

Our Contributors.

OURSELVES AS OTHERS SEE US.

BY KNOXONIAN.

Oh that some power the gift would gie us,
To see ourselves as ithers see us.

It may be all very well for some people to sigh for this power, but no Canadian bred minister need hanker after it. If the parson who has had the good or evil fortune to be born and bred in Canada could see himself as he is seen by his brethren in Scotland, he would see himself acting as a doctor, a lawyer and as a farmer. Worse than that, he would see himself transformed not only into a maid, but into a "maid of all work." At least, so said Rev. John Stewart, of Glasgow, the deputy from the Free Church of Scotland, in his address to the Assembly the other day:

We in Scotland have been led to believe that the ministers of Canada had got such rough work to do that they had become roughened by the work. Dr. Bryce, of your college, in his valuable work, "The History of Canada," informs us "that the ancient farmers" of this land were not highly developed animals, with acute and tender bodies, but thick-plated animals, suited to their rough environment," and at home we have been in the habit of thinking of you as ministers who have to drive or walk such distances to preach to many different places, and to act as doctors, lawyers and farmers, that you had become stalwart maids of all work rather than well-bred, sound theologians of scholastic or gentlemanly stamp. But my ideas are revolutionized since I came among you. Meeting on my way here with so many of your ministers, I was ashamed of the ideas we entertained, and saw that for devotedness to the work of their respective congregations, for a deep personal interest in their denomination, for an intimate knowledge of the literature of the Old Country and the New, you were not one whit behind us, while for brotherly affection and buoyancy of spirits you are our superiors.

Now, what could have led "we in Scotland" to think that Canadian ministers act as doctors, lawyers, farmers and stalwart maids of all work. Just how a minister would feel if he saw himself suddenly transformed into a maid, and not only into a maid, but into a stalwart maid, and not only into a stalwart maid, but into a stalwart maid of all work, we shall not pretend to say. The subject is beyond our depth.

Each minister must just try to imagine for himself how he would feel if this sudden transformation took place. We can easily imagine a prudent, level-headed minister working a nice little piece of land, and in this way earning for himself the title of a farmer. A few of our ministers in the early days when land was cheap and plentiful did manage to get a few acres of land for themselves. Would that more of them had been so fortunate! But does the possession of a few acres of land prevent a minister from being a "well-bred, sound theologian of the scholastic and gentlemanly stamp"? If so, it will go hard with "we in Scotland." In what country has a large proportion of the ministers glebes? The fact is hundreds of Scotch ministers have glebes and cultivate them, and to that extent are farmers, whilst the landed interest of Canadian-bred ministers generally consists of a lot in the cemetery and the amount of soil he may at any given time have on his boots.

There is another little fact that "we in Scotland" might make a note of. Perhaps nine out of every ten ministers who have tried to combine preaching and farming in this country have come from Scotland. The Canadian-bred minister rarely tries to work a farm. Some Scotchmen have tried the two and botched both.

The number of Canadian ministers who now practise or have ever practised medicine might perhaps be counted on one's fingers. We can think of only one, and we have a rather extensive acquaintance with Canadian clergymen. We have the pleasure of knowing a most estimable minister who practised medicine twenty years before he began to preach, but he is so scrupulously careful that he will not even make a suggestion except the family physician requests him so to do. Perhaps the good people in Scotland think that some of our D.D.'s are M.D.'s, and dispense medicine to the people.

If the number of Canadian-bred ministers who have ever given people pills can be counted on one's fingers, the number who have ever practised law might be counted on one's thumbs. Beyond acting as executor when asked to do so by a friend, or drawing a

will in an emergency, no Canadian minister that we ever heard or read of ever acted as a lawyer. The only courts they ever practise in are the Church courts, and Canadian ministers are not nearly such laborious practitioners in these courts as Scotch ministers usually are. How the clergy of Scotland were led to believe that their brethren in Canada are all doctors, lawyers and farmers, in fact "stalwart maids of all work," it is hard to say. Some wicked person must have been leading them up the wrong way.

It is pleasant to know that our genial and distinguished visitor has revolutionized his ideas in regard to Canadian ministers. Not only has he revolutionized his ideas; intercourse with Canadian ministers has actually made him ashamed that he ever entertained such ideas. If about 3,000 of the ministers in Scotland would get ashamed in the same way no harm would be done to anybody.

Were we permitted to ask questions we might ask some of those Scottish ministers who have not revolutionized their ideas on this question if all the ministers in Scotland are well-bred, sound theologians of scholastic and gentlemanly stamp? There are some people not specially stupid or particularly wicked who have some grave doubts on that question. Dr. Guthrie told the world that he saw 600 people asleep at once in a church in Scotland. We have some Canadian ministers who are not specially bright, but we never had one such a thorough master of the soporific that he could put his whole congregation asleep at once. We knew one who could come very near putting the whole number asleep at one time or another during the service and his was, perhaps, the best work ever done in Canada in the soporific line. Canada had not the honour of raising that man.

One of the most honoured and most useful Scotch ministers that ever laboured in Canada used to say that the average Canadian-bred minister was quite as efficient as the average minister in Scotland. And he said that when Candlish, Guthrie and many other great men were there to bring up the average. If that were true then, it is entirely true now.

ON THE EAST COAST OF FORMOSA WITH REV G. L. MACKAY, D.D.

BY C. A. COLMAN, CANTON, CHINA.

When we left Tamsui on the Lord's Day, Feb. 27, our party consisted of Dr. Mackay, pastor Ghim Ahoa, a courier, who was to cook for us, and myself; also a number of students, who, however, accompanied us only so far as Bangkah. Bangkah is about ten miles by the river from Formosa, and it took two hours to get there in a steam-launch.

There are four steam-launches, which carry passengers between Tamsui and Bangkah, and they are owned and run wholly by Chinese. Fare for Chinese, 5 cents, foreigners, 10 cents.

Two or three miles below Bangkah the doctor pointed out to me a chapel in a village—we could just catch a sight of it through the bamboos—which the villagers prepared to defend during the chapel-destroying mania when the French were about, from a mob who were coming from another place. They planted their guns in two commanding positions, and as the invaders must needs cross the river the slaughter would have been great had they attempted to do so; as it was, they thought better of it, and retired. Prudence is more largely developed than valour in most Chinamen.

As we passed Toa-tiu-tian, one mile below Bangkah, where all the foreign merchants live, we saw the spire of the most beautiful Chinese chapel I have seen in China. It is fully seventy feet high, with an arrow for a weather-vane.

Bangkah is the largest city in North Formosa, and has a population of 50,000.

General Yu, the highest mandarin in the island, is building a new city about a mile from the old one. As yet there is only the wall and gates, with mandarins' offices and residences (yamuns), and a few shops built; the remainder, and greater part, is in paddy (rice) fields.

He is also building a good road from Bangkah to Kelung, a distance of twenty miles, and has already got jinrickshas and coolies to pull them from Shanghai.

Dr. Mackay tells me that during the French troubles the people of Bangkah threatened to kill the

General; they said he was a traitor because he retired from Kelung when the French bombarded it. He is now head over the whole island, and, though hated, is also feared. He got money for his improvements from mandarins and rich men who, in former years, oppressed the people. This is his method of punishing them instead of having them beheaded.

The chapel in Bangkah, as in Toa-tiu-tian, is a stone building, with a spire about sixty feet high. It is capable of seating 300 people comfortably. Behind the chapel, at each side, are small buildings for the use of the preacher and his family, with an upper room for the missionary when he comes. On one of the stories of the spire is a representation of the "burning bush," with the Chinese characters above it meaning, "Bush burning, but not consumed;" the people quickly saw the application; higher up is painted the "Union Jack."

This is the fourth chapel Dr. Mackay has had in Bangkah; the mob tore the others down, but he has told thousands of them that if they pull this one down he will put up an iron one. When it was a building the people made no objection to either chapel or spire, only asking, "How high will it be?"

Some of the adversaries now say, "We ought not to have pulled down the others. Then he would not have built this, which is more beautiful and stronger than the others; he only builds stronger and better every time."

There are others who say the spire has helped the "fung-shui," luck, of the place, because two Chinese students obtained degrees last year, a thing which had not happened for several years before. The men who got the degrees live not far from the chapel in a direct line from its front. The people of Toa-tiu-tian and of Bangkah both claim to have the finest chapel.

We had service at two o'clock in the afternoon of the Lord's Day; there were about 200 persons present, and Dr. Mackay took for his subject the story of Dorcas, Acts ix. 36, using a picture—representing a woman bringing a naked child to Dorcas, and a beggar sitting at their feet—to impress the truth. These pictures are drawn and painted by one of Dr. Mackay's Chinese students, and he uses them and the blackboard very much in his preaching and teaching, just as we teach in Sunday school at home.

The preacher at Bangkah once saved Dr. Mackay from drowning. They were near their journey's end one day, when the doctor told this man to go on to the chapel and get things ready while he took a bath in the river. As soon as the man was gone Dr. Mackay jumped into the water and immediately lost all power to help himself, and would certainly have been drowned had not the man, who had stopped a few paces off, plunged into the water and taken him out.

During the evening of the Lord's Day Dr. Mackay was called to go to an elder who was not expected to live and wanted to see him. He went, and did not get back till two o'clock next morning. At parting the sick man gave his hand a great squeeze; they did not expect to see each other in the flesh again. On our return we heard he had died two days after Dr. Mackay had visited him. This man was formerly a bitter enemy to the truth, and did all in his power to set the people against the message of the Lord and the messenger; he was a travelling vaccinator, and so had plenty of opportunities, as he went from place to place, to slander Dr. Mackay, and he used them to the utmost of his ability; but the Lord had mercy on him, and the slanderer became a faithful witness.

On our way to Bangkah Dr. Mackay told of an old couple who were drowned by the mob in Sin-tiam during the French troubles; they were taken out and ducked in the river, and, on refusing to worship idols, they were grossly and indecently insulted and then drowned. Formosa has its martyrs too; yet there are people who say, "There are no truly Christian Chinese." Well, I don't know what any one could ask as proof that a man was a true Christian other than the proofs that hundreds of Chinese have already given.

On Monday morning we started for Kelung in chairs—three men to carry each chair. In about an hour and a half we came to the chapel at Sek-khau. We stopped a few minutes, and Dr. Mackay pulled out some teeth.

This chapel has also a spire, and is a stone building facing the Chinese street, with the back to the river.

[The "farmers" in the above extract is an emendation by the intelligent compositor. In Dr. Bryce's work it reads "fauna," and so Mr. Stewart quoted.—Ed.]