

that the very naturalness of a feeling of care for the bodies of the departed, the tendency all feel to decorate with flowers the grave of a friend, is a witness in favor of the Christian Gospel of Immortality—that Death is but a higher form of life—since “*Mors hæc reparatio vitæ*,” contemplating which the poet with a dignity possible to no heathen writer prays that he too may have part;

Genetali in sede sacra
Quam liquet exul et errans.

As in these beautiful lines the diction is everywhere that of the purest classical Latin, amidst which Abraham and Moses certainly look strangely out of place, and one is startled to find the father of Tobias designated as “*clarus et venerabilis heros*.” There are two long didactic poems, one on the Divinity of Christ, the other on the Origin of Evil, both full of suggestive thought and sound reasoning. The two books against Symmachus were written to plead a cause which was certainly not that of poetry or national sentiment. Symmachus, with the last adherents of Paganism in the Roman Senate, begged the Emperor not to remove the winged statue of Victory which had stood in the Senate house ever since the days of the first Cæsar. Prudentius in some very brilliant and vigorous hexameters describes the triumph of Constantine and the victorious labarum which had replaced the Roman eagle. Prudentius had his wish. The statue of Victory was removed, and soon after Rome was taken by the Goths. The labarum led the army to few victories.

Prudentius wrote also the *Peristephanon*, a series of odes on the Martyrs. In these appears the custom of invoking the Martyr's prayers. Many of these are exceedingly long-winded, and the martyrs, notably St. Cuthbert, show anything but a Christian spirit in their denunciations of the heathen religion and of the reigning Emperor. In the legend of St. Laurence, the Deacon (according to some he was an Archdeacon) jests horribly about his gridiron and the methods of cookery as applied in his case. The poem on St. Agnes is singularly pure and beautiful.

OUR NEW STORY.

AS we begin our new Story next week, it will be a very suitable time for new subscribers to commence. The story will be one of unusual interest—quite as good as the last. We do not expect to be able to furnish our readers with one which will give much more general satisfaction.

IN MEMORIAM.

JASPER HUME NICOLLS, D. D.

For the DOMINION CHURCHMAN.

Complaint has not unjustly been made that the notices in this journal of the Principal of Bishop's College have been so brief. In him the Church of England in this country has lost one of the purest, gentlest, truest spirits with which this or any other portion of the Church was ever blessed. For two-and-thirty years he served her in a post second in importance only to the Episcopate, with unselfish devotion, unflinching love and unflagging persistency; and for the results of those services, she owes him a debt of gratitude which it is scarcely possible to exaggerate. The readers of the DOMINION CHURCHMAN will

not be sorry to receive, though somewhat late, some fuller account of his life and labours.

Down to the founding of Bishop's College, the clergy of the Church of England in Lower Canada were drawn exclusively from the Old Country. On Mr. Nicolls devolved the all-important function of laying the foundations of an institution in which a native Canadian clergy for the Church of the future should be trained. That work was for two-and-thirty years almost exclusively in his hands; and it is simply a matter of course that he stamped himself upon this Church through her clergy for good or evil for many generations to come. It is the persuasion of the writer that the choice of him as her first Theological Professor was one for which the Canadian church can never be sufficiently thankful. Bishop's College, however, is not only a Theological school, but a public University. It was the persistent endeavour of the late Principal to exclude all narrowness of character and make the institution to the Province what his own University has for ages been to England. Indeed many prominent laymen have been already educated within its walls.

Jasper Hume Nicolls was the third of five sons of the late General Gustavus Nicolls, R. E. His mother was Heriot Frances, daughter of the late Deputy Commissioner General Thompson, and sister of the wife of the late Bishop Mountain. He was born at St. Peter's Port, Guernsey, in October, 1818. Most of his schoolboy days were passed in Canada, his schoolmasters being the well-known Dr. Twining, at Halifax, and Mr. Burrage at Quebec, his father being consecutively in command at these two places. He was also pupil for one year of the present Dean of Toronto. As a boy, while exhibiting the same gentleness and winning qualities which marked his later years, he yet excelled in athletic sports, and in daring, venturesome feats by flood and field. His own strong predilection was for the army which all his brothers entered; but by his parents he was destined for the sacred ministry, and to their will he dutifully bowed, sacrificing his own most cherished wishes. His mind, however, once made up, he gave himself to the work chosen for him with his whole heart, and in it did such good service and won such distinction as have fully justified the wise foresight of the guides of his youth. He entered Oriel College, Oxford, in 1836, and graduated with honors in classics and philosophy in 1840.

At Oxford, while a hard student, he—like so many others of that noble band of religious heroes who have revolutionized the Church of England in our generation, and have covered the face of the world with her trophies—was a keen follower of manly sports, his own special line being boating. In the College boat races he attained very high rank. It may be interesting to mention that while there is of course much fiction in the description of the boat race, in Tom Brown's Oxford Days, the characters especially being purely so, the race itself is taken from life and the coxswain of the winning boat was Jasper Nicolls.

On taking his degree, he remained in Oxford as a private tutor, in which he gained much repute. In 1844 he obtained the high distinction of being chosen Michel Fellow of Queen's College, Oxford.

He was ordained deacon in 1844, and priest in 1845 by Dr. Bagot, Bishop of Oxford. During his short ministry in England, he had charge of the Living of Wheatly, five miles from Oxford.

Just at this time Bishop's College was about being opened, and the selection of its first principal was a matter of much anxious thought to its founder, Bishop Mountain. His first choice was the Rev. S. S. Wood, then Rector of Three Rivers; but when it was decided to build the college at Lennoxville Mr. Wood declined to remove thither. The Rev. Henry Sewell, son of the late Chief Justice, next received the appointment, but resigned it before the college opened, for an eligible charge in England. The Bishop finally offered the Principalship to his nephew, Mr. Nicolls, who accepted it in the same spirit of simple self-denying devotion to duty which characterized his whole life, giving up for it prospects in England far more promising, and work and associations in every way more congenial.

Few persons have ever known how much self-denial there was in Dr. Nicoll's original acceptance of the post. The interesting notice of his decease

in the *Quebec Journal of Education* says that he was appointed Principal “at the modest remuneration of £300.” This is a mistake. He was offered and accepted it at one hundred pounds a year; but before he came out the unexpected donation to Bishop Mountain of £6000 stg., by his old friend Mr. Harrold, which the Bishop handed over to the college, enabled the authorities to raise the Principal's salary at once to £300.

He came out in the autumn of 1845, and at once proceeded to Lennoxville to begin what proved to be the work of his life. The history of Mr. Nicolls is henceforth the history of Bishop's College; but to go into that at any length would exceed the limits of this paper; the briefest sketch must suffice. Mr. Nicolls found the college building with its foundations barely laid. He began his work in a little old wooden house in the village, part of which was occupied as a store, with eight students of various ages and conditions, of whom the writer was one. The house was miserably cold; the rooms low and small, and inconveniently crowded with the numbers crammed into them, and there were many discomforts to endure. But there is not one of that little brotherhood who has not ever looked back upon that year as one of the very happiest in his life; and what made it so was the companionship of the Principal—his sweetness and brightness, his never-failing good temper, his ever-ready sympathy, his brotherly rather than fatherly kindness. All this added to his evident goodness and simple unostentatious piety, his unconscious humility, his high-toned truthfulness and stern indignation against all that was mean, selfish or dishonorable, and his eminent power as a teacher, which enabled him to lighten the burdens of the dullest who came under his hands, and to inspire all who had anything of capacity with an enthusiasm for study, filled the hearts of all his students with the warmest love for him.

The time of his abode at Oxford was just that at which the great Tractarian movement was at its height. His own College, Oriel, was its very focus. During those years John Henry Newman was at the summit of his wonderful influence and towards their close came the shock when he left us for the Church of Rome. It was natural, perhaps inevitable, that Mr. Nicolls, coming from Oxford just then, should be received, particularly by the Evangelical party, with coldness if not distrust. Unhappily this attitude of coldness was maintained by that party towards him and his work to the end of his life. Nothing could have been more unjust or a more short-sighted policy, unless indeed it is right and wise for men of one school of thought, when they cannot secure the entire control, to refuse all co-operation in church work with moderate men of no party in the church. The Oxford movement stirring as it did, the religious world to its very centre, must of course had its influence upon so earnest and sincere a spirit as Mr. Nicolls. How far, or if at all, he owed to it the deep hold which personal religion had upon his heart the writer does not know. But certain it is that the Oxford movement never caused him to drift from that safe anchorage where the Reformers and great seventeenth century Divines moored the church's bark. He was in fact, at no time more, in principle or feeling, than an exceedingly moderate churchman. No one is in a better position than the writer to know that even in the early days of his youthful ardour, the late Principal had no sympathy with any of the extreme views of the Oxford leaders; while from the extravagances and the entire spirit of the Ritualist party of our day, his whole soul revolted with the strongest repugnance, and all their distinctive principles he absolutely rejected. He was emphatically not a party man. Fairness to all legitimate phases of religious thought and movement, he both taught and exhibited. And his loyalty, as one entrusted with the education of young men belonging to all sections of the church, made him almost morbidly anxious not to bias any upon controverted points. Hence young men learnt very little of party views or controversies from the Principal. What they learnt from him was, true-hearted loyalty to the Church of England, unselfish devotion to duty, and the overwhelming importance of practical religion.

To proceed with the sketch of his life.—From