Church of the living God? What controversies, confusions, disruptions, schisms, weepings and wailings amongst brethren in the Church thou hast caused, let the world bear witness for these three hundred years past at least! For thy sake the Church of our fathers has like Job sat upon ashes and bemoaned her sad and desolate

condition. Contemplating these things, who can look upon this *twenty-third* chapter with complacency? If it had not been there, would the Church of Scotland have submitted to the wicked and revolutionary act of Queen, Anne anent patronage? Would the feuds of Burgher and Anti-Burgher New Light and Old Light, Cameronian or Covenanter ever have disfigured the page of our protestant Church history? Would we have had to wage that fierce and relentless seven years controversy on the voluntary question, the wounds of which are not yet healed? Would we now, but for th. misbegotten chapter, have had the "ten years conflict," with its final explosion of '43 to lament? Or, would the Scotch presbyterian family be separated as at this day into three hostile camps, each conflicting with the other both at home and abroad? No, we believe that these things would have had no existence if this unfortunate *Article* had never been hatched in the polemical brain of the seventeenth century. This is the root of bitterness, whose branches have cast a deadly night shade over the Churches, and which refuse to be torn up or cut down, that a clearance may be effected for the growth of the peaceable fruits of righteousness. Perhaps some of our respected readers will be thinking, if not saying, that we are writing rank blasphemy against the time-honored and immaculate Westminster Standards; and will tell us that these reverend and revered Symbols should meet with more politeness and respect at the hands of the *Canadian Presbyter*. But, asking pardon of any tender Presbyterian whose feelings we may have hurt, let us say in defence that we have only been expressing those feelings which a quiet and philosophic meditation on the causes of things ecclesiastical have engendered.

We are not, let it be observed, saying anything good or bad of the chapter itself, but are only noting that it has been the occasion, if not the cause, of a world of mischief in this our presbyterian Church. Of course we will not dispute with those who, learned in the dry-as-dust histories of the past three hundred years, will tell us that there are other causes from which the evils deplored have sprung. Granting much, if not all, that they may say, we must still assert that this article of the Church's faith anent civil Governments and her relation to them has been the fruitful cause of nine-tenths of the internal, if not also of the external calamities with which she has been afflicted. We might illustrate this point by a long array of historical facts, but we deem it sufficient to call the attention of the thoughtful and intelligent to it, that they may suck from it such lessons of wisdom as the present times demand.

Much, it is true, may be said in defence of this imperial chapter. It may, for example, be alleged that the Church is bound to testify for the supremacy of Christ in the governments of the world—that the duty of the civil magistrate is a doctrine of scripture and as such should be inscribed in her sacred symbols,—that the Church as the teacher of the world, should, among other things, testify what the King of kings requireth at the hands of the State;—that while the Church should according to its statutes submit herself as part of the civil society to the "powers that be," "rendering unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's," yet she should on the other hand distinctly declare what the world or the State should do for and on behalf of the Church or the true religion. All these statements appear perfectly reasonable. No christian man will in the *abstract* take any exception to them. Again it may be urged in defence, that the protestant Churches have all, more or less, credenda concerning the duties of the civil magistrate, and that the fathers of Westminster in this, as in most other matters, followed the example of the ancients and acted in harmony with the universal protestant consciousness of the age in which they lived. Had we been in their place we should probably have joined in their labours, and acquiesced in their canons and decrees. All this is true.

But the wisdom of any age, even the wisest that the world has seen, is not the wisdom of all time. Truth, it is certain, never changes,—it is ever truth, but it is equally certain that the position of one truth to another, or to the body of known truth may, and does, change as much as the fragments of coloured glass in the Kaleidoscope. The truth that must be put in the front rank of one time, may be safely retired into the rear of another—that which must in one circumstance be proclaimed on the housetop as with the voice of a trumpet, may under another be left to repose in silence, or be only softly whispered as a western breeze on a summer's day. It will not always suit to be firing loud artillery—it is folly to bombard when the enemy has fled. Infantry may sometimes be better than the fierce tread or swift charge of the horsemen. The pipe of peace is sometime more appropriate than the tocsin of war. So we say of the materials of the christian faith. The Church need not like tipsy Alexander be ever fighting her battles o'er again, and ever and anon be slaying the slain. True it is that the slain may live again, but when they shew signs of life and put on flesh it will then be time enough to buckle on the old armor and take up the old weapons. It is manifestly quixotic to be armed cap-a-pie in times of smiling peace, and to be looking out rusty defences when Providence calls us to wield the sickle and to gather in the harvest.

We may, therefore, be permitted to survey the position which the fathers, in their circumstances, were driven to assume, and to consider whether we might not in our day somewhat improve upon their ecclesiastical attitude. The *form of the Confession* is not surely so sacred as that we may not touch it—infallibility has never been claimed for its statements of truth. While we would not heedlessly tamper with the Standards any more than we would with the foundations of our house—still if the foundations need mending we would not hesitate to alter and mend, if by so doing we might strengthen and perpetuate the fabric. In the same way we are bound, as a sacred duty, to see to the character of our ecclesiastical Symbols. If certain emendations would strengthen the fabric and place us in a more christian position in relation to the general body of believers, why should we not make them? This general duty none, we are persuaded, will deny; it is only when we come to specify the points, that debates will arise. Then we may differ as to whether any *Article* needs alteration, or whether the Church should alter its attitude towards other Churches or other believers. It is to the consideration of this matter that we are coming, only in the meantime we protest against its being supposed that we are tampering with the Standards, or that we may not be permitted freely to discuss their terms and propositions.

What, we would ask, is the relation of the doctrine of this *twenty-third* chapter to the general doctrines of the christian Church? Is it of the number that is essential to her christian character, and without which she would cease to be christian? No, certainly! Does it belong to those that pertain to the foundations and elements of the christian faith, ignorance in regard to which, would be a hindrance to spiritual progress? No, certainly! Does it, further, pertain to those necessary developments of christian doctrine concerning which the Church is bound to testify in opposition to the natural principles of the unregenerate heart? We trow not! It has not, let it be observed, been in reference to the ungodly or to the pagan that the Church has been called upon to make *a?* the testimony of this chapter. Not until she comes into the professedly christian period of European history do we find questions relating to the civil magistrate attracting special attention. But when a race of professedly christian kings and princes arose, it was felt to be necessary to declare that civil governments were of God—that there were things that belonged to Cæsar—that civil governments

were necessary to the welfare of mankind. Not, however, until the Church advances into the sixteenth century was it called upon in opposition to Anabaptists and Mennonists, to declare further that a christian might lawfully be a magistrate—might administer the wholesome laws of the commonwealth, and wage war upon just and necessary occasions. This is the length to which the venerable Augsburg Confession reaches—but here it stops. It attempts no further definition of questions of political economy. If we had only this Confession of Melancthon and the early reformers, “voluntary” debates would not vex us now. But, alas! as ages rolled on, new perplexities arose. Protestant princes began to assume and to usurp the powers of the pope. Not contented with their own sword they must snatch Peter’s from his hands; and Peter’s two keys from his girdle. Then began a new contest. Or rather then was revived an old contest with different factors. Formerly it was the pope who contended with the prince for the Church’s prerogatives, now it is the people against both pope and prince. When the pope was driven out of Britain, instead of the Church obtaining freedom from that old usurpation, she had still to assert her inalienable rights against the more objectionable usurpations of the Crown. This was a bloody conflict in which she engaged. It made more martyrs in Scotland and England than their battles with the pope. It was the Church’s duty then to assert the crown rights of her Lord against the treason of earthly monarchs, and hence to declare as we have it in the *third* clause of our *Chapter*, that the state had no right of administration or government in the kingdom of God,—that it may only *take order* concerning certain matters *in and about the Church*. This last declaration has, however, been long the bone of contention. The language in which it is couched in the Confession is evidently that of compromise—the terms are the most guarded possible. On the one hand it puts the magistrate out of the Church as having no office therein; on the other it admits into the Church both his hand and his head to “*settle, administer and observe.*” So cautiously, besides, is this whole *third* clause framed and pieced, like a piece of curious mosaic, that it equally meets the antagonistic views of the Crown and the Church—both are pleased with the pattern. The Church meanwhile thinks she has fixed the king and barred him out of her sacred precincts. The king also thinks that his State craft has to some extent fixed the Church, and that after all the “barrings” he may have his finger in the pie-ecclesiastical, and like little Jack Horner of nursery notoriety, “Put in his thumb and pull out a plum and say what a good boy am I.” The Church doubtless has always interpreted this clause to its *own advantage*—put upon it, we will not say a non-natural sense, but a most favourable construction. On the other hand as was seen in ’43, the State has, with professions of reason and justice, taken an interpretation most advantageous to *itself*, and on the ground of the Confession as well as on the general principles of State supremacy which they deemed its language to sanction, did claim a right to interfere in, or to *take order* concerning ecclesiastical administration. Is it not unfortunate to have to do with such a clause as this which, like the head of Janus, faces two ways? With a clear conscience, as a Free Church, we can interpret it right for ourselves, but this interpretation, it must be allowed, is different from that which our fathers and the State put upon it. These former deemed that the magistrate was doing wrong, and acting contrary to the Covenanted Confession, in not putting down, Brownists, Anabaptists, Arminians, Quakers, &c.; and against such national dereliction of duty as the tolerating of these sects they solemnly testified. Now *we* have shifted our ground. We hold that the magistrate should tolerate all and persecute none. They made a nice distinction between magisterial powers *circa sacra*, or *about* the Church, and powers *in sacris* or *in* the Church, and drew the line of separation between the one and the other at a point which we think lies *within* the Church and

touches upon her spiritual functions. We are greatly divided on this whole question, and, for the most part, in one form or another limit the magistrate's power *circa sacra* to that of simply protecting the Church in the discharge of her spiritual duties; we also, more strenuously than our fathers, resist the magistrate's entrance within even the shadows of the spiritual temple.

From this review it will appear, that the *third* clause of the *twenty-third* chapter is the latest-born of the Church's credenda,—that it is related only in the most remote degree to that system of doctrine which the Christian consciousness recognises as essential to the character of a Christian Church. The Church existed long without it. The noble Augsburg Confession—the Symbol of German Protestantism—contains no such clause. In this matter, as in many others, Luther was much in advance of the age in which he lived. “Do you say,” wrote he, “the civil magistrate should indeed not force men to believe, but *only to interfere in order that the people be not led away by false doctrine? and how could heretics otherwise be put down?*” I answer, to counteract heresy is the business of ministers, not of the civil rulers. The word of God must here contend: if this proves unavailing, neither can civil magistrates remedy the evil, though they should deluge the earth with blood. Heresy is an intellectual thing, that cannot be hewn by the sword nor burned with fire nor drowned with water: the word of God alone can subdue it.” Had such just and noble opinions taken a firmer hold of the Reformed Churches, it had been well for Christendom at this day. But other counsels prevailed; and strange to say, the Calvinistic Churches, while they suffered most grievously from the persecution of princes, were yet the most strenuous defenders of their prerogatives in regard to the first table of the Divine Law. The Confession of Paris of 1559 expressly admits the King's supremacy in many if not in all sacred things, so too does the *First Book of Discipline* of Knox and the Reformed Church of Scotland, ratified and enacted in the year 1581; and when we come to the Assembly at Westminster of 1643 we find the same admission of the magistrate's powers in regard to heresies and schisms. The Church of Scotland, it is true, in the ratifying Act of 1647, modifies somewhat the statement of the *twenty-third* and *thirty-first* chapters, but only, be it observed, in regard to the magistrates power in the calling of ecclesiastical Synods, which they limit, as they did in the Book of Discipline of 1581, as only applicable to “Kirks not settled or constituted in point of government,” or to times “when the kirk is corrupted and all things out of order.” Notwithstanding this sagacious exception to the powers of the magistrate, the thorn in the flesh still remained; and it is only by the most ingenious opiates and “long reasonings” that any portion of the Presbyterian Church can tolerate these clauses, or submit to the powers of the civil magistrate which they are understood to describe.

Curious it is to note the change of sentiment which has gradually crept into the Protestant Churches generally, and the Presbyterian especially, in regard to civil interference *with* or *in* sacred things; curious also to note the different way and form in which this change manifests itself. It is evident that the Revolution settlement of 1688 paved the way for, if it did not introduce, freer notions of civil and religious liberty than before prevailed. Remnants of the old regime however remained as fungi upon the new ideas. The final triumph of religious liberty was reserved to the beginning of the nineteenth century, in the repeal of the notorious “Test Acts” and the political emancipation of Roman Catholics. Since these events the true liberty of the subject has been better understood and more firmly established in Britain, than it has been in any country or in any age. Englishmen of all creeds and professions in these days intelligently maintain the true principles of political jurisdiction. The idea of persecution for conscience' sake, or on account of religious belief, is repudiated

throughout the wide possessions of the British Crown. This change in public sentiment—for change it is—exhibits itself differently according to the different position of the several Church parties in the country. The national Churches, conservative by reason of their position, show their conversion to the principles of religious liberty, not by altering the old dogmata or resiling from the old “Acts and Testimonies,” but by a new *interpretation* of the Confession itself. They do with the *Articles* as biblical scholars now do with the Mosaic accounts of the creation,—interpret them in the light of modern knowledge. Again, those who are popularly called Dissenters in Scotland, less conservative, by reason of their freer position as detached from State connection, but still not altogether void of the conservative element, permit their office-bearers, in subscribing to the Confession, to make an exception in so far as it does not teach “compulsory or persecuting and intolerant principles.” They have seemingly not the courage to put their finger upon the persecuting or intolerant parts and say, “Out with them, blot them from the sacred symbols!” but, in a manner peculiarly Scotch, they cover the sore bit with the plaster of an ingenious abstraction. We are not finding fault with this procedure, far from it. In adopting this plan, we believe this Church did its best in the circumstances to escape from an awkward dilemma. Again, another section of the Presbyterian family, still more free than the former and less trammelled by ancient prescription, adopted a bolder expedient than these former:—the American Presbyterian Churches of all grades and names have applied at once the pruning-knife to the obtruding branches, and by a frank and clear emendation have rid their *Confession* of everything that could possibly be a pretext for the interference of the civil magistrate in spiritual or religious matters. The Confession of these Churches is thus brought into perfect accord with the general christian sentiment. Those who adopt it are not put to shifts and subterfuges, even to their wits’ end, to escape the *seeming* Erastianism of the *twenty-third* and *thirty-first* chapters. Strange to say, too, in the American Churches with this amended Confession, ministers of all the Scottish and Irish denominations of Presbyterians may be found working together, and advancing the kingdom of God in happy and united harmony. There the problem of union has been skillfully demonstrated. The salt waves of the Atlantic seem to have scoured away the acid of European dogmatism; and questions that in Scotland or Ireland would have excited “a conflict of ages,” have, without any the least breach of temper or skin, been quietly settled in America. Does not this clearly show that the christian consciousness does not demand for its satisfaction the *third* clause of the *twenty-third* chapter; and also that the Church may amend her *Articles* into conformity with her own avowed sentiments in a clear and honest way, without ceasing to be highly conservative in her presbyterian polity and Calvinistic doctrines? Now let us ask which of these ways of meeting the disharmony between the old and the new faith of the Church in regard to the civil magistrate, is the best. The *first* is commendable in the circumstances of the national Churches: it relieves them from a scandal, while it does not require them to shift their ground or in the least to impair the compact solidity of their ancient fabric. It may however be questioned whether this is the most honest and straightforward way of getting over the difficulty. It has the merit of being the easiest: it is unquestionably less difficult to invent and defend an *interpretation*, than to dig out or remould the peccant clauses. But it has this disadvantage, namely, that it hinders the union of Christ’s people; it is a thorn that ever irritates the body-politic of the Church, and places her out of harmony with a great company of believers. The *second* plan, or that adopted by the Dissenters, is certainly more explicit than the first; but while it relieves them from one difficulty, it leaves another, little less formidable, behind. It does not

specify the tainted parts, but casts a cloud of suspicion over the whole document, as if in every chapter some hideous "compulsory or persecuting and intolerant clause" "squat like a toad at the ear of Eve" might be lurking. It besides lays the Church open to the imputation of accepting in some form, and of cherishing in some degree, a persecuting or intolerant Confession. It has however the unquestionable merit of relieving tender consciences and of enlarging the sphere of the Church's christian sympathies; those whom the other Churches will not admit unless on unqualified subscription to the Confession, she can receive with open arms. The last or *third* plan, namely, that of the American Churches, is however the most honest and manly of the three. They speak what they think, without fear of man. Their Symbols need no qualification to meet the sentiment of the Universal Church in regard to religious liberty. They cherish no persecuting doctrines, but say "Out with them at once!" We greatly prefer this bold and open way. This is what one would do if a snake or a scorpion were to enter one's dwelling. We would not try to extract their stings or their venom, or to stroke them down and make believe that they were harmless, beautiful specimens of natural history. No! we would have them out at once, and the place swept and washed in which they lay. So would we with persecuting clauses in our Confession.

"What, then," the Orthodox reader will say in alarm,—“what are you driving at? Do *you* wish to mend and mangle our venerable Confession?—*you* who not so long ago wrote so well about the immaculate perfection of this ancient Church Symbol?” Don't be alarmed, we say in reply. The writer holds all the Confession, and he is not going to change his views one iota at present. He believes all that he has subscribed too, and much more. But, with many others, he does not think it necessary to put down all that he believes in the Confession. Had he his own way, he certainly would amend the twenty-third chapter; but as he does not expect to obtain all his preferences either in the Church or the world, he is content to accept of what he can get, and to recommend that which is at present both expedient and practicable. What is that? it may be asked. It is that we who put a *safe interpretation* upon the disputable and objectionable clauses of the Confession, and that our brethren of the United Presbyterian Church who permit subscription to the Confession with a general exception of persecuting doctrines, should agree at once, not to put the clauses out, no! no! some of the fathers would object to that, and people on this and the other side of the water would raise a cry about that, but to permit simple exception to be taken, if so it was desired by any office-bearer, to certain *specified* clauses, say; the *third* of the *twenty-third* and the *second* of the *thirty-first*, or any other bearing upon the same question. These sentences might be bracketed in *our* Confession, and easily described or referred to. By this plan and expedient all doubts would be removed, and every one would be permitted, in his own way, to give assent to the views which we all alike hold. None of us hold these clauses in any other sense than that in which the United Presbyterian Church holds them. We both agree in repudiating persecuting doctrines—in denying that the magistrate should take any other order for preserving the unity and peace of the Church than that of advice and counsel, or that he should suppress heresies in any other way than by giving no countenance to them and showing them no favor. We again both permit the magistrate to put down blasphemy and obscenity,—from different motives perhaps, but practically we agree. As to the magistrate's reforming or preventing "all abuses and corruptions in worship and discipline," we should like to know what Free Churchman, or what Churchman of any kind, even the most Moderate, would submit to such direct action or interference of the magistrate in these matters? To be sure we have the

saving clause that for the better effecting of these things he has power to call Synods. But he may not think that this is a "better" way of effecting these things than some other of his own devising. Witness the exercise of this power by the Crown of England at the present day in the Episcopal Church. Who does not know that the Government above all things dreads the assembling of a free Convocation in the Church of England, and that if any reforms are to be effected they will be effected only by the Parliament and the *Crown*? To talk of princes and governments looking after corruptions and abuses in worship or Church discipline, in these days of corrupt and godless administrations, is to talk of allying the church in a bond of subjection to the synagogue of Satan. We would like to see the faith of those who hold to this Article practically tested. We are confident it would fare no better than the faith of the seven Anglican Bishops in their favorite doctrine of passive obedience. When said doctrine began to pinch their own toes, they became the most disobedient of subjects. True it is we can *interpret* these clauses in a *safe* way, but why keep up a confession which we practically deny? Deal with other clauses and other doctrines as we are really dealing with this, and see what a mess will be made of our noble testimony for the truth of God. If a *safe interpretation* be permitted in regard to the *twenty-third*, why not also with the *tenth* or with any other chapter in the whole volume. The result of such a process would be the negation of the Confession altogether, and every man, notwithstanding subscription, would believe it just as he pleased. The safest and most upright as well as practicable way is to *specify the exceptional parts*, and say of them, or permit any one to say of them, "I except to the power of the civil magistrate therein described."

In the event of a union with the United Presbyterian Church, this is the settlement of the matter of "subscription" which we would advocate, and we cannot conceive what objection could reasonably be taken to it. It would be granting and avowing nothing that we do not now both grant and avow, and it would effectually harmonise the christian sentiment and Confession of the two bodies, so that henceforth the imperial ghost would be exorcised, and would no longer by his visitations and approaches affright the faithful sons of God. x

SKETCHES OF THE OLD MINISTERS OF EDINBURGH.

No. II.

In our youthful days, Dr. David Dickson, Senr., was minister of what was then called the New North Church. It was one of four churches which constituted the four wings of St. Giles' Cathedral, one of the few Roman Catholic places of worship that escaped the fury of the populace at the time of the Reformation. They were afterwards formed into two large Churches, one of them named West St. Giles, and the other retaining its former appellation, the High Church. But at the time of which we speak, there were four churches called respectively the High Church, Haddies' Hole, the Tolbooth, and the New North Church. It was in this last that Dr. Dickson officiated. He was much admired by his congregation, who were chiefly composed of the lower and middle classes. Indeed his discourses were full of fine old divinity, and were delivered with much unction. He generally spoke in the pulpit in a very high key, accompanied with a strong 'burr,' a peculiarity common to his family. This good man was extremely zealous in the discharge of his parochial duties, more especially in attending the sick and dying. Indeed he excelled in bringing the truths of the Gospel to bear

upon the particular cases and circumstances of all whom he was called to visit. It ought to be mentioned, that when he was a country minister he used to extend his labours to neighbouring parishes, which were either destitute of the means of grace, or cursed with moderatism. This is all the more to his honour, since in these days missionary labours were little thought of even by evangelical ministers.

Sir Henry Moncrieff of Wellwood, Baronet, or as he was commonly called "Sir Harry," was one of the ministers of the West Kirk. This Reverend Gentleman was possessed of a private fortune upon which he might have lived at ease, but he preferred to spend his life in the honorable office of a minister of the Gospel. My earliest recollection of Sir Harry is that of a grave gentleman in a single broasted-coat, and a shovel hat, with grey hairs reaching down to his shoulders, and a long gold-headed cane in his hand. Almost every person that met him, bowed to him as he passed. He was respected on account of his rank, as well as on account of his ministerial office. As an instance of this we may mention that the pulpit-beadle of the West Kirk being asked on one occasion who was going to preach, replied with marked emphasis,—“It's the Knecht himsel,”—the common people in those days making no distinction between a Baronet and a Knight. But sooth to say, it required no extraneous recommendation to go and hear “the Knecht himsel,” for his sermons were remarkable for good sense and sound doctrine, and were delivered in a manly and somewhat authoritative style. The tones of his voice were those of a preacher who did not crave a hearing, but demanded it as a right. The West Kirk being a collegiate charge, he was called upon to officiate once every Sabbath. The morning discourse was generally much longer than the afternoon one, and was usually divided into two parts, as was the custom in some of the other city churches also. For a number of years Sir Harry was in the habit of delivering his discourses, which were fully written out, and carefully committed to memory; but as he advanced in life, and his memory began to fail, he had recourse to reading his manuscript. On the morning on which he introduced this practice, having announced his text, he took his manuscript out of the Bible and held it up in the sight of his hearers, pointing it at the different quarters of the Church. This was characteristic of his scrupulously honest and straightforward mind. Sir Harry was particularly tenacious of the independence of the Presbyterian Church in its relation to the civil government, and declined to hold any service in the West Kirk, on occasion of the Royal mandate at the Princess Charlotte's funeral. In this he was followed by his friend Dr. Andrew Thomson, and their conduct gave grave offence to those who were in places of authority. Even those ministers who complied with the wishes of the Government did so with great reluctance. But while tenacious of the independence of the Church, Sir Harry was a staunch loyalist, and expressed both these feelings at times in a rather peculiar way, as the following instance may show:—“On the Sunday following the demise of George the III., says Lord Cockburn in his ‘memorials of his own times,’ Sir Harry Moncrieff, not satisfied with merely praying for the new sovereign generally, said in plain terms, giving the very date, that there might be no mistake about it.—‘And O Lord, stablish his heart in righteousness, and in the principles of the glorious revolution of sixteen hunder and echty echt!’ His influence in the church courts was very great, on account both of his intimate acquaintance with ecclesiastical law, and of the sagacity and wisdom of his counsels. Among the judicious measures which were adopted at his suggestion, special mention must be made of the “Ministers' Widows' Fund.” Of this Sir Harry may be called the sole originator, and it is an interesting fact that all the schemes adopted for the same benevolent purpose by other ecclesiastical bodies have been formed upon the basis of his plan. He was generous in his hospitality as became a gen-

tleman and a Christian minister, and nothing delighted him more than to have around his table the rising young men of Edinburgh. He was particularly fond of retiring to the quiet retreat of his paternal estate of Wellwood. There he and another great champion of the church, the late Dr. Andrew Thomson, used to meet for mutual consultation and fellowship, to discuss public affairs, and project articles for the "Christian Instructor." The General Assembly was the arena where Sir Harry greatly distinguished himself in pleading for the inalienable rights of the Christian people in the choice of their own ministers. And it required courage in the days to which we refer, when a high-handed and unprincipled patronage was exercised, to make any resistance to its imperious demands. Not that Sir Harry was altogether opposed to patronage, for he preferred a modified patronage to a system of pure popular election. But whenever any attempt was made, either by the crown, or by private patrons, to ignore the rights of the people, and to force on them an unacceptable presentee, he opposed it with all his might. Though he and his party were generally outnumbered in the vote, yet in the speeches which they delivered, important principles were evolved and freely discussed, which were ere long to issue in the celebrated "veto law," and the "non-intrusion" controversy. Sir Harry lived to the advanced age of eighty years, and came to his grave like a shock of corn in its season, in the year 1830. Dr. Thomson in his funeral sermon finely exclaimed,—“My Father, my Father, the chariots of Israel and the horsemen thereof!”

Dr. David Dickson, son of Dr. Dickson, Senr., of the New North Church, was one of the ministers of the West Kirk, and colleague to Sir Harry Moncrieff. They may be said to have had the largest parish in Edinburgh. Indeed almost all the new city parishes that were successively formed, were partitions off the West Kirk, which at one time extended over the whole of the new town, and a large portion of the old. But even after all the deductions which were made from it, it was still very large and populous, and the congregation that attended the parish church was more numerous than any other, filling the extensive area of the building, and two galleries one above the other. Such a charge involved a great deal of ministerial labor. Dr. Dickson might be seen issuing from the manse at 10 o'clock, A.M., with a huge green-silk umbrella under his arm, attired in old-fashioned clerical style, (the tow-wig and shovel hat excepted) walking at a quick pace, bustling along as one who had some important engagement in view. And indeed scarce a day passed in which Dr. Dickson had not to perform a multitude of duties, which would have overwhelmed any person not possessed of his physical strength as well as his intellectual activity. He adapted himself with great ease to the various requirements of pastoral work, whether it were to attend upon the sick and the afflicted, or to take part in some meeting of a religious society, to celebrate a marriage, or offer up prayer at a funeral. His sermons though verbose and not generally popular, were full of excellent matter, and carefully studied. He was admired by his own people as a deep divine, and was much beloved for his social qualities. He had an humble opinion of his own talents as a preacher. On one occasion when asked to preach in behalf of some benevolent object, he frankly answered,—“I would gladly undertake to advocate the cause, but ye ken, I'm no' very pop'lar.” Although “no' very pop'lar himself,” he was a great advocate for popular rights, as opposed to high-handed lay patronage. He made it a point to attend the Church courts, especially his own Presbytery, and was very useful in the examination of students applying for license to preach. Indeed he was one of the “black committee,” as it was called, which consisted (as far as I recollect,) of Drs. Thomson, Dickson, Grey, Lee, and Gordon, who had the reputation of being rather hard upon the students.

Dr. Henry Grey is the last we shall mention in the present paper. He began his ministry in Edinburgh in St. Cuthbert's Chapel, or as it was commonly called the Chapel of Ease. He had not been long there till he became one of the most popular ministers in the city, and many came from other congregations to hear him. He was gifted with a sweet voice, and a remarkably distinct utterance, and possessed an elegant manner, resembling that of an English divine. When there was a charity sermon to be preached, Mr. Grey's services were generally secured. These sermons were delivered in St. Andrew's Church, on Sabbath evenings, and so large were the crowds that assembled, and so tremendous the squeezing and crushing, that ladies screamed, others fainted away, and others had their dresses torn and their bonnets destroyed. Not only were the pews completely crammed, but the aisles were crowded, and many had to retire unable to obtain entrance. On these occasions Mr. Grey always distinguished himself, and generally succeeded in obtaining a liberal collection. After he had continued minister of St. Cuthbert's Chapel for several years, he was translated to the New North Church, where he maintained his former popularity. Subsequently he was inducted into the new Parish and Church of St. Marys, where he continued to officiate till the period of the disruption, when a new Free Church was built for him by his faithful and attached flock, and where he officiates at the present day. Mr. Grey became involved in the apocryphal controversy of the year 1832. He undertook to defend the conduct of the Earle Street committee of London, in circulating the Apocrypha along with the inspired Word of God, and a pamphlet issued under the *nom-de-plume* of "Anglicanus" was written by Mrs. Grey, and edited by him. Dr. Thomson of St. George's, who was Secretary to the Edinburgh Bible Society, exposed, in a severe article in the "Christian Instructor," the fallacious arguments and erroneous statements of the pamphlet. This again gave rise to a sharp reply on the part of "Anglicanus." The controversy waxed hot and personal, and injured the cause of religion at the time; but there can be no doubt that it resulted in good, for it eventually put a stop to the circulation of the Apocrypha, and brought back the Earle Street Committee to the fundamental principle of the Bible Society, to publish and disseminate the pure unadulterated Word of God, without note or comment. The controversy, as was to be expected, created a marked coolness between Mr. Gray and Dr. Thomson, yet when Dr. Thomson died in a sudden and affecting manner, Mr. and Mrs. Grey went to his house, and obtained from Mrs. Thomson a lock of his hair as a souvenir. ✓

SOCIETY.

We have no idea of treating this subject in all its breadth. It is far from our thoughts to attempt any disquisition on the social relations and affections of mankind—on the basis and structure of the social fabric—on the dangers that spring out of a neglect of social duties, or on the heavy burdens that are imposed by needless social conventionalities. These are important topics, but we shall not deal with them now. Our more limited purpose is, to look at Society from a Christian stand point, and enquire how far it meets, or may be modified to meet, the wants of enlightened and religious minds. Such an inquiry we take to be especially apposite at the present time, in the opening of winter, which is the favorite season of entertainment and social intercourse.

No intelligent person will aver, that the usage and tone of Society in this country, even in the more enlightened portions of the community, are such as satisfy the higher desires and capacities of man and woman as social beings. Persons of serious purpose often deplore the hours they are obliged

to spend in the drawing-rooms of their esteemed friends, as time wasted and lost. And if any hints can be given for the elevation of a christian social life, they are certainly not superfluous.

It may be assumed that every man must go into society beyond his own family, and that he will find it convenient to meet society in the evening of the day. The extent to which men comply with the social usages of the times, depends on their mental constitutions and tastes. Those who are of a grave, studious, or domestic home-loving character, who are deeply impressed with the value of time and retirement, are reluctant to spend their evenings abroad. If they 'go out', it is to avoid offending their friends, or it is to please their daughters rather than themselves. Others of a more communicative, and perhaps more volatile disposition, or living, as so many young men do, far from their own families, go with zest to evening entertainments, and delight in the excitement of society. Extremes of course are to be shunned; but plainly it is no one's duty to be anti-social, or treat with coldness the sympathies and cordialities of his fellows and friends.

As to the public haunts of mere amusement—the theatre and public ball room—we regard them as simply out of the question. We know what may be said for each of these—but have no idea, that thoughtful Christians will be found within their precincts. It is not so broadly to be said, that the religious may not go to feasts and festivals in the houses of the worldly. The Corinthian believers were not forbidden to accept the invitations of their heathen neighbours, if they were disposed to do so, but were directed how to keep their consciences void of offence. One must not be conformed to this world, the fashion whereof passeth away; but to go out of the world, or stand entirely aloof from the general society around, were to follow John the Baptist rather than Christ. The former girded himself for his awakening rousing ministry by an ascetic and rigorous life; and preached repentance in the *wilderness*, having "his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey." The latter, our Divine Master, preached repentance in the *world*, sitting at meat in the houses of Pharisees and Scribes, and even Publicans, going, when invited to marriage feasts, mixing in life, and partaking of the ordinary courtesies of men. Yet it does not follow that Christians may allow to themselves the very same liberty of intercourse with the world, as they read of in the public life of Christ. They have no security against injury, such as the Master had. No tendency to evil was in Christ—the Prince of this world had nothing in Him,—and he could mix in any company without soil or stain. So constituted was the man Christ Jesus, so fortified in moral and spiritual purity, that He could no more be sullied by contact with sinners, than the light of sun or moon is sullied by glancing on the corruptions and contaminations of this world. But we are not so, and it becomes us to enter into mixed society, always with guarded and jealous care over ourselves—and not to enter into scenes of worldly festivity and excitement at all, when we know that they are fitted to weaken our own piety and to strengthen the hands of the ungodly.

But how little profit or pleasure is really obtained from some of those entertainments, which are most carefully removed from the courses of the world, and attended by thoughtful Christian people! Of course in those circles, there is no desire to dance, or play cards, for these are not pleasures to sober minds and living souls. The love of dancing, indeed, in any circle, betrays a defective intellectualism, and a predominance of the sensuous over the cogitative and spiritual nature. The frivolity of a people is largely to be attributed to want of education, and poverty of ideas. The young man who left school a dunce, and has since that period acquired nothing more than a certain ease of manners, or the young lady, who reads nothing and is incompetent to sustain a sensible conversa-

tion, cannot expect to shine any where else so much as on some festive floor, where the very small talk in the intervals of the dance, will not overstrain their poor faculties, or lay bare the shallowness of their souls.

Now we are far from writing this in a misanthropic or ascetic temper. We do not deery the generous feast of hospitality, or censure the smiling throng of 'young men and maidens,' or wish to refuse them, while yet their powers of reflection, and so of conversation, are unripe, such amusements, as, while not involving any impropriety, enable them to mingle together with ease. The importance of such intermingling is perhaps not sufficiently recognized by parents and guardians of the strict Puritanic regime. When boys and young men are without opportunity of moving in social life, where female influence is present and felt, they are apt to become either morose or riotous—their manners rude, and their morals coarse. We firmly believe that a considerable freedom of social intercourse, sanctioned and watched over by parents, is not only a legitimate source of pleasure to the young, but a guard of private and public morality. There is a more close connection than some persons imagine, between the amenities and the ethics of human life.

But having said this, we still desiderate something more than amusement and amenity. We assert, that social life should be made conducive to the highest interests of man, and that "social evenings" ought to be so spent, as to quicken the intellect, and edify the soul.

Toward these ends, the great social power must ever be *Conversation*. Perhaps this seems to some a poor instrument for so great a work, but these are they who are yet ignorant of the higher capabilities and delights of converse, the concourse of intellect with intellect, and the sympathy of soul with soul. Multitudes have never known true conversation; they have merely talked. But, as Cowper says:—

"Talking is not always to converse;
Not more distinct from harmony divine,
The constant creaking of a country sign."

On the other hand, there are those, and to them we make appeal, who have experienced that some of the best thoughts they have ever received or conceived, have been struck out in stimulating converse with a competent companion or friend. Good conversation must be free from controversy and dispute, and equally free from mere froth and badinage. The small talk which some gentlemen think appropriate to be addressed to ladies, may be garnished with compliments, but is in itself no better than an insult to the female understanding. We wish to hear in society the frank utterance of thoughtful and kindly natures, without any stiffness or pretence, and enlivened by sparkles of anecdote and wit. It is hard to find this in the present state of intellectual culture; and it is a peculiar vexation, that the female sex, especially adapted by nature to shine in society, are, by the poor unreal education they commonly receive in Canada, but ill fitted to converse on general topics of the belles lettres, or science, or criticism, or art. Of course there are brilliant exceptions, but we do not think our general statement will be disputed by any person competent to form a judgment.

If our estimate be at all correct or just, it is surely time to inculcate a higher ideal of social life than at present exists even in religious circles. Till the true ideal is entertained, there will be little reform. And while the pulpit and the press inculcate, it were well that intelligent Christian men, who have an advantageous social position, should begin to exemplify an improved ideal in the character of the re-unions to which they invite their friends.

At the same time, no marked and general elevation of the present social usages can be reached without a higher mental culture than is commonly found to exist. There are two classes of very respectable persons of whose culture we

despair—mere men of business, whose talk even in society, is of stocks, and goods and discounts; and mere housekeeping ladies, whose talk is of servants, and new receipts for puddings, and the prices of bread and butter! But leaving these worthies as hopeless in this matter, we ask, are there not many, especially of the younger members of families, who might so follow out their education, and give themselves to reading, observation, and reflection, as to confer and receive pleasure and benefit in any social circle in which they may move? We have remarked among young people educated in Canada the symptoms of a very limited course of reading. In England, there is generally found in good society an acquaintance with current literature, and at dinner and evening parties, the contents and merits of new books are frequently discussed. In Canada we suppose this to be rare.

The object we have in view might be advanced by the occasional delivery at private reunions of a brief address or monologue on some topic of interest, which might afterwards occupy the general conversation of the company. We have seen this done with very happy effect. It is essential, however, that it be done by some one of recognised competency and authority, who can address the company with wisdom, good taste, and well bred ease.

With all this, we would have *Music*, as good as possible, and in abundance. If musical education was more general, we would recommend, besides the solos of the more skilful performers, a few chants and anthems in which all the company might join. Especially would we have at the close a united song of praise to God. It is not to be laid down as an absolute rule, that in every social assemblage of Christians, there must be a complete service of praise, reading, and prayer, since such a service, introduced at a late hour, detains the guests so long, as to prevent their proper service of family worship on their return to their own homes. But every such assemblage might very appropriately close, by the whole company rising to pour out their hearts in a psalm or hymn, or spiritual song, making a joyful noise unto their common Lord and Saviour.

One word we shall also venture to say, on the table of hospitality. Rich and expensive suppers near the midnight hour are neither conducive to health, nor agreeable to Christian simplicity. The reunions of the French or Swiss Christians are in this respect far preferable to the parties in vogue among members of British or Canadian Churches. A table on which refreshments are laid is accessible at any hour of the evening, and is sufficient for guests who come not to pamper their bodies with viands, but to have a "feast of reason and a flow of soul." We feel bound to plead for more simple entertainments, and for earlier hours. In our humble opinion, society should cease at ten o'clock. It is then full time for family duties and private retirement. And it is not right to forget, that early hours are great safeguards of health and morals, and family order.

These thoughts we beg to submit to the calm judgment of intelligent readers. They do not profess to embrace every view of the subject, but they cannot be considered, we trust, without casting some light on the reforms required in Christian Society.

A LAY SERMON.

(From the Times.)

ON THE IRRELIGIOUS POLICY OF THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT.

"Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents; and cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness."

The life of a nation or of a nation's policy is as the life of a man. Both have their creeping infancy, their hot youth, their golden prime, their tottering age. To both are finally meted out by an Allwise Judge with unstinting hand hope and confidence, remorse and despair, as they have attained or come short of the great purpose of existence. This is an universal rule; it holds good of all nations

and of all men. It holds good of their internal religious life still more than of their external political acts. As the tree falls so will it lie; man and nation alike shall be known by their fruits. On the present occasion the train of thought carries our minds with a lightning flash to a great peninsula many thousand miles away across two oceans, and bids us review the infancy, the youth, and the prime of that mighty empire which England has established and upheld for more than a century in those regions of the gorgeous East.

There is a touching story somewhere of a father who would not allow his child to be taught to say its prayers. "Some of my friends may be infidels or heathen," he said, "and, though this in theory is a Christian family, it would shock them if they heard the child praying." Besides, the man was a philosopher; he thought it unfair to bias the child; when it grew of years to judge, it might choose for itself, and pray or not; meantime it was *not* to pray. So things went on for some time, till the child's first grief came. Its mother died. The story does not tell us whether the philosopher used to pray himself, nor does it inform us if he wept when his wife died. We know nothing about him till he went to bed one night, and then the story goes on to say he heard some one repeating the Lord's Prayer in the next room, where his child slept. This was an unparadonable liberty—to pray out loud in his house, and in his child's bedroom; so he went in to see who it could be that thus broke through all rule and order, and there he found the child's nurse, who had taught it its prayers long ago after the good old fashion, and now was comforting the little one for the loss of its mother by making it say, "Thy will be done." Here, then, was the whole policy of this man with regard to his child destroyed by a perverse combination of calamity and disobedience, and a glorious philosophic experiment spoilt by an overruling Providence, which took away the child's mother, and a maid-servant who had prepared it to support her loss. Well! we cannot help thinking that the "traditionary policy" with regard to Christianity in our Indian Empire is very much like the policy and purpose of the man in the story and his child. We have been afraid to let the children pray, lest the heathen who live in the house should be offended. The experiment has failed in every way more signally in the reality than in the story. The children *have* been taught to pray by stealth, by hasty and hurried missionary effort; the heathen *have* been offended, and now that a great woe has come, when children are weeping for mothers and mothers for children, it is not in consequence, but in spite, of those to whose care the temporal and religious welfare of India has been committed, that our countrymen, in the agony and anguish of their tribulation, have been able to say, "Thy will be done."

Let us turn, then, from a system, which has shown itself so little capable of appreciating its opportunities; let us avert our indignant eyes from an Executive which has been content with the maxims of mercantile prudence, instead of rising to the dignity of an Imperial policy; let us forget the burning zeal with which the chiefs of great idolatries have glowed; let us not reckon the scimitars which flashed by hundreds of thousands at the bidding of the Caliphs; nor call to mind that fury of conversion, that great greed to gain souls, that mighty impulse to propagate the "faith," which began with Mahomet and ended with the subversion of the Empire of the East. This burning fire of enthusiasm is not, it is true, of our creed or of our age. It has long since passed away. Or, if we remember these things, let us remember also that when so much was done for a base imposture, we might at least have done something in our generation to spread a purer faith; but that we have done nothing at all, that we have been neither hot nor cold, that we have halted between two opinions, lest we should provoke the suspicion of proselytism and conversion, until we have ended by exciting that very suspicion; and so, by a course of conduct quite unaccountable to the Oriental mind, have drawn down on our heads the very evil which has so lon

haunted our doubtful minds. Let us turn from the Government, then, and fix our eyes on the conduct of our countrymen as it has been displayed of late in India. This is a more welcome theme. Here, in the energy of character exhibited in each isolated case; in the self-reliance, resignation, devotion, faith; in deeds of the sternest heroism and traits of the most touching tenderness we recognise the grandeur of our race, and almost exult in the opportunity which has brought such bright examples before the eyes of an astonished and admiring world. As no persecution, Christian or heathen, has been steeped so black in treachery and cruelty, or has vented its malice with such diabolical tortures and such exquisite brutality, so no martyrs, ancient or modern, have met their fate more serenely and cheerfully than our glorious countrymen. Death has looked them in the face, not with the mild features of a happy release, but grim with all the agony of soul pangs and shocking spectacles, far worse than any bodily anguish; yet they have met him manfully, and fallen without a murmur, confessing their faith. Who that reads the heroic and pathetic details of these Indian massacres is not reminded of that chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews which tells of that "great cloud of witnesses," "who through faith subdued kingdoms, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight," and "turned to flight the armies of the aliens;" or if we think of those whose lot has rather been to bear than to do, who does not recognise those who "were tortured, not accepting deliverance," who "had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings," "of bonds and imprisonment," who were "stoned, sawn asunder," and "slain with the sword," who "wandered about, being destitute, afflicted, tormented?" What has enabled Englishmen to do such deeds, and to bear such trials? One Divine gift enshrined in a little word,—Faith.

And now that we have contrasted the lukewarmness of the system of Indian Government and its "traditional policy" with the fervour and heroism of each individual of our race, let us ask if the "traditional policy" of which we have heard so much does not stand self-condemned by the faith of those very Englishmen whose religious feeling it has striven so long to keep down? When was this "traditional policy" of suppressed religion, of Christian worship with bated breath, first introduced, by whom was it inaugurated? It arose a century ago, in that philosophic age when Christianity was so sound asleep that it might have been thought dead; it was inaugurated and adopted by men great in their generation, no doubt, great as generals and statesmen, but not great in religion, for their religion was one of expediency, and their Christianity rather of the pocket than the heart. It happened, too, that their policy, the essence of which consisted in eking out the lion's hide with the fox's skin, was admirably suited to the wants of a weak but ambitious State. In this they were true children of their time. But it has happened here, as in so many other cases, that the politic wisdom of one age has come to be the folly of the next, and of this at least Englishmen may boast;—that they are better Christians now than they were a century ago, for they could not well have been worse. So it has turned out that, while all England has been advancing and improving itself in many ways, our "traditional policy" in India has lagged more and more behind the spirit of the age, till it has become ridiculous and impossible. The system of no religion, in plain words, has broken down, because Englishmen in the East will not tolerate it any longer. They are too good for the system, and will no longer suffer the Gospel light to be hid under a bushel, because that was the order of the day in the time of Clive and Warren Hastings; their conduct lately has shown that they can be as brave as their fathers, and better Christians into the bargain. The less, therefore, we hear of a "traditional policy" in this sense the better. It is a thing out of date, and lifeless; an idol which "old Indians" will do well to throw, along with all other idols, "to the moles and to the bats."

WORDS OF THE WISE.

BISHOP HALL'S OCCASIONAL MEDITATIONS.

ON THE SIGHT OF A DIAL.

If the sun did not shine upon this dial, nobody would look at it. In a cloudy day it stands like a useless post, unheeded, unregarded; but when once those beams break forth, every passenger runs to it, and gazes on it.

O God, while thou hidest Thy countenance from me, methinks all Thy creatures pass by me with a willing neglect. Indeed, what am I without Thee? And if Thou have drawn in me some lines and notes of able endowments, yet if I be not actuated by Thy grace, all is, in respect of use, no better than nothing; but when Thou renewest the light of Thy loving countenance upon me, I find a sensible and happy change of condition; methinks all things look upon me with such cheer and observance, as if they meant to make good that word of thine, "Those that honour me, I will honour." Now every line and figure which it hath pleased Thee to work in me serve for useful and profitable direction. O Lord, all the glory is Thine. Give Thou me light; I shall give others information; both of us shall give Thee praise.

ON A FAIR PROSPECT.

What a pleasing variety is here of towns, rivers, hills, dales, woods, meadows, each of them striving to set forth the other, and all of them to delight the eye! So as this is no other than a natural and real landscape, drawn by that almighty and skilful hand, in this table of the earth, for the pleasure of our view. No other creature besides man is capable to apprehend this beauty. I shall do wrong to him that brought me hither if I do not feed my eyes, and praise my Maker. It is the intermixture and change of these objects that yields this contentment both to the sense and mind.

But there is a sight, oh, my soul, that, without all variety, offers thee a truer and fuller delight—even this heaven above thee. All thy other prospects end in this. This glorious circumference bounds, and circles, and enlightens all that thine eye can see: whether thou look upward, or forward, or about thee, there thine eye alights; there let thy thoughts be fixed. One inch of this lightsome firmament hath more beauty in it than the whole face of the earth; and yet this is but the floor of that goodly fabric, the outward curtain of that glorious tabernacle. Couldst thou but (Oh, that thou couldst!) look within that veil, how shouldst thou be ravished with that blissful sight! There, in that incomprehensible light, thou shouldst see Him whom none can see and not be blessed; thou shouldst see millions of pure and majestic angels, of holy and glorified souls; there, amongst thy Father's many mansions, thou shouldst take happy notice of thine own. Oh, the best of earth, how vile and contemptible! Come down no more, oh, my soul, after thou hast once pitched upon this heavenly glory; or, if this flesh force thy descent, be unquiet till thou art let loose to immortality.

ON OCCASION OF A RED-BREAST COMING INTO HIS CHAMBER, AND SINGING.

Pretty bird, how cheerfully dost thou sit and sing, and yet knowest not where thou art, nor where thou shalt make thy next meal, and at night must shroud thyself in a bush for lodging! What a shame is it for me, that see before me so liberal provisions of my God, and find myself set warm under my own roof, yet am ready to droop under a distrustful and unthankful dullness! Had I so little certainty of my harbour and purveyance, how heartless should I be, how careful! how little list should I have to make music to thee or myself! Surely thou camest not hither without a providence. God sent thee, not so much to delight, as to shame me; but all in a conviction of my sullen unbelief, who, un-

der more apparent means, am less cheerful and confident. Reason and faith have not done so much in me as in the mere instinct of nature. Want of foresight makes thee more merry, if not more happy, here, than the foresight of better things maketh me.

O God, thy providence is not impaired by those powers Thou hast given me above these brute things: let not my greater helps hinder me from a holy security and comfortable reliance upon Thee.

ON OCCASION OF A SPIDER IN HIS WINDOW.

There is no vice in man whereof there is not some analogy in the brute creatures. As amongst us men, there are thieves by land and pirates by sea, that live by spoil and blood: so is there in every kind amongst them variety of natural shakers; the hawk in the air; the pike in the river; the whale in the sea; the lion, and tiger, and wolf in the desert; the wasp in the hive; the spider in our window.

Amongst the rest, see how cunningly this little Arabian hath spread out his tent for a prey; how heedfully he watches for a passenger. So soon as ever he hears the noise of a fly afar off, how he hastens to his door; and if that silly heedless traveller do but touch upon the verge of that unsuspected walk, how suddenly doth he seize upon the miserable booty, and, after some strife, binding him fast with those subtle cords, drags the helpless captive after him into his cave!

What is this but an emblem of those spiritual freebooters that lie in wait for our souls? They are the spiders, we the flies; they have spread their nets of sin; if we be once caught, they bind us fast, and hale us into hell.

OF THE SIGHT OF A RAIN IN THE SUNSHINE.

Such is my best condition in this life. If the sun of God's countenance shine upon me, I may well be content to be wet with some rain of affliction. How oft have I seen the heaven overcast with clouds and tempest; no sun appearing to comfort me! yet even those gloomy and stormy seasons have I rid out patiently, only with the help of the common light of the day: at last, those beams have broken forth happily, and cheered my soul. It is well for my ordinary state, if, through the mists of mine own dulness and Satan's temptations, I can descry some glimpse of heavenly comfort: let me never hope, while I am in this vale, to see the clear face of that sun, without a shower. Such happiness is reserved for above: that upper region of glory is free from these doubtful and miserable vicissitudes.

There, O God, we shall see as we are seen. "Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart."

P O E T R Y .

SONNET.

Pilgrim! that passest by this narrow road,
Dost thou go silent, sorrowing all the day?
Consider, 'twas not singing that did stay
Thy feet, that so more lightly might have trod,
Lift up thy heart in thankful praise to God!
For He who placed thee in a stony way,
Has given thee food and clothing, and the ray
Of heaven's pure light to cheer thee, and hath showed
The golden crown that waits thee at the end.
Rejoice! it is thy heritage—rejoice!
Go ever with thanksgiving in thy heart,
So shall thy worship to His Throne ascend,
So shall thy thoughts grow purer, and thy voice
Learn in the angels' songs to bear its part. A. J. W.

NOTICES OF BOOKS.

THE CANADA DIRECTORY for 1867-68. *Montreal*: John Lovell; pp. 1528. Price \$5.

We cordially join in the burst of applause with which this great work has been received by the Canadian Press. Whether we regard its comprehensive plan, its immense and accurate information, or its mechanical execution, we pronounce it equal if not superior to any similar work, even in older countries, that has come under our notice. It is no mere Directory to places and names—but a Statistical Account of Canada, derived from the best sources, and compiled with no ordinary skill and judgment. We have particularly examined the lists of the Clergy, the Department of Education, and the Tables of Routes, and find them all that could be wished. Bound up with the volume is a new Map of Canada, prepared by Mr. T. C. Keefer, from the latest surveys.

No intelligent man in any part of this country, who takes the least interest in public affairs, ought to deny himself this invaluable book of reference. We congratulate our worthy Publisher on his success in so large an undertaking, and hope that the public will accord to him the support which he has so well merited at their hands.

HISTORY OF KING PHILIP, by JOHN C. ABBOTT. *New York*: Harper & Brothers. *Montreal*: B. Dawson. 1857. pp. 410.

This is not Philip of Macedon, but a Sovereign Chief of the Wampanoag Indians, with whom the early settlers in New England had long and bloody warfare. His original name was *Pometacom*, and he appears to have been a man of great natural ability, and persistency of character. He combined hostile Tribes of savages in the attempt to exterminate all the English intruders on the Red Man's soil. At last his death by a musket shot scattered the confederacy, and the Indians were subdued on every side.

Mr. Abbott appears to have carefully examined the rude annals of these troublous times. He has certainly woven his materials into a most interesting narrative, of which it is enough to say, that it is worthy of its place in the series of Abbott's Illustrated Histories.

SUMMARY OF INTELLIGENCE.

MISSIONARY AND ECCLESIASTICAL.

BIBLE REVISION—AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY.—A very warm controversy is waging in the United States, concerning a new edition of the Bible for some time issued by the American Bible Society, in which certain alterations of the text commonly in use, have been made. These alterations pertain to words, to orthography, to proper names, to compound words, to words in italics, to punctuation, to capital letters, marginal readings, the old contents of chapters, and to one or two emendations, in accordance with the original Hebrew and Greek. The attention of learned and eminent men has been lately called to these alleged innovations of the Bible Society, and much surprise and sorrow has been expressed that the directors of a Society, having the confidence of all the Protestant Churches, and which is liberally supported by them, should, without authority, and without the knowledge of their constituents, have attempted to *amend* the text of Holy Scriptures. Dr. Brekinridge, one of the most fearless and able men in the Old School Presbyterian Church, brought this matter before the last General Assembly, the result of which was a unanimous condemnation of such proceedings. At this meeting much stronger measures would have been adopted, but for the assurance given by one of the officers of the Society, that the new edition with the offensive emendations would not be persisted in. Since that time Dr. Vermilye of the Dutch Reformed Church, and one of the Committee of the Bible Society, has with much warmth defended the Society's action, and attacked with some bitterness its assailants and the Church to which they belong. This has called forth able replies written with great precision and intellectual force, from the pens of Dr. Van Renselaer, and Dr. Brekinridge, in which the whole question is fully discussed. Dr. B. thus writes:—

"Now, I am bold to say, that if all this had been done with regard to the works of Milton or Shakspeare, it would have been considered an unprecedented act of literary folly, arrogance, and bad faith. Can it be conceived to be possible, that the Christian public will endorse it, when it is perpetrated on a version of the Sacred Scriptures, which has given fixation to the noblest language and literature on earth; which is the highest bond between the greatest nations in the world; and which is the power of God unto salvation to the most numerous and devoted portion of the followers of the Lamb? Surely this cannot be.

"Now, our plea is, that this entire procedure, from beginning to end, is wholly gratuitous, unwarranted and intolerable. That the Bible Society has no authority, no call, no need, no fitness, for any such work. That no single denomination of Christians, of all those united in using its agency for circulating the common English Bible, ever did, ever could, or probably ever would, have conferred upon it any such power. And that the whole affair is a most cruel mistake, which ought to have been corrected the moment it was observed; to persist in which will be a most flagrant outrage, incapable of defence in morals, and capable of a redress, both through public sentiment, and at law, fatal to the Society.

"Our further plea is, that the principles on which this procedure has been undertaken and carried through, are perilous in the highest degree. That the results reached are evil, and only evil. That the persons who did the work are manifestly incompetent to such a work as they undertook without any lawful call."

The whole subject is of the deepest interest. Many of the Synods at their late meetings have passed strong resolutions condemnatory of the Society's version; and it appears obvious that even although many of the alterations are improvements, and not one of them "mars the integrity of the text, or affects any doctrine or precept of the Bible," yet unless the Directors of the Society resile from their position as emendators, and confine themselves to the work of printing and circulating, a serious schism in the body will be the result, and this hitherto catholic union of Christians will become altogether sectarian in its character. Such a result as this will certainly be a source of regret,—but better this than that the sacred text should be inconsiderately tampered with by unauthorized hands.

CONGREGATIONAL UNION OF ENGLAND AND WALES.—This Union has just held its annual meeting in the town of Cheltenham, and is said to have been "one of the most cheering, interesting, and every way satisfactory autumnal meetings ever held." Among other things it was resolved to separate the Union from all official connection with the Home Missionary, the Irish and Colonial Societies, it being found that the management of these Societies, under the auspices of the Union, involved ecclesiastical responsibilities and arrangements of a kind embarrassing to a Union of Independent Churches. At one of the diets an earnest discussion took place as to the necessity of a "Supplemental Fund" for the better support of Ministers of the Gospel. It was said that there was no doubt as to the necessity of such a fund. Many of the brethren were in absolute want. The inconvenience and misery were not confined to men with incomes of less than £100. It touched equally men with £200 and below. Mr. James of Birmingham thought that however desirable the end in view, anything like an attempt to form such a fund would inevitably fail, and that they must ultimately bring out the energies of individuals and Churches themselves. "Their very form of Church Government precluded the success of any such fund. Any half dozen persons banding together, who took a pastor, and called themselves an Independent Church—although very dependent in pecuniary affairs—would apply, and getting aid, would exhaust their means. The Churches he considered must be roused to their duty." Others thought that the objections of impracticability and inconsistency with Congregational polity were quite unfounded. In Scotland the Union had overcome the difficulty, and surely the English were not more impracticable than the Scotch. The Revd. Mr. Gamble said that "he scarcely believed there was a Church in this kingdom, at all events, not half a dozen exceptions, who raised a sufficient sum to enable a Minister who had seven or eight children to live and educate them. They had large chapels that contained perhaps 1000 to 2000 persons and the amount they raised was after all very small. Now-a-days if a man had £400 or £500 a year he was thought a rich man, and to have got much more than he deserved. He would tell the deacons that the great object for which they held office was the support of the Ministry, and the general temporalities of the Church. He would suggest to some of them to leave alone some spiritualities with which they meddled now-a-days, and confine themselves more to the temporalities." A resolution was passed recommending the serious consideration of the matter to congregations and County associations. Another interesting topic discussed was that introduced by the Rev. N. Hall "on the methods of preaching the gospel best adapted to the age." He considered that

preaching to be successful must be "intelligible, forcible, natural, earnest, practical, evangelical, and pictorial. Christ crucified must be preached, not a formal threadbare repetition of doctrinal statements, but a living Christ." Mr. Ed. Baines, of Leeds, in thanking Mr. Hall for his paper, spoke disparagingly of the reading of sermons. For years he had felt it to be an exceeding great drag on the Church. He would not say that it should never be practised, but he would say it was deteriorating in its influence. No man who assumed to produce an effect read his sermons. Mr. James said that for the first fifty years of his Ministry he had not read a sermon. He implored ministers to guard against the habit which was creeping over the denomination. We can only further note the interesting statement made by the Rev. Dr. Brown of Cheltenham regarding the death of the late Lord Fitzhardinge,—“Ultimately,” said he, “God gave me to hear this confession from his lips, ‘My life has been a lost life; I thought religion was a melancholy thing; I find it is the only thing worth having. Here I am, dying a poor penitent, clinging to the cross of Christ.’”

THE GERMAN KIRCHENTAG.—This general Assembly of the United Lutheran and Reformed Churches of Germany, was held in October last in the ancient city of Stuttgart. 1410 members gave in their names. The great majority were clergymen or University teachers, yet there was no want of laymen. The people attended the meetings in large numbers, and the evening services, held in three of the city churches were always crowded. The subjects considered by the several speakers were: the Spiritual character of the Church in opposition to high church and Latitudinarian principles; and the condition of the Protestant churches in Austria, to whom a letter of sympathy and an admonition to faithfulness was sent. The subject of Foreign Missions was discussed at much length; finally, an Annual Missionary festival on the 6th January; also, individual and Church prayers for Missions, and the appointment of invalid missionaries to Churches at home were recommended. A very delicate theme, and one dangerous to the peace of the assembly was introduced, namely, “Protestant Catholicity.” Stahl, a High Church Lutheran, made notorious by Bunsen’s late work on the “Signs of the Times,” occupied the chair. The subject had reference to the Evangelical Alliance, yet, for the sake of peace, its name was not once referred to, and only a few practical points were mentioned in which Protestant Germans ought to realize the feeling of their spiritual unity, but even this prudent cautiousness provoked Stahl fully to explain his own views with that keenness and dialectical skill and vivacity in which he has scarcely his match. For this abuse of his position as chairman, he was interrupted, but he cut every one short by stating that he was chairman, and that no one had a right to speak without his permission. A stormy scene ensued, and a general feeling pervaded the assembly, that ere long the high Lutheran party must separate itself from the Kirchentag. In the discussions on the Home or Inner Mission, sad pictures were drawn of the irreligion and immorality of the rural population in many parts of Germany,—public houses were multiplied and well supported—rationalism and atheism had numerous emissaries among the people—and the prevalence of tobacco smoking was noted as an enemy to the moral welfare of the nation. At a separate conference, resolutions were adopted by a large assembly, appealing to governments and people on the duty of Sabbath observance. The meetings were closed with prayer, and a solemn hymn. Next year the assembly is to meet at Hamburg. ✕

LITERARY.

NEW ENGLISH DICTIONARY.—The Philological Society of England have issued proposals for a complete Dictionary of the English Language, under the supervision of R. Chevenix Trench, R. T. Furnivale, and Herbert Coleridge. Special committees are formed for the purpose of looking up unregistered words. A series of rules has been drawn up for the guidance of collectors, such as, that the words are to be such as are not found either in the latest edition of Todd, Johnson, or Richardson; or, such as these dictionaries adduce no authority for, or only late authorities; or such as are used in a different sense. Obsolete words, and words in older writers, then imperfectly naturalized, are also to be received. The dictionary is also to include all idiomatic phrases and constructions passed over in the above dictionaries. Among the authors to be consulted are named Bishop Andrews, Roger Ascham, Barrow, Bacon, Burton, Fuller, Fenton, Holland, Henry More, Hackluyt, &c.

ROMAN CATHOLIC AMENDED VERSION OF THE BIBLE.—The *Weekly Register*, a Roman Catholic journal, makes the following announcement:—“We are authorized to state, that, in accordance with the decrees of the last Synod of Westminster, which have lately been returned from Rome with the approbation of the Holy See, the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster has entrusted the preparation of a corrected version, in English, of Holy Scripture, to the care of Dr. Newman. ✕

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