

# Sunday Reading.

## MRS. MOUNTFORD INTERVIEWED.

The Lady Lecturer Talks of Her Birth-place and Many Other Things.

Many St. John people have heard Mrs. Mountford, the lecturer on Bible themes and have been particularly charmed by her cordiality. A newspaper correspondent interviewed her in Montreal last week. He received a cordial reception.

"I am very glad to meet you," she said, "and shall be glad to tell you anything I can. But would you mind coming to the dining room with me? The morning is the only time I can get for rest, and I am afraid the dining room will be closed. I am very glad you enjoyed my lecture last night. Was it not a splendid audience? So appreciative."

"A good many women, Mrs. Mountford, appreciate what you said in regard to the importance of educating women and making them politically the equal of men."

"I am glad to hear you say that, for I feel very strongly on the subject. The need of it is very easily seen. Woman has a very strong influence, but how have men forced her to use it? Not in a straightforward, honest manner, but in all the underhand, deceitful ways that can possibly be contrived. She, perhaps, ventures to express an opinion about a certain matter, but is met with the usual rebuff. 'My dear, what can a woman know about such matters?' What is there left for her but to say: 'No, my dear, of course, I do not know anything about it. It must be as you say.' Now she says that, but she feels something else. Does she give up? No! It simply becomes a question of her wit against his authority and power. She seems to give in, but simply changes her tactics. Now, what is the result of all this? She is systematically trained in deceit, and that deceit of her character she transmits to her children."

"Is it so in your observation that a son inherits especially the characteristics of his mother, or is it only a fad of a few?"

"Certainly, it is so. And that is why you see so many cowardly men. Their mothers have never dared to have an opinion of their own and how can their sons. You hear of a man becoming a defaulter. Society raises it hands in horror, and exclaims, 'How is it possible! He comes of one of our finest families, and the mother was such a sweet woman!' True—his mother was sweet, but she had learned that the best way to obtain what she wanted was by underhand means, and that deceitful character she transmitted to her son. He was not necessarily one whit more deceitful than she, but being a man he had larger opportunities of working it out."

"Do you not think that women have enough to do already without troubling about political matters?"

"No, I don't. The wealthy classes spend much time over novels and so-called social duties that might very much better be spent in the interests of their country. They would then be much truer helpmeets for their husbands, and much wiser mothers for their sons."

"But what about those who have not so much money; my sympathies go more largely to them."

"So do mine, and of them I say the same. A knowledge of the world outside makes a woman twice as able to cope with her work indoors. Where some women waste time in parties and novel reading others spend it in being over-particular housekeepers."

"Yes, I know the question of household help is a tremendous one, but it is one that cannot be settled by women alone. Schools of housekeeping should be established by the state just as science, medical and other schools are kept for men. The course should be just as strict and the diploma just as much prized."

"Some people object to your lectures, Mrs. Mountford, because they say you treat the bible irreverently."

"Ah, that is because they do not understand. They glorify the Jews of old till they quite forget that they were flesh and blood like ourselves. They forget that God does not create special people to work with, but works with people as they are. Now, some people object to what I say of Rebecca. They say how modest it is of her to cover her face when she alighted off her camel to greet Isaac. It was nothing of the sort; it was the most natural, most innocent coquetry, and the same may be seen now in the east any day. They wear veils there, to be sure, but while a plain woman wears a heavy veil a pretty woman wears a very thin one. Then if some one passes on whom they wish to create a favorable impression they draw the veil across the lower part of their faces, but use their eyes with excellent effect. Rebecca was a true daughter of the east. She was coming to marry Isaac, but he had never seen her. Was it not the most natural thing possible for her to wish to make him fall in love with her on the spot. Would he not just as naturally think, if her eyes are so lovely what must the rest of her face be?"

"What about unmarried women in the east, are there many of them?"

"Yes, of late years there are a great many. Largely because war has killed off so many

of the men. But they are not looked down upon as they are by many here. In the west they are called 'old maids,' there they are called 'holy women.' They are considered set apart especially for God's service. Eastern people say anyone can get married but not every one is fitted to be a holy woman. It is the maidens young and old who visit the poor, watch by the sick and do all the fine embroideries we sport from there. The idea of the nun is imported from the east."

"This reminds one of the case of Leah's marriage with Jacob. Many blame Laban and pity Leah, but according to the customs of the country the fault was Leah's. She really forced herself on Jacob when he wanted her sister. It would have been a great disgrace to Leah to have Rachael married before her, against her will, but had she given her consent it would have been all right. As it was, Laban was forced by her to do as he did. It is quite evident that she was determined to have Jacob for herself. During Jacob's seven years of service for Rachael there was quite time for her to have other suitors, but either no other would have her, or she would have none else. Her jealousy of Rachael was shown very early all through her life, and in the way her sons treated Joseph you can easily see how she transmitted her character to them."

"Is Solomon's picture of the excellent woman a type of the woman of the east today?"

"Yes, in a large measure, among the wealthy classes. Supposing there are ten or fifteen sons, when these marry they all bring their wives to live under the paternal roof. But the sons are still under the control of the father or grandfather as the case may be, and the woman under the charge of the mother. Each separate family has its own suite of rooms, but all are members of one household and under one control. The chief woman of the harem you can see has a tremendous amount on her hands when she superintends such an establishment. Christ had such a household in his mind when he said, 'In my fathers house are many mansions, I go to prepare a place for you.' That has a significance to the eastern mind that the western man who insists on having an establishment of his own cannot imagine."

"Many people, Mrs. Mountford, think you are a Jewess."

"Yes, (with a laugh), I know, and that in spite of my explaining over and over again that I am a Slav. You wish to know something of my family? Well, for centuries back my family have been great soldiers and great religious enthusiasts. They were large landed proprietors and owned many serfs. Many people give the Czar, Alexander I, great credit for freeing the serfs, but the measure was really forced on him. My great-grandfather, along with many others had freed his long before. He lived much the life that Count Tolstoi does now, working for and with his people. Although freed, the serfs refused to leave these men and still worked on their estates. My father and mother are distantly related. My father was a great religious enthusiast, had strong radical tendencies and was a powerful orator. Naturally, these qualities made him a marked man and about that time he was forced to leave the country. His chief object in life, as had been said of his forefathers, was to search for truth. In Jerusalem, if any where, he thought he would find it. There he went and there I was born, and there he continued to live because he loved the country."

"Why did I take up the work of lecturing? It was after my first visit to the States. There I heard men like Robert Ingersoll denouncing the bible, railing at its accuracies and absurdities, and I could not help seeing that a great deal of it was done through pure ignorance. They knew nothing of the life and customs of the people about whom it was written and judged everything in it from the standpoint of men who knew no life but that of the west."

### Christian Scientist on the Flood.

A very noteworthy contribution has lately been made by Prof. Prestwich, an English geologist, to the literature drawn forth by the long-mooted question as to a possible cause for the flood or its origin. Dr. Prestwich describes at much length the various phenomena which came under his observation during many years of geological research to Europe and the coasts of the Mediterranean, among these special reference being made to finding the flints of the drift to be of two classes, viz., one with bones of animals carved and interspersed with the remains of man, and the other, termed by him the "rubble-drift," containing bones of animals of all ages and kinds in vast heaps. Reference is likewise made to raised sea beaches, and the constant occurrence of "head," the large masses of transported rock, loam and lias, covering the high plains in Hungary and southern Russia, and the ossiferous breccias in various localities. From the circumstances attending these and their surroundings, Dr. Prestwich comes to the conclusion that such phenomena are only explicable upon the hypothesis of a widespread and short submergence of continental di-

mensions. The age of man he considers rightly divided into paleolithic and neolithic, and there thus seems cause for the origin of the account of the flood. Sir W. Dawson's opinion is emphatic, based on geological and palaeontological grounds, of a physical break in the anthropic age, evidence of this being afforded by the cave remains, etc.

### Why not be Happy now?

Many people pass through life in constant anticipation of a happiness that is never realized, whereas if their hearts were right, they might be happy now. It is well to remember, says a Christian writer, that the time never will come, in this world, when we shall have everything we want, just where and when we want it. The only way to be happy is to enjoy all we have to the utmost as we go along. It is right to lay up for old age in youth; right to prepare for a rainy day, but it is not right to bend all our energies to this end, and put off until the future the happiness we might enjoy every day. It is far too common to see people working and saving, denying themselves all recreation and many comforts to lay up money to buy more land, to build a larger and finer house, or to save for their children, thinking that when they have accomplished this they will be happy, and begin to take comfort. The hoped-for point may be attained; or, if it is, sickness or death may have come first, and the dear ones whom we expected to be happy with may be gone forever. How much better to use some of the good things of life as we go along; to make our humble homes as cheery and bright as possible now, instead of waiting for a better house! Don't starve today, either body, mind or soul, thinking that you will riot to-morrow. Don't hoard and scrimp through all the best years of your life, that you may be generous in your wills. Life is uncertain, and it is better to make your children happy while they are under the home roof; to call to that home every agency which will make their lives sweeter and better, than to deny them these that you may leave them a large bank account when you are gone. We must be grateful and patiently bear our trials, believing that all, if rightly used, will fit us for the enjoyment of perfect happiness hereafter.

### Who Made the Lord's Prayer.

The prevalent belief is that in whatever exact words it was originally spoken, it was wholly the creation of Jesus Himself, and therefore of Divine origin. The facts seem to show that such is not the case. In Conway's "Sacred Anthology," which is a selection from the sacred books of all religions, will be found the ancient Jewish morning and evening prayers, with which Jesus was, of course, familiar, and of which the Lord's Prayer is evidently largely a condensation: "Our Father who art in heaven, proclaim the unity of Thy name, and establish Thy kingdom perpetually and reign over us to all eternity. Our father who art in heaven, Thy will be done on high; vouchsafe to bestow a peaceful and tranquil mind to those who honor Thee on earth, but do, O Lord, what seems good in Thy sight. Give me only bread to eat and raiment to put on. Forgive, O Lord, those who have this day offended me. Let us, O Lord, not fall into the power of sin, transgression, or iniquity, and lead us not into temptation. Subdue our inclinations that they may be subservient to thee. Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, power, glory, and majesty."

### He Preached to the Scullery-Maid.

The Bishop of Ripon is a court preacher and sets before the Queen of Great Britain the way of life. The story is told that when the bishop was asked how he managed to address so exalted a personage as the sovereign and yet maintain his composure, he replied that he never addressed her at all. He knew there would be present the Queen, the princess, the household, the servants, down to the scullery-maid. And, said the bishop, I preach to the scullery-maid, and the Queen understands me. Blessed be the bishop that makes the gospel to be understood to the common people. There should be a scullery-maid in every congregation and she should be the supreme subject of the preacher's solicitude when he selects his language and his metaphors and illustrations. We fear the preaching that goes wide of the scullery-maid.

### Cromwell's 'Soldiers' Bible.'

Lord Wolsley's preface to the neat facsimile reprint of "Cromwell's Soldiers' Bible," just issued by Elliot Stock, is short and to the point. It runs as follows:—"In my humble opinion the soldier who carries this bible in his pack possesses what is of far higher value to him than the proverbial marshal's baton, for it carries its teaching in his head, and lets it rule his heart and conduct, he will certainly be happy, and most probably eminently successful." The history of the little book is interesting. It used to be asserted that every soldier in Cromwell's army was provided with a pocket bible, but Mr. George Livermore, of Cambridgeport, Massachusetts, in 1854, pointed out that it Cromwell's soldiers carried the Bible in their knapsacks it was not the whole Bible, but the "Soldiers' Pocket Bible," which consisted of appropriate quotations from the Scriptures printed in pocket form, and which was generally but-

toned between the coat and the waistcoat, next to the heart. Only two copies of the original work are now known to be in existence. One of them is in the collection of pamphlets formed during the progress of the civil war by George Thomason, a bookseller in London, and subsequently purchased and presented to the British museum by King George III. The other copy is still in the United States of America. It is a small octavo of sixteen pages, inclusive of the title-page; it bears the "imprimatur" of Edmund Calamy, who is said by Echard to have acted as an army chaplain. The passages, with two exceptions only, are taken out of the old Testament.

### The Prayer of Gethsemane.

What a mighty—what an almighty prayer—must have then gone up before the Eternal One! embracing not merely the chosen few who on the morrow's dawn were to become the near companions of their Lord, but for those also who should follow them throughout all time. It is no vain presumption to believe that not the humblest messenger who has ever since been sent to preach on earth peace and good will to men but found a place in that most solemn intercession, and that for him were sought during that hallowed night the grace and strength and wisdom which of himself he could not have. What an encouragement and strength to every burdened minister and toiler in the vineyard is the thought that the omniscient mind of Jesus embraced with the petitions of that prayer every individual in every age who should thereafter be called to proclaim the unsearchable riches of the Gospel of grace.

### Joe Howard's Idea.

Joe Howard, the famous newspaper correspondent, arises and sits down upon Dr. McGlynn, and a large class holding similar views, in this very emphatic manner: "I see father McGlynn is to speak Sunday next on 'What Shall Be the Relationship of Catholics and Protestants in America?' That's nonsense. Common sense emphatically declares that that relationship shall be precisely such as exists between methodists and baptists, episcopalians and universalists. There is altogether too much of this ember fanning business. Catholics and protestants alike have the right to their own faith, and there is no necessity of any 'relationship' between these two any more than between any other two. Let every man worship his own God in his own way and attend to his own affairs."

### Messages of Help for the Weak.

"I waited patiently for the Lord; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry." Psalm 40: 1.  
 "Dost thou believe on the son of God?" John 9: 35.  
 "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Acts 9: 6.  
 "Let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works," Hebrews 10: 24.  
 "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." John 11: 21.  
 "Have fervent charity among yourselves," I Peter 4: 8.  
 "God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble." I Peter 5: 5.

### The Great Requirement.

"I am persuaded," says an English pastor, "that everywhere in Christ's church the requirement is not more meetings, more organizations, more active work, but first more leisure to look into His face. For intensity of work you need intensity of life. For much labor you need much life. Is He our life? If we are too busy to walk with Christ we are only idly busy. We are impressed with these words, for they are applicable to the spirit of the time, which in Christian work is one of much aggressiveness. The Laodicean church was an active, busy organization, yet the love for Christ was lukewarm and he stood without the door. It is evident that he was not the centre and mainspring of that church's activity."

### The Just Fear of God.

"If we work upon marble, it will perish if we work upon brass, time will efface it; if we rear temples, they will crumble into dust; but if we work upon immortal minds, it we imbue them with principles, with just fear of God and love of our fellow-men, we engrave on those tablets something which will brighten to all eternity."

### Little Sins.

It is not the great dragon sins that come out against us and slay us as we go marching happily on our way toward God, but the little insignificant and contemptible vices that steal upon us while we sleep and poison us with their sting. Mosquitoes drink more blood than lions.

### Luther's House.

The house in which Martin Luther died at Eisleben, Germany, bore no mark to indicate this fact until a few weeks ago. The famous house, however, has been repaired and restored in a worthy fashion. It contains many relics of the great reformer.

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The man who faithfully discharges his duties as a legislator has no secure. And when is added to these public duties one's own personal business, one's hands are in truth full. An iron constitution may in such a case resist the inroads of disease for a time, but even with physical advantages in one's favor the strain will eventually tell. The case of Mr. Reuben E. Truax, ex-M. P., of Walkerton, Ont., and the present member-elect in the Local Legislature for Bruce, is an illustration in point.

The popularity of this gentleman has been such that public honors have been crowded upon him. At the recent election of members for the House of Assembly in Ontario Mr. Truax was the choice of his fellow-Liberals for Parliamentary honors and, as has ever been his wont, he came out successfully. But these honors on behalf of his country have been at serious cost to the health of Mr. Truax. He became a victim of indigestion in some of its most aggravated forms. "For ten years," he says, "I was much troubled with indigestion." In conversation with friends, he has put the case much stronger, saying "I

was nearly a dead man." "I tried," said he, "a number of different patent medicines, and have been treated by several physicians, but found no benefit from them. South American Nervine was recommended as a medicine likely to do me good. I obtained a bottle from the local druggist, and I must say I found quick relief. The first bottle I have followed up by taking two more bottles, with the result that I am entirely free from indigestion, of which I had been a victim for fully a decade. Freely, and indeed with pleasure, I strongly recommend to all sufferers from indigestion this medicine which has worked so wonderful a cure in my case."

■ This great discovery, South American Nervine, is efficacious in its application to many of the worst forms of disease, but perhaps with no complaint is it so certain and undoubted in its cure as with indigestion and nervousness. Mr. Truax's case of ten years' standing, was a desperate one, but the fact is no case is so severe as to withstand the wonderful remedial effects of South American Nervine.

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