

# The Wesleyan,

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## HINTS ON GENERAL READING.

### LETTERS TO A YOUNG MINISTER.

#### NO. IV. BIOGRAPHY. POETRY.

DEAR BROTHER,—As was perfectly natural, the death of Wesley led to no little haste in placing his Life before the public. There were men who longed for an opportunity to vent against him their chagrin and hatred; Hampson wrote under those feelings. There were others who desired to forestall the market—to secure for Methodism the eulogiums of its founder's biography; Coke and Moore wrote with this end in view. Whitehead prepared a Life which is open to the same objection as Hampson's. Southey's religious education and prejudices, with his poetical cast of intellect, disqualified him for giving a disinterested life of Wesley. Richard Watson's literary and theological implements were always ponderous, and so were unfitted for the light and delicate touches which patiently shape out a faithful life statue. Jackson's life of Charles Wesley gives the most just and minute view of the two great brothers which had appeared up to a recent date; but even that was written by a hand so tenderly affectionate that it left the shadows out of the picture. Tyreman's Life of Wesley, and Dr. Rigg's answer to, or criticism upon, Tyreman, are necessary to show John Wesley in the full outline of a very wonderful character. Those volumes also furnish as ample and correct a view of the rise of Methodism as can be ascertained from books anywhere. You would do well, therefore, to go to the fountain-head in seeking information upon the origin and principles of the church to which you have given your adhesion.

Two Biographies which have recently appeared, are excellently illustrative of another great ecclesiastical organization, of whose history you should have an intelligent understanding.—I mean the lives of Guthrie and Norman McLeod. If you take with these the Life of Chalmers and that of Hugh Miller, you have a good epitome of the History of Presbyterianism, with the key to not only the "Disruption," known as a great division in the Church of Scotland, but also several other rents which are now but being healed tenderly by time and Christian common sense. McLeod was in the very breach of the struggle, as were Chalmers and the others mentioned, but on the opposite side. The bombardment for some time was tremendous. There were giants in those days. But the atmosphere is now all the clearer, and the armies are stepping across the lines and shaking hands. If we would know the causes of their conflict, we may find them, as I have indicated, in the details of Biography. Without these you cannot understand the word "union" as applied to the Presbyterianism of to day.

These are but samples of what I mean by pointing to Biography as a key to the problems of reform or organization, whether religious or political, moral or social. If you would trace Presbyterianism farther back, for instance, than the comparatively recent times alluded to, you may go to Calvin's Life. If you would understand the philosophy of the "Reformation," go to Luther and Melancthon. If you would know the origin of that powerful system which meets us in so many forms in this Dominion—Jesuitism—read the life of Ignatius Loyola. George Fox and William Penn will tell you of Quakerism, and so on round the circle of the creeds.

It is useless to enter upon the arena of statesmanship, and political leadership. The names which rise here to claim attention are legion. Men who have moulded constitutions, made and unmade sovereigns, helped or marred the fortunes of great nations, lie on the face of history by a score. Self-made men, like Franklin, Fulton, Whitney and Greeley in America, and Wast, Stephenson and Arkwright in England, have lives which illustrate not only the success of honest ambition, but also the progress of the arts and sciences through which they obtained deserved abiding fame.

There are a few special Biographies which, before we leave this part of our subject, we would sincerely recommend. Boswell's Life of Dr. Johnson is one. Macaulay styled Boswell "the first of Biographers;" and it is a question whether Johnson is not better

known by the pages of this devoted companion than by any of his own publications. The fidelity of his Biography to the facts of life is its most remarkable feature. You have Johnson described from every standpoint, under every possible light and shade, and what is more remarkable, Boswell similarly paints himself, faults, whims, contemptible meanness all included. Withal, the work is an open window through which you gaze upon much of society in England, with its peculiar habits, during the latter part of the eighteenth century.

Another is the Life of Walter Scott, by his son-in-law, Lockhart. How a great genius lived, worked, and killed himself—how Scotch and English men of letters envied, hated, loved, and lauded each other—how publishers kept great poets and novelists grinding as the Philistines kept Sampson—and how these slaves of the quill, instead of pulling the house about their ears, built up for these same publishers colossal fortunes, and left enduring fame for themselves and their country—how bubbles are blown and bubbles burst—all this is told in Scott's great Life better than in any work of our acquaintance. But we must leave Biography.

### POETRY.

Beware of that utilitarian judge, and that extravagantly practical judgment which condemns poetry because "it seldom says anything which could not have been better said in prose." Poetry is not, by its admirers, read for the information it conveys, though in that respect it demands no sacrifice. When poetry is regarded as veiled history, it would be easy to point to historic books in preference; if Poetry be considered as a species of romance, the actual Novel might be chosen for its own purposes. But poetry is the cream of literature. Into it rise the sublimest conceptions of genius, the most subtle and enduring forms of words—those that survive the ages, and help to strengthen the ages. It is reserved for epicures to sip and enjoy poetry. No gross mind is capable of either making poetry or entering into the spirit of it. All organizations which reach a degree of excellence and prosperity—all nations which gain ripeness and perfection, have their poets and poetry. Our own race—the trinity of stock which has handed down a generation inheriting the best constitution and gifts of England, Ireland and Scotland, has had its rare and numerous poets. You cannot honestly pretend to possess an intelligent acquaintance with the periods into which our history is divided unless you have held at least some intercourse with the poets of those periods. This, however, is the most sordid advantage to be gained. As a professional man you are in quest of forms of expression by which directly to reach the hearts and intellects of your readers. "Poetry," says Matthew Arnold, "is simply the most beautiful, impressive, and widely effective mode of saying things and hence its importance." As affording means of conveying your own best thoughts to others, Poetry deserves study. It is principally, however, as an intellectual and spiritual enjoyment that poetry may be read, for until one attains to that condition of mind which takes that condition of mind which takes a good poetry with a keener relish than a connoisseur would take rare old wine; and until it has some such exhilarating effect upon him, he is insensible to its advantages. You will readily see, therefore, that a taste for poetry is to a great extent the result of special culture.

Famous preachers and lecturers have been known to sit down for a half an hour to the perusal of some particular poetical author, before commencing a public discourse. The sympathy between the reader and his subject, and the exercise of what is known as the imitative faculty in man, combine to give the speaker thus some share in the style and spirit of an acknowledged genius. At such a time, when the theme is to be the Fall, or Redemption, or Angelic agency and administration, Milton's sublime imagery in the *Paradise Lost*, will, at least, stimulate the imagination and kindle enthusiasm. A lecturer who is treading upon the social problems of the time, will naturally problems of the time, will naturally turn to Mrs. Browning's *Aurora Leigh* or Tennyson's *Princess*. Tennyson's *In Memoriam*, which has suggestions of extraordinary delicacy and strokes of keenest reproof and sarcasm upon current doubts and misgivings, would well precede a deliverance of the unrest of the modern intellect. What more suggest-

ive of domestic peace and piety than Burns' *Cottars' Saturday Night*? On the Romance of History Walter Scott's *Lady of the Lake*, or *Marmion*, would wake a long train of suggestions.

This thought will occur to you while following the Poets;—their writings reflect the morals of the particular times and circles in which they lived. Chaucer, the father of English Poetry, writes of queens and kings in allegory, brave knights, beautiful ladies, tournaments, friar's tavern songs,—in short, his characters are a gorgeous, sensual, pleasure-seeking crew. Priors' poems are odes and epigrams, witty and well turned, but less chaste than Chaucer's. Goldsmith and Kirk White begin to emerge from the flippant, irreverent type. Our own Poets have passed the boundary of impiety and sensuality altogether. In fact, a Poet cannot now write for posterity who does not regard the laws of chastity and the refined tastes of the age. Thus, Poets are Historians; if all other literature were blotted out, they show the progress of our race. From Chaucer to Bryant or Longfellow is an upward moral graduation.

### GERMAIN ST. CHURCH. LAYING OF THE CORNER-STONE.

MR. EDITOR:—The following account of the ceremony and address connected with the laying of the corner stone of the Queen Square Methodist Church, as well as the description of the building itself, consists chiefly of clippings from St. John papers.

An important epoch in the history of the old Germain St. Methodist congregation took place on the afternoon of the 8th day of August, when the ceremony in connexion with laying the corner stone of the new edifice to be erected on Queen Square, occurred in the presence of a vast assemblage, that occupied a large platform on the site of the building, a part of Charlotte street and the northern portion of the square. The site was rendered very attractive by its neat appearance, and by the fine display of bunting—one string of flags extending from the site of the building across Charlotte street, another from the large pole on the platform to Queen's Square. The afternoon was delightfully fine—a finer day could not have been had. The space assigned for the clergymen and other gentlemen who were to participate in the event, was set apart by a line extending across the width of the platform.

After the preliminary work of getting the stone into position had been accomplished, the Rev. Mr. Chappell, the pastor of the congregation, announced that the services would be conducted by the President of the Conference of N. B. and P. E. I., the Rev. Joseph Hart, who immediately read from the Discipline of the Methodist Church as follows:—

*Dearly Beloved*.—We are taught in the Word of God that although the heaven of heavens cannot contain the Eternal One, much less the walls of temples made with hands, yet His delight is ever with the sons of men, and that wherever two or three are gathered together in His name, there is He in the midst of them. In all these His servants have separated certain places for His worship; Jacob erected a stone in Bethel for God's House; Moses made a tabernacle in the desert, and until it was some such exhilarating effect upon him, he is insensible to its advantages. You will readily see, therefore, that a taste for poetry is to a great extent the result of special culture.

Famous preachers and lecturers have been known to sit down for a half an hour to the perusal of some particular poetical author, before commencing a public discourse. The sympathy between the reader and his subject, and the exercise of what is known as the imitative faculty in man, combine to give the speaker thus some share in the style and spirit of an acknowledged genius. At such a time, when the theme is to be the Fall, or Redemption, or Angelic agency and administration, Milton's sublime imagery in the *Paradise Lost*, will, at least, stimulate the imagination and kindle enthusiasm. A lecturer who is treading upon the social problems of the time, will naturally turn to Mrs. Browning's *Aurora Leigh* or Tennyson's *Princess*. Tennyson's *In Memoriam*, which has suggestions of extraordinary delicacy and strokes of keenest reproof and sarcasm upon current doubts and misgivings, would well precede a deliverance of the unrest of the modern intellect. What more suggest-

The pastor of the Church then read the Parchment Scroll about to be deposited in

the corner stone. It contained the following account of the Church, its organization, &c.:

On the 24th day of September, 1791, the Rev. Abraham John Bishop arrived in the city of St. John; and on the Sabbath following preached from 1st John, 1, 3. At the close of the second Sabbath a Society was formed. The Class met at the residence of Mr. Kelly, corner of Charlotte and Princess streets, and in the absence of the minister Mrs. Kelly was its leader. By the 1st day of April, 1792, the Society had increased to eighty members and had purchased a church, just vacated by the Episcopalians, situated on Germain street between Duke and Queen streets.

The corner stone of Germain St. Church was laid during the ministry of the Rev. Joshua Marsden, and on Christmas day, 1808, the church, 60x42 feet, was opened by prayer meeting at 6 o'clock, a. m., and two services during the day. During the summer of 1809, George Taylor, school master and local preacher, organized the first Sabbath School in the city, in the church which the congregation had recently vacated. About 1828 the church was enlarged, and later a schoolroom about 28x40 feet was added. On the 20th day of June, 1877, the church was destroyed by the fire which laid two-thirds of the city in ashes. For a time the congregation availed themselves of the privilege of worshipping with the Free Will Baptist Church, and afterwards with the congregation of the Exmouth Street Methodist Church. In March, 1878, they leased for a year from May, 1878, Dr. King's Hall, corner of Germain and Church streets.

At a meeting of the congregation it was decided that a change of site was desirable, and the choice was left to the Trustees and Building Committee. They, by a unanimous vote, decided to purchase from E. L. Jewett, Esq., far the sum of \$11,000, his lot, angle Queen Square and Charlotte street.

The corner stone of the Queen Square Methodist Church was duly laid in accordance with the usages of the Methodist Church of Canada, by Mr. John B. Gaynor, on the 8th day of August, 1878, in the 42d year of the reign of Her Most Gracious Majesty Alexandra Victoria of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Queen, and of the Colonies and Dependencies thereof, Empress of India, Defender of the Faith.

The Right Hon. Sir Fredrick Temple, Earl of Dufferin, Viscount and Baron Clanaboyne in the County of Down in the Peerage of the United Kingdom, Governor-General of the Dominion of Canada. His Honour the Honourable Edward B. Chandler, Lieutenant-Governor of the Province of New Brunswick.

Officers of the General Conference of the Methodist Church of Canada—Rev. Egerton Ryerson, D. D., LL. D. President; Rev. Geo. Douglas, L. L. D., Vice-President, Rev. Duncan D. Currie, Secretary.

Officers of the Conference of N. B. and P. E. I.—Rev. Joseph Hart, President; Rev. Charles H. Paisley, A. M., Secretary; Rev. Humphrey P. Cowperthwaite, A. M., Journal Secretary.

Pastor of the Congregation of the Germain St. Methodist Church—Rev. Benj. Chappell, B. A.

Board of Trustees—William A. Robertson, Aaron Armstrong, Joseph Bullock, George F. Thompson, Mason Sheffield, M. D., Edward L. Whittaker, George E. King, Esq., Secretary; Thos. C. Humbert, Treasurer.

Building Committee—Joseph Bullock, Chairman; Thos. C. Humbert, George F. Thompson, Edwin Fisher, James Mason, Stephen G. Blizard, James R. Woodburn. Architect of Queen Square Church—Jno. Welch, Esq.

Contractors—Jas. Thompson, J. Purdy French and D. Wheeler.

Quarterly Board. Stewards—Thomas C. Humbert, Andrew Gilmour, Joseph Bullock, Mason Sheffield, M. D.; Harry G. Jordan, Recording Steward.

Representative Trustee, Aaron Armstrong.

Superintendent Sabbath School, James R. Woodburn.

Class Leaders, Henry Maxwell, Harmon Trueman, Michael Hennigar, David Collins, Capt. Joseph Prichard. Elected by the Society, John R. Marshal, Thomas Bustin, Joseph W. Potts, Edw. L. Whitaker, John Hargraves.

Leader of Church Choir—Samuel Humbert.

So far as now can be ascertained the successive ministers of the congregation were as follows; Rev. Abraham J. Bishop, Joshua Marsden, William Black, William Bennett, M. Knowlan, Stephen Bamford, William Crocombe, Robert Alder, James Priestly, Richard Williams, William Smithson, John B. Strong, Enoch Wood, brisay, Samson Busby, Enoch Wood, D. D., Richard Williams, William Temple, George Miller, Henry Daniel, Richard Knight, D. D., James G. Hennigar, Ed. Botterell, John McMurray, Matthew Stewart, D. D., Henry Pope, D. D., Howard Sprague, A. M., John A. Clark, A. M., Benjamin Chappell, A. B.

CONTENTS OF THE CORNER STONE. In the corner stone, which weighs three

tons, were placed the following articles: Scroll containing history of Germain St. Methodist Church, its officials, and the successive ministers since the formation of the Society;

Copy of the Scriptures;  
Wesley's Hymns;  
Discipline of the Methodist Church of Canada;  
Minutes of the Conference of N. B. & P. E. I., 1877;

*The Wesleyan*, 2nd Aug., 1878;  
*Daily Telegraph*, June 21, 1877;  
*Daily Telegraph*, June 23, 1877;  
*Daily Telegraph*, Aug. 8, 1878;  
*Daily News*, Aug. 8, 1878;  
*St. John Globe*, July 12, 1877;  
*St. John Globe*, June 10, 1878;  
*St. John Globe*, Aug. 7, 1878;  
*Daily Sun*, Aug. 8, 1878;  
*Morning Freeman*, Aug. 8, 1878;  
Barnes Almanac, 1878;

Photograph of Germain St. Methodist Church.

Album containing list of persons who have subscribed towards the building fund;

Sabbath School hymn book;  
Order of exercises;  
Current Canadian coins.

(Conclusion next week.)

### GEMS WORTH SETTING.

Life is a wonderful gift. It dwells in beasts to go out and never be let in again; but it dwells in man as a spark of God's own kindling, which is never to be distinguished, but to burn for ever and ever.

The most unhappy of all men is the man who cannot tell what he is going to do, that he has got no work cut out for him in the world, and does not go into any. For work is the grand cure of all the mankind—honest work which you intend getting done.—*Carlyle*.

No one sails far in life and meets with nothing unusual. Choice pieces of sandal and spice are drifted to us on currents we know nothing of; floated, it may be, to us, as to the early mariners, from out of the west, and the blessed isles where the more blessed live; divinely sent, that their sweet breath might revive our faintness, and keep our hope up.—*Golden Rule*.

To do men good is the great hope of life; to make them true Christians is the greatest good we can do them. Every investigation brings us round to this point. Begin here and you are like one who strikes water from a rock on the summits of the mountains; it flows down the intervening tracks to the very base. If we could make each man love his neighbor, we would make a happy world. The true method is to begin with ourselves, and so extend the circle around us. It should be perpetual in our minds.—*J. W. Alexander*.

Rowland Hill said of some of the speakers of his day, that they had a river of words with only a spoonful of thought. It is a great misfortune to have a fretful disposition. It takes the fragrance out of one's life, and leaves only the bads where a cheerful disposition ought to bloom. The habit of fretting is one that grows rapidly unless it is sternly repressed.

If a bee stings you, will you go to the hive and destroy it? Would not a thousand come upon you? If you receive a trifling injury, don't be anxious to avenge it; let it drop. It is wisdom to say little respecting the injuries you have received.

"So live, that when thy summons comes to join the innumerable caravan, which moves to that mysterious realm, where each shall take his chamber in the silent halls of death, Thou go not, like the quarry-slave at night, Scourged to his dungeon, but, sustained and soothed by an unfaltering trust, approach thy grave, Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams." —*W. Cullen Bryant*.

That which could break a proud man's heart will not break a humble man's sleep.—*Henry*.

If a word spoken in time is worth one piece of money, silence in its time is worth two.—*Talmud*.

A tree will not only lie as it falls, but it will fall as it leans. And the great question everyone should bring home to himself is this, "What is the inclination of my soul? Does it, with all its affections lean toward God, or away from him?" —*J. J. Gurney*.

Our justification does not depend upon the degree of our faith, but upon the reality of it.—*Davenant*.

If all men would bring their misfortunes together in one place, most would be glad to take a proportion out of the common stock.

By two wings a man is lifted up from things earthly, namely, by simplicity and purity. Simplicity ought to be in our intention; purity in our affections. Simplicity doth tend towards God; purity doth apprehend and test him.—*Thos. a Kempis*.