

## Our Contributors.

### NEGLECTED CLERICAL FORCES.

BY KNOXONIAN.

Among the Forces or Fountains of Power for good frequently neglected, Principal MacVicar puts the youthful preacher. Indeed the esteemed Principal is of the opinion that the force is worse than neglected—it is repressed, snubbed and generally sat upon. Says the Principal.

If he is a preacher and delivers popular sermons, full of dash and thrilling eloquence, he will be reminded by some Nestor of the pulpit that a very poor man may make a feast one day, but it is only a princely man who can have a feast every day. He will be told, with truth, that daily bread is what tries us all.

True, Doctor, but the brethren who put in these reminders are not usually Nestors. We are getting somewhat shaky in our classics, but if we rightly remember Nestor was a prominent man connected with Troy, who was noted for his wisdom and eloquence. These brethren who sneer at young preachers of "dash and thrilling eloquence" are never eloquent except when they give forth an eloquent flash of silence, which is painfully seldom. They are not wise or they would not sneer at any young man doing his best. Being neither eloquent nor wise, they are not Nestors. Nestor would probably bring an action for libel against the *Journal* if he saw the use that the Principal makes of his name in this paragraph. He might very properly plead that his reputation as an orator has been injured by the connection in which his name stands. He would probably tell the jury that the men Principal MacVicar compared him with often use limping logic, construct sentences with broken backs, are as dry as a lime-burner's shoe, speak in monotonous tones, or go up and down in regular sing-song style from the first word in the introduction to the last word in the conclusion. If Nestor knew the facts, that is about what he would tell the jury. Then he would call all the really good preachers in the denomination—all the real Nestors—put them in the witness box, and each one would certainly swear that he never used any such language in speaking to a young preacher of "dash and thrilling eloquence" as Principal MacVicar says the Nestors used. Nestor would then put in some evidence to show that he sustained material damage by associating his name with old clergymen who sneer at young preachers. Next day the following would be found in the legal reports of the daily press.

"*Nestor vs. The Presbyterian College Journal of Montreal.* Action for libel. Damages laid at \$10,000. Plaintiff conducted his case in person, with great skill and eloquence. Mr. Morris appeared for the defendant. Verdict for plaintiff and \$5,000 damages. Order for immediate execution issued."

But the youthful preacher suffers in another way and in another place:

In Church courts, for several years his motions may go unseconded and his speeches unheeded. The Moderator, wise man—*Primus inter pares*—may be conveniently blind when he rises to address the house, as he is not as yet acknowledged as a member of the select speaking committee of the Presbytery, Synod or Assembly, as the case may be. What with these things and occasional allusions to flash-in-the-pan and spread-eagle oratory, the criticisms of the people and predictions by his class-mates and seniors of coming failure, the young man is likely to be sufficiently reminded of his frailty to keep him humble.

There are so many suggestive facts in this paragraph, and we have such a wealth of illustration to throw light upon them that positively we don't know where to begin.

Is there then a "select speaking committee" at least in many Church courts, who decide on the list of members who are to be heeded and unheeded? You innocent! did you ever doubt it? Nearly everybody who frequents Church courts knows this, but Principal MacVicar was perhaps the first man of his standing who had the courage to make the statement over his signature. A young man who is not in any way connected with the "select speaking committee" is of course not expected to say anything. He must wait until he has as much experience in wrecking congregations as some members of the select committee have had. When he has broken up two or three congregations, and turned a fair number of Presbyterians into Methodists, or something else not so good: when he has preached in about twenty vacancies and never got a "nibble," then he will be eligible for a

seat in the select committee, and the Moderator may see him no matter where or when he rises. Conveners who have reports to move and second will avail themselves of his services, and if he is docile and very "useful" to the select committee and said Conveners, his chances for a speech at one of the evening meetings are good. If he is certain to speak so badly that he will not throw any member of the select committee or the Conveners into the shade, he is almost certain to be invited.

But if a young man has not the experience alluded to he must just wait until he gets it. In the meantime he must build up his congregation, and collect money for the Schemes. In fact collecting money is one of the principal uses to which young preachers are put. The cast-iron members of the select committee never object to the money. The blindest member of the select committee can see a collection. The young man and his speeches and motions may go unheeded for ever, but he need never fear that his funds will go unheeded. Indeed he is fortunate if his study table is not covered with circulars asking money. The financial is the sphere in which any young preacher is sure to get recognition. Perhaps if there was a little more recognition in some other sphere the deficits in certain directions would not be so large.

There are few things in this world more utterly grotesque than to see a modest young minister whose congregation raises handsome sums for the Church, sitting silently for days in a Church court while men are pressing around the front, bobbing up and down every five minutes, and kindly taking charge of the proceedings, who don't raise enough of money in a year to provide George Leslie Mackay with instruments to pull the teeth of his parishioners.

### HERE AND THERE IN BRISTOL.

In a former letter I stated that Captain Woodes Rogers brought to England in 1710 from Juan Fernandez, in the person of Alexander Selkirk, the

#### PROTOTYPE OF ROBINSON CRUSOE.

Since writing that letter I find that this subject was discussed some time ago in the English and Scottish papers, and to-day appeared the following leader from the *Tobago News*, which may interest some of your readers:

By the papers we see that at Largo, on the Fifeshire coast, in Scotland, was unveiled the other day the statue of Alexander Selkirk, a native of that town, who was the solitary inhabitant between 1704 and 1708 of the island of Juan Fernandez, in the South Pacific Ocean, and who is said to have been the prototype of the Robinson Crusoe of Defoe's admirable book. We have no hesitation in affirming, what has heretofore been surmised, that the scene of the exile of Defoe's hero was neither Juan Fernandez nor anywhere in the Pacific, but in the Caribbean Sea. We have nothing before us to confirm the opinion that Defoe conceived the idea of the plan of his book from the experiences of the unfortunate castaway; but granting that this was so, it is more than probable that the author, during his checkered career, had several opportunities of obtaining from reliable sources accurate descriptions of some other island. Some correspondence on the subject has recently been appearing in the English papers, but we have no hesitation in claiming for our little island the honour of having been so vividly and graphically described in this volume. Year after year, as visitors arrive, they are instantly struck with the reality of what they have read; and every one in leaving carries with him the firm unbiassed opinion that Tobago, and no other, was the island home of Defoe's mariner.

At the Colonial and Indian Exhibition, held at South Kensington last year, there were exhibited from this island the veritable and venerable head of Crusoe's goat, and also a sketch of Robinson Crusoe's Cave at Sandy Point.

D'Israeli, in his "Curiosities of Literature," says that it was probably an observation of Steele, which threw the germ of Robinson Crusoe into the mind of Defoe. "It was a matter of great curiosity to hear him (Alexander Selkirk) as he was a man of sense, give an account of the different revolutions in his own mind in that solitude." Defoe, who had suffered imprisonment, was struck by apoplexy, and reduced to a state of comparative solitude. To his lonely contemplation, Selkirk in his desert isle, and Steele's vivifying hint often recurred, and to all these, says D'Israeli, we perhaps owe the instructive and delightful tale which shows to man what he can do for himself, and what the fortitude of piety does for man. Even the personage of Friday is not a mere coinage of his brain; a Mosquito Indian, described by Dampier, was the prototype. "Robinson Crusoe" was not given to the world till 1719—seven years after the publication of Selkirk's adventures. His history was

detailed in so interesting a manner as to attract the notice of Steele and to inspire the genius of Defoe.

#### QUEEN'S SQUARE.

I visited the Bristol Free Library, opened in 1876, and said to be the first founded in the kingdom, and was surprised to find the books of reference of such old date, and the reading room so small. I think both the library and the reading room might be placed in the reading room of the Toronto Free Library alone. The copy of the "Encyclopædia Britannica" I wished to consult was about the first published, and had not one of the articles I wanted. The librarian told me that the branch libraries in Clifton and elsewhere would probably have later editions. I inferred from the appearance of the place that the original library was kept in existence chiefly because it was the first, though its age is certainly not great.

I walked through the Square, near which it stands, and after admiring the equestrian statue of William III., Prince of Orange, by Rysbrach in 1735, standing in the centre of the Square, I looked at some of the houses around, connected with the names of men now historical, such as that in which

#### HUME, THE HISTORIAN,

had been a merchant's clerk, and where he gave up his stool on being snubbed for trying to mend Mr. Miller's English. Was it out of spite for this that Hume says: "How fortunate then was James Naylor, who, desiring to enter Bristol on an ass, all Bristol could not afford him one!" Next door lived Captain Woodes Rogers, referred to in connection with the prototype of Robinson Crusoe.

#### MARY CARPENTER (1807-1877).

The memory of this lady is still held in great respect in Bristol for the interest she took in the poor, and the establishment of ragged schools, and afterwards of industrial schools. She was the daughter of a Unitarian minister, the Rev. Lautz Carpenter, first at Exeter, where she was born, and afterward Bristol, where both died. It was largely owing to her perseverance that the "Industrial School Act" was obtained, which enabled them to erect industrial schools for boys in Bristol in 1857, and afterward several both for boys and girls. She visited the United States and Canada as a prison reformer, and did more for the welfare of poor prisoners. In 1866 she went to India and three times after, and had the gratification of seeing a bill passed for the establishment of reformatory and industrial schools throughout the Indian Empire. It was by her love and energy the women of India were reached by European influence. There is now a monumental tablet to her memory in the Cathedral. I had the curiosity to go out a few miles to Arno's Vale Cemetery to see her grave, which answers to the wishes she expressed in the following lines:

Oh, let me lie in a quiet spot, with the green turf o'er my head,  
Far from the city's busy hum, the worldlings' heavy tread;  
Where the free winds blow, and the branches wave, and the song birds sweetly sing,  
Till every mourner here exclaims, "Oh, Death! where is thy sting?"  
Where in nothing that blooms around, about, the living e'er can see  
That the grave that covers my earthly frame has won a victory;  
Where bright flowers bloom through summer time, to tell how all was given  
To fade away from the eyes of men and live again in heaven.

#### THE POET SAVAGE.

When passing St. Peter's Church I saw a monument to the poet, Savage, which recalled my youthful days when I read his poems, which I have not seen for many a long year. When driven by his own dissolute habits from the fashionable society of London, he sought shelter here in the west, and died of fever in Bristol Prison, and was buried at the expense of the governor of the gaol.

#### ALL SAINTS' CHURCH,

which dates from 1422, has not only a fine monument to Coleston, the great merchant benefactor of Bristol, but a rare old Bible—Matthew's edition of Tyndale and Coverdale, blotted and raddled by Papal authority in 1534. In this edition the fifth verse of Psalm xci. reads thus "So that thou shalt not need to be afayed for any bugges by night," etc. This reminds me of the