

British American Presbyterian

Vol. 5--No. 12.

TORONTO, CANADA, FRIDAY, APRIL 21, 1876.

[Whole No. 220

Contributors and Correspondents.

(For the Presbyterian.)

REV. NORMAN MACLEOD, D.D.

While many of our readers are looking anxiously for Dr. MacLeod's Memoir, which has created such an interest at home, we think it a fitting time to publish in these columns some personal recollections we have of this distinguished divine. It may serve to allay the thirst for this work which is already so manifest, and to prepare the way for the more thorough enjoyment of the volumes themselves.

Dr. MacLeod, at the period of his death in 1872, was only 60 years of age. He belonged to a family whose sons have for generations been trained for the Church, and was early devoted to the work of the ministry. His father was a fine specimen of the Highland gentleman and Christian minister, and unlike his distinguished son was spared to see his four-score years. Young Norman was a bright and witty boy, and at college during his whole term was more distinguished for his personal qualities than his attainments and success as a student. He was hearty in all his movements, and in the midst of the usual fun and frolic of college-life was known as a merry companion, and the lover of manly sports. When Sir Robert Peel was elected Lord Rector of the University of Glasgow, Norman MacLeod distinguished himself by a memorable speech delivered at a banquet given in honor of that illustrious statesman, and in which he gave proof of such natural force and eloquence as to call forth the special commendations of Peel himself. Having been licensed to preach about the usual period, it was not long ere his gifts and graces carried him into the long desired position of a parish minister. He became minister of Loudoun in Ayrshire in 1838, and soon attracted attention as a rising and popular preacher. When the great secession of '43 occurred, which led to the formation of the Free Church of Scotland, Norman MacLeod occupied the position of sympathizing to a certain extent with the seceders, and yet loving and revering the Establishment in which he had drawn his first breath, and whose very dust was dear to him. He had not committed himself to the view of Church polity entertained by the leaders of the Free Church, and when at length the disruption took place which swept nearly 500 ministers from their Churches and mansees, Mr. MacLeod threw himself into the work of rebuilding the beloved Church of his fathers. In the year of the secession he was translated to the parish of Dalkeith near Edinburgh, and in this larger sphere his zeal, earnestness and eloquence came more prominently into view. During this period his services for public occasions were eagerly sought, and in Glasgow where his venerable father ministered to the largest Gaelic speaking congregation in Scotland, MacLeod of Dalkeith was rapidly becoming a household name. He frequently assisted at the communion in the Barony parish, then enjoying the able and valued ministry of his esteemed friend Dr. Black, and on these occasions crowds gathered to hear him. When the Barony parish became vacant through the untimely death of Dr. Black, all eyes were eagerly turned to Mr. MacLeod, and not long after we find him settled in Glasgow, as minister of the second most lucrative parish in Scotland, and affording a sphere for useful and honorable service second to none in the world.

It was as minister of the Barony parish Dr. MacLeod attained his commanding influence and world-wide reputation. From the beginning of his career in Glasgow, his natural eloquence commanded immense crowds of eager and attentive listeners, and to the day of his death his popularity as a preacher never waned. His majestic presence in the pulpit, his clear and ringing voice, with the Highland accent agreeably perceptible, his winning and lively manner, all contributed largely to his success. He was deeply in earnest in addressing his audience, and every one felt as though his glistening eye were turned to him, and the sermon preached for his special benefit. The utterances of the preacher were no less remarkable than were his presence and manner. Christ was the ever-present theme—Christ and Him crucified. He turned not from that to the right hand or the left. He had no particular hobby to ride in the pulpit, being as free from the vagaries of spiritualism and pre-millennialism, as he was from vulgar sensationalism. While no one could have excelled him in wit and humor, in the social or family circle, this was all laid aside in the pulpit in presence of the commanding motive to honor Christ and save the sinner. Had he given way to his natural temperament, and forgotten the solemnities of his office, he could easily have kept his congregation in excited and constant merriment. But he was above this, and chose on all occasions to press with fervent earnestness the terms of salvation provided in the gospel. The name of Jesus Christ in his kingly office was constantly on his lips. He constantly spoke of Him as the Lord Jesus Christ. But while his discourses were evangelical in their spirit and matter, he was singularly free of all dogmas. He did not quibble and speculate about such things as election and predestination. In presence of the burning desire to save the souls of men, these took a subordinate place in his

philosophy and teaching. We are certain that he would have given the reply of Rowland Hill to the request that was once made to him by a church official, the request, viz.: to preach to the elect. He would have said, with good Rowland, "Go and put a mark on the elect and I will preach to them." Dr. MacLeod was eminently a preacher of common sense. He was simple and practical, easily understood, and his discourses never failed to touch the heart. He never aspired to the grandiloquence of Chalmers, nor to the ornate and philosophical language of Caird, nor to the panoramic descriptions of Guthrie, nor to the reasoning of Candlish. In mother-tongue words he sought to gain the ears of the people, and yet it would be far from the truth to leave the impression that he was simple and earnest, and nothing more. He had a graphic power of describing, not scenery so much, as men moving and acting in the midst of scenery. He could picture to the life a ship in distress in mid-ocean, and while the storm was raging. In clear and graphic language, he could delicately analyse the feelings of the human heart. A vein of poetry ran through all his writings, which revealed itself in ideas rather than expressions. Many a thrill of surprise and excited feeling might be seen passing over the audience like an electric current. Men felt that the preacher knew them thoroughly, and there was no shade of character, no feeling of shame or remorse, of joy or love that was not familiar to him. The bereaved parent was comforted, the stricken husband or wife was strengthened, the business man, the mechanic, the sons and daughters of toil were nerved for their duties and trials, the down-trodden were uplifted, the cast out and degraded were inspired with new purposes in his presence. Like Dr. Chalmers, most of his sermons were read, though we often wondered that with such a command of language, with his practical turn and fertile imagination, he had not thrown away the manuscript entirely. It was chiefly in preaching to miscellaneous congregations in the evening, that his great power revealed itself. He had his written discourse reduced to notes, and prepared for effective delivery, and then with all his valuable resources at hand—his knowledge of men and manners, his poetic temperament, his acquaintance with all countries, his experience amongst the rich and poor—the impression he made was powerful and abiding.

Dr. MacLeod was highly distinguished in parochial work. The parish in which he laboured is over crowded with the poor, and with the working classes. Any ordinary man would have felt himself powerless in the midst of such a population. It was, of course, impossible to visit parochially—or from house to house, especially with the countless pressing duties of such a charge. In his first year, Dr. MacLeod organized district meetings, dividing his parish as equally as possible, having each district presided over by elders and deacons. He visited one district every week, and in some convenient place met all who chose to come—preaching to them, administering ordinances, and enquiring into the welfare of every family. Such work only revealed more and more the immense numbers, who, in such a city, never think of going to church. Dr. MacLeod was continually hearing as excuse for such indifference, the old cry—they had no clothes; and being unable to clothe themselves, he at length opened his church on Sabbath evenings for a service exclusively for those who had no Sunday clothes, and to remove every shadow of excuse, he made it compulsory that no dressed person should be admitted. A separate sexton was appointed with special instructions to let none enter but those wearing fustian jackets and plain garments, who was so conscientious in the discharge of his duties, that on one occasion he turned Dr. MacLeod's own wife from the door, a joke which the Dr. enjoyed as heartily as any one else. From the beginning the immense Church of the Barony was crowded to excess, with those who could not go to the ordinary services without proper clothing. We have seen between 2,000 and 3,000 such persons gathered within the walls of the old Barony, and there Dr. MacLeod was peculiarly himself. He was quite at home. With simple words and striking figures, with his soul aglow with warm and enthusiastic feeling, with sympathy listening in his eye, he continued for an hour or more to sustain his audience in breathless interest. The crowd poured out of the church evidently pleased and edified. Many of those who began to attend church in this way, and being led to give up the expensive ways of the drunken and licentious, were soon clothed and in their right minds, and passed into fellowship with the regular congregation, or went forth and became nuclei of new and rising congregations. From this work grew a great number of important mission stations throughout the city, which have since grown into flourishing and independent churches. The Barony parish is now split into many parishes, where beautiful churches raise their lofty spires to the heavens, and where schools are multiplied to meet the overgrown wants of the city in the matter of education. Dr. MacLeod also shone as a visitor of the sick. His cheerful face beamed upon the sick-chamber, and in his very presence there was a comforting and gladdening influence, while his few and well-chosen words, and his brief and earnest prayer, never failed to impart consolation and joy.

The partiality of Queen Victoria to Scotland is well known. About the period of Dr. MacLeod's entrance into Glasgow, the Queen, by advice of her Consort, had established a royal residence in Aberdeen-shire. It is situated in the valley of the

beautiful spots in Scotland. Soon after the royal family commenced to reside here, the minister of the parish in which she lived, invited to his pulpit some of the more distinguished preachers, and in this way Caird, MacLeod, Stewart, and others, were brought before the Queen. Dr. MacLeod's first sermon made a profound impression. The Queen, in her published journals, speaks of his discourse on Nicodemus as beautiful, and mentions that when the preacher prayed for her husband and children she felt as if a great lump were in her throat. Since then Dr. MacLeod repeatedly received the royal command to preach in her presence, and he was then invited as a guest to the royal table. It was well known that Dr. MacLeod was greatly esteemed by Prince Albert, and that after the Prince's death, he was welcomed by Her Majesty as a wise counsellor. Dr. MacLeod was appointed a Chaplain to the Queen, an office of honor but without emolument. He is now known as the intimate friend of the Royal Family, and we mention this not so much as a matter of special distinction, as to bring out an interesting trait in his character, viz.: that the Royal patronage and friendship made no difference in the man. He was no less devoted to his Church; he was a warm friend of the poor and of the working man; he was more than ever the prime mover in every benevolent scheme, and every Church work. Indeed, Dr. MacLeod was a singular exception in this, that the smiles of the Court made no difference on his bearing, and that like Sir Walter Scott, who one day dined with the King, and supped with a poor actor in the evening with equal pleasure; he could pass from the palace to a cottage, and make himself at home in the one as in the other. He always showed a keen interest in the poor but deserving student, and it was observed as a contrast to other great ecclesiastics that the immense patronage he wielded in virtue of his own talents, and through his intimacy with the Queen and the nobility, was not used exclusively for the promotion of his own relatives, but always for the purpose of putting the right man in the right place. Many students, who began college life without a penny, are now through the friendship of the Barony minister settled in the best parishes of the Church.

Dr. MacLeod is also a particular and shining star in the world of letters. Some years after his settlement in Glasgow he projected a monthly periodical known as *Good Words*. He was quick to see that a magazine, having for its object both to please and instruct, was greatly needed. The new journal was religious in its spirit, free from sectarianism, and liberal in its treatment of all subjects. The commanding genius of Dr. MacLeod gathered around him the great divines of the Church of England, including Archbishops and Bishops; nobles like the Duke of Argyll, distinguished in letters; statesmen like Gladstone, who as a set off to the cares of State, cultivated the pen; authors of fiction like George MacDonald, who employ their gifts in the instruction of mankind; men of science, poets and philosophers of every shade. The result was a magazine of varied and brilliant talent, suited to every rank in life. Added to this was the genius of the editor which showed itself in songs and ballads, in stories and allegories, in philosophical essays and religious discourses. Dr. MacLeod's story of "Wee Davie," a classic by the way, raised the circulation of *Good Words* with a bound from some 50,000 to upwards of 100,000 copies per month. It has steadily grown in popularity ever since. Dr. MacLeod is also the author of the beautiful memoir—*The Earnest Student*, of the Starling, a work of commanding humor, and of other instructive volumes.

From the beginning of his ministry Dr. MacLeod was eminently "missionary" in his spirit, but during his Barony pastorate there was seen in him a growing love for Foreign Missions. He introduced the subject into his discourses, organized a Parochial Association for collecting mission funds, and brought his whole strength and eloquence to bear upon the subject in the Presbytery and General Assembly. The Church of Scotland has only one Foreign Mission, viz.: in India, Dr. Duff having been its founder and its most distinguished agent. Some ten years ago Dr. MacLeod was made Chairman of the Indian Mission Board, in which position his influence was soon felt throughout the Church. Shortly afterwards, like Chalmers, his illustrious countryman, MacLeod commenced a tour through Scotland, addressing meetings in every town and city, and seeking by every means within his power to rouse the people to active exertions in behalf of the Foreign Mission. Notwithstanding all his other labours, he sometimes addressed two or three such meetings in the course of a week, involving long and fatiguing journeys. In a very short time the whole Church was alive on the subject, and not long before his death the Christian world was startled by the announcement that Dr. MacLeod, in company with Dr. Watson of Dundee, was going on a missionary tour to India. He visited many important cities in India, preaching to the British residents, obtaining immense contributions, and carefully studying the races, their manners and customs, his own congregation willingly granting him leave of absence for the purpose. Visiting India in person was a grand conception. It gave a new insight into the work needed. It brought him into contact with the noblest missionaries of all Churches. It revealed inefficient agents. It taught him strong points for missionary enterprise, and the result was a thrilling and magnificent report to the General Assembly, which gave a new impetus to the Church's liber-

ality, and inspired students with the purpose of consecrating their lives and talents to foreign fields. The work done cannot be over valued, the good accomplished cannot be told. These will appear after many days. And now that Dr. MacLeod is released from his herculean labors, and has entered rest, we cannot doubt that the Churches, not only of Scotland, but all lands, will be turned with eager and earnest longing to the conversion of the world.

Dr. MacLeod was cut off in the midst of his years full of honor. Let us say of such a man, let him rest in peace. One reason why the Lord calls men from their work ere they have reached the time "when the keepers of the house tremble," is that He has need for them in the upper sanctuary. We cannot think of such men as dead; they are living in God's presence, basking in the smiles of his love, mingling in the society of glorified beings. They are engaged more actively and zealously than ever in the service of the Master. They have been fitted by their work here below for far nobler work in the kingdom above, and now in far grander ways are they honoring and glorifying their Master. Let us learn a lesson from their lives—let us do our utmost for the glory of God and the good of our fellowmen; let us follow in their footsteps, and thus their lives will be a perpetual blessing and joy to us and future generations.

Lives of great men all remind us,
We can make our lives sublime,
And departing, leave behind us,
Footprints on the sands of time.

ONE OF OUR PIONEERS.

On the evening of March 30th, a deputation from the congregation of Pricewille and Durham road, along with some friends outside the congregation, called at the manse, Pricewille, to present the Rev. Mr. Cameron with an address and a present of money, previous to his removal to the congregation of Roxburgh. It is now eighteen years this spring, since Mr. Cameron first entered the County of Grey, travelling, as we heard him say, from Fergus to Durham on foot through mud and slush, as the roads were too bad for the stage to run. He preached one Sabbath in Durham, and returned for four months to Mount Forest, which consisted then of three stores and a few houses. In 1859 Mr. Cameron was appointed missionary, by the Presbytery of Hamilton, to Pricewille (which consisted then of two or three houses), and Durham Road. In 1860 he was sent again to the same field, and during that summer a Presbyterian Church, the first in that section, was built on the Durham Road. There was no central fund in those days to aid weak congregations. When a district wished to secure the services of a settled pastor it could attain its object only by grouping several congregations together under one pastoral care. To strengthen the Durham Road congregation, the Rocky Saugeen was added to it on the west, and the Toronto Road on the east, and this wide district organized into a congregation by the Presbytery of Hamilton. From its western extremity in Bentinck to its eastern extremity beyond Allan's Hill in Holland, this congregation was between forty and fifty miles in length. Over this scattered field Mr. Cameron was ordained pastor in 1861. After ten years labour it was seen that the time had arrived to contract the field. The congregation on the Toronto line was thrown off, as a new swarm, and is now a prosperous congregation with two good frame churches, under the pastoral care of the Rev. Mr. MacAlmon. The time had indeed arrived when it was becoming a necessity to divide the remaining field into two congregations, leaving Pricewille and the Durham Road, which has two churches and a manse, as one charge, and the Rocky Saugeen as a separate field with its church. Had Mr. Cameron consented to remain, Pricewille and the Durham Road would, in a short time, take on their own shoulders the burden shared at present between them and the Rocky Saugeen; but Mr. Cameron saw it his duty to accept the call to Roxburgh. No one can say that selfish motives prevailed much with Mr. Cameron, to draw him away from his large and laborious field of labour. He had three calls, (one to the village of Beaverton, where superior inducements were offered), all of which he refused rather than part with people to whom he was so attached, and who were no less attached to him. The union, however, of the Presbyterian Churches last June, changed the position of matters in Pricewille and the Durham line. Not that Mr. Cameron's congregation wished him to leave, as was clearly shown when the matter was fairly and squarely brought before them. There were only three who thought, not for any personal reasons but on public grounds, i.e. for the sake of union with the other congregation (formerly in connection with the Church of Scotland), that he should resign his charge. After considering the matter and placing the question on broad grounds of general expediency, Mr. Cameron at length, much to the regret of his people, and in the face of their urgent pleading at the bar of the presbytery for him to remain, resolved to accept the call to Roxburgh, and to hand

to which he had devoted fifteen years of close, patient and unintermitting pastoral labour. It was not Mr. Cameron's belief, as he told the presbytery, that this step would hasten the union of the two congregations; still he was willing that those who were so sanguine for union might have a chance of trying to bring about this desirable issue, if they could, after his departure. The irritation felt by Mr. Cameron's congregation, because that through the unreasonable demand of the sister congregation they lost their pastor, works at present against any near union, as is evidenced by the fact that each of the congregations is to be supplied this summer with a student missionary. This fact should be noted by people in other parts of the Church, who think that by knocking ministers about as if they were wooden men on a chess board, they can patch up artificial unions by motions and speeches and paper resolutions. Union of congregations cannot be forced. True union, as Napoleon said of a Republic, cannot be made, but must grow by slow and cautious steps. It is the opinion of many who know the field and the people that union might be obtained with more haste and certainty by Mr. Cameron's remaining in Pricewille and working quietly the work that lay there to his hand, than by his leaving the field. But matters have been ordered otherwise, and people can only hope that all will turn out for the best for all parties, in the long run.

In presenting Mr. Cameron with the purse referred to above, the following address was read in name of the congregation of Pricewille, Durham Line, and parties not belonging to the congregation, but who approved of Mr. Cameron's public work in the South Riding of Grey:

"REVEREND AND DEAR SIR,—We cannot allow you to leave us without expressing our high esteem and approbation of your whole conduct while labouring amongst us. We know that any praise would be of very little consequence to you; and we feel assured that a higher motive than human approval has actuated you. We cannot but acknowledge with thankfulness to God, that your conduct has been such as we ought to try to imitate; and we heartily pray that such an example may influence our lives, even when you are absent. We express our deep regret for the separation which is about to take place; and we sincerely trust that the change may conduce to your welfare and happiness, both temporal and spiritual, and that also of our esteemed and kind friend Mrs. Cameron. The accompanying small token of respect is a slight acknowledgement of our appreciation of your past services, and an indication of our good wishes for your prosperity. We remain, Reverend and dear Sir, yours affectionately, F. MacRae, Archibald Black, on behalf of the Congregation. Pricewille, 30th March, 1876.

MR. CAMERON'S REPLY.

"DEAR CHRISTIAN FRIENDS,—We have often met on different occasions, but our meeting this evening is different from any meeting we ever had before. I am no longer your pastor; in a few days I will leave the place where I spent so many happy Sabbaths, never again, perhaps, to see your faces in this world. It is pleasant that we part, not in anger, but with warmest feelings of love and esteem than ever we had towards each other. It is no easy matter for me, then, to give expression to the emotions which your gift has awakened. The good feeling towards Mrs. Cameron and me, of which your present and address is only the outward expression, is to us of far more value than the gift itself. I thank you, Christian friends for your kindness; and would ask you to convey thanks to the congregation and community which you represent. May the blessing of the Lord that maketh rich and addeth no sorrow, be yours."

Mr. Cameron then led the meeting in prayer, commending the friends there present, and the whole congregation, "to God and to the Word of His grace."

Awakening at Goderich.

EDITOR BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

SIR,—It will rejoice many of your readers to learn that a marked religious awakening is in progress in the town of Goderich. A noon-day prayer meeting is held daily in the room of the Y. M. C. A., and special services nightly in Knox Church, and one of the Methodist Churches. Some time ago the two Presbyterian congregations of the town were happily united under the joint pastorate of their former ministers. This manifestation of brotherly love has been followed by a large blessing from on high. Various indications of special interest in divine things have been manifesting themselves for some months past in the town and congregation. These led to the beginning of a series of nightly evangelistic services towards the end of last month. The attendance was from the outset large, and has gone on increasing. The meetings have been marked by deep interest, quietness, and the power of the Spirit accompanying the Word. Many have remained to the after-meetings as inquirers, and not a few of these have found rest in Christ, and now rejoice in the assurance of their forgiveness. Believers, too, have been greatly revived and quickened, and the pastors cheered and strengthened by the manifestations of divine power which they have witnessed. They have been assisted by some neighbouring ministers, and are well seconded by a band of zealous workers within the congregation. Let us pray that they may be strengthened yet more and more to trust in the saviour while the harvest lies white before them, and blessed to the gathering in of very many more sinners into the Lord's garner. J.W.M. Apr 11 1876.