

## Our Contributors.

### THE MYSTERY OF SELF CONTROL.

BY KNOXIAN.

As we write the great criminal trial at Woodstock is coming to a close. What the verdict may be no human being at this moment can tell. Perhaps the jury may disagree. If one of the twelve should happen to be a non believer in circumstantial evidence all he needs to do is to hold out resolutely against the eleven and the long trial must go for nothing. Scores of intelligent men would hesitate to send a human being to the gallows on circumstantial evidence no matter how strong the chain. The old saw—men may lie but circumstances never do—is as worthless as many other old saws are. It is quite true that some men not only may but do lie infamously, but it is equally true that circumstances may be entirely misleading. Circumstances have misled hundreds of men quite as intelligent as the average juror. Circumstantial evidence has probably sent more innocent men to the gallows than perjury.

The relative value, however, of oral and circumstantial evidence is not the matter we want to discuss. This famous trial suggests another question quite as difficult as the guilt or innocence of the accused. Put in a condensed form that question is

#### HOW DOES HE STAND IT?

We write on the eighth day of the trial. According to the reporters during these eight days the accused has been as free from anything bordering on nervousness as any man in the court-room. After seven months of confinement in jail he is brought out and in presence of a crowded court-room is put on trial for his life before a judge and jury, and to all human appearance is less anxious than the judge who presides over the trial. Many in the audience display feeling, some of the witnesses are nervous, even the lawyers give occasional hints that they are human, but the man in the dock, if the reports are correct, seldom displays anything more than a languid interest in the proceedings. He knows that his life is at stake, but he is quite cool. Being an intelligent man he must also know that the crown has fastened a frightful chain of circumstances around him, and with the exception of one or two links the chain did not interest him enough to make him change colour.

How can the self-control of the man be explained? It will not do to say: "Oh, the accused is an Englishman of fine physique. These old country people have no nerves. It is a physical question purely." The facts are against any such theory. The leader of the men charged with the Biddulph tragedy was a giant compared with the Woodstock prisoner; but he broke down physically and had to be nursed as an invalid during the greater part of the last trial. This man in Woodstock steps as lightly up and down stairs as if he were going into a ball-room. He bows and smiles to the crowd as pleasantly as a candidate for parliamentary honours. Perhaps there may be a change before the trial is over or when it is closing but that will not alter the fact that for over a week the unfortunate man has gone smilingly through an ordeal that would have crushed many people or perhaps made them insane.

We have heard various theories given to explain what seems to us almost a miracle of self-control. One explanation is that the man has no moral nature. There is nothing to show that this theory is correct. Of course the man is not exactly the raw material out of which apostles and foreign missionaries are made, but those who have the best facilities for judging have no such low opinion of him as that he is destitute of a moral nature. And supposing he has no moral nature the next few hours may show that the dangers ahead are not all of a moral kind. He certainly has a physical nature and the punishment sure to follow a verdict of guilty is one that might well make a man tremble even if his moral faculties were not highly developed.

Some hold that the accused is a callous criminal. There is nothing to show that the man was ever charged with a crime in his life until charged with the one for which he is being tried. The crown has not even hinted at previous misdeeds. It is quite true that he drew on his imagination about his Niagara farm and his alleged horse business but if every man who lies about real estate and horses is a criminal several new penitentiaries should be erected at once.

Was the good Woodstock lady right who said that the man was innocent and was sustained by supernatural power? What ever this theory may reveal about that excellent woman's ability to deal with evidence it shows beyond all manner of doubt that she has a good heart. Had she not been a good woman she never would have thought of that explanation.

Is the accused sustained by a consciousness of his innocence? One of the points sought to be made against Madeline Smith was that her cool confident manner in the dock showed her to be a woman capable of committing a crime. Her eloquent counsel knocked the bottom clean out of that theory by giving an illustration of a frail young woman who went on the scaffold "serene as an angel" and whose innocence was afterwards established beyond all doubt. Coolness in a criminal on trial may be worked on both sides and the great Scotch advocate certainly made the most of it for his fair client.

We have often heard preachers say in sermons that great troubles are easier endured than small ones, but they always followed it up by giving a reason. In great troubles good peo-

ple always go to a higher power for help and the help brings them through. Lesser ills they too often try to bear with their own strength and the result is that few bear the lesser ills patiently and fewer still heroically. It requires a good deal of charity to think that this Woodstock man bears his great trial bravely for the same reason that the best of Christians often go through the furnace with wonderful self-control.

Well, then, how do you explain this man's demeanour? We all know how easily moved most people are. Some of us remember the examination hall and the feelings with which we took up the list of questions and the pen. Some of us remember our first speech. Many a man has shown a thousand times more feeling in getting up and saying "Mr. Chairman" than this Woodstock man has shown during the week he has been on trial for his life. Thousands of men have been more frightened in getting married than he was when Mr. Osler was weaving the awful coil around him. We don't wish to anticipate the verdict but if the awful sentence is pronounced the accused may show more self-control under that terrible ordeal than many a man shows in preaching his first sermon or making his first speech.

An important lesson might be learned from this great trial. If this man can keep cool in his terrible ordeal there is not much excuse for respectable men getting into a passion in Parliament, or in the Presbyteries, or Conference, or General Assemblies, or other places where men congregate and deliberate.

### THE BI-CENTENARY OF "THE GLORIOUS RETURN" OF THE WALDENSES IN 1689.

#### VI.

#### IV—THE FESTIVAL AT SIBAUOD.—(Continued.)

Sig. Pons, of Naples, spoke to the following effect in Italian of the work of Evangelization: "When one reads the history of the Waldenses he might think that we should cherish malice towards the descendants of our persecutors. Thank God we do not. We have inherited from our fathers a debt which we have to pay a people of thirty millions. We have to tell them of the love of the Father, of the sacrifice of the Son, and of the gift of the Holy Spirit who renews hearts. That is our privilege and our highest honour. No other Italian province has a higher. Beckwith wrote in 1844: 'You will be missionaries or you will be nothing.' God gave us Gilly and Beckwith\* to prepare our Church for His work, and from 1850 Turin was occupied, then Genoa, Florence and Milan. In 1861 Appia came to Palermo and Naples. In 1866 Venice was evangelized, and with the Italian arms a Waldensian pastor came in 1870 into the capital. The work is spreading to day over the whole peninsula. Our enemies are many. They are superstition, ignorance, calumny and infidelity with its sneers. But we trust in the Lord of Hosts. In 1850 we had only one workman. To-day we have 132. Since 1868 7,600 persons have been received into our churches, and we have at present a membership of 4,226. Public opinion is in our favour; the press speaks kindly of us, and the authorities protect our liberties. Cairoli lately said to me feelingly, when he was on his deathbed: 'Ah these noble Waldenses! they are everywhere and always the first.' The director of the Mediterranean Co., whom I thanked for reduced rates, answered: 'It is the very least that we can do for those who deserve so much from Italy.' If the results of our work are yet very small, it is the fault of us workmen, who have not struggled with the same steadfastness as our fathers, and of you, Waldensian brethren, who have not prayed with sufficient faith for those employed by you. The Queen said once in a time of danger: 'Ever onward, Savoy!' I will say: 'Ever onward, Waldenses!' God grant that at the next centenary, from the top of the Capitol and from the top of the Vatican shall, echoing, ring the cry: 'Christ is King of Italy!'"

The choir sang: "Hail, O Mountains of Israel!"

Pastor G. Appia, of Paris, next spoke: "How shall we be faithful to the promise which we have made? How shall we fulfil our mission as individuals, as families, as a people? A little Neapolitan girl when dying refused the services of a confessor. She said: 'Jesus is enough.' Yes, by having Christ in us and being for Christ we shall do the work of God. That is enough in the labour of life, and in death, and it leads to glory. Our fathers wore an orange leaf in their hats because William III supported them. Our emblem is a candlestick. But as the Eiffel Tower gives light only as it is connected with electricity, we shall shed abroad light only by being connected with the source of light. Scripture says of Christ: 'He shall see of the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied.' Mazzarella said to me one day on this point: 'Do you believe that little is needed to satisfy the soul of Christ? It needs millions to do so.' Satisfy the soul of Christ by working for Him, and also by suffering with Him, and for Him. The whole earth must be filled with the knowledge of the Lord. Let us do like the Moravian Brethren. Let us go forward. 'On, on,' were the last words of the evangelist, Rostagno. Let them be ours!"

\* Dr. Gilly was a minister of the Church of England. Beckwith, a member of that Church, was a general in the British army. At the Battle of Waterloo he lost a leg. He was with his regiment in Montreal. A township near Ottawa is named after him. After he left the service he made his home at Torre Pellice in the Waldensian Valleys. He married a Poudoise. She and her daughter, their only child, are still living. I had some conversation with them when I was at Torre Pellice. I saw, but only from a distance, the general's grave, which is there. A full-length, life-size portrait of him, and a half-length, life-size one of Dr. Gilly adorn the walls of the Waldensian College at Torre Pellice.

The choir sang: "O my country, where the voice of our fathers!"

Several foreign delegates next spoke.

Pastor Louitz, of Bordeaux, in name of the Synodical Reformed Churches of France, returned thanks for the invitation addressed to them. "Both churches have suffered and have had the baptism of blood. Let us take care that liberty does not make us lax, and that we do not cease to be like our forefathers in faith and life."

Pastor Balavoine, Moderator of the Company of pastors of Geneva, said: "Our friends of the Valleys left us somewhat abruptly 200 years ago. Our fathers wished to keep them, but could not. God meant to re-establish here a more precious fountain than that of the Po, a spiritual fountain which would fertilize Italy. Be fountains of blessings."

M. Senft, of the Moravian Church, quoted three passages of Scripture which seemed to him to apply especially to the past, the present and the future of our Christ: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" "I determined not to know anything save Christ and Him crucified." "Be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord."

The Rev. Mr. Cunningham, of Edinburgh, said that he needed their language to give full expression to the abundance of his heart. You have most kindly opened your doors to us. We have been moved by the expression of your feelings and by your vows to the Lord. We share your joy. But there is something more beautiful than memorials. It is the future.\* May God enable you to accomplish the glorious return of the Word of God into the country of Mazzini, of Garibaldi, of Victor Emanuel and of Cavour!

Pastor Segers, of Holland: "Our ancestors also took an oath. They were called *Gueux*† They promised to be faithful even to the wallet.‡ I take part in your vow. May God give you grace that wherever there is a Waldensian there shall be a friend of God, of His country and of liberty!"

Dr. Vahl, of Faelstor, Denmark: "Our Church is young in the family of the friends of the Waldensian Church, but we pray that God may make your Church more and more a true light."

Pastor Rochedien, of Brussels, brought the salutations of the Belgic Churches. "I belong to the Church of the old Gueux, but I am a descendant of the Huguenots. Waldenses, Gueux, Huguenots, all have suffered for their faith. They have died for it. You desire to be faithful to God, to the religion—the Gospel, to your country. May God give strength all, pastors and people, old and young. You can do nothing without Christ, but you shall be able to do all by Christ."

The chairman then proposed a cheer for the King. The meeting gave three, then sang, "Glory to the Holy Ghost," after which M. P. Long closed with prayer, followed by the blessing.

After the services of the day there was a dinner at Bobi in the meadows, under the great walnut trees, where rustic tables were set for a few hundreds of guests. It was a season of most hearty fellowship. Several toasts were given. That to the venerable Dr. Godet was received with special honour by all present. Three members of Parliament, Gen. Geymet, Commissaire Peyrot and Sig. Faldella, besides delegates and foreign and Italian pastors, gave addresses.

In the evening those present went home wearied, but happy after such a delightful day.

NOTE.—We staid, "douce" Canadian Presbyterians are apt to at least not "go in with" hurrahing for the king, and having a dinner at which toasts are given and replied to, all on the Sabbath. Well, each country has its own customs. We must not be "too hard" on our Waldensian brethren of 1889. They will not do so again; that is, at the next centenary. When I was in Vichy, France, I attended the French Protestant service. The minister I believe to be a true Christian. As we were afterwards returning together to our hotels we had to go through a park where were several women selling nosegays. On the way my companion stopped and bought one to give his landlady, for she was very kind to him, he said. Fancy, say one of our Toronto Presbyterian ministers buying a "posy" in the street on a Sabbath!

Elder's Mills, Ont.

### LETTERS FROM FORMOSA.

#### LETTER FROM DR. MACKAY.

The Rev. Dr. Wardrop, Convener of the Foreign Mission Committee, has kindly forwarded the following correspondence for publication:—

Mrs. Mackay, our three children and one student went with me inland for exactly two weeks this day. We selected a number of stations, viz., Kelung, Tsin-tng-Kha, Sek-Khan, Ba-Kah, Toa tin-tia, Chin-nih and Go-Ko-Khi, all of which are stone churches. To these we directed our energies by ways and means which cannot easily be put on paper or impressed clearly on Christians in Canada. One thing is certain: that man is woefully mistaken who has the idea that it is only necessary for a missionary to enter a chapel, stand on the platform and go through a form of reading,

\* There is a very neat alliteration here in the work from which I get my materials for these papers—"plus beau que les souvenirs, c'est l'avenir." It cannot be given in English.

† A French word meaning beggars.

‡ That is, even till compelled to wear the beggar's wallet. The story of the origin of the above name and saying is very interesting. It is, however, too long to be told here. I shall tell it at the close of these papers.