

a great inspiration and help. It reminds me of the homiletic maxim: "Got a grand text if you would preach a grand sermon." Dr. Blair has a grand text and he preaches a grand sermon. This book, we doubt not, will hold the same relation to his work that Dr. Andrew Bonar's life of R. M. McCheyne holds to his. Through this he will instruct and stimulate and strengthen many in the times to come. The portraiture of Livingstone is very minute and faithful. It is like a PreRaphaelite painting. Everything goes in to stand forth in its natural strength. It is not a dash of vague impression, it is rather a vigorous stippled portrait, every line traced and full.

We cordially thank him for it, and the impulse to nobler and better things it carries with it.

He gives us a glimpse of another man of character besides Livingstone, and that is his father, Neil Livingstone, who was a man of great spiritual earnestness—a truly consecrated man. He was a tea merchant, and at the same time a carpenter and missionary, a Sabbath school teacher, a member of the missionary society, a promoter of meetings for prayer before such things had ceased to be regarded as badges of fanaticism. With such a father we can guess what the son would be. Good fathers have not always good sons—but the goodness of the father does not usually make a son bad, it is rather a help to him to be good. David Livingstone became early a Christian. One of the quiet, undemonstrative type. He seldom revealed his inner feelings, save in his action, he allowed his feelings to affect his will rather than his tongue. They were the steam to drive the engine and not alone to blow the whistle. His father was a great reader, and while fond of the old Scotch theology, he took delight in reading of the enterprise of the nineteenth century. Hence books of travel or of missionary work were eagerly seized by him and read, and talked about to his family that they might be interested in it too. This was no doubt the influence that determined David Livingstone's career. It brooded over his spirit and called it into the dark places of heathenism. We do not purpose outlining his life. We only refer to it as one in which character was the chief working element. He was pre-eminently a man of character, and he was that because he made religion not an outward garment but an inward grace. It was the everyday business of his life. Here is a sentence that shows the man: on the way out to Africa he says, "The captain rigged out the church on Sabbath, and we had service; but I being a poor preacher, and the chaplain addressing them all as Christians already, no moral influence was exerted, and even had there been on Sabbath, it would have been neutralized by the weekday conduct. In fact no good was done." *Neither at Rio, nor on board ship, nor anywhere could good be done without the element of personal character.* This was Livingstone's strong conviction to the end of his life. And so we find him careful of his life. His word was inviolable. He kept his promises to the learned Murchison and to the savage Makololo. He was respectful to the barbarians as he was to the civilized. He never forgot that they were men. He won his way across Africa, and north to the Ujiji without hurt from poisoned arrow or deceitful dart because he always remembered that a man's a man for a' that. How grandly he had taken captive the hearts of the people, when after his death he was carried for eight months through tribes alien to the bearers till he was placed in the hands of the authorities at Zanzibar. While he lived, he lived for Africa. He went about from tribe to tribe "doing good"—healing the sick, preaching the Gospel, doing all in his power to win poor, lost ones to the Saviour, and as a consequence, Professor Drummond in his "Tropical Africa," tells us that "whenever David Livingstone's footsteps are crossed in Africa the fragrance of his memory seems to

remain." Never was there among more men a man more truly the Lord's than David Livingstone. What a great work he did! Its fruit will be seen at the last day. He did not sound his trumpet over his converts. This element every Christian worker needs at the very bottom of all—to give all value. It is not learning, nor gifts, nor cleverness that is greatest, it is character, and that, as Roland Hill declares, is of immense importance to the preacher of God's Holy Gospel.

Woman's Influence. An article by Mr. Harry Quilter on the character—or want of character, as a contemporary puts it—of most of the modern fiction and drama, has been much quoted. The following passage from the article on the responsibility and influence of women ought to be taken to heart:—"If such be the character of modern prose, story, and drama, we are forced to ask for whom are these mainly written? Who supports the circulating library and problem plays? The answer must be—our women. Mr. Mudie might shut his shop, and the theatres close their doors, if men were their only, or even their chief customers; and when we find that stories and plays of a certain kind are multiplying in number and increasing in favor, I fear we are irresistibly led to the conclusion that the class who read the stories and frequent the theatres enjoy, and, in fact, order such work. That in fiction they do not only consume, but supply the greatest quantity, is more than probable. Here, once more, is for our women a question of courage—if they will cease to tolerate in fiction and on the stage, these narratives and representations of such things as are scandalous, morbid, and impure, they can put a stop to their production! There is no decent theatre in London which would survive for a fortnight the absence of the female portion of its audience. Nay, I will even go so far as to say that if half a dozen ladies only walked out of the theatre when the play offended their modesty, and this occurred two or three nights running, I believe that play would be, in theatrical and most appropriate parlance, 'condemned irrevocably.'"

A Special Effort Needed. A statement issued by the Board of Management of Knox College relating to the financial needs of that institution gives a few interesting facts with respect to the college. At no period in the history of the college has the attendance been larger than at present and the interest manifested in its welfare has rarely been equalled. To meet the actual requirements for 1895-6, including a deficit of \$2,629 from last year, it is estimated that at least \$22,000 will be needed, while only \$18,000 is in sight. A special effort is urged on the part of church members individually to meet the estimated deficit of \$4,000.

Successful Evangelistic Work. From reports given at some length by our contemporaries it would seem that Rev. J. W. Mitchell, M.A., has had considerable success in his evangelistic work during the past few months. Meetings have been held by him in conjunction with Messrs. Crossley and Hunter at Carleton Place, where large additions are expected to the membership of the churches. The same is true of the series of meetings being held at Guelph which were largely attended and manifestly blessed to the hearers. Mr. Mitchell's labors have been largely devoted to giving Bible readings in the afternoon, directing the house to house visitation and guiding the inquirers. For this work Mr. Mitchell seems to be specially fitted and to have met with gratifying success. As a man with long pastoral experience his labors have been found to be of special use to pastors in the building up of congregations and in many other ways.