

that is to say, the appointment of examiners or superintendents whose duty it shall be to inspect the clergy and their method of parochial work. One report suggests a parochial visitation at least once every three or four years, to be followed in each case by a conference at which the people would be asked what they thought of their minister. These proposals have recalled the fact that in the early days of the Church such visitations took place, and that at a still earlier period, even in the days of Knox, there were "superintendents" appointed to look after the clergy, with powers and duties similar to those of the suggested "Assessors." The *Times* correspondent says: This view of the case was discussed in the Presbytery of Kirkcudbright last week, and specimens were given of the kind of questions that used to be asked a century and a-half ago. The following are examples: "Does your minister rule his house well?" "Does he keep familiar company with profane or scandalous persons?" "Is your minister a dancier, a carder, or a dicer?" It is felt that such questions might be awkward for some of the brethren of the present day. That the parochial clergy, who enjoy a great amount of freedom and independence, should be jealous of anything like inquisitorial rule is natural enough. There is, however, something to be said on the other side. At present there is no direct check on the inefficiency of the clergy. They hold their appointments practically for life. They cannot be displaced unless they are convicted of uttering unsound doctrine, or of immoral practices. There are no means of punishing a man for laziness, or inefficiency, or neglect of duty. The need of some kind of superintendence is generally admitted, but there is great difference of opinion as to the form it ought to take. The Dissenting Churches are as much alive as the Established Church to the necessity of adopting some kind of control. The Free Church has introduced a system of Presbyterial visitation, and the subject has been discussed by the United Presbyterian Church at its Synodical meetings during the last two or three years."

### INCIDENTS AND COINCIDENTS.

RELATED BY . . . M'DONALD TO THE WRITER.

DEAR MAC: Meet me at McKenna's store at one o'clock to-morrow. I will make a purchase, and then pretend to wait there for a car—but don't keep me waiting, and then we can take a nice sail on the lake. Mother and brother are going to the Falls—There! she is calling me. JULIA.

P.S.—I almost forgot you are a stranger in Toronto. . . .

HERE followed street and number of the store. This note, without date, I picked up in Empire Lane about ten o'clock one Wednesday morning last July. Lying beside it, partly upon it, was a good cigar; another had probably been lit at that spot, judging by a burnt match or two. "This and nothing more" to guide me as to the "Mac" or "Julia." But what if the "to-morrow" was not to-day? I would not be likely to find her if I sought her. However, on the spur of the moment, I determined to try to see this "Julia" at the store designated, and watch the meeting of the two friends.

Four or five young ladies came in separately, five minutes to one. I had been there ten minutes, had bought a book, receiving my change from a five dollar U.S. greenback; thus, in a measure, making myself a customer, though a total stranger there. My mind's eye, as well as my visible optic, was wide open. Ah! here entered "Julia," her style creditable, it was modest, her voice musical as she asked the clerk for "fine quality of note paper." It was her voice that attracted one of the two remaining ladies, who, turning, addressed her:

"Why, Jennie! how are you, dear?"

A gentlemanly young man now entered; and again, in my mind, this was "Mac." His inquiry of the clerk was not audible to me, but the clerk's response was:

"Just out of them, Mr. Stephens; we'll order some for to-morrow."

Again my mind's eye was misleading, Mac was a stranger in Toronto. But surely this was Julia—just on time! She spoke to the clerk in courteous, familiar superiority, saying:

"Mr. Mac" (this clerk's name was not Mac, I had learned so much) "I want 'Looking Backward'."

She was looking forward—to the door. The clerk responded, pointing sideways at me:

"I have just sold the last copy, Miss, but I will get you one." And he called for the little boy, when some one answered that he had gone to the post-office. Julia said:

"O never mind, sir."

And I said—without shaking or trembling in the least, outwardly:

"Take this copy, Miss Julia."

She was gazing intently out the door; it was now almost five minutes past one. She was startled at mention of her name and as our eyes met—we were both standing near the open door—I bluffed boldly, I was no longer looking for Mac though momentarily dreading his arrival. Holding out to her the note I had picked up in the morning, I said composedly:

"My friend Mac just handed me this as he jumped on the train." Hastily she asked: "Why has he gone home? He was not going till morning, or by the afternoon boat."

This did not enlighten me much, but she had stopped looking out the door, her eyes were focussed on me and mine on hers, for hers were speaking kind of orbs and they would tell me if "Mac" arrived, from which, reverently, I quoted mentally the words of the litany, "Good Lord, deliver us."

"Yes," was my response, adding: "The train was moving out as he threw your note towards me requesting me to tell you he was wired home, some one was ill. I did not catch who, indeed it was accidental my meeting Mac; he was just boarding the moving train and not quite sure hailed him.—I guessed at you."

"I am so sorry," then smiling, "about Mac, I mean," now serious, "I hope his mother is not ill, he loves her devotedly, and he could not do without her. She is such a lovable mother to everybody. Do you know her?"

"I never met his mother, but have heard of her lovable character. However, now I am Mac's representative, or substitute, and as Mac would say, lunch first, and then the nice sail."

This, as indeed all I spoke, was thrown out tentatively to this trustful maiden, she responded quickly:

"That sounds like Mac, and as I expected to lunch and sail with him, I suppose to take both with his substitute for further information, (emphasized) will be quite the proper thing to do. The first information, Mr. Substitute, which you did not volunteer, is your name?"

Here is the coincidence, in my name. For I gave my true name which was better than my first thought, but somehow, by an indefinable process, Ruskin like, this young woman was causing me to search for truth in the beauty she was unfolding. Our talk was as brief as recorded, yet I had grown in that brief time to believe in the tissues of falsehoods by which I had led this lovely girl to believe in me. Of course Mac had taken a train. No fellow, worthy of the companionship of so charming and handsome a young lady, would otherwise fail to meet such an engagement.

In our short walk to the restaurant, marching Indian file by reason of the crowded streets and sidewalks, gave me opportunity, mentally, to measure Mac; with same prefix to name, about the same age, from the U. S., as bright a young man as I conceived myself to be; but here the parallel ended, for with him, there existed some drawback, or why not meet Julia at her home?

Seated for lunch she asked and partly answered: "Where did you know Mac? You are Torontonian."

"Yes same as you are. I first met Mac in a restaurant, not like this one, but where liquor was sold, we drank together and got into a friendly discussion over the spelling of our names. I contending, as did my mother, as a descendant of the Scotch lassie, Flora McDonald, that we were right in our orthography, or in the abbreviation, or at any rate phonetically. By the way yours is not a Scotch name?"

How did I know? She had not given me a clue, though evidently she thought I knew it for she responded at once.

"No, father says that the Montaignes and Montagues are of the same stock; our branch is Huguenot."

This was a pointer, upon which I said interrogatively: "Many on this side pronounce the name differently."

"O yes, I have heard some, ignorantly or affectedly, say Montage, but of course that is incorrect. The rule as to accent upon penultimate or ante-penultimate does not apply to proper names as Archimedes, Aristides, Penelope and others, though in the classics the one rule governs, I presume; but in our French tongue even the pronunciation of proper names is made flexible."

This, apparently pedantic though really modestly spoken response, gave her away, name and school, too, for we naturally drifted to her school days, and she grew bewitchingly eloquent in recounting incidents of those days; of her graduation and subsequent visit to cousins in New York city.

"There I met Mr. MacIlvaine, a friend of my cousins. He was our escort to many pleasant entertainments during my two months' visit. And there, alas, the episode occurred that forever disgraced him in the eyes of my parents. Father had arrived that day from Toronto, I was to return home with him. In the evening Mac called, and, in the warm parlours, it soon became apparent that he had been drinking, for he acted and talked stupidly—so abnormal in him you know, as he is very bright. We were all so sorry, the more so for father meeting him the first time and in such condition. My parents pity and condemn any young man who drinks; so do I; but I thought, through my cousins' and my own friendship, that Mac (he insisted upon my calling him as my cousins do simply Mac) with so much good in him and with such a good mother, would see the error and harm in liquor, and I have no doubt he will, or I would not care a straw for him. But when my cousin wrote that Mac was coming to Toronto on an excursion trip and would like to call upon me, my parents were unrelenting, and mother wrote saying they must decline to receive him. However, the note he gave you from me, I enclosed in a letter to one of my cousins for him, of which I told my mother. I tell her everything."

So much was made known ingenuously by this girl of nineteen; for, without hesitation, as I drew her out, she had spoken of her last birthday. Thus with a good breeze, with this charming companion at my side, I easily controlling the main sheet, smoking the while, we had sailed many miles away from the city's din and bustle. Conscience pricked me sorely, but, against it was arrayed my admiration for this genial companion. I might loose her—for fairly she was not won even for the sail—by telling her of my deception; my perplexity was great. If this MacIlvaine awaited her arrival home my doom was decided.

This young woman touched me tenderly by every characteristic of her nature, as at first her beauty and manners attracted my admiration. All unconscious to

herself she had taught me to respect her as "no weakling girl, but true woman, who had measured well her womanhood," and now well-rounded, with grace of carriage and grace of character, which she, divinely guided, had brought into perfect harmony with that Master's teachings.

How could I tell such an one of the deception practised, aye, now being perpetrated upon her? Conscience conquered, or that inalienable and inestimable inheritance from my mother told me to tell the truth to this daughter of Eve. It was on our return homewards, sailing before the wind, a brisk one, with the sun's slanting rays throwing lengthy shadows across the lake far out from the shore. My boldness subdued, Satan-like referring to Scripture, I stated my position hypothetically, like as the prophet to King David. The latter's anger blinded him, not so with Julia, nor did she answer as David, neither did she speak as did Nathan, though she saw, that very properly she might have done so. Her answer sounded scriptural, yea, sepulchral to my hearing, as with such a plaintive, pained voiced, her brilliant eyes saddened and fastened on me, she said, so sorrowfully:

"And you have done this to me?"

In that moment it seemed to me, that, insignificant, I represented my sex, and, in my self-assumed representation, MacIlvaine, also, stood before this pure girl, and he drunk! What could she think of boasted manhood from these two representatives? These were lightning thoughts, though lasting and scathing. Involuntarily my hands let go helm and main sheet, and looking straight into her eyes, now dimmed as with pearl drops, I told her of the contest of conscience since I had met and learned to know her; of intending merely a joke; of my subsequent admiration and love of her company; of her vivacity, wherein was no lagging of interest on my part; and much else my own manhood demanded I should speak. She was not responsive to aught I felt or could express, though with gentle, now distant politeness she answered my questions. Her glance was turned towards the docks of the city, and thither we were rapidly sailing.

Arriving, she parted from me as if she had hired my services to sail that boat.

In the fall I learned that Miss Julia with her parents and brother had left the Dominion with no *animus reverendi*, they were natives of one of the southern States. How far this incident was a moving cause I know not, though their move was soon afterwards and was sudden.

Mac, after losing the note, not remembering the unfamiliar names contained in the postscript, wandered about the streets with a forlorn hope of meeting his lady friend; and, save her father, the only acquaintance he had in Toronto. However he remembered her home address, and late in the day he despatched a messenger with a note to Miss Julia, telling of his mishap in losing her note and feelingly expressing his "great grief" thereat, as he would "return homeward in the morning, sorry he came." Shortly after supper he received in response a note from the young lady, with a cordial invitation from her father and herself to spend the evening with them. Adding, at the request of her father his apology for not presenting the invitation in person, this pleasure being denied him by reason of a lame ankle occasioned that day by slipping on a banana pairing.

I learned further that Mac did not return to New York the next morning nor for several mornings, but was a guest over Sunday at Julia's hospitable home.

By the time these friends met that Wednesday evening I was well on my return trip to Detroit, where I belong.

And now I have no hesitation in giving this incident for publication. Macs and Montagues are numerous, both sides of the lakes, and residences are not localized. The recital carries its own moral in the repentance of Mac, the relator, and in the nobility of character of the young lady, whose Christian name is not Julia.

W. PIERCE.

DURING the early part of the summer of 1835 a pair of water hens built their nest by the margin of the ornamental pond at Bell's Hill—a piece of water of considerable extent, and ordinarily fed by a spring from the height above, but into which the contents of a large pond can occasionally be admitted. This was done while the female was sitting, and as the nest had been built when the water-level stood low, the sudden influx of this large body of water from the second pond caused a rise of several inches, so as to threaten the speedy immersion, and consequent destruction, of the eggs. This the birds seem to have been aware of, and immediately took precautions against so imminent a danger, for when the gardener, seeing the sudden rise of the water, went to look after the nest, expecting to find it covered, he observed, whilst at a distance, both birds busily engaged about the brink where the nest was placed, and when near enough he clearly perceived that they were adding, with all possible despatch, fresh materials to raise the fabric beyond the level of the increased contents of the pond, and that the eggs had been removed from the nest by the birds, and were then deposited on the grass about a foot or more from the margin of the water. He watched them for some time, and saw the nest increase rapidly in height, but I regret to add that he did not remain long enough to witness the interesting act of replacing the eggs, but upon his return in less than an hour he found the hen quietly sitting upon them in their newly-raised nest. The nest was shown to me *in situ* shortly after, and I could plainly perceive the formation of the new with the older part of the fabric.—*Selected.*