

PROMINENT CANADIANS.—XXIII.

SKETCHES of the following Prominent Canadians have already appeared in THE WEEK : Hon. Oliver Mowat, Dr. Daniel Wilson, Principal Grant, Sir John A. Macdonald, K.C.B. Louis Honoré Fréchette, LL.D., Sir J. William Dawson, Sir Alexander Campbell, K.C.M.G., Hon. William Stevens Fielding, Hon. Alexander Mackenzie, Sir Samuel Leonard Tilley, C.B., K.C.M.G., Alexander McLachlan, Hon. J. A. Chapleau, Sir Richard Cartwright, K.C.M.G., Sanford Fleming, C.E., LL.D., C.M.G., Hon. H. G. Joly, Hon. P. J. O. Chauveau, Sir Wm. Buell Richards, Hon. Wilfrid Laurier, M.P., Hon. Honoré Mercier, Q.C., Hon. William Macdougall, C.B., Rev. Principal MacVicar, D.D., LL.D., and Prof. Charles G. D. Roberts, M.A.

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It is said, "They who rock the cradles rule the world." If this be true—and, confessedly, there is enough of truth in the saying to make it proverbial—those cradles are not rocked at the hustings, nor by loud voiced declamation from the public platform. The nurseries do not invite the public gaze. Forests grow without boasting, and the hand that keeps the planets in their orbits has no advertising tricks whereby to attract attention to the work. The noisy demagogue has his place in nature—so has the kettle-drum—but the powers that mould and bless society are for the most part the powers behind the throne. Such reflections irresistibly rise as the pen begins to write of the modest philosopher whose name stands at the head of this article, and whose talents more than justify a place for their possessor in this series of eminent Canadians, understanding by this last term not merely those whose birth-place is Canada, but also those who have made this land the sphere of their toil, found here their home, and to the upbuilding and prosperity of which they have contributed or are contributing their share.

Dissent in England for the most part takes the form of antagonism to the entire polity of the Established Episcopal Church. Dissent in Scotland held tenaciously both the polity and the doctrines embodied in the standards of the Established Presbyterian Church. English dissent is anti-Episcopal; Scottish is as thoroughly Presbyterian as the State Church. They who seceded from the Scottish establishment did so because, in their esteem, that establishment was not true to its Presbyterian trust. Among those who originally seceded from the establishment a discussion arose as to the propriety of taking the burgher oath required in the towns of Edinburgh, Glasgow and Perth, which oath contained a profession of "the true religion presently professed within this realm, and authorized by the laws thereof." One party held these words to mean simply those doctrines and polity which the authorized standards required, but another, and that the more numerous, held these words to be an endorsement of the Established Church, with its corruptions, from which they had seceded. A division resulted in the formation of the Burgher and Anti-Burgher Associate Synods. To us these controversies are dead issues, it is hard to realise the importance thereof, but they arose from strong convictions, and those who took active interest therein were men of keen intellect, earnest spirit, and could intelligently distinguish things that differ. The Rev. William Young ministered to an Anti-Burgher Church in the quiet town of Berwick-upon-Tweed, and here, about three-score years and ten ago, was born to him the subject of this sketch. The mother was a daughter of Rev. George Paxton, Professor of Divinity in the Anti-Burgher Synod. Mr. Paxton wrote a work well known in its day "Illustrations of Scripture from the Geography and Customs of the East." Dissatisfied with the ultimate union between the Burgher and Anti-Burgher Synods, Mr. Paxton remained with others to form the Synod of Original Seceders, continuing his professorial duties among them. These facts are mentioned as accounting in some measure for the keen intellect and scrupulous integrity which the respected Professor of Metaphysics and Ethics in University College confessedly possesses in no ordinary degree. There is an hereditary piety, and we are all controlled largely by our environment.

George Paxton Young's collegiate course was at Edinburgh; he was among the earliest students of theology at the Free Church College in that city, and sat under the inspiring teaching of Dr. Chalmers. Dr. William Gregg of Knox College in this city was a fellow student, and, though theologically the two are confessedly far apart to day, they are alike respected for the simplicity, earnestness and sincerity of their lives. John Macintosh, "the Earnest Student;" Mr. Edersheim, author of a "History of the Jews," and of the "Life and Times of Jesus Christ;" Principal Rainy of Edinburgh, and Principal Douglass of Glasgow, were among those who were companions at that time in the Free Church Hall. Mr. Young began his ministry in Paisley, Scotland, and emigrated to Canada about 1850. After a brief pastorate over Knox Church, Hamilton, he received the appointment in 1853 of Second Professor of Divinity in Knox College, the Senior Professor being the late Rev. M. Willis, D.D., confessedly in his day one of the best read scholars in the patristic and reformation theologies. Mr. Young's department was Logic, Mental and Moral Philosophy, and the Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion. Subsequently, on the appointment of the late Dr. R. Burns, as Third Theological Professor, the subject of the Evidences was given to Dr. Burns, and that of Exegetical Theology to Mr. Young. It was while under this arrangement that the writer of this article for three years attended on Prof. Young's lectures. Only utter lack of brains would keep a student from learning under such teaching. The Second Professor's analytical powers seemed perfect, he never came before his class unprepared; he possessed the rare faculty of placing himself for the time being thoroughly *en rapport* with the author whose work or theory was under consideration, arguing for him as against the objections urged by the ready students, and then

when he had thoroughly indoctrinated the class in the views given, would with merciless keenness, expose the fallacies, overturning or buttressing the argument as the theses were to be rejected or maintained. Some criticism is like to the thunderbolt, crashing, overturning; our Professor's was that of a keen-edged razor, the *dissecta membra* being the first intimation that the work was done.

The students were not merely instructed, they were drawn out; we do not remember one weary hour in the class room; and as the Professor warmed to his subject his shrill voice, rising almost to a shriek in its falsetto, would still every sound, rivet every eye, until the sentence ended, the student would remember that "notes" had to be taken and from the height of enthusiasm the class would regretfully drop to prosaic pencil and paper again. Examinations loomed! and we knew our Professor's examinations were no shams.

Occasionally some shrewd advice was kindly given; *e. g.*, class ready, with note books opened—the professor duly seated (the seat was seldom kept more than ten minutes of the hour)—a slight rapid stutter: "Eh, gentlemen—ah—you are studying to be—preachers—eh—I will give you two rules which, faithfully followed, will prevent your congregations from sleeping, and yourselves from being bores." Every pencil was ready—"Never mind your note books, gentlemen, your memory ought to be sufficient"—expectation on every countenance—"Gentlemen—never speak unless you have something to say"—class looking as though they might be sold—"when you have said it—sit down!" Blank countenances and the lecture begins. Happy they who remember the advice and keep it. Another: "Gentlemen, I heard of a student that boasted of his readiness in pulpit preparation. He said that he frequently went into the pulpit not knowing what he was about to preach from. The sermon generally ended by the people not knowing what he had said." There was not much laughter, those piercing eyes and voice sent the lessons home.

In 1864 Prof. Young resigned his position in Knox College and eventually his ministerial standing. The reasons have never been given in detail, though it is generally understood that there was a growing divergence between the conclusions to which study was leading and the expressed views of the church. Having no desire to pose as a martyr, or to be unfaithful, Mr. Young quietly withdrew.

For some time Mr. Young did admirable service as Inspector of Grammar Schools, and very much of their subsequent efficiency is due to his efforts and suggestions. So vivid however were student recollections of thorough teaching in the Presbyterian Church that in 1868 Mr. Young was asked to take charge of classes in Mental and Moral Philosophy, and elementary Latin and Greek, in the Preparatory Department of Knox College. This position he filled till called to the chair of Metaphysics and Ethics in University College, which chair he has occupied with more than approbation ever since. In our student days no class in the University was more irksome; not one to-day exceeds it in popularity.

Professor Young stands to the front as a mathematician and has recently presented solutions of problems which have hitherto baffled the best skill: and one who has read critically the works of Plato and Aristotle cannot but rank high as an accomplished Greek scholar. Indeed it would be difficult to name a chair in the Arts course our friend could not fill with ability.

Professor Young never married, yet we know of few men whose home instincts are stronger: they who have shared his hospitality, as the writer has, know how tender and thoughtful his attentions are in his own house. Trifling in his company is out of the question, but a generous flow of spirits is invited, and you are made to feel thoroughly at home. He will pass away, as all must, and the busy city will scarcely know that a prophet has been among them; but the lives he has inspired, the minds he has trained, and they who have been thrown upon his affectionate care, will know that a good man and a true has entered into rest.

JOHN BURTON, M.A., B.D.

THE only value of external success is as a sign of interior spirit. Our successes ought not to be things which are achieved by force of will or by skill of hand simply; they ought to be the fruits which the spirit of our lives bears, as naturally as the tree bears its appropriate fruit. No really strong life will miss some form of external success, though it may not be a form which the world recognizes; but its real achievement will always be interior and spiritual.

A THRILLING incident, which recently happened in India, is related by the native papers. It was no less a feat than the photographing of a tiger and a buffalo at the instant they were in deadly conflict. The whole affair had been deliberately pre-arranged. The buffalo was carefully tethered to a stump in the middle of a field. The artist, who was, of course in peril of his life, coolly focussed the horned beast. Then the tiger was let loose, and springing upon the buffalo, struck the huge creature to the earth with a single blow of his paw. The camera, at this intense moment, took its instantaneous impression, and the result was a picture vividly representing the deadly scene, and its victim at the very moment of dying. "The one beat of the heart," says an account, "that intervened between the awful blow of the tiger's paw and the victim's positive surrender of existence, sufficed for the photographer to catch and fix with unerring fidelity the attitudes of the slayer and the slain." The striking achievement has its scientific use. It settles, by indisputable testimony of the sun's rays, the much mooted question by what method the tiger destroys its prey. The artist was a man of rare courage, for in order to achieve this triumph of his art he took the chance that the untamable rover of the jungle would leap on him instead of the victim intended for his deadly onset.