

Our Contributors.

A GOOD GLADSTONIAN LESSON.

BY KNOWNIAN.

The other day we stumbled across an essay written by Gladstone on Macaulay some years ago. It is bound with one on Norman McLeod by the G. O. M., and both are of course exquisitely good reading. Gladstone has a style of his own, and when he writes or speaks on political issues it is sometimes a little difficult to know exactly what his magnificent phrases mean. Possibly he means that they should be a trifle elastic. There is no mistaking, however, what this essay on Macaulay means. The writer manifestly set out with the intention of showing that Macaulay is the most brilliant writer the world ever saw and that he is as unreliable and dogmatic as brilliant. Through fifty pages the Grand Old Man shows that very thing with much greater clearness than he ever expounded the advantages of Home Rule for Ireland. It is hard reading for an admirer of Macaulay. Macaulay plumed himself on his accuracy in details, and you hold your breath and feel your cheek getting the least bit hot as the Old Man downs your favourite on his own ground. There is any amount of consolation, however. Macaulay played many a victim himself, and the writer who consigned Robert Montgomery and a hundred others to everlasting contempt richly deserves all the Grand Old Man gives him.

But we have wandered from our text as far as some preachers are in the habit of wandering. We set out with the praiseworthy intention of drawing some useful lessons from a genuine Gladstonian expression found in this essay. Near the end the writer forecasts the future centuries and indulges in a little interesting speculation as to the probable lifetime of Macaulay's writings. He thinks Macaulay will be read in the year 2850, and probably in 3000, but not perhaps read "as a standard and supreme authority." He will be read "with fascination," "with delight," "with wonder," with "copious instruction," but with

COPIOUS RESERVE

The more you turn that expression "copious reserve" over in your mind the more suggestive does it become. What a multitude of things there are in this world of ours that ought to be heard and read and believed with copious reserve.

Perhaps the first illustrations that occur to one is an extreme party newspaper—an organ. You take up a party organ of a certain school and you read that the Liberals are a bad lot, fond of boodle and bribery, greatly given to thieving and lying, constantly plotting treason and pulling the wires for annexation. You read on and wonder that these people are allowed to live in the country. Then you look around among your neighbours and see that those "horrid Grits" are actually allowed to meet the party of immaculate purity on even terms in business, in social life and everywhere else. You wonder, and after a time it begins to dawn upon your mind that an extreme party organ of any political school should be read with *copious reserve*.

Occasionally you read in the newspapers of great religious movements that are said to be taking place in different parts of the country. Judging by the reports, it would be fair to conclude that old Satan was being driven out of these parts. You go there, stay in a hotel, talk to the people, do business with them, and you are not long in finding out that human nature is just the same there as anywhere else. A little observation and experience convince you that even reports of religious affairs have not unfrequently to be taken with copious reserve.

Brother Blowhard has not sinned for a great many years—so he says, though some of his neighbours might not quite agree with him. He soars aloft, he says, to the third heavens, and dwells in delightful contemplation on high subjects. His wife and children might perhaps tell a different story, but what do women and children know about such things? Blowhard can tell an experience that Abraham never felt, that Moses never enjoyed until he got to the very summit of Pisgah, that David never dared to sing about, that Paul never attained to. It may be all right. Blowhard may be a more advanced saint than Abraham, or Moses, or David, or Paul, but in the absence of conclusive evidence it might be well to take Blowhard's experience with copious reserve.

In fact any man who indulges in big talk should be listened to with copious reserve. Exaggerated expressions if taken at their face value are always misleading if not altogether untrue. A good rule in life is never to pay much attention to a boaster. If noticed at all he should be taken with copious reserve.

Men who have the blues should always be listened to with copious reserve. This is specially true of cases in which the blues arise from ill-health. Quite unconsciously a man may easily give a blue tinge to his words if his liver is on strike or his digestive apparatus is out of order. In such cases the sufferer should always be taken with a reserve charitably copious. He did not mean to do or say anything wrong.

An angry man should always be heard with a reserve religiously copious. The men who lose their temper occasionally are a long way from being the worst men in society. Of course self-control is a grand thing, and it gives a man wondrous influence among his fellows, sometimes far more influence than he deserves. The indispensable thing in con-

trolling others is to control yourself. Every man can't control his nerves, and if a good man does allow Old Adam to master him for a moment, just take his angry words with copious reserve. If a really good man he will be sorry enough for them himself next morning.

Tale-bearers, gossipers, scandal-mongers and all the unclean brood of that kind should be taken with a reserve so copious that no attention is paid to them at all.

SERMON REVERIES.

NO. IX.

"A Happy Man" was the main theme of a discourse which set me a thinking the other Sabbath. So many of us are dissatisfied that anything which could lead us out of the woods would surely attract attention and cause reflection. There are represented in an ordinary congregation almost every walk and condition of life, and among these the usual ten per cent of those entirely satisfied will be found. As the preacher eloquently said "The epicure has run the whole gamut of pleasures, and turns away with his longings still unfulfilled; so the stoic, who endures pain and suffering with fortitude, and esteems all things as naught to him, yet is restless and discontented. If any should be happy surely the wealthy are, yet we know that pleasures pall and all things shed their alluring coating in the enjoyment of them. So earthly pleasure fails, to all, to be a happiness lasting and true." Such an opening meant the laying before restless ones the merits of Christ's Gospel, its merits, healing effects and life giving principles.

The text was those two mighty verses with which the Psalms open: "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law doth he meditate day and night." Truly faith and creed enough for any and every one without any theology intermingled. The preacher was not by any means as free as he is as a rule. In fact the sermon hesitated and almost stopped at times. That its vast importance was one of the reasons there is no doubt. More sermons have been preached upon these verses than one can comfortably read, much less understand. For only one in a dozen can give directions as to what is "sitting in the seat of the scornful," and one in a hundred, satisfactory directions. The Methodist parsons denounce vigorously in bold language dancing, cards, theatres, etc.; they even are not very choicé in their delineation of the ultimate end or present character of any engaged in any of these tabooed habits. Young people, especially of the Methodist Church, enjoy cards and dancing as a rule as well as any other belief. As for theatres, as many of those go there as go from any other branch. So they are *non est* according to their preachers, and plain talk does not work as intended that it should.

Our preachers on the other hand say, that is, most of them "You must do everything as if God saw you and you knew it. If you can play cards with a clear conscience, do so. So with the others. But take heed lest thy brother, who is weaker than thee, stumble."

The germ of the whole trouble is of course the degrading of every pleasure in process of use by degraded man. Why every one of these enjoyable things should be wrong has puzzled many an earnest thinker.

Our friend, Mr. McIntyre, of the Bloor Street College, has an idea of great value. "That the stage has deteriorated because of the laxity of the Church; instead of travelling in separate paths, the Church and stage should have gone on together. There is no higher work than the correct imitation of the actions and lives of God's highest creation, viz., man." The trouble is that by sending the stage on its way alone, the Church allowed a great force for good to become deteriorated and debased. Of cards and dancing I say no ill; the cards require skill, and, as such, are worthy of all mastery. It is a pity though, with all our boasted advancement, that we cannot entertain our guests without hopping around a room or playing cards. That other games are now "invented" is a fact, but for childishness condensed, commend me to most of them. The old-time chess and checkers after all have remained reasonably free from abuse, but unimpaired in their points, difficulties and beauties.

Those dreadful people who, according to the opinions of a well-known divine, are on the highroad to destruction by reason of their lodges, etc., to which they belong, will, however, more than any other, be interested in the question very much. Whether theirs be a lodge which, walking in, they are ungodly, or, standing in, they are sinful, or, sitting in, they are scornful, they only know. I belong to a couple of these organizations. One for insurance, and one for its associations. Of course the Rev. Dr. does not know anything about that which he spoke of, and I am forbidden to tell him, but this much I can say and I do say it. God and His manifold works, glories and attributes, enter largely into the whole ceremonial of both of my pets. The one carrying insurance I will not mention further, as its *raison d'être* is apparent. The other carries with it means and chances for further extending one's acquaintanceship not possessed by any other organization, not excepting Churches; and I am an inveterate attender at all Church affairs, and know thoroughly well every one that goes. One can't limit their circle to Presbyterians, however, for you get into ruts, so that other means are sought out. Now the only danger from all

this is late hours and all that these mean. I never saw at one of these gatherings, some of which were very large and social affairs, anything of which I was ashamed; everything was just, perfect and regular. Those who have been at a "fourth" will bear me out in this statement. Wherever there are happenings which should not be, then by all means let those who desire a pure, manlike and respectable state of things to exist, exert their great influence that way. Some one has said that "the devil should not have all the best tunes." So say we all, and likewise he should not have everything or anything else. A sturdy, firm resolve for right, and a frowning down of all questionable remarks or actions, should characterize all of God's people. There is just a much fun, frolic, brightness and cheeriness possible for the Christian as for any one else. Those who pull a long face and impose their extreme religious views upon others, only make a bright world of a dull grey hue like which it was never meant to be. Satan works splendidly with pessimistic colours, but never with optimistic ones.

The whole question of companionship hinges of course just here, not that we would damn a man by his own companions. A young elder said in a meeting the other day, regarding an applicant for a choir post, because he had been singing in a church of another denomination, that "he would never do here, he must sing out of a pure heart, and a man who could sing in such a church must of necessity be far otherwise." Poor elder, I am afraid that the dull heathens who so feebly hiss their hymns of praise, would stop the action of his heart did they but come into one of our churches and commence to sing. The sentiment of his remark is as silly and thoughtless as that of another man who would not engage any of the applicants for a position as organist unless they would admit they were "saved."

CURLY TOPP.

SABBATH OBSERVANCE.

The following is the substance of Mr. John Charlton's speech in support of the second reading in the House of Commons of his Bill for securing the better observance of the Lord's Day:—

Mr. Charlton, in presenting the Bill for securing the better observance of the Lord's Day, first explained its provisions. The first section prohibited the publication of Sunday newspapers and the sale of newspapers on the Lord's Day. The second section provided for the closing of the canals on the Lord's Day from six o'clock in the morning till ten o'clock at night. The third section provided for restricting railway traffic on the Lord's Day as far as it was possible to do so, and the fourth section forbids Sunday excursions by railway or steamer. The Minister of Justice, he said, had admitted the power of Parliament to deal with all these questions, and it only remained to consider the question of propriety. The demand for Sunday rest was not placed on religious grounds, but was treated rather in the light of a civil right, although, of course, the higher law not only sanctioned but required that which the Bill proposed to make the law of Canada. The observance of the day rested upon God's command, as did every human blessing. The State could deal with it as a purely civil question. It could provide for and command the use of one day in seven as a day of rest, for sanitary reasons, for intellectual and moral reasons; for the purpose of securing the health, happiness and prosperity of the people, and to secure protection in rights of conscience and freedom to worship God and keep His commandments. Religious observance was not enforced, but the right to enjoy religious privileges was secured by this Bill, to the citizen.

Much tenderness was shown in certain quarters about encroaching upon the domain of ecclesiastical law, but it would be found upon examination that human legislation must adopt a part of the decalogue. The first, second, third and tenth commandments dealt with questions pertaining to man's moral state and moral duty, but the Christian state could not escape the obligations imposed by the higher law on the fourth, sixth, seventh, eighth and ninth commandments. It must deal in its enactments with the crime of murder, with theft, with perjury, and with crimes against chastity; and it was just as proper and necessary for it to deal with the question of securing to earth's toilers the day of rest that God had decreed should be their heritage. Mr. Charlton pointed out the English statutes that provided for Sunday observance. Nearly all the colonies had laws of the same character, and so also had all the American States except California. It might be asked, who desired this law? He could answer that it was demanded by labour organizations, by Churches, by jurists, and by statesmen. He gave quotations from Henry George, T. V. Powderly, Chief T. McArthur, the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, the American Federation of Labour, and other labour organizations. He quoted Daniel Webster, Chief Justice Field, Judge A. G. Thurman, Justice Matthew Hale, Gladstone, Disraeli, Shaftesbury, Argyle, Bright, Lincoln and Garfield in the same connection. For the benefit of his French-Canadian friends he gave the unequivocal utterances of Pope Leo XIII, Cardinal Taschereau, the Bishop of Buffalo, Cardinal McClosky and Cardinal Gibbons, in favour of Sabbath observance.

It had been objected, Mr. Charlton said, to Sunday laws that they were not consistent with liberty and human rights. On the contrary, he said, the Sabbath law was the bulwark of liberty because it was the bulwark of morality. It promoted good morals, it protected the public health by giving the rest essential to health's preservation. It gave us the educational influence of the Church, the Sabbath school and a day that might be devoted in part to reading and study. It blessed and protected the home, and good homes were the bulwark of the nation. It prevented crime, and it promoted the prosperity of the individual and of the State. With it, as with all God's statutes, we could say with David: In keeping of the there is great reward, and we might always be sure that industrial prosperity and good moral condition were inseparable.

In dealing with the economic aspect of the case, Mr. Charlton said that in the interest of labour the ten-hour