

"A limited atonement cannot be preached." This is certainly a bold assertion, and we feel perfectly astonished that the author should have ventured to make it. He knows that the doctrine is maintained by a very large proportion of the most faithful and successful ministers of the gospel, and yet he hesitates not to brand them with the duplicity or cowardice of refusing to own or proclaim what in their hearts they believe. It is quite true, that the doctrine is exceedingly distasteful to the natural mind. It so humbles the pride of man, and exalts the sovereignty of Divine grace, that to carnal-minded men it is extremely unpalatable. Ministers, therefore, who are afraid to encounter the prejudices, or anxious to court the applause of their hearers, may studiously avoid the declaration of this, as well as of any other peculiar doctrine of Christianity. This doctrine, however, we fearfully assert has been preached, is preached, and will continue to be preached, wherever and whenever the ambassadors of the gospel are not ashamed or afraid to declare the whole counsel of God.

The author concludes this part of his pamphlet with the statement, that the doctrine of a definite atonement "was unknown in the christian church till the ninth century." In proof of this he refers to a speech of the Rev. G. Kennedy of Leith, who refers to certain passages in the writings of the Fathers, which seem opposed to our views.—That such passages occur we do not deny. But if our author will turn to the closing part of Owen's work on the death of Christ, he will find how little dependance can be placed on Mr. Kennedy's sweeping assertions. He will there find extracts from the writings of such early Christian Fathers as Ignatius, Clement, Cyprian, Athanasius, Augustine, and others, which plainly shew, that so far from the doctrine of a definite atonement being unknown till the ninth century, it was maintained by the most eminent of the early Christians. From Augustine, for example, the following extracts are given: "Christ will possess what he bought; he bought it with such a price that he might possess it;" and again, "He that bought us with such a price, will leave none to perish whom he hath bought."

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TORONTO, NOVEMBER, 1850.

KNOX'S COLLEGE.

THE Session of 1850-51 was opened on the 17th ult. The attendance of students at the opening was very good, equal to, if not larger than on any previous occasion of the kind. We were much gratified to see several of those ministers who had received their education in Knox's College, and who are now settled in pastoral charges in various parts of Canada, revisiting their Alma Mater, and mingling again with their younger brethren. One very pleasing feature connected with the institution is, that feeling of christian fraternity which has characterized the students to so large an extent from its establishment. We see in this an important element, calculated to promote the vigor and harmony of the church, when these men assume, as they must necessarily very soon, the active management of her business. Every day's experience is teaching us, and recent events have made the fact more palpable, that it is to a native trained ministry we must chiefly look for the supply of our congregations with ordinances.

Together with the Professors and students, the ministers and elders from various Presbyteries of the church, there was present a considerable number of ladies and gentlemen, who take an interest in the College.

The Rev. Dr. Wallis opened the service by giving out Psalm lxxii. 16-19. After singing, the Rev. William Reid of Picton, Moderator of Synod, offered up a suitable and impressive prayer.

Dr. Wallis then proceeded to address the students. We can only give a brief outline of this comprehensive opening lecture, some passages of which struck us as exceedingly appropriate, and expressed with eloquence and power.—We refer especially to that part of the address which pointed out the motives which should actuate an aspirant to the holy ministry—his duty to aim at a high standard of ministerial qualification and general learning—and the deportment that should characterize him in his intercourse with men.

After some introductory remarks, Dr. Wallis proceeded nearly as follows:—

"The object for which we convene here is one of prime interest and importance; and it is well that we should feel alive to the responsibilities connected with our pursuits, at the very commencement. What can be more interesting and important than the business of preparation for the service of Christ in the gospel! The least reflection on the design of the gospel ministry, and on its bearing on the temporal and eternal well-being of our fellow-creatures—nay, on the effects which may follow even to generations unborn, from the manner in which the duties of religious teachers are discharged—I say, the least reflection on these things, should secure serious thought from those who spontaneously address themselves to this spiritual calling, or who, by the advice of others, separate themselves to the Lord's service. "If a man desire the office of a bishop—a spiritual guardian of others—he desireth a good work;" but in proportion to the magnitude of the interests involved in the care of souls, is the blame-worthiness attaching to whatever is frivolous in the spirit in which it is undertaken; faithless in the manner of its performance; or even slight and perfunctory in our preparations for such a trust.

"We wish to speak to you, dear friends, in the language both of encouragement and admonition. Placed at the gate of your entrance to this school of the prophets, we must warn you of the danger of thoughtlessness and formality, not to say falsehood and hypocrisy, in a business of the very highest concern, whether as it regards the glory of God or the good of man. We do, indeed, welcome and hail every sincere proffer of service to the best of Masters, and the best of causes.—And we do most heartily and affectionately—I speak for myself, also for fathers and brethren around me—sympathize with all the honorable aspirations of studious youths, with all the cares and anxieties of right-minded candidates for the Holy Ministry. We would as frankly tell you of the encouragements that await you, as of your responsibilities; of the great and noble rewards—great I mean in the light of faith and of heaven—that belong to the walk of life you have chosen. But, assuming that your resolution has been well weighed, and that you have addressed yourselves to your design in a spirit of prayerfulness, we are persuaded you will all the more candidly welcome any counsel of ours which may guard you against temptations incident to the position of Students, or aid you in realizing the great end of your pursuits.

"I am compelled to say, that while there is no station more honorable than that of a gospel min-

ister, none, in which one may count, perhaps, on a larger share of real human happiness; there is not a character more contemptible than a trifler in the vineyard of the Lord, and no walk in which more bitter mortifications await the presumptuous intruder into an office, for whose duties he has no congeniality of disposition, and whose responsibilities he has never ind to heart. If the office be undertaken in a spirit of mercenary secularity—if the profession be chosen only as a retreat from more arduous and more laborious vocation—if even undertaken mainly for the sake of its opportunities of intellectual leisure and enjoyment; or, last of all, if, supposing the presence of some higher views, there be in the Student a vain conceit of innate and unassisted sufficiency, leading to make light of the means of thorough preparation for the work in view—be assured the sin of such persons will find them out, and the mistake on which they have proceeded in arranging their plans of life will be discovered, it may be, too late both for their comfort and their usefulness.

"It is grievous to think of the numerous instances of disappointed hope which the history of the pulpit records—chargeable on errors at the outset of the student's course—disappointment to candidates for the ministry themselves; disappointment to their friends; and to the public;—which it is in vain sought to refer to causes so general as the innate prejudice of men against religion, or the itching ears and fastidious taste of the age, or the multiplication of competitors in the Gospel field. We are not forgetting that these causes do exert an influence in hindering the acceptance of well-intentioned and even well accomplished labourers. But I wish to impress it on your minds, that these causes are often pleaded in explanation of what they do not explain—and that a responsibility which is nearer and more subjective is often shifted to the distant and objective, in accounting for the phenomena of listless auditories, empty pews, and decaying congregations, in communities well affected to the cause of religion, and disposed to give to the ambassadors of Christ a favourable hearing. That in such circumstances the preacher does not gather around him eager and grateful listeners, or that the interest in the ministrations of the pulpit is seen daily to wane, is in a large proportion of cases to be attributed to the effete and unimpressive character of the preacher's matter and style—and to the want of becoming earnestness in the work, both out of the pulpit and in it. When men of active and inquisitive mind are disappointed of finding the expected aliment of their souls—or their taste as well as conscience is offended by the incongruity between the transcendently important themes which the preacher handles, and the absence of even the ordinary pains in illustrating and enforcing them, which a very moderate degree of intelligence in the hearer desiderates and appreciates,—men who are busy and ardent in other pursuits, are conscious of something being grievously wrong. They are pained to miss in him who deals with them on the high concerns of eternity those tokens of method and adjustment,—those fruits of industry, and conscientious application, which are demanded in other departments of human labour; but which when wanting here, betray an inadequate estimate on the part of the preacher himself of the interests which he professes to commend to the attention of all.

"My young friends, the real cause of a minister's disappointments is often to be found in a neglect of adequate preparation. And the reason why I labour to impress this now is, that the evil is not seldom traceable to college days. The minister is inefficient because the student was indolent; and ill habits acquired in the class-room, and at the divinity-hall, have been transferred to the minister's sitting-room and manse. The counsels of experience are despised by the self-sufficient. Indolence satisfies itself with contemplating a passable style of acquirements—not what is best, but what is tolerable. Procrastination