

Our Contributors.

POINTS AND SOME MEN WHO CAN MAKE THEM.

BY KNOWNIAN.

Dr. Willis used to advise his students to attend the courts occasionally and study the manner of first-class lawyers in addressing juries. The Doctor was the sworn enemy of "pulpit soporific," as he called it, and he thought that one of the ways to break up the soporific was to study the style of good speakers who had no pulpit, and no soporific. Spurgeon urges his students to try and rival the ability of the men at the Bar in doing good, *impromptu* work, and says that he has often been astonished at the readiness and ability with which they can defend the interests of their clients. No doubt many valuable lessons may be learned from the gentlemen of the Bar, but beyond doubt the most enviable quality of a highly-trained lawyer's mind is his marvellous ability to lay hold on the vital points of a case. Here the trained legal mind is far and away above the mind of every other man, especially the clergyman. You look at some matter and you think there are many points involved. You submit it to a highly-trained legal mind, and he brushes away at one stroke all the points you thought important and strikes a vital principle at the bottom that you never thought of at all. You wonder, but if you test the case the chances are a million to one that the issue will turn on the one point the legal man saw. Perhaps it was the only point in the case. The rest was all rubbish. The principal reason why some ecclesiastical trials are a burlesque is because the men conducting them don't know a vital point from a mere opinion or assertion. They have scarcely judicial capacity enough to know a vital principle from a cough or a sneeze or a shout.

There are not many vital points in any ordinary question. Thirty years ago the Presbyterianism of Canada was convulsed on the organ question. How many points were really in that controversy? Not more than three or four. Certainly not more than half-a-dozen. A Scotch clergyman summed them up in a pamphlet entitled "The Organ Question Pro and Con." If we rightly remember he condensed the question into three or four contentions on each side. Dr. Proudfoot went over all the points in a short speech in the Assembly in Quebec in '71, and managed to sugar-coat them with such skill that the Assembly gave him what he asked. The hundreds of people who now use instruments with pleasure and advantage don't remember or don't know that they owe their liberty to the London Doctor. He was the first man who succeeded in getting done legally what others had done illegally. George Brown was right when he said that men who secure liberty for the people seldom get credit for their labours. They don't either in Church or State.

There are not many vital points in the Jesuits' Estates question so far as the constitutionality of the Act is concerned. Of all the men who have vociferated on that question, how many could sit down quietly and tell you what the constitutional points are? Ask for constitutional reasons why the Quebec Legislature should not have passed that Bill, and just watch what you get.

The number of vital points in the trade questions now before the public is not large, and they are becoming fairly well known. By the time the next election is over the people will understand the points. One of the leading newspapers keeps them before the public every day. Under a new heading and from a new standpoint you find precisely the same facts and arguments nearly every morning. The work is done on the same principle as Moody conducts special services—by hammering on one spot.

How many of the people who talk about Separate schools know the points involved? How many could give you even the historic facts of the case?

One of the chief points of difference between an influential speaker and one who has no grip is that the one makes points and the other does not. Intelligent people soon weary of mere words. Of course there is in every community a class of semi-idiotic people who are quite satisfied with words nicely put together and pleasantly expressed, but the class is not influential, and happily it becomes smaller every year. The men who make things move in Church and State must themselves be moved by ideas. A pleasant, insipid speaker or preacher does well enough for featherhead people, or for any people for a short time, but people who think will in the end demand something to think about. In other words, they want points. A mind that does anything in the way of thinking cannot feed long on wind, however musically the wind may blow.

The capacity for making points is perhaps partly natural and partly acquired. One indispensable thing is clear thinking. As Shedd says, you must have a clear, clean-cut idea, and must see it in a clear medium. Then there must be power of expression. Everybody can't express clearly all the ideas he sees clearly. Power of arrangement is also indispensable if more than one point is to be made. Next to the intrinsic value of a point its setting is perhaps the most important thing.

Who is the best maker of points in the General Assembly? On the whole we should be inclined to say Principal MacVicar. He can make a larger number in fewer words, and make them stand out more prominently and clearly than any other man. For making one point at a time, and mak-

ing it flash like lightning, Mr. Macdonnell is head and shoulders over any man in the Church, but he does not manage his transitions with the same ease and skill as the Montreal Principal. The transitions are always the most difficult parts of a speech, and it is doubtful if a man of nervous temperament can ever master the art of passing gracefully and quickly from point to point.

Principal Grant makes points in an exceedingly agreeable manner, but he often limits and qualifies them until you are not quite certain just how much is left. Dr. McLaren makes a point with great clearness and power, but to do his best he needs time. Dr. Gregg is always clear as a sunbeam. So is Principal Caven.

In Canadian politics the best man to turn a point is Sir John Macdonald. In that particular kind of warfare he is perhaps the first man in the world. By some kind of an argument, by an anecdote, by a joke, by a personal attack, by some means or other, he nearly always turns a point so that the average man thinks that the point is answered or that there is very little in it to answer.

Who is the best man in Dominion politics to make points? Probably Mr. Mills. At all events he is the best to make them on paper on different questions. Of course Mr. Mills has no such speaking power as any one of twenty men in the House. There are a dozen men on his own side anybody would rather listen to, but when you want to get all the points in a difficult question, just take Mr. Mills' speech in the *Hansard*, and see how he goes to the very roots. Sir Richard Cartwright is an effective maker of good points and so also is John Charlton.

Mr. Mackenzie before his health failed was probably the first man in his party or in the country to make clear, strong, well-put points. George Brown was a perfect master at the business. In fact every man in Church and State that ever amounted to anything was a good maker of points.

Moral: If you can't make a point keep your mouth shut, except at tea-meetings and conventions.

THE BI-CENTENARY OF "THE GLORIOUS RETURN" OF THE WALDENSES IN 1680.

IX.

V.—THE FESTIVAL AT TORRE PELLICE.

We come now to the "last scene of all" in the festivals.—

(b) *The illuminations and fireworks,*

which took place in the evening. These formed a pleasing change from the previous celebrations of the occasion, and were not at all out of keeping with it, though they addressed themselves only to the senses. I cannot do better than simply translate the whole of the account of them given in the work already mentioned, which is as follows:—

The scene presented by the bottom of the valley and the surrounding heights in the evening of September 2 was, as a gentleman of high rank termed it, "truly a fairy show." No sooner was the signal given than on all sides, and even on the highest peaks, were kindled immense bonfires, some of which contained nearly a thousand fagots. Thanks to the exertions of a committee composed of inhabitants of Rora, which, according to its circular, "echoed and allieed itself to that of Torre Pellice," great fires blazed on the little Col de Pian Prà, at Rocca Bera, Rocca Boudet, Fin, Bric and Valanza: and lower down at the Vignes, at the Chateau, at the Collet and Racette. Others besides, by the exertions of the committee and of several private individuals, shone to the right on the hills of St. Jean: at Broi, Saret, Pissavin, Bric, Bric des Lantaret, Montplaisir, Bealera Peyrola, Odin, Cioldmai, Peyrot, Rocca Courdera, Castlus, Castlucet, Roccia Manuet, Sounaliettes and Louchera; still further to the right, in the valley of Angrogna: at Bariolo, Ramà, Casteletto, Bastione, Bovile, Cataron, Serremalan, Serre, Buonanotte, Mondin, Bagnao, Turle, Mont Cervin, Velotech, Cacet, Prassuit, etc. Lastly, in the bottom, at Vandalin, at the great Castluss, Ciampas, Punta Cornet and Pramola. We are not mistaken when we say that the number was near seventy.

Lastly, in the bottom, all the houses were illuminated, some with Venetian lanterns, others with glasses, others again with coloured globes. The temples of St. Jean and Torre Pellice were magnificent. Each was adorned with three stars of blue glasses. The gardens on the hill were prettily illuminated with twinkling stars and rays of fire. The Albarin house at the Blouats was richly adorned with the royal escutcheon, and the Bauer villa with bell flowers of different colours. Higher up, under the fort, a portico was represented in fire on the dark background of the hill. Lastly, the village was a real kaleidoscope. There was not a house which had not in its windows its transparencies, its globes and some of the fifteen thousand glasses placed by the committee, which gave a small grant to those who desired them. The Waldensian house had on its facade a royalescutcheon of an extraordinary size, lighted by 450 glasses, from which hung a graceful crown of illuminated bell flowers. The front of the college was decked with stars and daisies, and from the centre of the town one could see the house which formerly belonged to the Counts of La Tour (Torre Pellice), shining with lights. The streets were ploughed by the crowd, and cries of admiration gave place to enthusiastic shouts and cordial ovations when the carriage in which were Count Lovera and his attendants was passing by. Yet there was not the slightest disorder. A large party of young men set out from St. Jean with torches, and after they had gone through the streets of Torre Pellice, cheering for their king and country, went to salute the representative of the former at the Bauer villa, to which he had come for the purpose of witnessing the pyrotechnic display.

At 8.30 the boom of a cannon was the signal for the beginning of the fiery shower, the work of Sig. Chiabotto, of Turin, which, from the heights of Fort Sainte Marie,* fell at first in the form of squibs, stars, rockets and bombs filling the air with numerous cries, and drawing from the crowd certain very characteristic "Oh's" and "Ah's" of admiration. And when, to crown the pyrotechnic work, Bengal lights made the fort seem "all enwrapt in one devouring flame," the thoughts of several must have gone back to times past in which that height shone with a much more awful light, and their hearts must at the same time have glowed with gratitude to that God who has wrought so many and such great changes for us.

*I did not go up to see the ruins of this Fort when I was at Torre Pellice, as several friends told me that I could see well enough from the bottom all that was of interest in them.

"Here endeth" the history of these festivals. But before closing this series of articles, I would like to give my readers a translation of some very excellent remarks on the festivals by the writer of the work from which, as I have already said, I have taken my materials. As it was published by order of the Synod of the Waldensian Church, his remarks, of course, are endorsed by that body. I know that there are those who have read my former articles in this series with deep interest. The remarks of which I have just spoken would, however, in addition to what I have already said in this paper, make it too long. I shall, therefore, stop here for the present and devote my next to them.

T. F.

Elder's Mills, Ont.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND.— JUBILEE OF MISSIONS IN INDIA.

BY REV. S. HOUSTON, M.A., KINGSTON.

SECOND ARTICLE.

We come now to speak of the work done as described by Mr. Jeffrey in his history. In July, 1840, the first two missionaries were designated by the Union Assembly, the Assembly at which the Union of the Synod of Ulster and the Secession Synod was consummated. The pioneer missionaries were James Glasgow and Alexander Kerr. Both had been in the work of the ministry a few years, long enough to approve themselves as men in whom the Church might place confidence. The designation was in July, and before August ended they had started for the field. From the time they sailed from Belfast it took six months for them to reach Bombay. When we remember how quickly the same journey is made now we see somewhat of the progress that has taken place in half a century in the mode of travelling. The field to be occupied had, after a lengthened correspondence with Dr. John Wilson of Bombay, then of the Church of Scotland, afterwards of the Free Church, been selected by the directors. By his advice the Province of Kathiawar was appropriated. It is a peninsula north of Bombay, lying between the Gulf of Bombay and the Gulf of Cutch. The population is about two millions and a half. On the arrival of the missionaries at Bombay they were received with the utmost cordiality by Dr. Wilson, as indeed all their successors were. Not only so when they were ready to proceed to the new and untried field and work, Dr. Wilson accompanied them. We need not wait to describe the tedious and exceedingly perilous and uncomfortable passage from Bombay. Even after perils by water were over there were eight days' land-travelling on springless bullock carts, and this was not lightened by the fact that the mission families were accompanied by infant children, born while in Bombay. In June they reached Rajkote which was to be the headquarters of the new mission, some eleven months after they were designated. The Province is composed of a multitude of petty native governments, and there were all the difficulties and annoyances that missionaries in such circumstances are compelled to encounter. They were not long in Rajkote before most of them, including Dr. Wilson, were prostrated by the fever peculiar to that climate. Dr. Wilson's life was despaired of for a time, but he recovered to do many years' work. One of the missionaries however, Mr. Kerr, succumbed, and so the workers were reduced one-half before the work was well begun. The consternation produced by the news of his death at home may be conceived. We can only wait to say that in time his place was filled and more than filled. Four additional men were selected and sent into the field. Besides the opposition that was so common in those days, and to which our own missionaries in Central India are no strangers even in these days, there was another hindrance which the early Irish missionaries had to meet and with the aid of their supporters at home overcome. This was the procuring of a permanent residence. At first they occupied bungalows which belonged to the camp. It was found, however, that the occupancy of such houses was a very precarious matter. If a new regiment came the bungalows had to be vacated on sight, and then the missionaries were practically without a place to lay their heads. This led to the raising of funds at home for the erection of mission premises. It was an absolute necessity to procure these, if the mission was to go on. This took time and until completed there was much hardship to be endured. Besides evangelistic work of a direct kind which from the first and all along was attended to with all the zeal and pertinacity possible, early attention was given to schools, and education has ever been an important part of the work. No one in the mission or at home doubts now the wisdom of the policy then adopted and which has been continued to this hour. The logic of history has abundantly proved the sagacity of the men who founded the mission. Indeed when we look back over the half century we may boldly say never was a Church or Mission Society better served in their missionaries than the Presbyterian Church in Ireland has been.

As the number of the missionaries increased more stations were occupied. This is the usual history of mission work. Not only so, they came in time to occupy stations beyond the Province of which at first they took possession. On the mainland adjoining the peninsula the London Missionary Society had for a length of time been at work. Some time after the Irish missionaries began their work the London Board resolved to consolidate their work in India, and after some negotiation it was agreed to transfer their premises to the Board at Belfast. Not only were the premises got on favourable terms but at least one missionary resolved to cast in his