

Pastor and People.

A PRESBYTERIAN PRESCRIPTION FOR INGERSOLL.

Colonel Ingersoll, the American infidel lecturer, is still discoursing on the Bible in American cities. A very sensible Presbyterian minister has put together the following appropriate verses on the subject:

"I pray you don't preach at him;
I pray you don't screech at him;
The best way to deal with him
Yet will be shown;
Attend to your sermon
Some great theme determine,
And as for the Colonel,
Just leave him alone.

"He only will laugh at you,
He'll only throw chaff at you,
His way is well known;
And seldom, or never,
Did argument ever
Convince an opponent,
So leave him alone.

"How patient the Lord is!
How potent His word is!
And 'tis not unknown
That the infidel teacher
Has sometimes turned preacher,
And so might the Colonel,
So leave him alone.

"Some good we might say for him;
At least we can pray for him—
Our love be thus shown;
And the tears of his mother,
And the prayers of some other,
Stored in heaven, may be answered;
So leave him alone."

THE PAN-PRESBYTERIAN COUNCIL.

(Concluded)

THE RELATIONS OF PHILOSOPHY AND THEOLOGY.

The Rev. Principal MacVicar, of Montreal, read a paper on this subject: Speaking of it, no less an authority than the Rev. Professor Lindsay, of Glasgow, said: "He apprehended that the paper attacked one of the most interesting, one of the most subtle, and one of the most important problems which Theology had always had to face, and which faced it now—what was the connection between Philosophy and Theology? and the Rev. Professor S. D. F. Salmond, D.D., Aberdeen, thought the two papers—Rev. Dr. MacVicar's and one by the Rev. Todd Martin, D.D., on Biology and Natural Science—were very admirable in respect to their spirit, their reasonableness, and their moderation.

Dr. MacVicar in substance said: Theology, in a most important sense, was fundamentally independent of philosophy; its subject-matter came not from a human but from a divine source, while philosophy was wholly the product of man's mind. Theology was indebted to philosophy. The aid it received was chiefly in the way of mental discipline, in sharpening and developing the faculties, imparting dialectical skill, and inculcating a critical spirit. This was of the utmost value to theology when accompanied by Christian humility. It led them to distinguish between things which differed, to separate from the articles of their creed superstitions, limitations, and excrescences of various sorts "to prove all things and hold fast that which is good." Theology had nothing to lose but everything to gain by the sober exercise of a reverent, progressive, critical spirit. Workers in this great field must hold themselves free to receive light from all quarters; and philosophy, rightly studied, should teach them to be not only aggressive but also calm, judicial, and thoroughly inductive in their search for truth, should beget that true scientific mental attitude which looked facts fairly in the face and made sure of a sufficient number of them before indulging in sweeping generalizations.

Equally obvious were the deep and lasting injuries inflicted upon theology by allowing the theories and points of barren contention among metaphysicians to take the place of Biblical facts and principles, the

place of the gospel in the creeds and public teaching of the Church. The battles of theology had chiefly raged around mediæval and modern philosophical wranglings, which in many instances had been no credit to human intelligence. They had, on the contrary, often rent asunder the body of Christ, and proved the fruitful cause of scepticism. They had obscured and even buried beneath heaps of learned rubbish God's message of redemptive love and mercy to their fallen world. The pulpit and the press were not wholly innocent in this connection. Comparative silence on their part regarding Christ as the light and life of men, and, at the same time, persistent praise of the value of philosophy begot the belief that human reasoning was preferable to the gospel for enlightening and saving purposes. To this must be added the fact that great dominating philosophical speculations now daily woven into popular literature and science, were directly antagonistic to the central truths of theology. This was the case with various forms of materialism. Its universal negation of spirit struck at the being of God and all dependent doctrines. Its attempt to reduce man's constitution to one factor, to make him all body and no soul, a cunningly constructed machine set in motion, and directed by physical force, left no room for either freedom or moral responsibility. He was in the iron grasp of a relentless necessity, deprived of free agency, and incapable of virtue or vice as these were described in Scripture. And all this rested upon pure assumption, for materialists had not given evidence for what they confidently postulated. They asserted without proof that all mental, moral, and spiritual phenomena were accounted for by the investigations of physicists, while the truth was that physicists, by every method of analysis known to them, had failed to discover the source of a single thought, volition, hope, joy, sorrow, or act of conscience. When they had done their utmost the whole mass of spiritual phenomena was still unaccounted for, untouched. Again, the hypothesis of evolution had of late permeated all departments of thought, and was used to explain the origin and growth of all things. Religious life was said to have risen from the lowest fetishism and diversified itself into all the forms of the prehistoric and historic past. Christianity was nothing more than an eclectic belief evolved out of all the corrupt cults that preceded it. This might please Pagans, Buddhists, and admirers of the Parliament of Religions; but it was in flagrant contradiction of Scripture and history. Whatever truth and beauty great specialists might profess to see in this hypothesis, it was obvious that as it influenced current theology and the belief of the masses, it discredited a supernatural revelation. It rendered void faith in the miraculous appearance of the Son of God among men, and consequently in all the distinctive doctrines of the gospel evolution could not give them the birth in the manger of Bethlehem, the resurrection from Joseph's sepulchre, and the scene on the day of Pentecost. It necessarily denied the possibility of the sudden elevation of savages and cannibals to a plane of Christian life and character such as has been attained by them in our own day in the New Hebrides, Uganda, Madagascar, and other heathen lands, the evidence in support of which was as scientific and conclusive as that relied upon by chemists in their laboratories. In like manner a critical examination of Pantheism and of many other current philosophical speculations would reveal both their weakness and antagonism to Biblical theology. It was still true, after the lapse of ages, that the world by wisdom knows not God. Hence the folly—one was constrained to say the wicked folly—of preaching philosophy to perishing men instead of the simple gospel which was the power of God and the wisdom of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth.

The Rev. Dr. Waters, of Newark, New Jersey, read the first of a series of papers

upon "The Church, the Reformed View of it." His specific subject was

"THE CHURCH OF GOD: ITS NATURE AND PURPOSE."

After referring to the Symbolic books and Confessions of the Reformed Churches, he continued: The first thing which struck the reader was the unanimity with which they assert the doctrine of the perpetuity and universality of the Church. According to their teaching, the Church began with the foundation of human society, and would continue to the end of time when all things shall be gathered in one. They taught, further, that there is only one true Church of God to be found wherever there are any of God's children. The teaching of the Reformed Confessions was exceedingly liberal in its view of the Church. They did not confine the Church to certain localities, nor did they build up denominational walls around the Church, fencing it off from all others who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and worshipped Him in spirit and truth. These confessional statements laid great stress upon the Headship of Christ. They also agreed in the general statement that "there can be no Church where the Word of God is not received nor profession made of subjection to it." One of the great outstanding characteristic universal facts connected with and marking the progress of the Church during the long period of its history was that of piety—the godliness of its individual members. One result of their doctrinal teaching was seen in the fact that the Reformed Church had stood for purity of doctrine as set forth and taught in the Word of God. In doing so it had taught the people to think for themselves. The view of the Church of God as held by the Reformed Churches tended in a most material way to develop the idea of liberty. It came to stand not only for liberty of conscience, but was the foster mother of that liberty which had found its highest development in the free institutions of this land and of the kindred people on the other side of the great sea, who, whatever differences might emerge from time to time, never forgot whose kith and kin they are.

THE AMERICAN CHURCHES; THEIR ORIGIN AND CHARACTERISTICS

The following brief and most interesting summary is from a paper read on this subject by the Rev. Dr. Good, of Reading, Pennsylvania. The Churches in America were mainly formed, especially in the last century, by those fleeing from the persecution on the Continent. The oldest Church in America, and the oldest Protestant Church was the Reformed Dutch. They came over early, and the first governor, who purchased what was now New York for \$24, was Peter Minuet. The next was the English Presbyterians—the Puritans—who settled in Massachusetts Bay. The next was the Scotch-Irish, and it was this that the Presbyterian Churches of America looked to as their origin. Its first Presbytery was held in Philadelphia in 1705. The German Reformed Church, with which he himself was connected, followed. The next emigration was the Scotch, and the Scotch wanted to outdo the others, for they founded more churches in the United States than any other, and three denominations sprang from this one—the first in 1753, the second in 1774, and the third—the Canadian—in 1769. But the Yankees liked to improve on these denominations, and so they founded two or three of their own. There was the Cumberland Church, that grew out of a revival, and because the Presbyterians refused to license uneducated ministers. It was founded in 1810. Then there was the Southern Presbyterian Church, founded in 1861, and arising out of the Civil War. He would have liked to have referred to individual Churches, but he could not omit mentioning the old Huguenot Church of Charleston, founded in 1681, and whose existence was continued until this day. In this Alliance in the Western Continent there were fifteen full regiments of ministers, 20,000 churches,

about 2,000,000 communicants, and about 8,000,000 adherents.

Turning to the characteristics, he said that, of course, all were alike Calvinistic four square, though there were differences between them. First, there was the broad Presbyterian Church—broad in extent, in activity, theologically, and in sympathy with everything that was right and true. That was the Northern Presbyterian Church. Then there was the churchy Church—High Church in the sacraments and government, but did not believe in the apostolic succession of the bishops. That was the Southern Presbyterian Church. Then they had the Revival Church—represented in the Cumberland Church. Then there was the Bible Presbyterian, in which the Bible was not only read, but sung, and that was the United Presbyterian Church and the Reformed Presbyterian Church. There was again the conscientious Presbyterian Church—a Church perhaps over-conscientious in the view of some—but which refused to let their voters vote in civil elections, because the name of God was not in the United States Constitution. He referred to the Reformed Presbyterian Synod. Then there was the Musical Presbyterian Church; in this he referred to the Welsh Calvinists. There was also the Conservative Calvinists, and that was the Dutch Reformed Presbyterian Church. And there was the Union Presbyterian Church. Union was in the air, and our denomination had demonstrated it, for the Canadian Presbyterian Church had united within it four Presbyterian denominations. Dr. Good concluded by stating that there were five points in the American Calvinism which were somewhat different from the Calvinism of the seventeenth century. These five points were: 1st, Their conservatism in doctrine; 2nd, Their practicalness; 3rd, Their emphasizing of education; 4th, Their desire for freedom; and 5th, Their desire for union.

HOME MISSIONS.

This subject is one which was certain to be taken up in the Council, and the Rev. Dr. Cochrane, of Brantford, was the spokesman on this subject for the Western Section of the Alliance, or that on this side of the Atlantic. He said: Home Mission work in Great Britain was in many respects essentially different from what it was—and must be for years to come—on the American Continent. Here we had a compact and homogenous people; there they had a heterogeneous mass of people gathered from all parts of the globe. In Great Britain our efforts were confined to cities, towns, and villages within easy reach; while on the American continent they had to deal with vast districts over prairies and Rockies. Here we required a few thousand pounds; but there, if the work was to be done at all, it demanded millions of dollars. The adherents of the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches in the world numbered about 30,000,000. Of these there were 2,000,000 communicants in the United States, and 200,000 in Canada. In connection with these Churches there were over eighty Presbyterian universities or colleges and twenty-one theological seminaries and some 7,500 missionaries engaged in home mission work, and supplying nearly 8,000 stations every Lord's Day, with an expenditure last year of \$2,000,000. The field of home missions in the United States covered its entire territory of 3,600,000 square miles, that of Canada nearly the same—3,470,257 square miles. As to population, the United States had now 70,000,000, and Canada 5,000,000, with territory unoccupied capable of providing homes and farms for 300,000,000 more. Home mission work in American towns and cities was very much what it was in the Old World. There was the same widespread indifference to religion, as indicated by the fact that some 32,000,000 in the United States never entered a place of worship, and their children never received Biblical instruction. More and more it seemed as if the working classes were getting out of sympathy with the Church. Sixty-five out of every hundred young men were Christless. Then there was immorality of all shades and colors, drunkenness, Sabbath-breaking, gambling, fraud, violence, defiance of the law, and traps and temptations for the young in the more public, as well as less frequented streets, and unblushing infidelity that laughed to scorn the sacredness of the marriage tie. But it was still worse in the newer and more sparsely settled portions of the west and north-west, where certain forms of evil assumed a fiendishness and ferocity unknown in the great centres of commerce. No subject could come before the Alliance more practical in its bearing than home evangelization on the American continent, not only upon the masses—but only as regarded the future of their common Presbyterianism—but because of the mighty influence that such a great missionary church must have upon the American