



REV. GEORGE DOUGLAS, *Ex-President of the General Conference.*

The Rev. George Douglas, LL.D.

BY THE EDITOR.

IN the beautiful village of Ashkirk, near the romantic Tweedside, and seven miles from Abbotsford, in Roxburghshire, Scotland, was born, on October 14th, 1825, the subject of this sketch. He came of sturdy Presbyterian stock, and his youth was nourished on the lofty teachings of the Word of God, the Shorter Catechism, and the Westminster Confession; and, doubtless, his young soul was often stirred by the heroic traditions of Flodden Field and of Dunbar, which were both near by, and by the ballads of Chevy Chase, and of the border war.

In 1832 the Douglas family came to the City of Montreal, and in an excellent school, kept by the Rev. Mr. Black, Presbyterian minister, in Laprairie, young George continued his education. In course of time he became a clerk in a book-store, and probably hence derived that love of literature which has been a characteristic of his life. He was in time promoted to the dignity of book-keeper. But a thirst for knowledge possessed his soul, and he entered in the School of Medicine of his adopted city, and pursued part of the prescribed course.

In the year 1843, the great crisis of his life-history took place. Being then a young man in the eighteenth year of his age, he was led by the providence of God to attend the ministry of the Rev. William Squire, in the old Methodist Church on the corner of St. James and St. Francois Xavier Streets. Under the faithful preaching of that man of God, whose memory is even yet fragrant in the hearts of many, he became convinced of sin, and was enabled to exercise that faith which saveth the soul, and feel that love which casteth out all fear. He forthwith identified himself with the Church in which he had been brought to God, and joined a class led by the now sainted John Mattheson, of which he himself afterwards became leader. Mr. Mattheson delighted to tell how he overcame George's diffidence about speaking in public and leading a class, by calling

upon him on one occasion, when the class-room was crowded, to speak, and then, when he was telling his experience, Mr. Mattheson slipped in behind him into his seat, and said, "Now, George, lead the class." From this there was no escape, as he occupied the floor without any possibility of getting a seat.

The talents and consecrated zeal of the young convert were such that soon the voice of the Church summoned him to public service for the Master. Overcoming his natural diffidence, he was induced to perform the duty of a local preacher. This he did with such success as to be highly acceptable to the

Wesleyan congregations of Montreal, accustomed as they were to the preaching of men of distinguished abilities. It was evident that God had called this young man to the office of the Christian ministry as his life-work. And he was not disobedient to the Divine call. In 1848, being then in his twenty-third year, he was received as a probationer for the ministry. The following year he was recommended by the Lower Canada District to attend the Wesleyan Theological Institute, at Richmond, England. But scarcely had he reached that famous school of the prophets than he was designated to missionary work in the Bahamas District of the West India Mission. He was "specially ordained" at St. John's Square, London, in the spring of 1850, by the venerable Thos. Jackson, Dr. Alder, and others, and sent to the Bermuda Islands. After a year and a half's residence in that semi-tropical climate his health failed, and the germ of his subsequent life-long affliction was planted. He returned, therefore, to Montreal the following year. Of his ministerial life of thirty-two years, twenty-two years have been spent in that city—eleven of them in pastoral work, nine at the head of the Theological College, and two without a charge on account of ill-health. His other fields of toil have been Kingston, Toronto, and Hamilton, in each of which places he laboured for three years, witnessing many seals to his ministry in the prosperity of the work of God under his charge.

In 1869, in recognition of his distinguished abilities, the University of McGill College conferred upon him the well-merited degree of LL.D. Dr. Douglas is a man whom his brethren in the ministry have ever delighted to honour. And right royally has he represented his Church and country in the presence of the great religious gatherings and foremost orators of the day. His manly presence, his deep toned voice, his broad sweep of thought, and majestic flights of eloquence, have stirred the hearts of listening thousands, and done brave battle for the cause of God. He has also filled with eminent

ability the office of co-delegate of the old Canada Conference, President of the Montreal Conference, and Vice-President and President of the General Conference of the Methodist Church in Canada.

Not the least of the important labours of the Rev. Dr. Douglas is his fostering care and wise presidency of the Wesleyan Theological College, Montreal. To this he has given the energies of his ripest years. The arduous duties of the principal's chair he has discharged with heroic fortitude, even while enduring a martyrdom of physical suffering. That his useful life may long be spared to bless the Church and the world, will be the prayer of all who know him either by reputation or in person.

The Christmas Dress.

BY MRS. C. A. LACROIX.



The young Thalia tried it on, and was delighted to find that it was a most perfect fit.

While counting out the change for the work, Mrs. Thalbert remarked, "It is very cold this evening. Thalia go and get a glass of wine for the gentleman who has brought your dress. You will find it in the little cupboard in the small pantry below. Be sure and take a light with you, for it is already dark there."

Thalia returned presently with a bottle, poured out a glass, and waited politely before the man, to serve him again if he should wish. But having taken a mouthful, the poor fellow, in fright of poison, threw it out of his mouth quicker than it went in.

Thalia had been too dilatory to obey her mother concerning the taking of a light, and instead of wine she had laid her hand on and brought the ink-bottle. Now her beautiful blue dress was all sown over with spots of black ink so badly that she could never wear it. The poor girl shed many hot tears of sorrow and disappointment, but her mother said to her, "Now you see what comes from disobedience; to-morrow you must go to church in your old dress, and to make you obedient another time, I shall not buy you another dress until the year brings round another Christmas."

If Thalia's mother had been a teetotaler she would have had no wine in the house, and poor Thalia would have saved her dress. Wine is a mocker, and to drink it, or to give it to friends on Christmas or New Year's Day—or indeed, at any time—is a great wrong. Let the children's cry be, "Down with strong drink! Huzzah for cold water!"

The Year is Old—So Old!

THE year is old—so old!
The nights are long and dark and dreary;
The fretting winds are never weary;
They fight against my window pane,
The burden of their sad refrain,
The year is old—so old!

The year is old—so old!
The mountains tell it to the river,
Their sides deep rent by seam and shiver;
The rivers sobbing as they flow,
Repeat it in the vales below.
The wild sea waves take up the strain,
And ocean bears it back again.
The year is old—so old!

The year is old—so old!
O voices of the dreary night!
O sleepless watchers for the light!
O hills that lift your hoary heads
Above the ice-bound river beds!
O winds that wail round nameless graves!
O sobbing, sighing, wild sea waves!
The year is old—so old!

The year is old—so old,
O hearts that breathe and eyes that weep
O'er buried hopes that treasures keep!
Prepare the shroud and winding sheet,
And softly walk with reverent feet,
The year is old—so old!

Old Hannah.

"HANNAH says the cattle fall upon their knees at twelve o'clock Christmas eve," said Minnie Grant to her aunt, as they sat waiting for the child's bedtime.

"Hanna is a superstitious old Scotch woman," returned the aunt; "she believes all that she has ever heard, without reason or questioning; but that is happier than to doubt every thing, as many people do. I suppose that idea about the cattle came from an old Latin poet, who speaks of them as cherishing the new-born Child with their warm breath, and falling down before the majesty of his glory. There are many human beings who never show this reverence that is attributed to the beasts; they might learn a lesson from old Hannah's superstition."

Aunt Ellen was thoughtful and quiet for a moment, then she said, "It would not be so very wonderful for the dumb creatures to prostrate themselves before such a sublime mystery as God manifest in the flesh, when, through the instrumentality of an angel, an ass was once caused to fall down before it, and to speak as with man's voice."

"Hannah will put her new 'besom' behind the door to-morrow morning, and a chair in the door-way with bread and cheese upon it," said the little girl; "she thinks it will bring prosperity to the family."

"If we try to make clean our hearts, and to sweep out all evil things from them, as we sweep the house with a new broom; and if we use hospitality and charity to all the poor and needy who come to us, it will indeed bring prosperity, and God's richest blessing," replied Aunt Ellen. "There is a good deal of significance in many of these old customs. It would be pleasant to use them if we always thought of their meaning."

"And Hannah has made me a 'Yule baby' from some of the bread dough," said the child.

"That is to remind you of the blessed Babe, who is to us the bread of everlasting life. If we do not feed upon his love and his word and his Holy Spirit, we can no more live the Christian life than these bodies could live without our daily bread. I like Hannah's customs when rightly understood."