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KNOX COLLEGE JUBILEE.

The great event which all Presbyterians interested in Knox College, or indeed, in Presbyterianism in the Dominion, have been looking forward to with so much interest, and which has, during the past few months, been often referred to in our columns, the celebration of the Jubilee of Knox College, is now a thing of the past, and has become a matter of history. It was appropriate that the proceedings should open in Knox Church, one not only bearing the same name as the college, but one which is historic in its connection with Presbyterianism in the city and in the Province. A large audience had assembled when from the vestry there bled into the church the professors of the college and others, and the Rev. Principal Caven, D.D., and Rev. Dr. Parsons, pastor of the church, conducted to the pulpit the Rev. Dr. Patton, President of Princeton College, New Jersey, U.S., who received his arts education in the University of Toronto, and part of his theological training in Knox College, for which he retains an ardent affection and which retains an ardent affection for him.

Principal Caven made a few introductory remarks, characteristically modest, respecting the occasion, introducing Rev. Dr. Patton as a distinguished alumnus of Knox College, the head of a famous American college, and well known in Canada as he is in what is now his adopted country, who had been chosen as the preacher of the Jubilee Sermon. Before sermon, Rev. Dr. Parsons conducted the devotional services, choosing most appropriately the Hundredth Psalm, which was sung with heart and soul to the noble tune to which it has become wedded. Praise, prayer and scripture reading being solemnly engaged in, Dr. Patton took his text from Mark xi. 30: "The baptism of John: was it from heaven, or of men? Answer me."

THE SERMON.

It was not a sermon in the ordinary sense, but rather a religio-philosophical prelection, most suitable to, and worthy of the occasion, worthy also of the high character which the Presbyterian pulpit has gained for itself for solid learning and for the defence of sound doctrine. After a brief introduction, in which the speaker referred to the agnostic position assumed by the religious leaders of that day when they answered, we cannot tell, and saying that many for different reasons at the present day assume the same attitude, he observed that it was one which those who represented Knox College could not take. He then stated the question he was about to discuss was that of Supernatural Religion. This he said was the burning question of the day; it eclipsed all others in its importance and concerned equally all denominations. He proposed to discuss the question under three heads.

I. Is Christianity a supernatural religion.

II. Has it any dogmatic contents, that is, has it any doctrines which it is obligatory on man to believe.

III. If it has, where are they to be found.

A NATURALISTIC RELIGION.

In these days a naturalistic religion is being presented to us in two forms, the first posits everything in the terms of matter and of motion; the second posits everything in terms of mind. These are the Spencerian and Hegelian forms respectively. Following up both to their logical conclusion, as he showed, makes an end of religion, and if of religion, of morality also; immortality, a personal God, are both gone.

After pointing out the indissoluble connection of religion and metaphysics, he declared that sooner or later there would have to be a pitched battle between supernaturalism and naturalism, and it might as well come now as any time. Christianity might choose the ground upon which this battle should be fought, and it might choose it to be waged over the grave of Jesus Christ, that is, over the doctrine of the Resurrection. He referred next to the destructive criticism in recent years of the Old Testament in the interests of naturalism and pointed out that those chargeable with this, know perfectly well that to be consistent they will have to apply the same destructive criticism to the New Testament, and explain Christ's person and work according to it, which is for all the great purposes of Christ and His work as they are now understood by Christians, to explain them away altogether.

Hence if there is nothing supernatural in Christianity, there is no religion, no morality, no immortality, no God.

His second question was:

HAS CHRISTIANITY ANY DOGMATIC CONTENTS which it is obligatory upon man to believe? If, as Christianity teaches, there has been a miraculous invasion of the world by the Almighty, we would naturally expect it to have in it something distinctive. There is something of good in all religions; we need not deny that; but what is distinctive of Christianity and justifies its missionary activity, and its exclusive claim is, that Christ was not only a great example, but that He claimed to be the world's Saviour; Christianity claims that it is a way, the way, the only way of salvation. There is peril, or there is no peril, there is no deliverance, or there is deliverance through the Christ of Christianity. Regard the scriptures as we may, they tell us that we are sinners, that without the shedding of blood there can be no remission. In view of this, does not the possibility of salvation depend upon the facts of the incarnation and the atonement of Christ? Not the knowledge of the facts, but the facts themselves. As soon as this is stated we have a dogma, or a doctrine, or a propositional statement, call it what you will, one of such immense importance that it is obligatory to believe it, because it is the condition of salvation; and he who receives it must not only believe it for himself, he must also press it upon others with all his might. "Knowing the terrors of the Lord, we persuade men; we are ambassadors for Christ." These facts involve a good many other facts bound up with them, making a body of doctrine, which comes under the head of dogma. A dogmatic religion, one of positive, obligatory facts which must be believed, is the need of the present day. Christianity is not science, it is not philosophy; it is information, it is information given by God to men.

This leads to the last question—

WHERE IS THIS INFORMATION TO BE FOUND?

Is it to be found anywhere? Different answers have been given. (1) It may have been given to each individual spirit. Of this, without any disrespect to them being intended, the Quakers might be cited as an example. (2) It may not have been given to individuals but to the people collectively. This is the doctrine of the Christian consciousness. But if one opinion may be wrong and no man is willing to claim that it is absolutely impossible for him in this matter to be wrong, it is not easy to see how one hundred wrong opinions are any better than one, and this is the defect of this view. (3) God may have made this known to the church in its corporate capacity. This is the Roman Catholic and High Anglican view. This destroys the scriptures, which also the Higher Criticism does, and thus we find extremes meeting. (4) The fourth opinion is, that we have this information in the scriptures. This is the answer of Protestant Christianity. Here the questions of the Inspiration and Historicity of the Old and New Testaments were discussed and the question asked, Have we in them a body of information still left, after criticism has done all its work? The answer was, Yes. In support of this, appeal was made to the phenomena of scripture as an organic structure, to our own experience in the responses of man's nature to the teaching of scripture, and thus, without excluding or belittling the doctrine of the teaching of the Holy Spirit, we arrive at the conclusion that the scriptures are the word of God, contain information from God to man on the great question of salvation. The importance of the testimony of the Holy Spirit was dwelt upon more at length, the place of the reason, the church and the scriptures, respectively, referred to and pointed out; and with a brief but inspiring peroration upon the importance of the occasion in view of the great work of Knox College having been, and still to be, the unfolding and holding fast of the scriptures, the training of men for that great work as preachers and the connection of this with all that is most vital for man's interest, he brought his discourse to a close. A short but comprehensive prayer followed, then "Onward, Christian Soldiers," led with sympathetic enthusiasm by the choir, and joined in with heart and soul by the audience, testified to the effect of the whole discourse upon the audience and will not soon be forgotten.

The sermon occupied upwards of an hour and a quarter, and although it was from beginning to end a piece of close connected reasoning, necessarily requiring the use of terms which to many in the audience must have been unintelligible, yet the fluency of the speaker, his language flowing without a break or even a halt, his learning, his perfect mastery of his subject, his earnestness, his touches of sarcasm and irony, his flashes of humour without irreverence, kept his audience in close and sustained attention to the close. It was such an intellectual and spiritual treat as one can enjoy only rarely in a lifetime, and such an intellectual feat as we have never personally seen equalled, and has left such an impression upon all who heard it as to have raised President Patton to the very highest place in their admiration as an exponent of a difficult but supremely important subject.

This worthily opened and worthily closed the first part of the programme of the jubilee services. The

SECOND PART OF THE PROGRAMME.

of the Jubilee celebrations began on Wednesday, and takes us to Knox College itself and to the Convocation Hall. At a meeting of the alumni on the previous day, an effort was made by appointing a committee to wait upon the proper authorities, to have the place for this meeting and the next changed to some much larger building, in view of the number likely to attend for which the accommodation of Convocation Hall would be quite inadequate. This it was found could not be done. Promptly at 10.30, the Faculty and others who were to take part on the occasion, arrayed in their official robes, headed by Rev. Prof. MacLaren, who was to preside, began to file into the room. This was the signal for general and cordial cheering, especially on the part of the students. It was a touching sight to see the loving, respectful tenderness with which the venerable Dr. Reid was assisted, as with feeble steps and slow, he walked along the aisle, got upon the platform and took his seat, and at the same time one could not but notice and be pleased with, if one did not even admire, the cheerful glow of happiness that lighted up the brave, strong features of his face. A part of the Forty-eighth Psalm was sung. Rev. Dr. Gregg led in prayer, after which Prof. MacLaren proceeded to say that although this was the Jubilee year, which suggested trumpet-blowing, neither Knox College nor he himself was much addicted to that sort of exercise, and a ripple of gentle laughter came over all when he added, this was to be done by Rev. Dr. Reid. The best testimonial, he said, to the college was its work, which he had known and been somewhat intimately associated with as student or professor almost from the first. The college as a theological school had been marked by two or three

WELL DEFINED CHARACTERISTICS.

The first of these was, its steadfast attachment to the great evangelical principles and fundamental truths held by it in common with the living church of the living God. The second was, its faithful adherence to the historic features of Presbyterian doctrine and polity, and this not owing to a blind conservatism, but because they were intelligently believed and held fast. The third was, the interest it had always taken in applied Christianity as represented by the great work of saving souls and building up the church of Christ. It had always been noticeably missionary in its character, so that in the city, for a hundred miles around it and in the Home Mission fields in every part of the church, the work of its students or professors in this regard was well known and appreciated. He recalled the names of the late Dr. Black, the pioneer Presbyterian missionary in Manitoba, and of Rev. Mr. Nesbit, who gave himself with such devotion to save the red Indian, and to our missions in China, Formosa and India, all so largely manned by students from Knox College. He hoped that it would always continue to be marked by these features. The

REV. DR. REID

was then appropriately introduced and asked to read the admirable historical paper which, through his courtesy and the kindness of the Rev. Wm. Burns, we have already been enabled to lay before our readers. It is not often that a college is so favored at its jubilee as to have for its historian

on the occasion one who took part in its inception, who has for the whole half-century watched over its growth, and has during all that period had such intimate knowledge of its history as the Rev. Dr. Reid has had of Knox College. Although his walking powers are impaired, his voice is not, and his paper was read with strong, clear, distinct enunciation, while the broad, unmistakable Doric was like a breath, direct and fresh from the hills of old Scotland. The appreciation of it and of the man was testified to by general and hearty cheering at its close.

LETTERS OF REGRET

at inability to be present were read at this stage from the Moderator of the General Assembly, Rev. G. L. MacKay, D.D., our well-known Formosa missionary, who is at present in Britain, from the Revs. Principal MacVicar and King, and the Rev. Dr. Munro Gibson, of St. John's Wood congregation, London, England, a distinguished graduate, who was for some time pastor of Erskine Church, Montreal, and so popular that his name yet on any appropriate occasion will call forth a cheer from any gathering of Knox College graduates. Others were mentioned as having sent regrets for unavoidable absence, among whom was the Rev. Prof. Beattie, of Louisville, Kentucky. A resolution of the Presbytery of Toronto was also read addressed to the Senate and Faculty of Knox College, congratulating them on the auspicious occasion. The

REV. PRINCIPAL GRANT

was then called upon, as representing one of the oldest, if not the very oldest Presbyterian colleges in the Dominion. He was in his happiest vein, his face all the morning had been beaming. He brought the cordial greetings of Queen's College, Kingston, from which, with a playful humour, he added, Knox College had sprung. They too, he said, had their Dr. Reid in the Rev. Dr. Williamson, whose eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated, but was busy planning new work, although his connection with Queen's dated back to what always seemed to him a dim and misty past. He quietly remarked that, at Queen's, they had of late had so many jubilees that he had become quite accustomed to them. The Special Relation of Sister Colleges was the theme assigned to him. This was determined largely, he said, by their origin and the nature of their work. It was well to go back to origins; the Jewish Jubilee recognized this; to go back and trace God's gracious dealings in the past, for inspiration and instruction, for guidance in the present, and for hope in the future. Our rejoicings in the present must have their roots in the past; the heart of the national being, of the State, is centred in the past; so must it be with the church. It is only by looking back to and honouring the fathers that we can be worthy of them and continue to be a real, historical, apostolical and reformed church. The church in Canada in begetting its colleges had acted as a free church, influenced by the forces and spirit existing at the time when they had been called into existence. Thus in 1839, animated by high patriotism and wise zeal, our fathers resolved upon founding in Kingston, at a time when they were poor, but full of courage and faith, a university and theological college on the Scottish model. In the same spirit of the time, Knox College was founded in 1844. He further illustrated this point by referring to and tracing rapidly the history of college education in the Maritime Provinces from the founding of Windsor University to that of Dalhousie and of Pine Hill Theological College, and of Manitoba College and the summer session. These and all the six colleges of our church illustrated the freedom of the church's action at different periods in its history. The church had been the fruitful mother of colleges and would continue to be. Unbelief is barren, but all the great colleges and universities of Europe had their origin in the church; Christianity, religion, is always asking, seeking more light. To the same principle it was due that our church is still founding colleges in Formosa, in Trinidad, in India and even in the South Seas.

The sister colleges were further related in their

IDENTITY OF WORK.

They are all fellow-laborers with each other; there is no such thing as Baptist

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