

THE ECCLESIASTICAL AND MISSIONARY RECORD.

For the Presbyterian Church of Canada.

"Wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of thy times, and the strength of salvation."

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NOTICES.

HOME MISSION COMMITTEE.

The Synod's Home Mission Committee will meet (D. V.) in Knox's Church, Hamilton, on the second Wednesday of October, at 6 o'clock, p.m., for the distribution of Missionaries for the winter half year, and other business.

Presbytery Clerks are requested to send Statistical statements of distribution, and applications for Missionaries, to the Conveener, at the least a week previous to the meeting.

Applications from Congregations for Missionary services must be made through their respective Presbyteries. Missionaries will be distributed among the Presbyteries, to be by them appointed to the Stations within their bounds.

WALTER ROSS, Conveener.

Hamilton, Aug. 19, 1848.

PRESBYTERY OF TORONTO.—The next ordinary meeting of this Presbytery will be held in the Divinity Hall of Knox's College, Toronto, on Wednesday, the 6th of September next, at 12 o'clock.

P. GRAY, Presbytery Clerk.

Norval, Aug. 17, 1848.

KNOX'S COLLEGE, Toronto, will be opened at the usual time. More particular notice will be given in our next number, as well as in some of the newspapers.

THE PREPARATION AND THE MINISTRY OF THE SERVANTS OF GOD.

A SERMON, IN BEHALF OF KNOX'S COLLEGE, TORONTO, PREACHED IN THE SCOTCH CHURCH, ST. GABRIEL STREET, MONTREAL, BY WILLIAM LEISHMAN.—Acts xii, verse xxii: "*Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds.*"

Whenever God has a great work to do, he never fails in raising up the proper agency by which the work may be done. Does he need a prophet who can speak to kings? then he trains him up in the courts of princes; or does he look out for a deliverer to emancipate degraded slaves from bondage, and make them a nation of noble freemen? then he chooses the child of the slave for the saviour of the oppressed. It was thus that Moses was made a fit champion to cope with the enemies of Israel and the enemies of Israel's God, and was learned in all the wisdom of Egypt, and was mighty in words and in deeds. The sufferings and the subsequent renown of Joseph, paved the way

for the introduction of the Israelites into Egypt; and the people multiplied and prospered to such an extent, that the very monarchs became jealous of the emigrant sojourners within their borders. It was not enough to make them slaves; their slavery had still further to be aggravated by the most relentless and unpracticable exactions. All this, on the part of their task-masters, was intended to keep them down, and not only to increase their grievous burthens, but to thin their numbers, and wear them of their lives. But still they were used, and the monstrous purpose of their inhuman masters was rendered still more painfully evident to the persecuted race, by the barbarous decree, that every man child, as soon as he was born, should be slain. But the blood of the sons of the Hebrew captives was not to be upon Pharaoh's soul, and all the barbaric commands of the Egyptian monarch were only turned into channels for increasing the greatness of Israel, and hastening and rendering sure the ruin of Egypt. Pharaoh purposed to destroy, but God determined to deliver; Pharaoh wanted slaves, but God spoke to freemen; Pharaoh wished to butcher children, and God sent an innocent babe, saved from the bloody knife, within the tyrant's very palace halls, to be taught the accomplishments of a prince, and to stand before the king as the champion of the people of God; and thus, the mightiest and the meekest of all who wore the Hebrew lineaments and gloried in the Hebrew name, was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds. We know not whether the character of the captive Hebrews resembled that of the broken and fallen and scattered race, whom we find in every nation on the face of the earth, in the wandering and exile modern Jews. Look now at that unbelieving race, once so glorious in their patriarchal history—in their bondage, and in their freedom—in their prophet messengers, and in their temple psalmody—in their Jerusalem poetry, and in their Messiah hopes; but now so forsaken and so desolate, without prophet, or country, or temple, or Saviour; look at them, and mourn and weep, because the gold has become dross, and the most fine gold been changed; and while the world points its finger of scorn at their ignoble and miserable pursuits of hockery, and money changing, and money lending, think not on their present degradation, but think on their former renown, and think on him who was a prophet, like the Son of God, and carried a loftier than a kingly look in the noble features of a noble Jew, and was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds. From the character of Moses, as it was formed under the special providence of God; from the great work for which Moses was thus prepared; and from the merciful ends for which Moses was made the instrument, we learn many valuable lessons in regard to God's care over his church, in all the circumstances of men, and in every age of the world. God's servants need to be prepared for God's purposes; the preparation is often such that man cannot bring it about; and the necessities which they are called upon to supply are such that the wisdom of man cannot meet.

In discoursing, therefore, on our text, we shall not confine ourselves specially to the character and the achievements of Moses, but shall take a more general view of the application of our subject to the circumstances of the church of Christ, in all ages and localities, and more particularly in the time and the country in which our lot is cast. In the first place, then, we shall speak of the preparatory instruction of God's servants; in the second

place of the service which God's purposes require; and in the third place of the necessities which God's grace supplies.

I. In the first place we are to speak of the preparatory instruction of God's servants. Moses was called the servant of God; and, in like manner, all the ministers of the gospel are still the servants of the same glorious Master. Moses declined to be the servant, yea, he would not be called a son in Pharaoh's house; and so the ministers of Christ are not to be the servants of the world, nor the children of the evil one. Moses required to be prepared for his sacred work, and so the ministers of the gospel need also to be prepared for their high and holy vocation. And how was Moses prepared? Was he trained among the common bondsmen whom God raised him up to deliver? No. It is true he was taken from among them, was born by a Hebrew mother, and had the strongest sympathy for all the sufferers of the Hebrew slaves. God could have educated him for his purposes in any way he pleased. He made the fishermen of Galilee, Apostles and martyrs; and though the life of Moses had been made as bitter as the lives of his brethren, with hard bondage in mortar, and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field, still God could have made of the sun-burnt and uncounted labourer, with coarse hands and still coarser skin, a spokesman and a leader who could have made the proudest monarch tremble that ever sat on Egypt's throne. But it was not the unpolished slave, but the accomplished man who was sent to speak to Pharaoh. And before he was sent, he was thoroughly prepared; prepared not by the toil of the captive's drudgery, but by the very learning of the captive's enemies, and the courtier knowledge of the palace of the king, whose oppression he condemned, and whose vengeance he braved. Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds. Nor does the minister of the gospel require a less strenuous, or a less accomplished preparation. It may not be necessary to clothe the humble servants of Christ in the attire of princes, nor to bring them up in the soft refinements of a luxurious palace; but they ought to know, and to be thoroughly equipt, for meeting the sophistries of an ungodly world, and all the enemies of the cross of Christ, and then they will stand before the unbelievers as dauntless messengers for the Saviour, as Moses stood in the presence of Egypt's king. Inability and unbelief are not always feeble and unskilful in their opposition to the gospel; and an unlettered ministry might present but a poor championship, in behalf of the most glorious of all causes, in striving with sinners to lay down the weapons of their rebellion. Pharaoh was not easily defied, and the cunning of the carnal heart will not timidly allow itself to be slain. And if, before Moses went in to master Egypt's king, he first gathered all the learning and all the wisdom of the Egyptians, so also before the servant of Christ attacks Satan's throne in the human heart, he will do well to furnish himself with all aids of human learning and human wisdom to which he is able to attain. Human learning, however, was not all the preparation which Moses required. It was not the learning and the wisdom of the Egyptians, which enabled him to bring so many plagues upon the enemies of Israel; nor yet the learning and the wisdom of the Egyptians which made the sea become dry land for the footsteps of Israel, and a grave of waters for the armies of Egypt. The spirit of God was there, and without that spirit, all the learning and all the wisdom of the Egyptians would never have made Moscaeo