

## Our Contributors.

### The Late Dr. Thompson of Sarnia.

BY REV. PROF. JORDAN, D. D.

It was with sad surprise and deep regret that while the Synod was sitting in Toronto, we heard that Dr. Thompson had suddenly been called to his rest and reward. The news was quite unexpected and came as a sudden blow and severe shock to many of us, for Dr. Thompson was a man respected by all who knew him and beloved by those who had the privilege of close friendship with him. I cannot now attempt a detailed sketch of his career or anything like an adequate appreciation of his character and work, but a few words of personal tribute will not be out of place. A few weeks ago I met him in connection with his lectures at Queen's University and never did he enter more heartily into the work of giving wise counsel to the young men preparing for the ministry. A little later and he was with us at the Convocation taking a deep interest in all its proceedings and saying a few appropriate words in presenting the Rev. A. McLean for the honorary degree. We had hoped that there were still some years of varied usefulness for him here but it was not to be, the Divine Father ordered it otherwise. Two days before his death he occupied his own pulpit and made a powerful impression by his clear statement and earnest appeals, almost to the last moment he was engaged in the faithful discharge of pastoral duties visiting the sick and caring for the needs of his congregation. Then the call came, a few sharp strokes of pain and all was over, that is all of earthly toil and trial, and a nobler life of worship and service was begun.

I have known Dr. Thompson for the past thirteen years and have met him in the home as well as in the different church courts, and have always admired his thoughtful kindness and practical wisdom. He was a student and a scholar in the most real sense. But he was not a mere scholar; in fact I am rather puzzled by that phrase, as it is used by some of our ministers. I do not think that the church is in danger of being troubled very much by "mere scholars"; the pressure of present excitement and practical life is too severe for that. A man cannot be a scholar in the noblest sense of that word without having the fulness of manhood and the true Christian spirit. The noblest men that I have known, in connection with the Christian church, and especially our own branch of it, were men who used scholarship for the service of their fellows. That is a large subject but it comes up naturally when we are dealing with the life of a man who ministered for thirty six years in the same town and continued through it all to be a keen student and a living teacher. To such a man there is no "dead line" for the testimony is, that his latest ministrations were richest in all elements of strength, in all those powers which appeal most effectively to mind and heart, and the question how this came to be the case is for interest and importance to the younger men. It is true that in our

country, the man whose inclinations lead him to study must make sacrifices because of the pressing nature of what we call practical work, but no man must sacrifice too much in that direction, or he will be shorn of his power and degenerate into a creature of shallow speech and fussy activity. If the church is enlarged as an organization, this increases the need for intellectual power and spiritual life. If we gather people together there must be a real message for them and the message must be adapted to the needs of all classes. Dr. Thompson was an example of faithful services on all sides of church life. He was never in a feverish hurry. He believed that if God gives us work to do, He gives us time to prepare for it and to do it well. Steady thoughtfulness and patient perseverance in practical service and in facing the problems of life were the dominant notes in his life. To build up a strong congregation, to be a wise counsellor to his brethren in the Presbytery, to take a share in all the great enterprises of the church, to exert a steady uplifting influence in social life for many years—this is a noble record and is only accomplished by a man who under the inspiration of Christian love has dedicated all his varied powers to the Master's service.

Dr. Thompson was a man of fine natural ability of real capacity and large grasp of mind. He kept all his powers of reasoning and sympathy in constant healthful exercise. He had clear definite convictions and also a broad outlook. He did not suddenly change his views or rush hastily to new conclusions but by brooding over the ever pressing questions, he slowly assimilated much that was best in modern thought. He was never panic stricken, because he believed God would take care of the church. This put into other words means that he had faith in the threefold power of the gospel to redeem and purify the individual soul, to meet all real questions of the healthy mind, and to control and ennoble society. It is our duty to seek such a faith and to cherish the memory of such a man.

### Whose I Am, and Whom I Serve.

The following article is a chapter from a book written by the late Rev. Dr. Thompson of Sarnia entitled "Jesus my Saviour" and published by the Fleming Revell Co. This small volume deals with various aspects of the Saviour's redeeming work and this closing chapter discusses briefly the nature of "Our Consecration to Him." We have pleasure in reproducing it here for its own sake and because it illustrates what is said by Dr. Jordan elsewhere as to the style and spirit of Dr. Thompson's ministry:

The apostle always brings His doctrine to bear on life and conduct and close His letter to the churches by making a personal appeal seeing these things are so what manner of men ought we to be in all holy conversation and Godliness? Is Christ your Saviour? Can you say, "My beloved is mine and I am His?" The doctrines of grace which we have been dwelling on are manifest; are you adorning these doctrines and walking before God unto all pleasing? This brings up the question of our consecration to His service, and our surrender to His gracious claim.

There is an expression which Paul uses that puts this matter of personal consecration in its true light—"The Lord, whose I am, and whom I serve." Could we keep this ever in our hearts it would make us true and strong in all lines of daily duty. Because He owns us, we are His in all things. Christ is our Master in everything; in our words, our deeds and daily business. He is the Lord of our week days as well as of our Sabbaths; the Lord of our shop and office as well as of our closet and pew. His disciples must find their church where their duty lies, and many a mother, full of her household cares, may be as much in the service of God as those who sing psalms in the House of God. And as no word our Saviour spake, or deed he ever did was secular, His servants must seek His spirit and learn to glorify God whether they eat or drink or whatever they do.

Some cultivate an ascetic spirit and seek to withdraw from the world into some quiet retreat, to retire into the cloister, the convent, that, undisturbed by the noise, the confusion, the strife and worry of the world, they might be able to give themselves exclusively to meditation and prayer. This life has attractions for a certain class of minds.

It seems to them to be the very ideal of Christian life, quiet, meditative, prayerful. In the judgment of some this secluded life is regarded as more sacred, and nearer heaven and Master than any other. But this is God's world, where we live, and how much better to live for the purpose which He intended, and strive to have God's will done in all departments of the world's work. When the disciples came to Jesus and asked Him "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of Heaven?" Christ's reply was—"He is the greatest who does the most good; doing good to all men as we have opportunity. And there is no work like that which we spend amid fears, and conflicts, the joys and sorrows of our fellow-men; working not on dead matter, but on the living, palpitating heart of humanity. Every one who loves his Saviour should have his own chosen, well selected field of labor, and seek to cultivate it as the garden of the Lord, for the plants and flowers that bloom there are the sweetest and most fragrant of all.

Nor are we left to be guided by abstract principles, for we have placed before us a perfect example, and an embodiment of every grace in the character and life of our Lord. "In our blessed Lord and Master, we have one who Himself trod before us every step that He would have us tread, bore every burden He would have us bear, met every temptation He would have us meet, shared every grief He would have us share, did every duty He would have us do. Study it aright and it will surprise you to discover over what a wide and varied field of human experience the example of our Saviour stretches, and how difficult it is to find a position or experience of our common life to which you may not find something answering in the life of Jesus of Nazareth."—Hanna's Life of Christ.

But more is needed than example, for many saw and knew His life well and yet turned away and walked no more with Him. His crucifiers were not ignorant of what manner of man He was. Even the betrayer had been with Him through all His ministry, had heard His words, witnessed His miracles, knew His life, en-