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FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 1878.

TOPICS OF THE WEEK.

The Canadian Ministers have fallen and a new administration taken their place. We hope that, warned by what has befallen their predecessors, the present Ministers will set their faces against any kind of political corruption. The country expects as much, and we hope will not be disappointed. It would seen, necessarily to fellow from what has been done and decided, that the present Parliament be dissolved. If it has been elected by wholesale bribery then it is not a Parliament at all, and the sooner, therefore, the people are appealed to the better.

DUKE OF ARGYLE ON CHURCH ES TABLISHMENTS.

It is gurious to note how the most acute and conscientious get confused and inwolved in contradictions when they comm it themselves to the defence of "State Ohurch-We have an illustration of this in a late speech delivered by the Duke of Argyle at Helensburgh, Scotland, in connection with the endowment scheme of the Church of Scotland. His Grace is a supporter and yet not a supporter of State Churches. He could be a consenting party to the dis-establishment of the Irish Church, but would not touch a stone of the venersble sister Churches in England and Scotland. He repudiates accordingly all claim en the part of the State to judge between truth and error, and would no more arrogate to it the right of putting up the true than of putting down the false. This is evident, for if the State is either bound or permitted to do this, it is bound to do so as much for the Irish as for the English or Scotch. of the channel as the other, and its support is not to be determined by local cireumstances or an adverse popular majority. Neither, according to His Grace, is endowment to be determined by the wishes of a mere majority, for in that case the Church of Scotland would be quite as much to be condomned as that of Ireland, seeing no sensible man, now, at any rate, claims in its support for the Kirk of Scotland a majority of the Scottish people. Besides, if acknowledged the State is not a competent judge, then heathenism ought to be established in India, and Popery without fail in Ireland; while it would be difficult to say which would have the advantage in Ontario, as the majority is ever and anon changing. It is very easy for the Duke to say that the circumstances of Ireland are so peculiar, that they are the "very antithesis" of those of the sister kingdom's, but it is better not to condescend upon particulars or try to make good his assertion. It sounds grandly but it means nothing, to add that, "Established Churches, where they have grown up with the history of the people, and where nothing has happened to alter their fundamental character and position are among the greatest national blessings, to be cherished and maintained as long as that character is maintained." That short sentence conteins nearly as many fallacies as words, and is followed up by the astounding acknowledgment that established Churches cannot be extended in our times on the same principles on which they were founded. Why not? There is no possibility of defending the existence of established Churches except on principles that would entirely justify their extension. The "original character" of the Scotch Kirk is maintained, it is to be presumed, else it enght, even on the Duke's showing, to be abolished. If the "circumstances" in which

it exists are now similar to what they were

why not extend the "greatest national blessing" as well as "cherish and maintain" it? The Duke gives no reason, nor can give, except that such is his opinion. We think he is correct in saying State Ohurches cannot be extended, but then in that case what becomes of his argument? "Concurrent endowment," the only one which can be defended with any show of reason, if the State is not to be the judge of what is true and what is talse, what ought to be established and what ought not, is condomed as "impossible and imposite in Britain," and as really fatal to "civil and religious liberty. When the Duke comes io what is called pure voluntary congrega. tionalism, he makes still wilder work. We don't think he means to misrepresent, but he does soull the same. He intimates, though not directly, that a minister wholly dependent for support on his people must feel "ombarrassed." That is, we presume, that he is even under a temptation to be unfaithful "for bread." Now no one knows better, or at least none ought to know better than the Duke, that no class of clergymen in Scotand have been more fearlessly faithful in the discharge of duty and the exercise of discipline than those who were dependent entirely on the people for their living. Nor is it less a matter of notoriety that while there have been and are startlingly exceptions, no class of mimeters in Scotland, and England also, have been greater tuft-hunters and more inclined to "condone" the peccadilloes of the parish squire or the leading people of the congregation, whose ecolesiastical expenses are all defrayed out of the funds of the State, than the parish ministers. That fact has been painfully notorious for the last century and a half at any rate, and has been acknowledged and mourned over by the most devoted and fearless of the friends of both

Then the Duke adds that "the weak point of voluntaryism is that it does not provide for the poor and thinly scattered districts. It provides for the rich. It necessarily does so to the neglect of the outlying districts." Where has the Duke found out all this? It cannot be in the theory at any rate of unendowed churches, for that recog nizes it as not not only dutiful but politic for the "strong to help the weak."

these established churches.

Voluntaryism is not congregationalism and as little is it optionalism. It is very true, that in practice, all Churches and Christians come far short of the ideal set before them, but they do not this because of their voluntaryism but in spite of it, and as far as the poor and thinly districts of the country are concerned, very much through the blighting influence of an established church. It is notorious that the adherents of an established church systematically teach the people that it is not their duty to give to the support of the gospel, for that duty belongs to the State. It is also notorious that usually the wealthier members of the community are connected with the endowed as the fashionable and privileged church and so far take away a Truth is as precious on one side large portion of the money power which might otherwise be utilized for the advancement of the cause of Christ in poor and heathen districts. The Free and U.P. Churches of Scotland are notoriously made up of the poorer classes with only a comparatively small sprukling of the wealthy. Yet when the Duke considers what they have done and are doing, and what many of the members of the Established Church are doing through the same might of willinghood, he will feel, we think, that he was the funds of the whole people are to be courageous at any rate, if nothing more, taken with justice to endow the Church of when he said that voluntaryism only at best the majority, without regard to the truth | "holds fast, but is not able to hold forth." or falsehood of its teaching, of which it is It is a common mistake to confound optionalism with voluntaryism. No one is forced to connect himself with the cause of Christ when he would rather not, but when he has taken that step he must meet all the obligations implied in doing so, and one of these obligations is to feel that he is a stoward, and that all that he has and is, is the Lord's, to whom he must one day give account. A majority may decree an established church, just as it may decree any other majority. But that will not make it right, though it may make it legal, and force the recalcitrant minority either to bow in the temple of the God Rimmen or suffer social ostracism and oppression as the penalty of not thinking on religious matters as the majority decrees or as the Government arranges. For good or for evil, the establishment of religion by law is agused-up theory. If it come into renewed favour because it allows men to profess one thing and believe another, this will only, in the estimation of right-thinking . 2en, baston its fall, and will make it not so much a nullity as a nuisance, which all good and truthful men will rejoice to see swopt from the earth. Christianity does not depend for its existence or its power on the Kings of the carth, or the endowments of the State. Were all State Churches, on the contrary, treated like that of Ireland, one Church door would not be closed that ought to be kept open, one preacher's

voice would not be silenced that ought to

gospel be turned inte anything like the vallay and shadow of death, or be made the hubitation of atheists or incidels, of the impure and degraded of every kind, as we are would; as if Christ could not support His own cause without the help of Conor.

IN MEMORIAM.

HR. ALPXANDER LAIDLAW, BUN'R

At his residence, Mono Coatre, on the 18th September, 1878, Mr. Alexander Laid law, sen'r., died. After a short illness, he pescefully passed away, at the ripe aga of

Born about the beginning of the century, of roligious parents, in Lanarkshire, Scotland, he received the education and training common to his class in that much favored land. He began life in the coupley ment of agriculture, and continued it to the and with distinguished success. Fond of reading, he early acquired the habit, and through his long life he speut a large share of his leisure time in the favorite exercise. Works of poetry and religion were those that chiefly attracted his attention. Here, doubtless, we have not only a rich source of present enjoyment to him exposed to view, but also the source of that large, practical wisdom which he evenced in every department of his useful life. Through this same honored instrumentality, accompanied by the grace of God, he soon be came the subject of deep religious convic tion. After a sharp, protracted, but by no means uncommon struggle, he yielded his heart to the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. Henceforth he became a diligent student of the Word of life, an ardent lover of good mon, and a happy experiencer of that heavenly grace which comes alone through Jesus, the effective agency of the Holy Spirit. As he advanced in years he exemplified the advancement of the true Christian, the many noble qualities of his mind and heart were improved, ripened and enlarged; he seemed to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, till he attained in no mean degree "unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." What a dignified maturity, and how eminently it qualifies for overy position!

During the 21st year of his life he emigrated, first to New York, where after four years he contracted a very happy marriage with Miss Margaret Fraser—also from Lanarkshire-who still survives him, with seven grown-up children, to mourn their bitter bereavement. We heartily commend them to the kind care and keeping of the mighty God of Jacob, that he may guard, guide, and defend them not merely, but also afford them the true, heaven-gifted consolation which they severally need.

Next he removed to Rochester, in 1883, whence, after spending a few more years of early married life, he moved with his wife and three children into the township of Mono. Here was a special field for the display of those manly Christian gifts which Mr. Laidlaw so largely possessed; which, while he lived, received for him from all such loving respect, and now that he is dead call forth such a flood of deep sorrow and unfeigned regret. Mono was just then beginning to be settled. Amid the wild and privation of a Canadian forest he made abode, and began to rear his family. His own felt necessities, and those of his neighbors, aroused his latent energies and called them into vigorous action. He soon proved himself "the right man," and invaluable in unceasing efforts to advance the best interests, both spiritual d secular, of the young settlement. In the absence of duly appointed laborers of the vineyard, prayer-meetings were instituted, and statedly conducted from house to house. These were sustained and carried on chiefly by his instrumentality.

The year after his entrance in the woods a school-house was erected--the first opened, we learn, in the township. Shortly afterwards a church was raised for the worship of the hving God, entitled Burns' Church, in honor of one of Canada's most distinguished missionaries; and still later a comfortable manso beside the sanctuary. For all of them Mr. Laidlaw gave the site, with three acres of land attached.

In 1836, he, along with two others, was elected an ordained and older in this first Presbyterian congregation, Mono. The responsible and arduous duties of this high office he discharged with singular acceptance and fidelity till very near the close of his long and well-spent life. All through the period of this efficient service, unostentatiously rendered and at a time when it was much needed, the spiritual interests of the youth were not neglected. He began it early, and through many successive years foiled earnestly in this nursery lepartment of the Church's work—the Sabuath school. The fruits of his training and example are now being manifest, and many yet remember the lessons he so wisely, and lovingly, and impressively communicated.

In connection with the Bible Society lie be heard, nor would one solitary nook labored zealously, and very perseveringly, when as a State Church it was created, that is new blessed with the light of the latest period of his life. As the best M's ideas on these points and with these we

and shortest comment of labors in this useful department we quote the true and pithy statement of one of the ablest, most energetic and successful of the Society's traveloften weakly and atheistically told it ling Agents: "Mr. Luidlaw is the sum-total of the Mono Centre Branch."

As a Christian he was humble and devout -a man of prayer, he wrestled with Godseemed to live near Him all his days, and took sweetest pleasure in these acts of devotion. Strong in the belief of the cardinal truths of the Bible, he never shrank from the prosecution and was strenuous in the advocacy of them. In support of the diatinctive tenets of Presbytorianism he had many sharp encounters with oppressors, but so far as we learn, he ever left savory impressions of his sterling piety and undaunted courage.

The many missioneries throughout our Section of the Christian Church, who have visited and labored in Mono Centre, will roverentially speak in memory of him, and think of the warm, devoted friend they ever found in him, of the cordial welcome they received to his hospitable abode and of the comfortable lodging there so long as needed. He knew the value and importance of their work, himself had some experience of its trials and difficulties, therefore he loved and revered them for their work's sake, and was ever ready to forward them in it. We subjoin the following graphic testimonial from one of the oldest of these men of God, one who knew him intimately and is competent to judge impartially. "I held Mr. Laidlaw in the highest esteem since I knew him. The uniform consistency of his Christian character. his activity and persevering diligence in doing good, his uncompromising firmness in holding to what he regarded as truth, and his candor and charity towards those who might conscientiously differ from him; all combined to show that he had imbibed largely the spirit of the gospel."

The aged older has now gone from the scene of his earthly toil and entered on rest in the heavenly mansions, "but being dead he yet speaketh." Oh that those who remain could hear and wisely learn, how blisful would be the result! "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors, and their works do follow thom.

HOME MISSIONS.

We call special attention to the letter of the Rev. William Cochrane which will be found in another column. The case is urgent, and ought to meet with a prompt and liberal response. Never was there a time in the history of the Canada Presbyterran Church when the openings for usefulness presented were more numerous or more inviting. On all sides the work is limited simply by the amount of money and missionaries that can be employed. It will be in the last degree discreditable to the members of the Church if these opportunities pass unimproved. If any importance ut all is attached to the distinguishing characteristics and principles of the Presbyterian Church, now is the time to show it. We are fully convinced that the Presbyterians do attach much value to these, and have no doubt that the funds necessary to maintain and extend the Home operations of the Church will be speedily forthcoming. The amount that can be given to missionaries and supplemented congregations is, no doubt, all too small; the greater, therefore, the reason why it should be paid promptly and in full.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF JOHN S. MILL.

Wo I we no intention of giving any outline of the recently published autobiograph of the late Mr. J. S. Mill. It is certainly a courageous book and brings out very tudy the writer's views on religion, mar tage, &c. What is astonishing is that, like a good good many others who had held and avowed similar opinions, Mr. Mill expresses his astomshment that professing religious people and those who beheve in the sauctity of marriage should condemn strongly persons of his way of thinking as if they were guilty of some moral wrong and deserved something like social ostracism Mr. Mill and his sympathies ought to know that this follows as a matter of course. Those who behere in the existence of a personal God, and who have somewhat strong opinions about the promiseuous intercourse of the sexes cannot help feeling somewhat indignant at those who have no such belief and who look upon marriage, as usually understood in Christian countries, as an antiquate projudice and a most unreasonable and unnecessary restraint. That this was the position of Mr. Mill is very evident from his own avowals in this autobiograph; and though both his wife and himself may have in many respecies been personally estimable, there is no wonder at all that their "advanced op:nious' should have been rather strong meat for those who believe in God and are far from realizing the idea of a man loving his neighbor's wife. The following extracts shows that we have not misrepresented Mr.

leave the matter to those who are more ad vanced than we at all profess to be. Of his religious ideas he speaks thus;-

"I was brought up from the first without any religious belief, in the ordinary acceptation of the term. My father, educated in the creed of Scotch Presbyterianism, had by his own studies and reflectious been earlied to reject not only the belief in Royelstion, but the foundations of what a commonly called Natural Religion. I have heard him say, that the turning point of his mind ly called Natural hengion. I have heard him say, that the turning point of his mind on the subject was reading Butler's Analogy. That work, of which he always continued to That work, of which he plways continued to speak with respect, kept him, as he said, for some considerable time, a believer in the divine authority of Christianity; by proving to him, that whatever are the difficulties in believing that the Old and New Testaments where it from, or record the nets of a residence. believing that the Old and New Testaments proceed from, or record the acts of, a perfect wise and good being, the same and still greater difficulties stand in the way of the belief, that a being of such a character can have been the Maker of the universe. He considered Butler's argument as conclusive against the only opponents for whom it was acamst the only opponents for whom it was intended. Those who admit an omnipotent as well as perfectly just and benevolent maker and ruler of such a world as this, can say little against Christianity but what can, with at least equal force, be retorted against themselves. Finding, therefore, no halting place in Doism, he remainod in a state of perplexity, until, doubtless, after many struggles, he yielded to the conviction, that, concerning the origin of things nothing whatever can be known. This is the only correct statement of his opinion; for dogmatic athoism he looked upon as ab. surd; as most of those, whom the world had considered Atheists, have always done.

I have a hundred times heard him say, that all ages and nations have represented their gods as wicked, in a constantly in-ercasing progression, that mankind have gone on adding trait efter trait till they gone on adding train train the tree reached the most perfect conception of wickedness which the human mind can do. vise, and have called this God, and prostrated themselves before it. Thus ne plus ultra of wickedness he considered to be embodied in what is commonly presented to mankind as the crood of Christianity. Think (he used to say) of a being who would make a Hell—who would create the human race with the infallible foreknowledge, and therefore with the intention, that the great majority of them were to be consigned to horrible and everlasting tormont.
The time, I believe, is drawing near when this dreadful conception of an . object of this dreading conception of an conject of worship will be no longer identified with Christianity; and whon all persons, with any sense of moral good and ovil, will look upon it with the same indignation with which my father regarded it.

It would have been wholly inconsistent with my father's ideas of duty, to allow me to acquire impressions contrary to his convictions and feelings respecting religion; and he impressed upon me from the first that the manner in which the world came into existence was a subject on which nothing was known; that the question, 'Who made me?' cannot be answered, because we have no experience or authentic information from which to answorit; and that any answer only throws the difficulty a step further back, since the quertion immediately presents itself, 'Who made God?' He, at the same time, took care that I should be acquainted with what had been thought by mankind on these impenetratrable problems. I have mentioned at how early an age he made me a reader of ecclesiastical history; and he taught me to take the strongest interest in the Reformation, as the great decisive contest against priestly tyranny for liberty of thought.

I am thus one of the very few examples,

in this country, of one who has not thrown off religious belief, but nover had it: I grew up in a negative state with regard to it. I looked upon the modern exactly as I did apon the ancient religion, as something which in no way concorned me. It did not seem to me more strange that English people should believe what I did not, than that the men I rend of in Herodotus should have done so. History has made the variety of experience. icty of opinions among mankind a fact familiar to me, and this was but a prolongation of that fact. On religion in particular the time appears to me to have come, when it is the duty of all who, being qualified in point of knowledge, have on mature consideration satisfied themselves that the current opinions are not only false but hurtful, to make their dissent known; at if they are among those whose station or eputation gives their opinion a chance of being attended to. Such an avowal would put an end, at once and for ever, to the vulgar prejudice, that what is called, very improperly, unbelief, is connected with any bad qualities either mind or heart. The world would be astonished if it knew how great a proportion of its brightest orna-ments—of those most distinguished even in popular estimation for wisdom and virtue -are complete scepties in religion; many of them refraining from avowal, less from personal considerations, than from a conscientious, though now in my opinion a most mistaken apprehension, lest by speak ing out what would tend to weaken existing beliefs, and by consequence (as they suppose) existing restraints, they should do harm instead of good.

Of unbelievers (so called) as well as of believers, there are many species, including almost every variety of moral type. But the best among them, as no one who has had opportunities of really knowing them will hesitate to affirm, are more genuinely religious, in the best sense of the word religion, than those who exclusively arrogate to themselves the title.

Of his relationship to Mrs. Taylor during her first husband's life he speaks as follows. The last sentence showing that though he might so far yield to the absurd restraints of society it was simply from a wise to preserve the connectional respectability of Mr. and Mrs Taylor. Many of his disciples who may adopt his principles may have no such scruples. And indood, why should they?

All these circumstances united, made the number very small of these whose society, and still more whose intimacy. I now veluntarily sought. Among these, was the in-