

Our Contributors.

CONCERNING A MUCH NEEDED FACULTY.

BY KNOXIAN.

One of the delights of our boyhood was to sit in a quiet corner in the court room and watch the late Chief Justice Richards hold the scales. We thought the chief was one of the greatest men in the world and wondered how he could see all round and right through a question, straighten out tangles in a word or two and keep so cool while other people were more or less excited. The lawyers might wrangle, and the witnesses get too quiet or too noisy, and the juries bring in exasperating verdicts, and disappointed litigants murmur, and beaten attorneys mutter some rather hard English as they saw their cases fail, but the chief always kept the same. The thing above all others that we wondered, at was how he could say so much in so few words. We had never heard a man talk so economically before. The politicians we had heard talked all evening, most of the preachers preached a good part of the day, some of the lawyers made long addresses to juries, but here was a man who seemed to condense a world of meaning into a sentence, and often a very short sentence. Like Daniel Webster's, each word seemed to weigh a ton.

No doubt it was mainly his splendid judicial faculty that made Chief Justice Richards so impressive. The dignity of the office and the surroundings had of course some influence, but the judicial mind was the main thing. A judicial mind of a high order is always impressive.

The man who can take a firm hold of a question, turn it around and show all sides of it to people in a clear, strong light rarely fails to have permanent influence among his fellow men. People soon lose confidence in the man who keeps his small mind on the small corner of one small idea. They never have much confidence in men who lose their head. They have none at all in men who have no head to lose. When we say "people," of course we mean people of fair intelligence and a reasonable amount of judgment. That ignorant men, men swayed by passion, follow fire-brands and knavish, noisy demagogues goes unsaid, but it is equally true that sensible, intelligent men usually prefer to follow leaders with a well developed judicial faculty.

Viewed as a whole, how does the ministry of the Presbyterian Church in Canada stand in regard to the judicial faculty. Before two months are over that faculty may be needed badly enough. Will it be at the front and ready for use when the church needs it?

We have some men with fine judicial minds. We could name half-a-dozen or so that would have adorned the Bench. How about the rest of us? Were you ever in a Presbytery when the local brethren got excited wrestling with a case, the salient points of which a clever law student could have seen through in thirty seconds, or a level-headed business man settled in ten minutes. Were you ever in a Synod when the court sat late to settle an appeal and the members became unjudicial in mind as midnight came on. We have vivid memories of two trials of that kind. In one case part of the pleadings was in Gaelic and was addressed to a worthy D. D. who does not know three words of the original language. When the speech was over the D. D. smiled benignly and said yes. In the other case the appellants, appellees and members of the court got into a sort of mixed condition and as usual got excited. Half-a-dozen men were vociferating at once when one of the very few church lawyers in the room sorrowfully asked his neighbor, "What would you think of the judges in a civil court if they acted this way?"

It is very difficult to manage judicial business in a church court with anything like dignity and decorum. Hugh Miller said it was impossible because there is a confusion of functions. Each member has to be a judge, a juror and advocate at the same time. He is a judge when he settles questions of law, a juror when he decides on matters of fact and a counsel when he asks questions.

Such being the case, small wonder that ecclesiastical trials of certain kinds of cases are the most unsatisfactory of all kinds of trials. The inherent difficulties of the situation are increased and intensified by the fact that many of the men who have to do the triple work of judge, juror and counsel have never had any judicial training or experience. Nature may not have built them for judges at the start, and even if she had they never got an opportunity to improve on nature's handiwork.

Can the judicial faculty be developed? Yes, when there is a respectably sized germ to develop. It can be developed by the study of theology, if you study theology fairly; that is, examine each side of the question honestly and fully and state each side fairly. Cunningham, Hodge, MacVicar, Caven and McLaren are fine illustrations of how the judicial faculty can be cultivated by theological investigation. No judge could state a question with greater ability than Cunningham used to do. Hodge's great book abounds in lucid judicial statement.

Of course a man may read some theology without developing his judicial faculty to any great extent. The Methodist preacher, an Englishman, who used to save himself from a break-down in his sermon by shouting, "Calvinism sends souls to ell," may not have had a generously developed judicial faculty. We have heard one or two Presbyterians who were about as well equipped in the judicial region.

In another paper we may be presumptuous enough to throw out a few hints about some methods by which the judicial faculty may be cultivated. Meantime, borrow a microscope and see whether you have a germ of that kind to cultivate.

THE FIRST GOSPEL HARMONY.

BY REV. JOHN BURTON, B.D.

Of the early Christian apologists few by their personality and work exercised a greater influence upon the church than Tatian. A Syrian by birth, educated in the schools of Greece, he travelled through parts of the Roman Empire as a sophist; about the middle of the second century he came to Rome, where he was made acquainted with the Scriptures and the Christian "sect," and under Justin Martyr became a convert to the faith. After his tutor's death, he appears to have strayed into the ways of heretical philosophy, but as we are dependent upon "orthodox" writers chiefly for an account of these heresies, hesitancy in condemning should be our attitude. The great work of Tatian was his *Diatessaron*, in which he endeavored to compile a life of Christ from existing gospels: in other words to construe a harmony. The chief interest taken in this work of Tatian was its bearing upon the question as to the dates of our four gospels, especially that of the fourth, St. John, which some advanced German critics placed even as late as A. D. 160-70. The *Diatessaron* cannot be placed later than this, and manifestly if the "memoirs" which Justin had, and Tatian used, were our gospels, the date of their reception as authoritative must be pushed back to at least the early decades of the second century. Now, no critic seeks to place the date of John's gospel, earlier than the close of the first century, late, very late in the Apostle's life, so that Tatian's use of the gospel would bring us very near to the earliest period claimed by the most conservative school, namely, the acknowledged lifetime of the Apostle. Happily, now, all reasonable doubt as to the identity of Tatian's harmony and our received gospels is set at rest, and its recent proof is the occasion of this article.

Without knowledge of Tatian's work in detail has depended upon a commentary thereon by Ephraim Syrus, from which a large part of the text could be constructed. The article on Tatian in the last issue of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, had no further information but since then (1888) two Arabic tests have been collated and published, with a Latin translation, and this year (1894), a full translation in English, by J. Hamlyn Hill, B.D., of Cambridge, with reference to our gospels, has been given to the public. We can herein see how Tatian wove into one consecutive narrative the entire gospel narratives, as we

now have them, and we venture to say that his work will not only be studied now as determining the early reception of our present gospels by the Christian church, but as a well thought-out harmony of those gospels and the chronological sequence of the discourses and events in the life of the Saviour. The dates of these Arabic manuscripts are probably from the eleventh to the twelfth centuries and may in some instances have been made to conform to later New Testament texts, but this cannot affect the general accuracy or mar the identity of Tatian's material with the gospels as we have them to-day. A few of the more interesting comparisons may be of interest.

In the margin of the Revised Version we are told that the two oldest Greek manuscripts omit from the eighth verse to the end of Mark xvi. The *Diatessaron* retains them, as also John v. 4, which the revisers have removed from the text. John vii. 53-ix. 1-11 is, however, omitted. The reading of the authorized version is retained—much to our personal satisfaction—in the angel's song Luke ii. 14, "On earth peace, good hope to men." Much as we admire the Revised Version and respect manuscript authority, "On earth peace among men in whom He is well pleased," seems to us inane, and we gladly hail any well grounded authority for retaining the form to which our ears have been so well attuned.

Tatian inserts the account of the Lord's Supper after the departure of Judas, thus displacing Luke's apparent order; and, according to Ephraim's commentary, gives a suggestive rendering of Luke xxiii. 43, "This day shalt thou be with Me in the garden of delight, (Eden)." The genealogies of Matthew and of Luke appear as an appendix, and are not inserted in the body of the work.

Close students of the Gospel narrative found difficulties in determining the order of events in our Lord's life. We view this harmony of Tatian as specially worthy of their study; it is the attempt of one who was very near to the fresh apostolic tradition, to whom probably some means of determination were at hand lost to ourselves.

THE REV. DR. J. G. PATON.

We publish this letter by request, in justice to the character of a devoted missionary. Publicity was sought for it but could not be obtained in the *Record* of our Church.

To the Editor of the *Presbyterian Record*, Montreal.

Glasgow, Scotland, Feb. 17th, 1894.

DEAR SIR,—A copy of your *Record* for this month has been forwarded to me here. It contains an article headed "Dr. Paton's Mission," which I can only regard as a malicious misrepresentation. An anonymous letter by "A Minister," couched in insinuation, is answered by you as Editor in a series of statements, either untrue in point of fact, or so placed before your readers as to suggest what is untrue, and can only damage my character and standing as a Missionary of the Cross. I claim a little space for reply, though I leave the Presbyterian people of Canada to judge betwixt us as to the spirit of such an attack on one who is spending his days and years as, by God's help, I am trying to do.

1. Your correspondent well knows there is no such thing in existence as "Dr. Paton's Mission," about which he so innocently inquires. It is the New Hebrides Mission, supported by Australia, Scotland, New Zealand, and Nova Scotia, for whose interests alone I am a humble and devoted advocate. True, personal and loving friends, readers of my book and others, have started a "John G. Paton Mission Fund," and they may in their too affectionate regard speak of the work in which I am engaged as "Dr. Paton's Mission"; but all my toils and all moneys raised by me, or sent to me, are exclusively devoted to the New Hebrides Mission.

2. You lightly touch off my period of nearly four years of perils and trials, as being "about two years on Tanna," and the interval betwixt leaving Tanna and settling on Anewa, you wipe out thus—"After some years of absence his next settlement was on Anewa"—leaving anyone to infer that the four years between might be a happy furlough. If it gratifies you to belittle what God called on me to do, and to suffer for Christ's sake, you are welcome.

But the churches know that in that period the very existence of the mission was at stake; that by incessant travelling and addressing churches and schools without one day of rest, £3,000 were raised to build the first *Dayspring*, and besides another £1,400 to relieve her from debt after her coming out from Nova Scotia, and her first trip to the islands; £2,000 to secure additional missionaries; and to organize a permanent fund for her support, which has continued ever since. Again, at a later date, when she was wrecked, God used me in raising another £3,000 to secure and insure a second *Dayspring*. Now, in the opinion of all the missionaries in the field, and of all the churches concerned, the very existence of our New Hebrides Mission depended on the accomplishment of these tasks, which, God knows, I undertook with much shrinking, and only for the work's sake, and for the lives of missionaries and their families.

3. You note that I have been "on furlough since 1881," and that I have "not been at work in the New Hebrides from that date." I leave aside the fact that I have been sent to the islands thrice in that period, and spent all the time the Victorian Church would spare me there in the interests of the Mission on several islands, but particularly on my own beloved Anewa. Your readers may be informed, however, that in all those years I have never had one week of rest, nor sought it; that the whole of my time and strength has been spent in the service of the Mission, raising money to support those in the field and to increase the staff, by ceaseless travelling and lecturing; and further, that in the judgment of the Victorian Church, whose missionary I am, my time and strength are more profitably spent thus for the Mission than by remaining on my own island, where the cause of Christ is carried on by converts given to me of God (whose number you refer to in anything but a Christ-like spirit) and by occasional visits of the nearest missionaries. If I had been consulting personal comfort, or shrinking from duty, I might at my age have sought a different kind of furlough without dishonor or blame.

4. You are kind enough to say "Dr. Paton at present cannot be said to have any special Mission." My "commission" at least, is from the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, with another from the Federal Assembly of the Presbyterian Churches. It was publicly circulated throughout the United States and Canada in my "Statement and Appeal," to the number of many thousands. It authorizes me, amongst other things, "to procure two missionaries," for the New Hebrides, under the Victorian Church and to "receive any contributions offered for its foreign missions." This is part of my "special mission," and by the help of God, I hope to fulfil it, and more.

5. As to the call for "five or six additional missionaries," and for the new "Dayspring Mission Ship," the missionaries on the islands and myself may be in advance of the opinion of the Churches we represent, in reference to the requirements of the islands and the necessities of the Mission. But you have no authority for saying (1) "That no church has any thought of making that advance at the present time"; or (2) "That the Dayspring Board in Sydney has charge of the matter," that is of the decision to build or not to build another mission ship. Formally, no church may have "authorized" the taking of either of these steps, simply and solely because of the financial responsibilities being heavier than they see their way to meet. But to me it is as certain as anything can well be—that if the people of God in Britain, in Canada, and the States, put the means into my hands, as they seem disposed and willing to do (thank God), there will be only one opinion in Victoria as to employing the necessary missionaries and building the vessel without which the Mission cannot possibly complete its work in the New Hebrides. The one obstacle in the way, so far at least, as known to me, is the lack of funds; and not any decision against more missionaries, or the new ship. Ten years ago, all the missionaries on the islands declared the necessity of a steam auxiliary ship. The Victorian Church "commissioned" me to raise the money. I went back to them with £6,000. They got plans from a famous Clyde shipbuilder; all in good faith, surely. But it was found the new