

One of the best things we have read lately in the way of a novel is *Donovan*, a modern Englishman. It is the story of one upon whom fate frowned from birth; who through misfortune became a cynic and an atheist. It is a work with a distinct and noble purpose; and no one who is interested in the relation of Christianity to modern life will find the time taken in reading it anything but profitably spent. There is at once a broad Christian sympathy and a hardy common sense about the authoress which is only too rare in much of our modern literary work.

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It is becoming the fashion now-a-days in certain quarters to look less to the pulpit and more to pastoral visitation as the great power in church work. While we have no desire to take from pastoral duties any of the honor which is due to them, nevertheless we do not believe that pastoral visitation either in this country or in any other country can ever become the ruling power in the Christian Church. It certainly cannot in the Presbyterian, without a radical change in the character of its worship. To assume that it may is, in the first place, out of accord with the traditions of Presbyterianism. From time immemorial the pulpit has been the rallying ground of all her greatest and noblest work. The battles which have made her immortal have been fought in the pulpit; any defeats she has suffered have been due to weakness in pulpit power; and from the pulpit has come the victory which at last crowned her work.

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Every one is, of course, familiar with the cry about the decadence of pulpit power. It were small wonder if there was such a decline when we find leading men in the church publicly teaching that we must look no longer to the pulpit, but to pastoral visitation, as the allotted means for the increase of the church. We have no hesitation whatever in characterizing such a statement as a groundless one, and in the second place affirming that the public expression of such sentiments is, as D'Israeli would say,

"A political blunder and worse than a crime."

Never since Paul stood on the hill of Ares has the pulpit been the power in the Church and in the world that it is to-day. The press, so far from supplanting it in the instruction of mankind, is simply its best servant. The influence which Mr. Beecher, Mr. Spurgeon, Dr. Talmage and Mr. Joseph Cook have had upon religious thought and life in Europe and America for the last quarter of a century is simply incalculable.

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There is an excellent article by Mr. G. Mercer Adam in the *Trinity College Review* on the influence of colonialism upon literature. Mr. Adam opens the argument by denying that our intellectual activity is in any degree commensurate with our material. Continuing and limiting his remarks to literary activity in the political sphere,

he asks whether it is possible to find "breadth of culture and power of vision" in a political dependence. The country is to-day within fifteen years of celebrating the three hundredth anniversary of its birth. That far-back event saw it a colony in the cradle of France; to-day sees it still a colony in the cradle of Britain. There are some advantages that belong to the colonial condition as there are some advantages that adhere to the cradling stage. If unduly prolonged, however, these advantages become disadvantages—the colony remains the infant colony, and the inmate of the cradle becomes the man-dwarf."

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Mr. Adam goes on to ask whether it is true, as some affirm, that Canada is to-day a "nation," and a somewhat lengthy consideration of the subject brings him to the conclusion that the idea is ridiculous. We have not the time at present to consider the whole question as we would like, but we must confess that Mr. Adam has made out a very good case. Yet he does not offer us a complete solution of the difficulty. He does not say whether he thinks it lies in independence, in annexation, or in what. But, whatever may be the means employed, we are at one with Mr. Adam in holding that until Canada is a *nation*, while she may have an occasional son covered with immortality in the literary sphere, she will certainly have no literature as such that is worthy of the name. One swallow does not make a summer, and one great writer, or two, or three do not constitute a literature.

* ASSOCIATE EDITORIALS. *

IS it not a fact that students are often sent to the mission field who are unfit for the positions entrusted to them? Some may say that from observation we cannot ascertain what men's inward character is, and that, therefore, we have no right to pass so harsh a judgment as this upon them. It is true we should be guarded in judging of our fellow-men; and that we should always read unto their actions the highest motives which their conduct will warrant; but, at the same time, we must not excuse all sorts of unbecoming and unchristian conduct on the ground that though the flesh is weak the spirit may be right with God. There is not, as is sometimes supposed, an eternal war declared between the flesh and the spirit; a war in which one triumphs to-day, and the other to-morrow. What is called the flesh is nothing other than the outward expression of a spirit that is out of harmony with the eternal will of God. If, therefore, the prevailing tone of a man's conduct distinctly expresses want of conformity with the highest principles of our being, how can we say that notwithstanding all this his spirit may be right with God? That men attend college whose conduct is doubtful while there, and that these are sometimes sent to the mission