

an hysterical effort at an oratorical flourish. Let me quote a letter written a quarter of a century ago by the beloved of his church, the large-hearted and liberal-minded preacher of the Barony Church, Glasgow, Dr. Norman Macleod, in answer to the intemperate criticism of a Scotch professor: "I am not in the habit of taking notice of all the hard speeches which have been uttered against me by violent and unscrupulous abstainers. There are, I rejoice to know, among teetotallers very many persons whom I highly respect for their own and for their work's sake, and many intimate and dear friends with all of whom I am glad to co-operate in my own way, according to my given light and conscientious convictions. But I protest that there is also among them a rabble of intemperate men, revelling in the pride of power which enables them as members of a great league, and under cover of an exclusive profession of self sacrifice for the public weal, to bully the timid, and to exercise all the tyranny possible in a free country over every man, especially a Christian minister, who presumes to dissent from their views of duty, and to resist their demands, or who dares to defy their threats and despise their insinuations. Such men I never notice. But it is otherwise when a learned and Christian gentleman like you attacks me. Yes, I think your remarks were unfair, uncalled for and calculated, as far as your influence and words extend, to injure my character and weaken my hands in labouring among the working classes whose well-being is dearer to me than life. I must ask you to prove your assertions, and to justify your remarks on me and my writings more fully than you have done in your speech, and upon other principles than those of the league. I do not ask you to explain or defend those 'principles' of total abstinence, to show their harmony with Scripture, or their expediency as rules of action in the present state of society. All this I am willing for argument's sake to take for granted. But what I demand in justice from your hands is to prove that the principles, the argument, the spirit, or anything else, in my tract is inconsistent with any other things in the Word of God, which I recognize as 'the only rule of faith and morals.' Nay, you are bound in order to justify yourself to prove my teaching to be so inconsistent as to have warranted me in exposing it as you have done, and in holding me up as a foe of temperance, and my tract as calculated to confirm drunkards in their vicious habits; nay, to ruin souls temporally and eternally. Pray keep to this simple theme. Put my tract and Scripture side by side, and in clear language and with truthful criticism, point out the contradictions between Bible and tract, in word, principle or spirit. Wherein do they differ? Wherein am I not of Paul, or of Cephas, or of Christ? Is it in my exposition and denunciation of the crime of drunkenness? Is it in my urgent recommendation to all drunkards to adopt total abstinence as essential to their case? Is it my toleration of the temperate use of drinks by Christian men, which in excess would intoxicate? Is it in admitting that in certain cases total abstinence should be adopted by sober men? Do point out, I beg of you, anything I have written which Paul or our Great Master would condemn, and which warranted you holding me up as a foe to temperance, and as a real, though unintentional, helper of the devil in his work of ruining souls temporally and eternally." Neither has the Presbyterian Church nor any considerable number of its clergy denied the right to use alcoholic beverages in moderation. It has never sanctioned coercion. But there have always been among its clergy the unthinking, the fanatical and intemperate. They showed themselves during the Sabbath controversy by passing without recognition, or by hissing on the street, as gentle and loving a spirit as ever made a prayer—Dr. Macleod. These are the impressions of his loneliness: "I felt at first so utterly cut off from every Christian brother, that had a chimney-sweep given me his sooty hand and smiled on me with his black face, I should have welcomed his salute and blessed him." Dr. MacVicar may prate about ecclesiastical ancestry to uphold a blasphemous dogma, but those ancestors never lived. The Presbyterian divine of an earlier day asked a blessing over his glass of punch. Many of the present drink it in secret and curse it in public. It was the custom in Scotland to have an ordination supper where there was plenty of wine, and I believe the custom still exists. Dr. Guthrie says: "When I was a student there was not, so far as I knew, one abstaining student within the university, nor was there an abstaining minister in

the whole Church of Scotland." Dr. Guthrie himself became a total abstainer, but through failing health was afterwards compelled to take a little wine daily. His sons say "that though an earnest abstainer, Dr. Guthrie never joined those who, regarding stimulants as *per se* and in all circumstances evil, banish them from their houses. When alone with his family, no liquor was to be seen on his table; but he did not make his own practice a rule for his guests. They had liberty to take or decline as they thought fit. . . . Dr. Guthrie knew human nature too well to imagine that the incitements to intemperance are to be met successfully by repressive measures." Writing to a friend thirty years ago on Popular Innocent Entertainments, Dr. Guthrie said: "The love of excitement is so engraven on our nature that it may be regarded as an appetite. Like our other appetites, it is not sinful unless indulged in unlawfully or to excess."

WILLIAM T. TASSIE.

(To be continued.)

MR. W. HOUSTON AND INDIAN MISSIONS.

MR. EDITOR,—In your issue of last week I notice a communication from the above named gentleman on the Mission Work of our Church among the Indians of the North-West. Some statements, omissions and arguments therein call for comment. At the outset Mr. Houston says: "While there seems to be no lack of energy in pressing on the attention of the Church the claims of our French Evangelization Mission, I do not find that there is any committee specially charged with the prosecution of a work which seems to me to be of infinitely greater importance—the evangelization of our heathen Indians in the North-West." It is easy to tell Mr. Houston and all whom it may concern, that such a committee exists to-day, has existed for more than a quarter of a century, and is likely to be continued in existence, even though the doctrine of the "survival of the fittest" should obtain. The Rev. Dr. Thomas Wardrope, of Guelph, is Convener. The Rev. Dr. W. Reid, of Toronto, is Treasurer. Any person may remit to him. Rev. Thomas Lowrie, of Toronto, is Secretary. The committee is composed of thirty members, more or less, among whom are Dr. McLaren, Principal Grant, Dr. Moore, Mr. McDonald (Seaforth); Wm. A. Morris and others. The committee meets three or four times a year. Last May it gave very careful attention to the Mission Work among the Indians in the North-West. It reports every year to the Assembly. The report of this committee before the Assembly last June, was given at length by a paper called the *Witness*, of Montreal. It is not a little surprising that Mr. Houston did not turn to the minutes of Assembly and ascertain facts before penning his letter. When you find such a mistake in the outset of the letter, what confidence can you have in what follows?

Mr. Houston complains that while the Presbyterian Church spends \$30,000 on her French work, she does little or nothing for the Indians of the land. Here again, it seems very clear that the writer of said letter does not know his ground very well. It is true that we spend \$30,000 among the French Canadians to give them the Gospel. Would that we had twice or thrice the amount to give to the work! There is another fact to be laid side by side with this which will relieve to some extent the complexion of Mr. Houston's complaint. We spend *four* times as much per head upon the Indians of the North-West as we do upon the Romanists of the Dominion. This statement can be verified by the minutes of the Assembly and from Macoun's Statistics of the North-West. For every three cents that we give to evangelize a Frenchman, we give twelve cents to bring a Red-man to the truth. The Foreign Mission Committee may not have gone very far astray after all in its administration of affairs.

Reference is made by Mr. Houston to the good work done by the Methodist Church among that people, also to the wise counsels of a certain priest to those about him. The points are well stated. We are glad to see them brought forward. Just here it should be remembered that a writer may be unjust through silence. Why withhold what the Presbyterian Church has been doing in the same field? Why not mention the happy influence that the Rev. Solomon Tuncansuicaye has been exerting at Bird Tail Creek? Why leave in the background all that that noble Half-breed, Rev. George Flett, of Okanase, has done far and near? Why not speak of the restraining influ-

ence that Rev. John McKay has had at Mis-ta-was-sis and elsewhere? I have seen it stated in the papers that all the converts to Christianity through the missionaries of our Church have remained loyal to the Queen all through the rebellion. I have no idea that Mr. Houston desires to conceal the good work done by our eight or ten labourers among that people, but he ought to look up facts. When he does do so, as he is well able to do, he will not write in such a way as to lead the public to believe that the Presbyterian Church is doing nothing for the benighted Indians under the old flag.

In regard to the French work in which our Church is at present engaged, Mr. Houston holds views that are very much at variance with those held in the Church generally. He gives expression to one of these views when he says: "The Romanists are better supplied with churches and pastors than our own people." The only meaning that can be fairly attached to these words is that the Romish Church presents a purer Gospel, a fuller Gospel, than Presbyterians do. That can be the only meaning of having a better supply of churches and pastors. If this position be true, the Reformation led by John Knox and others was a mistake. But the truth is that the Romish Church does not present the Gospel of Christ as the Reformed Churches do. When Mr. Houston insinuates that Romanists point sinners to the Lamb of God, as Presbyterians and Methodists do, he is wrong—utterly wrong in fact. There is such a thing as calling light darkness, and darkness light; sweet bitter and bitter sweet. That this work is carried on for political purposes cannot for a moment be admitted. The aim of the Church in this effort is to bring men to God. That there are some of the Romanists that know God in their souls we do not for a moment doubt; but we fear that the mass of the people are in darkness as to the way of life through Christ. Our Church feels it to be her duty to bring the Gospel to them. By being brought to God men become better citizens. That end is before us, but it is secondary and subordinate. Mr. Houston is to be blamed for discouraging this work without having shown that the undertaking rests on a wrong foundation. Mr. Houston is an able and scholarly man; but that he is able to show that our Church is wrong in this movement, I do not for a moment believe. Till he has shown us the untenableness of our position we must hold him an obstructionist in the way of a good work.

JOHN B. EDMONDSON.

Almonte, July 25, 1885.

ADDITION TO MONTREAL NOTES.

MR. EDITOR—In your issue of the 5th inst., under the heading "Montreal Notes," wherein is given an account of the induction of the Rev. Dr. Smyth into the pastoral charge of St. Joseph Street congregation, it is stated: "The former pastors of St. Joseph Street Church were the Rev. Professor Scrimger, M.A., now in the Presbyterian College in this city, and the Rev. Thomas Cumming, now of Truro, N.S." As this matter has been mentioned, it is in order to tell the story in full. The gentlemen mentioned were certainly pastors before Dr. Smyth; but they were not the first. St. Joseph Street has a history before their day. The first labourer in that field was the late Rev. P. D. Muir, B.A.. He was not a pastor in the ordinary sense, for the reason that when he entered upon the field there was no congregation to call him. He laboured there for nearly three years as, what is now termed, an ordained missionary. Under him the congregation was gathered and organized, the church building enlarged, and a day school, which afterwards proved the nucleus of the Royal Arthur School, was carried on under his superintendency in the basement of the church. Mr. Muir resigned in the year 1866, and died shortly afterwards. The next in the field was the Rev. A. Young, now of Napanee, Ont., and the first pastor of St. Joseph Street Church. Mr. Young was called towards the close of the year 1866, and inducted into the pastoral charge of the congregation at the beginning of 1867. He remained over six years. Professor Scrimger succeeded him; Mr. Cumming followed Mr. Scrimger, and now Dr. Smyth.

August 6th, 1885.

FRUITLESS is sorrow for having done amiss if it issue not in resolution to do so no more.—*Bishop Horne.*