

of use has diminished its sweetness. The preacher reads every word, and, greatest of gifts in the neighbouring Republic, his sermons are comparatively short. His reading is very effective and brings him many advantages, yet we strongly question in the case of a natural speaker like Dr. Thomas, whether he does not lose more than he gains by such use of his manuscript. We never yet heard the famous Dr. Dale, of Birmingham, preach without putting to ourselves the same question. Both are born rhetoricians—their specialty is to move multitudes by popular address, and high as is their place among the teachers of the day, we wish we felt more certain they had not “left the line.”

Turning to the style of our preacher, we at once pronounce it worthy of high praise. In every department of this, Dr. Thomas never forgets the controlling purpose of his work. His words are those in common use, Saxon and strong. Every sentence falling on the ear as light upon the eye, and all so massive in their compactness that the completed thought comes upon you like a Naysmith manner. In reading his printed sermons we felt what never struck us while under the charm of the voice, a lack of ornament in the style. That this, if we are correct, springs from no deficiency of imaginative or creative power we know; it is rather the product of a taste too severe and a natural shrinking from seeming display. In the valhalla of great speakers none lie, who failed to incarnate the essential thought in frame-work of richness and beauty. The lover of nature can enjoy the clear, crisp sky of a frosty day, but he does more than enjoy when the heavens sparkle with stars and the queen-like moon shines in golden splendour.

In these days of old and new theologies, the critic dealing with the religious teacher is expected to assign him a place in some distinct school. If we might venture such a task, we should—though hesitatingly—place him in the more conservative section of the broad school of the Anglican Church. Very likely he would decline to call any one of the teachers in that recognized ecclesiastical division master. But if he did, we fancy the one to whom discipleship would be most fully owned would be the late Frederick Denison Maurice. On distinct doctrines they widely differ, but the drift of their views is alike.

Dared we leave the church and invade the home, we have much to tell, and little we may write without sinning against the sacredness of private life. Through the growing facilities of travel, every year sees an increasing number of English visitors to these shores. Among such are a fair proportion of Congregational ministers, and few among them fail to find their way to the hospitable home in the lovely Boston suburb where the good Doctor resides. Especially is that true of those who come with the hope of finding a settle-

ment in the States. To them he gives time and influence without stint, and there are numerous happy pastoral positions in America to-day which never would have been obtained without the brotherly help of the man of whom we write. So well is all this known in England that among the old brotherhood, the fame of his too generous friendships somewhat eclipses his reputation as a great preacher. If this so suffers, then as in Byron's fine image of the dying eagle, “he nursed the pinion that impelled the steel.” Yet to be loved is more than to be admired and if we mistake not, would be the sweeter to the Doctor if choice had to be made. Fortunately here they are not alternatives, for it is Dr. Thomas' happy position to hold many hearts by the magnetism of his kindly nature, and to possess the suffrages of competent judges as to his high capabilities and rare excellencies as a preacher of the Gospel.

NOTES ON A LATE ISSUE OF “THE CANADIAN INDEPENDENT.”

THE engraving of Dr. Barbour does not do the new Principal justice. Wood-cuts are not the best of pictures. The engraving of Dr. Barbour gives the outline and general contour of the countenance, but there is a dark, stern, judicial severity about his expression which is the very opposite of the calm, childlike and loving look which charms and wins all beholders.

AN editorial jotting about the unworkableness of Congregationalism suggests the enquiry, Have we any church discipline nowadays? A member is in the minority, forgets that there is such a Scripture as “submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God,” and departs to another fellowship; or, there has been inconsistency in some respect or other. Pastor and fellow-members venture on remonstrance and reproof. Offence is taken, and away goes the wrong-doer. Such is the eagerness for numbers which begotten of sectarianism, that the new-comer is received with open arms, there is no enquiry as to the circumstances leading to the denominational transition, no letter of dismissal and recommendation is called for; but the accession to the ranks is rejoiced over with great joy. This is for a lamentation, and does much to lower the tone of spirituality and the standard of piety in all the churches.

SPURGEON, with all his many excellencies and great usefulness, has evidently got the disease known as “big-head.” He should carefully study and preach to himself a searching sermon from the text, “My brethren, be not many masters, lest ye receive the greater condemnation.”

THE reference to Dr. Munhall's meetings provokes the question, What minister of ordinary gifts would