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Dr. Thomas McLaughlan, by W. Keith Leask, M.A., with introduction by the Rev. Principal Rainy, D.D., Edinburgh and London. Oliphant, Anderson and Ferrie, 1905.

Doubtless the membership rolls of the Presbyterian Church in Canada contain the names of not a few who knew Dr. Thomas McLaughlan personally in the old land, and of many more who knew by reputation the great Highland preacher, and pastor of the Gaelic charge of St. Columba's, Edinburgh. Perhaps a few of our oldest members may still remember Dr. McLaughlan's visit to Canada in the troublous times of 1846, when he formed one of a deputation sent to America in the interests of the United Free Church of Scotland. To all such and to many more who are interested in the history of Scottish Presbyterianism Mr. Leask's book should be very pleasant and profitable reading. Dr. McLaughlan's work was so comprehensive and so intimately connected with church and educational affairs in Scotland during this period, that his biography is virtually a history of the whole period. Indeed the author has been very careful to preface his record of Dr. McLaughlan's life and work by a short history of the state of affairs for many years prior. The book itself is well and attractively bound and printed and contains a fine photogravure of the subject of the biography after an oil painting by Norman Macbeth, R.S.A. The author has added a very convenient and detailed index to the work, which makes it very useful as a book of reference for the history of this interesting period. Principal Rainy's introduction is a very appreciative recollection of Dr. McLaughlan in the several spheres of work in which he was active. Speaking of him Dr. Rainy says: "He deserves to be remembered by all who are interested in the Highlands, in its romantic memories, and in its present day problems."

United States Presbyterianism is talking, and seriously, of erecting a great Presbyterian "Cathedral," or minister, at Washington. Among those prominently advocating the idea is senior Chief Justice Harlan, of the United States Supreme Court. There is plenty of money in the hands of the Presbyterian laymen in the United States; the big minister will be erected if the scheme commends itself to the judgment of those interested.

## THE TORONTO CHILD MURDERER.

The recent horrible tragedy in Toronto, where a young girl of 13 years stole and murdered a child which had been left in a baby-carriage outside Eaton's departmental store, naturally gave rise to much discussion and many homilies. The place of heredity in the case was ventilated, so was the matter of the little girl's environment. The child clearly lacked the preventive influence of a good home.

The more or less irresponsible child-murderer confessed the idea of stealing the baby was suggested by theatrical posters showing a child in the act of being kidnapped. Decent people have for some time past been complaining of these posters as suggestors sometimes of vice and sometimes of crime. If a coarse and murderous poster can do such harm in the way of suggestion, what must be the effect on immature minds of the coarse and murderous play itself. Those who uphold the theatre as a possible method of valuable instruction insist Christians should not denounce all plays, but ought to discriminate. It is impossible to tell from the "notices" in the daily newspapers what plays are helpful and which vulgarizing and crime-producing, since they are usually "puffed" to the skies both before and after performance without the slightest regard to merit. In the whole matter of admitting "notices" and advertisements of almost every kind, we are sorry to have to say the daily press all the world over is retrograding into laxity that cannot be too severely condemned. Were every daily newspaper as careful about its advertisements and commendations as, say, the Montreal Witness, much demoralization and evil consequence would be averted. In this matter, the average newspaper purchaser and reader (YOU, for instance) can find ways and means of encouragement on the one hand and of protest on the other. A hundred strenuous post-cards to the publisher, of the bestowal or withdrawal of a half-dozen advertisements, would set publishers of daily newspapers thinking.

The Advance: In Wales "barrels of beer have been taken back to Carnarvon because there was no market for them." The sobering effect of the revival is impressing many with the feeling that the greatest temperance movement the world could have would be a general revival.

United Presbyterian: The things that oppose us are the things which God has sent to try us. He is laying adversity at our feet to test our patience or stimulate our faith; he is breaking up our nest that we may try our wings; he is casting us adrift that we may learn to use our oars. Strength of character is disclosed by the occasion and God sends the occasion that we may see our character in its proper light. There is always opposition going up stream, there is none going down; yet no man with his boat's prow up the river goes over the cataract. There is no test of character in drifting; there is in battling against wind and tide.

Michigan Presbyterian: Our Lord gave us a criterion by which to judge revivals as well as individual lives when He said: "By their fruits ye shall know them." The revival that crowds the house and multiplies converts and is talked about on the street and published in the papers may after all be only a religious spasm, the fruits, in the confessing and forsaking of sin, in old enemies swept away and differences healed, in making amends for former wrong-doing, in giving up evil habits and forming godly ones. A revival should prove itself by a happier family, a more peaceful community, and a more righteous government.

## IF I WERE A LAYMAN.

By a Minister.

If I were a layman, and had never been a clergyman, I should be very much like the average layman of today—but not nearly so good; for, with all his shortcomings, the layman whom I have known is one of the noblest specimens of the genus homo. And I say this after scanning all his spots and wrinkles through many years from the lofty attitude of my pulpit throne.

But, having been a clergyman, if I should now be transformed into a layman, what a layman I should be!

First of all, I should attend public worship on the Lord's Day habitually and with punctuality. Every Sunday morning I should say to myself, "I must today be about my Father's business." Nothing should ever keep me from the place of prayer which would not keep me from the shop or office. And I should be in my place every Lord's Day for these several and separate reasons: I should be there for the preacher's sake. Christ could not do his work alone, nor can any one of His ministers. A proportion to the support which he receives from his brethren will be the efficiency of his labors. Nowhere does a preacher so need the assistance of the men of his church as in the work of preaching. A public speaker can give back in flood only what he has received from his congregation in spray, and no spray ever rises from a Sahara waste of empty pews. The eloquent tongue is impossible unless there is the listening ear, and, if the latter be present, the former is not far away. The message of the Lord never comes full and hot from human lips unless there is a congregation waiting to receive it. The absence of ten or twenty of his most influential men will damp the fire in any prophet of the Lord, for the absence of these men discredits the worth of everything the preacher says. Every man in church on Sunday says by his presence there to all the community, "This man is saying something which it is worth while for all to hear"; and every member of the church absent from the service says to all the town by his absence, "One does not miss much by staying at home."

Moreover, a Christian owes it to his brother Christian to be in the church at the hour of prayer. We are all frail and feeble, and we need the assistance of one another in the arduous effort of approaching the throne of grace. In the work of creating a reverent and receptive mood every man should bear his part. Whatever energy the Lord has given him one should be ready to communicate to others, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased. And for the church's sake every man should do what lies within his power to make public worship what it ought to be. The church is the body of Christ, and the world judges Christ by his body. On no other day of all the week has the community the opportunity of seeing the Lord's followers with one accord in one place. It is the day when the Lord's army should present to the world an unbroken front. The man who is not in his place is disorderly. He is out of the ranks, and should be admonished. Were public worship what it ought to be, it would kindle a fire for the cleansing of the town. The fire flickers feebly on the altar if men of light and leading stay at home.

Once more, for the world's sake every Christian should worship God habitually in the eyes of men. As Christian people, our supreme work is that of witnessing. The testimony ought to be full-toned and emphatic. It should come from the mouths of many witnesses. When the minister rises to deliver his message, every member of the church who is present co-operates with him in the great work of persuasion. Although silent, the congregation speaks, and after the benediction, as the people wend their way to their homes, the sound of their footsteps in the streets continues the worship; for, being interpreted, it says to all who have eyes