

For Dominion Presbyterian.

"Biographies in Brief."

II. JEREMY TAYLOR.

By Nicol Moffatt.

Cambridge, Oxford, Uppingham and Lisburn, Ireland, were the four places connected with this man's life. Among these are divided his birth, college life, ministry and Episcopal labors. Laud, Chillingworth, Charles I., and Richard Vaughan were the four men whose lives contributed much to his. The first discovered his abilities, the second influenced his character, the third was his king and hero, the last provided a shelter and gave the needful, unsparingly and untirefully.

Jeremy Taylor is of the stock to which Dr. Rowland Taylor belonged, though the link between, his father, was not of the clergy, but of a profession less liable to martyrdom—he was a barber. The instincts of courage had not died out, however. Jeremy's days also were in troublous times, and, although he may not have been a Protestant of the exact mould of his illustrious relative, yet he could stand rejection from his pulpit and even imprisonment in the tower for principles he held dear. His connection with Laud left a suspicion that he was not a good Protestant. But how many other good men have unjustly carried suspicion as their shadow! He was a Royalist, however, and in those days politics and religion were held to be well matched. He stoutly held his ground, so that after the conflict has passed, it must be said he was ever conscientious and in earnest.

Laud knew a man when he saw him. Jeremy Taylor had the fine appearance, striking eloquence and pronounced ability which the archbishop prized so highly. Others lived to see and hear what Laud knew would happen.

In Taylor's published sermons we have literature that shall endure for its stately eloquence, fervid spirit and practical issue. He is Miltonian in his choice of language and thoroughly aggressive in his aims. His immense learning and serviceable memory made him extremely ready and powerful on every occasion. *Holy Living and Holy Dying* and *The Great Exemplar* are two books still popular with us.

He never was a Presbyterian nor yet cherished many kind thoughts towards towards them. Although both suffered together under Cromwell yet he never joined hands with them in affliction nor shared happiness in times of peace. Probably the dislike was mutual; at least we see in Taylor an instance of one preaching toleration at one period and practising intolerance at another. In his first visitation throughout his diocese in Ireland he declared thirty-six churches vacant because the Presbyterian minister had to decide between Episcopal ordination and deprivation.

He died at the age of fifty-five, after an active life in the ministry of over thirty years. He was twice married, had a small family of devoted children, the death of several of which in succession, just as they were attaining to manhood, was the immediate cause of his death. Let old England hope that another of her illustrious sons is resting in peace, since all hold his memory dear.

Books and Reading.

There is no excuse for the tablet of one's mind remaining blank, like an unwritten page, in this age of exhaustless resources and splendid opportunities, with profitable knowledge springing up everywhere accessible to everybody. No one need be in want of a useful periodical or book for a moment. Time was when periodicals were not known, and when books were scarce and their readers few. A dozen volumes were considered quite a library in well to do families, and these went the round of large neighborhoods, and were preserved with jealous care. Now we are living at the other extreme. There is not a day but books by scores are issued from the presses of this and other countries. Book-making is one of the largest of the world's industries.

The truth is, books are too many, and are not valued as they should be on account of their commonness. If they were fewer they would be prized better, and more eagerly read. Of what is termed "current literature" there is too much. It accumulates on our tables to our embarrassment, and the temptation is to skim, not to study; not to read leisurely, thoughtfully, solidly, as books were read when they were few—read through and through, again and again, till every page looked as familiar as the face of a dear friend, till every thought was so mastered as to become the inalienable possession of the mind. Many great men have been reared on very small libraries. How they would have enjoyed our larger privileges! In this highly favored period there may be found in almost every home shelf upon shelf of selected volumes; in every Sabbath school, a library; in our day schools, libraries; in our colleges and seminaries and universities, extensive libraries; in our town and cities, public libraries accessible to all. Every man, woman and child may have a book to read, and may choose from a hundred or a thousand a book that is worthy, a book that is pure, elevating, refining, ennobling.

In the choice of books, the most careful discrimination is necessary; for, of the flashy and trashy, the vulgar, the vile and pernicious, there is no end. Such is the literature that trains a superficial and sensational generation, who substitute skimming for reading, excitement for thought. What alcohol is to the body this literature is to the mind. It vitiates the taste; it destroys digestion. A single reading intoxicates; habitual reading dissipates. Pupils in this school demand sensational preaching from the pulpit, and sensational editing in the press. The common sense and solidity of the past is superseded by the common nonsense and superficiality of the present. The demand is not for meat, but for milk, and the more it is watered the better it is liked, hence the great multitude of intellectual babes and weaklings.

Upon the educators of the young rests a heavy responsibility. It is in the line of their work to acquaint their pupils with the best authors and to interest them in their writings. It is in the power of the schools to control almost entirely the reading of the pupils, and to imbue them with correct literary tastes. Boards of Education, Superintendents and Teachers should make this literary training, in all

the grades, a prominent feature of school work. Much may be done in the schools to save the youth of our country from the debasing influence of a corrupting press. Publishers, such as have too much self-respect, and too high a regard for public morals, to publish anything but the purest and best, should have their efforts cordially seconded by parent and teachers, and should receive the hearty patronage of all lovers of good literature. —The Christian Intelligencer.

Literary Notes.

The Gentlewoman for December continues two interesting serials, and contains also two short Christmas stories. Many useful hints are given in regard to Christmas presents of all kinds. The number is unusually good. Gentlewoman Publishing Company, New York City.

For Troubled Hearts, by Charles Aubrey Eaton, M.A. The author's preface is: "These little messages were given from week to week in a Sunday leaflet to my congregation, in the hope that they might prove of help to troubled hearts. They are now published in more permanent form with the same hope and for the same purpose." This preface explains what the book is—simply brief messages from a pastor to his people, but the messages will be as applicable to all readers as they were to that particular congregation and all will find them very helpful. The book is neatly bound in green cloth.—The Poole Printing Company, Toronto.

The Christmas cover of *Ev'ry Month* is a welcome relief from the wild and artistic display of color seen at this time of year on many of the magazines, and is very attractive in its simple beauty. The contents carry out the promise of the cover. A novel article on the "Human Side of a big Department Store" is profusely illustrated and contains information which will be most astonishing to the ordinary customer of the bargain sales, with its mass of facts and details concerning the life of the girl behind the counter. The magazine also furnishes three short stories, while the music, consisting of four pieces, goes beyond the usual in popularity. *Ev'ry Month*, 1260 Broadway, New York City.

Table Talk for December is even brighter than usual, and this magazine is always a welcome visitor. There is a holiday air about the issue, for it is about Christmas gifts, and Christmas cheer, that most of the articles are written. For the Home-makers who want the latest ideas to make bright the closing days of the old year, they will find in the article entitled the "Great Festival of Christmas," much that will interest them, and also in the Department devoted to Games, Entertainments, etc. An article of special value to all up-to-date housekeepers is entitled the "Etiquette of Serving a Table," by Mrs. Burton Kingsland, of New York, who is an authority. The Christmas story, which is given the first place, is very interesting. Table Talk Publishing Co., Philadelphia, Pa.

Prisoners of Hope, by Mary Johnson. This "Tale of Colonial Virginia" makes a very strong impression on the minds of those who read it. Aside from the peculiar interest that always centres in those old colonial days, we have here a story that is of absorbing interest. The writer tells of the plot of the servants and slaves of Virginia to gain their freedom, and she makes us see from their standpoint and understand their situation in a wonderful way. The story is full of strong characterisation as well as fine description. When we read of the flight of the hero and heroine before the Indians, their lonely wanderings through the forests, we seem to see beautiful, luxuriant Virginia, with its hidden horror of an unseen enemy ever lurking in ambush and ready to destroy. Not the least of the attractions of this entirely attractive book is the very pretty light green linen cover, with decoration of dark red.—Houghton, Mifflin & Co., Boston.