

## "My Times are in Thy Hand."

BY THE REV. A. B. MACKAY, D.D., MONTREAL.

*For the Review.*

It has been said that human life is like an April day in England—

The beautiful, uncertain weather  
Where gloom and glory meet together.

Happy then must he be who, looking at the swift succession of changing experiences, now dark now bright, now sorrowful now joyous, can say with the Psalmist, "my times are in Thy hand." They are no chance medley of fickle fortune's cruel sporting; they are all shaped and ordered and controlled by a hand of perfect power and skill and tenderness. This is the assurance of faith not the discovery of sight. As we look at these times we get confused if we attempt to explain them. We see them moulded and colored by influences from all quarters and of the most varied kind. They are the result of forces acting from within and from without, from beneath and from above, from behind and from before—sometimes steadily, sometimes spasmodically, sometimes purposely sometimes accidentally—physical, intellectual, spiritual. Therefore as far as intellectual apprehension goes all seems a chaos. But faith knows this is true "my times are in Thy hand" and rests there in absolute repose, counting all other confidence "nothingness of emptiness."

The Psalmist can look all the ugly facts of his life in the face and though the sight is sad and painful it does not drive him to despair because he knows all his times are in God's hands. He was no stranger to sorrow. Few have drunk more freely of the cup of woe. In this thirty first Psalm he tells out his griefs and marshals his miseries, soul and body were almost crushed under the heavy load. Listen to his complaint, "Have mercy upon me, O Lord, for I am in distress! Mine eye wasteth away with grief, yea my soul and my body, for my life is spent with sorrow and my years with sighing." And worst of all his conscience tells him that his own sin underlies all his trouble; "My strength faileth because of iniquity and my bones are wasted away." Were he free from fault it would be some consolation, but he dare not take that comfort to himself, for it would be a lie. Thus he groans in spirit and confesses his sin.

His misery is made more keen by the remembrance of happy days. Once he was surrounded by hosts of friends, admired by many acquaintances, looked up to by all. Now he has lost his popularity, is cut off from all comforting and supporting companionship, and the sense of utter loneliness crushes his soul to the dust. He has found out the meanness and selfishness of human nature. His neighbors, his acquaintances even the public generally avoid him like the plague. They seek to ignore him as completely as if he were a dead man, out of mind. He feels like a broken bowl lying in a dust barrel in a back lane. And he knows right well how the change has been brought about and this adds to the bitterness. Whisperers and back-biters and slanderers have been at work poisoning the ears of others against him, plotting together to effect his destruction, setting traps and snares and nets privily to catch him. They will be satisfied with nothing short of crushing him. Yet this much enduring man can cry "my times are in Thy hand." They are not in the hands of my enemies. They are not in the cold hand of blind fate. They are in Thy hand, O Lord Thou God of Truth. There is comfort and strength and rest at all times. My going out and my coming in, my ups and downs, my joys and sorrows, my gain and loss, my health and sickness, my life and death are in Thy hand. Here let us rest like a little child nestling in its mother's arms.

This is a very simple and fundamental truth. "My times are in Thy hand." There they are, and I could not if I would, I would not if I could, take them out of His hand. Were the choice given us to take our times out of God's hand, would we not refuse the offer? feeling that its acceptance would be the most audacious sin and the most egregious folly. Where could they better be than in the hand that bears the print of the nail, the hand which has hurled my sins as far from me as the east is from the west?

Look back and say "My times are in Thy hand" up to the present hour, divine power, divine wisdom, divine love, have been moulding and fashioning my whole life in every phase of it. Look forward and say the same. These times to come, unknown to me are all known and arranged

by Thee and Thou wilt keep me, guide me, bring me to Thyself. Are you young? Could you have a better assurance with which to pass into the unseen future? Are you old? Could you have a trustier staff on which to rest in your declining years? Then your cheery soul will say to fellow pilgrims

Grow old along with me,  
The best is yet to be—  
The last of life, for which the first was made.  
Our times are in His hand  
Who saith "A whole is planned,  
Youth shows but half; trust God; see all, nor be afraid."

Is this true "My times are in Thy hand"? Then let us be free from anxious care. Surely I dishonor Him if I worry and fear and fret. Is your business outlook dark? Do you see complications looming up which greatly distress you? Is your health bad? Is your natural strength decaying? As you see one and another falling at your side, does your heart sink at the thought "Somewhere in the waste the shadow sits and waits for me?" Well if you do come to the hour of death this time is also in His hand, and of all the blessings you have received in life there is none to be compared with that you will receive at death. It means getting home to be with Christ which is far better than anything we have experienced at the best and brightest of all these times we have enjoyed in the shelter of His hand. "My times are in Thy hand; therefore goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

## Educated Young Men and the Church.

BY J. T. REID M.D., MONTREAL.

*For the Review.*

Carlyle says:—"Strong is the man who has a Church—what we can call a Church. He stands thereby though in the centre of immensities—the conflux of eternities. Set manlike towards God and man. Well may men prize their credo—raise to it stately temple and reverend hierarchy—and give to it the tithe of their substance. It is worth living for and dying for too."

In this commercial and materialistic age, there is an ever increasing majority of young men who have no Church, and who, compared with Carlyle's standard—which is the only true standard—are not symmetrically strong.

According to recent American statistics, only twenty per cent. of the young men of the States east of the Mississippi regularly attend any church, while only twelve per cent attend Evangelical churches. In the States west of that river only thirteen per cent. regularly attend any Church, and only seven per cent. Evangelical churches. In those vast undeveloped regions of the West, where are to be the seats of future mighty empires, these figures are appalling.

In Canada we have, happily, a more hopeful condition. Yet even in Canada our figures fall far short of what they ought to be, far short of what they will be, when our Canadian Churches shall take full advantage of their opportunities.

Of the thousands of young men who are students in our Canadian Universities, the majority are loyal neither to the Church nor to the principles of that religion, which it is the mission of the church to inculcate.

Only a small minority of the students of our own University, only eighteen of all the medical students are members of our University Y.M.C.A.

The Church ascribes the cause of this deplorable state of things to the natural depravity of the hearts of our young men. Many of the best thinkers among the young men, emphatically state that the fault is the fault of the Church—educated young men are nothing if not logical.

Whatever the cause may be, this problem is a vital problem, for upon its solution will depend not only the future waxing or waning influence of the Church, which was divinely ordained to be the incarnate conscience of the World, but also the future moral tone of the State which must wield in the future, as it has wielded in the past, such a mighty influence in promoting or retarding the regnancy of God's Kingdom on the earth.

In the interests of young men, as well as in the interests of the Church and of the State, this paper presumes to refer to one of the causes of this disloyalty to the principles of Christianity which is in our day so prevalent amongst