

love of popularity, were not the principles that held sway with him in council or in conduct, in public affairs. Whether you agreed with him in sentiment, or whether you differed, you found in him, in the one case, a hearty and honest associate, or, in the other, a liberal and magnanimous opponent. Mr. Esson was long engaged in the ministry, in a church in Montreal. Some years ago, (nine now,) at the commencement of Knox's College, in this city, he threw himself with all his ardour, into the work assigned to him, in directing the studies of youths intending for the holy ministry, especially in the preliminary department of their training. And not more by his intellectual than by his moral influence, by his professional exertions than by his truly paternal interest in those committed to his charge, did he contribute to form the minds of a considerable proportion of our candidates, and attach to himself the confidence of one and all us to a familiar friend. I have had the best opportunity of witnessing the earnestness with which he sought to impress a reverence for the Word of God on his pupils, and to commend to them the dictates of its divine wisdom, as the ultimate rule and arbiter in all philosophic investigations. I believe he derived his chief-est enjoyment in the study of man—his favourite study—from the opportunity it gave him of admiring and commending the Divine Author of all his mental and moral adaptations. He lived in a region of lofty contemplation, in which, as he retired within himself, he not only might seem to withdraw himself from the excitements of passing events,—having no heart for the turmoils of petty strife, and his talents not lying in the capacity for details in business—but he might seem even in a degree unsocial; not because he was austere, but because his mind was prone to abstraction. But he was far from being without the social feeling, any more than indifferent to public interests. He loved his friends; he looked forth from his retirement with complacency and benevolence on all men; and when he allowed himself to relax in conversation, young and old alike listened delighted to the overflowing of his affectionate heart; the utterances which indicated, without ostentation, the richly furnished mind, trained to habits of observation, and sagacious reflection. His habits of abstraction, therefore, had nothing of the morose; and I think it was because his mind was possessed of the peace of the Gospel, and imbued with the love of God, as well as provided with the stores of philosophical and historical lore, that he was so uniformly happy, alone or with others, as the good man is said to be—satisfied from himself.

"The latest hours of our departed friend were in harmony with the habits of his life. It was not simply the favour of God, but the likeness of God, that his soul aspired

after; it was not merely the more selfish question of safety that exercised his spirit—though that is itself a great and important question: and he gave indications in his expressions of a contrite and humble mind, conversant with godly sorrow; he loved to hear of the gracious covenant, and of the everlasting righteousness of the Mediator. But, with a mind at rest in the faith of Christ, he dwelt in love as one dwelling in God; and, I believe, that in his view of heaven itself, he looked not so much at the idea of being free from all the ills of life, or possessed of self-gratifying joys, as at the end to which salvation itself is the means, in a closer communion with the Father of Spirits, and a larger participation of a divine nature.

"How mysterious is the divine Providence! But a short while ago, his name was selected as among the likeliest candidates for a newly erected chair in our University. I can bear witness to the equanimity with which he received the notification and waited for the issue. It has pleased God to assign to him a translation of a different kind—but it is not without satisfaction that his many friends can reflect that a long life of educational service did not close without this testimony rendered, with very general concurrent suffrages, to Mr. Esson's learning and his merits as an instructor of youth.

"There is reason to think that the rapid decay of his strength latterly, was the effect, to a large extent, of long-continued mental application. Ungrudgingly these labours were given, but they are of a kind (and it is not always allowed for or understood) to wear out the frame, independently of any organic disease seizing on the vitals. The intellectual anxieties which a keen imagination, and a tender texture of the nervous system produce, press formidably on both the mind and body. The sword may prove too sharp for the scabbard; and it is affecting to witness the prostration of the finest powers, yielding, not without resistance from their natural buoyancy, to the stern progress of the destroyer; overcome by the exhaustion which was induced by their very great vigour and activity.

"Truly all things are full of labour; man cannot utter it—the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing—Knowledge itself vanisheth away; yet not that knowledge which wrought love—charity never faileth. Though all flesh is grass, and the goodness of man is as the flower of the field, the word of the Lord, in itself and in its subjective effects in the soul, endureth for ever. They who have known and loved spiritually, shall know and love yet more and more. Death is not the extinction of thought; it but enlarges the sphere of vision; and at the fountain, far more than at the streams, shall the happy spirit quaff unceasing draughts of intellect.