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THE GUARDIAN.

"HOLD FAST THAT WHICH IS GOOD."

VOLUME II.

HALIFAX, N. S. WEDNESDAY, JULY 3, 1889.

NUMBER 1.

POETRY.

MY LIBRARY.

"Having no library within reach, I live upon my own stores, which are, however, more ample, perhaps, than were ever before possessed by one whose whole estate was in his inkstand."

My days among the dead are past;
Around me I behold,
Where'er these casual eyes are cast,
The mighty minds of old:
My never failing friends are they,
With whom I converse day by day.

With them I take delight in weal,
And seek relief in woe:
And while I understand and feel
How much to them I owe,
My cheeks have often been bedew'd
With tears of thoughtful gratitude.

My thoughts are with the dead; with them
I live in long-past years;
Their virtues love, their faults condemn,
Partake their hopes and fears,
And from their lessons seek and find
Instruction with a humble mind.

My hopes are with the dead—anon
My place with them shall be,
And I with them shall travel on
Through all futurity;
Yet leaving here a name, I trust
That will not perish with the dust.—*Southey.*

LITERATURE.

COLLINS'S CHEAP EDITIONS OF SELECT CHRISTIAN AUTHORS—WARD'S LIBRARY—FRASER AND CRAWFORD'S CHRISTIAN LITERATURE.

We do not blame the Messrs Chambers for cheapening the literature of their country. On the contrary, we think they have done good service to the cause of national intellect, by putting a library of standard works within the reach of the operative classes. We have no fears from an enlightened population, provided only that "knowledge, which is power," shall be associated with moral principle, and sanctified by the faith of the gospel. But we will attach great blame to the members of the professing Church of Christ, if it shall so turn out, that while the literature of the world is made level to the capacities and the pockets of our people, no provision of a similar kind shall be made to bring the lessons of a higher and holier literature within the grasp of our mechanics and artisans. It gives us, therefore, sincere pleasure to see the indefatigable mind of a Christian bookseller, like Mr. Collins, engaging itself in an enterprise of this nature; putting forth its energies to meet the moral necessities of the age; and bringing within the reach of the humblest of our people such valuable stores of sacred knowledge as those provided in the "Select Christian Authors," with the very valuable "Introductory Essays" appended. The specimens before us are beautifully executed, and the price is remarkably moderate. That Mr. Wilberforce's noble work, with the excellent Essay by Bishop Wilson of Calcutta, should have been furnished in even an elegant form for *sixteenpence*, is what we could not have anticipated; and we shall anticipate with great satisfaction the works of the Howes and the Doddridges, the Witherspoons, the Maclatrina's, the Baxters, and the Venns, with a host of the same class, on the same scale of price and style of execution. The "Introductory Essays" are by some of the ablest men of the day, and each contains a discussion of some one vital topic, suggested by the books which are thus prefaced, and entering deep into the secrets of practical and experimental theology. Will our excellent friend allow us to notice such works as Dickinson's "Familiar Letters," Fuller's "Gospel its own Witness," and Edwards on the "History of Redemption," as scarcely entitled to be passed by in a selection of Christian Authors adapted for popular use. The praiseworthy undertaking has our best wishes. This is to purify the fountains of popular literature, and to give a Christian tone to the national mind.

It gives us great pleasure to observe that Messrs Ward & Co. of London have commenced a "Library of Standard Divinity" on the same plan. Their first publication—Archbishop Leighton's "Theological

Lectures"—is now before us, and it is very tastefully got up. In the same elegant, correct, and cheap form, the choicest productions of the Howes, the Halls, the Baxters, the Taylors, the Owens, the Flavels, and the Bunyans—besides many excellent works of modern divines—will be brought before the public in an authentic and unabridged form.—*Christian Instructor.*

SYNOD OF GLASGOW AND AYR. PRINTING OF THE BIBLE.

Principal MACFARLAN, in proposing an overture to the General Assembly as to the safeguards to be adopted in reference to the printing of the Bible, after the Queen's printer's patent has expired, said thirty years had now passed since he had introduced an overture into the Synod, so that they would see he was not over zealous in pressing forward legislative measures on the Church. But this was a most important case—the most important that could be brought before them—it concerned the purity, the authority and credit of the sacred volume in the Church and in the country. They all knew that in all Christian countries, and especially Protestant countries—the very principle of the separation from the Church of Rome being the circulation of the Bible among the people—the greatest precautions have been used that the translation of the Bible should be accurate and accurately printed. In England, the Queen's printers have the exclusive right of printing the Bible, except when notes are appended; and the same rule holds in Scotland. Though no doubt there have been complaints of errors, yet these errors were trifling, and were never such as to affect the text, and these have of late years been all corrected, so that the present editions are of uncommon beauty of typography and accuracy. The patent expires in July next for Scotland, and a committee of the House of Commons have recommended that it shall not be renewed, but that the power of printing the Bible shall be given to the Scottish Universities and to the General Assembly; that English Bibles may be sold in Scotland, which cannot be the case at present; and that Bibles may be printed by every printer who shall give an obligation under certain penalties, that the text shall be kept pure. This last provision is of a most alarming character. Every printer who can get paper and types may print the Bible if he comes under an obligation, but to whom must he come under obligation? Who is to enforce the penalties? Probably some board of Commissioners. But what confidence can the people of Scotland have in such mixed Commissions as we have seen on some former occasions? (Hear, hear.) Such a measure would have the effect of destroying the confidence of the people of Scotland in that Book which they are taught to revere, and which is put into the hands of their children as a treasure. But if it be printed on the authority of a printer only, they will lose their confidence in the purity of the Word of God, and there will be a consequent diminution of their reverence for that, which had always been regarded with a reverential feeling by those who have experienced its use and its value. These must be the results if the proposed plan is adopted. There can be no objection to the sale of the English Bibles in Scotland, if Scottish Bibles are admitted equally free into England; but will the English Universities or the English people receive them if they are printed only on the authority, perhaps, of a Commission? But a still deeper and more dangerous point is, that there may be not accidental, but intentional, vitiations of the pure text. There are various sects who not only try to interpret Scripture to suit their own views, but who actually vitiate the text for the same purpose. Cromwell, in the time of his Protectorate, paid £1000 to the printer at Cambridge to make an alteration of one word—to get *he* put in place of *we* in the third verse of the sixth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles; and such was the feeling of the General Assembly at the alteration, that they passed an Act repudiating that version, and preventing its use in Scotland, thus showing how scrupulous our fathers were as to the accuracy of the Scriptures. But matters of that sort are now looked on as of little moment. Even in the schools called national, the Bible is excluded, and extracts only furnished for the use of the children, and some of these from other than the authorised version. Another thing he would state to show the animus of some parties as to the Bible:—A vessel some time ago sailed with emigrants to a foreign part and they were supplied with a copy each of the English prayer-book; but on examining them it was found that everything containing Trinitarian views was ex-

tinged. (Hear, hear.) We cannot, therefore, be mere spectators of a measure which will open up a field for such practices, and deprive the people of this country of the confidence which they have been in the habit of placing in the Bible. It has been said that the Bibles will be afforded cheaper under the new system, but that was a subordinate matter to the accuracy of the printing. But it was doubtful if they would be cheaper. From the evidence of one of our townsmen, it appears that where the preparations are already in operation, they may be printed much cheaper than any other party can do. All that they required was a safeguard to accuracy. It may be said that the American Bibles are as accurate as those here. He would allow that some of them were accurate; but did that prove that all were so, or that all would be so in future? Might not vitiations be yet attempted? He had drawn up the overture in general terms—he did not urge any particular measure, as the Government plan was not yet known; but he was convinced that this week would not pass till the question be put to the Government in the House of Commons, and then the Church will know what to do. The great point was to press on the General Assembly the necessity of immediate steps as when the patent does expire, there will be nothing to prevent every one from printing the Bible. The General Assembly should take instant means for securing the purity of the Word of God—that they may recommend themselves to the conscience, the patriotism, and the Christian affection of every member of the Church.

The overture was agreed to.

Dr. BURNS brought forward his overture with reference to the Colonial Churches, especially those in Canada, calling on the Synod to apply to the Marquis of Normanby on the subject. In Canada, sales had been going on for years of the Clergy Reserves; and in 1837, there were £118,000 laid up as a fund from these sales, bearing interest at 6 per cent. He had transmitted documents to the deputation of the General Assembly on this subject, showing the quantity of land alienated for the benefit chiefly of Roman Catholics. The amount given to the Church of Scotland was only £1350; and lately, a sum of £500 was granted to Lower Canada, but this was only optional—while the £1350 was not from the Reserves, but from the Canada Company, which would expire in a few years. When the Scottish clergy were few the division of that sum among them yielded something considerable, but now it was only £57 10s. to each minister. This was all that the Church of Scotland received while the Church of England and the Roman Catholics shared largely in the bounty of Government; and lately the Methodists had got £4000 to endow a college. The Church of Scotland should stand boldly forth in behalf of our countrymen in Canada; and this overture would strengthen the hands of the Assembly's deputation by memorialising the Colonial Secretary. The overture was agreed to, and a Committee appointed to prepare the memorial.

PROPOSAL OF A HOME MISSION TO THE DESTITUTE DISTRICTS OF SCOTLAND.

Every successive Report issued by the Commissioners for inquiry into the religious destitution which was alleged to prevail, only renders the necessity still more obvious of some vigorous and decided steps being taken to remedy the evil. From various causes, it is now beyond the possibility of denial that the population, in many parishes, has outgrown the means of religious instruction. What is to be done then? Government positively declines to interfere in the matter. In reply to a question put recently by the Earl of Galloway to Lord Melbourne, the Prime Minister replied that Ministers had no intention of making any proposition on the subject. Are the people, then, to be allowed to perish for lack of knowledge? No. It is necessary that some plan be devised for supplying those districts of the country which are now provided to be so scantily provided with the means of grace. The plan which most obviously suggests itself, as likely to remedy the evil with the greatest rapidity and success, is the raising of a fund for a Home Mission, until more permanent support shall be obtained. Let the probationers of the Church, as many of them as are ready to engage in the undertaking, be sent forth into the destitute districts, invested with the full authority and powers of the ministerial office, and each having an assigned locality, within which he could labour in word and sacraments. We are quite aware that this plan would be attended with many