

the individual conscience must be carefully guarded and the personal life must have fair play. We welcome his timely protest against the attempt which some would make to turn the Church into a kind of club or society based upon a number of petty regulations. On the subjects of slavery, intemperance and gambling, Mr. Black writes with a fresh interest, and brings in many apt quotations and appropriate anecdotes. The work of Young Men's Christian Associations, Christian Endeavor Societies, Salvation Army, and various women's societies is discussed with cordial appreciation and is regarded as a manifold manifestation in modern times of the "Christian consciousness." Were these chapters simply regarded as a series of earnest remarks our work would be done when we had thus pointed out their scope and admired the love of liberty, and the demand for high principle which breathes through all of them. But as the heading of each chapter shows they are to be regarded as the sub-divisions of a large subject of which the leading thoughts are "Christian consciousness" and "evolution." The question then returns as to the author's views on the nature of "Christian consciousness," and "evolution," and also as to the relationship between these two factors in his scheme of thought. A full statement and criticism of this part of the subject would require a small volume and is consequently impossible in the present article. We can merely indicate some difficulties which may serve to show that the subject is far from being an easy one. We have heard of the Bible, the Church and reason as competing authorities in the realm of Christian thought, and we are familiar with discussions as to which of the three is the final court of appeal. Mr. Black on page 13 tells us that "the holy Scriptures are the supreme authority in doctrine and in life," but immediately afterwards he says that Christian consciousness "is a co-ordinate authority." "There is a trinity of illumination, the light of revelation, the light of the religious consciousness, and the light of nature" (page 23). When Mr. Black comes to discuss the "the destiny of man" we are informed that "while theoretically an argument might be made for the infallibility of the Christian consciousness, the doctrine is of little or no practical utility" (page 47). "The Christian consciousness puts great honor on man" (page 48). Speaking of the longing for immortality, and the desires by which it is supported he says: "All these natural, reasonable and moral desires are part of our Christian consciousness." The Salvation Army's convert, and the "transformed" cannibals have Christian consciousness; in the 18th century there was no Christian consciousness (page 24); and chivalry had no Christian consciousness in it (page 200). We are again called to note the fact "that the Christian consciousness has asserted its sway and brought positive convictions and moral certainty where from the standpoint of biblical exegesis and criticism there was room for diversity of opinion" (p 210). Further statements are that "the doctrine of the Christian consciousness solves past difficulties and promises a future of generous possibilities" (p 243), and "the Christ in us struggles in vain for fullest expression until we hail the Christian consciousness." We do not wish to do any injustice in thus quoting these scattered sentences but we have been endeavoring to find out what the "Christian consciousness" is by a survey of what it does. Along with all this "it is also desirable to bear in mind that the common Christian consciousness is that consensus concerning doctrine, morals, or ethics, which is held by each and every Christian." These statements do not help us very much in our attempt to find out exactly what this "Christian consciousness" is; it is not, of course, a mere abstraction, it is a power at work in the individual spirit and there is also in some way a collective consciousness of the community. There is

one thing evident in contradistinction to Schleiermacher. It is not feeling but knowledge, or at any rate the element of knowledge in it is predominate. We must not stay to enquire whether Schleiermacher's "feeling" has not much knowledge involved in it or whether it is correct to speak of Schleiermacher's philosophy as "sensationalism." Neither can we follow Mr. Black in his slight treatment of consciousness in general or in his quotations from, or criticisms of, sacred philosophers. We turn over to page 15 where we learn "that religious consciousness is consciousness plus the theistic conception;" that statement would of course admit of much explanation but as we seem to have entered upon a synthetic process we do not pause but look for a conception which is to transform religious consciousness into Christian consciousness—"Christian consciousness is religious consciousness with certain notable additions." These additions are five in number, we cannot recapitulate them now or examine them in detail, they are simply stated and not deduced from any common principles. On page 15 some questions are given which are said to be its "imperative categories" and "its touchstones." These references may be useful as showing the philosophic basis of Christian consciousness "as it appears to Mr. Black. We are here in the presence of subtle questions which are not to be settled in a few sentences. Having already taken up so much space we cannot review the "evolution" side of the book; it does not seem to be closely reasoned so far as its connection with the main subject is concerned, although the general idea of development through the growth of personal conviction and the advance of social sentiment is well illustrated. When we are informed that the Satan of the book of Job is "first and greatest of utilitarians" that "Wigglesworth's God is a sort of gloomy and glorified Oliver Cromwell," and that a doubtful story about David Hume "ought to be true if it is not," we are in the atmosphere of popular rhetoric rather than of philosophic discussion. We could wish also that when the sentence from Tennyson on "honest doubt" is quoted, the whole passage might be given so that the poet in the same breath might tell us of the man who fought his doubts and gathered strength, etc." We regret not being able to deal with Mr. Black's treatment of the "consciousness of the heathen," but we must close with the hope that this book may be the means of stimulating thought upon the many important subjects that come within its range.

ELDER-MODERATORS.

MR. EDITOR,—I am glad to see that the Elder-moderator question is attracting so much attention. "Another Elder," in your issue of Dec. 25th, seems to think that the General Assembly adopted the book of "Rules and Forms of Procedure," as the constitution of the Church, instead of "as a useful guide."

There is certainly no ambiguity about the expression, "The Moderator is a minister." It states, simply, what was, up to that time, the practice of the Church. It does not affirm that there has ever been any legislation on the point in question. Can your correspondent refer to any Act of a Canadian Presbyterian General Assembly affirming the principle, that a ministerial Moderator is essential to the valid constitution of a Church court. The principle is not essentially Presbyterian, and the Church seems simply to have been "captured by the clergy" to that extent. This is clearly one of the clerical or prelatical developments away from the sound and consistent Presbyterianism of the Primitive Church.

The "Rules and Forms of Procedure," though a most excellent and useful manual, is not "the constitution and by-laws" of the Church, as some suppose; but simply, as the Assembly explicitly affirmed in sanctioning its publication, "a useful guide . . .

in the transaction of ecclesiastical business." The concluding sentence of the prefatory note in the last edition, confirms this view of the scope of the book as the correct one. "The Book of Forms having been thus carefully prepared, will, it is hoped, be found to exhibit in a satisfactory manner the ordinary practice of this Church in the transaction of business." "Ordinary practice" is not statutory enactment. If a Presbytery, or other Church court, departs from the "ordinary practice" it may be called on by a superior court to "show cause," to explain or justify its action, but should surely not be condemned if neither the principles of Presbyterianism nor the constitution of the Church has been violated.

Your correspondent is greatly concerned lest the acts of Presbytery may be declared void by the civil courts, on account of having an Elder-moderator, and in the very next paragraph he censures the last Assembly for not proceeding precipitately in an unconstitutional way to add a clause to the constitution of the Church by a Declaratory Act. If the principle of ministerial monopoly of the chief seat in the synagogue is to be embodied in the constitution of the Church it should surely be done in a constitutional way in terms of the Barrier Act. Until that is done, and a majority of the Presbyteries approve, and the Assembly enacts, the constitution of the Church will leave to Church courts the liberty they have hitherto enjoyed in reference to this and other details of procedure. It might be worth while to make sure that the principle is scriptural before it is legislated into the constitution. If those who contend so strenuously for its adoption could only do that they would find the rest of their self-imposed task easy. Hoping to see the question in all its aspects fully discussed in your columns before next Assembly, I am,

A. N. T. PRESBYTERIAN.

ANOTHER NAME FOR PROFESSOR.

Among others the name of the Rev. Hope W. Hogg is being mentioned in connection with the vacant Chair of Old Testament Introduction in Knox College. The qualifications of Mr. Hogg for such a position are being brought under the notice of many of the brethren. He is a man of earnest evangelical spirit and great scholarship. Born over thirty years ago in the East he is the son of the Rev. Dr. Hogg, long a missionary in Egypt under the American U.P. Church. After spending his youth in that country, where he acquired a most intimate knowledge of both colloquial and classical Arabic, he came to Edinburgh and entered upon a most distinguished career as a student at the University there, taking his M.A. degree in 1884. He studied Syriac at the University and took a full theological course at the Scottish U.P. Hall in the same city. He took the highest honors of his year and was beyond all competitors in Hebrew. He took the B.D. degree at the University in 1887. Becoming an ordained missionary of that most conservative of churches the American U.P. Church, for over six years he was Professor in their training college at Assiout, Egypt, teaching Old Testament literature and History of Religions. All his leisure time was devoted to the acquisition of an intimate acquaintance with Semitic languages and dialects in which he attained the height of proficiency, and to original research in Archaeology and Ancient History, the results of which, we believe, will, ere very long, be given to the public. Recently Mr. Hogg has sought professional work and was a candidate for the Hebrew Chair in Edinburgh University, which, however, in accordance with a time honored rule, was given to an Auld Kirk minister.

In German Mr. Hogg is a proficient, and is familiar with the most recent thought of the Teutonic schools. Lately by a well-known publishing house he has been entrusted with the translation of Keiler's "Geschichte der Hebräer."

Of Mr. Hogg, Professor Orr, of U. P. Hall, Edinburgh, says: "He has an excellent knowledge of Arabic and Hebrew and would make a good teacher." Professor Geo. Adam Smith, of F.O. College, Glasgow, says: "He has knowledge and experience of a kind extremely rare. In the present state of Oriental study Mr. Hogg's work will prove of the highest value." Sir Wm. Muir, Principal of Edinburgh University, and Dr. Watson, Principal of the American College, Cairo, both eminent Orientalists, warmly praise Mr. Hogg's character and learning.

COM.

Teacher and Scholar.

By REV. A. J. MARTIN, TORONTO.

Feb. 2nd, 1896. } THE POWER OF JESUS { Luke v. 17-26

GOLDEN TEXT.—Luke v. 24.

MEMORY VERSE.—1:24.

CATECHISM.—Q. 43.

Home Readings.—M. A. 11. viii 1-17. T. Mat. ix. 1-17. W. Ma. xii 1-14. Th. Mark i. 16-45. F. Mark ii. 1-22. S. Luke v. 17-26. Su. Ps. li.

Our lesson for this week brings before us one of the most dramatic incidents in our Lord's career. It was at Capernaum and within some house there, perhaps the one which He reckoned "home," that our Lord was preaching when this event occurred. The fame of the young prophet of Nazareth was spreading, so that the place was crowded. And not only the house itself, but the doors and all avenues of approach were filled with an eager multitude. Various were the motives which had brought the people together: some had come through real desire to hear the truth, others from mere curiosity; some to enquire and others to condemn. If only that advance had been in a right frame of mind toward God, not one would have gone away unblessed, for the "power of the Lord was present to heal them." Is it not too often the case that even while the Lord is waiting to be gracious, wrong dispositions and a wrong attitude toward God on our part hinder us from receiving the "healing." One, however, was brought who had come in faith expecting a blessing. He received all, and more than he expected, for upon him was shown our Lord's "power over sickness" and His "power over sin."

I. Jesus' Power Over Sickness.—

Doubtless Jesus had shown this power many times before this day. Luke gives us quite a group of miraculous doings in which Jesus had been active about this time. Learning of this the poor paralytic eagerly awaited His coming to Capernaum, and then induced four friends to share in his confidence that this Jesus could do for him what He had done for others. Willingly, therefore, they took the place of bearers and brought their helpless friend to where the Master was teaching. Their faith was one which would not be turned aside by difficulties. Thoroughly seized of the need this poor man had of healing, and thoroughly convinced that Jesus could cure him, all five were determined to secure the healing if possible. That is alone the right kind of faith, which embraces these two elements. We must have a consciousness of our need and a conviction that Jesus Christ can satisfy that need before we will come to Him in spite of every hindrance. It is unnecessary to dwell upon their efforts to bring the needy one to Jesus. The story is plain enough, and in these days when our knowledge of the structure of houses in these Eastern lands is so full there are no difficulties to explain. When Jesus discerned the faith of those who had sought Him, He said to the paralytic: "Son, thy sins are forgiven thee." We cannot tell for certain, but it seems quite plausible that a life of sinful debauchery had been the cause of this young man's paralysis, and that during the time of his helplessness he had had plenty of time to reflect upon this, and had in his heart longing for recovery, but second in intensity to his longing for freedom from sin. There can be no question that the young man was forgiven, just as a few minutes afterwards he was healed of his disease in obedience to the command, "Rise take up thy bed and walk." The power to heal, thus unquestionably shown, proved:

II. Jesus' Power Over Sin.—How

these critics stared when Jesus said, "Son, thy sins are forgiven thee." Two thoughts filled their minds: First, that this man blasphemed God in claiming a Divine prerogative. Only the one against whom we have sinned can forgive the sin. Second, that this was a clumsy attempt to deceive; for if Jesus had the power He claimed He should assert it in a sphere where His truth could be put to the test. Jesus read these thoughts at once, and that all doubt might be dispelled from their minds as to His Divine power, He gave the proof which in heart they had been demanding. In obedience to the command, the helpless man arose and wrapped up his bed, and bearing it upon his arm departed to his home. Still the people did not perceive the truth. They glorified God that He had given such power to man. Instead of being satisfied that this Man was Divine and looking to Him in faith for their own forgiveness and cleansing, they were simply filled with an ecstasy of joy that such things were manifested. Let us not be as foolish as these blinded Jews. Let us rather rejoice that the Son of God became man, and that now it is He and He alone who forgives sins and heals diseases. And that by and by He will receive His forgiven ones into that home where there is neither sickness nor sin.