

## Our Contributors.

### WHERE DO ALL THE GREAT MEN GO?

BY KNOXIAN.

One forenoon, more than twenty years ago, the late Dr. John Edgar, of Belfast, addressed the students of Knox College in the old Divinity Hall. Among other things he said that there might be a student in that room who would some day be a greater writer than Shakespeare. The students did not know very well what to make of that statement. Some of them thought the great Irishman was quietly poking fun at them. Some thought he was indulging in a little mild sarcasm. Others believed he was trying to stimulate them to work hard. The only professor, now alive, who was in the room at the time, seemed bewildered at the idea that there was a possible Shakespeare among the students. He knew what was in the "boys," as students are now called, better than anybody else, and the idea that one of them should ever become a Shakespeare seemed to overcome him. Evidently it had never occurred to him that any of the young men into whose heads he was trying to hammer something about the relations of the Ego and the Non-Ego would ever create Hamlets.

If there was a Shakespeare in the hall that forenoon he has not come to the front yet. The world has not heard from him as a dramatist. No doubt many of the young men then present have written many good sermons, and that is much better work than writing plays. A few write occasional articles for magazines. Some contribute a little to the weekly or daily press. One or two may have been guilty of making a little spring poetry. But, so far as we know, the Shakespeare who was budding during Dr. Edgar's visit has not yet even blossomed.

If there was any such man it would be hard to find him and his book. Perhaps the next generation may discover him. Possibly his Hamlet and Othello may be played to our great-grandchildren. The poor man has no chance in his own day, because nobody can find him. He is just as hard to find as the great men are who have been coming out of our Theological halls every year, since these excellent institutions began to exist.

There is no Theological hall in the Church that has not been favoured during every session of its existence with a number of students who were supposed by their friends to be the material out of which most distinguished men would certainly be made. Possibly the young men themselves had a suspicion that greatness would be thrust upon them some day. One student makes a specialty of Systematic Divinity, and his friends see in him a future Hodge. Probably, as he burns the midnight oil, he thinks he sees himself how Hodge's great work could easily be improved. He modestly hopes he may live to improve it. Another gives special attention to exegetics, and his admirers predict that the day is not far distant when Alford, Eadie, Ellicott and several other learned gentlemen may take a back seat. A third is supposed to be the man who will yet prepare a work on Apologetics that will silence the sceptical world. At least half-a-dozen—perhaps we should say a dozen—are to be preachers that will electrify any kind of a congregation. Nor are these predictions confined to the youthful admirers of the coming men. Grave professors sometimes hint that the Church will soon hear from some of the students. Venerable fathers in the Presbyterian look wise, and say that the young man just licensed will probably accomplish great things. The pastors of these youthful prodigies, if good elderly men, take a pardonable pride in making glowing predictions about the future Chalmers "who was brought up in my congregation." The lady admirers—well, we have no words to express what the lady admirers hope. The one thing clear is that in every Theological hall, at every period of its existence, there have been a number of students who were expected to become very distinguished men. As some of the halls have been in existence for a long time the aggregate number of great divines in embryo must be considerable.

And it should not be forgotten that congregations have not been behind in making predictions about the coming men. Many good people see a possible, if not an actual, Guthrie in the young pastor, just

settled over them. In many cases it would be better for both pastor and congregation if their expectations were more moderate, but they see Guthrie all the same.

Now the question arises, Where do all these great men go? Where are they? What becomes of them? Confessedly, there are not many great men in the Church. Two or three years ago when a fourth professor was spoken of for Knox College, a good many people thought the Church would be compelled to import one. Of course a majority of these were people who are always trying to show their superiority by belittling everything in their own country and fawning upon everything in every other country. Men come to Canada as poor as Lazarus, grow rich, and then show their gratitude by running down everything and everybody in the Dominion. Had some of them remained with the people they fawn upon, they would have worked for a few shillings a week and died in a poor house. They grew rich in Canada, and now they show their gratitude by abusing everything Canadian. Lovely Christians are they. Delightful patriots who speak well of every country in the world but their own. People of that kind would of course prefer a professor from another country, to the best equipped Canadian, even if the imported man's head were made of basswood.

But it must be admitted that some people, who do not habitually sneer at the country which gives them their bread and in which their children were born, thought it would be well to import a professor. This fact, coupled with the fact that professors have been imported from other colleges, shows that there are not many conspicuously great men in the Canadian Churches. But there are just as many in proportion to our population as in the Churches of any other country. Conspicuously great men are few in any Church, in any country. Useful men are plentiful in every Church and that is something to be thankful for.

The right reply to the question, Where do all the great men go? is that the great majority of them settle down and round off into good, useful pastors. In less than five years from the time they began actual work the dreams about rivaling Hodge, or Sir William Hamilton, or Guthrie, or Alford, vanished. In ten years, probably, the young man of the glowing predictions is not doing half as good work as some fellow student who never aimed at anything higher than good plain work.

Moral—Don't expect too many great men to the square mile.

### IS CHRIST OR THE FOUNDATION OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH?

BY THE REV R. WALLACE.

(Continued.)

After Christ's resurrection, when He met His disciples at the Sea of Galilee, our Lord addressing Peter does not call him Peter, but gives him his family name, "Simon, son of Jonas." (John xxi. 15.) Why was this, but to denote that he had already forfeited the title Peter, denoting firmness, by his wicked and cowardly conduct in the hall of Pilate; while Christ thrice asked him, "Lovest thou Me?" to remind him that he had thrice denied his Master. Is it likely then that such a fickle and unreliable man would be made the firm foundation on which the Church was to be built? Besides wherever by our Lord Himself the future constitution of the Church is alluded to, or by the apostles its actual constitution, no hint of any primacy of Peter is given, but the apostles are spoken of as absolutely equal. Thus in Matthew xix. 27, 28, we are told that after the young ruler refused to give up all for Christ, Peter said, "Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed Thee, what shall we have therefore?" "And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed Me, in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of His glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Cf. Matthew xvi. 25, 26, 28, and Ephesians ii. 20. Again there is no trace of such pre-eminence in the Acts, which give the history of the Primitive Church, nor in the Epistles of Peter, nor of the other apostles. Thus in Acts iii. 11, 12, Peter says that Christ is the stone or foundation of the Christian Church, rejected by the Jewish builders. So in 1 Peter ii. 5. Thus Peter's judgment as to the

true foundation is the same as that of Paul in 1 Corinthians iii. 11, viz.: Jesus Christ. Cf. Acts x. 25, 26. Peter did not claim to be the rock on which the Church was built, but declares that Christ was the foundation stone laid in Zion by the Father's hand. (Isaiah xxviii. 16.) Is it at all likely then that Christ, who knew what was in man, who knew how weak and fallible Peter was, would select him to build His Church on? Paul had much more of the rock in him than Peter. He always stood firm and immovable as a rock in the midst of the most dreadful persecution, and in the very presence of death. Peter was unreliable, inclined to compromise, the very last to be counted infallible or unshaken. In Galatians ii. 11-14, Paul charges Peter with double dealing, and says that others were led away by his temporizing, and that when Peter came to Antioch he "withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed." In Galatians ii. 7, 8, Paul states that the Lord and the Church had allotted a special province of duty to each of them: to Peter the apostleship of the circumcision, and to Paul that to the Gentiles. In 1 Corinthians ix. 5, and Galatians ii. 9, Peter is mentioned as on an equality with James and John. In Galatians i. 8, Paul tells us that he went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, etc. But then this was at least three years after his conversion, during which he was going through a course of preparation for his work in Arabia. Had Peter's instruction been of much account to Paul, he would have sought it at once. But he tells us that he received not the Gospel from man, but directly from the Lord. And that at the close of his three years' special studies for his work. "Neither went I unto Jerusalem to the apostles who were before me." (Galatians i. 17.) Peter was no primate at Jerusalem. Paul tells us of his visit to Jerusalem fourteen years after, when he speaks of Peter as having no priority there, but simply as being associated with James and John. (Galatians ii. 9.) If any one had a primacy there, it was evidently James, the Lord's brother; for he was the Moderator of the first Synod before which the appeal from the Church in Antioch was brought. (Acts xv.) Paul felt under no obligation to the leaders there. "To me they that seemed to be somewhat added nothing." In regard to the fickleness of Peter in sanctioning unjustifiable compromises, Paul says in Galatians ii. 5, "To whom we yielded not by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the Gospel might continue with you." We thus see that compromises with sin or error or any evil are wrong and dangerous. Is it not strange after such repeated charges of complicity with error, and tendency to dissimulation on the part of Peter, to hold him to be here appointed by our Lord, the foundation on which His Church is built? What then was meant by giving him the power of the keys of the kingdom of heaven has been explained in the words of Dr. Smith. The expression seems to refer to the custom of putting into the hands of a teacher of the law, a key to open the chamber in which the Scriptures were deposited, or which was given to a steward and worn by him as a badge of office, Isaiah xxii. 22. It was conferring on Peter the right to declare the way of salvation through Christ, and to exercise discipline in the Church. Hence we find him honoured to open the Gospel dispensation to both Jew and Gentiles. But all the power thus conferred on Peter was twice afterwards conferred: first on all the twelve apostles and then on all the Church, as set forth in Matthew xviii. 18, 19, and John xx. 19-23. And thus Peter had the honour simply of priority of time and labour. He and the other apostles were appointed to set forth the terms of discipleship to Christ or of salvation, and also the terms of membership in the Christian Church, and to exercise discipline within it; and all the ministers of Christ while following their teaching in the inspired Word, and exercising discipline according to the Word, have similar authority from Christ. By this authority they exclude or admit whom Christ would exclude or admit. Augustine, the greatest of the ancient fathers of the Church, takes the same view that we have set forth, in his later years. He says: "I have somewhere said of St. Peter that the Church is built upon him as a rock. But I have since frequently said that the Word of the Lord 'Thou art Petros and on this Petra will I build My Church' must be understood of him whom Peter confessed as the Son of the living God; and Peter so named after this rock represented the person of the Church, which is founded on this rock, and has received the keys