

Pastor and People.

A MODERN SAINT.

Her eyes are heavenward fixed in prayer
No vestal virgin walks more free;
Life's silent homage day by day
Is more to God than words may be.

Not 'neath the fretted vaults afar,
But in the still calm sphere of home,
She bears her witness for the Lord,
Nor knows a wish from thence to roam.

Her prayers are deeds, her praise as true;
No cloistered shades invite her feet;
Life has its secret holy place,
Its shrine, where fears and wishes meet.

Where children cling around her knees
To breathe the sacred words of love;
And listening to their whispers sweet,
A glad thanksgiving goes above.

Nor pains nor penance seeks she more,
Than care and sorrow bring us all;
In lightning burdens others bear
She answers to the Master's call.

Her cross she takes, her pledge was given,
"Till death shall part"—the solemn vow
O mother! wife! was ever saint
More true, more holy, thus, than thou!
—Rev. Walter Baxterdale.

THOMAS'S DOUBT APPLIED TO POLLOKSHIELDS.

In the course of a sermon on Thomas, "the man with doubts and difficulties," preached in Stockwell Free Church recently, the Rev. John M'Neill said:—Thomas, one of the Twelve, was not with them when Jesus appeared after His resurrection, and so the eclipse, the misery. Eight days afterwards the disciples were together, and Thomas with them; then the revelation, the brightness, and the glorious testimony, "My Lord and my God," as the eclipse rolled off and the sun blazed out. Elocution ought to come to the preacher's aid many a time in interpreting Scripture, for although by unthinking people it is much despised, there is a great interpretive power in good elocution, and he thought if he had the gift he could bring a good deal out of that 24th verse of John xx., "But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came." Ask yourself—Where is your Thomas? Why is he not beside you? He is sitting at home in West Pollokshields reading his book. Think of the flimsy excuse for not coming to the place where Jesus is to reveal Himself in resurrection brightness and gladness.

Mr. M'Neill thought Thomas was not with them, because, for one thing, he had given way to a prevailing tendency of his, and it was a tendency of ours to-day and among thoughtful people—the tendency to doubt. He went aside by himself the way some of our modern Christians do. "This is an anxious time and there's a great deal to think about, and in a morning like this John doesn't suit me and Peter doesn't understand my view-point." You know how you run down your minister, some of you thinking folk; he doesn't sympathise with your difficulties, and you have ceased to come to church or have gone elsewhere, but you just dropped in to hear M'Neill. Thank you. He is thinking and wondering if these things can be true when suddenly, and just like Him, Jesus showed Himself to simpler-minded folk. Thomas to-day is dropping off church-going because the minister does not sympathise with his difficulties, and he is reading ponderous books on the miracles that make things as clear as mud and after he has read one or two books on the evidences he is in the darkness, and could not tell you his left hand from his right. Oh, there's a simpler way for doubting folks, despondent folks, people that are depressed by difficulties, from scientific and other quarters. Be unlike Thomas—hold in and hang on to the company of simpler-minded, watching, expectant people. I often say, when I hear these doubters,—all churches have them; men have difficulties about the supernatural, especially about the resurrection, and so on—I say to them, Brethren, instead of reading ponderous books and listening to lectures on the evidences, go to a Salvation

Army meeting; and Thomas almost sneers at you when you give him that advice. A man with his intellect to go to a Salvation Army meeting! I say there is no better cure for doubting than shouting out. These people who feel like singing all the time, their tears are wiped away. My dear Thomas, give them a trial. I thank God for men like Billy Bray, who believed in God with a shout instead of with a sigh, which makes one doubt whether they believe anything. As Billy walked along his right foot said "Hallelujah," and his left foot "Amen." May you have the Pollokshields Streets ringing with such feet.

THE PREACHING OF CHRIST- MAS EVANS.

Come with me in imagination to a neighborhood in the heart of South Wales in the early part of the present century. The people are simple in their habits but strong of character. Their principle recreation is found in studying the Bible, and their greatest conceivable luxury in hearing one of the masters of the pulpit sweep the gamut of melodious speech with a full and undiluted Gospel for his theme. The intelligence has come that Christmas Evans is on one of his evangelistic tours, and that he will arrive at that place on a certain night. The populace is on tiptoe of excited expectation. It is the topic of conversation at the smithy and in the tailor's shop, in the market place and at the fireside. The plowboy and the milkmaid, as well as the farmer and the shopkeeper, must hear the one eyed preacher from Anglesea. Such an occasion was more to them than the arrival of the finest prima donna to the musically cultured of any of our modern cities. The evening at length arrives and the homely edifice is packed to suffocation. The preachers of all evangelical denominations from many miles around are assembled in the big pew encircling the pulpit. The windows are thrown open and men and women who cannot gain entrance, in vehicles and on the green sward come within the circle of the preacher's voice. At the appointed time the eagerly expected one makes his appearance. The service is simple and fervent. The Scriptures are read by one of the neighboring pastors, a prayer offered by another. Then, the stanza of a familiar hymn being sung in a plaintive minor key, Christmas himself ascends the pulpit. The text is given out in an undertone. The introduction is brief and simple, but gradually the preacher rises in both thought and utterance, until heights of dramatic effectiveness and imaginative brilliance are reached that carry the audience resistlessly upon the current. The subject on this occasion is the demoniac of Gadara. The picture of the demonized individual passing through the neighborhood, or concealing himself in secluded places so as to spring forth like a panther upon women and children, made the people shudder. Then the scene is shifted and the catastrophe of the swine given with inimitable effect, the preacher himself laughing at the grotesqueness of his own description and the whole audience convulsed with suppressed excitement until, when the black pig is mentioned, all decorous restraint was at an end. Then laughter gave place to tears, and merriment to the most devout fervor and solemnity, as the healed demoniac is described returning home, and Mary and the children when sufficiently assured of his restoration gather rejoicingly around him, and God's love and grace are magnified. At this stage of his discourse the preacher gave himself up to the mighty currents of enthusiasm which he had himself awakened. He soared aloft, bearing his audience with him into the very empyrean of emotional excitement. With a few piercing voice effects which were peculiarly his own, he completed his task, leaving the audience, whose sensibilities he had played upon with such consummate mastery, too thoroughly aglow to observe his retirement from the Church or for sometime to know that he was gone.—Rev. Benjamin D. Thomas, D.D., Toronto, in *The Homiletic Review*.

THE BIBLE STUDENT'S TOOLS.

Books for study of the Bible! What a multitude of them there is! In 1892 the new publications suggested by the Scriptures numbered in England 530, and in the United States 538. The figures for England in 1892 show 528. One scarcely knows how to select from so much rich material.

Yet of course the workman must be very discriminating in his choice of tools. Experimenting with new and untried implements may be worse than useless.

Have a part or all of the Scriptures always about you. It is said that in 1870, when the German army under Von Moltke moved across the Rhine at the first tap of the drum, with each eye fixed on Paris, there was not an officer in the saddle that did not carry in his breast-pocket a map of every road between Strasburg and the French capital. Get a pocket Bible.

Have the right kind of Bible. Whether it be an Oxford, or a Bagster, or whatever kind, do not get one that is too good to use. Give particular attention to binding, paper, and type. It is to be your book for life. I recently saw the Bible of an evangelist, whose work is largely Bible reading. The products of study were seen in every margin.

Get a copy of the Revised Version, also, and learn to use it in private study. A comparison of the two versions will often furnish suggestions for instructive comment, as well as open your eyes to the beauty of the Word. Compare, for example, II. Cor. iii. 18 in the two versions.

Any that are able to read another language—Greek, Latin, German, French—will find it profitable to read occasionally thus for comparison; of course this is especially true of the Greek New Testament. Every student in high school or college who can do so should read the Sunday-school lesson from the Greek testament. To any that have not had the opportunity to learn Greek, but who would be glad to avail themselves of some knowledge of the original, I recommend Hudson's "Critical Greek and English Concordance of the New Testament," an inexpensive work of great value to the student of the Bible.

Another requisite is a note-book, stout enough for preservation, convenient in size and always ready for use. Several note-books may be used, representing different sections of Scripture. Another plan is to have an envelop for each book of the Bible. I should like to urge the young people to take notes on their pastors' sermons, writing either at the time, or afterwards from memory.

Interleaved editions of the Bible may take the place of note-books. I may refer just here to a valuable set of books, three volumes by Prof. Weidner, "Studies in the Book," interleaved for students' notes, containing abundant materials and rich suggestions for Bible study.

A SCOTCHMAN'S EXPLANATION.

"Well, you may say what you please," said Smith, "I, for my part, cannot believe that God would first impose laws on nature, and then violate His own laws. What would be the use of making them if they are to be so rapidly set aside?"

"I dinna ken, sir," said uncle very reverently, "what God may do, or what He winna do, but I don't regard a miracle to be a violation o' the laws o' nature. There is no violation o' the laws o' God that I ken o', save the wicked accounts o' wicked men."

"And what, then," asked Smith, "do you make a miracle to be?"

"I regard it," said uncle, "to be merely such an interference wi' the established course o' things as infallibly shows us the presence and action o' the supernatural power. What o'clock is it wi' you, sir, if you please?"

"It's half past twelve, exactly—Green-which time," replied Smith.

"Well, sir," said the uncle, pulling a

huge, old, oid timepiece from his pocket, "it's one o'clock wi' me; I generally keep my watch a bit forrit (a little forward.) But I may have a special reason the noo for setting my watch by the railway; and so, ye see, I'm turning the hand o't round. Noo, wad ye say that I had violated the laws o' a watch? True, I have done what watchdom wi' a' its laws couldna' hae done for itself, but I hae done violence to nae o' its laws. Ma action is only the interference o' a superior intelligence for a suitable end, but I hae suspended nae law. Well, then, instead o' the watch, say the universe; instead o' moving the hands, say God acting worthily o' Himself, and we hae a' that I contend for in a miracle; that is, the unquestionable presence of the Almighty hand working the divine will. And if He sees fit to work miracles what can hinder Him? He has done it oftener than once or twice already; and who daur say He'll not get leave to do it again?"—*Sunday Afternoon.*

MAKING BREAD OF STONES.

How could temptation lay hold of Him? It is quite possible that it could, and that He could suffer in it. Take that instance of the wilderness. He was sure now that He was the Messiah, and in the presence of the great thought He retires into the wilderness to study the method of His Messiahship, and was so caught up in the great thought that the body forgot its needs. "And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He began to be an hungered." And Satan, always ready to take us at our weakest point, said, "Command that these stones be made bread." He could have done it. He is always doing it—a little feldspar, a little mica, a little hornblend, a little vegetable mold—I can not eat dirt, and yet I can. There is nothing of nutriment for me in that, and yet I must live on it. I stood in the Vale of Chamounix and saw the Alps throwing their pinnacles into the blue. I said they were the everlasting hills; but I saw the glaciers floating down the hills, turbid with the rocks that once had thrust themselves thousands of feet into the blue, but now were loosened by the frosts and broken by storms; and out of the coming dust will wave the harvest on which men live. What was that but turning stones to bread! He could have done it. He is doing it every moment, and if not we should all die. But if He had done it then He would have been false to His Messianic mission, of service, not to Himself, but to others. He answered, "Man shall not live by bread alone," and resisted the temptation. But do you not suppose that the Lord was hungry and faint with the fast of forty days—From a sermon "Touching the Bier," by Rev. Wayland Hoyt, D.D., in *The Homiletic Review*.

It may not be popular, but more of the judgment in the preaching of the day would have a stimulating and regulative effective upon the hearers. Christ and the Apostles made much of a personal settlement with God, and so must the preacher of righteousness to-day. Men must not hear so much of "the sweetness of religion" as to overlook its sterner aspects. "The Great White Throne," is a tremendous reality. We are accountable beings, and must answer for the evils which we condone, the wrongs which we commit, and the things which we neglect. God notes our treatment of men and of His Church, and will, sooner or later, call us to strict account.—*Philadelphia Presbyterian*.

Is it because the Church on earth is "the Church militant" that we have the "loyal army plan," the "boys' brigade," etc.? While military precision and a measure of military discipline may be advantageously employed by "good soldiers of the cross of Christ," they should ever remember that "this is the Word of the Lord": "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."