

Our Contributors.

SEVERAL MEN SOLILOQUIZE ON THE FIRST WORKING MORNING.

BY KNOXONIAN.

The morning a man begins work after his vacation he is very likely to indulge in a soliloquy more or less mournful. He feels very much as students feel the first morning after the Christmas holidays. That morning, as some of our readers may remember, is rather blue. College work seems irksome after Christmas festivities and boarding house fare contrasts painfully with Christmas turkey. Still any sensible student knows that he cannot have Christmas all the year round, and any sensible man should know that his vacation cannot last for ever. Indeed, no sensible man would want a longer vacation than he needs. Work is better than idleness; duty is better than pleasure; home is better than any summer hotel. The man who wants to go idle all the year round is a loafer. The woman who has no higher aim in life than to visit and have what she calls "a good time," is not in any immediate danger of turning into a Florence Nightingale.

We may imagine different kinds of men indulging in a soliloquy on resuming their work. Here is the soliloquy of

THE HON. SOLOMON SOLON.

"Back again at my desk—work terribly in arrears—dozens of letters to read and answer—any number of matters to look into—office-seekers coming down upon me like an avalanche—political opponents plotting—papers on the other side lying most infamously—friends jealous and quarrelling—wish I could have remained away another month."

Go slow, Mr. Solon, please. No doubt the public are hard to serve. Opponents are often unscrupulous and friends often cruelly unreasonable. But, Mr. Solon, you should remember that you can't have all the honour of being a Cabinet Minister and all the quiet of insignificance at the same time. If you were nobody in particular, Mr. Solon, nobody would ask you for anything bigger than a match to light his pipe with. But you are in a high place. You enjoy high honours, and have a good deal of power. You must just take the bitter along with the sweet, Mr. Solon. You cannot sit down and stand up at the same time. You can't eat your cake and have it. You can't be a big man and a nobody on the same day. If you don't like to take the worry of prominence along with the honour, just step quietly down and out and the rush of men to take your place will make your hair stand with astonishment.

THE DOCTOR'S SOLILOQUY.

"Ah, yes, that hysterical creature wants to see me already. How did she know I got home? Let's see—at least a dozen visits to make to-day. Of course I shall be called up to-night half-a-dozen times. Pity a man can't have one good night's rest in his own house."

Yes, Doctor, it is a pity, but it would be a far greater pity if you had no patients at all. What would become of you if all your patients had recovered in your absence? Now just make some bread pills for your hysterical patient, and get into your cart and go your rounds like a good little man, and be thankful that your business does not consist mainly in waiting for people to call you.

THE MINISTER'S SOLILOQUY.

"Back in my study again—almost overwhelmed when I think of the amount of work to be done—nearly a hundred sermons to prepare during the next year and several hundred visits to make—many meetings to attend—addresses to deliver—any amount of worry to endure—hobby horse men to keep in their place—cranks to straighten out—grumblers to keep in humour—quarrelsome fellows to keep quiet, etc., etc."

Dearly beloved brother, don't take on so. If you are an industrious, methodical worker you will have a day to do every day's work in. As your day is so shall your strength be. A clock would be paralyzed at the beginning of the year if it could count the number of ticks it has to give before the year closes. For every tick there is a second to tick in. Somebody has said that genius consists in doing the thing at your hand first and then the next and the next and the next until every duty is overtaken. Whether that is genius or not it is the right way to work. You don't need to write all your sermons on any one morning or make all your visits on one afternoon. Take important duties as they come, and stop running to every kind of meeting at which your duties mainly consist in posing as a figurehead or in pronouncing the benediction.

THE LAWYER'S SOLILOQUY.

"Business all in a mess—everything behind—have lost the run of all our cases—can never catch up—clients complaining—clerks doing nothing—confusion everywhere—court's coming on—can never get ready, etc., etc."

Come now, Mr. Blackstone, don't get worried. A legal gentleman should never lose his head. If he does his clients will soon be in a bad way. Take the most urgent business first, and a little time and labour will soon put everything right. Too much business may be burdensome, but too little would be worse. None at all would mean potatoes and point for your dinner with perhaps few potatoes and nothing to point at.

MRS. GADABOUT'S SOLILOQUY.

"Back again to the old drudgery. Always did hate house-keeping. And those children! Mercy, what will I do? Wish I could have stayed away another month, etc."

No comments on Mrs. Gadabout. A woman who does not like her house better than any other place is far beyond the pale of reason.

Nothing need be said about

THE EDITOR'S SOLILOQUY.

The editor seldom gets a holiday, and when he does get a short one he is so busy the morning after he returns that he has no time to soliloquize. For consolation the editor must generally fall back upon the fact that

VIRTUE IS ITS OWN REWARD.

THE BI-CENTENARY OF "THE GLORIOUS RETURN" OF THE WALDENSES IN 1689.

Last year, the close of the two hundredth since this "red letter" event in their history took place, was observed in a most fitting manner by the descendants of the Italian Covenanters, as we may well term them.

I purpose giving the readers of THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN, in this and a few more papers, accounts of the different celebrations of the occasion. This one I shall make a kind of introduction to the others.

On the 12th November, 1887, the Table* addressed a circular to the churches of the Valleys and their sessions, insisting on moral and spiritual preparation at this celebration, as by far the most important, and pointing out as means to be used to gain this end, (1) a more open profession of faith; (2) the reconciliation of families at variance with each other (3) the abolition of worldly merry-makings; (4) meetings for humiliation and prayer.

On the 25th July, 1888, the foundation stone of the Waldensian House at Torre Pellice, designed to be a memorial of the Bi-centenary, was laid. The following articles were placed in it: A New Testament printed in Rome in 1872, copies of the Reports of the Table and the Commission of Evangelization to the Synod of 1887, and of the minutes of that Synod, a duplicate of the *proces verbal* of the ceremony, and a leaden plate bearing the following inscription in Italian: "In the year one thousand eight hundred and eighty-eight, July 25th, at Torre Pellice, during the reign of His Majesty Humbert I., in presence of the members of the Waldensian Table, and of many persons expressly invited, there was laid the foundation stone of this Waldensian House, reared in remembrance of the Glorious Return of the Waldenses in 1689, and as a monument of the gratitude of the sons of that people to the merciful and faithful God, J. P. Pons, Moderator; E. Bosio, Vice-Moderator; E. Tron, Secretary; Cavalier Paolo Meille; G. B. Olivet." After prayer, the Moderator read in Genesis the vow of Jacob, and his words on returning from his exile, and in Psalms cxxvi. and cxxix. the verses which describe the sufferings of the past as well as the deliverances bestowed by the Lord, and gave a short address, followed by a few words in Italian by Sig. Vola the advocate. After the reading and the signing of the *proces verbal* by 129 persons, among whom was the Senator, General Corte, the stone was sealed with cement, and the blessing of God was asked.

With the sanction of the Synod of 1888, the Table set about building the schoolhouse at Balsille, and the monument at Sibaoud. Regarding these, I shall say more hereafter.

At a meeting of the pastors in April, it was decided to hold special meetings for humiliation and revival during May and June. Good Friday was set apart as a special day of fasting, and Sabbath, August 4th, as a day of thanksgiving.

On the 18th of May, 1889, King Humbert addressed a letter to the Waldenses through the Moderator, of which the following is a copy:—

WALDENSIAN TABLE.

GENTLEMEN AND HONOURED BRETHREN,—Four centuries of persecution did not reduce the Waldensian Church to such an extremity as that in which it was found two hundred years ago, when, after having been almost annihilated by war and dungeons, in 1686, its feeble remains, to the number of about three thousand persons, were transported far from their earthly home to the land of exile.

The Table addressed to sister churches a circular from which I take the following passages:—

HIS MAJESTY'S PRIVATE OFFICE.

ROME, May 18, 1889.

Very soon the faithful Waldenses will celebrate the second century of their return into their native land which they have loved so much as to suffer for it.

The event, which is the cause of such a natural rejoicing to so many citizens who have set an example of strong virtues, is also hailed with joy by our King who well knows the unwavering attachment of the Waldenses to the House of Savoy. And this faithfulness to the dynasty, united to a warm love of country, having given Italy brave soldiers and very loving sons, His Majesty the King, to show his feelings towards that loving people, and to keep up always among them the cultivation of the civil and moral virtues, gives five thousand lire (\$1,000) for the Waldensian House and School which are to be opened on the occasion of the two hundredth anniversary of the day which marks the end of their exile.

Have the kindness, sir, to inform the Waldensian people of this royal gift, and to explain to them the object thereof, and accept the expression of my high esteem.

The Minister of the Royal House,

VISONE.†

But God, who had purposes of mercy to that little dispersed people, brought them back in a wonderful manner into their country, in the year 1689. The Glorious Return of our ancestors, after a year's heroic struggle, was crowned with peace with their Sovereign and their re-establishment in their native Valleys.

*The word "Table" has here the same meaning as "Board" in the sense of "Committee." We often use the word "board" in the sense of "table" in connection with eating. In the days of old, there was a court in the Presbyterian Church of Scotland, called a "Table," of much the same nature as that so called in the Waldensian Church.

† A most remarkable document to come from an old palace of the popes! The palace of the Quirinal in Rome, is one. How true it is that "time works wonders!"

Since then, there has been no crusade against the Waldenses; and the edict of emancipation of 1848, having removed the last barriers which separated them from their fellow-citizens, they have been able to carry the Word of life, even to the extremities of the Italian Peninsula.

The Waldensian Synod of 1887 has decided that the Bi centenary of the Return should be celebrated in a solemn manner.

For this purpose, on the 27th of August, and the 1st of September next, two large meetings shall be held at Balsille (Val St. Martin-Massel) and at Sibaoud (Val Pelis Bobi); and on the 2nd of September, the day of the opening of our yearly Synod, the Waldensian House which our churches and their children, scattered a little everywhere, have built at Torre Pellice, as a monument of their gratitude, shall, God willing, be inaugurated.

We are happy to carry out the desire of our last Synodical Assemblies, in inviting sister churches to rejoice with us, by means of a special deputation, for which we have a hearty and brotherly welcome.

Among the most important of the other preparations for the celebrations, was the formation of a popular committee, of which Cavalier Arthur Peyrot of Le Fort was chairman. Its object was to enable everyone to decorate and illuminate his house, giving, on an average, a small sum, and to close the celebrations in grand style with fireworks, of which Sig. Chiabotto, of Turin, was given the charge. The following is the greater part of that committee's circular:—

Waldenses, we are fast coming to the days appointed, by common consent, for the celebration of the Bi-centenary of the Glorious Return of our ancestors into their Valleys. These dates remind us of the joy which they felt when they again saw, and again conquered their dear country, and when they obtained from their Sovereign peace, the restoration of their goods, and above all, their liberty of conscience. These dates remind us also of the sufferings which they endured, and the blood which they shed abundantly in these Valleys, even at the doors of their houses, in order to obtain with the almighty help of God, those earthly and spiritual good things of which we have become the heirs.

Our respected and highly esteemed pastors, to whom we owe all gratitude, have organized religious celebrations of thanksgiving to honour the victory of these heroes of the faith. Waldenses, it is also our duty to organize a celebration to honour in a way more material, more tangible, in the eyes of our dear fellow-citizens, the memory of these noble facts.

We all, old and young, rich and poor, must unite for this end, according to our means, but with the firm resolve that this celebration shall be the bright display of the gratitude which we cherish towards our ancestors, and the joy and pride which we have on account of being their descendants.

A committee has just been formed for this object, to prepare bonfires which are to be lighted at the same time in the capital of our Valleys, and the surrounding parishes on Monday evening, the 2nd of next September, at 8 o'clock. The Committee proposes: (1) That from August 26, to September 3, the national flag shall be hoisted in all the houses in our Valleys; (2) That at eight o'clock in the evening of September 2, all private houses, all churches, and all buildings under the charge of the Church, shall be illuminated; (3) That the same evening bands of young people, carrying lighted torches, shall leave Bobi, Villar, Angrogna, Rora, and St. Jean, and march to Torre Pellice, to be present at the magnificent display of fireworks which is to take place on the heights of that parish; (4) That the same evening and hour, as many bonfires as possible shall be lighted on the surrounding mountain tops and slopes.

In my next, I shall begin my accounts of the different celebrations.

T. F.

Elder's Mills, Ont.

THE GOSPEL IN FORMOSA.

Two letters from Rev. Dr. G. L. Mackay, dated Tamsui, July 15 and 16 respectively, have, through the courtesy of Rev. Dr. Wardrope, Convener of the Foreign Mission Committee, been forwarded for publication. They are as follows:—

MY DEAR BROTHER,—Travelling here in 1873 I came across a school teacher, thirty years of age, in height a little above the medium, but quite sharp and thin-featured. His wife had been dead several months and father only as many weeks. Altogether he was depressed—somewhat naturally—but much more so on account of circumstances. He viciously, obstinately and angrily attacked myself and students present. After a few meetings he came out to Tamsui and remained in my small Chinese house a short time, then began to attend chapel services. Seeing this his old associates poured forth wrath and indignation, reviled and persecuted him, his own mother being one of the most bitter. He remained quite unmoved though. In 1874, November 15, at the Chih-nih chapel, Lièn Hô was baptized, after which he travelled and studied with us until he took charge of a station as helper. In 1877 he was preacher at Kelung, and married a widow twenty-six years old on August 26. From that time he laboured at several stations until appointed teacher in Oxford College. Latterly he was at Tsin-tui-á, near Tamsui, where we held preaching services. On April 11 of this year we closed a series of meetings up the river at Toatin-tia and came out here. I was immediately sent for to see Lièn Hô, who was very ill. On entering the room I saw he was hopelessly gone, for he was in the last stages of pneumonia brought on by exposure during damp weather. Next morning early I hurried to see the last—and found the end was near. On being asked if able to think and, if so, on what subjects, he replied "O, yes; all the time. Christ is precious to me now." Being further questioned he said, "Sing, yes, sing, be quick and sing." We sang our tenth hymn, *i.e.*, Psalm 121, then he muttered, "I heard all, how sweet now! now!! now!!!" I said, "Lièn Hô, we have been together many a day, and now we part and will sing hymn forty-one. "Forever with the Lord." When near through he gazed straight in my face, then all round with a shining and smiling countenance. Wonderful! There is no doubt about it, there is no sentiment, no imagination about the fact—physical fact—that his whole face suddenly changed and wore a bright, cheerful and happy look. I am not concerned just now about the cause thereof but merely state the fact. After a moment's suspense I left, to see no more that living countenance here, left to hear no more