CORNISH CUSTOMS.

Wakeman's Picture of a Simple and Sturdy People.

Change is Unknown in Cornwall—Every Funeral Draws Together Hundreds of People—One Hundred Thousand Cornish Folk at a Funeral—The Undertakers Regarded With Extreme Awe.

[Special Correspondence of the RECORD UNION. Copyright, 1891.]

CROWAN, Cornwall, Nov. 23, 1891.

I always love to come into rough and hearty old Cornwall. Physically it has two interesting aspects, the moorland, mineland interior barrenness and the weird and wondrous coastwise scenic glory.

The moorlands stretch dolorously as if in boundless loneliness. The tors or hills are bleak and bare. The whole face of nature seems torn and scarred as if by tremendous elemental struggles. Yet all these caverns and chasms which disfigure it were made by the hand of man. Its granite, shale and slate hide copper, tin and iron. For more than 3,000 years its surface has been cleft, and its depths gored and bored, until its face is pitted as if with extinct volcanoes.

Toward St. George's Channel at the northwest and the English Channel at the southeast, innumerable valleys and tiny burns slope toward and cut through the walls by the sea, every one discharging limpid streams, which go whirling, foaming, or singing to the sea. Along the sides of these lovely combes are the quaint old homes, the rich acres, the ample ricks of grain and the sleek herds of the sturdy farmers of Cornwall. Tramp these coast roads but a mile you suddenly stumble upon these lovely vales—the stream and the farms half hidden by glorious foliage dotting the sides far up the combe as eye can reach; here a rumbling old mill; there a nestling church; below you the quaint old village; beyond, the tiny haven skirted by the homes of fishers and speckled by queer fishers' crafts; further, the tide plowing up between massive haven walls, or a stretch of low-tide rock and drift, and at last the bright blue sea.

So there are three kinds of folk and life in Cornwall. The mines and miners largely occupy the barren interior. Between these and the coast are the farms and farmers of the tiny combes and vales. And everybody on the coast is a fisherman, fishwife, or in some way profits from the endless harvesting of the deep. Yet these Cornish folk are all one. They are one in sentiment and tradition; in everyday life and custom; in ceaseless labor and integrity; in countless quaint and curious superstitions; in dislike and distrust of every English person and thing outside of Cornwall; and they are one in an almost universal piety. They are nearly all Methodists of the first, firm sort. They are all God-fearing, spook-believing, honest-dealing folk, who believe that liquor is as good for the body as is religion for the soul, scrimping neither, indulging in neither to excess, and, withal, savoring their rugged, everyday lives with a mutual helpfulness that is noble and a generous hospitality to the right meaning stranger which knows no bounds.

Having been much among these simple and sturdy people, I have been greatly impressed by the often mournful and almost stern manner in which their olden customs are preserved. Change is unknown in Cornwall. It is regarded in the nature of desecration. The changeless pursuits of the people for thousands, not hundreds, of years, mining, farming and fishing, largely account for this. Besides, Cornwall has few large towns. People live in miners' cottages, farm houses and fishers' huts, which are huddled, by the half dozen to, perhaps, a score, in tiny hamlets. In these Cornish life may be seen to-day precisely as it has remained for hundreds of years.

Perhaps there is no event among these people more illustrative of character, traits and the peculiar cherishing of mournful customs than the Cornish funeral. No work is done for half a score of miles roundabout on funeral days. All festive or political occasions fail to draw together such Cornish crowds as the burial of the lowliest man or woman of Cornwall. The assemblages never number less than many hundreds, and usually comprise many thousands of "Cousin Jacks," as all Cornishmen are called, and all call each other, while the burial of a Cornish farmer, miner or fisherman will often attract far greater crowds than that of the greatest and noblest lord. To illustrate this singular outpouring on funeral occasions, in 1870 the body of a Praze miner who had emigrated to Colorado and had been accidentally killed in one of the mines of that State, was brought back here for burial. The entire population of Cornwall is less than half a million souls, yet more than 100,000 Cornish folk attended this funeral, or nearly ten times the number that gathered at the funeral ceremonies of the late Lord St. Aubyn.

Every little hamlet has its carpenter and joiner. From time immemorial this personage has possessed extraordinary dignity from the fact that, by favor and custom, he is also the undertaker. His shop, which is also his home, where his apprentice lives with him, is regarded with extreme awe. It contains the "funeral tackle," the necessary implements for burial, which have been handed down through generations, and in whose preservation himself and his wife exercise and display extraordinary anxiety and pride. The people are universally superstitious regarding all these articles, and if any are accidentally seen lying about they exhibit genuine awe and fear. In fact, they are intensely and hereditarily keen in all death portents, attach the greatest significance to the slightest token, and, it is said, can "smell a funeral from Bodmin to Penzance."

At the discovery of the faintest aroma of coffin varnish in any Cornish hamlet, everybody is astir. Men and women gather in the streets, and women rush into each other's houses with the welcome-mournful news.

"Oa, Jinny," the breathless visitor will gasp, "Tommy's (the joiner) mak'in a box, you."

"You" is added to nearly every conversational exclamation, inquiry, answer or sentence, in Cornwall.

"Howst ee knaaw, you?"

"Cos't ee smell un?"

The joiner is quite as keen in keeping informed regarding the progress of any neighborhood illness, and is not likely to be caught unprepared when his services are finally required, for there is not only thirty shillings, or a trifle over seven American dollars, to be got for theord inary Cornish coffin, but death ushers in the joiner's absolute reign for at least forty-eight hours. During that period he is the undertaker, the greatest man in Cornwall, and in all commands and behests no Czar was ever more implicitly obeyed.

But he cannot provide against accidents in the mines. If, in the night time, a knocking is heard at his door his good wife Jinny is the first to waken, with "Tommy, sumbudy's Jack be dead. Go t' doear!"

Descending, he greets the swarthy "pairdner" of the dead miner with a solemn visage, calculating the while if the lumber and coffin furniture are ready, when this brief but comprehensive colloquy may be heard:

"Wass a matter, coden (cousin) Jack, you?"

"Thee cosn't guess whose dead, you."

"No, no, coden Jack; who es a?"

"Jack's Billy 's dead, you. Hawl (hole in the 'mine-pitch') went oaff about un n' smash un all to scats."

"Thee doesn't say so?"

"Yea, yes, you. Thees muns mak a box for un."

All is now bustle in the little shop. The measure for the "box" has been brought with the aid of a "strop" or string; or the undertaker secures it by an extraordinary series of professional maneuvers about the person of the "pairdner," who, as cautiously, admits certain comparisons regarding his own stature and that of "un" who was "smashed all to scats."

Then the sleepy "prentice" is bundled out of bed and hurried off to Praze, Helston or Penzance for the coffin-handles and plate, the latter always being a huge enameled affair more than a foot square. The lad, shivering with fright, first proceeds to the house for the requisite lettering. Then the dreariest trip on earth is taken by this Cornish boy. It is often from ten to twenty miles and return. Nine times out of ten his route is across howling moors, over dangerous paths that literally wind about pitfalls, or through six-foot lanes where the thorn trees prod and lance him savagely. Dark and drear is this trip for any human. Grewsomely dark and drear it always is for this Cornish 'prentice, for it always rains in Cornwall, and the wind forever rages over the rock-strewn peninsula so fiercely that even the gravestones are anchored and propped that the signposts of the dead may not be blown away. Inexpressibly dark and drear is it to this Cornish lad with the wraith of the "smashed un" for his only company.

The country undertaker will complete his "box" by the next evening. It is always the same in Cornwall—of pine, stained a rich, dark cherry, with two heavy handles on each side, the huge enameled plate on top, upholstered with carpenter's shavings and cheap white muslin, and provided with a stout rope handle, like that on an emigrant chest, at the head and foot. There are no hearses in this land. No carts, wagons or carriages are ever seen here at a funeral, unless it be at one of some member of a noble family.

The delivery of the coffin for "layin' out" has therefore been, for generations, a matter of importance and rude ceremony, and always by hand. From the universal dread of these people to come in any manner of contact with anything pertaining to the dead, "carryin' the box" is attended with some mystery and more difficulty. Usually the undertaker's old cronies, who know that liquor and, perhaps, a shilling besides, is, at the end of the journey, are engaged. These, four in number, with the "box" on timbers between, and with the joiner at their head, set out on their lugubrious journey, which is often one of many miles.

On arrival at the place of destination the "box" is set down some distance from the house. In accordance with long custom he enters alone and announces his mission. Through just as old a custom a short period of wailing is then the rule. This ceases as abruptly as it began, when the undertaker always asks of the widow, "Well, Jinny, hast ee got any licker? The chaps out ther's a little 'fraid." She will invariably reply, "Yes, my son, plenty, plenty." He then repairs to the thirsty helpers with the remark, "No fear, boys, long o' Jack. Jinny's got plenty licker," and they will as cheerily reply: "All roight, Tommy, we can stand un now."

These matters, essential from time immemorial, being once adjusted, they are followed by a great amount of officious measurement, for, from first to last, every possible opportunity for simple impressiveness and effect is made most of. Sometimes the "heading" of the little stairway is removed. Perhaps the "box" must go in through the second story window. But nothing more terrible could happen than to have the "box" come into the house in any other way than "feet first." That would be an unqualified and absolute presage of further death in the same family, or to neighbors who were "watching" with the family.

In Cornwall, "watching" with the dead is universally called "settin' oop with Coden Jack." Friends and relatives always go to the house of mourning and enliven the family with memories of other similar occasions, of the most marked characteristics of the deceased, and, all else failing, revive the countless uncanny death legends and superstitions of Cornwall. These gatherings, however, are never held in the room with the dead. The single living-room of the Cornish household is utilized, and it would not be a Cornish home if the funeral "saffron cake" and an abundance of liquor were not provided.

By word of mouth the hour, which is set by the undertaker, of departing for the parish church—for, although nearly all Cornish folk are Wesleyan Methodists, every Cornishman is finally buried with the Church of England service—has been made known far and near. Thousands of folk, all in black, gather to escort the dead and mourners. Here, again, the importance of the undertaker is observed. He has selected a voluntary choir from the crowd. He appoints the eight "bierers" or bearers. He brings two chairs from the house and sets them in the highway. The coffin is deposited on these. Then he arranges the "bierers" and the curious "coffin tackle."

This consists of two polished hectagon sticks, four feet long, and round at the ends, and four stout linen "napkins" two feet wide and three yards long. Two of these are passed through the rope handles, one at each coffinend, knotted, and the sticks are passed through these knots, providing supporting handles for "bierers," two at the head and two at the foot. Four other "bierers," two on each side, assist in carrying the coffin by passing two napkins under the coffin and the ends up through the side handles, for it should be remembered that the burden must be literally carried often for many miles, and never once set upon the ground, although, from another ancient custom, chairs will be seen set outside every house along the funeral way.

A dirge is sung while the mourners are being disposed in due order. Then the undertaker reads the first two lines of that most lugubrious and solemn of all Wesleyan hymns—

Where'er we go, where'er we be,
We're marching to the grave—

which is the signal for wailing on the part of the mourners, weird and plaintive chanting by the choir, though no others are allowed to lift their voices, and for the slow and measured departure of the doleful cortege.

All along the way the undertaker is proudly conducting his functions. He selects helpers, who relieve the regular "bierers," though the latter must always be in their places when passing a village. And it would not be a Cornish funeral if he did not command the choir to sing, "Where'er we go," as every hamlet or little collection of houses was approached; if every person overtaken upon the way did not join the cortege and accompany it for some distance; if any one coming toward the procession did not instantly turn backwards on its discovery; if the choir did not use its utmost powers as the parish church was finally reached; if the cortege failed to halt a respectful distance from the church door until the "passon" and sexton had made their appearance, wholly outside the entrance, to receive it; if all the women did not wail and weep during the entire service; if the "passon," sexton and undertaker were not paid for their services, at the grave, in coin, in the presence of the entire multitude; if hundreds of "Cousin Jacks" and "Cousin Jinnies" did not return to the bereaved home to participate in sympathetic reminiscence, saffron-cake, beer and liquor; and if the departed's "pairdners" and cronies, including the undertaker with his "helpers" and "bierers," did not repair to the public house to indulge in toddy, boiled beer, or "shneagrum"—a Cornish drink of beer, brandy, sugar and lemon—and during the eventful night ten thousand times praise their late comrade with the highest eulogy one Cornish man can bestow upon another:

"Ah, Coden Jack's gone, you. Ah, ee knowed tin, did Coden Jack!"

EDGAR L. WAKEMAN.

[For the RECORD-UNION.]

"AN ANGEL'S TOUCH."

A CHRISTMAS STORY — BY ELLA MAUD JOHNSON.

Snowflakes fell like the veil of a bride,
Caressingly down at "Yuletide,"
Mantled the snow-enshrouded town
In a spangled robe of softest down.

Festooned in holly the festive scene,
Bright with garlands of red and green;
Illumed by flashing gleams of light,
Through frosted panes of windows bright.

Cherry faces with roseate glow,
Softly kissed by the falling snow,
Beamed expectant from the gliding throng—
Hearts o'erflow'd with mirth and song.

Maid, matron, son and aged sire,
Dressed in holiday attire.
Gave sweet response to the happy call,
Merry Christmas to one and all.

Sleigh bells jingled in merry chime,
The village clock mark'd the flight of time,
The organ pealed its anthem sweet—
Soft echoes answered from the street.

* * * * * * *

A little girl with bright blue eyes,
Paused here, and there, in mute surprise—
Little May, scarce eight years old,
With clustering curls like a crown of gold.

She'd often heard of the Holy Child,
Born in a manger, where angels smiled;
Sadly she peer'd through each window pane,
And wondered if the angels would smile again.

* * * * * * *

Shyly she entered the village store,
Pushing her way through the crowded door;
"I've only a dime," to herself she said,
"Ten cents in silver, for tea and bread."

Over her face, so wan and fair,
There crept a look of blank despair,
And she thought of pies, so many nice things,
The joyous holiday brings.

"But ma must have her cup of tea;
Better for her than it is for me,
For she is ill, and this I know—
'Twill make her strong—she told me so."

* * * * * * *

The store was crowded; 'mid its noisy whirl
Unheeded sat the little girl;
Down her cheeks the fear-drops crept,
Tired of waiting, at last she slept.

Many passed, and saw her there;
Many praised her golden hair;
Meanwhile the little dime lay prest
In her folded hand across her breast.

Sweet smiles caressed her baby face,
As if they would the tears efface;
One there was, bent low, and smiled,
Long she gazed on the sleeping child.

A woman, of pure, seraphic face,
Black-robed, with modest grace,
A faithful servant of the sisterhood,
Relieving want and doing good.

Gently from the tiny hand withdrew
The hidden dime, so bright and new;
In its place two silver dollars gleamed,
The giver's eyes with love and pity beamed.

As on she passed with footsteps light,
An earthly angel from a mission bright,
Imbued with the words of sweet accord:
"He that giveth to the poor, lendeth to the Lord."

* * * * * * *

The store was empty ere the clerk espied
The sleeping child. "Wake up," he cried;
She rubbed her eyes and then awoke;
In sweetest accents thus she spoke:

"Oh, such a pretty Christmas dream—
I saw Santa Claus and his reindeer team;
Around him stood an angel band—
One of the angels touched my hand,

"And led me up to a beautiful tree;
Everything on it was there for me;
Mamma was well, and happy, too,
For the angels gave her plenty to do."

Just then the silver coins she saw,
Her wondering eyes lit up with awe:
"Oh, now I know. 'Twas no surprise,
But a true angel in disguise.

"And you, kind sir, opened the door,
And let her in to clerk in your store."
Who shall say they are not earth?
Ye that know their sterling worth.

Like that sweet child, who believed so much,
In her simple faith of an angel's touch,
We entertain them unawares,
Accept their gifts, but the glory's theirs.

Eureka, Nev., November 25, 1891.

[For the RECORD-UNION.]

GATES AJAR.

When life's fitful dream is over,
And all our worldly cares shall cease,
And we seek a home celestial
In a land of joy and peace;
When we reach God's heavenly kingdom,
Where no sorrow comes to mar,
Will the angels bid us enter
Through the gates that stand ajar?

Will our loved ones come to greet us?
Shall we meet and know them there?
Will they welcome us with gladness
To their home so pure and fair?
When we've crossed the cold, dark river,
When from earth we are afar,
How the soul will thrill with rapture,
If for us the gates shall stand ajar.

Will the Glorified Redeemer
There be waiting to receive
All the ransomed and repenant—
All who that in Christ believe?
When our eyes are closed forever,
And no earthly grief can mar
The last sleep that knows no waking,
May we enter rest through Gates Ajar.

MRS. NELLIE BLOOM.

West Oakland, November 25, 1891.

LITTLE BITS.

"Why, Mr. Ardent, how ungallant of you, to say you thought I was 32!" "Well, it certainly struck me that you were somewhere near the freezing point." —Life.

Doctor—There is one thing more. Your wife must not speak a word to-day. Tell her that. Patient Husband—W-would you mind telling her yourself?—Dorfarbier.

"What is this spontaneous combustion, anyhow?" "It's a fire that lights itself." "By George, that's just the thing! I'll lay in a stock of 'em for the furnace next winter."—Puck.

Correspondence Editor—Here's a fellow who wants to know how he can acquire a flow of language. What shall I say to him? Snake Editor—Ask him if he ever tried stepping on a tack with his bare feet.

"I told Dr. Wray the other day that I believed I was the only living example of his patients." "Was he embarrassed?" "Not a bit; he acknowledged it." "What did he say?" "Said he was sorry to say I was."—Elmira Gazette.

A New York woman hopped out of bed the other night, flung her arms around a burglar and held him while her husband ran several blocks for a policeman. All of which goes to show that the husband was not of a jealous disposition. —Detroit Free Press.

Wilkins—Will you marry me, Miss Harte? Miss Harte—This is so sudden, you surprise me. Yes, I will. Wilkins—And, by Jove, you surprise me, too. I was sure you wouldn't accept me. So sure, in fact, that I had bet $5 on it. Now I'm five out.—Yankee Blade.

He told his son to milk the cows, feed the horses, slop the pigs, hunt the eggs, feed the calves, catch the colt and put him in the stable, cut plenty of wood, split kindlings, stir the milk, put fresh water in the creamery after supper, and to be sure to study his lessons before he went to bed. Then he hurried off to the club to take a leading part in the question, "How to keep boys on the farm."—Covington Enterprise.

DON'T run the risk of your cold getting well of itself—you may thereby drift into a condition favorable to the development of some latent tendency, which may give you years of trouble. Better cure your cold at once with the help of Dr. D. Jayne's Expectorant, a good healing medicine for all coughs, sore lungs and throats.

HELPLESS.

Chicago, Ill.
I was confined to bed; could not walk from lame back; suffered 5 months; doctors did not help; 2 bottles of
ST. JACOBS OIL
cured me. No return in 5 years. FRANCIS MAURER.
"ALL RIGHT! ST. JACOBS OIL DID IT."

IN RELIGION'S REALM.

Expressions from the Various Religious Newspapers.

The Religious Thought of the Day as Expressed in the Sectarian Press—Some Matters of Interest to Both Ministers and Laymen.

In commenting upon the Briggs case the *Occident* of San Francisco (Presb.) says: "The only question that remains concerns the limits of toleration to the utterance of critical conclusions, pending the arrival of a new era of theological construction. Dogmatic utterance and aggressive advocacy of new conclusions during the interval cannot fail to result in perilous unsettlement of faith and decadence of vigor in the church. Even supposing the conclusions reached by Professor Briggs to be correct, the church is not prepared to receive them; and the process of testing to which they should have been subjected before dogmatic promulgation would have schooled the church to readiness for their reception. We do not disguise our conviction that the boundaries of toleration have been unduly stretched—not wholly by the action of the New York Presbytery, but certainly as the complex result of the events of which that Presbytery's action was the last."

"Dr. Briggs is grievously to blame," the Chicago *Interior* (Presb.) thinks, "for the tone, temper, rashness and even ambiguity of the inaugural address, and he owes it to the church to make an ample and sincere apology for the disturbance he has caused. He had no business to make the statement about the sources of divine authority without qualifying it—and so of other statements. No man has any right to throw out expressions on these vitally important truths which any honest man can construe into heresy. If he do it inadvertently, he ought to make the correction promptly, upon his attention being called to it. He says he is sorry. He can say more in a manly and self-respecting way, and admit that he did wrong, and beg the pardon of his brethren for the wrong-doing. That is the thing for Professor Briggs to do, and what we devoutely hope he will do. Since the Presbytery of New York has acquitted him of heresy, he is put upon his honor to do and say voluntarily whatever is necessary to make it right with his brethren and the church."

"The Presbytery took Professor Briggs at his word, and on his own estimate of the teachings of the now famous inaugural dismissed the proceedings. An appeal will probably be taken to the Synod. The *Interior* says: 'There is nothing liberal or illiberal in the verdict. It is simply an issue upon the existence or non-existence of alleged facts—a verdict as remote from doctrinal significance as the verdict of a civil jury upon the facts of a civil case.' This may all be true," remarks the Chicago *Universalist*, "and yet the failure of the Presbytery to make a direct issue with Dr. Briggs is proof enough that it takes the back track and leaves the alleged heretic master of the situation up to the present time."

"Is there any great harm in believing that Moses was to all intents and purposes the author of the first five books of the Hebrew Scriptures?" asks the *Religious Herald* (Cong.) of Hartford, Conn. "Has such a faith the effect of corrupting the believer in it and making him a worse citizen, a more undevout Christian? Inasmuch as the 'higher critics' have nothing else to offer, why not leave us, poor, uncritical souls the privilege of believing as Christ and the apostles, as all successive generations down to our own day appear to have believed? There is something positive in the faith we have. There is nothing certain or positive in what these men would bestow upon us. They leave us in the dark, while pretending to enlighten us. We are driven to the conclusion that the labor of such critics is well-nigh worthless. We turn from it to what possesses some intrinsic value. We have some consolation in believing that Isaiah was the author of the Hebrew poetry bearing his name, but none in the theory that he did not write it, and that we do not know who did not compose it. We are justified in putting a very low estimate upon the faculty for the higher criticism."

"We cannot understand the anxious fear of some devout yet timid souls lest the Bible should be dethroned from its place in the reverence of the world," exclaims the New York *Evangelist* (Presb.). "The anxiety so frequently expressed lest the 'foundations should be destroyed,' indicates a sad want of courage, or, what is still worse, a sad want of faith. But do we really believe the Bible to be the Word of God? Then it cannot be destroyed. The mountains may be removed, but the Word of the Lord abideth for ever. All the criticisms that are made upon it only serve to bring out more distinctly its beauty and its power. It may seem almost a paradox, a contradiction in terms, to say that the occasional discovery of 'inaccuracies' or 'discrepancies' strengthens rather than weakens our faith; but it is true, for, as our readers must have observed, these 'discrepancies' are in almost every case infinitesimal in importance. When we reflect that the great Hebrew and Greek scholars of Germany and Britain and America have been at work upon the Old and New Testament for half a century, and have literally, to use an expressive if not very elegant phrase, 'raked it as with a fine-tooth comb,' and found only 'errors' so petty as these, we ask in amazement: 'Is that all?' These are, indeed, but specks of sandstone in the marble of the Parthenon; and the book, that has borne an investigation to which no other was ever subjected, shines forth, indeed, like the temple on the Acropolis, not only with undiminished, but with increased radiance and splendor."

"Many churchmen will breathe a sigh of relief," says the *Living Church* of Chicago (P. E.), "at the news of the acquittal of Dr. Briggs at his recent trial for heresy. There was a rumor, which had an air of probability, that upon being convicted and dismissed from the Presbyterian ministry the Professor and his friends were likely to seek admission into the church. Aside from the question of his views on the subject of inspiration, eschatology and the like, there is a growing feeling that it will not redound to the lasting benefit of the church to convert it into a cave of Adullam. Every experienced country priest knows that accessions to his parish growing out of dissensions in some neighboring religious society are not of the most desirable kind, and that his work is more likely to be hindered than advanced by an increase of numbers which is due, not to conviction that the teachings of the church are true, but to discontent and faction in another community."

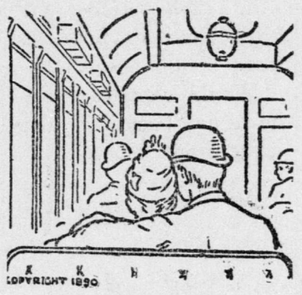
"What we are getting at the current meetings of the various State Presbyteries in New York, New Jersey, Indiana and Illinois, is really in the nature of a dissolving view," says the New York *Freeman's Journal* (R. C.) "The light plays gradually lower and lower, the picture of infant and heathen damnation grows dimmer and dimmer, the ecstasy of election and sanctification fades into mist, and a keen eye, indeed, is that which can discover in the skeleton of Calvanism anything like its orginal proportions. Presbyterianism of the past is a thing we shall never know again in this country, at least, and the worst of it is that, having made away with its rugged features, those who still retain the name have not the honesty to go the full length which their action calls for."

In discussing the attitude of the Roman Catholic Church toward the public schools, the Boston *Congregationalist* says: "At every point the effort is the same. It is an attempt by the church to control the education of the children and to make the State pay for it and protect the church in doing it. Let no one lose sight of the real issue. Let the fight not be against the Roman Catholic Church as such. Its members have as good a right to the protection of government in worshiping God in the way they choose as any other sect. If any other denomination should attempt like encroachments they should be as earnestly resisted. American citizens contend that it is the duty of the State to provide for the education of its children, and they will fight as for their life for the right of the State to control without the interference of any church the education the State provides. The sure way to success is, while steadfastly maintaining this principle, to provide so good schools that private and parochial schools cannot compete with them, and to choose on school boards so able and fair-minded persons—whatever may be their religious affiliations—as to maintain the superiority of the public-school system. When such persons are nominated for this service they are called to the most important duties to which patriots may be summoned. It may be well questioned whether the State ever calls its citizens to greater opportunities or presents weightier claims to their sacrifice in its behalf. And we are sure they will be slow to turn aside from these calls unless they can justify their refusal by the most conclusive reasons."

"That the Methodist Church is growing lax in discipline must be evident to any man with half an eye," observes the *Christian Advocate* of Nashville. "That we are losing to an untold extent by the lack of discipline no man can deny who has any true estimate of the true success of the power of the church. Our brethren of other churches who have so many kindly things to say of us see our tendency and peril along this way, and feel it keenly, for they are looking to us as their main force and ally in this spiritual fight, and if we are weakened dismay and defeat will be their share in our demoralization."

A La Robert Elsmere.

A settlement has been founded by Mrs. Humphrey Ward on the principles laid down in "Robert Elsmere," which has its headquarters in University Hall, Gordon Square, London. Arrangements have been made for a course of lectures for the coming winter. These will include a series of Dante, "Some Aspects of Theism," "The Literary Study of the Bible" and "Elements of Political Economy."



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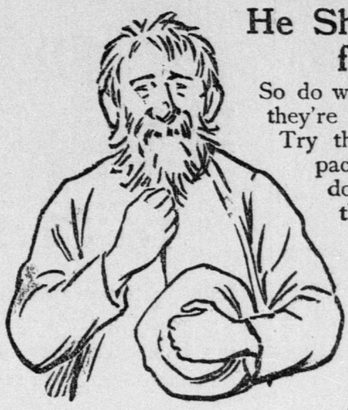

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