

THE ECCLESIASTICAL AND MISSIONARY RECORD.

For the Presbyterian Church of Canada.

"Wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of thy times, and the strength of salvation."

VOL. IV.

STREETSVILLE, C. W., NOVEMBER, 1847.

NO. 1.

Original Poetry.

LINES

FOR THE MISSIONARY RECORD.

I saw a little limpid spring,
'Twas near a mountain's side,
Whose crystal waters sparkled bright,
And made a silver tide.
The rill which flowed from it I traced
Along its verdant shore;
Through valley rich and meadow fair,
Its gentle course it wore.

As I advanced, it seemed as if
It wide and wider grew,
Till in a river broad and deep
It burst upon my view.
And still the river's course I traced,
And marked its deeper flood—
Still with increasing grandeur roll'd
'That stream—the love of God'

But now an ocean's shoreless main
In majesty appears,
And breaks on our astonished sight,
Demanding grateful tears.
White on the boundless food we gaze,
'The eye of faith can glean
But a small space of all that's there—
'The rest by us unseen.

Nor shall eternity reveal,
Its vast extent to man;
A height, a depth, a length, a breadth
No creature's mind can scan.
But with all saints Lord make me know
'That stream of love divine;
And may I on its placid tide
For ever float as thine!

J. A.

Knox's College, Toronto,
Oct. 27, 1847.

KNOX'S COLLEGE, THE OPENING.

This institution was opened on Monday, the 26th ult. By the recent resolutions of the Synod, the winter session, which is the principal one, should continue six months, beginning with the middle of October; and the directors, notwithstanding the non-arrival of the Professors, expected from Scotland, were unwilling to delay the opening of the session much beyond that time.

A goodly number of students have arrived in town. They were assembled in the Divinity Hall, together with several members of Knox's congregation, when the College Committee and the resident Professors entered and took their seats.

The Rev. William Rintoul, Convener of the Committee, took the chair, and gave out the 67th Psalm, which was sung, and led in prayer to the throne of grace. He then introduced the business of the day by a short address on the state and prospects of the institution. These he illustrated from the history of the College, originating, as it did, in the disavowance of the Canadian Presbyterian

Church from the established Church of Scotland, and the loss of Queen's College, with the gain, however, of almost all its divinity students; and also, from the progress of the College, which he traced minutely through the three past years. He also touched on the mission of Mr. Bayne to Scotland, and the prospects of increased strength in the professorial department.

Mr. Rintoul illustrated the constitution of the College, as being analogous to that of the Theological School of Geneva, in which the celebrated historian of the Reformation, and Gausson are so distinguished professors. He said that, alike unchartered and unendowed, it depended on the will of the Church, expressed through the Synod; that, necessary as an effective Theological school is, to perpetuate and extend the work of evangelization, its prosperity was bound up with a revived state of religion in the Church: that God has been in various ways, blessing us as a Church, and that if he continue his favour unto us, and revive and strengthen us for advancing his cause in this great land, then it is certain that he will also bless our College, and enable us to send forth well accomplished labourers into his vineyard.

Mr. Rintoul then introduced the Rev. Mr. Robb, of Hamilton, who delivered an admirable discourse on the importance of a thorough culture of literature and philosophy to the theologian, and of a full acquaintance with the whole scheme of revelation to the minister of the gospel. Mr. Robb has very kindly placed his M.S. in our hands, and we may yet give it a place in the columns of the *Record* in two or three successive numbers; meanwhile, we quote from the *Banner* a very good abstract of this discourse:

"Mr. Robb first adverted to the preparatory studies necessary for those entering the ministry, showing that all knowledge was important to the theologian, as well to increase his own stock as to furnish him with suitable illustrations—that general grammar, and particularly an acquaintance with the languages in which the scriptures were originally written, was highly requisite—that logic, which teaches the laws that ought to govern the human mind, which enables us to detect errors in false reasoning, and gives order to his own conceptions, was indispensable to the students—that theologians ought to be well acquainted with the philosophy of mind, for as the mechanic not only needs to be familiar with the tools he handles, but also with the nature and quality of the material on which he operates, so a minister should study well the character of those over whom he is placed, and know the manner in which to treat each particular case. In illustration of this, Mr. Robb referred to the heresy denying the influence of the spirit in conversion—which arose from the false metaphysics of Hume and others. He showed that christianity does not fear nor oppose truth—that what is true in religion is no error in science—recommended the careful perusal of Edwards on the Will, Butler's *Analogy*, and the writings of Chalmers, whose lamented death, it has been well said, has awakened the echoes of the world—who

with giant arm grappled with and overcame the mighty foe, and who, in an article written a short time before "he fell asleep," has said that "no great coming battle for the truth must be fought on the field of metaphysics. (See a criticism on Morell's Philosophy, in the North British Review.)

"Mr. Robb recommended the systematic study of Theology—i. e., that the great truths of the gospel should be studied according to their dependence and relation to each other—that as the student of nature first considers the great natural divisions—animal, vegetable, and mineral—so examining minutely the subdivisions and vast variety of species which these include, so the student of the bible must arrange and classify those truths which lie scattered throughout the sacred pages. The natural philosopher's duty is not to devise and to propound what laws ought to regulate nature's works, but to take nature as he finds her, i. e., he is not to theorize, but to draw legitimate inferences from the truths ascertained—so the Theologian must make the bible the basis of arrangement—the starting point—and in his future investigations must adopt the motto "what rearest thou?" instead of "what thinkest thou?" Mr. R. illustrated the evils flowing from a contrary course in a concise and logical manner, by the errors that have arisen regarding the doctrine of atonement—but we cannot trust ourselves to follow him through his beautiful chain of reasoning. He next called the attention of the students to the benefits derivable from a thorough acquaintance with the leading doctrines of the gospel, which, like the different parts of a building, had a beautiful dependence on each other, an evidence, says he, of its divine origin—human ingenuity never could have wrought out such a perfect and harmonious system. An error in one doctrine would affect the truths of the whole system.

"After specifying some of the leading doctrines, such as the Trinity, justification and sanctification, and their relation to each other, &c., he gave a beautiful illustration by referring to the experience of Luther. He felt himself a guilty condemned sinner—that no indulgences, no penances could give relief, and until he felt the power of the prophet's precept, "Thou shalt live by faith," no rest could he find for body or soul. But this doctrine of justification by faith, "as if God had planted it there, disclosed to him the mystery of the christian life, and increased that life in his soul,"—by this he achieved the Reformation in Germany. A similar work in Switzerland was effected by Zwingle, who reached the truth in a somewhat different manner, viz., by the gentle influence of scripture. He held that nothing was to be admitted but what was sanctioned by scripture—while Luther thought all lawful that was not forbidden by scripture. The rev. gentleman advised the careful perusal of the old divines, such as Calvin, Turretin, and the elegant Witsius, concluding his admirable and deeply-interesting address by exhorting the students to seek in all their studies an unction from on high, and to have their minds deeply imbued with the spirit of the gospel."

The Rev. Mr. Buchanan, of the Free Church of Bothwell, Scotland, next addressed the students in an appropriate and solemn strain. One maxim he especially inculcated on the students, which we trust they will not forget, viz: that all reasonable acquirements in their proper studies were attainable, through the divine blessing, on sustained and well-directed exertions,