

"Had it been left to our ordering, we would have kept our brother with us for the sake of his family—the wife and five little children who can so illy spare him; for the sake of his parents and personal friends who, upon the love they bore him, had built so many hopes for the future; for the sake of the Mission that has met in his death such irreparable loss; for the sake of his associates and co-workers in it, and especially for the sake of him, whom, in a public address in this very temple, he was pleased to call ('mon vénéré et bien-aimé frère dans cette œuvre, qui m'est si chère,') 'my venerated and well-beloved father in this work, which to me is so dear,' and whose mantle, may I add, we all expected would fall upon our brother Dodds, should the founder of the Mission be compelled to lay it aside. 'But God's ways are not our ways, nor His thoughts our thoughts.' In it is permissive providence against which it is not ours to rebel, but around which hangs a mystery we cannot fathom today, our beloved brother has been cut off in the prime of early manhood, in the midst of his great and increasing usefulness.

"We, his associates, his personal friends, weep about his bier. Thousands in this city to whom he has ministered in Christ's name, mourn him who has been their friend, teacher, and spiritual guide. And thousands in Great Britain and America, who have known him by name and honoured and loved him for his work's sake, will join the number of sincere mourners when the sad news of his death reaches them."

MONTREAL PRESBYTERIAN COLLEGE.

OPENING LECTURE.

The Presbytery of Montreal met on the evening of Oct. 4th in Erskine Church to induct the Rev. John Scrimger, M.A., into the chair of Hebrew and Greek Exegesis in the Presbyterian College. A fair audience was in attendance, and at eight o'clock, as the organist played a voluntary, eighteen or twenty ministers and professors, including the College Senate, in robes and regalia, filed in and took their seats upon the platform. The Moderator, the Rev. Robert Campbell, of St. Gabriel Church, presided, and called upon the Rev. Mr. Morrison, of Ormstown, to conduct devotional exercises. After singing, reading the fourth chapter of Ephesians and prayer,

The Moderator introduced the business of the evening. He referred to the necessity, ever recognized by that Church, of an educated ministry. The managers of Montreal College had long since deemed that more than mere lecture courses were essential for the training of its students, and they attached special importance to instruction in the Scriptures in their original languages. The liberality of the Church had now enabled them to establish a professorship of Hebrew and Greek Exegesis, and Mr. Scrimger had been selected to fill the position. He then put the questions of the Formula to Mr. Scrimger, and upon receiving satisfactory replies to them, the Moderator, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the King and Head of the Church, inducted him into the office, and, followed by all the members in turn, extended to the new-made professor the right hand of fellowship. The Moderator then offered the induction prayer, after which he proceeded to address Professor Scrimger upon his new relations. He had known him longer than any of his co-Presbyters, having held his first pastorate in Mr. Scrimger's native town, and his steady and rapid advance in knowledge, particularly of the languages, had come under the speaker's personal observation, and he had also been one of the first to welcome him to the office of the ministry in this city. The satisfactory character of his services as lecturer in the subjects of which he was now made professor, while at the same time attending with acceptance to the pastorate of St. Joseph street Presbyterian Church were mentioned in high terms, and the speaker was confident that, since Mr. Scrimger's whole time was to be devoted to those subjects, his high attainments and former experience gave assurance of success. In a comparison he made between the respective offices of pastor and professor, it was pointed out that, although the latter was not the higher dignity, yet it was more important, inasmuch as ministers to catch men were easier got than those qualified to train fishers of men. An illustration of Dr. Chalmers was quoted in this connection to the effect that the maker of a machine was more productive than the user of it, and therefore a professorship was of higher usefulness than a pastorate. While not

presuming to instruct the new professor in his special functions, he might call attention to some duties that did not require the skill of a professor to discover. The exegetical instructor was confined to the study of the Scriptures—a field wide enough for a life's efforts, and yet narrowed within the lids of the Bible. While the apologetic professor has to understand other religious systems, and deal with them, the exegete must begin by assuming that God is and that He has revealed Himself in the Scriptures. His chair was second to none in importance, and no college was complete without such a chair, and the speaker expressed the hope that more expository preaching in the future would result from the appointment of Mr. Scrimger. His work was fundamental, God's method having been prescribed in the prayer of the Lord, "Sanctify them through Thy truth," and his duties lay in finding out what the Spirit saith in the Word, regardless of the Babel of outside opinion. The professor had not to try to harmonize the Scriptures with the Church's creed, and the manly independence of him addressed gave assurance of honest interpretation. On the other hand he must avoid the worse extreme of searching for novelties. To decide between conflicting views of those who had gone before him would often perplex him, as the Bible had drawn forth an enormous mass of commentary literature. The speaker was persuaded no necessity would ever arise for reconstructing the creed of the Church from the discoveries of the new professor. He referred to the intellectual giants—the elect of England—who had framed their Church standards, as men whose work would stand the strictest scriptural test. Finally, he commended Professor Scrimger, in apostolic language, to God and the Word of His grace, to make him a workman needing not to be ashamed.

Principal MacVicar at this stage announced that the work of the Presbytery was over, and the succeeding exercises were under the auspices of the College Senate. He informed his audience that the College, with all that recent munificence had afforded it, was not extended beyond its necessities, as its rooms were all taken up and some students had to find lodgings elsewhere. The staff, he was glad to say, had been strengthened since last session, and now comprised four professors, a Dean of Residence, and librarian, and three lecturers. The friends of the College would, at its approaching opening, he anticipated, realize its additional claims as calling for still greater munificence. Dean of Residence was a new office, the creation of which had been approved by the General Assembly, and was very important, embracing in part the work of instruction and government of the students. For this position the Board had selected the Rev. W. J. Dey, M.A., of Spencerville, a gold medalist of McGill University, and also in theology. In addition to a fine college record in arts and theology, he brought to his new duties, the valuable experience of a seven years' successful pastorate. The Principal then formally welcomed Mr. Dey to his new office, and afterward called upon Professor Scrimger to deliver his inaugural lecture.

Prof. Scrimger ascended the pulpit and announced his subject: "The Prophets and Their Work." The prophetic Scriptures, comprising a fourth of the whole volume, he said, were unintelligible to most readers. They were obscure from their poetic structure, and required most careful study to be understood. The defectiveness of the present authorized version increased the obscurity, and he hoped for much improvement in the approaching revised version. The prophecies were further made difficult of comprehension from their being not arranged in chronological order—a fault inherited from the Hebrew canon, and impossible to thoroughly rectify, and, even if otherwise, the present order was so venerable that it is doubtful if it would ever be disturbed. Another difficulty besetting this department of sacred writ was popular misapprehension of the position of the prophets and their point of view, the impression being general that the chief object of the prophets was to predict, and of the prophecies to furnish proof in their fulfilment of the Divine inspiration of the Bible. This was changing the prophet's front and setting them against the wrong enemy. We have the writings of sixteen prophets, whose lives covered a period of fifteen hundred years; but these were only eminent ones selected out of a large class, for there is mention made of over a hundred prophets being hid by Obadiah, of four hundred collected by Ahab. There were guilds of them, and in Elisha's time they had

outgrown their accommodations, although the semi-monastical institutions called the "schools of the prophets" were not likely their permanent domiciles. Isolated prophets, such as Enoch and Noah, lived in the earlier ages, but they were first formed into a recognized body by Moses, who appointed seventy of them, and were afterward reorganized by Samuel. In their early period the functions of the prophets comprised ruling and judicial powers, which they largely maintained until after the establishment of the Hebrew monarchy. Indeed, the judges were a prophets, and held their authority from the fact that the Spirit of the Lord was upon them, as was evident from the cases of Othniel, Deborah, Gideon, Jephtha, and Samson. David and Solomon exhibited prophetic gifts while holding the kingly office. Saul's conflict with the prophets upon matters of state ended at last in their success, for the crown at Saul's death descended to their nominee. The prophets were magistrates in the primitive times when such were advisers as well as judges, who prevented as well as punished crime. They were educators of the people in public affairs—yet not mere political economists. They taught fidelity to Jehovah and obedience to his law as the foundation of national prosperity; their teachings never ceased to have a political bearing, and they always took an interest in public questions. That they even took sides was apparent from their support of Jeroboam, but they never lost the functions of religious teachers, because Hebrew politics were based upon religious principles. The priesthood were designed to be religious teachers, and had the responsibilities and emoluments of such, but their hereditary succession involved degeneration in time, and they gave more heed to the ritual than the intellectual lines of duty. Reference was made to their liability to fall into the arts of causistry that always went hand in hand with ritualism. The prophets flourished side by side with the priests; they were preachers without churches, comparable to the itinerant preachers of the Middle Ages, and they varied in numbers according to the spiritual life of the nation. The prophets adopted various forms of appeal to the people to catch their attention; for, while the priest spoke whether the people would hear or forbear, the business of the prophets was to make the people hear. Therefore, it being always easy to gain the ear of men by flattering them, many prophets fell under that temptation, yet some were superior to it and boldly withstood kings in the name of the Lord.

The second division of the lecture dealt with the supernatural aspect of prophecy. Supernatural messages had undoubtedly been given, and it was natural to suppose that the mediums for that purpose should be selected from among the men wholly devoted to the statutes and truth of God. The new revelations had mostly been given in times of great crisis, such as national defection from the service of God and general corruption, when God intervened and armed one of His servants with a special message. There was always something connected with his receipt of the message to enable the prophet to distinguish it from the workings of his own mind. In all cases the message was in the direct line of his work. A large portion of prophecy consisted in the denunciations of sin. Prediction of the future was largely subsidiary to immediate effect upon those for whom the Divine message was intended. The prophecies on the eve of the captivity were intended as warnings; those of judgments upon other nations taught them that God reigned. The Messianic prophecies were evidently intended to prepare the nation to receive the Messiah, whose coming was supposed to be near. To get at the meaning of prophecies, it was necessary to find out what evils they were intended to remove. The prophets doubtless spoke for later times; the principles underlying their utterances were everlasting.

The meeting closed by singing the Doxology, and the benediction from the Moderator.

WILLIAM MORLEY TWEEDIE, the winner of the Gilchrist scholarship this year, is the son of one of the ministers of the New Brunswick Conference.

In briefly noticing the presentation to Mrs. McNabb two weeks ago, we should have said that Mr. McNabb was also the recipient of a liberal donation from friends at Woodville. The Beaverton congregation, besides overpaying Mr. McNabb's stipend nearly two months, generously relieved him for three months during the summer, having for that period secured the services of Mr. J. C. Smith, who with ability and acceptance occupied the pulpit.