

IN MEMORIAM JOHN CARRY, D. D.

Many of the readers of the *Guardian* will have heard with sorrow of the sudden death of the above-named distinguished divine, and will be glad to read a somewhat fuller account than usual of a life which has shed lustre on the Church and country.

The subject of this notice was born in Ireland, but at the age of 15 came to Canada with his father and settled at Pakenham, on the Ottawa. There when he was 21 he heard the Divine call and devoted himself to the Sacred Ministry. He joined us in Bishop's College in 1848, and was immediately recognized as a man of very superior mind. The influence he exerted upon his fellow-students was deep and lasting. There was an intensity about him—an intensity of devotion to study, of love for learning, especially of fiery zeal for his mother the Church of England as the bride of Christ, and with all that overbearing zeal, a childlike simplicity and absence of conceit that no generous nature could withstand. Especially in the cultivation of habits of systematic reading his influence and example were of the highest value. On St. Matthias's Day, 1850, he was made Deacon, and appointed travelling Missionary in the District of St. Francois. Five months later he was ordained Priest, and given the charge of Leeds, and laboured there for five years with the unflagging devotion which characterized his entire ministry. In 1855 he was advanced to the parish of Point Levi; this charge, after two years, he resigned for a more extended field of labour in the Diocese of Toronto, where he spent the remaining 33 years of his ministry and life.

In this sketch some account must be given of his life work, his published writings, and his character. His ministry, of course, stood first with him, and to it everything was made not only subordinate, but tributary. He was always a diligent visitor, especially so in his younger years, when the writer knew him as his nearest clerical neighbour in charge of a large section of very rough country, where he had to search out his people on horseback over the worst conceivable roads.

Once in the house of a parishioner, however lowly, and he was the kind and genial father and friend of all, his eloquent tongue pouring out his stores of sacred learning upon his rustic circle, delighting them also with his mirth and wit, with which he knew so well how to season the graver matters of his discourse, and never leaving them without prayer and blessing. He was most conscientious and painstaking in his care for the instruction of the young.

It is well known, through his speeches in the Synod of Toronto and his letters in the newspapers, how earnest and persistent he was in his efforts to awaken all religious persons both inside and outside to the necessity, if our country was to be saved from moral and religious ruin, of all the religious bodies uniting in systematically giving such religious instruction in the common schools of the country as all could agree upon and as the law allowed. He had himself arranged, in concert with the ministers of the other religious bodies, such a course for the schools of Port Perry. But it was in the pulpit that he shone most brilliantly. His written sermons were apt to soar about the capacity of ordinary hearers, but his extemporaneous addresses (and nearly all his preaching was extemporaneous) were always delightful to learned and unlearned alike. His exposition of the sense and meaning of the sacred writer was masterly, and he would bring home to the conscience the lessons intended with a power that overbore all gainsaying. Charming would he illustrate the points he insisted upon out of the rich stores of Divine and human. And all this in such chaste and beautiful Eng-

lish that it was a delight to simply sit and listen. For rich, varied, and instructive discourse, combining profound exposition of God's word, clearness and fulness of doctrinal teaching, faithful setting forth of duty and convincing appeals to conscience—in all these qualities taken together, it is believed that the Canadian Church has had in our day few preachers to compare with him.

But Dr. Carry as a speaker and writer largely influenced the Church and the community outside his own parish. His profound and varied learning, his familiarity with all ecclesiastical antiquity, his large acquaintance with every department of literature, and above all the masterly power of his pen in setting the truth he was defending in the most convincing light gained for him long since the ear of the Canadian people. His services to the Church of Canada as a learned divine and a brilliant and powerful writer have been simply inestimable. But it is especially by his brethren of the clergy that his loss will be felt. His stores of knowledge were always at their disposal, and were frequently drawn upon. But more than that, his presence among the clergy was a never failing healthy stimulus to advancement in every right direction; but especially in learning, and both by private advice and in the periodical meetings of the clergy for conference and study, Dr. Carry's counsels and his discriminating recommendations of books were of the greatest value.

To the general public Dr. Carry was best known by his letters in the public press. These were upon all sorts of subjects—literary, educational, social, ethical as well as religious. Their masculine vigour, originality, and outspoken boldness, as well as the charm of their style, made them very captivating. Among the most important were those on the controversy with Rome, and which won for Dr. Carry the title of the Littledale of the Canadian Church. One incident is worth mentioning. Some years ago Archbishop Lynch was assailing the Church of England in the newspapers, using authorities from the Fathers, one of them very telling on his side from St. Athanasius. There was consternation in the Roman camp a day or two later when Dr. Carry pointed out in a letter to the *Globe* that Archbishop Lynch's authority was from a writing which all learned Romanists acknowledged to be spurious. The Archbishop at once wrote and acknowledged that this was true, and that he himself had been deceived. There were several series of controversial letters on the Sabbath question, on the Intermediate State, on Tithes, and on the use of fermented wine in the Holy Communion. The part he took in vindicating the Apostolic origin of Episcopacy from time to time was so able that when the conference on reunion was held three years ago in Toronto Dr. Carry was selected by the Church of England delegation to prepare a written statement of the grounds upon which the Church of England must always maintain the Historic Episcopate. The impression made by that paper upon the members of the other two delegations was shown by their request that it should be printed for their fuller and calmer study at home. But that which formed the crown and glory of his life were the twelve letters printed simultaneously a few months ago in four or more of the leading secular newspapers of Canada, upon the reunion of the separated bodies of English speaking Christians. Their great ability and profound learning; the marvellous way in which he marshalled and disposed of the difficulties of the problem, showing the reunion to be practicable even from a High Churchman's point of view, without sacrifice of principle on either side, but more the beautiful spirit which everywhere pervades them—their moderation, their conciliatory tone and temper, learning treasured up in his unerring memory, their generous consideration towards others, made a profound impression.

There remains one more side of Dr. Carry's life to be touched upon, without which this sketch would be incomplete—his table talk. His power as a conversationalist was one of his most excellent gifts. The flow of his talk in the social circle was simply delightful, full of variety in its subject matter, playful and jocular and always instructive. Without the least effort he would take captive the company he was in, turning the talk into channels far removed from ordinary gossip, and gaining a delighted hearing from one and another of those great thoughts with which his mind and heart were always full to overflowing. And when he found a really intelligent and appreciative circle, how would he glow and expand and pour himself out in eloquent talk, brilliant with quotation and all on fire with the enthusiasm of goodness. The good that he did, the hundreds that he instructed, the influence he exercised by his rare gift through his long life, I believe, quite beyond calculation.

Mention has been made of Dr. Carry's learning. In every department of sacred learning his knowledge was exact. He had a sound acquaintance with the Hebrew and Syriac language; and besides his familiarity with the Greek and Latin classics, which he kept up to the end ("I am reading an ode of Horace every day," he wrote some months back), he had an intimate acquaintance with the ecclesiastical Greek and Latin writers. His knowledge of Biblical exegesis and criticism was extensive and exact. To say that he knew the Hebrew Bible and Greek Testament from end to end were to say little; he had scrutinized every text and examined every difficulty over and over again; and to meditation upon the Holy Scriptures the first and best of his time and thought was always given. But not only sacred learning, in all literature he was extensively read. His especial delight, however, was in poetry, indeed his mind was essentially poetical, and he was himself a verse writer of no mean order.

In estimating Dr. Carry's character, everyone at all intimately acquainted with him would put first the transparent honesty of his nature, and next his courage. To say that he had the courage of his opinions was to say little. All his life through he not only incurred obloquy by writing vehemently against opinions and practices in favour with the public which he believed to be injurious, but he again and again deliberately entered into contests where he knew he would excite prejudice and dislike against himself personally. But what especially bound his friends to him was the affectionateness of his nature, his unusually warm and loving heart. The highest quality of all was the depth and power of his personal religion. There lies before the writer a MS. volume of his prayers, mainly intercessory, extending over more than 30 years. If one did not otherwise know it, an hour spent over this sacred relic would convince anyone that Dr. Carry was essentially a man of prayer.

His health had been much broken for several years, and he knew that he was liable at any moment to be summoned away, and often spoke of it. His death, instantaneous from heart failure, as he was on his way to give the Blessed Sacrament to a sick parishioner, was a veritable *euthanasia*. Port Perry, from which he will always be called (*Johannes a Portu* he once called himself in a flash of wit), holds his mortal remains. Where he himself, we may hope, is, may best be seen from his Christmas greeting to the writer a short time since:—"The circle of years narrow, and so I think intensifies the affection which we entertain for the lessening number of friends. Soon all gloomy views will be dispelled, and in that blessed mysterious Paradise of God we shall love without a fear and without a cloud."

H. R.

Bishop's College,
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