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THE THEOLOGUE.

VOL. 3.—MARCH, 1892.—No. 3.

Presbyterian College, Halifax.

COLUMBA.—(Continued.)

THE new comers' first buildings are such as the Stanley Explorers would extemporize at their African camping grounds, fragile huts, wooden palisades, or more firmly planted stockades; no solid masonry then as now, but long, low, wooden buildings—the veriest log shanties—or, at the outset not so stable even as that, but huts made of pliable branches of trees twisted in and out among some upright stakes like the hurdles of a sheep pen, a kitchen, a refectory, sleeping-rooms, a carpenter's shop, a smithy, all detached and of the rudest material; Columba's cottage on a rising knoll near by, two stories in height, with two attendants at the door-way awaiting orders, the scantiest accommodation for the rest, and their noble chieftain bending within his study over his precious MSS. or kneeling in prayer. Near by stood the church, the chief building, of wood, coated over with rushes to keep out the damp—plain, unadorned.

The buildings stood within a circular rampart of earth, taking in also the little God's acre to which, from time to time, the occupants of the quiet cells near by were consigned. Each cell was supplied with a straw pallet and a pillow. That of their illustrious chief contained a table, a chair, an ink stand, a few MSS., a bare flag for a bed, a stone for a pillow: this last when he rested from his labors deposited on his grave, stood long there, his only monument. Without the rampart a barn, a kiln, a mill, cowhouses, etc., and in the offing near by a small fleet of boats ready for service. Their bill of fare was eggs, fish, seal's flesh, barley bread and milk, on ordinary days; and on Sabbaths or Feastedays, or when a casual visitor arrived, the extra luxury of mutton and occasionally beef.

It is said that the king of the Dabriad Scots, who was related to Columba, gave him the Island; though Pinkerton thinks he got it from the Picts, the then possessors of the Northern Hebrides. among whom he and his followers specially laboured, the Irish Scots being already professing Christians. There was constant intercourse then between the Scots of Ireland and those of Argyle, and the navigation of the sea between them was understood. Druidism had its chief seat in Anglesey, Christianity in Iona. Lindesfarne was the earliest centre of the Northumbrian Church. The people who sat in darkness saw in Iona a great light. *Lux in Tenebris*—the Waldensian motto of later date, might have been its as well. Here for thirty-four years lived Columba, copying MSS. of the Holy Scriptures, (he was a beautiful transcriber) and training men for missionary work. He was specially partial to the Psalter, whose blessed verses he delighted in chanting and singing. 'His sonorous psalm singing would come echoing down the glen like the noise of a distant waterfall. It was as a simple Presbyter of the Irish Church (he knew no higher title) that he came to Iona 1328 years ago and set up one of those colleges which have ever been a prominent feature of the Irish and Scottish churches. This of itself would favor the proposal later made by a distinguished brother to connect our college with Columba's name. Is it not worth our serious consideration to call the institution so peerlessly situated on the North West Arm, St. Columba's College? These holy recluses formed all the clergy their church had. Any vows of obedience exacted were only to the President of the college which they made their home. It was in point of fact, simply a well regulated mission station, and church extension consisted in multiplying such stations. They accepted the existing clan system—the natural grouping of the people. The missionary college was a little family of clergymen, with their students, adapting itself to the clan organization, in order to carry religious instruction through all its ramifications. St. Columba's College was just a missionary station which developed into a college on the manual labor plan. He was not sent by the Church of Ireland, though he and Iona cherished filial relations towards it. He got his orders from heaven and could say with his model—Paul, I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you. He

acknowledged no standard of doctrine save that of the evangelists and apostles. The foundation of his instruction and his instrument in converting was the word of God. He ruled his clergy with authority, yet not as a Bishop, but a senior Presbyter admitting them to his counsels and making them co-workers with himself. All succeeding Scottish Abbots of Iona were Presbyters, and took precedence of Bishops. Kings in Scotland and Ireland were often crowned by the Abbot of Iona. He never asked the aid of their arms in his apostolic work, but their reverence for him was shown by the desire of so many of them to be near him in the silent cemetery. He exercised an independent jurisdiction. Not long after the death of Columba, men of his spirit and true apostolic succession went forth from Iona; St. Aidan, for example, who evangelized England from the Tyne to the Humber, and restored Christianity when almost stamped out by the Danes. In Lindesfarne he established the Mother Church which developed afterwards into Durham Cathedral and College, and owed for centuries allegiance to the Abbot of Iona, who was Primate of all Scotland and the North of England, and never once acknowledged dependence on the Bishop of Rome.

Columba's ecclesiastical system was also educational. The curriculum consisted in the study of the Latin language and of religious Latin literature, especially the Latin Bible, with the doctrines of Revelation as then defined and classified, and the practice of religious duties, observances of devotion, and the training necessary to the proper performance of their religious functions. Much time was spent in copying portions of the Bible, which was their foundation of doctrine. They had subsidiary aids in such commentaries and summaries as their learned men prepared. They also devoted part of their time to original composition, writing both prose and verse in Latin and Irish and to preserving a record of passing events. In presence of the people among whom they labored the main thing was the preaching the everlasting gospel, without the use of breviaries or missals, of pictures, or images, as aids to devotion; nor do we ever read of their praying to Saints, or adoring the Virgin. Celibacy was commended, but not commanded. The tonsure or peculiar cut of the hair which was shaven close over the forepart of the head was practised, and the use of the Cross as a sacred sign, but

the greatest errors of the Roman Catholic Church which accumulated so rapidly in the Sixth Century had not yet corrupted their faith. The confessions of Augustine and the Homilies of Chrysostom formed favourite text books. Still, while a master and minister, Columba was preëminently a missionary. Both parts of the great Commission he endeavored to fulfil, sedulously cultivating the field in his own immediate neighborhood—then penetrating to the regions beyond. After two years of faithful Home Mission he undertook what might be called a Foreign Mission to the Northern Picts, visiting Brude their king in the vicinity of Inverness, 150 miles away, and much of that distance had to be traversed on foot. The Pictish monarch at first stoutly opposed, but was brought ere long to acknowledge “another King, one Jesus.” Columba kept plying him with arguments and appeals and at last overcame him by “the Blood of the Lamb and the Word of His Testimony.” So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed that the fiercest enemies were unable to gainsay or resist. The success realized among the pagan Picts was mainly owing under God to the power of Columba’s preaching and the purity of his personal character. It was the voice of one crying in the wilderness. What a wilderness it was, and what a voice !

“ A voice so thrilling ne’er was heard
 In spring time from the cuckoo bird,
 Breaking the silence of the seas
 Amongst the farthest Hebrides.”

Many incidents of thrilling interest are told of the pluck and prescience of Columba in his Missionary tours. Take one as a specimen. Columbanus, a Pictish proprietor, who had proved a well beloved Gaius to Columba, had been come down upon in a predatory raid by John, one of the Irish Christian Scots belonging to the Kintyre Colony. The desolating incursion had been repeated again and again, and the plundered victim took joyfully the reverse of the spoiling of his goods. On the occasion of the third foray, as John is returning to his boat laden with spoil we are told that “Columba boldly threw himself in his path, and all unarmed, poured out on him a torrent of reproaches, and with his strong clear voice, which is wonderfully dwelt on by his biographer, rising high in righteous wrath, commands him to lay down his plunder. But John is not to be moved—brushes

past the little group, clambers into his boat and with words and gestures, jeers at Columba. The Saint's hot blood is up. Blazing in a white heat of generous indignation and careless of danger, he pursues him to the beach, and splashes out into the translucent water, up to the knees, and there, with his two hands lifted to heaven, calls down judgment on his head.

Away goes the pirate merrily with a last jeer shouted as he hoists his tanned sail. The Saint and his monks sit down on a little knoll to calm themselves, and looking after the swiftly departing boat, he prophesies that it will never reach the land. They sit for a little time watching, and the keen prevision of Columba, whose eye had long been trained to watch these changing skies, is proved true. A sudden squall catches the boat, labouring with the ill-gotten booty, between Mull and Colonsay. Over it goes like a flash as the sail turns, and when they look again, an empty sea—and they come down from their knoll awe-struck at the swift judgment.

Take another illustration, showing his yearning compassion. Sitting with his faithful servant Diarmid on another elevation overlooking his island home, and casting his grey melting eye athwart the sea, he abruptly breaks out with, "I wonder why a ship is so long in coming from Ireland which brings : great sinner to do penance." Shortly a sail heaves in sight making for the little harbor when Columba, as if acting out the dear old father's part in that pearl of parables, says to his servant, "Let us go to meet this convert whose true repentance Christ receives." The penitent leaps from his boat, runs to him, as he is coming from the quay, falls at the Saint's feet and pours out a flood of tears in presence of the waiting and wondering crowd. Then the Saint, weeping as profusely along with him, said to him, "Arise my son, take comfort, thy sins are forgiven, because a broken and a contrite heart God will not despise." The man rose up with a wondrous feeling of relief as when the pilgrim at the cross found his burden fall off. It has been observed, that "if priestly absolution were always like that it would be right. The heart that could deal so tenderly with the penitent must itself have known what it was to be broken, and healed by Almighty Gentleness."

Columba loved the Bible and lived it. Much of his time and

that of his associates was employed in writing out copies of portions of the Word of God. Printing was not known for eight hundred years after his day. Judging from the manuscripts yet extant which tradition ascribes to his hand, he must have been a beautiful penman. But better still he could say, "Oh, how love I Thy law, it is my study all the day." Bible study held a foremost place in the Theological course of the college over which he presided. The Columbans were close Bible students, not in translations merely but in the original tongues as well. With Hebrew and Greek some of them were quite familiar. With Holy Scripture their memories were stored and their minds saturated. "Open thou mine eyes that I may see wondrous things out of thy law" was the burden of their frequent and fervent petitions. Goethe's cry was theirs, "Light, Light!" Adamnan tells us that Columba often retired for a season to the Island of Hinba that he might there enjoy a season of special and private communion with God. "On one occasion when he was living there the grace of the Holy Ghost, we are told, was communicated to him abundantly and unspeakably and dwelt with him in a wonderful manner, so that for three whole days and as many nights without either eating or drinking, he allowed no one to approach him." And then Adamnan adds that Columba afterwards asserted that at that time certain very obscure and difficult parts of Holy Scripture were made quite plain and clearer than the light to the eye of his heart. Well would it be for every Theological student to imitate this illustrious college president of 1300 years ago, by devoting a special season to earnest supplication for the Holy Spirit to lead in the way of all truth. "*Bene orasse est bene studuisse*," was the motto of the great German Reformer.

The Iona students were strong contenders for the supreme authority of the Bible as the only infallible rule of faith and practice. As plainly and positively was this insisted on by Columba as by the "solitary monk that shook the world." Their own wills were absorbed in Christ's. Columba could say of the Great Master with Paul, "Whose I am and whom I serve." They sought to carry out Christ's will by consecrating their everyday life to Him, by the cultivation of personal piety, and by fulfilling what is required in the second petition, "Thy Kingdom come." St.

Columba was a great missionary, of a kingly air, a beaming face, a magnificent form, a powerful and persuasive oratory, with an intimate knowledge of scripture, and an intense love for souls. He piloted his frail craft mid perils of waters and was ever minding to go afoot mid perils of the wilderness, visiting the islands on every side of Iona, and the Pictish barbarians on the mainland, roaming through Ardnamurchan's rugged wilds, crossing and recrossing Drum Albyn's beetling crags, penetrating every glen and strath where he could find any scattered groups perishing for lack of knowledge, and everywhere with the same simple story to tell, the old old story of Jesus and his love. A great ecclesiastic too, he was, but on this side of his character we cannot touch. Educationalist, evangelist, ecclesiastic, all in one, but, though thus many sided and ubiquitous, leaving not a stone unturned, or a moment wasted in connection with whatever he undertook; he furnishes to every student and Christian worker amongst us a fine example of redeeming the time, for his biographer informs us that he could never spend the space of even one hour without study or prayer or writing or some other holy occupation. Columba and his followers did not so much form separate congregations and ordain pastors over them as plant Christian colonies, which, amid the dense heathenism, might be as a "dew from the Lord. The rule of Columba was not Episcopal in the ordinarily understood sense of that word. It was essentially Presbyterian, or, like that system of Superintendency established by John Knox. The Venerable Bede in his Church History, writing a century and a quarter after the time of St. Columba, says in a celebrated passage which deals a death-blow to the pretensions of the Diocesan Episcopate: "That island (namely Iona) has for its ruler an Abbott, who is a priest, to whose direction all the province and even the Bishops, contrary to the usual method, are subject according to the example of their first teacher (Columba), who was not a Bishop, but a priest and monk." Similar institutions sprang up elsewhere after the Iona model, 32 in the territory subject to the Scots and 21 in that subject to the Picts. The great missionary institute founded by St. Columba formed a centre of light and source of blessing to the whole land, and both Scottish and Pictish monarchs received from him their first Christian consecration.

Columba having served his generation nigh a score of years in Ireland and thirty-four in Scotland was now to fall on sleep. It was the sleep of a laboring man, which is sweet. So he giveth his beloved sleep. The manner of his death was simple and suggestive as his life. On the Saturday before he was carried in a rustic waggon to the harvesters in the field, and from an adjoining knoll he blessed them. He inspected the granaries and looked happy when he saw that he left for his poor people plenty of grain. With a heart full of prophetic impulse he went up to the hill of the Abbot and pronounced over his beloved island, seen for the last time, its future glory. "Unto this place, albeit so small and poor, great homage shall yet be paid, not only by the king and people of the Scots, but by the rulers of barbarous and distant nations, with their people also." He then went slowly down the hill to his hut leaning on his servant's arm. He sat down at his little table, and began where he had left off translating the Psalter, at the thirty-fourth Psalm. When he had reached the 10th verse, "*Inquirentes autem Dominum deficient omni bono,*" his pen dropped from his fingers. I must stop here, and what follows let Baisheve write. Sitting on the stone which was his pillow for years, he said to the brethren, "These, O my children, are the last words I address to you, that ye be at peace and have unfeigned charity among yourselves." He then lay down. At midnight when the bell rang he rose to prayer, and was the first to reach the spot where prayer was wont to be made. Diarmid followed and found him prostrate and speechless. Columba never spoke again, but lifted up his hands as if to bless the friends surrounding him, and as he blessed them he was parted from them. The hands hung powerless by his side. The oar of his life long toil had dropped from them. He had touched the shore, escaped safe to land, gone into the port of everlasting rest, was home at last. Then was he glad because he was quiet; so He bringeth him to his desired haven.

THE POET OF "DREADFUL NIGHT."

EARLY in the year 1874, there appeared in the pages of *The National Reformer*, a periodical long and ably conducted by Charles Bradlaugh, a poem entitled "The City of Dreadful

Night." It bore the initials "B. V.," and soon attracted considerable attention. Rossetti and Marston, Emerson and Longfellow expressed their high appreciation of its quality; and eulogistic notices appeared in both the *Spectator* and the *Academy*. This created an unusual demand for the issues of the paper containing the poem, with the natural result that it was soon out of print, and could not be obtained except at considerable labour and cost. Interest was deepened by the pronouncement of George Eliot. The author had sent her a copy and she acknowledged the courtesy in an interesting letter, in the course of which she said;—"I cannot rest satisfied without telling you that my mind responds with admiration to the distinct vision and grand utterance in the poem which you have been so good as to send to me. Also, I trust that an intellect informed by so much passionate energy as yours will soon give us more heroic strains with a wider embrace of human fellowship in them—such as will be to the labourers of the world what the odes of Tyrtæus were to the Spartans, thrilling them with the sublimity of the social order, and the courage of resistance to all that would dissolve it." It seemed clear to all who had a right to judge in the matter that a new poet had arisen in England.

"B. V." was the *nom de plume* of James Thomson—the initials being derived from "Bysshe" in honour of Shelley, and "Vanolis," an anagram on the name of Novalis, whose spiritual history and experience Thomson thought somewhat like his own.

Thomson was born in Port Glasgow in 1834. His father was a sailor, and his mother an Irvingite. From the former he inherited the dipsomania which bore such bitter fruit in later years, while from the latter he derived that strain of melancholy which deepened as the days went by till every light in his life was quenched. It will not be possible within the limit of this paper to do more than merely mention the facts of his history. His youth and early manhood he spent as an army school-master, serving in this capacity from 1851 till 1862. Then, finding his way to London, he picked up a precarious living by writing for the journals—undertaking secretarial work in connection with commercial enterprises—and anything else which lay to hand. This hard and unremitting toil was varied by the intercourse of literary friends among whom he counted the foremost of the

time, and the terrible intervals of dissipation into which he occasionally lapsed. It was in one of these "painful fits" he met his death early in June, 1882.

His spiritual experience Thomson himself divided into three epochs or stages. In the opening of *The City of Dreadful Night* he introduces us to a weird pilgrim whom he follows as he makes his toilsome way to three ruined shrines:

" I ceased to follow, for the knot of doubt
Was severed sharply with a cruel knife:
He circled thus for ever racing out
The series of the fraction left of life;
Perpetual recurrence in the scope
Of but three terms, dead Faith, dead Love, dead Hope."

There seems to be no reasonable doubt that the pilgrim is Thomson himself and the three shrines represent the three spiritual epochs in his life. With one exception it will be difficult to assign any specific dates to these epochs—that exception is the epoch of "dead Love." Like Novalis, Thomson was unfortunate in his love affair: the young lady whose affections he had gained and to whom he was passionately attached, died suddenly, soon after they had plighted troth. On a nature such as Thomson's this experience left a deep and lasting wound; long after when writing, as he seldom did, of his loss, he said:—

" Ah, ever since her eyes withdrew their light,
I wander lost in blackest stormy night."

The second epoch—"dead Faith"—must have followed hard upon the first. It was during this period Thomson contracted his intimacy with Charles Bradlaugh, whom he met while serving with his regiment in Ireland. There is scarcely any evidence that he began, as one critic says, "his lessons in Pessimism under the tuition of Mr. Charles Bradlaugh," but it is not to be supposed that the young and ardent mind could have come into contact with "Iconoclast" without having some of his early ideals destroyed. It is sufficient for us to note that faith—faith in God and immortality which sometimes blossomed in his early poems—died and passed away completely. Then despair came. When love and faith are dead there is no room for hope, and so the third epoch dawned, if that can be called dawn which only preludes darkness. Out of the hands of God Thomson fell into the grip of a cold and iron fate. He owned himself beaten; the

dark "primordial curse of existence" was a burden too heavy for him to bear :

"Ove. me pass the days and months and years
Like squadrons and battalions of the foe,
Trampling with thoughtless thrusts and alien jeers
Over a wounded soldier lying low ;
He grits his teeth, or flings them words of scorn
To mar their triumphs, but the while outworn
Inwardly craves for death :o end his woe."

It is under the guidance of this man we enter the sombre streets of the dread city of night.

Thomson's purpose in writing his poem was twofold. It was in the first instance a relief to himself,

"Because it gives some sense of power and passion,
In helpless impotence to try to fashion
Our woe in living words howe'er uncouth ;"

And again he was impelled to lift his voice so that other dwellers in the city hearing him might

"Feel a stir
Of fellowship in all disastrous fight."

The poem is written in twenty-one sections of varying length, into which are interwoven two independent threads of narrative. One series describes the city and its dwellers, while the other series gives a succession of incidents illustrative of the character of individual citizens and the different feelings with which they regard their destiny. Space forbids that any detailed description of the poem be given. I shall therefore content myself with attempting to set before the reader the character of the city, and then narrate one or two of the most important incidents.

The city is described as "certainly of night." The moon and stars may shine with scorn or pity, but the warm and pulsing light of the sun has never rested upon it. Through its streets the dwellers move "in distempered cloud of thought" and with deadly heart-weariness all day long. The city is not ruinous although here and there within its limits may be descried "great ruins of an unremembered past." Faintly thro' the gloom glimmer the street lamps which always burn, casting a weird light on passers by which brings to view their

"Worn faces that look deaf and blind
Like tragic marks of stone."

The series of incidents opens with the story of the pilgrim who, with slow and deliberate steps, visits in perpetual recurrence

the three shrines where lie his "dead Faith, dead Love, dead Hope." This is followed by a poem in which is described the quickening of the eye in darkness, by which the accustomed sense

"Perceives a shade in shadow not obscurely
Pursues a stir of black in blackness surely
Sees spectres also in the gloom intense."

The ear, also, becomes endowed with quicker sense so that it

"Hears breathings as of hidden life asleep,
And muffled throbs as of pent passions wild,
Far murmurs, speech of pity or derision ;
But all more dubious than the things of vision,
So that it knows not when it is beguiled."

With these new quickenings of sense the dweller in the city is prepared to see and hear the honors of the place, and these soon begin to unfold themselves.

There now follows the most mysterious and impressive episode in the whole poem. An inhabitant is overheard narrating a journey through a desert on his way to the city. It is a highly-wrought effort of pure imagination and does not lend itself readily to quotation. Here is the opening stanza :

"As I came through the desert thus it was,
As I came through the desert : all was black,
In heaven no single star, on earth no track ;
A brooding hush without a stir or note,
The air so thick it clotted in my throat ;
And thus for hours ; then some enormous things
Swooped past with savage cries and clanking wings ;
But I rode on austere ;
No hope could have, no fear."

The desert seems to hold the same place in this pilgrimage as does the Valley of the Shadow of Death in another. Strange and awful shapes gather round the traveller : eyes of fire stare at him with the glare of starved desire—hot upon him then beats the heavy breath of death—sharp claws, swift talons, and cold fleshless fingers pluck at him from wayside bushes—while strange fires gleam portentous from earth and sky. At length the pilgrim reaches a wild sea shore where he sees a woman coming towards him bearing in her hands a lamp which proves to be "her own burning heart." This vision smites the pilgrim in twain—"two selves distinct that cannot join again : " one falls to the ground stark in swoon, and the other stands motionless and watchful apart. Over the "senseless me" the woman kneels and bends—

"Those lamp-drops fall upon my white brow there,
She tried to cleanse them with her tears and hair ;
She murmured words of pity, love, and woe,
She heeded not the level rushing flow ;
And mad with rage and fear,
I stood stone-bound so near."

The past gives us no clue by which we may reach an interpretation of this "awful dream : " he turns away from it silently and abruptly as if it hurt too much to linger long over it.

The crisis of the poem is reached in the sections in which he describes the scene in the cathedral and the preacher's discourse. There is probably no darker passage in English literature than this. It is the climax of woe and despair. After describing the building with the large glooms within its mighty fane, and the gathering of the "shadowy congregation," the poet sets before us the preacher with his voice of solemn stress and eyes that "burned as never eyes burned yet." Then through the solemn arches there rise and fall the lines of the great sad voice :

"Oh melancholy brothers, dark, dark, dark !
O battling in black floods without an ark !
O spectral wanderers of unholy night !
My soul hath bled for you those sunless years,
With bitter blood-drops running down like tears :
Oh, dark, dark, dark, withdrawn from joy and light !

And I have searched the heights and depths, the scope
Of all our universe, with desperate hope
To find some solace for your wild unrest.

And now at last authentic word I bring,
Witnessed by every deed and living thing :
Good tidings of great joy for you, for all :
There is no God."

This, then, is the evangel of Pessimism. It might be as well to take leave of the poem here, but I ask the indulgence of my reader for one moment longer, while I give him, in a sentence or two, a notice of what is certainly the finest allegorical passage in "The City of Dreadful Night." In the last section but one the poet describes two figures, large and austere ; one is a couchant sphinx wrapt to the breast in shadow ; the other an angel standing in the moonlight. Musing as to the meaning of the figures, the poet is aroused by a sharp and clashing noise ; the wings have fallen, and, instead of an angel confronting the sphinx, there is only a warrior leaning on his sword. Again the poet dreams, and again he is aroused to find the warrior gone

and an unarmed man with feet resting on the fragments of the broken sword, and impotent hands raised in appeal to the mute and stolid sphinx. The whole passage is an extremely powerful one, and justifies the eulogium of George Eliot when she speaks of the poet's "distinct vision and grand utterance." But its literary quality cannot shield us from its "stroke of pain;" it sends a quiver through every fibre of the soul. The section describes the three phases through which the poet's mind passed in relation to the mysteries of the world and man: there was first the elevation of religious faith and hope; then the self-confidence and self-reliance of thought and philosophy; and lastly, the helplessness of utter despair. This is the "last word of Pessimism": men love God and find—the Sphinx!

This poem has been well called a portent. It is, indeed, a "sign of the times," to which we do well to give heed. Long ago Goethe foresaw and predicted the rise of a "literature of despair" and our day has seen the fulfilment of his words. A variety of causes have contributed to this result; but among them may be noted the new current of theological speculation which affected poetry at the beginning of this century, finding expression in such works as Byron's *Cain* and *Faust*, contributed by Goethe himself. When the foundations of religion were shaken men began to seek for a substitute, and imagined they had found it in thought and culture. But these failed. And thus we find the mutterings of dismay and distress rising in the writings of such men as Arnold and Clough. Add to these the feverish rush and haste of ordinary life in our day, and the conditions required to produce a "literature of despair" are provided. There can be no "deathless singing" till a change has come. If there are any "immortal strains" in the songs of contemporary singers, they will be found in those of their poems that indicate a return to that sweet simplicity and noble faith that upheld Milton and Wordsworth. It is more evident than ever before that the one need of our literature is that need which was pointed out some years ago by Mrs. Browning. "We want the touch of Christ's hand upon our literature, as it touched other dead things. We want the sense of the saturation of Christ's blood upon the souls of our poets, that it may cry through them in answer to the un-

ceasing wail of the sphinx of our humanity, expounding agony into renovation."

But it is a portent in another sense. It is well for us to have laid bare in all its hideous shape the issue of "unfaith." There is among us an intolerable glibness of talk about scepticism and free-thought; it is but talk, to be sure, yet no one can say whereto empty and vain talk may lead. To play with words means to degrade them,—to rob them of all high intent and power; and the time may come when the man who misuses them shall awake to the need of "unseen support," only to find that his conduct has robbed the words which convey such support of all meaning and force. Irreverence is one road to despair,—and despair brings us to the "City of Dreadful Night."

The time-worn proverb reminds us to say nothing but good of the dead—yet good may result from the "bad" that is said. In this connection it would be hard to say how much of Thomson's pessimism is to be traced to his dissolute habits, but that it was a contributing cause cannot for a moment be denied. His friends and companions put in the plea of heredity, and some weight must in justice be allowed to their claim; but in these days when heredity is held "to cover a multitude of sins" there is surely nothing extravagant in expecting "a strong man to take a strong man's place in life." And Thomson is claimed by them to be a strong man; if so where is the evidence? Others have had as bitter an entail as that into which he was born, but they did not succumb. To their help their came that One, whose entrance into the world Thomson thought had made the world "considerably the worse." Here again Thomson's poem is a portent. No one can consider the last sad scene in this "strange eventful history" without feeling the impotence of man, and recognizing that if "The City of Dreadful Night" is "to melt away in the sun" it must be in the beams of that gracious Light who announced himself as "The Light of the World." The story is told by William Sharp, a brother poet. Thomson had broken out into one of his uncontrollable fits of intemperance. "For a few weeks his record is almost a blank. When the direst straits were reached, he so far recovered his control that he felt himself able to visit one whose sympathy and regard had withstood all tests. Thomson found Marston alone:

the latter soon realized that his friend was mentally distraught, and endured a harrowing experience, into the narration of which I do not care to enter. I arrived in the late afternoon, and found Marston in a state of nervous perturbation. Thomson was lying down in the bed in the adjoining room: stooping, I caught his whispered words to the effect that he was dying; upon which I lit a match, and in the sudden glare beheld his white face on the blood-stained pillow. He had burst one or more blood-vessels, and the hæmorrhage was dreadful."

It is a terribly sad tale: unrelieved by any gleam in its tragic sordidness. There is nothing like it in the whole story of English literature since the rising of that cold grey dawn which saw the dead body of Chatterton as he lay with the bits of arsenic still between his teeth.

ANDREW ROBERTSON.

THE FOURTH PROFESSORSHIP.

BOTH sides of the case having been already presented in your columns by able advocates, I should have preferred attempting some other subject than that of the fourth professorship; but with editorial authority, you have given me the, in this case, doubtful advantage of not having to choose.

I shall attempt, then, to say a few words in favor of the appointment of a Professor of New Testament Introduction and Exegesis.

First, I think it is time that a protest was entered against the undue advantage given to the other chair proposed, by calling it *the practical chair*. We are told that we want something practical. Of course we do. Nobody advocates the wasting of time or money upon subjects not practical. Therefore we object to the implication that we are so foolish as to do so. During the discussion of this question at Synod, it did seem difficult for some speakers to give a name to the professorship which they advocated; some of them insisting upon the value of apologetics, others speaking of the advantages of drill in elocution, while still others seemed to have heard of failure in the performance of the marriage ceremony and the administration of baptism. With so

many subjects, so widely different, to choose from, or to combine under one unfortunate professor, there is no wonder that difficulty was apparent whenever an attempt was made to define the professorship desired; and it may seem ungenerous, in view of that difficulty, to object to the name generally adopted by the advocates of that much embracing professorship. Yet, in simple fairness to ourselves, we do object.

We do not deny that most, at least, of the subjects proposed by the other side, are of practical use in the work of the ministry, but we refuse, even by silence, to seem to acknowledge that the chair we advocate is any less so. On the contrary, it is because we believe it to be of the *most* practical use to the ministry of the present day that we do advocate the appointment of a professor of New Testament Introduction and Exegesis.

There seems to be an impression in some quarters that the subjects even now taught at Pine Hill are not practical. Have our graduates then, or any appreciable number of them, proved themselves such utter, or even partial, failures in the pastorate? Among all the men in our church who can be in any fair sense called unsuccessful either as pastors or preachers, is there an undue proportion of Pine Hill men? Does the average graduate of any other theological college, from which men come to us, prove more successful or do better work in the ministry than the average graduate of our own college? I think that if any fair-minded person, who knows the facts, will take a list of Pine Hill men who have been in the ministry seven or eight years or over, and review the work they have done, he will be convinced that somehow or other the vast majority of them have learned how to do the work of the ministry. What else should be expected? If a good knowledge of Systematic Theology, which is the orderly study of God's revelation to men, a fair acquaintance with the languages employed by the Holy Spirit in giving that revelation, and an intelligent grasp of Church History, which is the record of God's dealings with his people; if these are not to be reckoned as practical preparation for the ministry, then we shall no longer grudge the exclusive use of the word "practical" to the advocates of elocution and kindred subjects. But if the study of the foregoing subjects is practical prepara-

tion for the ministry, why speak of *any* proposed chair as "practical" and thus, by implication, deny the title to these?

The subjects studied at Pine Hill now, as in the past, are practical subjects of use, nay indispensable, in the work of the ministry. And what we want is, in the first place, more of the same. I doubt if in any theological college on this side of the water, or on the other, harder work is done by the students in the ordinary course than is done at Pine Hill. Men working for honours in theology, as in other things, may work harder, but for men who want to go out to their life's work with sound minds in sound bodies, and to do the work of the ministry with anything like vigour, the work is hard enough, quite. When therefore we wish for "more of the same," we do not mean that more work should be put upon the students, but rather that less should be put upon the professors. A man can do only a certain amount of work. The more widely his work is spread, the less thorough it must necessarily be.

There is a danger, not always escaped, in the discussion of this subject, *i. e.*, that advocates of either chair should speak, or be understood to speak, as if the other chair proposed was of no great importance. No advocate on either side of the question really believes that. We believe that Homiletics, and especially Pastoral Theology, are indispensable in the thorough furnishing of men "for the work of the ministry." And our friends on the other side hold, with equal decision, that New Testament Introduction and Exegesis are necessary. We would all gladly see more provision made for the study of all these subjects. Again, we may be in danger of speaking in such a way as to lead those unacquainted with the facts to suppose that in our college at present no training is given in either or both of the proposed lines. Now everybody who knows Pine Hill at all knows that good work is done along both lines, wonderful work, I think, in view of the heavy and multifarious burdens laid upon the professors. The simple question before us is, along which line is it best for us now to strengthen the college? The more I think of the matter and the more I hear it discussed the more I am convinced that the chief need is a chair whose occupant should be able to make New Testament Introduction and Exegesis his special business.

1. Some of us in our pastoral work have lately come across the serpent's trail in the shape of books, industriously circulated among our people, which, based upon outrageous exegesis, and buttressed by grotesque interpretation, teach fearful and wonderful things as to the Second Advent and future retribution. In attempting to counteract such mischievous teachings, we find New Testament Exegesis an intensely practical business, and realize that we need the knowledge of it, as well as the knowledge of how to use it. Suppose that we could by a more eloquent and persuasive presentation of the truth lead men to forget or reject such heretical productions. Would we have any right to do so if we could not give a reason for the faith that is in us, if we could only quote authority against the supposed authority that led them astray, if we could not show from the New Testament, by a sound exegesis, that the faith of the church is the faith of the Apostles and the teaching of their Lord and ours?

2. Apart altogether from questions of the higher criticism which questions will come upon us as they bid fair to come upon all the world, we need a thorough knowledge of exegesis in the ordinary work of the ministry. One of the most common complaints in every quarter of the church to-day is that so many absent themselves altogether from church, and that so many more go only occasionally. Now, let it be freely acknowledged that nothing can take the place of persistent pastoral visitation as a means of persuading people to come to church. Terrible tales might be told of neglect in this matter and its results. But what will best keep men in church? What will send them away day after day resolved to come again? Surely what will best accomplish that purpose is the systematic study of whole books of Scripture—so connected a study that once a hearer becomes interested, he will be careful not to miss any part of the whole study. Now everybody knows that in order to successfully carry on such a continuous study of any book of Scripture, a man must be thoroughly up in New Testament Introduction and Exegesis. I am firmly persuaded that if we are to keep intelligent, thinking men in the church, and give to those whom our pastoral visiting may bring to church anything worth coming for again, we must have more regular and systematic exposition of God's word. The only thing that can compete with

that as a retentive power is a continuous display of pulpit gymnastics and religious pyrotechnics, and if people go to church Sabbath after Sabbath to witness such performances they would be far better in bed.

3. Reference was made repeatedly at Synod to the condition of affairs at such colleges as Union and Princeton, and of course these are much better furnished than we are along the line of Homiletics, Pastoral Theology, and Elocution. But they are also better fitted in all the other subjects proper to a divinity school. We are behind them *numerically* in every way; and our inferiority to them is no more an argument for the establishing of one chair than it is for the establishment of the other. The only way in which Princeton or Union or any other college could be argument in our case would be by showing that they were in our position and acted in a certain way; and then there would be still room for difference of opinion as to the wisdom of their action. If the chair occupied by Dr. Paxton at Princeton, and that lately vacated by Caspar Hodge, should be vacant together, can anybody tell us which it would be thought more necessary to have speedily and wisely filled? Or will any old Princeton student venture to tell us which of those professorships is generally considered the more valuable to the students, and to graduates in after life?

4. When other colleges are mentioned we are reminded of another argument used by the advocates of what they call the "practical" professorship. It is briefly this, "we want more students." Granted. The Presbytery of St. John alone could give hard work to every one of our nine graduates this spring. We want, and should have, at least twice as many graduates every year. But when our friends go on to say that in order to draw students to our college we must make the course of training more attractive, we begin to watch their argument very sharply. For we know that it is quite possible to make the course more attractive to a certain class of minds by making it less thorough. If ever the day should come to our church when that was done, then—Ichabod. I believe, and hope to find that a majority—an overwhelming majority—of the members of the Synod believe, that to establish a chair of New Testament Introduction and Exegesis is the best way in which we can increase

the efficiency of our college, and thus make it more attractive to the best class of men. But further, it seems to me that if we are to attempt competition with other colleges along this line, we are entering on a hopeless race. Let us make our own college as efficient as possible and trust to the honest loyalty of our students and ministers that men may come, and be persuaded to come, to the college which in honour they are bound either to heartily support or openly oppose. Students go away to other colleges, not chiefly for the sake of Homiletics or Pastoral Theology, or even Elocution, but chiefly because they are not encouraged by their pastors to attend our own college. Much might be said, perhaps *should* be said, on this point, but I refrain. Only this—would it be altogether out of place to ask the General Assembly to define and limit the hunting grounds of College Principals?

5. Some of those who advocate the "practical" professorship, wish to have assigned to the unhappy man who should occupy it the work of travelling up and down through the various presbyteries and congregations of the church seeking out likely young men and presenting to them the claims of the college: that he should be not only a "practical," but a peripatetic professor. Why? Have we not already in every settled congregation at least one man bound in honour, if not by the church's command, to act as agent for our college? The more the professors visit the various congregations of the church the better will the congregations and their pastors be pleased, but let the visiting be visiting for pleasure and not by compulsion. The man whom we want to fill the chair of New Testament Introduction and Exegesis will need to devote the summer months to hard and regular study, and will not have much time to travel. Let us not say anything which may give any pastor any ground for thought that he is relieved of the duty of seeking out men and sending them to our own College.

6. I suspect that after all argument is over, each of us will be of his own opinion still. We differ fundamentally in our ideas of what an efficient training for the ministry is. Our brethren who speak in favour of the "practical" chair have no intention of yielding to a demand, which certainly exists in some quarters, for less learning and more show, for popularity either in the

college or in the pulpit, at the expense of solid and sound theology. We are alike actuated by a desire to see the college as well furnished as possible, with men who shall be as well trained as possible, for the work of the ministry. We differ only in our opinion of the first step to be taken in our progress towards that end. I think it is possible, even in our present financial condition, to meet both views. Let me humbly suggest as follows:—

It will be universally allowed that New Testament Introduction and Exegesis can be taught best by one thoroughly qualified man devoting the chief part of his time and strength to that alone. It will be as readily acknowledged that there is no fixed type of a successful pastor or preacher. Every man must put something of his own individuality into both pastoral and pulpit work. It would seem to follow, that, other things being equal, it would be an advantage to have hints and suggestions from a variety of sources, than to be confined to one. In other words, a young man will be more likely to profit by instruction from a number of successful pastors and preachers, than by the prelections and criticism of any one man however qualified to teach. A professor of homiletics has his own style of preaching—his own ideas of preparation. But his style and mode of preparation may not suit one or more of his students. Well then,

Let us have a professor whose chief business shall be to drill his students in New Testament Introduction and Exegesis. Let the three professors now in the college, relieved from the exegesis which they now teach, and the fourth professor also, give short courses of lectures in Pastoral theology and Homiletics. The three we now have were all pastors, and there are no more able, nor, I should suppose, more popular preachers in the Synod, and it would be an unspeakable advantage to our students to have suggestions and criticisms from all three. Or—either as an alternative or as an addition—let men now in the pastorate, who are notably successful as pastors, or as preachers, come up from time to time (say two each session), and give of their fresh experience to the young men in the college. Almost every year revivals of religion take place in one or more congregations. Let the pastor whose flock has been refreshed, come and tell what the indications were of the approaching shower; how the

precious drops were gathered; how the flowing streams were guided, and cisterns filled against a time of possible drought.

Thus, I humbly believe, we shall get thorough instruction in New Testament Introduction and Exegesis, and a better and more useful course in Homiletics and Pastoral Theology than we should have from any one man.

THOMAS STEWART.

A BRIEF SKETCH OF MISSION WORK IN LABRADOR.

IN the beginning of the year 1888, the students of Pine Hill College resolved to support, or help support, a missionary in some needy field. After gathering all available information regarding various needy fields, it was decided that we should support, for one summer at least, one of our own men on the coast of Labrador.

Mr. W. J. McKenzie, who had just completed his first year in Theology, was chosen for this work. He faithfully and indefatigably traversed the rock-bound coast from Harrington Harbour in the West to Battle Harbour in the North, an approximate distance of two hundred and ten miles, ministering to the people's spiritual and temporal needs. Within this distance he found a Methodist Missionary at Red Bay faithfully doing his Master's work: also an Episcopalian Missionary at Harrington, who did very little in giving to the people the "Bread of Life."

Mr. McKenzie, learning during the summer of the spiritual destitution of the people, decided to remain during the winter and the following summer on the coast. He travelled up and down the coast during the winter preaching, teaching and visiting the people irrespective of class or creed. Mr McKenzie returned to Halifax in the fall of '89 to resume his studies.

Mr. F. W. Thompson volunteered to take Mr. McKenzie's place on the coast the following summer. He did his work faithfully, following pretty much the same lines of work as his predecessor. Mr. Thompson returned in the fall to resume his studies.

We secured the services of a young native to teach school during the winters of 1890 and 1891. This young man had received all his training in the schools of the Congregationalists

at Bonne Esperance. The children made remarkable progress under his tuition. Some of them began with their letters, and are now able to read quite easily the third, fourth and fifth Royal Readers.

They have also made remarkable progress in arithmetic, writing, etc. Quite a number of these children came to me with their Testaments and read large portions of them to show how well they could read; and in some cases they were able to repeat from memory large portions of chapters in the New Testament. They would often add in conclusion that they were deeply indebted to our society and would never forget our students for their kindness in teaching them to read and write.

Seeing the gratitude of the people and the way the children had made use of their privileges, I felt that we as a society were amply compensated if we had nothing but this.

During the winter of 1891 there were many demands made upon our church for men and means, so that we were about abandoning Labrador for some more promising field; but we were led to change our minds by the receipt of a number of letters from Labrador, in which the people earnestly entreated us not to forsake them in their time of need. They gave many cogent reasons why we should continue our work in that place. After a considerable discussion it was agreed that a man be sent to the coast for another summer.

But on account of the isolation of Labrador we deemed it absolutely necessary to the efficient working of the field, that we should have a man invested with authority to dispense ordinances. But our means were limited, so that we could not support an ordained Missionary in Labrador and fulfil our obligations to Couva Mission in Trinidad. Therefore we resolved to petition the Presbytery to ask the Assembly to grant them power to ordain one of our Theological students. Our request was granted; so our difficulties in this respect were over for a time.

I embarked in company with Dr. Hare from Halifax for Labrador on the twentieth day of May, by schooner "*Thora*." She was commanded by a skipper from Jedore, popularly known as 'Uncle Sandy Mitchell.' This schooner is owned by Captain James Thompson of Halifax, who carries on an extensive trade with the people of Labrador.

After a pleasant and uneventful voyage, we sighted Harrington, the land of our destination, on the evening of the 27th of May. Harrington is a small village situated on a cluster of islands, with a population rapidly on the increase, now numbering about one hundred souls. Some of the people here are possessed of no ordinary degree of intelligence. Most of them are able to read and write, and are enthusiastic Christian workers. The summer before they each contributed a quintal of codfish toward the erection of a suitable building for religious and secular purposes. They got most of the material for this building from Halifax, and did all the work themselves. Last winter they enlarged it, so that it would accommodate easily the floating population during the summer months.

Dr. Hare and I secured a boat for the summer, and equipped ourselves as best we could with nautical instruments. Leaving Harrington in our boat, the next place of importance that we visited was Mutton Bay, with a population similar to that of Harrington.

While we were in this vicinity the coast was visited for the first time by that scourge commonly called la grippe. Knowing comparatively nothing about this disease, the people naturally treated it as an ordinary cold. The result was, numbers of them contracted pneumonia and died. In one harbor there were only two or three, out of a population of seventy or eighty people, able to attend to the needs of the sick: so we were kept busy for nearly two weeks ministering to their spiritual and temporal wants. The doctor's services were highly appreciated, and he no doubt saved many lives. This visitation of la grippe, in the middle of a short fishing season, meant the loss of many thousands of dollars to these poor people.

After this epidemic had ceased to rage, we proceeded on our way, visiting scattered families and settlements until we came to the next most important station in our mission, viz., Bonne Esperance (about 100 miles from Harrington) where the Congregationalists established their mission, and did good work years ago. Here Mr W. H. Whitely, of Newfoundland, has charge of some sixty men employed by Job & Co., St. John's, during the fishing season.

Here we have a nice church, and a commodious mission-house

partly furnished; also a library of some 700 volumes. We have in addition to this a church and school-house in St. Paul's River, where the people of Bonne Esperance live in the winter season. These buildings, books; furniture, etc., have all been given to us by our congregational brethren on condition that we would continue to work on the coast. In the winter season there are some sixteen families living in St. Paul's River. In the summer there are some two or three hundred men from Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, Quebec and other places, engaged in fishing at this place. These were visited on board their vessels.

The next place we called at was Bradore. This is quite an historical place. The oldest inhabitants claim that there was a Spanish town here before Jacques Cartier discovered the St. Lawrence. The foundations of the buildings are still to be seen. I was told a number of relics have lately been found here of great antiquity.

This place and an old fort situated in Old Fort Bay have lately attracted the attention of those interested in antiquarian research. There are now only eight families living in Bradore. A few miles from this place is Blanc Sablon, the terminus of which is commonly called Quebec Labrador or North Shore. Here Capt. Blandford, a gentleman from Newfoundland, has a large number of men employed in the codfishery. We intend in the future to make this the northern terminus of our mission.

Now since the physical features of a country, as well as its geographical position, must to some extent affect the people and, consequently, mission work, it would not, perhaps, be amiss for me to say something about Labrador in general.

The portion of Labrador with which we are immediately concerned is situated in the County of Saguenay, Province of Quebec. Our nearest station is about four hundred and fifty or five hundred miles distant from Halifax.

The Coast of Labrador is bold and rocky, with here and there high precipitous hills terminating abruptly at the water's edge. The coast waters are studded with numerous islands, rocks and shoals, which make it dangerous for the mariner. The winters of Labrador are long and severe. For nearly seven months of the year the people see no one from the outside world. Because of the coldness and shortness of the summer season and

scarcity of soil, there is practically no vegetation. There are only three lonely cows scattered over a distance of one hundred and thirty miles to supply a population of one thousand people with milk. The only animals kept are dogs. Travelling in winter, as well as in summer, is sometimes difficult. In winter it is done with dogs and cometik. The word cometik is an Esquimau word, signifying sledge. This sledge is about ten feet long, two feet wide, shod with whalebone. They drive from five to a dozen dogs in a team. With these dogs they carry their mails in winter to and from near Quebec. They also visit their friends, driving sometimes fifty or sixty miles a day over the snow-covered hills and frozen bays. They also draw with their animals from the interior of the country sufficient fire wood to last them the whole year.

The summer travelling is done wholly by boat. The summer being a very busy season the missionary must be able to manage his own boat or hire a man for the summer and give him sufficient to keep his family in the winter, as he will have no other means of a livelihood. The people are dependent wholly upon the fishery for a living.

A few of the people are independent, having acquired some money when the fisheries were good. But the majority are poor, getting their summer's supply in advance in the spring from traders, and paying them in the autumn with fish (if they catch them.) But although they are poor they are willing to do all within their power to aid in the good work.

One poor man who had been an inveterate user of tobacco abandoned the filthy habit and contributed what he called his tobacco money to our mission which amounted to \$8.00 a year. This man is only one out of a number who have given up this idle habit, and are now using their tobacco money for noble purposes. These people irrespective of class or creed, receive the missionary kindly. Their hospitality knows no bounds. They are eager to hear the message of salvation. Quite a number are now showing by their lives that they know by experience that the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation.

I organized Harrington and Bonne Esperance last summer into mission stations. I received 25 into fellowship with the church at the former place, and five at the latter. In St.

Augustine River I received one, making in all thirty-one communicants in good standing. I administered the sacrament of the Lord's Supper to twenty-five and the sacrament of Baptism to two persons, and married four couples.

I think our readers will see that our two years' labour has not been in vain. We certainly have every reason to take courage and go forward in the work to which we have set our hands. God has abundantly blessed us in our humble endeavours in the past, and we are sure he will bless us still.

I may mention that we have a man—Mr. D. C. Ross, of Blue Mt., Pictou Co.—on the coast this winter, who discharges the double function of a teacher and catechist. We have good prospects of receiving a faithful ordained man to take up the work in the spring for a year.

In the name of the Society I wish to thank all our friends who have so generously assisted us in our work. I hope their generosity will never grow less.

We are specially indebted to Capt. James Thompson of Halifax for his kindness in carrying our Missionaries to and from the coast free of charge, also to his men for the gentlemanly and Christian-like manner in which they treat our Missionaries.

PRESBYTERIANISM IN EASTERN NEW BRUNSWICK.

WHERE are but two Presbyteries in the whole Province of New Brunswick—St. John and Miramichi. This seems remarkable when we take into consideration the extent of the territory which they cover, and the number of congregations and Mission stations which they contain. Still stranger does the case appear when it is remembered that the Presbytery of Miramichi has over-leaped her natural bounds on the North, and holds within her maternal grasp a large section of the Province of Quebec. These are, indeed, Presbyteries of "magnificent distances." Let one but cast his eye over the map of New Brunswick and Eastern Quebec, noting, meanwhile, the localities in which our Presbyterian populations centre, and remembering the work we should overtake in enlarging our borders, and he will conclude that, however necessary such extended bounds may

have been in the past, in the true interests of our cause they now require both readjustment and sub-division.

As a matter of fact, the Synod has a very much larger proportion of its members present from year to year, than the Presbytery of St. John has at its stated meetings. This, of course, is due to the great distance many have to travel, causing much precious time to be lost, and needless expense to be incurred. One can easily see that a continuation of such an arrangement, sooner or later, must produce coldness and, consequently, inactivity in the outlying places. And the chill which passes over the extremities, because of insufficient circulation, must ere long reach even to the heart of the Presbytery.

For some practical purposes the Presbytery of St. John is considered as consisting of three sections—Eastern, Middle and Western. Without having definite bounds set, the Eastern may be said to comprise the counties of Westmoreland and Albert, with considerable portions of Kings and Kent. In all this area, there will be only one settled pastor within one month from the date of this writing. Buctouche and Port Elgin and Shemogue will be vacant at the end of March. These, with the large groups of mission stations in this territory now unprovided for, present a very needy field. Much as our church in all parts of this Province requires good men and true, in no portion is the demand for earnest workers more pressing than in this Eastern section. And what is true of the congregations here is quite as true of the mission stations, for both are situated in the centres of population and on the lines of railway. If Presbyterianism is to grow in these places, and extend itself throughout this part of the Province, then these congregations and mission-fields must be kept well manned.

These congregations are not now pastorless because they are uninviting and undesirable. Shediac, until recently weak in numbers, although strong "in faith and good works," has been enlarged by the addition of Scotch Settlement and Cocaigne. As now constituted, this congregation is not hard to work, and it presents an inviting field for any active man. As a place to reside, Shediac is certainly most desirable. Port Elgin and Shemogue fall vacant only because of the advanced years of the pastor, Rev. J. McG. McKay. Mr. McKay has done splendid

work in that congregation. There is a good manse at Port Elgin, and the field, if properly cared for, is really one of the most promising within the bounds of the Synod. Buctouche is an easy charge in many respects, and it is, moreover, a delightful place in which to live. The congregation is not large, but is composed of thoroughly loyal Presbyterians. Sussex should not remain long without a pastor; it is an attractive field, and contains an appreciative people. It was long the scene of the labors of the Rev. James Gray; and the last pastor, Rev. T. Stewart, did admirable work there. The foundations of Presbyterianism are, therefore, well laid in that congregation, and the future of our church is most hopeful for any active minister of the gospel.

Presbyterianism was very much neglected in Albert County in the early days, perhaps more neglected there than in any other part of New Brunswick, which is saying a very great deal. With proper management then, the cause might have been strong there to-day, for the original stock was largely Presbyterian. As it is, however, there are quite a number of most loyal members and adherents of our church remaining, and Riverside forms a centre from which good work has been done more recently,—and still better may yet be accomplished. The elements are not wanting out of which a hopeful congregation could now be formed. Mistakes made in the past, in the way of unsuitable appointments, form no valid reason for discouragement on the part of the people, or the minister who is not afraid of real honest work for the Master. Albert County furnishes a fine field for a good Presbyterian missionary. Those who have labored at Dorchester and vicinity in our cause, will agree that, for a summer's work, there are few places which have as many attractions, and promise as hearty co-operation on the part of the people. There are a number of other localities within the area indicated, which should be cared for by our church. Some of these did formerly receive supply, but space will not now permit to speak of them in detail.

Clearly our present duty is to supply these places which have been named, with good and faithful men, as speedily as possible. This being accomplished, we may not only hope to hold our own, but also to extend our borders. As the fields now are, or shortly will be, our cause must suffer. The case is urgent. The require-

ment of Presbyterianism in this Eastern part of New Brunswick should make a strong appeal to those who have its welfare at heart. For that reason this brief statement of the situation is here presented to all the readers of the *Theologue*, but more especially to our available students and ministers. And is not the need of this section of the church, which is, to a greater or less extent, a sample of many parts of the home field from East to West, a loud call to many of our cleverest young men, who are now determining their life work to devote themselves to the Christian Ministry. By so doing, they would be coming up to the help of the Lord against the mighty, in the most practical form in which their services could now be rendered.

J. MILLEN ROBINSON.

Moncton, March 5th, 1892.

EDITORIAL.

DURING the last few years "Progress" has been both the motto and the characteristic of our church. Throughout the whole Dominion she has been making a steady and rapid advance in numbers, liberality and influence. While maintaining her hold where already established, she has gone on from year to year opening up new fields, and endeavouring to atone for past neglect in destitute places where a feeble remnant of her people still survive. For all these signs of prosperity we do well to give thanks. And yet there are other circumstances which may well cause anxiety. The future well-being of our church depends in large measure on her being able to properly man her various stations, and to-day the number of ministers available is altogether insufficient to enable her to do so. For some time the supply of ministers has not equalled the demand, and were it not for the men who have come out from the old country our vacancies would be much more numerous than they are. We cannot however afford to be dependent upon any other country for the supply of our needs. It should be the aim, and is, we believe, the desire of the church to train in our own college men for work in our own country. We welcome good

men and true wherever they may have been born and educated and yet if we are to be a flourishing church we must be self-supporting ministerially as well as financially.

We should be able each year to send forth from our college enough men to supply all our needs, and also to spare a few to help carry on the pioneer work of the Church in the great North-West. Alas! how far do we fall short of this ideal.

The number of Maritime Province students who graduate this spring from all the Presbyterian Theological Colleges in the United States and Canada would be altogether inadequate to meet our wants; and of those who are not studying in Halifax all but one are likely to settle beyond the bounds of the Maritime Synod. Our own college will probably graduate nine students, the second largest class in the history of the institution: but this seems a small number when we remember that there are between thirty and forty vacancies to be filled. In view of this alarming state of affairs which only shows us whither we have been drifting for some years past, the conviction must force itself home upon us all that there must be something wrong—something terribly wrong with our church.

What, then, is wrong? And where does the responsibility lie? It is our conviction that the wrong lies at the door of the church as a whole, and perhaps especially at that of the ministry. Among the duties of ministers one which is especially enjoined upon them in our "Rules and Forms of Procedure" is that of looking out young men of piety and talents who will be able and willing to take up the burden of ministry as it falls from the shoulders of the fathers of the church. Is this duty faithfully and conscientiously performed? Are the claims of the ministry sufficiently pressed upon the attention of the youth of the church in public and private? It is for the ministry to answer this question. We believe that the general testimony of our people would be to the effect that very seldom have they heard a sermon dealing with this important subject. Incidental references to it may occasionally be made, but in few cases does it receive in the pulpit that attention which it merits. Private effort and teaching in this matter may be far more common; but certainly if there has been much seed sown in secret, the harvest has of late been woefully meagre. The number of graduates from our

own Theological Hall during the ten years from 1881 to 1891 was 73, or a fraction over 7 each year. During the last four years the number of Maritime Province students who have gone into our ministry has not exceeded 10 per annum. Now we learn from the Minutes of the last General Assembly that the number of ministers on the roll of the Maritime Synod is 207. There must surely be something radically wrong when the influence of the life, character, teaching and direct effort of 20 ministers is required to induce one young man to enter the ministry. And what has been said as to the ministry applies with equal force to the congregations and membership of our church. There are in our Synod about 200 ordained charges with 35000 communicants. It requires then twenty congregations to furnish each year one graduate in Theology; and out of 35000 members in full communion only 10 (or 1 in 3,500) annually become preachers of the word of life.

These facts are enough to make us pause. What a commentary they furnish upon the spiritual condition of the church. Of what avail is our boasted liberality and rapid church extension, unless the Spirit of the Lord be poured forth upon the talented youth of our congregations leading them to covet earnestly the privilege of being ambassadors for Christ. Is it not time that instead of appointing a "committee on methods of working," our Synod appointed a season of special prayer that the Lord of the harvest would send forth labourers into His harvest. In the days of the past when God's people were subject to bitter persecution, there was no lack of men who were willing to engage in the work of the ministry, though to preach the gospel was to incur the risk of torture and death. And what the church needs to-day is a similar spirit of unselfishness and heroic devotion: a spirit that will lead her sons to resist the allurements of worldly pleasure, gain and honor, and to consecrate their talents to the regeneration of the world, willing to lose their lives as far as outward appearances are concerned if only they may be fellow-workers with God in the salvation of their fellowmen.

Our church offers a comfortable competency to most of her ministers, and it is well that she does so. But it may be that some have laid too much stress upon this as an inducement to enter the ministry. Is it not possible that, by dwelling upon the

comforts and emoluments to be obtained in the ministerial office, one may foster that worldly and self-indulgent spirit which lies at the foundation of our present difficulties? The less we emphasize the material advantages which the church offers her ministers the better. What we want is, that those whose duty it is should magnify the office of the spiritual teacher, and earnestly seek both in public and private to urge its claims upon all suitable young men who are brought under their influence. This should not be left to professors in Theology. It is not their work to drum up students. Neither should it be left entirely to the ministers, though it is in a special sense their duty. This is a matter in which every follower of Christ, every loyal son and daughter of the church, should have a strong personal interest. The prosperity of the church, for which we are required to pray, is to a large extent dependent upon the efficiency of ministerial work; and at present there is a great lack of pastors and teachers. The harvest is great but the laborers are few. Should not this fact be specially brought before all our congregations, and should not earnest, united prayer be made, that God would send forth into his work laborers that will not need to be ashamed?

When this is done; when the pulse of our spiritual life is quickened by the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit; when the duty and privilege of being ambassadors for Christ is more constantly and earnestly urged upon the attention of the talented youth of our church; above all, when the worldly spirit which has crept into so many Christian homes has been driven out, and when the teachings and life of those homes bring more vividly before the minds of the young the truth that a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things that he possesseth: then, and not till then, will our present difficulties vanish. Our vacancies will then be filled with men of the proper spirit, and we will be able not only to supply our own needs, but also to send forth many who shall proclaim in distant lands the unsearchable riches of Christ.

COLLEGE NOTES.

REV. JOHN CALDER has returned from Florida, where he spent the Fall and a few of the Winter months, and is at present at his home in West Bay, C. B. We regret that he has felt it necessary to resign his charge at Springville, Pictou Co. We hope his native air will prove more health-reviving than that of Florida.

REV. GEO LECK paid us a visit a few weeks ago, happening in upon us the last day of the Elocution class, in time to take part in the speech-making at the close, with a word of reminiscence of Pine Hill and Pictou.

ANOTHER welcome visitor to our hall was the Rev. Anderson Rogers, of Windsor. Mr. Rogers, when he comes, pays a good visit, attends classes and, in a practical way, acquaints himself with the college as few members of the Synod do.

THE Committee appointed to request the Halifax Presbytery to ordain Mr. F. W. Thompson, a student of the second year, for mission work in Labrador, has met with a favorable response. Mr. Thompson is expected to spend a year in the field, returning at its close to take his Third Year Examination. While sorry to lose him from next year's graduating class, we cannot but feel grateful that a man has responded to the call from Labrador. Mr. Thompson has the advantage of a summer's experience "on the coast."

AT the first of the session, most of the students were not a little put out at the prospect of a blank in the usual bill-of-fare: but their fears were soon quieted by the announcement that the Senate had secured Rev. James Carruthers of Charlottetown to deliver a four-weeks course of lectures on Elocution. Limited as to time, the lecturer made the best use of what was at his disposal, by meeting with the class six days out of the seven. The regularity of their attendance testified to the students' appreciation of the lecturer and his subject. The last meeting of the class was on the afternoon of Tuesday the 1st inst.; several of the Senate and of the city ministers were present, and at the close expressed themselves as highly pleased with the scientific manner in which Mr. Carruthers had handled his subject, and the progress made by the class under his tuition. On the evening of the same day, Mr. Carruthers gave a course of Readings in the basement of St. Andrew's Church, and was well received by the large audience that had gathered to hear him.

ON March 8th there was a good attendance of students to hear Professor Seth His contribution was a paper on the 'Wisdom of Solomon.' It was well worthy of attention, and threw light on many passages before obscure.

TUESDAY evening, March 15th, we had an informal hour's talk from Dr. Currie, on Hospital visitation. The talk was "practical" in the best sense, and was highly prized. We had the ripe fruit of experience and reflection arising from Dr. Currie's contact with the sick and suffering. It will be of great service to us all.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

Rev. J. Aitken Greenlees, \$1.50; Rev. John MacMillan, A. H. MacKay, Rev. J. Carruthers, Rev. J. H. Chase, Rev. J. Millen Robinson, Rev. E. A. McCurdy, \$1.00 each, Rev. J. H. Cameron, Rev. D. McDougall, Rev. Frank Coffin, Rev. J. D. MacGillivray, Rev. J. F. Dunstan, Rev. A. B. Dickie, R. Mellish, H. C. Dixon, Rev. A. P. Logan, J. P. Falconer, Rev. S. C. Gunn, Rev. A. D. Gunn, Rev. George McMillan, Rev. Dr. McKnight, Rev. Willard MacDonald, Rev. H. H. MacPherson, Rev. W. H. Ness, J. M. Fisher, James Gardner, Mrs. Enon MacDonald, Miss Ethel Muir, Miss M. Hosterman, Miss C. C. Hobrecker, W. H. Piers, C. Munro, Rev. H. K. MacLean, T. M. MacKelvie, J. H. Hattie. 50 cents each.

The Financia. Editor hopes that all subscribers will find it convenient to hand in their subscriptions without delay.

BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS TO BE ADDRESSED TO THE FINANCIAL EDITOR,
ALEXANDER LAIRD,
Pine Hill, Halifax.

WM. L. BARNSTEAD.

J. H. SUTHERLAND.

CENTRAL HOUSE, 145 AND 147 BARRINGTON STREET, HALIFAX.

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