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PREACHING IN GAELIC.

It is natural to suppose that those who undertake to preach in a language which they are imperfectly acquainted, must make mistakes, which those who are acquainted with the language in question can at once detect, and it may be, hold up to ridicule.

In Caraid nan Gaidheal there is a story to the effect, that a Gaelic minister, proud in all likelihood of himself and of his Gaelic, while admonishing his hearers to remember the poor, said: "Remember the he goats." The Gaelic words for poor and he goats are somewhat alike. Near Montreal, some years ago, there was a minister whose father and mother spoke Gaelic, and who had little or no acquaintance with any other language. It occurred to that minister to preach or to endeavor to preach a Gaelic sermon, to his congregation. Satisfied probably with his success, he asked an ingenious Gael what he thought of his sermon. The reply was, "I am no very strong in the the English." It has to be inferred from that reply that the Gaelic sermon which the minister professed to preach, partook much more of the nature of English, than of Gaelic. Gaelic ministers are frequently in the habit of complaining that a comparatively small number can be induced to attend the Gaelic service. Intelligent Gaels there have always been who maintain, that if Gaelic ministers knew something more about Gaelic, and were able to preach Gaelic with more idiomatic purity and eloquence, Gaelic congregations would speedily increase in number and attention. Gaelic ministers are not to be severely blamed for being unable at times to use better Gaelic, and to pronounce Gaelic correctly, because until somewhat recently, even in the Theological Halls of the Presbyterian Churches of Scotland, no attention small or great was paid to the study of Gaelic, and because so far as the training of such Halls was concerned, students left them with as little, or less Gaelic than they had when they entered. We cannot

think very highly of those who had charge of the education of ministers in years gone by in Scotland, and who though many of these students must needs preach Gaelic when their academic career was over, made no effort whatever to give to Gaelic students the slightest opportunity for gaining even a small grammatical knowledge of the language which they intended to preach to Gaelic congregations throughout their life. Better days have happily dawned on the Gaelic language, and on Gaelic preaching. The Gaelic Mod has already assumed such lofty vigour, and such large proportions as to do away to a large extent with the lamentable indifference which has obtained in many quarters, so far as the speaking, and reading, and preaching of Gaelic are concerned. The influence of the Gaelic Mod is becoming stronger and more perceptible every day, inasmuch that many who who were wont to say that they had forgotten their Gaelic (though it was as clear as daylight that Gaelic had not forgotten them) are now learning a better lore and are compelled in spite of themselves to believe that there is no disgrace but a lofty honour in being a Gael. The Gael has from time immemorial occupied the plains and straths, and glens and hills of Scotland. He has had a patriotic and honourable career in the face of his unrelenting foes, whether they were Scandinavian, or Anglo-Saxon, or Norman. The Gael and his language form no unimportant part of Scotland. They have had much to do with bringing Scotland, sterile and unattractive as she was by nature, to her present greatness and prosperity. Nor can the Gaels yield the palm to any other tribes or nations for their reverence for God, for their devotion to truth, and honour, and godliness, and for their implicit faith in God, as the Friend of those who love and fear Him, wherever their home may be, and whatever the language be which they speak, and by means of which they communicate their best thoughts for the enlightenment and improvement of their fellowmen.

THE TEMPERANCE ISSUE

The agitation in this Province in favor of some considerable advance in temperance reform, reflected itself in the recent political convention held at Toronto in connection with the Ontario Liberal party. The convention seems to have been representative, as well as unprecedentedly large; embracing men from every constituency, denomination, and calling. Resolutions were passed on such subjects as Public Ownership Stock Watering, Taxation of Railways, Electoral Purity, Labor Interests, New Ontario, and Temperance.

On the latter question the convention showed great extremes of opinion; but finally a large majority averaged on the following:

The right to have the question of the abolition of the bar or of the shop license, or of putting the traffic under Government control, submitted to a vote of the

municipal electors on the initiative of a petition signed by 25 per cent of the electors.

No new licenses in New Ontario for all time to come.

No new license to be granted anywhere except on a petition signed by 50 per cent of the residents in the polling subdivision within which it is proposed to locate it.

Forfeiture of license for second offense

While many would like to go farther, and while some would not go so far, it will be seen on reflection that the above is an important advance.

If any municipality thinks it can carry a majority against the sale of liquor, it can have a ready trial, provided twenty five per cent of the electors take the initiative by petition. If there are not twenty five per cent so desirous, that means the constituency is not ripe for the prohibitive measure desired by some.

No new licenses in New Ontario for all time to come! That is on the principle of starting right, before custom and an appearance of vested right have made their appearance.

Forfeiture of license for second offense would either stop a lot of injurious illicit selling, or it would cut off a lot of licenses; either result would be useful.

Should any license be thus cut off, neither it nor any other new license can be granted unless 50 per cent of the residents sign a favorable petition.

The foregoing provisions put into the hands of those who consider the liquor traffic an evil, prove an extraordinary and effective leverage provided it is taken advantage of. It may not be all everyone would desire; but we must not be like the partially demented man who declared he would not budge from where he stood unless and until he could take the half mile to his home in one leap. The sane and safe method, after all, is step by step.

A SUGGESTIVE FACT.

That celebrated trainer of wild animals, and manager of a great show for many years, F. C. Bostock, has written a thrilling book about animal training; and he makes this assertion, that in the first requisite of the animal trainer is good personal habits.

In some curious, incomprehensible way," he says, "wild animals know instinctively whether men are addicted to bad habits. It is one of the many problems that are beyond human understanding. For those who are in the least inclined to drink, to live a loose life, the wild animal had neither fear nor respect. He despises with all the contempt of his nature, and recognises neither their authority nor their superiority. If a man has begun to take just a little, or deviated somewhat from the strait road, the animal will discover it long before his fellow men."

This is certainly a strange fact. But that it is beyond human understanding is not so sure. Bad habits mean lack of self-control and of strength. The quality in the trainer which dominates the animal