

LIFE GLINTS.

For the Review.

The past and future are the darkened heights that wall the valley of life and the strife of every heart is to climb above their shadows.

Life is as boundless as space; its grave is eternity.

To live the present well is but to gild the future hours with joys that never fade.

The thoughts we think and clothe in words bear impress of the inner life.

Life is a journey through a lonely valley, brightened only by the rays of light that shine through acts of duty.

To live is not to die, if life is but well lived.

The study of life is the history of eternity,

Our days are like morning dews that pass away in the golden light, or as fleeting clouds that fade in the noonday sun.

Earth's darkest night overhangs the soul that owns no guiding hand.

Life spans the ocean of being. Death is but a change to new experiences.

The soul that seeks a purer sky from vexing thoughts must rise and trust on pinions far to soar where heaven directs the way.

A power rests upon the soul to speak beyond this transient life in confirmation of the word that says, a brighter day shall yet arise when dim our earthly vision grows if in our lives we choose the good and court the smile of nature's God.

The essence of good living is, living well, choosing well, and doing well.

There is no place in a rule of perfect conduct for "don't do this or that."

Darkness is of the earth, brightness of the sky so life's deepest sorrow lightens when the look is turned on high.—M. S. MERCER.

HOW THE BUSINESS OF THE CHURCH IS DONE, HER CONSTITUTION AND COURTS.

BY J. A. PATERSON, M.A.

For the Review.

The business of the Church is the King's business. The great aim and object of our Church is to present the message of salvation to the world, and in one sense that is her business. The Church is essentially an aggregation of individuals permeated with the Divine Spirit, and being so, it is of much importance to know what is the best machinery whereby this aggregation can be moved and governed and best fulfil the law of its existence under many a different environment, and so best discharge its highest function to "go and disciple all nations."

Our enquiry is, therefore, what is this best machinery and how does it move? Or in other words What is the constitution of our Presbyterian Church? and how is her business transacted? It may be said that such enquiries matter not. Love the Lord Jesus Christ and we shall be saved. That is quite true, but the Lord Jesus Christ, as the Head of His Church, has appointed its constitution, laws, ordinances, and offices, and if we love Him we should study these out and work them out under Him according to His design and so fulfil His commands. The God of Nature loves order and peace and government, and advancement in Nature and the God of the Church is the same, and He loves order and peace and government and advancement in the Church. He who organized Nature organized the Church.

It is impossible in a short space to present the rational foundation of the constitution of our Church. We can only give a brief synopsis of its structure, leaving our readers to more thoroughly inform themselves by reading such authorities as Witherow, Stewart, Roberts, McPherson, Hodge and Breed.

Firstly then, be it said that the essential principles of the Presbyterian form of Church government are the equality of the ministry, government by elders, and a

gradation of Church courts. There are some who advance the principle of the parity of the elder, that, in fact, there is no essential difference between the minister or teaching elder and the members of the congregation who are elected and ordained as ruling elders. This has gone so far in the estimation of some that it has been gravely debated that the ruling elder can administer the sacraments and be eligible for the Moderatorship of Presbytery, Synod or Assembly. The oversight of the spiritual concerns of the congregation is vested in the elders. They are elected by the members of the congregation in full communion. When elected, and if they accept, then they are fully ordained by the laying on of hands, on declaring before the congregation their belief in the doctrines and standards of the Church and their agreement to maintain and defend the same. They continue elders for life unless deposed or suspended in process of discipline. The temporal and financial affairs of the congregation are under charge of the managers or of the Deacons' Court.

The Board of Managers is usually elected for a term of three years or longer and a certain proportion retire each year by rotation. Managers should be members in full communion, although this rule is sometimes honored in the breach and not in the observance and therein lie grave objections. If the congregation prefers Deacons, then such are appointed only from among the members of the Church in full communion. They are duly ordained and hold office until death, or suspension in process of discipline, or removal, or resignation. The Deacons' Court is composed of the minister of the congregation, the elders and the Deacons. The duties of the Managers or Deacons are more particularly to obtain from the people contributions for the sustentation of the ministry and the schemes of the Church and to disburse all moneys received for these purposes, subject to the approval of the congregation: to attend to the wants of the poor: to take care of the property of the congregation: to provide for the payment of the minister's stipend and other salaries and generally to administer all matters committed to their charge as the congregation may from time to time direct.

Humanly speaking our Church is governed by its Courts, and these are four in number, commencing at the Kirk Session and then proceeding to Presbytery, Synod and General Assembly. The jurisdiction of the Courts extend only to those who are members of the Church, and their decisions and enactments derive their sanction entirely from the spiritual authority wherewith Christ has invested His Church and its officers.

The Presbytery consists of all ordained ministers within the bounds engaged in church work, or who have their names placed on the roll by a special enactment of the Assembly, and an elder from each pastoral charge.

The duties of the Presbytery are to receive and dispose of petitions and appeals from sessions, to provide for the supply of ordinances in congregations; to form mission stations in new congregations, to superintend the education of students and the examination of preachers; to moderate in calls given to ministers; to ordain and to induct into the pastoral office; to judge all matters affecting the moral character of ministers and licentiates; to admonish, rebuke, depose or excommunicate offenders, and in general to superintend the congregations and sessions within the bounds. There are fifty three Presbyteries in the Church, including the Presbyteries of Trinidad, Indore and Honan.

The Synod is composed of at least three Presbyteries and comprehends all ministers and elders on the rolls of the Presbyteries within its bounds. The duties of the Synod are, to adjust the bounds of Presbyteries and to take the oversight of them; to dispose of overtures; to receive reports of Presbyteries and to consider all matters connected therewith; and to attend to all matters assigned to it by the General Assembly. There are six Synods in the Church.

The General Assembly is the highest Court of the Church and bears the title of "The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada." It consists of one-fourth of the whole number of ministers whose names are on the rolls of the several Presbyteries of the Church and an equal number of elders. The duties of the General Assembly are—to receive and dispose of petitions, references