

him in his ringing clear voice line the Psalms and lead the service of song in his native Gaelic.

At that time I visited St. Thomas, which was just starting. The Rev. J. McKinnon, afterwards of Owen Sound and Beckwith, a truly good man, was pastor. It was the communion season. Cousin William was there. He preached on the Thursday; then we had for over three hours "the speaking to the question" on Friday, a very singular but intensely interesting meeting.

I preached on Saturday and Mr. Gordon Brown drove me up to London thereafter. But William remained over the communion, which proved truly a time of refreshing. At our meeting of Synod, in June thereafter, held in Knox Church, Hamilton, cousin William was present. The lamented and revered Dr. Bayne of Galt, who was Moderator, made some complimentary allusion in introducing him to the Synod. Those present will remember how "bound in spirit" he was. At that time I slept a night in the same room with him in the house of James Osbourne, Esq., who was always a "well-beloved Galt," and I can never forget the impression of his exceeding nearness to God, of the atmosphere of heaven that encircled him, and the aroma of piety he diffused. He was the holiest man I ever knew. When passing through Ingersoll—then with comparatively few houses—there was pointed out to me the beautiful site he had selected for a church, on which afterwards Knox Church was built.

In Glengarry I found his name specially savoury. Mr. Donald Cattenach, and others like-minded, never wearied speaking of him. Some of his warm friends, either there or in Montreal, presented him with a great buffalo coat, which he wore in many a toilsome journey "amid perils of waters, and perils of the wilderness." He left it, on leaving the country, as a legacy to me, which I highly prized. In August, 1846, after eight two years of indefatigable labour, he left for home, by the sailing vessel that brought him out. Just before sailing he wrote his last letter to my mother in Toronto; which, as it has never appeared in print, I here subjoin:

"DEAR AUNT,—On the point of going down to the 'Mary,' which brought me out and is to take me away again from these shores to-day, I drop this note to go up with Mr. Alexander, a student for Toronto. He will bring up some of my tracts from Montreal, a large part of which I would like sent west, when there is an opportunity, to London (Mr. John Fraser), for Zorra, Stratford, Tuckersmith, Woodstock, etc., the places in which I lately laboured. Perhaps Mr. Alex. Fraser (Mr. Fraser's son) can assist in this. Remember us on the great deep. These 'many waters cannot quench love.' 'When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee.' Blessed covenant of grace. Happy souls that are divinely interested in it and in Him who is its Head. May this be the lot of all of you. Remember me to uncle and my cousins, etc. The rough coat, of course, becomes my cousin's property. It put me in mind of John the Baptist's. May he who shall wear it receive the same spirit. Wm. C. BURNS."

"Quebec, Aug. 19th, 1846, three o'clock p.m."

The "Mr. Alexander" referred to, is my dear old friend, the Rev. John Alexander, afterwards of Brantford, now of Brockville, who was then coming up from his native place, Quebec, to join our college in Toronto; the "Mr. Alex. Fraser" another kind old friend, Mr. Fraser of Cobourg, now Assistant Receiver-General in Toronto, the eldest son of the sainted John Fraser, of London. I have very hurriedly jotted down these reminiscences, but they may be of interest to some of your readers.

Halifax, N.S., 12th May, 1880.

THE LATE REV. ALEXANDER MAC-LENNAN, B.A.

This much lamented gentleman died on Amherst Island, of typhoid fever, on Monday the 18th inst., in the fifty-fourth year of his age.

Mr. MacLennan was twenty-five years old when he entered Queen's University, in 1851, but he did not, like some, make his advanced years a plea for shortening, in his case, the curriculum of seven sessions prescribed by the Church to students for the ministry. With characteristic modesty he felt his need of all the learning and culture which the regular curriculum imparts. With a praiseworthy spirit of independence he also declined to be indebted to anyone for pecuniary assistance during his college life, and on this account his attendance at college was interrupted that he might earn a livelihood by teaching school. He did not graduate in Arts till 1857, and in 1861 he completed his attendance in the Divinity Hall and was licensed to preach. In the following year he was inducted into

the charge of Mulmur, where he spent nine useful and happy years. In 1871 he was translated to Scott and Uxbridge, and held that pastorate until he was forced by pulmonary disease to demit it in 1876. After his health had been restored by a few months of rest he resumed the work which he loved, and having received a unanimous call to Amherst Island, was settled there by the Presbytery of Kingston on the 19th November, 1878.

The people of his third and last charge had but a short trial of his gifts and graces, but it was long enough to win for him sincere affection and respect. The esteem with which they regarded him was all the more creditable to him and them because his talents were not showy nor his manners ingratiating. It proved that he had real and solid excellence, not the mere semblance of it, and that they had discerned and appreciated it, although it was never obtruded on their notice, or set off by an address specially bright or winning. In the pulpit his tones were quiet and measured, and he never sought to attract by ornate language or well-turned periods. In private he was reserved if more than one was present and appeared to have little conversational powers. Yet by his own people he was liked, both as a preacher and as a pastor. For his sermons were carefully prepared, were full of plain scripture theology, faithful warnings, and judicious counsels, and were delivered in the solemn, simple, unaffected style of one who forgot himself and felt that he was speaking God's message to needy, suffering men. As a pastor he could scarcely fail to be valued by any who really knew him, for they saw that he was a genuine Christian, who always meant what he said, and who was ever ready to help them in his unassuming way by kind acts and sensible advice.

They shewed how much they cared for him by their many kindnesses to him and to his wife and child while he was going about among them, by their anxiety and their ready offers of service during his illness, and by their unfeigned sorrow at his death. He and his excellent wife will be long and affectionately remembered on Amherst Island. She was a true help-meet for him. Her frank, genial, lively disposition, supplied what was, perhaps, somewhat lacking in her husband. In the Sabbath school and in his visits from house to house she most efficiently seconded his efforts for promoting the interests of the congregation. Their best wishes and prayers will follow her and her little boy to her maternal home. J. B. M.

May, 1880.

ROMISH ORDINATION.

MR. EDITOR,—It would appear from some of your correspondents a most enormous thing for a Presbyterian to vote in favour of the validity of Romish ordination, and it is not a little interesting to witness the holy horror with which these lift their hands at such unreasonable conduct; the self-complacency with which they can write the Romish communion out of the pale of the visible Church with the greatest of ease, as if it were a self-evident proposition, the proof of which no sane man would think of demanding; and also the censoriousness with which they seem to deal with those who have thought and acted differently from themselves. The letters of "W" and "Layman" are notably characterized by this last feature. In the latter part of "Layman's" letter, advantage seems to be taken of this discussion to get a "sling" at the present respected and able Lecturer on Church Polity in Knox College. I have no doubt the Reverend Doctor is perfectly able to answer for himself, should he think it worth his while to condescend to such personal references. He also seeks to excuse himself from contributing to that institution until he shall be satisfied with the propriety of the doctor's conduct in reference to this question. (By the way, Mr. Editor, it is becoming now a favourite resort of the unwilling-to-give party to find some fault with the particular scheme recommended to their liberality, or with its management, or with some person connected with it, in order to excuse themselves from bearing their share of the Church's burdens; but let these things pass.)

I assume that the chief aim of all is to get at truth and righteousness in reference to this matter now before the Church. I shall put what I have to say in as concise a form as possible. Those who deny the validity of Romish ordination do so for the most part on either or both of two grounds—to wit: (1) The Romish communion is no part of Christ's visible

Church. (2) The ordination is invalid on its own account. These two things should be kept distinctly apart, although your correspondents seem to mix them.

1. "Has the Church of Rome ceased to be a part of Christ's visible Church?" If this can be demonstrated, the whole question is settled as to her ordination. It is for those who affirm that she has ceased to be in any sense a part of Christ's visible kingdom, to demonstrate that proposition clearly. The assertions and opinions even of the Reformers, who often spoke warmly in the heat of controversy and bitterness of persecution, are not *proof*. The history of her abominable idolatries, heresies, sins, and persecutions is not *proof* that the Head has cast her off. The references to prophecies, Pauline and Apocalyptic, are not proof unless it be demonstrated (1) that the interpretation and application of these to the Church of Rome are infallibly correct. (Interpretation of prophecy is always to be undertaken with humility and caution.) And (2) that the threats therein contained to excommunicate have been fulfilled. Those who confidently assert this latter will perhaps be in a position to tell us *when* that important event took place. "Erigena" says, "It was just when the Church of Rome clearly had changed from the true so as to become anti-Christian that the Protestant Church came out and left the synagogue of Satan." I take him to mean that at the Reformation the Church of Rome ceased to be a part of Christ's visible Church. But that is pure assertion. I wait for proof. If it be true, then, since the Reformation there has been "no ordinary possibility of salvation" within her pale according to the Scriptures and our standards. Are "Erigena" *et al.* prepared to adopt this conclusion, and say that during these centuries the heathen were just as likely to be saved (without the Gospel), as a member of the Romish communion? The following sentence seems to indicate a shrinking from such an awful judgment: "Granted that God has to-day His people within that Church in spite of her damnable doctrines and practices; granted, also, that she teaches an iota or two of truth, yet is that enough to constitute her a true Church of Christ? If so, then any organization which teaches a fragment of truth and has some good persons in it, must also be held to be a Church of Christ." If the "good persons" are *saved* persons then the "iota or two of truth" must be *saving truth*. If any "organization" has these two things, we must admit it to be a Church of Christ, or be prepared to accept more absurd conclusions. To prove the contrary, it is not enough merely to be able to shew that there is error and Antichrist within the pale of such an organization. Further, the judgment of the Protestant Church, or of the Presbyterian section of it, would not change Rome's true position in the estimation of the King and Head. The Church of England has dealt thus with the Presbyterian body, but we do not thereby imagine ourselves to be farther away from the kingdom of God. The fact that Rome deserves to be cut off is not proof that she has been. In that case the purest Church on earth must go with her.

I do not attempt to prove, as "Erigena" demands, that the Church of Rome is a branch of the visible Church. I am not called upon to do that. All I know is that that Church was a true Church. I have failed to find proof for the assertion that she has ceased to be, and until that is found, clear and unmistakable, I hold that as a Church we are bound to give even the Romish communion the benefit of the doubt at the very least, and "a true verdict give," not according to impression, personal conviction, or even widespread opinion, but "according to the evidence."

2. As to the ordination itself. "Layman" has given an account of certain "mummeries" in connection with priest ordination. That would have been of some use had he shewn first, that the validity of ordination to any office depended upon the form or ceremony thereof, or that that was even an essential element in its validity. "W" does not put the case fairly when he asks, "can ordination to the office of a priest be in any sense ordination to the office of the Christian ministry?" I am not aware that anybody has said that ordination to a priesthood as such is valid ordination to the eldership as such. But it is to be taken into consideration that besides the functions of the office of the Romish priesthood that are purely priestly, there are others that correspond more to that of the ministry. It is to be considered that the priesthood is the office in the Church of Rome that corresponds to that of Presbyterian with us. Ordination to the