

SPECIAL
ARTICLES

Our Contributors

BOOK
REVIEWSIS YOUNG SCOTLAND ON THE
DOWN GRADE?

Scotland is passing through a critical period. She is no longer the traditional Scotland of the true-blue Presbyterian, the Scotland of a serious-minded, sober church-going people. The Scotland pictured in "The Cottars' Saturday Night," when the head of the household "took the Book," and poured out his nightly petition to the God of Bethel in the midst of his assembled household—that Scotland is in sad process of dissolution. It is told of Shelley, the poet, that when he was in Edinburgh in 1811, some one reproved him for "laughing immoderately" in Princess Street on a Sunday. You may now laugh on Princess Street on a Sunday as on other days, and no one will think of checking your hilarity."

The Mad Passion for Pleasure.

The late Mr. James Payn, the novelist, who, as editor of *Chambers' Journal*, lived for several years in Edinburgh, used to tell how, in his time, even the window blinds were kept down on the "Sabbath," as an outward and visible sign of seriousness. Nowadays, the clergymen themselves are seen boarding the Sunday cars, and, as for the people, the young people especially, judging by the empty pews in many of the churches, the one Scriptural injunction which they would most seem to ignore is that which commands the "assembling of yourselves together" for worship and prayer. The week-end habit has touched Scotland as acutely as it has touched England, and the country roads on a summer Sunday are often so crowded with wheelmen and pedestrians as is the road to the Derby on the annual race day.

But apart from that, there is a deplorably lessened interest in religious observances and in the things that make for righteousness. That mad passion for pleasure, which is one of the features of our age everywhere, has taken possession of the people, of the younger generation especially, until not work but amusement seems to be the chief end of existence. Every spare hour is spent in some form of diversion, or in what is falsely called recreation. The remark of the enthusiast that "business interferes terribly with golf" is familiar enough to be classed among the "chestnuts," but it is "significant of much," as Carlyle would have said.

Why the Young Scot Does Not Go To
Church.

The effect of this insatiable craving for excitement and pleasure is bound to be deteriorating. It must spoil the home life, it must weaken all the finer qualities of the moral character, and deprive the mind and soul of that nourishment which the higher being calls for. Quite recently there was a long discussion in a leading Edinburgh paper on "Why young men don't go to church." Scores of reasons were assigned, the lack of attractiveness and intellectual stimulus in the pulpit being prominent. But it was generally admitted that the inducements and enticements of the world, the craze for athletics, for football and golf and tennis, the afore-mentioned "week-end" habit and the facilities for getting away into the country, the restlessness which eagerly seizes every opportunity for running away from home; it was generally admitted that these were the main deterrents to churchgoing among young men.

In a short article like the present it is impossible to enlarge, as one might easily do, on the evil effects to the young men themselves of this sapping of the fine old, sturdy, serious, independent, thrifty character of the Scot. It used to be

said in jest that if the North Pole were ever discovered a Scot would be found clinging around it. This, of course, as an illustration of the persevering, dominating, ever-forging-ahead quality of the sons of Caledonia. But the new humour is not likely to assign these qualities to the young Scot of to-day unless he takes heed to his way.

Has Mr. Carnegie Made Things Too
Easy.

It is a debatable point whether Mr. Andrew Carnegie, with all his munificence to his native land, is not directly responsible for much of the enervated spirit of independence which now prevails. Time was, and not so long ago, when the Scottish University student worked his way to high place literally on "a little oatmeal," toiling with his hands on the harvest field or wielding the blacksmith's hammer during his vacations. Now Mr. Carnegie has made everything pleasant and comfortable for him, and he smokes his cigarettes and flirts with barmaids and makes familiar with stage girls when his predecessor was "toiling upwards in the night." The result is that he does nothing with his life which of old would have been regarded as the creditable characteristic of the Scot. Where to-day is the working Scottish mason who will become a Hugh Miller? Is there any policeman walking the streets of Edinburgh or Glasgow or Aberdeen who will become a Dr. John Mackintosh, the historian of his country? Where to-day is the blacksmith who, like the late James Annand, will exchange the anvil for the editor's chair and a seat in Parliament.

The Better Way.

"Quit you like men! be strong!" is the Scriptural injunction which young Scotland requires to give special heed to to-day. If young Scotland does not, then young Scotland will soon be unfit for its duty. Let our young men be warned in time. As the President of the Baptist Union said the other day, they were made, as all of us were made, for something infinitely higher than the pursuit of pleasure and self-gratification—to do the will of God, to achieve noble character, to serve their fellows. Let them give themselves to these things, and the more assiduously as they see the trend of modern life. Let them cultivate, as their forefathers did of necessity (and happily for them), simplicity of taste and of living, nourish in their hearts a love of duty (instead of regarding duty as something disagreeable, to be got through in the cheapest and easiest way), practise self-denial, and exercise themselves towards godliness, that they may know by experience the pleasures that last forevermore.

"The over secure and self-confident person placeth his fond presumption on the rock of God's promise, and thereby draws as certain a ruin upon himself as he who ventures to go over a deep river without any other bridge than his own shadow."—Spurgeon.

The British antarctic expedition, to be commanded by Captain Scott, composed of twenty-eight officers and men of science and a crew of twenty-seven picked men, sailed from the Thames, June 1st, in the *Terra Nova*. Captain Scott hopes to reach the south pole in December, 1911. In addition to ponies and dog-teams, the party is provided with a novel means of transport in the form of a motor-sledge, which has been satisfactorily tested on the snows of Norway.

THE WORTH OF FAME.

In the diary of William Allingham, an Irish poet, whose work has a singing quality as tuneful as the melody of the thrush, we find many suggestive entries and not a few intimate touches that bring nearer to us the great ones of the past. Allingham had in him the stuff of a hero worshipper. He loved Tennyson and Carlyle with intense devotion, and the records he made of his visits to them are revelations of both men finer than any in their published lives. His diary was written for his own pleasure and information, and was not meant by him to be shown to the public. Therefore, it is the more illuminating in the glimpses it gives of various well-known people.

When Carlyle was eighty-four he made a pilgrimage to his birthplace in Scotland. There stood the tiny house in which he was born, not a feature of the surrounding landscape altered. The people in the streets of Ecclefechan looked much as they did in the days when Carlyle was a boy. He had gone from them and had gained world-wide renown. As a scholar and thinker, a lecturer and historian, he had won unfading laurels. Everywhere men of genius honored him, and the British Empire took pride in his work as that of a man who had influenced thought and molded character. He was in every sense of the word a famous man. In Ecclefechan nobody cared for this. The old man aroused no curiosity and received no plaudits. One sedate, elderly man, not unintelligent, told Mr. Allingham that he had heard of Carlyle and understood that he had written something that was called clever, but what it was he did not know.

A young woman was asked if she would not like to meet him. Not she. The aged philosopher came and went in his native place with as little attention as if he had never left it. Only a single farmer, standing at an inn door, stepped forward with a request that he might shake the old man's hand. "I have read your works," he said, "and I count it an honor to speak to you."

Young people at the outset of their career are apt to put mistaken value on fame. They see names that are often repeated in the papers, those of men in public life, of men who write books, men who control armies, or men who paint pictures. "Such a man is famous," they say, and their souls spring forward with eager yearning to a future day when they may be famous, too. If they live long enough they are disillusioned. Of all bubbles that break at a breath, fame is the readiest to break. Of all hollow shams on the face of the earth, fame is the hollowest. The fame of very few endures beyond their own period. Often persons now famous have died in ignorance of the esteem in which the world would by and by hold them. In the widest calculation, fame is partial and limited. Society is composed of innumerable mingling and intermingling circles, and a majority of these are so absorbed in their individual affairs that they would not step to the window to look should a hero pass down the street.

What then is worth while? The doing of the day's work well. This, and this only, is really rewarding to the doer. Never mind about fame; do the thing that must be done, as well as ever you can.—Aunt Marjorie in New York Christian Intelligencer.

Your life cannot be good if your teaching is bad. Doctrine lies at the basis of life. You may profess to believe a good many things, but in reality a gate to the first beatitude—substance and inspiration of your character.—Joseph Parker.