

unfurled. Do you wonder that we feel that "in our hands he left the task by him begun?" God grant to us grace to carry that banner, to speed that task, till we too are called to rest.

But all his work was not toil, nor all drives cold and dark. His was such a loving heart, love for the Master so clear and constant, love for humanity so strong, that his greatest joy was in ministering to others. I would my pen could tell what he was to his people, what they were to him; for rarely now is found such loyalty and love between pastor and people. To them he was father, law-giver and judge; they were his children, loved with a father's love. Day after day his study was interrupted by some one in difficulty; at all seasons they came, with all troubles, and never was their case slighted. Often have I rapped at his study door with a message from a waiting one, and knowing the burden of work which oppressed him, rapped with fear, but never was I greeted with a frown; sometimes a heavy sigh indicated the disappointment, but nothing further.

Moment after moment, hour after hour of his precious time he has spent listening to the tale from a heart-broken father of his wayward child, or of a grief-stricken mother, listening so kindly and pointing so gently to the Comforter, that in drawing them, he himself drew nearer. He made their joys and sorrows his, and each time he laid one to rest, we felt that he suffered—that one more tie to earth was severed, a clearer view of heaven and his Master gained.

The children, "the lambs of my flock" were his special care, and how they loved him and gathered round him! In Sabbath school his entrance was hailed with delight. Teaching the infant class one day, the impression he made on the minds of the little ones was forcibly revealed. We were speaking of God and endeavouring to teach them something of His omniscience and omnipotence, and asked if they had ever seen Him. One little boy startled us by nodding his head energetically in answer to this question. Thinking he did not understand we tried to explain, but were met with the quiet but firm assurance, "I have seen God." We then asked when and where. At this the little three-year-old struggled to his feet on the seat, looked eagerly all round the school-room, and suddenly, as the pastor approached, called out "There, there is God, me see God."

We smile and feel a little shocked perhaps at the belief of the little prattler, when we should the rather bow before the wisdom, far beyond that of the sage, which discerns the Spirit of God veiled in flesh. Should we not rather sigh that so seldom is our God seen in us? Surely 'tis our privilege to come so close to our Lord that He may shine through us, not only to live that men may take knowledge of us that we have been with Jesus, but so to abide in Him and with Him in us, that in us the world may see Him, and through us know Him. Is not this our duty as our privilege—to live Christ?

The love and esteem of those who knew him in public life is evident from the following extract from an article which appeared in a western paper at the time of his death.

"... He was in every respect a man far above the ordinary. Gifted with natural talents of a very superior order, he cultivated these by earnest study, close observation and systematic habits of thought, to a degree attained by comparatively few men. In almost every department of thought, he kept perhaps as nearly abreast of the times as it is possible for any man in this progressive, thinking age to keep. As a consequence his sermons bore evidence of great depth and compass of knowledge, and of an insight into human nature that made his hearers feel as if he had actually entered into their experience and as if their motives were laid open before him. . . . In every respect—whether in regard to the long period of usefulness that might have been before him, the good he was capable of accomplishing, the knowledge he was capable of disseminating, the pleasure he was capable of affording, or the influence he was capable of wielding—his removal at an age when most people attain their greatest influence for good, cannot be regarded as other than a great public calamity."

(To be Continued.)

SKETCH OF DR. HOWIE'S LIFE.

In order to meet the expressed desire of many, we publish the following sketch of Dr. Howie's life. He was born in Shwire, a village north of Galilee, and 3,000 ft. above the Mediterranean. His ancestors are said to be children of the stock of Abraham, and embraced Christianity in the apostolic age. His parents Tannoos and Shebiat Howie, were born in and never went beyond the limits of the Promised Land, and were zealous adherents of the Greek Church. Like the rest of their communion they held that there is a great and essential difference between them and the Roman Catholic Church. His grandfather was a priest and his father a builder, both were intelligent and comparatively well educated men. They possessed a copy of the New Testament, but that was too rare and too expensively bound for ordinary use, but a copy of the British and Foreign Bible Society's Bibles came into his father's possession and he used it diligently, reading it now to himself and again to his neighbours who gathered about his fireside in the winter evenings. Ghosn Howie was going to the village school then and was able to read fairly well, and what he heard and read induced him to ask two important questions: Are the life,

sufferings and death of Christ enough to save the sinner? second, is it efficacious or lawful for man to approach Christ directly without creature mediation? There was no one at hand to give him a plain and satisfactory answer. At the age of twelve or thereabouts his parents strongly desired to send him to a high school or college, but the boy knew that this implied the study of French or English and in his ignorance he exaggerated the difficulty of acquiring these languages, and as a consequence refused to go to college, so his parents sent him to learn the building trade.

His father died in 1866, and shortly after, Ghosn met with a slight accident, an evil which in God's good providence was destined to issue in good.



DOCTOR HOWIE.

A stone at which he was working slipped and knocked his leg a little above the knee. He took no notice of it at the time, but two days later it began to swell and became very painful. Skilled physicians were not to be found in that neighbourhood, for except in case of accident the people seldom need a physician; their life is simple and their diet consists chiefly of fruit and vegetables and a good deal of barley or wheat bread. Excruciating pain and sleeplessness continued for over two months, and the thing seemed a mystery to the local unprofessional physicians, but at last one of them in despair, as it were, lanced it, whereupon it was at once seen that this was what should have been done five weeks before, for with the discharge the pain decreased and in a few weeks he began to take plenty of food and sleep. A year or more passed and the wound discharged still and it turned out that portions of the bone above the knee had been dead. It took fourteen months to extract these, after which the wound soon healed. But during the year or year and a half he was under treatment he had no pain and his health seemed good, nevertheless he was confined to the house and at the same time continued to study the Scriptures.

The Protestant Church was founded in Syria by missionaries from the west in the second quarter of this century, and Ghosn Howie was visited by members or adherents of this church, and light as it were shone out of darkness; and the questions which had been almost shelved, were brought up again and answered, that the life and death of Christ provide a complete atonement and secure free forgiveness for the sinner; and second, that our Lord Saviour Jesus Christ decidedly invites men to come to Him, directly and at once, and the Blessed Virgin, His mother, the apostles and all the illustrious saints never pointed sinners to themselves but ever urged them to flee to Him, and the apostle Peter voices the sentiment of them all when he said, "for there is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts iv. 12). From this time Ghosn Howie became inflamed with the desire to become a preacher of the Gospel in some way, although pulpit work, as we understand it in the west, did not occur to him as possible in his case; however, his dislike to the study of foreign languages having been overcome, he began to study with a view to becoming a teacher.

In 1874 he made his first journey abroad, through Egypt and Spain to Britain, but from 1877 to 1880 he taught school in Syria; and he testifies that God moves in a mysterious way, doeth all things well and even out of evil brings forth good.

In reply to the question frequently asked Dr. Howie: Why do you not speak in public about your conversion? he replies: "The story of my life lacks the essential elements which constitute an interesting discourse or book. I am unable to say that I have been disinherited or persecuted or despised for the sake of Christ. On my recent visit to my native place, almost the whole village came to salute me and prove themselves friendly. The priests praised me publicly and the local governor entertained me hospitably; and all this cannot be the result of a compromise which I made with them, because during my sojourn among them I preached publicly as pure a gospel as ever was preached in Edinburgh or Toronto, and I long for another and larger opportunity to do the same again. Let me add that in finding and following Christ I lost nothing and gained everything. I have better meals, better clothes, better friends and more of them than I probably would have had, unconverted, unsaved, and there is no reason why I should not make the 103rd Psalm my morning song.

The circumstances of Dr. Howie's loss of sight, college career in Edinburgh and emigration to Canada will be the subject of a later article.

Dr. Howie was received as a minister of this church in 1886, and served for nearly three years as a pastor of Knox Church, Brussels. Having resigned his charge he revisited Palestine, his native country, last year and preached the Gospel in many villages there, and he earnestly desires to return and labour as an auxiliary in one or other of the Presbyterian Missions there if any friends could be found to assist in providing for his support. More particulars would be furnished on application to this office or to Dr. Howie himself, 168 McPherson Ave., Toronto. The *Toronto Globe*, which sent a reporter to interview Dr. Howie last year, said: Mr. Howie is a scholarly and forcible preacher and lecturer and has done much to interest and instruct Canadians in the systems of education in the east, evangelical missions in Palestine, and the geography, customs and commerce of his native land. The honourable position which he occupies as a scholar, lecturer, preacher and teacher, is more honourable in view of the disability under which he has laboured and against which he has made his way.

ATHEISTIC CRITICISM.

MR. EDITOR.—In his article published in your issue of November 9, Rev. A. Ben-Oliel, of Jerusalem, with whom I had pleasant intercourse during my recent visit to Syria, says: "The fool hath said in his heart there is no God," and so the Higher Critics say "There is no inspiration, no supernatural intervention of God in human history."

Now, I belong to the conservative school and, when still a student in Scotland, I received three prizes, mainly for three essays in which I defended the Church view of the date and authorship of the Pentateuch. I am fairly well acquainted with the more important efforts to overthrow that view, and, like Mr. Ben-Oliel, I discover no reason to deviate from the Church teaching on the subject. Nevertheless, it occurs to me that the language quoted above is objectionable, and the statement incorrect or misleading, and yet Mr. Ben-Oliel is not to blame. The criticism he refers to ought to be called not higher but atheistic criticism. It is high time writers and preachers should make and agree upon a distinction between Renan and Wellhausen on the one hand, and Robertson Smith, Bruce, and even Briggs on the other.

There are Higher Critics who deny the Mosaic authorship, but not the inspiration of the Pentateuch; the dates but not the authorship of other Scriptures. Mere fairness then seems to demand some kind of distinction between the criticism to which Mr. Ben-Oliel no doubt refers, and the criticism which merely takes exception to the date of composition or human authorship of a sacred Scripture.

GHOSN-EL HOWIE (late of Syria).

November, 1892.

A WORKING CHURCH.

"A church of 100 workers is far more efficient for good than a church of 300 hundred, with 200 non-workers or sleeping partners. Every idle member creates a bad atmosphere which seems to generate other idlers, and encourages a wrong idea of the meaning of membership in a church. That keen observer, John Stuart Mill once said: 'That bad men need nothing more to compass their ends than that good men should look on and do nothing.'"

So said Rev. Herbert Evans, D.D., of Canarvon, from the chair of the Congregational Union of England and Wales, in the Horton Lane chapel, Bradford, in an address on "A Living Church." The truth of the statement will forcefully strike every one who has had any considerable experience in church life. What pastor would not rather have a living, active church of fifty members than a sleeping inactive church of five hundred members? We have churches from five hundred to fifteen hundred members, and we find that the larger churches are no more efficient than the smaller ones. The working force of a church of five hundred members is generally less than one hundred persons.