

THE GREAT SALVATION.

In the second chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews a momentous question is asked, which has never yet been answered. It is this: "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" In the first chapter the author shows that this great salvation has been prophesied, provided, preached and proven. Its author has surpassed angels in His person, proclamation, ministry, inheritance and glory. His message surpasses that of the prophets and is final. His sacrifice of Himself makes possible the purification of sins. His session at God's right hand insures the bringing of many sons to glory and His universal and eternal reign.

These thoughts prepare us for the meditation on our subject. Our salvation is called a great one.

1. Because of its simplicity. This may seem like a paradox. But upon second thought we see that its very simplicity magnifies its greatness. Great thinkers are able to bring their thoughts down to the comprehension of the common people. Great men are always humble men. Great saints are always noted for their childlikeness and simplicity of faith and life. Paul says: "I fear lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ." The Gospel is so clear, plain and distinct, so definite and intelligible in its terms, so free from mysterious and obscure and ambiguity that the little child or any one with sufficient sense to render him accountable can understand it, receive it and be saved by it. The question of the jailor, "What must I do to be saved?" was answered briefly, pointedly and effectively by the simple words "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved and thy house." No long period of preparation and probation, no long course of Catechetical instruction, no term of years as a novitiate were necessary before he could have the assurance of salvation. That very night, following the simple course laid down by Paul, the Philippian jailor and his family became baptized believers, full of faith and joy and good works.

2. In its freeness. Isaiah understood this when he cried, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." "Without price" either in merit, service or money. "Jesus paid it all." "Look and live."

"In my hand no price I bring, Simply to Thy Cross I cling,"
"And have I nothing to do?" asked an old lady who was dying and making a Saviour of her prayers. "Nothing," said the minister, pointing her to Acts 13:39. "By Him all that believe are justified from all things." Again and again she repeated the question "And have I nothing to do?" At last she grasped the sublime truth of a gratuitous salvation and died rejoicing in it. It is also great.

3. In its righteousness. God must be just as well as merciful. Having provided a perfect Substitute, He can now be "just and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." Thus "Mercy and truth have met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other."—Christian Intelligencer.

Set not thy heart on dying
To find a world of bliss,
Lest for the future sighing
Thou miss the joys of this.
But let thy daily living
Bespeak a soul within
Which thus its aim fulfilling
True life as last shall win.

Something is wrong in the man to whom the sunrise is not a divine glory, for therein are embodied the truth, the simplicity, the might of the Maker.—George Macdonald.

A MISSIONARY EDUCATOR: REV. THOMAS McCULLOCH, D.D.*

By Rev. P. M. Macdonald, M.A.

Thomas McCulloch was a transplanted Scotsman, whose life, learning and labor enriched Nova Scotia in the early days of the last century. He was born in Renfrewshire, trained both in medicine and arts at Glasgow University and came to Pictou in November, 1803, 36 years after the arrival of the first settler and seventeen years after that of Rev. James MacGregor, whose life and work furnished the special topic for last month.

Prince Edward Island was his intended field, when he left Scotland, but malignant nature's frosts and tempests at the time of his arrival in Pictou made it necessary for him to spend the winter there on the mainland. He worked in the Pictou town part of Dr. MacGregor's congregation till the spring of the year, and then he was called to be the settled minister of that section. The day of his induction the Islanders came, too late, to take him across the Northumberland Straits. Had he gone to "The Garden of the Gulf," he would have worked as hard for the cause of higher education as he did in Nova Scotia; but the geographical situation of his activity might have interfered somewhat with its wider effect. At any rate the stormy sea and early winter served the peninsula a very good turn, when they kept McCulloch in Pictou.

The nucleus of his parish was represented by a handful of people who could count eighteen buildings in their community. These structures included barns, a blacksmith shop, and of course a jail. Around this bit of civilization the forest primeval stood dark and forbidding. It was no great opportunity for a man of culture and learning. But McCulloch did not complain. "If things were not as they might be, or ought to be, a great man tries to make them right. He sees the best that glimmers through the worst." McCulloch had visions of a larger community in the land of his adoption and he went to work to bring in that larger life. He preached and he lived the truth that makes free those who know it, and in everything he magnified his office. He related his efforts to the needs of those outside his own congregation, and planned and devised liberal things for them.

The value of a native University in missionary work is now recognized. The school and college to train the children of the land to be evangelized, are considered indispensable. A century ago Dr. McCulloch set himself to establish in Pictou an institution to train young men for the ministry of the gospel in Nova Scotia. Scotland was too far away to send enough men, and many of those sent were inevitably misfits.

The Episcopalians had a college at Windsor in the more westerly part of the province, but it was exclusively for their own students. The friends of that college opposed the efforts of Dr. McCulloch made in 1805 to found a college to train Presbyterian students, and they had influence enough to defeat his plans. He then started a Ghammar School. This proved a valuable temporary substitute for the desired college. In 1816 he again petitioned the Council at Halifax, seeking a charter for a college. By this time the Presbyterians had increased in numbers and influence, and now there were more friends at court. The opposition, however, was again too active, but only able to have the name "College" denied the institution. So it was, that Pictou Academy had the virility of a college, without the name of a college, and turned out scholars, to whom it could not grant degrees.

In 1817 work was begun in part of a dwelling-house, while the Academy

building was being fitted up. Dr. McCulloch was himself Principal and professors. For the first five years he was the whole staff, and at the same time also the minister of his congregation, preaching twice every Sabbath good, long, strong sermons, that still read excellently. As Professor he taught Greek, Hebrew, Logic, Moral Philosophy, and Natural Philosophy. He taught so well, that three of his earliest students, after a rigid examination at Glasgow, received the degree of Master of Arts from the University there.

McCulloch toiled terribly at his work, and all the time defended the Academy from the opposition of the Episcopalians and the "Old Kirk" folk, the "Kirk" people of the county, in all good conscience, no doubt, regarding the Academy as a means of destroying their connection with the Church of Scotland. This conflict caused him worry and labor, but he went through it, and stayed faithfully at his post. He was a maker of New Scotland by his very policy of trying to develop ability to do without Old Scotland's assistance. The march of time has amply justified his intention, and revealed the value of his labors. Pictou Academy has been, because of him, the nurse of Nestors in law, medicine, teaching, and preaching. In securing such a school for Nova Scotia, he set up a mark of light, that shone brightly near at hand, and lightened the darkness far away.

In 1838, Dr. McCulloch accepted the appointment of Principal of Dalhousie College, Halifax. Here he labored for five years. He had done his work, however, during the thirty-five years in Pictou. In 1843 he died, prematurely old at the age of sixty-seven, and no wonder, with all his manifold toils and battles.

Dr. McCulloch had many educational interests. He was not a mere porer over musty books. Though a profound thinker and an able classicist, he got out into the heart of nature and let her teach him. His museum was unique in the province. His collection of native birds won from the great Audubon the high praise of being among the finest that world famed naturalist had ever seen.

To rouse an interest in higher education among the people, Dr. McCulloch toured the Province and lectured on scientific subjects, chiefly chemistry. He was an author of able books of permanent value in ecclesiastical differences. He wrote frequently, and always ably, for the press.

His opponents were not few in number. His admirers and helpers were men of high intelligence. Judge Haliburton, ("Sam Slick") was a friend and great admirer of McCulloch, and in the Council eloquently advocated his educational plans.

One who is doing his good share for another part of Nova Scotia to-day, has said, "The bones of our modern Elishas are not without virtue; and to come in contact with such men as Dr. McCulloch may well cause a thrill to run through a man, who is very much of a corpse, and yet able to be up and about."

Canadian Churchman: Christianity, if it is to remain a vital force, must continue to be a teaching as well as a working system. Ultimately, indeed, the one involves the other. With the teaching will eventually go to the working. For the world is ruled by ideas. The religion therefore, that ignores theology (in its right place and proportion) is as unpractical as the navigation that ignores the compass, and the man who invariably demands immediate results as unpractical and "visionary" as the farmer who would reap to-morrow what he sows to-day.

We reap what we sow; but nature has love over and above that justice, and gives us shadow and blossom and fruit that springs from no planting of ours.—George Eliot.

*2 Tim. 2:15. Monthly Topic Plan of Study. 24th Feb., 1907.