

poet's deepest heart, which harmonized itself into the form of national song; and as it passed through his soul came forth ennobled and glorified by his own genius.

Intensity of His Nature.

That which fitted him to do this was the peculiar intensity of his nature, the fervid heart, the trembling sensibility, the headlong passion, all thrilling through an intellect strong and keen beyond that of other men. The first verse which Burns composed was a song in praise of his partner on the harvesting; the last utterance he breathed in verse was a song—a faint remembrance of some former affection. One of the main characteristics of his songs is, that their substance as well as their subjects deal with what is most permanent in humanity; those primary affections, those permanent relations of life which cannot change while man's nature remains what it is. In this the songs of Burns are wholly unlike those songs which seize upon and deal only with the changing aspects of society; as the phases of social life change, these songs are forgotten, but no time can superannuate the subjects on which Burns has sung. He gives us the first spontaneous gush—the first throb of his strong, simple, manly heart. When at his best you seem to hear the whole song warbling through his soul as naturally as a bird's. The whole subject is saturated with the element of music until it is penetrated and transfigured by it. No other Scottish poet has so much of the native lift as Burns. When his mind was at the white heat stage, it is wonderful how quickly he struck off some of the most perfect of his songs. And yet he could, when required, go back, and retouch them line by line, as he did in "Ye Banks and Braes o' Bonnie Doon." In the best of his songs the outward form is as perfect, as the inward music is all pervading and the two are in complete harmony.

The Human Emotions.

In not a few of his songs he has given ultimate and consummate expression to the highest and deepest fundamental human emotions. To show this four songs may be mentioned, in each of which a different phase of love has been rendered for all time: "Of a' the airts the wind can blaw," "Ye flowery Banks o' Bonnie Doon," "Gae bring me a pint o' wine," and the other in which the calm depth of long wedded and happy love utters itself, so blithely, yet pathetically, "John Anderson, My Jo, John." Then for comic humor of courtship there is "Duncan Gray cam' here tae woo." For friendship rooted in the past there is—"Should Auld Acquaintance Be Forgot?" For patriotic heroism "Scots wha hae wi' Wallace bled." And for personal independence, and sturdy, if self-asserting, manhood, "A man's a man for a' that."

In graphic description what words could be put together, or language found better to depict the type of a class then prevalent, "A blitherin', blusterin', drucken biellum"? And what could better represent patient endurance, wise reflection and excusable indignation of the wife of such a character, than the relations of Tam and his "Ain Wife Kate"? Or what could be more beautifully descriptive of the evanescent nature of sensual pleasure than the lines beginning, "You seize the flower, its bloom is shed"? Or what literary production presents such keen irony and subtle humor as is embodied in that unique talk of "Tam o' Shanter"? Then as a picture of the rural cottager's life of his day, what could eclipse his "Cotter's Saturday Night"? Where can we find such a portrayal of the true Scottish character, setting forth earnest loyalty to home and family; to religion and duty—or such a picture of parental and filial affection, mingled with a due proportion of command-

able family pride among the poor and lowly? The beauty of Burns' pictures of character lies in their exact correctness; no strain, no exaggeration. Every Scotman is well acquainted with the "Tam o' Shanter" type; and the cotter's humble but upright family is to be found on almost every farm; while Andrew, the young man, ardent but afraid to start; anxious to learn the right way to success in the battle of life before him, is found in many Scotch households. So purified and ennobled by Burns, these songs embody human emotions in their most condensed form and sweetest essence. They appeal to all ranks, they touch all ages, they cheer toil-worn men under every clime. Wherever the English tongue is heard, beneath the suns of India, amid African deserts, on the western prairies of America, among the squatters of Australia; wherever men of British blood would give vent to their deepest, kindest, and most genial feelings, it is to the songs of Burns they spontaneously turn, and find in them at once a perfect utterance and a fresh tie of brotherhood. It is this which forms Burns' most enduring claim on the world's gratitude. —J. W. Drape, in United Presbyterian.

OTTAWA.

The twenty-third annual meeting of the Ottawa Presbyterian W.F.M.S. was held in St. Paul's church, Ottawa. The meetings were well attended, and full of interest. The officers elected for the coming year are: Mrs. J. Alexander, president; Mrs. J. R. Hill, Mrs. J. H. Turnbull, vice-presidents; with the presidents of auxiliaries ex-officio vice-presidents; Mrs. George Hay, recording secretary; Miss Isabella Durie, assistant secretary; Miss E. H. Gibson, treasurer; Miss A. H. Gaggie, secretary of mission bands; Miss Mary Masson, secretary of supplies; and Mrs. C. H. Thorburn, assistant; Miss F. Evans, secretary of literature; Mrs. Urquhart, of Merivale, secretary of Tidings.

A change was proposed in the handling of our missionary work and the matter was discussed to see if such a change would be met with approbation. Boards of management in each province were to be formed, and instead of one large governing body there should be several, namely, one in each province. This especially would be a great help in the Northwest, where the presbyteries were so very far apart.

The meeting was in favor of the proposed reorganization and in favor of each province having equal representation on the Dominion board. Miss K. Campbell, of Neenuch, Central India, was present and spoke at both afternoon sessions. On Tuesday she spoke to the members of the mission bands, of whom, a large number were present, and on Wednesday afternoon she spoke on the revival in India and the work being done in the training schools of which she has charge.

The members of Presbytery with the delegates and other members of the Presbyterian society were entertained in the church parlors by the ladies of St. Paul's, where a very pleasant social hour was enjoyed by all.

The large public meeting held Tuesday evening was addressed by Rev. Dr. R. P. MacKay, foreign mission secretary of Toronto, who has recently completed a tour of all foreign mission stations. Dr. MacKay dwelt largely with the wonderful progress of missions in Korea. Rev. P. W. Anderson, the moderator of the Presbytery, presided and the greetings of that body were extended by Rev. C. W. Nicol, of Erskine Church. Mr. J. A. Machado spoke on behalf of the Laymen's Missionary Movement.

Next year's annual meeting will be held in McKay Presbyterian Church, an invitation having been received and accepted by the presbytery.

Great Britain owns at present more than one-half of the world's ocean shipping.

THE BIBLE AND THE CHILDREN.

By Rev. R. G. MacBeth, M.A.

We have found in the Bible the highest standard of life and character and the truest model for us to follow in our contact with daily affairs. In every department of human activity its ideals are supreme and from its pages we may safely take all our rules of conduct. Questions of right and wrong must in the ultimate be settled by appeal to its decisions while its insatiable demands for right-living go crashing like chain shot through the self-indulgent codes of common men.

Magistrates and ministers have been speaking to us recently about the perils that beset the lives of children in our own city. They are walking on a bridge whose hidden trap-doors honey-comb the roadway—or they are going through defiles, along whose steep sides wild beasts lie in wait to spring out upon them. The cry of a child in distress will stir even a coward to run to the rescue, but the sobs of the mother over a child in the way of danger shake Heaven itself till an avenging answer comes from the Lord God of Sabaoth.

For we cannot read the Bible without seeing how large a place the child holds in the mind and heart of God. He never left the children out of any covenant into which He entered with men. His promises always embraced the children and emphasis was laid upon the tremendous responsibility of parents for the physical, mental and moral well-being of the coming generation. When Christ came to reveal the fulness of God, He came as a little child honoring motherhood and childhood in the greatest event of human history. There must have been special charm about His splendid boyhood, and where the curtain lifts once we see that noble example of obedience as the Child went down to Nazareth with His parents and was subject unto them. Every disobedient child and every over-indulgent parent must stand forever ashamed in the beautiful light of the carpenter's home.

When Christ went out in His public ministry He made much of the children. He set a child in the midst of enquiring people and said that the child-life of purity and innocence and faith was the norm of the Kingdom of Heaven. He uttered a terrific malediction against any one who causes children to stumble, and said it would have been better for that one to have had a mill-stone around his neck and be drowned in the midst of the sea. That anathema stands today against every one who lures to ruin those who ought to be turning their feet early towards the Kingdom. Verily, it were better for such people if they had never been born.

Near the close of Christ's life some scenes of surpassing and pathetic interest come athwart the stage upon which Roman militarism and Jewish hate were playing their part. Children strew flowers before the gentle King and He, to the chagrin of the rejectors refuses to check the discordant notes of the children's hallelujahs. The children were singing from the heart, and we have Christ's word for it, that heart-music is the only perfect praise of God. And on that post-resurrection morning when Christ would send the rock-like apostle out on a great crusade He gave him, as an evidence of complete restoration, the supreme commission, "Feed my lambs." It is because of these things that to this day we shrink with an indescribable distrust from those who dislike children, while our hearts go out to those whose caressing love takes hold upon child-life with a warmth which colder natures cannot understand.

That answered prayer has been a factor in all that has been done that is worthy of mention and a source of blessing to the Church is a fact that will grow upon any devout inquirer who will look into it.