

Our Contributors.

THE PRESS AND THE PREACHERS

BY KNOXONIAN.

The relations between the press and the pulpit are a trifle strained just now. The strain came on some what in this way. Dr. Hunter, of Hamilton, allows people to ask him questions at his Sabbath evening service and prayer meeting. One evening, not long ago, somebody asked him if he thought there was any hope for the salvation of the editors of party news papers. The worthy Doctor thought there was, and quoted the well known lines about the lamp continuing to burn and the return of a certain class of sinners. He did, however, afterward say in effect in a letter to the press that he feared there was a considerable amount of something very like lying done by some of the party journals. Seeing a report of this discussion the *Globe* became somewhat angry, put on its war paint and took some healthy exercise in the way of showing that the clergy or, at least, some of them, are quiet as great sinners as the political editors are. Dr. Hunter replied in what would have been a very good letter had he not spoiled it at the end by the foolish threat that some of his Grit-Methodist friends might go over to the Tories if the *Globe* did not behave itself. If Dr. Hunter's friends are Grits from principle they must have precious little principle if the alleged misconduct of the *Globe* makes them vote the Tory ticket. Other journals and other preachers have had their "innings" and the discussion will, no doubt, do good.

With the leave of all the parties in the controversy and of his thousands of readers KNOXONIAN now desires modestly to take the floor. He starts out on his oratorical flight by making the strikingly original remark that the party editors are not all perfect. It must, we feel, be admitted that editors, like other men, suffered somewhat by the fall of Adam and that most of them have been guilty of actual transgressions. Indeed, it is remotely possible that most editors would admit they are not absolutely perfect—an admission which all clergymen would, no doubt, make in the abstract. The point which this contributor thinks he can make is that many ministers are just as great sinners in controversy as party editors. Not only so, but if they had to write as much as editors write—if they had to attack and reply every day or every week, as editors do, they would probably be very much greater sinners against propriety than many editors are.

Suppose all that the priests have written about Father Chiniquy could be printed in one column. And suppose all that Father Chiniquy has written about the priests could be published in a parallel column. How would these columns look? Would the matter be of a much milder type than the matter that usually appears in the columns of our daily journals? And be it remembered that in any discussion between the press and the pulpit, the press-men have a perfect right to consider the pulpit, Catholic and Protestant, as a unit. If, however, the Catholic pulpit is ruled out, let us confine our attention to one single specimen of controversial writing between Protestants and see if we can detect any of the sins charged against the editors of party papers.

Five years ago, the Rev. W. A. McKay, B.A., of Woodstock, published a work on Immersion of about 100 pages. Section xii. of that work is made up of alleged "Baptist Misrepresentations." These alleged misrepresentations are garbled or mutilated quotations from the Westminster Assembly, from Moses Stuart and John Calvin. What the author complains of is that the quotations "are wrenched from their original connection and invariably misrepresent the views of their authors." "The misquotations and perversions of fact and history found in some Baptist books," Mr. McKay declares, "are a disgrace to our common Christianity. To expose them all would require volumes." Pretty strong language, certainly. The wicked party journals never say anything much more severe about each other than that; and if the specimens given by Mr. McKay are fair samples, there are, or have been, some ministers that could teach any political editor how to make misquotations. Mr. McKay asks what his readers must think of the honesty of a Baptist writer who quotes the words used by Calvin to express Baptist views as expressing Calvin's own views! We think the writer who did that

would probably find some difficulty in getting a place on the staff of a respectable political journal. Referring to the misquotations from Moses Stuart, Mr. McKay asks if "the most unscrupulous followers of Loyola go farther in their misrepresentations and perversions," and he winds up the section by saying, "We have given but a few examples of the misrepresentations with which Baptist papers and books are crammed full!"

Now, be it remembered that the sin charged most frequently against the party journals is misrepresentation, misquotation, garbling and offences of that class. Dr. Hunter complains that he could not find out the amount of the public debt of Canada from the party journals because they would not give the figures correctly. Did they misrepresent and misquote and garble more than Mr. McKay charges his opponents with doing?

In this same pamphlet there is much more evidence that the sins charged against the party press are not confined to the press. Soon after Mr. McKay's pamphlet was published it was reviewed by a Baptist professor of theology probably selected for the work. Being a professor of theology, he was responsible not only for his own conduct, but for the example he set before his students. Let us see the fine example he sets as a controversialist before these students and the wicked party editors of the country. The wicked editors don't need to read far for a lesson. In his title this learned and gentlemanly professor—this model of Christian courtesy—describes infant baptism as "Rantism," those who believe in infant baptism being, of course, "Rantists." The wicked party editors must be greatly improved in morals and taste by seeing such language used by a refined Christian professor. Reading on a little farther the depraved party editors will notice that this model Christian controversialist calls his opponent an "unknown village preacher." There are probably not three party journals in Ontario that would describe a minister of the standing of the Rev. W. A. McKay as "an unknown village preacher." Reading a little more the wicked political editors will come across a sentence which charges Mr. McKay with ignorance or with resorting to "half truths which teach a lie," and these wicked editors will be surprised to see that when Mr. McKay clears the matter up there is no half truth worth speaking about, and if there is a lie at all, it is on the other side. The "lie," however, is given by this model of refined controversy and the wicked party editors are not improved much by their lesson. Political editors, though many of them write every day, don't use the word "lie" very often; but this gentleman, who is probably greatly exercised about the depravity of editors and the dirt of politics, cannot write one review without sticking the word "lie" in the face of his opponent. As the wicked political editors read on they will observe that their professor becomes very angry and coarse at times. Indeed, his language is so unbecoming that the depraved party editors must sometimes think they are back in their own profane offices during the heat of a general election.

But the worst is to come. While the wicked party editors are wondering whether their morals and taste have been improved, Mr. McKay comes up smiling and pleasantly observes that "Professor Unscrupulous (his reviewer's pamphlet is crammed full of perversions, misquotations and garbled statements.) Then Mr. McKay goes to work and gives some particulars. He shows that his opponent misquotes from page 129 of Dale, and makes Dale not only say what he didn't say, but exactly the opposite of what he did say. The wicked party editors wonder. Then Mr. McKay shows that his reviewer purposely omits part of a definition from Schleusner's Lexicon, which part would have ruined his theory of dipping, and gives the remainder as the whole definition. Mr. McKay leaves the reader to characterize the moral character of the omission. The wicked party editors say that though they know some strong words by heart, they cannot find language on the spur of the moment to do justice to this omission.

Passing by some minor offences we find Mr. McKay charging his reviewer with "gross immorality," on account of the way in which he made a quotation from page 27 of Mr. McKay's pamphlet, a clause having been left out which entirely changed the meaning. The wicked editors begin to think there will soon be a libel suit, as no professor would permit himself to be charged with "gross immorality" in literary work, but no libel suit has yet taken place.

But the worst is yet to come. Mr. McKay next charges his reviewer with using a "forged translation—a pure fabrication," from Eusebius. The wicked party editors breathe more freely when they learn that the translation was not made by the professor himself, but by some friends of his in Toronto whose translation he quoted. Mr. McKay then shows that his reviewer garbles a quotation from Halley, and actually puts in a period where the author had a comma. The wicked party editors could stand it no longer and left, fearing that their characters might be injured.

And yet there are scores of ministers in Canada who groan over the alleged unscrupulousness and general depravity of the party newspapers!

THE SERVANTS.

AN ALLEGORY.

A certain nobleman, named Cleronomos, who had a large estate in South America, was suddenly called away to Spain to attend to important business connected with other property in which he had an interest. He expected that several years would elapse before he should return, and, as there were on the estate several large concerns going on in the way of mining, building, farming, etc., he found it necessary to leave competent men in charge. So he called his servants, Gregoron, Phoboumenos and Ocneros, and giving each his particular charge, showed them his plans, and told them to do the best they could, saying that he would send from Spain a wise and trusted partner of his, Paracletes by name, who would advise with them in all matters affecting the estate, and would give them whatever funds might be required from time to time for carrying on the business. He also promised them that on his return, if they were found to have been faithful, he would give each of them one of his daughters in marriage, with a magnificent dowry and rich estate. But he added that if any of them neglected his business, he would return without warning and would punish such an one for his unfaithfulness. He further said that he might require them in Spain, in which case he should send for them, but the promised reward would still be sure to them, for they should return with him when he should come.

In due time Cleronomos sailed away, and in fifty days after Paracletes made his appearance on the estate and everything was set in order. Each of the servants got all he required, and the work of the estate went on in a most satisfactory manner.

After a while things began to change. Paracletes found that the servant Ocneros was drawing a good deal of money, but seldom had much advice to ask. On inquiry he ascertained that he was living a very gay and exciting life, neglecting his duty and wasting his resources. He remonstrated kindly with him; but without effect. Ocneros only replied, "Cleronomos will not be back for some time, and, as when he is here I have to work like a slave and cannot enjoy myself, I mean to have a good time now." So he persisted in carousing and revelling with his worthless companions. Paracletes could do neither more nor less than write to Spain and acquaint his partner with the misconduct of his servant.

Phoboumenos, too, was enjoying himself and neglecting his work. When Paracletes remonstrated he seemed to be aware of his danger and somewhat afraid, and said that he meant to do better. And when on one occasion a rumour reached the estate that Cleronomos had actually sailed for home and might be expected at any hour, Phoboumenos became thoroughly alarmed, immediately set about putting things as far as possible in order, and tried to make up for his past neglect. With a view to making things as agreeable as he could, he set all hands to construct triumphal arches, with flattering mottoes and cunning devices, and to prepare generally for a grand demonstration, expressive of great love toward his master and joy at his return. He also did all he could to get other persons wrought up to the same pitch of expectancy, so that Cleronomos might be gratified with his splendid reception and demonstrations of welcome, and thus be graciously inclined to overlook the negligence of the first years. At times, Paracletes admonished him regarding the work which still was not attended to as it should have been, but he would reply, "That even with Paracletes' aid he had no hope now of putting things into right shape; the difficulties were such that only the presence of his master could overcome them;