

The Northwestern Lutheran

The Lord our God be with us, as He was with our fathers; let Him not leave us, nor forsake us. 1 Kings 8: 57.

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No. 8.

RISEN WITH CHRIST

Col. 3: 1. 2.

Ye faithful souls who Jesus know,
If risen indeed with Him ye are,
Superior to the joys below,
His resurrection's power declare:

Your faith by holy tempers prove,
By actions show your sins forgiven,
And seek the glorious things above,
And follow Christ, your Head, to heaven.

There your exalted Savior see,
Seated at God's right hand again,
In all His Father's majesty,
In everlasting power to reign.

To Him continually aspire,
Contending for your destined place,
And emulate the angel choir,
And only live to love and praise.

COMMENTS

Rather Discouraging to the Plain Preacher Last Sunday, if the papers report correctly, the Rev. A. D. Thibodeau, pastor of the Sheridan Road Methodist Episcopal church at Chicago, spoke on Jess Willard, the victor in the recent prize fight in Havana. Rev. Thibodeau believes that "Jess Willard rendered society a magnificent service when he retired to private life and incidentally to obscurity the notorious degenerate Jack Johnson." But one should never weary of well-doing, so after having given Jess Willard such advice as would assist him to retain the heavyweight title, the Reverend pleads with him: "Hit the Sunday sawdust trail. . . . Come to Chicago next year and help make the town dry." This is decidedly discouraging to the plain preachers, who have thought right along that they were doing the Lord's work in preaching the Gospel and shepherding the flock assigned to their care, and that the Lord had prospered their work done in weakness. But the fact that large delegations from various cities are pleading with the ex-baseball player to come and save their town, and that the learned Chicago's minister now appeals to the hero of the ring for the same purpose, would indicate that the plain preacher has been a flat failure and that congregations should fill their pulpits with champions from the diamond or the ring. Our Lutheran Church has no such experts, and most of its preachers

are no more able to go in training for effective church work, so what shall we do? The future indeed looks dark. J. B.

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Why Should This Story be Remarkable? Among the happenings recorded by the newspapers some days ago there appeared a story that related how an elderly lady, a pioneer in her part of the country, was conducted to her last resting-place. There was no minister, a lawyer read a "lengthy eulogy" prepared by a member of the family, and "announced a couple of solos, but no prayer was said and no religious feature marked the service." This was evidently in accordance with the wishes of the deceased and no doubt reflected the attitude she maintained during life. It appears to us that in such case it was the most proper course to pursue and that anything else would have been woefully out of place. It is rare, indeed, that such a reasonable course is followed; it is quite the rule that when a man dies the undertaker is first summoned, and it is no less a rule that some minister, any minister, must be secured to assist the undertaker in making the funeral impressive and in surrounding it with the halo of a religious atmosphere—even if the deceased in the coffin had as little use for religion before his death as he had for embalming at that time. We repeat, why should a practice so reasonable, so sensible, so proper in such cases be deemed remarkable? H. K. M.

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New Church Buildings Recent years have seen a remarkable growth in the value of buildings erected for church purposes. A few years ago, in 1906, the total expenditure for church buildings was less than \$3,000,000. In 1913 the sum spent for such uses was five times as great, \$14,870,506! According to the building trade records for the first four months of 1914 the totals for last year promise to be still more amazing; during these four months \$4,389,986 was expended for new churches. This is quite gratifying. We are unable to secure figures for the exact amount for which Lutherans are responsible in these totals, but from other sources we feel encouraged to assume that they have not been laggards. It is known that the Lutheran expenditure was spread over a greater number of smaller buildings, and that is an additional reason to feel elated over this activity, for after all, the building itself is of secondary im-

Rev. C. Breiter, Jan 15
Kenosha, 65 N. Ridge
Wis.

portance—the great question is: are the buildings so located that people will come to them, and are they serving the true Christ?
H. K. M.

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Bed-time Stories A certain newspaper is conducting a department in which it daily prints a bed-time story to be read to the children by their parents. That is the right thing for parents to do, to busy themselves with their children in the evening instead of spending their time at the lodge-meeting, theater, dance hall, etc. If this were done more generally, we would soon be able to cut down the number of our truant and probation officers, and to close our social centers, where strangers are attempting to fill the place of the parent. What pleasant and profitable evenings can be spent in the family circle when parents take an interest in the school work of their children, discuss with them the happenings of the day, and, perhaps, also tell them a fairy tale. This would strengthen the ties that bind the child to the home and make the home influence the predominant one, as it should be.

But—as for bed-time stories—do we not know of something that is better than the fairy tale, something that will not merely arouse the imagination, but also stir the soul-life of the child? Go to your Bible, Christian parent, for that bed-time story, feed the young soul with the Bread of Life, teach it to commune with God. Teach it to know and see the Savior's grace, to rejoice and trust in the love of the Heavenly Father; bring it under the influence of the Spirit of God, who works through the Word—and your child will live to bless you for those bed-time stories.
J. B.

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A "School Joke" The superintendent of the school system of one of the largest cities in our country was at dinner with a family, one member of which attends a private high school. The superintendent was somewhat taken aback when the boy said:

"I'd like to know what kind of immorality you have at the Blank High School?"

It developed that at an athletic event, for which the boy's school acted as host, the visiting Blank athletes carried off \$200 worth of property and destroyed school fixtures besides. An investigation followed and if the boy was not satisfied as to the particular brand of "immorality" in vogue at Blank—and other schools—there were some of his elders that had no trouble in diagnosing the case as a plain matter of thievery. The superintendent made inquiries and found that the principal of Blank school had upon complaint of the sufferers held an investigation. He found his charges in possession of the stolen goods and had them returned and effected a compromise by

offering that the culprits pay for the material damage they had done. The only explanation that was offered him was: "It was only a joke, and they all do it, if they can get away with it."—This principal informed his superintendent that stealing went with athletics and was part of the athletic program. In fairness it must be said that the superintendent roundly condemned such a view.

But what can be done? There are other, and worse, things done "as a joke" or "in fun" and the public school teacher is helpless to prevent it, and, when it is done, he can do nothing to correct the evil; even the power to exercise strict discipline, unsatisfactory as it is, is denied them to a great extent.

We'll let the story stand for itself—without further comment; we'll not offer any advice—because we have none to offer that would fit the case. But there is a moral in the tale that is not at all hidden. If Christian parents, horrified by such occurrences, think of their boys and girls, they must wish for schools that are different, where moral guidance can be had. If such schools are not in their reach, it should be their deepest concern to establish them. Then, if such things occur, as they may, they may rest assured that an effort of the proper kind will be made to correct the evil and to safeguard the boy who is on the way to consider all sin a "joke."
H. K. M.

HE DESCENDED INTO HELL

There is sarcasm which savors of joy and victory when St. Paul utters the words: "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" 1. Cor. 15: 55. O death, where is now thy sting, thy power to hurt? Thou wouldst set thy whole fatal artillery against us, to overcome and hurl us into eternal death. But where now is thy fatal artillery? Thou art vanquished and disarmed, and we fear no further mischief from thee, nor heed thy weapons, but defy thy power, and meet thy wrath with derision. For though we are dead, yet behold, we live again, and shall die no more. And O grave, O hell, O Satan, where now is thy victory? Where are the spoils and trophies of it? Once we were thy prisoners, but the prison-doors are burst open, and we are forever released: captivity is taken captive, the imaginary victory is conquered, and forced to resign his conquest, and release his captives. O robber of our race, how art thou spoiled and carried away captive! Thou canst not boast of a single victory, thou art thoroughly defeated, and we need fear thee no more.

The proclamation of this triumph over sin, death, hell, and the devil is the descent of Christ to hell. "He descended into hell," is an article of our Creed. We believe that Christ, according to His human nature as God and man, after His burial, immediately before His resurrection descended into hell, conquered

the devil, destroyed the power of hell, and took from the devil all his might.

True, Satan, death, and hell were conquered on Calvary. The punishment of death was carried out upon the sinless One who took upon Him the sins of the world, and died as the substitute of man. The fallen race of Adam was doomed to death, as God had said: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die"—was put to death on the cross in the person of the second Adam, and by the Lord from heaven triumphed over the prince of darkness. "Through death"—the very result of sin; "through death"—the very weapon by which the evil one held his subjects in bondage; "through death"—the Prince of Life destroyed "him that had the power of death, that is, the devil," Heb. 2: 14, and thus his power was destroyed, his kingdom shaken, at the place called Calvary. Satan and all the power of hell were conquered and disarmed by the dying Redeemer. Yes, the Redeemer conquered by dying. "It is finished," He exclaimed bowing His head in death on the cross.

But, though the adversary and all the powers of hell were conquered on Calvary, the proclamation of this mighty and glorious victory is sent throughout his infernal dominion in the person of the Victor Himself in His descent to hell. This is attested by the following words of Scripture: "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison." 1. Peter 3, 18: 19. This clearly infers that Christ after having suffered death on the cross went forth into the prison—the infernal regions of hell—in His own body, having been quickened by the Spirit, for the purpose of preaching unto the spirits in yonder regions. But what did He preach there? There are those who would interpret the words of St. Peter in the sense that Christ descended to hell for the purpose of preaching the Gospel to those who had died before His Incarnation and who had no opportunity of attaining faith in the salvation wrought by Him. But such an interpretation is contrary to the general tenure of Holy Writ which teaches that the time of grace for all men is during this life on earth, and that it must be decided here, whether or not we are saved.

What is meant by preaching unto the spirits in the prison is intimated by the words of St. Paul, Col. 2: 15: "Having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it." Christ, the Victor, made a public show of all His enemies, exposing them to public shame. The Apostle alludes to the custom of a general's triumph, who returned victorious. When a Roman general had performed great feats in a foreign country, his highest reward was that the Senate should decree him a tri-

umph. On a set day the conqueror riding in a noble chariot in the midst of his victorious legions would enter the imperial city, while to his chariot were chained the kings and mighty men of the region he had conquered. Thus did Christ, so to say, tie His enemies to His chariot-wheels and ride forth conquering, triumphing over them. He revealed Himself as their sole conqueror, showed them, that their power is forever destroyed, that Satan and his hosts are absolutely defeated, that though in the first skirmish he vanquished mankind, yet in the second battle mankind vanquished him. The crown is taken from him. He is no longer the prince of mankind. His reigning power is gone.

This is in substance the article of our faith concerning Christ's descent to hell. It is the first stage in His exaltation, where He resumed the complete and absolute use of the divine majesty according to His human nature. Little is said in Scriptures of the descent of Christ, and "we should not," as our Lutheran confessions admonish us, "trouble ourselves with sublime and acute thoughts as to how this occurred; for this article can be comprehended by the reason and the five senses as little as the preceding; as to how Christ is placed at the right hand of the almighty power and majesty of God; but (in such mysteries of faith) we have only to believe and adhere to the Word. Thus we retain the substance (sound doctrine) and true consolation that neither hell nor devil can take captive or injure us and all who believe in Christ."

J. J.

THE TOOTH BRUSH AS A MORAL AGENT

That the tooth brush is a moral agent has now been satisfactorily established. If you do not believe this, read the following: "It is not sparing the rod but sparing the tooth brush that spoils the child. Investigation by officials connected with institutions that handle delinquent children has shown that bad teeth make bad boys and girls.

The president of the New York Juvenile Association asserts that 91 per cent of the delinquent boys that come to the association to be looked after have bad teeth, from which they suffer, and that instead of worrying only about their morals the association worries about their teeth with the result that after two years of competent dentistry and daily use of the tooth brush 90 per cent of the boys are turned out as reformed.

The New York institution has found that the bad boy usually is an anaemic boy, the anaemia being due to poor digestion through insufficient nourishment caused by bad teeth. When this is corrected the boy becomes normal, takes on a saner and healthier view of life and its duties and changes his whole moral attitude.

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For a long time now there has been a growing tendency away from punishing bad children, for most educators have come to realize that, after all, the grownups really know very little about the working of the child mind and that punishment for deeds, which by adult standards were wrong, but which according to child ethics were quite open to reasonable explanation, was both stupid and inhumane."

Yet it would appear that child study is not an exact science, for another authority "Ernest K. Coulter, the Big Brother man and specialist in juvenile delinquents," in an address to Minneapolis women takes a different view of the matter: "There are times when an application of the good, old-fashioned hairbrush treatment is a good thing for the child. Just as you would use force to get the best results out of a bass drum, so at times the parent has to apply force to the delinquent child."

Tooth brush or hair brush—now what is a poor, perplexed parent to do when eminent child specialists disagree? Or is it, perhaps, possible to harmonize these conflicting views? Does the hair brush vigorously applied possibly stimulate the circulation and thus tend to correct the anaemic condition causing the bad boy "to take on a saner and healthier view of life and its duties and to change his whole moral attitude?" Child study has been productive of much good, especially in the direction of hygiene, sanitation, and the care for defectives, but it has proved itself a dismal failure as often as it has attempted to analyze the mind or soul of the child and to furnish data to the educator who would really educate, build up a good character. It has made this the age of the shredded child. The poor thing is being weighed, measured, tested, catalogued, dissected, and served to the teacher and the parent as a heap of arms, legs, eyes, ears, lungs, stomach, liver, etc. Search as you will, you will not detect the trace of a soul in this heap. It's all body. Get all these parts adjusted right, and oil them well, and you will have a smooth-running child guaranteed to win in the race of life.

Now we, too, know that the physical condition of

a child is not without influence on its behavior. We believe that the body should be kept clean and developed. But we also know that the physical condition is not the deciding factor in the conduct of the child. We have known rascals whose teeth and stomach were in an excellent condition, and, on the other hand, sickly children and adults whose lives were filled with true piety.

Children are bad because they are conceived and born in sin. The greatest authority on the child has said: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh"; and, again: "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, theft, false witness, blasphemies."

And the remedy is neither the tooth brush nor the hair brush, though the latter has its God-assigned place in the rearing of the young: "He that spareth his rod hateth his son; but he that loveth his son chasteneth him betimes," Prov. 13:24. The remedy is indicated Eph. 2:10: "We are his workmanship created in **Christ Jesus** unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

Educators who deny the innate sinfulness of the child and consequently, reject the Gospel as the only means of true education, will ever be blind leaders of the blind.

J. B.

THE POPE AND THE "GOOD PRESS."

The Roman hierarchy has never been accused of failing to guard its interests. The greater the opposition, the greater is its counterattack. In late years it has been assailed unmercifully, not always with the choicest weapons, in our country as well as in foreign countries. Its own native land has been flooded by a deluge of literature that is aimed at the power of the pope and his lieutenants. The most recent measure taken by the Vatican to combat these onslaughts is a publication, to be known as the "Good Press." We may expect that, with their usual efficiency, the Romanists that are to have charge of this enterprise will make the most of it. It will not merely serve to deliver counterattacks and apologies to Italian foes, but will be a sort of standard bearer, whom all will follow that are similarly engaged. In the future we in America will also come under the scope of the plan through the many news channels that are at the service of the powerful Romanist organizations.

Of all American churches, the Lutheran church should be affected at least. Popularly known as the traditional foe of the Roman Catholic church, the popular opinion is entirely at sea when it comes to define the nature of the opposition which Lutherans have offered to the Vatican. The Lutheran church has never singled out any one particular church in its polemics; if that ever seemed to be the case, it was due

to circumstances that made some one church for the moment more dangerous to the Evangelical cause. The opposition at such times was, if it merited the approval of serious Lutherans, entirely on the ground of doctrine and only secondarily on that of Christian practice.

The whole Anti-Catholic campaign, so-called, is to-day almost entirely a matter of economic or political controversy. A Lutheran citizen may be interested in some aspects of this agitation, but he should never make the mistake of thinking that he is serving his church by doing so. Our church will continue to be served only by the spreading of the Gospel. Any other activities lie entirely beyond the sphere in which its energies should expend themselves. We are aware of the fact that many Lutheran organizations have been importuned into taking official action on some phase of this question, but we do not hesitate to express our conviction that such action was misguided and, however harmless it may now appear, may easily lead to complications that will crowd the makers of such resolutions to ground untenable by conscientious Christians.

It may also well be doubted, whether the leading spirits, who in any event retain control of the public anti-Catholic movement, are acting from love of true religion. In many cases it is quite apparent that their zeal is impartially directed against all churches that uphold a higher ideal than that of material welfare; they have chosen the Catholic church as the target for their attacks just now because it offers the best mark. If the battle against the church of Rome should be attended by success, we may be sure that all the weapons, including those that may have been forged by the help of zealous Lutherans, will be directed against our own church. Not because we resemble the Catholic church, because we do not, but because the opponents of Catholicism are unable to distinguish between us. In the matter of parochial schools alone, they are even now ready to convict us on the same grounds on which they convict their principal foes. Our well-recognized opposition to lodges and fraternalism is another source of displeasure; and more than anything else do these elements resent our consistent refusal to join in public or union services of religious character. It must not be forgotten that the Lutherans even more than the Catholics, are even now accused of retarding the Americanization of foreign elements of our population by the maintenance of schools that preserve the native language of the immigrant.

It is futile to argue against much of this—the self-satisfied American is frequently unable to understand our arguments, even if he seriously tries to. Some of the questions, however, are subject to intelligent demonstration; the difficulty here lies with our inability

to reach those who are most loud in the public councils.

As far as the controversy between the Catholic church and its political enemies is concerned, the Lutheran church is unmistakably neutral; individual Lutherans may find occasion here or there to enter the controversy to a limited extent—but even then they will exercise such caution as accords with their Christian ideal of good citizenship, which consists in paying more, much more, attention to the fulfillment of their own duties, than to the exercise of force to make others conform to their way of thinking. Incidentally it might be pointed out that that is the true principle of liberty and applies with equal force to many other “reform” movements.

H. K. M.

SUICIDE TO-DAY

“The Salvation Army suicide bureau at 673 South State street gives aid and advice to would-be suicides.” We have read this notice repeatedly in the more recent numbers of a prominent Chicago daily paper. If it stood alone, those of a critical bent might consider it a dreadful accusation, raised by some enemy of the Salvation Army, and naturally expect proof of guilt to follow. But it does not stand alone and the matter following, together with the reputation established by the body in question, is well able to remove the wrong impression from the mind of the critical reader.

Appearing as they do, these words are a communication to the public, made by the Salvation Army. Nor does this notice bear the character of a clever advertisement, designed to call general attention to the manifold activities of this body. It appears in a section of the paper which is devoted to the news of the day. Here it stands forth in heavy type and is bracketed under a head which calls attention to some of the saddest happenings, the suicides. Glancing at this notice again as it lies before us, we must say that it is indeed an advertisement in its real sense, a notice to draw the attention of those most concerned. Who these are, experience tells us: the would-be suicides. Untold harm has been wrought these ill-advised unfortunates in the past who with morbid interest have brooded on the suggestive features of the suicide column. Embodied where they are in the day’s tale of terrible mistakes, the words of this insertion offer counsel where there is a crying need for it; to many they may have been as a ray of light where all else was darkness. While we cannot definitely say what “aid and advice” the Salvation Army has to offer “to would-be suicides,” we do not hesitate to say that credit is due the clever mind which had this offer placed where it stands.

The fact that the newspaper of a large city, reporting on the events of the day, must daily devote a certain amount of space to cover the suicides; that a re-

religious organization, avowedly concerned with the welfare of the most unhappy, regularly enters a set offer of aid in that space—gives the whole subject the character of a permanent feature in the report of a day's events and speaks volumes. The number of suicides is increasing alarmingly. What is the cause? The report before us recites four cases and the immediate cause of each would seem to be hopelessness: in one case, because of long-continued illness; in another, because of a joyless wedded life; in a third, because of unbroken drudgery; in the fourth the cause is omitted and the result given as "tired of living." In many cases we hear "temporary insanity," evident or presumed, mentioned as the cause; but very often this condition is but an intermediate stage brought about by forces with which the victim was unable or unwilling to combat.

Some seek to trace the great misery of some classes and the growing frequency of suicide to the selfishness of society. To their mind Lazarus at the gate were well entitled to sum up the causes of his woe in the cry: "no man cared for my soul." True it is, much of the squalid misery of our time is to be laid at the door of those who are guilty of grinding greed, an utter lack of consideration, a brutal harshness in their treatment of their fellow-men. The victims of such heartless abuse look upon their lives as empty of all the joys that gladden others and long suffering deprives them of hope. But that does not justify a man in committing the greatest crime against himself, self-destruction. Man's help is but a sorry prop and "cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord."

There is a stay which supports when all others are as broken reeds—our God. There is so much hopeless misery to-day because there are so many who are cut off from their God. On Him we ought to lean every day of our lives with a growing knowledge of His steadfastness and a childlike trust in His goodness and mercy. Walking with our God, the days of adversity will find us clinging to Him with added earnestness and singleness of the mind. We will never forget that we are under His loving guidance and "know that all things work together for good to them that love God." This life will ever appear as one of His gifts, His to bestow and His to take away according to His infinite wisdom. In the season of darkest trial our consolation will be: "My times are in thy hand: Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee. My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is strength of my heart, and my portion forever." G.

He that will believe only what he can fully comprehend must have a very long head or a very short creed.—C. C. Colton.

TRIFLES MAKE FOR PERFECTION

A celebrated sculptor was one day visited by a friend. He had come to look at a statue on which the artist was working. He had been there several times before, but upon this particular occasion he was much surprised at the great progress the sculptor had made. Full of astonishment he cried, "What an extraordinary change you have made in the statue since I was here last! What have you done to it?" "Oh," replied the artist, "this part I have somewhat changed, that feature I have made a little more prominent, to the lips I have given a little more expression, and this part I have polished." "But, friend," cried the visitor, "the things you claim to have done are all mere trifles; they surely could not bring about such a great change!" "Certainly, they are trifles," said the artist, "but you want to remember that trifles go to make perfection, and perfection is no trifle."

In striving after holiness, do not forget that trifles, the little things, count for very much.—Luth. Pioneer.

LUTHERAN AND CATHOLIC FIGURES

Objection comes from prominent Lutherans to the omission of their denomination from the roll of million-member churches in the statistics sent out by the Federal Council of Churches. Instead of falling below the million-mark, they point out, they muster nearly 2,500,000. Further examination shows the dispute to be a matter of classification. Dr. Carroll, the statistician, credited the Lutherans with 2,444,970 members, but divided them among twenty-one bodies, the largest having 850,772. This seems to be the bone of contention. Dr. Remensnyder writes to the New York Times to point out that there are 2,442,894 communing members of Lutheran faith, and "next to the Methodists and Baptists," they are "the largest Protestant Church in the United States." Rev. J. F. Ohl writes that Dr. Carroll "does not seem to understand that the Lutheran Church makes little of organization, but much of faith. If I am not mistaking, it was he who once spoke of 'eighteen different kinds of Lutherans in America, and who counts each one of the four general bodies and the fourteen other synods not connected with these as so many denominations. . . . In spite of the external divisions in the Lutheran Church of this land, many of which are to be accounted for on linguistic and geographical grounds, there is a much closer inner unity than in some of the denominations whose ministers and congregations are gathered into one general body." Dr. Remensnyder adds a note on Lutheran increase in 1914:

"As the increase of the Lutherans was quite extraordinary, namely, 121,875, i. e., upward of 5 per cent., there is no reason why—when, for example, the Episcopal Church's growth, 28,641, is declared 'notable'—

the remarkable 121,875 gain of the Lutherans should not equally belong to the 'notable' column."

Catholic statistics now appear in the new annual edition of the "Official Catholic Directory." This Church shows a gain of 241,325 members, bringing the membership in the United States up to 16,309,310. (Dr. Carroll's figure is 13,794,637.) The gain in the past ten years has been 3,846,517, and in the past twenty 7,231,445. The editor thinks 10 per cent. should be added for "floating" Catholic population of which no record can be kept. Some further statistics are here presented:

"There are 18,994 Catholic clergymen in the United States. There are 14,961 Catholic churches, showing that 310 new Catholic churches have been established during the past year.

"New York State has the largest number of Catholics, 2,885,824; Pennsylvania is second, with 1,756,763; Illinois third, with 1,473,379; Massachusetts fourth, with 1,392,000; Ohio fifth, with 793,179; Louisiana sixth, with 586,200, and New Jersey seventh, with 585,150." (Wisconsin stands ninth in the list, with 576,470).—Lit. Dig.

JUST FOR TO-DAY

Lord, for to-morrow and its needs
 I do not pray;
 Keep me from stain of sin,
 Just for to-day;
 Let me no wrong or idle word
 Unthinking say;
 Set Thou a seal upon my lips
 Just for to-day.

—Canon Wilberforce.

AN OLD QUESTION AND OLD AND NEW ANSWERS

The span of human life varies but little, if at all, in all the times that we are in the habit of including into historical discussion. The scriptural three-score years and ten or fourscore are still the quite accurate measure of human life. The individual has no assurance that his allotment will reach this approximate limit or will exceed it, and not a few find the uncertainty most harrowing and practically use up their years in fear and trembling to prepare for the extension of their joyless existence, though it is difficult to understand what has been won.

A few years ago a London journal invited its readers to take it into their confidence and truthfully answer the question: How long do you want to live? The response to the invitation was generous. It was a question to which the wisest reader could supply the answer no better than the least wise, and a fool might answer it as well as a philosopher. Taken separately the letters were the most uninteresting imaginable;

taken as a whole, they led to very interesting conclusions. The youngest letter writer was 12 years old, the oldest 90, yet there was one thing that all had in common: they put the limit of life, which they expected to reach, somewhere in the future. The nonagenarian still looked forward to 2 or 3 additional years as well as the man of eighty or seventy.

Another thing stood out very plainly. It seemed to matter very little how old the writer was, he always seemed to be content with but a few years more. The more youthful were notably modest. There seems to be no reason to doubt the sincerity of these replies to the old question, they are too true to human nature to be suspected.

A new variant of the old answer to the old question was given publicity recently. A famous anthropologist announced that he expected to live 120 years. He also gave the recipe, which he meant to follow. "Just be placid, always smile and keep on the job all the time." That's not so very bad, as such recipes go, but it is not nearly as simple as it seems to be. The more we think about these answers, the more do we realize that ripeness of age is scarcely a matter of years at all. It is experience, valuable experience, that ripens and matures man. History is replete with examples of great men, taken away at the height of their powers, when their years, as measured by ordinary standards, would scarcely have indicated a beginning in life. But that comes closer to the real question: What is the experience in life that brings maturity?

Is it success?—fame? How few would then really live. We can do no better than turn to the Psalm of Moses, from which we may learn more than the number of years that limit human life. "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom." And the only wisdom Moses can mean is the wisdom that his 120 years of life were only able to touch at the surface: "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom."

It is not nearly so important to speculate on the years allotted us, as to learn the wisdom of God to enter death whenever it may come to us secure in Christ "who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."

H. K. M.

OBITUARY

Rev. Carl Ferdinand Stromer died April 9th after a brief illness of pneumonia. His death, a sad shock to his many friends, came to him at Marinette and left the sum of his years at 53. The deceased was born in Aurich, Germany, and formerly held pastorates at North La Crosse, Wis., and Bay City, Mich. For over fifteen years he has ministered to the German Lutheran church at Marinette. His burial took place April 12th.

GOD IN NATURE.

So soberly and softly
The seasons tread their round,
So surely seeds of autumn
In spring-time clothe the ground,
Amid their measured music
What watchful ear can hear
God's voice amidst the garden?
Yet, hush! for He is here!

No mere machine is nature,
Wound up and left to play,
No wind-harp swept at random
By airs that idly stray;
A spirit sways the music,
A hand is on the chords,
Oh, bow thy head and listen—
That hand, it is the Lord's.

Elisabeth Charles.

ITEMS OF INTEREST**War and Missions**

To sustain the extensive mission work carried on in foreign fields by the churches of the nations now at war must be getting extremely difficult as the months roll by, and in view of the fact that the end of the awful struggle is not yet in sight. It will be a hard task for Great Britain to sustain its 10,000 missionaries in the foreign field, since it entails an annual cost of about ten million dollars. Germany will have a still harder task to provide for its 1,200 missionaries, which annually need two and a half million dollars, not so much because of the difficulty in raising the necessary funds as, rather, because of the difficulty in getting the funds to the workers laboring in fields belonging to the enemy, who refuses to allow funds from Germany to reach the missionaries. France has only 120 Protestant missionaries in the foreign field, and it should not be a very difficult task to gather the \$150,000 necessary for their support. All the European Continental societies combined maintain about 2,500 missionaries, entailing an annual expense of about four million dollars.—Luth. Pioneer.

Hebron Water Bottles

Hebron, one of the oldest cities in Palestine, has always been famous for its oriental water bottles, made of goat skins. Here are to be found large tanneries, where these receptacles are turned out by the thousands. Lying upon the ground in rows may be seen hundreds of goat skins awaiting purchasers. Each skin is inflated, either with water or with air, so that the buyer may know it is perfectly water tight. The majority of the skins used come from Arabia, while a large number are also received from the Lebanons. They are brought to Hebron by the camel caravans, and are purchased by the tanneries and turned into bottles. They pass through many processes and a tanner will spend a week upon a single skin before it is rendered water tight and serviceable. From Hebron these old "bottles" are sent to all parts of the east, thousands going down into Egypt and the Sudan every year. They are also used as rafts. A number of inflated skins are attached to a light wooden frame, which then not only readily floats, but is capable of carrying quite a heavy load. Such rafts are to

be seen on the rivers of Syria and also on the Euphrates and Tigris.—Birmingham Post.

Denounces Film Censors

A resolution characterizing as farcical the national board of censors, which wields the blue pencil on moving picture productions and calling upon the legislature to provide a state board of censorship for New York, was adopted recently by the New York East conference of the Methodist Episcopal church.

The resolution recites that "millions of young Americans attend motion picture shows daily and that many shows have degenerated into mere schools for crime because of the improper films permitted by the farcical so-called national board of censors."—Herald.

School Enrollment.

The United States has an enrollment of over 19,000,000 pupils in its schools; Germany has 9,737,262; England, 6,075,968; France 4,440,000. Germany leads in thoroughness and method, France in centralization, and England in this that it gives to the teachers wide latitude for the exercise of individual opinion.

CULLED BY THE WAY**Sad, Tender Words**

"I must request the congregation to contribute generously this morning," said the Reverend Mr. Smallfee, sadly. "My stipend is eight months in arrears, and my creditors are pressing. I, of course, work largely for love, and love, equally of course, is tender; but it isn't legal tender."

Felt for His Neighbor

A gentleman was one day relating a tale of deep distress, and concluded very pathetically, by saying, "I could not but feel for him." "Verily, friend," replied one of his hearers, an old Quaker, "thou didst right in that thou didst feel for thy neighbor. But didst thou feel in the right place—didst thou feel in thy pocket?"—Luth. Witness.

Secret of His Patience

Traveling Lecturer for Society (to remaining listener)—I should like to thank you, sir, for so attentively hearing me to the end of a rather too long speech.

Local Member of Society—Not at all, sir. I'm the second speaker.

No Moral

The late Dr. W. B. Robertson, of Irvine, was once addressing a boys' meeting, and having delighted them with some of his racy anecdotes, he began to draw to a close by saying:

"Now I'm going to point out the moral of all this."

"Niver mind the moral," shouted a little fellow from the middle of the hall; "gie's anither story."—Interior.