

Editorial Notes and Comment

The limited eldership is before the Presbyteries for study. The General Assembly sent down an overture, without advice, bearing upon the subject. It may be a "dead conservatism" that will prompt any presbyter or any Presbytery to pause to study the subject rather than approve the measure with alacrity, but all the same they will try to examine it carefully, and their wisdom will judge of the reasons which may be offered pro and con.

"Discourage," when uttered by a formal deliverance of a great Church court, means more than when uttered by an individual. It hardly rises to the dignity of "advice," or "admonition," and is far short of "injunction," but it is worthy of some respect. Therefore it should be very carefully used by a Church court. If it is not applied in a case which will command respect, it is unwisely used. It is to be feared that our Assembly's use of it in connection with the use of "the filthy weed" will not evoke that regard which ought to be paid to every deliverance of such a court.

Just before adjourning the recent General Assembly passed a resolution requesting the Presbyteries, in electing commissioners to the General Assembly of 1915, to elect at least half of the commissioners from each Presbytery from those who served in the Assembly of 1914. It further asked the Presbyteries to adopt a standing rule which will result in the return to the Assembly of each succeeding year at least one-half of the commissioners from each Presbytery from those who had served in the Assembly immediately preceding. So far as the first part of this resolution is concerned, does it not look a little like a renomination of themselves by those who passed it? The whole proposition is one on which quiet and earnest discussion will be helpful. There are many reasons why the new plan would be desirable and effective. It would require considerable self-sacrifice on the part of presbyters, however, in lessening the opportunity for attendance on the sessions of the highest court of the Church, membership in which is always an honor as well as a responsibility.

"When thieves fall out, honest men get their dues." A few weeks ago a Southern county which had been "dry" for some time, went "wet," an end secured by the saloon supporters registering and voting a great number of negroes. As soon, however, as a few negroes applied for license to sell liquor, applications were turned down. Now they are making a row about it and are claiming their rights. Politics makes strange bed-fellows. Liquor interests make stranger still. The Southern manhood which revolts against negro control, or even negro influence, in the affairs of State, gives up its manhood and surrenders to the desire for drink, and gathers up and uses negro votes to reinstate that which curses its women and children and pollutes the land.

"Distance lends enchantment" is a trite quotation and it is true. "The far-away fields are always green" is an Irish proverb. We accordingly are prone to look out toward the limits of our mental horizon to discover the great and good of earth. If, when these are brought near in the form of prophets and teachers, their garb or accent or other incidental is suggestive of their remote origin, we at once prick up our ears and say, "It's fine." So it is, usually, but often no finer than we already have just across the way. Last year two famous Scotchmen gave the James Sprunt lectures at the Seminary at Richmond. Their lectures were learned, able and edifying, as anyone may find for himself by reading them in printed form. But

"there are others," as was commonly said a while back, and for good and sufficient reason the Seminary Board at its last meeting politely, but effectively, suggested that the faculty of the seminary, in bestowing the honors of the James Sprunt lectureship for 1915-1916, should designate their distinguished president, Dr. Moore, which was duly done. We are not disposed to indulge in fulsome eulogy of our own household. President Moore needs none from us. We know his worth and simply say, "Well done." The James Sprunt lecturer withheld this fact from us when interviewed by our reporter as to the seminary outlook but we got the information from outside sources. It is authentic.

THE LOGIC OF EVOLUTION.

Some weeks ago readers were distressed by accounts in the public prints of a succession of suicides in the University of Pennsylvania. Provost Smith of the University no doubt expressed the state of mind that prevailed among faculty and students when he said he was "shocked," "unnerved," "could not sleep," and experienced "the feeling of having suffered some great loss." He further said, "The suicides caused me many moments of deep thought. I wondered what there is lacking in a college life that left the young men with no resources to tide them over the shoals and sorrows of life and guide them to a safe port. I tried to think of possible ways to lead the students from the channel that was leading them to self-destruction, and I decided it would be necessary to lift the minds of the students away from their imaginary troubles to the contemplation of their Creator. Billy Sunday came to my mind, and I immediately proceeded to carry the thought into effect. The enthusiasm the students showed over him was a revelation to me, and the results exceeded my fondest expectations." It soon developed that a large body of the students, to the number of several hundred, had organized themselves for Christian work and held meetings in the industrial town of Coatesville where riot and bloodshed were rife a few months ago and that hundreds of men and boys in the shops had been constrained to readjust their ideas of Christianity, under the influence of this militant band of student evangelists. We are not informed of the scientific notions that are taught at this university. We do know that in many similar institutions a gross materialism is taught. According to such teaching man is simply the highest known order of animal life and that which we call mind or soul is simply the resultant of complex and abstruse physical phenomena, and when the thing that is called life ceases, personal existence ceases also. It is easy to see that when one regards himself simply as an animal he may normally, and to his own judgment, wisely escape suffering and solve his life's problems by ending all. Such is the logic of that base thing that we call scientific evolution, and when applied to morals and religion it is even more destructive. Provost Smith did a wise thing when he turned the minds of the students to the religion of Christ, a religion which teaches that God created man in his own image, and that, by redeeming grace, fallen man "is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him." Commenting some time ago on the published opinions of an evolutionist and a severe arraignment of the system by Dr. T. M. Morgan, professor of science in Columbia University, *The Presbyterian* says: "There would be little wonder at the increase of suicide if the doctrine of evolution should prevail." "But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as from the Lord, the Spirit."

RUSSELLISM IN ACTION.

In a series of moving picture exhibitions, followers or agents of that unique and forbidding character known as "Pastor Russell," have been presenting in Richmond "The Drama of Creation—Pastor Russell's wonderful drama of our world from nebula to our day, and 1,000 years yet." The exhibition is used to introduce Russell's books, which are advertised in connection with each exhibition at the close. It is apparently one of many instances of bold adventure in the prosecution of errors for the sake of financial profit. The man Russell, of unsavory reputation, has probably coined millions out of similar methods of appealing to the love of novelty and the credulity of the masses.

Romanism, of course, is the most powerful, as it is the most ancient of prevailing systems of spiritual despotism, but all possess certain essential characteristics. Consider the four systems known as Romanism, Mormonism, Christian Science (or Eddyism), and Russellism. Each has an official dictator as its head. Each claims special supernatural revelation, and exclusive authority, supernaturally conferred. Each professes loyalty to the Bible, yet repudiates its plainest and most vital doctrines. Each appeals to natural human instincts, many of them depraved, and makes loyalty to the system the test of character. Each employs ingenious and highly developed processes for enticing immense revenues from the pockets of its votaries, and each has been founded and fostered by persons of corrupt practices and bad repute.

Just now we are concerned with the destructive teachings of "Pastor Russell," the inventor of the imaginary "Drama of Creation." A single doctrine taught by this man, and accepted by the mass of his followers, will suffice to indicate related teachings with reference to some of the cardinal truths of Christianity.

Some time ago Dr. I. M. Haldeman, of New York, issued a strong pamphlet showing the vagaries and pernicious heresies of "Pastor Russell" and his followers. The title of his pamphlet is "Millennial Dawnism, the Blasphemous Religion that Teaches the Annihilation of Jesus Christ." Many of the Russellites retorted that their leader does not teach any such thing as this, and that he is grossly misrepresented by Dr. Haldeman. The latter has, therefore, brought out a supplement to his pamphlet, and with great definiteness proves his contention by quoting the exact words of Russell and citing volume and page showing where the annihilation of Jesus Christ is positively taught by this modern money-making "apostle."

Here are some of the questions: "Jesus presented his perfect humanity a sacrifice, laying down all right and claim to future human existence." "His human existence ended on the cross." "The soul of our Lord Jesus went into oblivion * * * at death." "Our Lord's being or soul was non-existent during the period of death." "As Adam, through his disobedience, forfeited his being, so Christ Jesus our Lord, by his death * * * paid a full and exact offset for * * * Father Adam's soul." "It was necessary, not only that the man Christ Jesus should die, but just as necessary that the man Christ Jesus should never live again, should remain dead * * * to all eternity." "Our Lord Jesus is * * * no longer a man." "He has no further use for a human body." "We know nothing about what became of it (the body) * * * whether it (the body) was dissolved into gases * * * no one knows." "Our Lord is no longer a human being. He is no longer human in any sense or degree. Since he is no longer in any sense or degree a human being, we must not expect him to come again as a human being." "The man Christ Jesus suffered for us