

Our Contributors.

SOME LESSONS THAT MAY BE LEARNED FROM THE LIFE OF SIR JOHN.

BY KNOWNIAN

The life that has just closed, like every other long, eventful and busy life, may be used to teach some important lessons. Reading the record of Sir John's early days, perhaps the first thing that strikes one is the pleasing fact that early disadvantages do not

BAR THE WAY TO PROMOTION

in Canada. Sir John Macdonald was not born with a silver spoon in his mouth. Like many another Highlander, his father came to Canada not to spend a fortune, but to seek a home and bread for his family. His son, the future Premier, had not as good an opportunity to get an education in Kingston in those days as a score of boys now have in every town in Ontario. Queen's University was not then founded. Dr. Reid tells us in his Jubilee speech that he saw Sir John for the first time at a meeting held in Kingston to take steps to found a university. The Premier, that was to be, moved a resolution, but, as he himself put it, was too modest to make a speech. The elaborate and costly educational machinery now running at full blast in Ontario was not thought of when Sir John was a boy. The Ontario Minister of Education was not then born. There was no law school in those days. But young Macdonald overcame those early obstacles, worked his way into the legal profession and was soon recognized as a prominent and rising member of the Kingston Bar. When he entered political life his path was not much easier than when he entered the legal profession. It is no secret that the Family Compact did not regard the youthful member for Kingston with favour. But John A., as he was then called, soon worked his way through the Compact until he got a firm footing on the political ladder. The blue-blooded aristocrats speedily found out that the Kingston youth had to be reckoned with in every move, and it was not long until he had the making of the moves himself.

Two other young men began life in Kingston about the same time whose achievements also illustrate the pleasing fact that in Canada lack of wealth or influential connections need never keep back a deserving young man. Oliver Mowat was fifty years ago a student in Sir John's office, and Alexander Mackenzie was about the same time working in Kingston as a stone mason. Both of these men have had distinguished careers, but neither had any special advantages in his young days. Can anybody name three Canadians who began life amidst luxury and wealth and accomplished as much as John A. Macdonald, Alexander Mackenzie and Oliver Mowat? Does anybody say they own nothing more than colonial distinction? Well, to win distinction in one's own country and among one's own people is surely as honourable as to be distinguished merely because you are the son of your father.

A second lesson taught by Sir John's life is that

TO BE SOMEBODY YOU MUST DO SOMETHING.

The key to much of Sir John's success is found in the first political document he ever published. In his first address to the electors of Kingston he said:—

In a young country like Canada I am of opinion that it is of more consequence to endeavour to develop its resources and improve its physical advantages than to waste the time of the Legislature and the money of the people in fruitless discussions on abstract and theoretical questions of government. One great object of my exertions, if elected, will be to direct the attention of the Legislature to the settlement of the back townships of the district, hitherto so utterly neglected, and to press for the construction of the long-projected plank road to Perth and the Ottawa, and thus make Kingston the market for a large and fertile though hitherto valueless country. This desirable object once attained, the prosperity of our town will be established on a firmer basis.

That paragraph throws more light on Sir John's career than any half-dozen columns we have seen published about him. He thought it was better to get the back townships settled and build a plank road to Perth than spend the time and money of the people discussing "abstract and theoretical questions of government." He wanted a positive policy that would develop the country and promote the material interests of the people. From that day until the day he was stricken down he always had, or seemed to have, some plan for improving the country.

The lesson here is obvious and it ought to be learned in the Church as well as in the State. To obtain and retain the confidence and esteem of free men you must do something worth doing and keep on doing it. No man can make or keep a position for himself by nibbling at other men's work. Criticism, even when just, never gave a man enduring popularity and influence; where unjust it never failed to make him a nuisance.

There are men in every Church—the Presbyterian has its full share—who have no particular desire to occupy a back seat all their lives. Far be it from us to blame them. Ambition of a certain kind is a virtue. Any man with a heart in him would like to leave a good record for the sake of his family if for no other reasons. The mistake, however, that some aspiring men make is in trying to build up by pulling somebody else down. They expect to become known and influential, not by working, but by assailing some other man's work. The thing cannot be done. A man may make a little noise for a time by assailing somebody or something, but when the noise is over the man who made it is

generally disliked by a good many people and treated with contempt by a good many more.

If you want political, municipal or ecclesiastical honours, go into the political, municipal or ecclesiastical arena and do something that deserves them. If you merely stand outside and throw stones at those who are working within, you get no lasting distinction, and some of the men within may throw the stones back and raise an artificial bump on that portion of your organism that is charitably supposed to contain brains. Sir John's life also shows in a remarkable way the value of

CONCILIATORY POLICY.

He could keep more men of opposite tastes, opinions and prejudices at peace and at work in his Cabinet than any Premier the world has seen in the last half century. Under his genial influence the fiery French Catholic and the Ontario Orange leader could take sweet counsel together. The Prohibitionist and the distiller, the Equal Rights man and the Jesuit, were likely to reconcile their differences after a word of exhortation from the old man. Some of his own friends thought that at times Sir John carried the conciliatory policy to an extreme. Perhaps he did, but his success shows that in the management of affairs the conciliatory policy is usually the best. All pugilistic men, and many young men not specially pugilistic, think that the best way to do things is by force. They want to fight everybody that does not agree with them. Like every other Highlandman, Sir John could fight when he had to, but he was too wise a man to fight for the mere love of the thing. For one victory that he ever won by fighting, he won ten over opponents and over obstacles among his own friends by conciliation. There may be times when it is one's duty to fight, but they come seldom in the life of an average man. In the ordinary affairs of every day life the conciliatory policy is nearly always the successful one. Sir John's life also shows the marvellous power of a

MAGNETIC MANNER.

Bushnell contends that every man carries an "atmosphere" with him, and that the atmosphere of some men is repellant, while that of other men is attractive. Sir John's atmosphere was attractive. He had the peculiar power of fascinating his fellowmen, and many a political opponent fell under that power. Nature may not have given to every man an attractive atmosphere, but it certainly is the bounden duty of every man to see that his atmosphere is not repulsive.

The deceased Premier's career strikingly illustrates the power of good books to

KEEP THE MIND VIGOROUS

at three-score and ten. Like his great rival, Alexander Mackenzie, Sir John was a devourer of books. From his boyhood he was a reader. It is utterly impossible for any man to be attractive and influential for long unless he reads. A starved mind soon becomes a dull mind. There is one more lesson of much importance that may be learned from this wonderful life, and that is that a man succeeds best in politics if

HE LIKES POLITICS.

Sir John liked public life. So does Gladstone. So does Oliver Mowat. So does Alexander Mackenzie. So does every man who makes a high mark as a statesman. A whining politician never succeeds. The people soon tire of his moaning. If a man cannot serve the people without groaning about it he should get out of the way. Sir John never complained. Mr. Mowat never complains. George Brown never complained. Alexander Mackenzie might well be excused if he complained, but he never does. Gladstone has had many a hard knock, but the Grand Old Man said not long ago that this is the best half century for public work and the British the best people to work for the world ever saw. The lesson here is obvious. Chronic complainers never give effective service to the State. It may be questioned if they ever give better service to the Church.

To be compelled to follow a calling one does not like is a great misfortune. Of all the callings in this world the ministry is the one into which nobody should enter unless he likes the work. If there were some way of quietly putting every man out of the ministry that does not enjoy doing his duty, the Church would gain immensely.

JERUSALEM REVIVING.

WONDROUS EVENTS.

"Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things." And wondrous indeed are the things He has done recently in that far off land of freedom and religious liberty, the United States of America. As a watchman on the walls of Jerusalem, and a faithful sentinel, it is my duty to chronicle those wondrous events and emphasize their important bearings and significance, lest in these hurry-scurry days, with the electric wires piling up and jumbling current events in concise, curt phraseology, the trivial and most momentous alike, they should fail to arrest due attention, evoke interest and prayer, and call forth praise and adoration to Him who sits on the Throne of Providence, controlling and moulding all events in the history of the world, to the accomplishment of His purposes of love and mercy toward mankind and the promotion of His own glory and praise. And this is all the more important and necessary when those wondrous events transpiring around us are marvellously prognostic of the approaching fulfilment of prophecy regarding the ancient people of God and the land of their patrimony—of events predicted thousands of years ago.

A REMARKABLE CONFERENCE.

The Christian world is indebted to the *Daily Inter-Ocean* of November 25 and 26, for a full thrilling account of a most remarkable Conference between Jewish rabbis and Christian divines of different denominations in the great city of Chicago, and in the First Methodist Episcopal Church lasting two successive days and occupying the afternoons and evenings, amid crowded, enthusiastic audiences of Jews and Christians co-mingled, on "The Past, Present, and Future of Israel"—a most significant sign of the times we live in, whose issues it is beyond the ken of the wisest man to foretell.

That grand Conference, of far-reaching results, was brought about by the devoted, indefatigable exertions of an earnest servant of the Most High God, my dear friend, Mr. W. E. Blackstone, of Oak Park, whose praise should be to the Churches throughout Christendom as a noble example of a life consecrated to the Master's glory, and of deep interest in the welfare of the Jews. It was a unique, unparalleled Conference; and the *Inter-Ocean* should stereotype its second parts, containing the addresses, etc., of those rabbis and divines, for generations to come. All honour to God's chosen instrument, and all glory, adoration and praise to Him who is wonderful in counsel and magnificent in wisdom (Isa. xxviii. 29.); and may Chicago's name and its first Methodist Episcopal Church remain enshrined in the hearts of all lovers of the Jews!

MY LETTERS TO, AND LECTURES ON, JEWS.

I have abundant reason to bless and praise the Lord for that Conference and its glorious outcome. In the winter of 1889, my friend, Mr. Blackstone, visited the Holy Land upon his arrival and before his departure we conversed and conferred on the spiritual condition of the Jews in this and other lands, and at his desire I furnished him at cost price with the following publications of mine: "Letters to the Jews," 1,100 copies; "Letters on the Trinity of God," of five letters each, 500 copies; "Lectures on the Jews," 750 sets of three each, 2,250 copies; total separate copies, 3,850.

I should wholly mistake the practical character of my friend if I did not take for granted that between the spring of '89 and the autumn of '90 he must have been distributing those "Letters" and "Lectures" to the best advantage, and thereby paving the way to that great result—the Conference between Jews and Christians in Chicago, which has borne glorious fruit.

Of those "Letters" of mine to the Jews upwards of 20,000 are now in the hands of Jews in the United States alone, thanks to the co-operation of the American Tract Society, the Rev. Jacob Freshman, of New York, and my dear friend, Mr. Blackstone. The Lord has sent me a liberal donation for printing more of that serial of "Letters to the Jews," which I hope to do, D.V., during the forthcoming hot season, but I want means for reprinting the others, of which I have but few left; as also for translating and circulating them in Hebrew, Judeo-Spanish, French, etc., for which there is an urgent demand. May He move the hearts of others of His stewards to provide for this also.

A GLORIOUS OUTCOME—PALESTINE TO BE RESTORED TO THE JEWS.

That extraordinary, remarkable Conference has had a happy and wondrous outcome, consisting of a memorial to the President of the United States in favour of the restoration of Palestine to the Jews, just as Greece, Servia, Roumania and Bulgaria have been given back to their natural owners. The memorial solicits the President to summon a Conference of the powers, great and small, to consider the condition of the Jews, their claims as rightful heirs of the land of Israel, and some pacific mode of giving them possession of their patrimony. It was numerous and influentially signed by editors of newspapers, ministers of all Churches, and leading men, officials and others, of the great cities of the Union; and presented to the President in the White House, by Mr. Blackstone, after an interview with the Hon. James G. Blaine, Secretary of State, who evinced a kindly interest in the object of the memorial and promised to do whatever he could to promote it. Well and justly did Mr. Blackstone remark to the President that "not since the days of Cyrus, King of Persia, has any ruler had such an opportunity"—a splendid occasion to immortalize his name, he might have added. No other Power than the United States could uphold and forward that grand project with greater disinterestedness, and consequently greater weight, for attaining a peaceful and equitable solution of the momentous problem. No one could suspect the United States of any territorial ambition or of any other motive than the purest philanthropic benevolence toward a long-persecuted, oppressed, and trodden-down people. Would not the Pilgrim Fathers sing for joy that the land of their semi-exile should now procure the restoration of Palestine to the Jews?

On the 2nd inst. (May), I received a most friendly letter from Mr. Blackstone, full of interesting information and enclosing a cheque for \$25—£5 2s.—for this mission, in which he takes a lively, prayerful, practical interest, as is proved by his generous, welcome gift.

A DAY OF PRAYER FOR THE JEWS.

Replying to it on the 4th inst., I wrote: "May I suggest an invitation to all Christians in both hemispheres to set apart a day—a whole day—of prayer for the Jews, that God may move the hearts of the President of your great country and of all Christian princes and governors to zeal and perse-