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Our Graduates' Pulpit.

THE EYE AND EAR IN PARABOLIC TEACHING.

A SERMON

BY REV. JOHN H. MACVICAR, B. A., LATE OF HONAN.

Blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear. MATT. 23: 16.

A CRISIS had come in our Lord's ministry. For months he had been speaking as never man spake. With the boldest authority, with the most unmistakable plainness of speech, he had been declaring his unique position in relation to the

Father and to the sons of men. "All things have been delivered unto me of my Father: neither doth any know the Father, save the Son and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal him. Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you

rest." Straight, gracious, divinely assertive, had been his utterances. But suddenly he changed his method. He ceased making direct statements. He put the truth in peculiar round-about fashion. He spoke many things to them in the form of a connected narrative wherein he would institute some spiritual comparison. "He opened his mouth and uttered parables:" and, for the time being, "without a parable spake he not unto them." Indeed, so marked was his change of method, that the disciples became perplexed and asked, "Why speakest thou unto them in parables?" The words of the text, which form part of his answer, must not be understood as unfolding an isolated thought. They apply expressly to the parables. Blessed are your eyes: for they see what is to be seen in the parables. Blessed are your ears: for they hear what is to be heard in the parables. No good can be gained by seeking a more profound and mystical sense. It is a simple commendation of His disciples' eyes and ears, in contrast to the eyes and ears of the world. Let us keep these eyes and ears where they belong, in the body of his own interpretation.

First, then, THE FUNCTION OF THE EYE IN PARABOLIC TEACHING.

Things we can see are used to teach us about things we cannot see. The parables are either about processes in nature, or else events in human experience. They are patent to all. They are matters of ordinary

observation. We can see the sower going forth; see the fishers dragging their net; see the prodigal leaving home and coming back; see the Pharisee and Publican at prayer; see the mustard seed growing to a great size. In a word, we can see *all* the processes and transactions drawn upon in the parables. They are pre-eminently matters of sight.

But we may see without seeing. Many in the crowds who heard Jesus saw the sower going forth to sow, just as vividly as if he were before their eyes: indeed, he may actually have been before their eyes as Jesus spoke to them: but they saw only the sower. Many saw the net filled with fish: perhaps the fishermen may have been dragging it not far from where the multitudes sat and Christ from his floating pulpit may have pointed it out: but they saw only fishers, only a net, only fish. Many saw a wayward son going from home and then coming back for forgiveness: who never for a moment felt the least personal interest in the situation. Many saw the two men praying in the temple without seeing themselves. Many saw the extraordinary growth of the mustard seed and perhaps thought only of the commercial aspects of it.

And so far as the mere observation of the things about us is concerned, *any* man might have uttered these parables. In fact, other teachers *did* utter parables not dissimilar to these: as, for instance, the Rabbins of the Talmud. But Jesus spake as never

man spake, because he saw as never man saw. In his person, God looked on the visible world through the eyes of Man; and Man looked on the unseen world with the eyes of God. Whenever Jesus turned himself about in this workaday world, he saw precisely what we see: but he saw infinitely more. He saw, that is to say, remarkable analogies, which served to illustrate and even prove his spiritual message: analogies, which cease to be remarkable, when it is remembered that He Himself *made* the whole realm of nature and exercises an unerring Providence over the affairs of men. For even with all the moral imperfections that still adhere to things temporal in consequence of the Fall, He was yet able to find apposite illustrations in the concrete of the Truth he would fain convey to the minds and hearts of men: and this, without the introduction of anything unnatural, forced or grotesque. Other teachers, alive to the advantages of the pictorial method, have used the fable, wherein they have endowed the brute creation with human faculties and have succeeded in teaching striking lessons in worldly prudence: but such a grotesque method is utterly unfitted for conveying spiritual truth. These parables of Jesus are "earthly stories," if you choose to call them so: but with this qualification—they are most emphatically, what a little girl once called them, earthly stories "with a heavenly meaning." Nor as such have they

become effete. It seems to me we need to look into them for their heavenly meaning all the more in these days when the myriad presses of the world are pouring forth "earthly stories" which can be regarded (some of them) as loaded simply with a hellish meaning. Never was the pictorial form of teaching more in vogue than now, and, to an extent greater perhaps than is generally realised it is moulding the opinions and regulating the lives of the growing youth of Christendom. Now, in the name of all that is sacred, why should it be allowed so largely to come under pernicious influences? The devil has no right to this method: it belongs to Jesus. At the particular crisis of which we have spoken he deliberately abandoned for the time being his straight-out undisguised utterances of the truth, and resorted to vivid word pictures, which at once arrested the attention and threw a more than earthly spell over the hearts and lives of those who had eyes to see.

Think of the *extraordinary attractiveness* of the method.

Why is it that the run on books in the great public libraries all over the world is said to be so extensively in the department of fiction? Is it not because man have eyes and want to see?

Why is it that as soon as a book proves to be a great success it is almost certain to be dramatized and put upon the stage, and people will

stream to the same performance night after night without growing weary? Is it not because men have eyes and want to see?

Why is it that the spectacular is entering so largely into present day religious activities throughout Christendom in the form of mammoth conventions and processional demonstrations? Is it not because men have eyes and want to see?

Why is it things have come to such a pass, that in good old Presbyterian Scotland a Presbyterian minister will announce a sermon on the latest novel, and a growing number of ministers in Great Britain and America institute a series of lime-light exhibitions in place of their Sabbath evening service? Is it not because men have eyes and want to see?

There is no blinking it. No matter how often nor how loudly the great thinkers of our day may deprecate the pictorial method and strive to keep their books, their speeches and their sermons free from all illustrative language, the fact remains that this method at the present moment is swaying the world by its very attractiveness. And that there is a legitimate place for it in religious teaching, without going to the extremes that have been hinted at, is obvious to any one familiar with the Scriptures.

The pictorial form of instruction has always had a strange fascination in the Orient: and it is therefore not surprising that it should have been

so extensively employed under the old dispensation of types and figures. Not only was the whole Mosaic ritual, during what may be called the Kindergarten period of religious history, an obtrusive object lesson in the realm of law and grace: not only were individual careers and national events pressed into service as pictures of spiritual struggles and spiritual principles: but the prophets, emerging from the Kindergarten period, continually gave forth their inspired messages in language thrilling with picturesque suggestiveness to the eye. What immense crowds Ezekiel used to draw by his dramatic presentation of the truth. What vividness in Jeremiah's acted parables of "the broken bottle" and the "bands and bars." How glowing the objective visions that filled the ravished eyes of the Evangelical Isaiah.

Yes. The parabolic method had been in vogue before ever Christ opened his lips. It had had a distinct place in the religious teaching of the past: and Jesus was far from considering its mere worldly attractiveness a good and valid reason for avoiding it. On the contrary, he knew the insufficiency, the incompleteness of the very use that had been made of it by those who came before him; and He, the Teacher of teachers, pursued it to a degree so particularly his own that now it can scarcely be said of his parables that they belong to a species,—they constitute a distinct species by themselves. Though an appeal to the

eye had been made under the old dispensation, Jesus says it failed to reveal as much, and as clearly, as he revealed. "Verily I say unto you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see the things which ye see, and saw them not: and to hear the things which ye hear, and heard them not, Hear ye then the parable" . . . in all its inspiring attractiveness.

Think, too, of the *conciliatory effects* of it. Jesus had enemies. Every public teacher has enemies: but so weak is human nature that few can be hard pressed in an argument without betraying annoyance, without manifesting positive resentment towards their opponents. Jesus knew nothing of that feeling. Jesus knew nothing of that feeling. Never for a moment did he lose sight of his unique mission as a Revealer of the Father: and his use of the parable shows it. It may have been—indeed we need have no hesitation in saying it *was* as much for the good of his enemies, as for the good his friends, that he began to speak in parables. The direct presentation of the truth had become so offensive to them that they were fast becoming unwilling to listen to him at all. They listened, as it was, only for the purpose of expressing their detestation of him. But instead of complacently regarding the situation and allowing his message in its directness to to repel, he sought a more conciliatory method, and found it in the parable. The truth was still pres-

ented: but it filled the eye and in that form proved less repellent. Many a sneering Pharisee must have listened on the outskirts of the circle: listened almost in spite of himself: listened, too, at quite a length to the gradual development of the fascinating narrative before he realised that it was all shaping itself expressly to rebuke his own false satisfaction with empty formalism. But though he may have gone away scowling and muttering, he would come again. The method had a charm for him. He had grown familiar with it in the rabbinical schools. He knew how to use it himself. Well then: if he had eyes at all for the living truth, this was the way to convey the living truth to him. And if he closed his eyes, if he deliberately refused to see what was evidently brought before them—this is what happened: he deprived *himself* of the living truth but in so doing could not keep it from those around him who had spiritual discernment.

"Therefore speak I unto them in parables because seeing they see not, and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand . . . But blessed are *your* eyes for they see, and *your* ears for they hear."

But besides being attractive and conciliatory, the parable is conspicuous for *its illuminating power*.

Seeing is believing. So the saying goes. It is not strictly true, but is an exaggerated embodiment of truth. People do not believe

everything they see: they often hold themselves free to doubt even their own eyes. But in the main, what we can clearly see does exert a definite and controlling influence over our beliefs and actions. Now, there are some mysteries in the kingdom of God of which we can only gain an understanding and to which we can only become submissive through devout and intelligent reflection on the analogies which on divine authority are declared to exist in what we *can* actually see going on around us. When clouds of darkness shadow our spirits: when, even, we see no light at all: Christ comes to us with a parable, and his parable, as it were, becomes a lamp. It lights up the mystery. For what is really the matter? We are distressed because of what we can see in one particular sphere,—the spiritual. Christ explains the mystery by showing what we can see in another and precisely similar sphere: and thereby demonstrates the intimate harmony that prevails between the natural and spiritual worlds: demonstrates it in tones more pronounced than those heard in the suggestion of Milton's angel:—

What if earth
Be but the shadow of heaven, and
things therein
Each to the other like, more than
on earth is thought?

But we have reached the transition point, and pass on to notice, secondly, THE FUNCTION OF THE EAR IN PARABOLIC TEACHING. "Blessed are your ears for they hear."

Suppose now, you have some particular parable before you: it does not matter which. The eye may see it with lifelike vividness: see it too in much of its spiritual significance: but that is not enough. The ear likewise has its definite function. It must hear, in the twofold sense of understanding and performing. These 'earthly stories' (some of them) have the 'heavenly meaning' hidden away and it requires an attentive ear to catch that hidden meaning. And when the meaning is caught, there must be obedience. The parables are unique in this respect. Men may rise from the perusal of some masterpiece of fiction only to discuss its literary merits—sigh over the sorrows of the heroine, laud the unselfish devotion of the hero, or execrate the villain—and then put it all back on the shelf. But the parables are not works of fiction. They may have been, and likely were, actual occurrences. And in any case they carry with them tremendous significance in the sphere of moral responsibility. They cannot be put back upon the shelf. They have not been told merely to while away the time. They have not been told merely to excite the emotions or quicken the intellect by a brilliant display of literary skill. From beginning to end they throb with a definite purpose which cannot be lightly thrust aside: a purpose, namely, either to move the will to holy activity, or else restrain the will from unholy activity.

How, then, *are* we to hear the parables so that we may understand them and act up to them ?

1st. By grasping the central truth in each. *There is one.* Let us discover *what* it is. Sometimes Christ himself tells us plainly what it is. Sometimes the context tells us. Sometimes it has to be made to tell itself by consecrated hard thinking: for as Matthew Henry sagely puts it, a parable is a "shell that keeps good fruit *for* the diligent but keeps it *from* the slothful." Come at it how we may, one thing is sure: a central truth does sound from every parable and we should listen well that we may hear it. We shall be more liable to do so:

2d. By avoiding extremes in the interpretation of details. Perplexity, when there is any, generally concerns the details, and the tendency all along has been either to press them too far, or else ignore them altogether. Neither extreme represents the proper attitude. Whilst we must beware of hearing too much, we must also beware of hearing too little.

3d. We shall profit most of all by

waiting in humility and prayer for the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

The parables, no doubt, considered as mere literary productions, were calculated to impress the minds of men and linger in their memories: and yet as a matter of fact we know they were not really understood even by the apostles till the Holy Spirit in all his illuminating power called them to remembrance. So too, may they fill *our* eyes and ears: so too, linger in *our* memories: but however closely we may scan them, however intently listen for their meaning, they cannot move, they cannot rule, without the energizing influence of the Holy Spirit. For hearing revealed truth to purpose always implies relying on it and acting in accordance with it. If we come to the parables in faith, they will come to us in power. May the Holy Spirit, who testifies of Christ, enable us, every time we concentrate our thoughts upon these wonderful analogies, to see Jesus and hear Jesus pronouncing over us the gracious benediction, Blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear.

II. THE COMPARATIVE STUDY OF RELIGIONS.

THE RELIGIONS OF PERSIA.

REV. PROF. JOHN CAMPBELL, LL.D., F.R.S.C.

THE prevailing religion of Persia at the present day is that of Mahomet. In the battle of Cadesiah in 636, Omar the son of Khettab defeated the Shah Yezdegerd, and captured the palladium of Iran, the leathern flag adorned with precious stones, which, more than two thousand years before, had been Gava's apron raised in revolt against ancient tyranny. But the Mahometanism of Persia then imposed upon the people is not that of Turkey. In the latter country the Sultan, like the Czar of Russia, is the head alike of Church and State; the creed is the unalterable law of the Koran: the universal sect is that of the Sunnees; and Mahomet is the sole object, after God or Allah, of adoration and of oaths. In Persia, on the other hand, the Shah is more in conflict with the Church than is King Humbert of Italy with that of Rome; the creed is progressive, emanating from a living infallible chief Mashtaheed or Mahometan Pope; the universal sect is that of the Sheehs who regard the Sunnees as heretics of the worst kind; and Ali the son-in-law of Mahomet, who claimed to possess his Noor, light or spirit, is the object of worship and

the sanction of oaths. The Sheehs look for the appearing of Al Mahdi, the Guide, a Mahometan Messiah, whose title was impudently assumed by the Rebel of the Soudan.

There have been Christians in Persia since the third century, of this we are well assured, but they must have had representation there long before, since among the converts at Pentecost there were Parthians, Medes, and Elamites belonging to that country. From it also came the Magi, or wise men of the East, to adore the infant Saviour. So greatly did the Christian religion flourish in Iran that, in the thirty-five years persecution, at the hands of the fire-worshippers, which began in 33, no fewer than "10,000 priests, monks, and nuns were executed, while the number of martyrs among the laity exceeded all computation." In 498 the whole Persian Church adopted the Nestorian form and creed which had arisen in Syria some sixty years before and which were purer by far than those of the so-called Catholic Church. Great missionary work was done by the Nestorians in India and China and among the Tartar and Mongol tribes. But a small remnant of from forty

to fifty thousand only now represents this once extensive Church in Persia, although there are 400,000 Nestorians in south-Western Hindustan who keep up the old traditions. The American Board of Foreign Missions began work among those of Persia in 1833 and has met much encouragement, its chief opponents being missionaries of the Church of Rome.

Many classical writers, Greek and Roman, refer to Zoroaster the Persian and the creed of the Magi, just as they do to Moses and the religion of the Jews, and are followed by the early fathers of the Christian Church. But these references are quite uncritical, for they set the Church an example it has not been slow to follow, of treating the religions of the barbarians with contempt. The first writer to introduce the Persian religion to modern Europeans was the Englishman Thomas Hyde, in his elaborate but now useless treatise *Veterum Persarum et Parthorum et Medorum Religionis Historia*, which he published at Oxford in 1760. One year later, an enthusiast named Anquetil du Peron, who had enlisted as a private soldier in a regiment bound for India in 1754, solely for the purpose of studying the Zend Avesta or sacred book of Persia, completed his researches, but I do not find that he published his translation till 1771, ten years farther on. Since then great progress has been made in Zend studies, and although the language

presents many difficulties to the translator, any reader of a modern language of any note may easily make himself acquainted with Zoroaster's teaching. For English speaking students one of the best translations is that of Spiegel and Bleek, published in 1864 at the expense of a Mr. Cama for the use of English-speaking Parsees in India. The Zend language is to modern Persian as Sanscrit is to Hindustani, and Latin to Italian, but it is more so, being rather a grandmother than a mother tongue. It was an ancient form of speech even in the days of Cyrus, when Persian had reached its second or Achaemenian stage. Two other stages, the Pehlvi and the Sassanian, interpose between the Achaemenian and the Persian of to-day. Only 400,000 Parsees are found in Persia, the ancient home of the fire-worshippers; there are over 100,000 in India, and some thousands in other parts of the East. Their religion, therefore, lacks the importance that attaches to numbers, but, in its antiquity and in the decided impression made by it upon many forms of primitive Christianity, it is more worthy of study than any other ethnic creed.

When we ask ourselves what the original form of worship was in Persia we are met with a difficulty. The author of the Persian Epic was a Mahometan, and such also were the historians of Iran. Firdusi wrote his poem, the Shah Nameh, the materials of which were collected from

oral tradition and put into fragmentary written form by various hands some hundreds of years before his time, in the year 1000, by command of Mahmud the Great. Mirkhond, whose history of the early kings of Persia took advantage of the work of many predecessors in historical narration, belonged to the fifteenth century. The facts of the Shah Nameh and of Mirkhond's History substantially agree, but the books were both written by devout Mahometans who regarded Zoroaster as an imposter and are severely silent on the subject of idolatrous worship. There is a good deal of demonology in the early part of the history, and it is related that Jemschid, a semi-mythical king like the Egyptian Osiris in character and fate, under the delusion of Satan proclaimed himself to be God and called for divine honours. In some parts of the narrative a connection with Hebrew history is attempted, as where Gurshaf, the last of the Pishdadian dynasty is made the son of a daughter of Benjamin, Jacob's son, and where Kai Kobad, the first of the Kaiianians, is said to have embraced the Hebrew faith.

An analysis of the history reveals some strange facts. The most startling is that it is not the history of an Aryan people at all. Its kings and heroes are almost without exception Turanians, and their story finds its reflection in many lands in which the northern Turanian peoples have made their home. The same

personages are found in Greek mythology, in Roman legendary history, in Sanscrit epics, and, more truthfully on the monuments of Egypt, the rocks of the Sinaitic peninsula, and the clay tablets of Babilonia and Assyria. The Dikhans who preceded Firdusi gathered these legends and traditions no doubt from the lips of inhabitants of Persia who spoke Persian, but the great bulk of population in that large empire was of Turanian blood. Such were the Susians, Parthians, Hyrcanians, Carmanians, Bactrians, and many other nations within its bounds. By comparing the notices of foreign tribes on the Egyptian and Assyrian monuments and those made by the earlier Greek geographers and historians, all of these tribes may be traced back to an ancient home between the Nile and the Tigris. There, from a period antedating the call of Abram and extending as far down as or in some cases farther down, than the Exodus of Israel, arose through the medium of ancient Turanian bards a great fund of legendary lore that was afterwards carried to the ends of the earth, and geographically located in the land of the tribes' adoption. The so-called mythology and early history of all civilized nations, from India to Britain and from Greece to Scandinavia, is of the same nature, in every case a loan collection taken from the aboriginal Turanian, be he Kshattriya or Pict, Messenian or Finn.

Firdusi and Mirkhond state that

Kai Kobad or Kobad reigned a hundred or a hundred and twenty years and that he embraced the Hebrew faith. The inscriptions on the rocks of Arabia Petraea called Sinaitic mention a Kubeda, grandson of Kodzu of Egypt, who had mining lands in that peninsula. The Turanian Etruscans on several monuments, worship him as Kupida, the Latin Cupid. From him came the name Copt applied to the Egyptians, and in Greek mythical story he is Ægyptus an Argive king. But Ægyptus is no myth: his name appears on many an Egyptian monument as Aahpeti, the father of Ahmes and grandfather of Neb-pehti, the so-called Apepi or Apophis who reigned a hundred years, and in whose eighth year Joseph, according to Eusebius and other authorities, was exalted to the position of second ruler in the land. The Sallier papyrus in the British Museum tells how this king gave orders to close all heathen temples and to worship only Sutekh, the one God. This is the Shaddai of Genesis xvii. 1., xviii. 3., Exodus vi. 3. and of many parts of Job, as in v. 17., vi. 4., viii. 3., etc., meaning the Almighty, the name by which God revealed himself to the patriarchs. It is the Tsnyotadzu of modern Japanese, a Turanian tongue, having the same signification. This Pharaoh was Joseph's convert and an active missionary on behalf of the one living and true God, under whom Job of the land of Uz became

a prophet. He was a Hyksos or Shepherd King as Brugsch and all Egyptologists admit, and the Turanian origin of the Shepherds cannot be denied.

The last of the Kaianian dynasty which Kobad inaugurated was Kai Khosrou. The last of the Argive line of Ægyptus was Acrisius, the golden. The last male of the line of the Aahpeti or Apophis of the hundred years was Methosuphis, the Hebrew Mezahab, the golden, and him the truthful monuments call by the name Har-em-hebi, or the Golden Horus. His daughter Mutretem married the new Pharaoh who knew not Joseph, the second Thothmes and first Rameses, for he bore both names, whose son Rameses II persecuted Israel. Under this Thothmes, called Gushtasp or Vistaspa by the Persian writers, Zarathustra or Zoroaster introduced his new religion, not into Persia, but into the ancient land of Egypt. The contemporary of Har-em-hebi of Thebes was Amenhotep IV, whom the priests of Thebes had driven away north to Tell el Amarna, because he had apostatized from the old idolatry of Amun and had set up a new religion, the worship of the disc of the sun under the name of Aten, having changed his own name in its honour to Khu-en-aten, "splendour of the sun's disc." Thus Zoroaster had before him heathen idolatry in the worship of Amun and a hundred other gods, the Monotheism of Aahpehti, Joseph and Job, and the

sun worship of the heretical King. Out of these he had to frame an eclectic system pleasing to the new ruler, who, as of Phœnician origin, had Semito-Hamite gods of his own.

An examination of the Zend Avesta or sacred book of the Persians, in its three parts, the Vendidad, Vispered and Yasna, and the Khordah-Avesta, discloses the fact that it professes to be in part a revelation from Ahura Mazda, the Wise Being, to Zoroaster. Those parts which are of the nature of hymns and litanies are not necessarily thus inspired. Ahura reveals the existence also of Angro-Mainyus, the Evil Spirit, co-eternal with himself, but yet to be destroyed by his power. Viewed as a monotheistic system or better as a dualism, there is much to admire in a so-called revelation which regards the world as originally created good in all its parts by a wise God. But as we pursue our investigations it appears that the Zend-Avesta contains a pantheon of original heathen deities and a pandiabolon of the same origin. Max Müller says: "Gods unknown to any Indo-European nation are worshipped under the same names in Sanscrit and Zend; and the change of some of the most sacred expressions in Sanscrit into names of evil spirits in Zend, only serves to strengthen the conviction that we have here the usual traces of a schism which separated a community that had once been united." The gods which are

objects of adoration are of three ranks, namely Amshaspands, Yezds, and Fervers. The minor devils are classed as Darvands and Divs, and among the former appear the Indian gods Indra, Siva, and the Asvin-Nasatya. Two of the Amshaspands of whom there are but six are Vohu-Mano and Spenta-armaiti, whose names are capable of translation as "the good spirit," and "the holy earth," but they are really those of King Gushtasp's historical son and grandson, for Spentarmaiti is a form of Esfendiar and Vohumano is his son Behmen.

Like the Hebrew Scriptures, the Zend Avesta deals largely in history, but it is the history of the imprecatory psalms. With Angro-Mainyus or Ahriman, the evil spirit, are allied Frangrace and Arejataspa, whom all commentators recognize as the same personalities as Afrasiab and his son Arjasp, the descendants of Tur, who was the son of Peridun or Thraetaona the founder of the Pishdadian dynasty. These are real historical characters and represent the leaders of the principal enemies of the Hyksos line in Egypt. The kings of that line, such as Kavata or Kobad and Husrava or Khosrou, are objects of adoration, and their enemies are objects of detestation. If the Bible had made Isaac and Jacob gods, and Ishmael and Esau devils, it would have followed the spirit of the Zend-Avesta. Even that obscure character, Mithra the mediator, is a reflection of no divine attribute, but

represents the son of Mutrelem, the daughter of Har-em-hebi, who by marrying Thothmes II united the Hyksos line with that of the new Pharaohs who knew not Joseph. From her Thothmes III or Rameses II acquired the name Mithras. It may perhaps be going too far to say that Ahura-Mazda or Ormuzd is a form of Har-em-hebi and the Egyptian Korus, but this is evident that, in spite of its apparent dualism, the Zend Avesta teaches ancestor worship in the legitimate royal line and the hatred of all their opponents. The very fact that Sanscrit gods are Persian devils makes it clear that their religions deal not with any theological truth but with vile race antipathies.

It may naturally be asked how the doctrines of a Turanian creed came to be couched in an Aryan tongue. The answer is plain. The ancient Aryans did not exercise royalty's functions, save on a very limited scale. There was no Aryan empire in western Europe before the time of Cyrus, and there was no Brahman empire in India until long after the Christian era. Prior to that time, the Aryans were either priests or royal councillors or mercenary warriors. Such were the Brahmans among the Turanian tribes who passed into India, the Magi among those that took up their abode in Persia, and the Carians or Ekronite Philistines who guarded Cario-Memphis in Egypt. They composed the hymns and other ritual pieces of

their mysterious worship in their own sacred language, a language which the vulgar was not intended to understand, but which, as it appears from many Sanscrit writings, several Turanian royal patrons of the Brahmans became so proficient in that they were able to compose hymns of a Vedic order in it. This old Pelasgic tongue, the parent of the Sanscrit and the Zend, has not yet come to light, but Egyptian and Oriental researches may yet make it known. It is of course possible that the Zend of the Avesta is the actual Aryan speech of the time of Zoroaster unedited and thus unchanged. If this be the case, we know the language of the Egyptian priests who lived a short time prior to the birth of Moses.

Can any good thing come out of Nazareth? In a religious book containing prayer, praise, imprecation, history, law, and moral precept, that was compiled to be a *modus vivendi* between hostile religious systems, and to flatter the vanity of the members of the new dynasty and win for them the homage of the people; can we expect to find any religious truth? At first thought the answer would be negative. But there is no denying the fact that there is much excellent morality in the Zend-Avesta, although largely of the eye for an eye and tooth for a tooth order. Its laws regarding dogs, its filthy purifications, its superstitious regard for fire, its admonitions regarding the paring of finger nails,

and similar matters, are trivial and disgusting, but they are mingled among much that is pure and elevated. The book is as full of mythology as a classical dictionary, and the hymns and prayers extend to all sorts of deified ancestors, yet over all is the one God, Ahura-Mazda, visible in the heavens as the sun, and represented on earth by fire and by the reigning sovereign who is the son of the sun. The most striking feature of the Zend-Avesta is its impassioned reiteration of the existence and work of Ahriman the evil one and his historical followers, of the balking of his wicked designs, and of curses deep and terrible on him and all his.

The great reality of a malignant being exercising destructive power in the world is recognized in all religions, whether these attempt to propitiate him or pose as his opponents. In Old Testament times this doctrine was brought into special prominence by the patriarch Job. Under the name Hapu, the patriarch was well known in Egypt, and his son Amenhotep-Hui was the prime minister of Amenhotep III, the father of the Pharaoh who established the worship of the Sun's disc at Tell el Amarna. The wisdom and sayings of Hapu were remembered down to the time of the Ptolemies, and he and his son received divine honors at Thebes. In the Zend Avesta, Job is called Hvova, and Zoroaster professed to look for all honor through his family. Here

then is the source of the old Aryan priest's truth abused or error that evil is co-eternal with good, namely the record of the afflicted patriarch's sufferings at the hand of Satan. Those who charge the author of the book of Job, as they do the evangelists and the apostle Jude, with Zoroastrian leaven are, so far as the first of these is concerned, chronologically at fault, since Job was some generations prior to the Persian law-giver.

It is hard to tell when Zoroastrianism reached its second stage of Magism, but it seems to have arisen in Media. The Medes and the Turanian peoples of the Persian Empire were more kindly disposed to Ahriman the evil principle than to Ormuzd the good, recognizing in him a Herman or Hermes, one of their deified ancestors, and he received divine honors from them. But above all, the Turanians adored Zervan, which in their tongue meant "the house of heaven," and which is the same word as the Iroquois Tharonhiawkon, denoting the supreme god of the five nations. The Abbé Cuoq translates it "the holder of heavens." The Magi, probably during the time of Median supremacy, prior to Cyrus or about 700 B.C., took advantage of the resemblance of Zervan to the language of Zoroaster in the Yasna where he speaks of "the Holy Spirit created in unlimited time" or in Zarvan-akarana. They, therefore, set up this Zervan as the original deity from whom or from which both

Ormuzd and Ahriman, good and evil, proceeded, still retaining the tribes of inferior gods and devils. This developed into pantheism along the same lines as Hindoo philosophy, and is virtually the creed of the Guebres and Parsees of the present day who are philosophically inclined.

The modern Parsees do not know their bible, the Zend-Avesta, and probably not more than a dozen of their mobeds or priests are acquainted with the texts which they recite in worship. They are monogamists, clean livers, charitable and devout. Their popular catechism of religious instruction, taking away a few references to Zoroaster, the founder of their creed, might pass current in a unitarian school. The doctrine of vicarious atonement or of a saviour from sin it rejects. Its brief creed has been thus expressed: "A Parsee believes in one God, to whom he ad-

dresses his prayers. His morality is comprised in these words, pure thoughts, pure words, pure deeds. Believing in the punishment of vice and the reward of virtue, he trusts for pardon to the mercy of God." It thus appears that the liberal Parsee, to whom the sun and fire are but emblems of divine power, is a respectable unitarian, who has virtually laid aside the peculiar features of his ancient creed, and who is agitating even now for the abolition of the filthy *uirang* purification, for the reduction of the number of obligatory prayers and ceremonial observances similar to those of the ancient Pharisees, and for the social elevation of women. The only obstacle to the acceptance by such liberals of the Christian faith is found in their fierce resentment to the doctrine of the atonement; otherwise they are not far from the kingdom of God.



ANALYSIS OF THE EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS

THE Epistle to the Ephesians, although one of the shortest of St. Paul's writings, is one of the richest in spiritual teaching. Within these six chapters is contained matter sufficient for the study of a lifetime. I suppose there are no more wonderful six chapters in existence. Before entering upon a more detailed analysis of these chapters, allow me to mention some leading thoughts derived from a study of this epistle.

1. We are impressed with the harmony of the Three Persons of the Godhead in the work of man's redemption and spiritual growth. They are revealed in these chapters as cooperating in the most perfect harmony. Especially is this the case with regard to the Father and Son in relation to this work. The writer seems to conceive them almost as one Personality working in two directions to achieve man's forgiveness. We see the Father and the Son working with absolute unity of purpose to restore man to the height from which he has fallen. From a perusal of this epistle we can conceive the difficulty which the early Fathers experienced in formulating the creed of the church; and we should be thankful to Athanasius and the other theologians who formulated for us the precious creed of the Council of Nice.

2. The next thought which strikes one on a cursory examination of the epistle is the grandeur of its teaching - the grand sweep of its doctrine. The apostle here soars on the flight of eagle's wings, comprehending in his gaze, the beginning and the end of time.

The epistle contains the doctrinal depth of the Epistle to the Romans with something of the prophetic grandeur of the Book of Revelation.

To illustrate what I mean: The epistle speaks of redemption being planned by God before the beginning of time; and we are told that Christ's redemptive work affects not only man and this world but that all things in heaven and in earth are united in Christ.

3. Another noticeable feature of our epistle is the number of key-words of theology used in it. I do not know other six chapters in Scripture equally rich in this regard. For example, we have the word "grace" used either as a verb or as a noun ten times. We have the word "faith" used eight times either alone or in connection with the name of Jesus Christ. We have the word "love" used fifteen times either as a verb or as a noun. We have the word "holy" used four times, and the word "peace" is used six times, while we are told twice

that we are saved by the "blood" of Christ.

Again we have the three classical words for Atonement: "Redemption" (*ἀπολύτρωσις*) "pardon" (*ἄφεσις* *ὡς παραπτώματος*) and "reconciliation" (*καταλλάξις*) used as a verb. The chief remaining doctrinal word is that of "election."

4. The remaining feature of the epistle noticeable on a cursory glance is its practical character. Paul sometimes soars away on the sublimest of prophecy: but it is no idle star-gazing. Heavenly comes down to the earth again, and shows us how these sublimests are related to the practical details of the Christian's daily life. He takes us into the parlor and shows us how the Christian parent should act in dealing with his children. He takes us into the field, and shows us the fidelity with which the slave should do his work. He takes us into the marketplace and shows what should be the character of our dealings with our fellowmen. He takes us into the social meeting and shows what should be the character of our conversation there. Thus St. Paul, the great formulator of doctrine is also the thoroughly practical man.

ANALYSIS OF THE EPISTLE.

I. GOD THE FATHER.

A. In relation to creation. III. 9, "God the Father created all things in Christ." Elsewhere in the epistle we are told it was Christ who created all things. And elsewhere in Scrip-

ture we are told it was the Spirit who created all things (Gen. I. 2). From these facts we may conclude that the three persons in the Godhead were equally concerned in the work.

B. Again the epistle teaches us about God the Father in relation to the doctrine of Election.

1. We are told that He elects believers to holiness and blamelessness. We read I. 4, "According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love."

2. We are told that He elects believers to the adoption of children. I. 5, "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself according to the good pleasure of His will."

3. Electing us to good works: II. 10, "For we are His workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." The words seem to be an echo of the teaching contained in the Epistle to the Romans: "For whom He did foreknow He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover, whom He did predestinate them He also called; and whom He called them He also justified." The doctrine of Election, so distinctly revealed here leads to these strange paradoxes. The one is that God predetermines every event that takes

place, while man's free will remains intact. Jonathan Edwards believed in the first of these—God's electing power; but he could not harmonise with that election, the truth of man's free will. Well, we cannot harmonise them either; we can only believe they are in perfect harmony. We cannot measure the power of God, so we must grope our way into this mystery by means of faith.

The other paradox revealed in the doctrine of Election is that, while God has chosen His people to eternal life, the Redemption of Christ is sufficient for all, and God's offer of salvation is for all.

For all practical purposes, then, Calvinist and Arminian are at one. There are only man-made barriers which divide them—barriers erected in our ignorance because we cannot grasp the whole truth of God. The doctrine is for believers, not for unbelievers—for believers, to assure them of their final salvation. Spurgeon says that if any are prevented from coming to God by the doctrine of Election, then it is because false teachers have stuffed up the windows of their prison with old rags hiding from them the infinite love of God. The doctrine of Election presents us with two paradoxes; but they are only paradoxes because of the limited nature of our vision. The Christian, Faith, as Bacon has shown, is full of paradoxes which are in perfect harmony in the omniscient mind of God.

C. Further, we have the doctrine

of God the Father in relation to the work of Redemption.

1. I. 6, "He hath made us accepted in the Beloved."

2. II. 5, "He hath quickened us together with Christ."

3. II. 8, He grants us salvation: "For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." This is the first meaning of the word "grace" in this wonderful epistle. It means here God's divine power granting us salvation through Jesus Christ.

The other meaning is God's divine power enabling us to advance in the spiritual life. And I think it will be found that, from these two roots, branch out all the meanings of this wonderful word.

D. God the Father in relation to Sanctification. Here we have the second theme of the epistle—the sanctification of the individual in which the three Persons of the Godhead are equally engaged. What a wealth of power the letter reveals as being placed at the believer's disposal to enable him to grow in grace. Surely we Christians are not fully alive to our privileges! God the Father enables the believer to grow in grace by aiding him in two ways: by His own indwelling; and by His gifts.

These gifts may be divided into three main classes: life, power and spiritual insight.

1. II. 22, We are told that believers are "builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."

2. We are told that God the Father bestows upon us peace and love and faith: VI. 23, "Peace be to the brethren and love with faith from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."

We are told that He bestows upon us grace and peace: I. 2, "Grace be to you and peace from God our Father and from our Lord Jesus Christ."

Again we read that He bestows upon us the exceeding greatness of His power (I. 19,) the power indeed with which He raised Jesus Christ from the dead.

II. 7. We read that, "in the ages to come, He will show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus."

I. 17. He grants us the power of spiritual insight, for Paul prays that, "The God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints."

These, then, are the gifts bestowed upon us by God the Father whereby we are enabled to grow in grace—gifts bestowed in conjunction with the work of Jesus Christ and of the Holy Spirit—peace, love, faith, grace, spiritual insight; and, above all, God Himself as an indwelling Power.

E. Again we have the teaching of the epistle in relation to the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, and we

are told, I. 20: that, "God the Father raised Jesus Christ from the dead."

II. JESUS CHRIST.

A. In relation to the work of Creation:

We are told, III. 9, that "God created all things by Jesus Christ."

B. In relation to Redemption:

The teaching with regard to Jesus Christ in relation to redemption is very full. His work in this regard is shown us in five ways. We are told that He grants us adoption, life, reconciliation, access to the Father and forgiveness. It is thus evident how closely Jesus Christ is associated with the Father in the work of Atonement.

C. In relation to Sanctification:

Jesus Christ is just as closely associated with the Father in the work of Sanctification. He carries on the work of Sanctification in exactly the same way as the Father and the Spirit, namely, by bestowing upon us special gifts and by His own indwelling in the believer.

I need not repeat the texts. They are almost identical with those used with regard to the Father in relation to the work of Sanctification.

D. Christ in relation to the Church:

Christ's relation to the Church is shown us in three figures:

1. IV. 12, He dwells in the Church which is called His body.

2. IV. 15, He is the Head of the Church.

3. He is the corner stone of the Church.

Again we find the Father, Son and Spirit working in perfect harmony in relation to the Church. We read that believers (II. 20, 21, 22) "are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." A wonderful building this is assuredly when Father, Son and Spirit are the Architects and Builders, and the indwelling Guests.

E. The name of Christ:

This epistle furnishes us with one of the names of Christ, and He is called the "Beloved" (I. 6). He is loved of the Father. By this name we are reminded of the words in the Epistle of Peter regarding the corner-stone which was disallowed of men but chosen of God and precious (I Peter, II. 4).

F. Christ the Source of Unity:

The epistle reveals to us Christ the source of unity in the universe in cooperation with the Father who works with the Son here as elsewhere. Accordingly we read: I. 10, "In the dispensation of the fulness of times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in Him."

We thus learn that there is no spot in the universe unaffected by Christ's redemptive work. The pure whiteness of heaven itself has been

stained by the fall of the rebel angels. The peaceful green of earth has been stained by the fall of man. Accordingly Christ's work affects heaven as well as earth; and we read that Christ will create new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness (II Peter, III. 13).

III. THE HOLY SPIRIT.

A. In relation to the work of Redemption. The actual work of the Spirit in relation to redemption is not mentioned in this epistle; but it is distinctly implied in the words: I. 13, 14, "In whom (that is in Christ), after that ye believed ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of Promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance." In these words we learn that the Holy Spirit is just as distinctly concerned in the work of redemption as the Father and the Son.

B. The Holy Spirit in relation to the work of Sanctification. The teaching with regard to the work of the Spirit in regard to Sanctification is very full in this epistle. Five aspects of His work are presented to us; and He is represented as sealing, strengthening, filling, giving life, and teaching to pray. III. 14, 15, 16, Thus Paul prays that we may be strengthened with might by Christ's spirit in the inner man. V. 9, We are told that "the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth." V. 18, We are urged to be "filled with the Spirit," and in VI. 18, to "offer up prayer and supplication in the Spirit."

IV. DEMONOLOGY.

The teaching of the epistle regarding demonology is very distinct, and we are told that there is a great spirit world near us against the forces of which we must contend. If the spiritual power placed at our disposal is great, great also is the demon power against which we have to contend. All the power of hell is arrayed against us in the fight : VI. 12, "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

V. ETHICS.

The Ethical teaching of the epistle is very full.

A. Different classes of persons mentioned :

The epistle deals with men and women in their different relations as husbands, wives, children, servants, masters. If the precepts of the epistle were universally obeyed by Christians to-day we would not hear of the need of "Applied Christianity." Family life would be sweeter; socialism would find no soil on which to grow. The more I study

the matter the more I feel that the principles of a true sociology lie not with Karl Marx but with St. Paul.

B. St. Paul also enters into details as to the Christian's daily life, and He tells us what sins must be avoided : Lasciviousness, anger, lying, stealing, corrupt communication, bitterness, wrath, clamour, evil-speaking, fornication, covetousness, foolish talking, jesting, drunkenness. The epistle, indeed, furnishes us with a guide-book for our daily walk and conversation.

C. Virtues to be practised.

Further, the apostle gives an outline of the virtues to be practised by the Christian. These are : Truth, honest toil, kindness, tenderness, forgiveness, walking in love, walking as children of the light, goodness, righteousness, truth, redeeming the time.

D. The Armour of the Christian.

Lastly, the Apostle rounds off His ethical teaching by enumerating the several portions of the Christian's armour : Truth, Righteousness, The Gospel, Faith, Salvation, God's Word and Prayer.

CHARLES B. ROSS.

Lachine, Que.

II. *THE HOLY GHOST THE AUTHOR AND INTERPRETER OF THE SCRIPTURES.

REV. PRINCIPAL MACVICAR, D.D., LL.D.

THIS subject has been put into my hands, but was not formulated by me. As it stands it is far too large to be satisfactorily treated in thirty minutes, the time at my disposal. I shall therefore be obliged to limit myself chiefly to the first section of the subject, and without entering upon any of the controversies that have arisen on the doctrine of Inspiration I shall indicate in briefest outline what I believe to be the truth regarding the general character and contents of the Bible as formed by the Holy Ghost—a Divine person acting as the executive of the Godhead.

The late Dr. John Cairns, Principal of the United Presbyterian College, Edinburgh, than whom no one was more competent to speak on this subject, in an essay published ten years ago, made the following concessions :

First, We do not need to hold that the question of the Canon has been fully settled. I for one have no quarrel with that settlement; but though I might not see my way to accept the Book of Esther or the Second Epistle of Peter, if I held a Word of God, I might equally hold

that Word all inspired in the highest sense.

Secondly, We do not need to hold that the present text is the very Word of God. This remark is a mere extension of the foregoing. The change from the original manuscripts to the best extant critical text is so far a sacrifice of canonicity. But we know how little this really means, and how it is always becoming less. The calmness with which even the ordinary mind has taken all the discussion connected with the Revised New Testament, is creditable to public intelligence. We see that, to all intents and purposes, the word of God has not been lost in transcription, so that while we must draw the distinction, it is not a grave one, between the Bible as we have it, and as it first came from God.

Thirdly, We do not need to hold that the Bible is all, as to the matter of it, revealed for the first time.

No one can ever have held this, even when less freedom prevailed as to the question of Inspiration than now. * * * *

Fourthly, We do not need to hold that the Bible, as to the manner of it, is in such a sense the word of God, as not also to be the word of man. In recent times much more

*An address delivered in Stanley St. Presbyterian Church, Montreal.

light has been cast upon what has been called the human element in the Bible, and this has been unwelcome to some because it has not unfrequently tended, if not to exclude, yet to lower the Divine.

This, however, has been an abuse and not the just use of a great and important principle in theological science. The Bible expressly recognizes this human element in itself. "Which things," says Paul, "*we* speak, *we* also believe, and therefore speak." These assertions are made in connection with the strongest claims to Divine inspiration. It is to my mind, one of the internal evidences of the canonicity of Second Peter, that it so clearly brings out the two sides in inspired teaching. "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." "Even as our beloved brother Paul also, according to the wisdom given unto him, hath written unto you." Our Lord recognizes the 110th Psalm as David's, in a true sense, "How then doth David in spirit call him Lord?" and remarkable is the introduction of the personality of David into the matter by Peter on the day of Pentecost, "For David is not ascended into the heavens, but he saith himself, the Lord said unto my Lord," etc.

This much, I think, we may safely accept from the wise and learned Dr. Cairns.

For myself I am accustomed to think that the character and extent of revelation are in part necessarily

determined by the limitations of man's nature and the degree in which language is capable of being a vehicle for the transmission of thought. Man is finite, and disclosures of the Infinite, of the Divine mind, must be made in such forms as suit his limited capacity. This principle of adaptation to the weakness of man's faculties is observable throughout the entire Bible; and the greatest clearness and fulness of revelation of God's character and will are reached in the Incarnation of His Son, who was the express image of God; and also in the writings of His inspired apostles. You recollect, accordingly, how Philip said to Jesus, "Lord, show us the Father and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, have I been so long time with you, and dost thou not know me, Philip? He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father; how sayest thou, show us the Father? Believeest thou not that I am in the Father and the Father abiding in me? The words that I say unto you 'I speak not from myself, but the Father abiding in me doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me, or else believe me for the very works' sake."

The lesson to Philip is as plain as it could be; and it is a lesson to us and to the Church in all ages. He is told to look at his Master and see the Father in him, to listen to the words of his Master and hear in them a message direct from God. What stronger assurance of the

truth coming from God could we ask? What could be simpler and yet what could be more profound? So deep that Paul, a man of mighty intellectual and spiritual grasp, speaks of this luminous revelation through the Incarnation of the Son as the "great mystery of godliness," something which the human intellect cannot fully penetrate.

And we must remember that there is still further limitation and difficulty in conveying God's thoughts to the human mind by reason of our sinfulness. We are distinctly assured that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God." These are the things contained in the Bible, and they are there expressly through the agency of the Spirit of God; but "the natural man receiveth them not; for they are foolishness unto him; and he cannot know them because they are spiritually judged." Sin has utterly blinded him. His spiritual but not his natural vision is gone; and none can enable him to see the truth savingly but he who indited it. Hence Paul says, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by the Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." The revelation thus made sometimes transcends the possibility of giving it articulate expression in words; for there are experiences of the regener-

ate heart which are unutterable, a joy which is unspeakable and full of glory. But when human speech fails the indwelling Spirit becomes the interpreter of our deepest consciousness, as well as of the Scriptures. "with groanings which cannot be uttered."

This much as preparatory to a condensed statement as to the matter or contents of the Bible. You all know that this matter is largely historical, biographical, doctrinal, devotional and prophetic. It is not all pure revelation. The lives of the men of the Bible fill many of its pages. The record stretches over many centuries and countries. It contains concrete examples divinely ordered and selected of all possible fundamental human experiences under all conceivable conditions. It sets forth, so far as it is necessary for us to know, all relations between God and man, between man and man, between communities of men or nations, and, finally, between men and other orders of sentient and intelligent beings.

If asked why the Scriptures assumed this form, and what the specific use is of this mass of materials so heterogeneous and comprehensive? We answer, God, who cannot err, deemed this the best form in which to cast his book and determined the extent and variety of matter which it should contain. It is all wisely adapted to the education of our race, and specially designed for the manifestation of his infinite

love and redemptive purpose in Christ. The Bible is Christo-centric, whatever our systems of theology and sermons may be; and it is all given by inspiration of God the Spirit, and is "profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness; that the man of God may be complete; furnished completely unto every good work." It is not vital for us to know precisely how and when and where and by whom these diverse materials were gathered. The essential thing is that we should make sure that God is responsible for collecting them, that we have his guarantee through His Son and through His Holy Spirit in this respect.

The Old Testament, as you know, opens with the Pentateuch containing history and biography and at the same time many divine enactments touching civil and religious matters. Then follow didactic, as well as historical, devotional and prophetic books. The structure of the New Testament is similar. It has its historical pentateuch, the four gospels and the Acts of the Apostles, followed by doctrinal and practical epistles and the great prophetic book of the Seer of Patmos.

Speaking very generally the Bible is a revelation of God and man, and of spirits, good and evil, while it includes also brief statements as to the origin, nature and destiny of the physical universe. These statements are not intended to teach men science,

but they will be found in accord with the verified results of scientific research, and inasmuch as they were made long before these results were reached it is self-evident that they must have come from some other source than the human intellect. They are from God. And as to God's method in gradually and progressively bringing together all that is embraced in his book several things require to be carefully noted.

At the beginning he communicated his mind directly to those who feared and served Him. He spoke to Adam and Eve and Cain both in Eden and beyond its confines. He continued to do so in many instances during the antediluvian age. Enoch walked with God, and Noah heard his voice directing him what to do to escape the destruction coming upon a wicked world.

Later God selected one man, Abraham, and trained him in a marvellous manner. He entered into covenant with him under the provisions of which with the seal of circumcision he gave visible unity to all believers. He made choice of the nation descended from this man, and selected a land for them in which they were to be separated from all the nations of the earth. This separation was to be perpetuated by sundry regulations, and was designed to prevent the people lapsing into polytheism and all its concomitant sins, and to preserve their national purity and stability. God educated this people spiritually and caused to be put on

record his dealings with them during many centuries as they passed through what may be practically called specimens of all possible human experiences and relations. He selected from time to time certain persons from the nation, and in some instances from beyond the nation, to whom he made known what could not be discovered by unaided reason. These were inspired prophets and apostles, men of God, his representatives and mouthpiece. In the fulness of time the great fundamental miracle of Christianity, the Incarnation, occurred. The Word was made flesh and dwelt among men. The record of His life of His earthly sojourn during thirty-three years forms a large and most essential factor in the book of God. Four men acting under the guidance of the Holy Spirit selected and reported certain of the lessons he delivered and of the beneficent and mighty works which he performed. They testified to his sinlessness and absolute integrity. They dispassionately told the story of his death, burial, resurrection and ascension to glory. After his ascension other writers appeared to finish the canon of Scripture. Thus the book was gradually developed to its completion. It is undeniably characterized by progress. But when we use that term progress we must guard against supposing that the book is the product of the human mind, and that therefore the matter of it improved in its general character as to reli-

ability with the advancement of human intelligence and culture.

This was not the case.

And we must also guard against another common error, that of imagining that because truth is introductory or elementary it is on this account less reliable than that which is full and complete. This again is not the case. The alphabet and the multiplication table are elementary, but not unreliable or useless for this reason. They fill their own places with perfection, and are as necessary as the highest results of mental effort.

And so God's first and simplest word to man is as true and essential as his last and deepest disclosure of Divine thought.

We have not time to trace and illustrate fully the evidences of progress in the word of God; but it is a mistake to overlook or deny it. No true doctrine of Inspiration can be formulated and defended by doing so. The progress was from the external to the inward or subjective. Outward restraints came first, and afterwards subjective ethical principles ruled the race, or at least those of them who served God. Object lessons were first used, then higher abstract truths. The Cherubim and flaming sword at the gate of Eden, the Shekinah in the tabernacle and temple, the ministry of symbols in the Levitical code, and later the more abstract and comprehensive teaching of the prophets.

Negative precepts gradually de-

veloped into their logical positives; and the emphasis was more and more laid upon the positive. For example—the prohibition “Thou shalt not steal” in the hands of the inspired Apostle Paul takes the form of “Let him that stole steal no more; but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing that is good, that he may have whereof to give to him that hath need.” “Thou shalt not kill,” expands in the hands of Jesus into the answer which he gave to the lawyer who asked him, “Who is my neighbor?” (See the parable of the good Samaritan, Luke X.) So with the fourth commandment. Its form at first was, “Thou shalt not do any work,” but its full positive scope and significance was unfolded by Jesus when he said, “The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath.” Thus it was with all the precepts of the Decalogue.

The Saviour himself proceeded gradually in unfolding truth, and fully recognized the law of progress in revelation. You recollect how he said to those whom he had been teaching for nearly three years: “I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he shall guide you into all truth; for he shall not speak from himself; but what things soever he shall hear, these shall he speak: and he shall declare unto you the things that are to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall

take of mine, and shall declare it unto you.”

This promise was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost and afterwards when those “to whom he had given commandment through the Holy Ghost” received power from on high, and were endowed with many heavenly gifts; and, being thus equipped for their special mission, they continued and extended “all that Jesus *began* both to do and to teach.”

It is time, however, that I should indicate more precisely the sense in which the Holy Ghost is the Author of the Scriptures. During the entire formation of the Bible his work was to convey to the minds of chosen men God’s thoughts on all the subjects embraced in the book, and to guide them infallibly in the selection of such matters of fact as he determined to incorporate in the record, matters of fact selected from the history of men and of nations, especially the Jewish nation, and from the life and lessons of Jesus, the Son of man—the crown of our humanity and at the same time God over all blessed for ever.

It appears to me that I am not straining the truth in the attempt to support a foregone conclusion by saying that, as a Divine person—truly God—the Holy Ghost was fully competent for this mighty task. We need not inquire too minutely *how* he performed it, *how* he caused the thoughts of God to arise in the minds of men, and *how* he saved

them from falling into error. The assurance of our Saviour that he could do it should satisfy us on this point. The men chosen for the work uniformly claimed to speak from God and for God. This claim is advanced so frequently in the Hebrew Scriptures as to impress the most cursory reader. And Jesus, the faithful and true witness, who had all the resources of Divine knowledge and could not be mistaken, endorsed this claim. He specifically accepted the Old Testament, and even set the seal of his approval upon very many of its most wonderful details by special mention of them. It was his only Bible, for the New Testament was not written till after his ascension. We dare not call in question the sufficiency of his knowledge or the absolute validity of his testimony in favour of Moses and the prophets, and in favour of the Holy Ghost as fully qualified to guide his Apostles into all truth. I dare not say with some that the Spirit could not and did not guide them in matters of geography, geology, astronomy or general history. I know not why these subjects should be regarded more difficult for him than the deep things of God. I believe that Christ meant what he said when he declared of the Spirit, "*He shall guide you into all truth*"—not into some truth.

And since he guides, but does not coerce, there is room for all the variety of style and modes of composition which characterize the sacred

oracles. This variety, instead of being a drawback, an obstacle to our faith, is just the opposite. The miracle of Inspiration is not diminished but increased by all this variety and by the employment of many instead of one or a few human agents, and yet securing truth and organic unity throughout the entire work. Imposters, such as Mohammed, aim at rigid uniformity of style in the hope of making it appear that their writings are literally dictated by God; but they forget that the God of nature, who is the God of the Bible, delights in infinite variety as consistent with perfect unity and truthfulness, and that "all these things worketh the one and the same Spirit."

The matter of the Bible may seem, in some instances, improper and repellant, such as we would not have inserted. Should this thought come to you in reading some Old Testament passages then remember that "no prophecy ever came by the will of man: but men spake from God being moved by the Holy Ghost." Remember, too, that the Bible is a revelation of man as well as of God. These dark and appalling facts, sometimes complained of as blemishes, are all needed in this sense, to show fully what is in man. Men are to-day as bad as these facts make them. Specimens in London, Paris, Chicago and New York equal in sinfulness and criminality those of Sodom and Gomorrah.

Learn also, in reading the whole

volume, to distinguish clearly between what God's Spirit records as having taken place and what God approves. Deeds of deepest turpitude performed by men and by the devil and his angels find a place, but no approval, in Scripture records. What Jews and Christians thought and practiced is one thing, and what God commanded and sanctioned is another thing. The former is not our rule of faith and conduct, but the latter—the word of the Lord, we are bound to accept. The drunkenness of Noah, the polytheistic tendencies of Israel, the sins of David, and the apostacy of Peter are recorded, but not approved or set forth for our imitation. They are rather flaming beacons set up by the Holy Spirit to show us dangers to be shunned.

Finally, it is of no practical consequence to us whether Old Testament

saints understood as clearly as we do the doctrine of the personality and divinity of the Holy Ghost. The great matter is that we know that the Spirit of Christ was in those of them who were chosen, from time to time, to make Biblical records; and that he "testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow." We know, too, that "God having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by diverse portions and in diverse manners, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in his Son." Therefore we have the firm confidence that in accepting the Bible and preaching the gospel we do not follow "cunningly devised fables," but deliver to the world a message which "is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth."



HARD SAYINGS OF CHRIST.

VI.

Therefore speak I to them in parables ; because seeing they see not and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. *MATT. XIII. 13.*

IF almost any one of us were asked to give off hand the reason why Jesus used parables in his teaching he would be likely to reply that it was for the purpose of making his meaning plain to a people dull of understanding in spiritual things. It is apt to be a surprise to us to have our attention called to the fact that when Jesus himself was asked the same question he gave the very reverse as his reason. He used parables in order that they might not understand. That this was the meaning of his answer is evident even from the statement in Matthew's gospel as given above when we read the context in which it stands. It is still more apparent from the parallel passages in Mark and Luke. "Unto you is given the mystery of the Kingdom of God, but unto them that are without all things are done in parables ; that seeing they may see and not perceive and hearing they may hear and not understand." (*Mark iv. 11, 12.*)

Nor does this stand alone as the solitary instance of such a procedure in the Bible. The very language in which it is stated here is but a free quotation from the commission given to Isaiah when he was called

to be a prophet and bidden to speak so as to "make the heart of the people fat, to make their ears heavy and shut their eyes; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears and understand with their heart and turn again and be healed." On more than one occasion too the Apostle Paul quotes the same passage as supplying the key to the manner of God's dealing with the Jews in his own experience. Evidently it is the statement of a law which has a somewhat wide application.

It is not, however, that our first and most natural thought as to the reason for the employment of parables is altogether wrong. So far as his own immediate disciples were concerned his desire was that they should understand his meaning, and understand it all the more clearly because of these parables. Not without success. For though they at first felt somewhat puzzled to catch his idea, he willingly gave them the key to the apprehension of his thought, and their subsequent delight in this mode of setting it forth is shown by the long list of his parables which they remember and record. Succeeding generations

in the church have found equal pleasure and profit in the study of them; so much so that they have been almost overdone with expositions which put a great deal into them they were never meant to convey. They have been the delight of children and have done much among all classes to keep alive an interest in the Bible. In fact there could hardly be a more charming form into which religious teaching could be thrown.

Nor is it to be assumed, notwithstanding the declared purpose of Christ, that even his most embittered enemies altogether failed to catch the meaning of his parables. In some cases there is evidence that they saw the drift of them clearly enough. When for example he had finished his parables of the two sons bidden to work in their father's vineyard and of the wicked husbandmen, we are distinctly told that "the chief priests and the Pharisees perceived that he spake of them." (Matt. xxi. 45.) It must be remembered that the parable was by no means a novel method of instruction invented by Christ. Similar parables are found in the Old Testament and are common in the Talmud which reports the current traditional teaching of the schools. They ought, therefore, to have been well able to profit by them, if they had taken the trouble to think them out with any desire to know their meaning. At any rate we may be sure that Jesus would have been only too ready to

welcome any indication on their part of a willingness to apprehend the spiritual lessons he was striving to impress on the world.

But just here lay the cause of the whole difficulty. Except when in search of something to feed their spite against Jesus, these Scribes and Pharisees had no real desire to know the meaning of the parables, nor indeed the true meaning of anything that he said. He had taught them many things plainly enough without veiling them under parables or under any other disguise whatever, and they had perversely misunderstood him. The unsophisticated common people heard gladly and recognized the obvious truth of his teaching, for he went straight to the heart of every subject he touched. But their leaders, dreading the effect of his teaching on their influence and prestige, wilfully put a sinister construction on everything he said, and even went the length of charging him with having a devil. They were in no state of mind to listen to him calmly or to put a fair interpretation on any of his words. They, therefore, had no reason to complain, if he now threw his teaching into a form which was to them less easy of comprehension or at least that required a little patience and goodwill to extract the meaning from it.

It is significant that this form of address is adopted for the first time by him apparently, at least on any large scale, about the same time as

the appointment of the twelve apostles. The two things constituted his practical reply to their plot for his destruction and indicated that in his opinion the breach between him and the Pharisees was now virtually final. Henceforth he hoped for nothing but evil at their hands.

In view of these facts it is in no wise derogatory to his character that he should now represent himself as speaking in such a way as to prevent them from understanding. Spiritual and intellectual blindness is ever the penalty for perversity. When men are not willing to see the truth, or to follow it if they do see it, then does God ever give them over to strong delusion to believe a lie. The responsibility for such an untoward result is wholly their own and not his. However sad it is, they have brought it upon themselves and can have no good ground of complaint.

So far from having a right to complain, we may discern a merciful purpose even in the form of their punishment. If the truth is put in such a way that there is greater difficulty in penetrating its meaning, there is at least for them the less sin in rejecting it. They are still responsible for doing so, inasmuch as they have unfitted themselves by their own act for the discernment of it. But there is less of conscious wilful perversity in doing so. They have at least something of the excuse of ignorance and the reflex influence of their course upon themselves is less serious. They are less

hardened from doing so than if they had understood clearly to the very end what it was they were doing.

We may even say that such a mode of statement increases the possibility of their ultimate repentance. Under the influence of excitement or of partizan feeling men will often do what their better judgment condemns, and once they have committed themselves to a certain course they find it hard to draw back. They want to be consistent, however clearly mistaken, and are afraid of the reproaches of those whom they have supported or encouraged in the same course. But there is always the possibility, however remote, that by and bye they may come to a better state of mind when the excitement has passed away, when the party ends recede into the back-ground and there is time for silent reflection. The course that a man will take then depends to a large extent upon the degree in which he has paltered with his conscience and trampled upon his convictions. The little less or the little more may decide whether he will repent or not, and so determine all the eternal issues that hang upon the decision. It is in mercy then as well as judgment that the truth is not made too plain to the wilfully evil. And if, as here, it should chance to be thrown into some form that even if not understood, may yet cleave to the memory and excite some curiosity when the time for reflection comes, by so much is increased the chance of his finding his way

into the Kingdom of Heaven. Harsh, therefore, as may seem this saying of Christ at the first look of it, it really links on to the prayer which he uttered on the cross, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do." And if at a subsequent time, as is not improbable, some of these very Scribes and Pharisees accepted the

gospel, we may regard it as partly due to the fact that at this critical period Christ veiled his teaching under the parabolic form so that "hearing they might not understand."

JOHN SCRIMGER.

Presbyterian College, Montreal.

Poetry.

LITTLE BIRD DOST THOU NOT KNOW ?

Little bird dost thou not know
That my heart is full of woe ?
Is thy world so bright and clear
That thou singest all the year ?
Is thy bosom free from care ?
Can no sorrow harbor there ?
Is thy mate upon her nest
And her little ones at rest ?
Is thy life without an end ?
Hast thou never lost a friend ?
Never known the bitterness
Of an unassuaged distress ?
Birdie, thou art far too gay,
Singing, singing all the day—
Every day and all day long
Pouring forth thy bubbling song ?
Hast thou not some mournful lay
For sad souls who come this way ?
Oh, I fear me, birdie, much,
Thou dost never think of such.
Never hint of shadow lies
Under all thy sunlit skies.
As thy Maker formed thee, so
Livest thou, nor seek'st to know,
As the swift days rise and flee,
What the future holds for thee.
Singing when the daylight dawns,
Singing o'er the sunbright lawns,
Singing when the shadows run
To the setting of the sun,
Singing still in storm or calm
All thy life becomes a psalm.
Happy, happy, happy bird,
I have never seen nor heard
Note of truer life than thine ;
Let thy sweet voice gladden mine !

ROBERT MACDOUGALL.

Mission Crisis.

HOME MISSION WORK.

WESTERN MISSION FIELDS AND THE WORK SOME OF OUR MEN HAVE BEEN DOING IN THEM.

IN our last issue we noticed the nature of our eastern mission fields and the character of the work done in them during the past summer by students from our College. Here, we shall turn our attention to the great fields of the West, and endeavor to put before our readers that which will enable them to see the fields as they really are and to form some estimate of the great importance that should be attached to this comparatively new field of missionary enterprise.

The Church is only now beginning to overtake the great work that is waiting to be done in the Prairie Province, the North-West Territories and the vast regions of British Columbia. There are, at the present time, in all of these places, families that have not seen a minister or missionary for twelve years; yea, more; there are young people to be found from twelve to sixteen years of age, who have not heard a sermon, and who know God and Christ only as names to swear by. These people are not among those who are in antagonism to the gospel. They would attend religious services and

in many cases are very eager to have them conducted in their midst.

The Missionary Society of our College sent Mr. Samuel McLean as its missionary to one of these far off and, up this summer, wholly neglected places. His field lies in the northern lake region of Manitoba and Saskatchewan districts. The two principal stations at which he worked are called Grand Rapids and Horse Island respectively.

Mr. McLean's experience in these new fields was, indeed, a novel one. It was truly pioneer work he had to engage in and had in connection with it difficulties as trying, perhaps, as any our foreign workers have to contend with.

About the first of June he started from West Selkirk on a combination of steam-tug and scow, called "The Red River." She was an old outfit that had seen better days, but was as good as any of her sort that ply in the northern waters of Lake Winnipeg. This was her first trip of the summer and she was loaded, to the utmost capacity, with pork powder and tar which was to be delivered at various Hudson Bay posts.

She was capable of making four miles per hour, but her captain told that in her better days she could attain a speed of six miles per hour, provided she was going in the direction of a current and with a stiff prairie breeze to give her assistance. They had three hundred miles of water to cover before they got to their destination, which was accomplished, by making fast time, in a little less than six days. The crew and passengers were of the roughest type as might be expected, but they formed an ideal assembly for the pioneer spiritual operations of our missionary.

On Saturday evening a strong head wind began to blow which was to Mr. McLean a good omen as he was looking forward to a day of earnest effort among the men on the Sabbath. The wind kept up during the Lord's Day so that it was necessary to remain at anchor. A service was held on board which was appreciated very much by many of the men. A few of them were from the Island of Lewis and were at home with the missionary, who could converse with them in the language of Eden; much to their delight. At Bull Head the vessel had to call for wood and Mr. McLean went ashore and visited the four families that inhabit this dreary region. He held a short service in one of the huts which was much liked by the whites of the place. It was the first meeting of the kind they had had for eight years and the Scotchmen in the

audience, rough though they be, were greatly moved by the truth once so familiar to them in the days of their innocence in bonnie Scotland. Although the missionary had only four hours of a stay at this place the people were thankful for the help they had received from him and the new impetus they got in trying to live above their surroundings and attain to a knowledge of God. It is hard for us, under favourable circumstances, to realize the condition of these few families removed some one hundred and twenty miles from the nearest Post Office.

A fresh start was made and after many hours sailing the destination was reached. Grand Rapids is situated at the mouth of the large Saskatchewan River, and is the headquarters of an American fish company which has assumed a Canadian name, and which operates very extensively in these waters. The only permanent residents are the Hudson Bay Company's Factor and an individual who professes the Episcopalian faith. During the fishing season the population of the place is made up of Indians and half-breeds. Their families are large owing, no doubt, to the treaty bonus which our Government in charity gives to each member of the family. This has encouraged polygamy and kidnapping and fostered the jealous spirit which is only too characteristic of the Indian. The principal, in fact, almost the only article of food used here is fish. They eat it for

breakfast, dinner and supper, and appear to get along very well on it. Our missionary had to accommodate himself as much as possible to the ways of the people and does not seem to be at all the worse because of it. The only domestic animal known here is a species of dog with a good admixture of the wolf. The fish diet would seem to have given it more brain capacity than the average canine possesses, for Mr. McLean relates how it goes and procures the fish for itself out of the abundance with which these waters teem.

The waters of northern Lake Winnipeg literally abound with white fish, regardless of the fact that four fish companies for the past eight years have been taking therefrom. Mr. McLean relates that three men in a sail boat caught three thousand fish in one day this season. These fish are frozen at Grand Rapids and Horse Island as they are caught, and shipped to West Selkirk, whence they are taken to the American markets. This work gives employment to two hundred men at the above-mentioned places and among these our missionary worked during the fishing season. On Horse Island, which has an area of some ten square miles, there are a few permanent residents. Three white husbands are found here, but through long association with the Indians, are greatly degenerated.

Our missionary had many difficulties to contend with in his work on behalf of these people. It was hard

to get an opportunity to speak to them as their life was a very laborious one. The boat hands went to work at two o'clock in the morning and did not stop operations until night fall. The shore hands began work at nine o'clock in the morning and usually remained at it until midnight. It will be seen that week-day meetings were impossible. Services were held on Sunday at 2 o'clock p. m. and 7 o'clock in the evening and were well attended. The majority of the people could understand English. Mr. McLean started a day school for the children which was attended by twelve scholars, only three of whom could understand the English language quite well. Reading, writing, a little arithmetic and the geography of Manitoba were taught, together with much Bible knowledge. This was an ideal public school where secular and religious education received equal attention. The children soon learned the Lord's prayer and showed considerable eagerness for religious instruction.

There lives on Horse island an old man who is now eighty years of age. He was born, and brought up near the island and has not been five miles south of it during his long life. He is contented with his lot and would not change his position for anything. An old "fiddle" and a pair of dogs are his only companions. He owns a Bible but is not able to read it. He repeats the Lord's prayer daily and asks God to keep and provide

for him. His piety is undoubted, and the reality of his communion with our heavenly Father is beyond question, so far as one can judge. He is awaiting the call from on high which he thinks will open the door to a better life.

When the fishing season was over, all had to separate. Our missionary could not part with those poor rough people whom he had learned to love without some emotion. His work had been blessed to the salvation of two young men, and many more were deeply impressed. The children had been taught to look to a heavenly Father. Let us hope and pray that his work done in this very needy place by our earnest missionary may be owned of God to the ingathering of many of these needy souls.

* * *

"The Church has many promising mission fields in Manitoba," is a saying with which we have become rightly familiar. But all western fields, by no means, contain those elements which go to constitute what, to the average student mind, is meant by a good field. We think of the new country and her thousand and thousand bushels of No. 1 hard, where people go to bed poor and waken up with untold wealth; we reflect upon the accounts we have heard of this same land thickly settled, in some places, with men and women who are ever holding out their hands imploringly for a minister to come to them, so that their

higher needs may be supplied,—and with these ideas in his mind the student too often hurries West, to find himself a surprised "Back-Easter."

For these pre-conceived erroneous ideas which cause this surprise, the student must blame others in part and himself in part. Too glowing accounts of the country itself and the opportunities for doing most highly appreciated work for Christ have, perhaps, been sounded in his ears, but, at the same time, that license of enthusiasm is not always granted which is due to those engaged in prosecuting a new and great work. Supplying the needs of the West is no easy task, neither is it light work to arouse proper zeal for this part of Home Missions. If some have gathered ideas and hopes from those engaged in the work which he finds are far too sanguine: rather than grow discouraged, he should seek the same enthusiasm and go forward to do the best work under the most unfavourable circumstances.

One of the "good fields" in Manitoba is Tarbolton. Situated in a fertile district of country thirty miles north-west of Brandon, and settled chiefly by Scotch people as the name indicates, it is a mission field worthy of the church's consideration. Service is conducted at three places, Tarbolton, Brierwood and Ralphton, with an average attendance last summer of eighty, seventy and fifty-five respectively. At Tar-

bolton a church was erected a few years ago, and affords the people a comfortable and attractive place of worships. At Brierwood and Ralph-ton the services are still conducted in schoolhouses.

Mr. F. W. Gilmour was sent out by our Student's Missionary Society to carry on the work there during the summer. He had a most favourable report to present of the progress of the work during his sojourn in the field. Success was marked in every department: a larger average attendance, more hearty services, larger Sabbath schools and the communion roll lengthened by the addition of twelve new names. Last winter the field suffered a marked depression because of the lack of services, but we are pleased to be able to say that the good work carried on by Mr. Gilmour will be sustained during this winter by Mr. Robertson, a student from Manitoba College. Mr. Gilmour seems to realize how detrimental it is to have the work suspended for the winter months.

* * *

Another field that should receive marked attention from our Church at present is the one in which Mr. M. McIntosh worked for the summer. Riverside is situated in southern Manitoba about forty miles south-east of Brandon. It is skirted on the north by the beautiful but diminutive Souris river, which, with its high and tree-clad banks, forms a striking feature in a prairie district.

In a settlement where the average farm contains over three hundred acres, it goes without saying that the neighbours are not very near each other. The settlers who come, for the most part, from the Province of Ontario, are proud of the new country which is now their home. The first question asked of a stranger is "How do you like the country"? and the second is like unto it, "From what part of *Ontario* do you come"?

After spending a summer in southern Manitoba, and beholding the changing aspect of its broad acres,—first the dark brown soil, then the waving wheat, then the myriad shocks, then the groups of stooks in 'orderly array', and finally the busy threshing scene, with its suggestion of bursting granaries, one no longer wonders that the people of the Prairie Province are proud of the land of "wind and wheat."

Riverside Field is of wide extent and contains six preaching stations, at three of which service was held each Lord's Day. The attendance at the various stations ranged from thirty to sixty, including adherents of several religious denominations. A Union Sabbath School was carried on at each station and was well attended. The people treated the missionary with great kindness, and set a good example to western fields by supplying him with a horse and buggy for the summer.

There is now on foot a movement to build two Presbyterian Churches, one at each side of the field. If

this project be carried into execution, all parts of the congregation can then be supplied with regular Sabbath services both summer and winter, and the prospects of the field speedily becoming a self-sustaining charge will be good. The lack of suitable places of worship is a great drawback to many western fields. Where the services are held in school-houses the tendency is simply to drift along, for so long as a people worship in scattered groups, having no common church home with its responsibilities and its privileges, regular organization and enduring progress are well nigh impossible.

Any friends of "Presbyterianism in the West" who would like to bestow some money where it would surely do permanent good, might do well to send it to Rev. P. Fisher Boissevain, Man. to be used in aid of Church buildings in Riverside Mission Field.

* * *

Mr. Alex. McGregor, who has travelled somewhat extensively through the West, was appointed to labour for the season in the Okanagan valley in British Columbia. This is, perhaps, one of the most attractive mission fields in the West from the natural scenery point of view, and is, to an energetic man whose aim in life is to save souls, a place which offers many inviting features, for the people stand much in need of the elevating influences of the gospel, and are disposed to ap-

preciate the services of a missionary whose personality is the very embodiment of the sublime principles enunciated in the word of God.

The physical aspect of the valley is interesting. The lake in the middle of it extends through its whole length and, in fact, beyond, a distance of some seventy miles. On each side of the lake there is a belt of level ground which extends from the water to the beginning of the bench lands, a distance of three or four miles. This soil is very fertile and is capable of bearing enormous quantities of fruit. Lord Aberdeen, whose ranch is in the valley, is doing all in his power to develop fruit growing. You can stand in the middle of a magnificent bed of strawberries from which it would be possible to gather two tons of the fruit, and look up to the snow-capped mountains whose tops are hidden in the clouds. The "bench" lands, as they are called, are on the mountain slopes that rise gracefully from the level soil around the lake. Many acres of these are cultivated by the hard mountaineers, but the greater area is used as runs for the large herds of cattle possessed by the ranchers. The valley is rich in gold although it has not been mined to any extent. Those whose supply of brain substance is below the average, will find in the valley all that is necessary to supply this want, as the best quality of salmon is abundant in the sparkling waters of these mountain streams. So plentiful are

they at some points that one can literally "fork them out" as has been said. Mr. McGregor tells of an individual who, on an occasion when the fish were specially plentiful, crossed a stream by stepping on the backs of the finny creatures which were so thick in the river, they could not escape at his approach. He won't, however, vouch for the absolute truth of the story.

The people of the place are from many parts of the world and would form, in their present stage of development, good subjects for psychical research. Here, is to be found the canny Scotchman with a superabundance of that characteristic trait, which causes his neighbors to be wary when he is around. The dashing American who has traveled over four continents is here trying to get along. The M. A. from Cambridge is also found with his dog and gun and his pedantic parade of classic knowledge, with which he tries to bewilder the more unsophisticated people of the glen. The passion of the inhabitants, just now, is for money, but there is underneath their rough exterior and worldly appearance something that responds to true goodness and manliness, and which will no doubt, in the near future, bring them to the level of the best of our Western population.

The people had been members of the church at one time but have been living for some years without the beneficial influences of pure re-

ligious thought. Mr. McGregor held services at three points in the valley. These were well attended and much liked by many. The field is a hard one, and the man who labours there must be possessed of much tact and energy in order to come up to the ideal of the inhabitants.

* * *

British Columbia enjoyed the services of another of our students. Mr. Angus McCallum laboured at Agassiz, a place about three thousand miles from Montreal. The trip is accomplished in five days and has much to interest the person who is passing over the great C. P. R. for the first time. The mountains of B. C. reminded Mr. McCallum of the picturesque hills of his Bonnie Scotland, but they want that peculiar beauty which the Scottish hills present in virtue of the abundance of hardy heather.

The Mission at Agassiz is a hard one as it covers some eighty miles along the main line. At the most important centre services were held regularly every Sunday, also Bible-class and Sabbath-school. A Y. P. S. C. E. was started and is getting along favourably. Mr. McCallum conducted a singing class which led the service of praise on Sabbath. There were two outside stations at which meetings were held periodically.

The people out here are rough in the extreme although, it is said, they are not nearly so bad as they were a

few years ago. This change is attributed to the gospel's influence. Sabbath breaking, profane swearing and drunkenness are the rampant sins of the place. Temperance societies have been started and, in many cases, are doing good work.

* * *

During the summer, Mr. James M. Wallace had charge of what is known as the Bow River Mission Field. It lies to the north and west of Calgary and embraces seven points at which services were more or less regularly held. There are four stations west of Calgary between the Bow and Elbow rivers. At one of these named Spring Bank a Union Church was opened this summer. At two other points meetings were held in school-houses, while at the fourth a private house was used for a sanctuary. The character of the land, here, is rolling as it is only fifty or sixty miles from the Rockies. North of Calgary service was held at two points ten and twenty-three miles from the city, through which the missionary had to go on horseback to get to the places. At both of these places the meetings were held in private houses as the country is

too sparsely populated to admit of schools. A point south-east of Calgary was visited once a month and service held.

On the whole the field is rather a pleasant one to labour in although the indifference of the people at some points is most discouraging.

* * *

Mr. R. J. Douglas laboured under the auspices of the Student's Missionary Society of the College on Manitoulin Island. The field comprises Burpee, Mills, Brittainville and Long Bay. The field is in as prosperous a condition as could be expected. It is not a strong field and has been over-estimated. Many denominations are represented in it which goes to weaken any one cause. At Mills the congregation was involved financially but through Mr. Douglas' efforts the whole debt has been wiped out. At Brittainville the people were very sympathetic and did all they could to help the missionary. The field is too large for very effective work to be done. Sabbath schools were held at all the stations.

Geo. Gilmore.

Presbyterian College.

Partie française

LA FUSION DES EGLISES.

L'ATTENTION de nos églises de langue française a été attirée au printemps dernier sur une question d'une haute importance: il s'agissait d'un projet de fusion des différentes confessions évangéliques. Personne ne contestera l'à-propos et la grandeur du projet.

On sait que la venue de Jésus-Christ devait marquer la réunion dans l'Église des Juifs et des Gentils et que la croix promet d'élever l'humanité, par une ascension glorieuse, à l'unité voulue de Dieu dès le commencement.

Celui qui voit dans la bible une condensation mystérieuse et ineffable de la volonté du Créateur: qui s'est assimilé les témoignages de l'Éternel, auquel il a fait volontairement la reddition de son âme, ne peut donc qu'appeler de toutes les voix de son être le jour glorieux où la loi de l'Unité, qui est la loi de l'amour, fera disparaître à jamais de la scène du monde les derniers vestiges des dégradations de l'égoïsme. L'instinct moderne aussi s'associe à ce pieux soupir de l'âme chrétienne demandant au Père des esprits la réalisation de l'unité du genre humain. Qu'est-ce en effet que ce cri d'égalité que l'on entend retentir de toute part sinon la voix d'un monde malade, agité,

qui demande, sans en avoir conscience, la venue de Celui qui a promis d'ouvrir l'année de l'humanité?

La bible, disons-nous, soulève le voile sombre au-delà duquel respendit le jour sans fin, où tous les hommes, unis par les lois saintes de la liberté et de l'amour, ne formeront plus qu'un peuple de frères.

Mais devant la multiplicité des systèmes auxquels la révélation donne naissance, devant les disputes qu'elle engendre, ne semble-t-elle pas prêter flanc aux sarcasmes de l'athéisme et consorts, en même temps qu'à cet affreux cri d'ironie, mille fois répété, d'une pitié ignorante et cruelle? Non, car la bible ne veut connaître que l'unité. Ne lui imputez pas cette multiplicité de systèmes; rendez-en plutôt responsable l'homme et l'instrument par lequel il perçoit la vérité.

Pour laisser intacte notre liberté, pour nous faire déployer notre activité, parce qu'il n'est pas nécessaire à l'homme dans l'acquisition de son salut de posséder la vérité universelle et absolue, Dieu n'a pas voulu donner à la bible toute la clarté d'une définition géométrique. C'est ainsi qu'en mettant tout à la question l'esprit d'analyse a pulvérisé des dogmes plusieurs fois séculaires que

les "hommes de Dieu poussés par le Saint Esprit" semblaient enseigner et qui, en réalité, n'avaient d'autres fondements que le sable mouvant des traditions populaires. La raison humaine, dont personne ne s'avise de proclamer l'infailibilité, ne parvient pas toujours à se dégager des langes de l'erreur, du préjugé dont elle est enveloppée, et dont a pu l'envelopper encore la première éducation. Les facultés de l'homme peuvent ainsi recevoir une empreinte funeste qu'elles impriment à leur tour sur les vérités qu'il perçoit. De là ce mélange d'humain et de divin, d'erreur et de vérité dans nos systèmes; de là quelques-unes de nos divergences que l'on se plaît à regarder à travers des verres grossissants. Voilà pourquoi aussi l'on oppose souvent l'homme à l'homme, les vacillations infinies de la sagesse de la chair, alors qu'on prétend lui opposer la majesté de la sagesse divine. Il y a aussi les suggestions de l'esprit de parti. L'égoïsme de l'homme, toujours frémissant devant le sacrifice, joue sans doute aussi un rôle funeste à la perception de la vérité; mais il répugnera toujours à l'âme droite et raisonnable de lui attribuer toutes nos divergences.

On le voit, la difficulté pour les Eglises évangéliques de parvenir à l'unité visible ne saurait être niée; peut-elle être surmontée dans les circonstances actuelles? Ce serait franchir beaucoup d'espace en peu de temps. Cependant, il espère davantage peut-être, le vieillard assis dans la "chaire de saint Pierre,"

quand il prescrit dans le monde entier des prières pour le "retour de l'Angleterre à l'unité de la foi." Il espère davantage encore le *Pan-American Congress*, qui demande la paix et l'unité du monde quand le chrétien déclare qu'il ne signera la paix que lorsque tous les peuples seront rangés sous la bannière de l'Evangile éternel.

Tout le monde connaît la solution commode de l'Eglise catholique romaine au problème de l'unité visible. Elle a d'abord établi ses conciles interprètes des oracles sacrés; les divergences surgissant encore, le pape s'est fait proclamer arbitre souverain de tous les débats. Ainsi, un concile qui gémit de ses faiblesses déclare un de ses membres infailible et dès ce jour celui-ci interprète infailiblement les Ecritures. L'unité ne peut ainsi être rompue que lorsqu'il se contredit. Sage expédient, sans doute, s'il n'y avait pour l'homme que des vérités de convention, mais il ne saurait convenir au disciple de la bible, qui croit à l'existence réelle de la vérité personnifiée en Jésus-Christ. Croyant au mystère de la révélation et à l'infailibilité des oracles de Dieu, il doit prendre pour devise le précepte apostolique: "Que votre obéissance soit raisonnable." Il doit éprouver les esprits qui l'enseignent pour reconnaître s'ils sont de Dieu, et repousser un ange ou un apôtre qui enseignerait une doctrine contraire à la foi. De cet enseignement, le chrétien est le juge. Il doit comprendre sa religion parce qu'il est l'homme

de la conscience morale. Il a appris que pour aimer la vérité de cet amour chevalresque qu'elle réclame, il faut la voir dans sa souveraine beauté. Enfin pour lui, la conscience éclairée par la révélation écrite, c'est le siège et la sanction du devoir ; c'est la voix de Dieu en lui et c'est fouler aux pieds Dieu lui-même que de n'en pas suivre implicitement les ordres. Ce sont là des faits reconnus chez-nous puisqu'ils sont à la base du protestantisme.

Cette "Eglise nationale" que l'on a demandée sera le plus sublime monument élevé jusqu'ici à l'Éternel si les adorateurs qui s'y trouveront réunis peuvent se dire: "on n'a rien changé au *credo* de l'Eglise à laquelle je me rattachais, ou du moins les seuls changements sont ceux que j'aurais voulu y apporter moi-même après une étude quotidienne de la bible." A toute autre condition elle sera un désastre ou tout simplement...une Eglise de plus. Autre Babel ou seconde Rome, ce monument de notre orgueil deviendra le mémorial de notre folie.

Quelque soit le but que l'on se propose, il ne sera jamais permis de courir à l'autel de la paix pour y offrir une partie des doctrines sur lesquelles repose sa foi. La fin ne saurait justifier les moyens, car nous ne sommes pas chargés de réussir mais d'obéir. S'il est superflu de décrire le triste spectacle du pouvoir de l'esprit se heurtant contre la brutalité du pouvoir charnel, on ne saurait trop insister sur ce fait, que

trahir la vérité pour sauver la vérité c'est travailler à sa propre ruine.

Il importe peu, dira-t-on, quelle que soit ma croyance sur des sujets secondaires tels que ceux qui nous divisent. A cela je réponds qu'il m'importe de professer en toutes choses la vérité. Une erreur,—le temps lui prête une puissance formidable—remontât-elle à la plus haute antiquité, n'a droit à aucun respect ni ménagement, quels que soient le nombre et l'honorabilité de ses adhérents. Qui peut déterminer la fin ou mesurer les conséquences d'une erreur, si légère qu'elle puisse paraître?

Toutes ces craintes, il les a partagées celui auquel les longues veilles, l'observation et l'expérience faisaient dire lorsqu'il se résumait sur le sujet: "Nous n'avons encore ni assez de vertu ni assez de lumières pour nous unir."

Notre manque de vertu, notre manque de lumières, voilà l'ennemi commun !

En effet, si dans le monde moral l'homme est l'instrument que Dieu emploie pour accomplir ses desseins, la science, en se vulgarisant, pourrait nous mettre sur la voie de l'unité. Il serait téméraire sans doute de lui demander une théorie du mystère de l'inspiration. D'ailleurs, "de même que Jésus-Christ est la parole vivante de Dieu," diront avec Adolphe Monod tous les vrais chrétiens, "la manifestation personnelle de ses perfections invisibles au sein de l'humanité, ainsi l'Écriture est la parole écrite de Dieu, manifestation verbale don-

née par le langage de ces mêmes perfections invisibles....mystère profond, mais, nous dit Saint Paul, "mystère de piété," et qui remplit notre âme de joie et d'espérance."

Si la philologie a réussi à gagner notre confiance, demandons-lui de remonter l'histoire de la bible, de comparer encore les nombreuses transcriptions qui en ont été faites par des hommes inconnus et non inspirés; demandons-lui à quel taux il faut prendre certains mots que l'on dit avoir perdu leur signification originelle dans les plis de ces longs siècles de ténèbres et de mort où régnaient en souveraine une Eglise puissante, despotique, ambitieuse et corrompue. Demandons-lui en un mot un Nouveau Testament d'une exactitude saintement munificente, qui soit pour nous ce qu'était le Testament grec pour les Grecs la première fois qu'il parut dans le monde.

Quand notre demande deviendra effective, les causes de division auront perdu beaucoup de terrain. Et puisque l'Esprit de vérité a promis de conduire la barque du Christ, marchons ! assurés que l'accomplissement de la promesse à notre égard se mesure sur notre foi et notre obéissance. Rappelons-nous seulement que tout sentiment d'impatience peut nous être fatal. Marchons ! assurés que Dieu saura toujours se tirer d'affaire.

Au reste, ces nombreuses confes-

sions que tant de gens déplorent et qui blessent si fort notre orgueil ne seraient-elles pas une bénédiction dans l'organisation actuelle de ce monde ? C'était l'opinion d'Alexandre Vinet: "Si toute la chrétienté ne formait qu'un corps compacte, dit-il, forte de sa position par rapport au monde, elle oublierait de compter sur la force de la vérité et sur les promesses de Dieu." C'est dans un même esprit que le généreux Agénor de Gasparin s'écriait: "Voici le grand mot de l'incrédulité: professe comme tout le monde ! C'est la manière la plus sûre et la moins compromettante de ne pas professer."

Âmes généreuses, âmes chrétiennes de tous les partis, jetez des yeux mouillés de larmes sur les petites des esprits exclusifs, toujours prêts à creuser un enfer pour quiconque a des pensées différentes des leurs. C'est là ce qu'il faut déplorer. Pour nous, séparés quant au mode de service, nous pouvons être un, là-haut, vers les régions de la grâce et du pardon: un dans la sanctification chrétienne avec ses saintes rigueurs et aussi dans sa sereine et attrayante beauté: un dans l'œuvre que nous accomplissons à la gloire du Maître en attendant l'unité glorieuse, parfaite, qui doit éclater au terme de l'histoire, à la fin des jours, lorsque Dieu dira: "Que toutes choses soient faites nouvelles." Apoc. XXI. 5. E. CURDY.

DÉFINITIONS DE L'HISTOIRE.

Larousse: "L'histoire est le récit des évènements dignes de mémoire."

J.-J. Rousseau: "L'histoire est l'art de choisir entre plusieurs choses fausses celles qui ressemblent le plus à la vérité."

Fontenelle: "L'histoire est une fable convenue."

Un contemporain: "L'histoire est une conspiration contre la vérité."

La Bruyère nous donne un portrait au lieu d'une simple définition: "La vie des héros a enrichi l'histoire, et l'histoire a embelli les actions des héros; ainsi je ne sais qui sont plus redevables, ou ceux qui ont écrit l'histoire à ceux qui leur en ont fourni une si noble matière, ou ces grands hommes à leurs historiens."

On dit aussi que l'histoire est la recherche de la vérité.

Ces différentes définitions ont le tort de généraliser; mais, quoique contraires, elles ne s'excluent pas; elles se complètent et vivront ensemble dans l'esprit humain jusqu'à ce que l'on ait fait le procès de l'intérêt personnel, de l'esprit de parti, du bigotisme, du chauvinisme et autres faiseurs de *gibbonismes*.

Toutes reconnues déjà par l'usage, ces définitions recevront peut-être leur sanction dans le *Grand Diction-*

naire universel du vingtième Siècle. Ce n'est pas satisfaisant.

Merci quand même, Progrès, si c'est là tout ce que tu peux nous donner.

E. C.

RÉFLEXIONS MORALES.

Il n'y a que deux sortes d'hommes: les uns justes, qui se croient pécheurs, les autres pécheurs, qui se croient justes. *Pascal*.

L'hypocrisie est un hommage que le vice rend à la vertu.—*La Rochefoucauld*.

S'il est heureux d'avoir de la naissance, il ne l'est pas moins d'être tel qu'on ne s'informe plus si vous en avez.

Après l'esprit de discernement, ce qu'il y a de plus rare au monde, ce sont les diamants et les perles.

C'est abréger et s'épargner mille discussions, que de penser de certaines gens qu'ils sont incapables de parler juste et de condamner ce qu'ils disent, ce qu'ils ont dit et ce qu'ils diront.

L'orateur cherche par ses discours un évêché; l'apôtre fait des conversions: il mérite de trouver ce que l'autre cherche.—*La Bruyère*.

College Note Book.

STUDENT LIFE.

The Christmas holidays are nearly upon us. Each student is now beginning to realize that he is gradually being lowered into the depths of the sessional work. The Arts man drinks in the wisdom of Socrates as he sits poring over his Greek, or perhaps he is getting tired following Hannibal's course over the Alps. Suddenly he throws aside his Livy and launches out into song. He sings to the tune "Retreat":—

The Latin tongue is very dry,
Greek'll almost make one cry,
Hebrew Kal looks rather queer,
And sounds uncertain to the ear.

One of those boys now studying the English Poets discovered that Wordsworth compares his mother to a hen. Scarcely less observant was the Third Year theologian who recently discovered a lake on his way up the mountain.

We were pleased to have a visit from the Revs. West and McIntyre, while on their way to Edinburgh. Both of these gentlemen purpose taking a Post-Graduate course in modern Athens. We wish them success.

In response to an urgent call Messrs. J. C. Stewart, B. A. and Edgar. W. Pack have decided to leave College and engage in missionary enterprise this winter in British

Columbia. Mr. Stewart was a member of the final year in theology; and although he will be graduated next spring by our Alma Mater, yet to sever himself from his classes and class-mates, is a sacrifice the meaning of which will be best appreciated by the student. We trust the Journal will find him out in his hiding place among the lonely islands of the Pacific. We send with it the good will of his many friends who wish both himself and Mr. Pack every success in their work.

We are glad to have Mr. Ervine's stately figure again in our midst. Like Prince Charlie he was "long in coming".

Though an earnest effort was made to moderate the character of the Halloween festivities, the North Flat men were unable to overcome the tendencies inherited from the father of the race. How sweet must be forbidden fruit.

We have something new in the foot ball department this year, viz, the interfaculty matches. We think this a capital idea as it will give the boys plenty of exercise of which the average student generally takes too little. However we would like to see Rugby rules set aside and as-

sociation taken up instead. We would, here remind some of our football enthusiasts that the field is the place to play Rugby and not the College lobby.

The season for white ties has opened. Special invitations are now coming for church socials. Our boys seem equal to the occasion. Much attention is being given to mustache growing, and in a few cases earnest efforts are put forth for a good crop. In the interests of science we are carefully watching results.

The first invitation we have received came from the Young People's Association of St. Gabriel's Church. A very enjoyable evening was spent. We are indebted to this association for the kind attention given by them to our lonely students. We still remember the flowers that last year entered "the port of Leith." We see just now an arrival of beautiful roses from Ottawa, W—r. being the object of adoration.

The Rev. Mr. Mowat appeared in person and gave us a cordial invitation to Erskine Church Y.P.S.C.E. Social. A large number of our boys were present and came home pleased that they had been there. A lady of an indefinite number of summers was heard to ask, "Who is that tall young man with the broad white tie? He is present at every church social that I am at," and there was a general smile all around at the betrayal of this promising divine.

A pleasant evening was spent at the annual meeting of the congregation of Crescent Street Church.

The best of harmony prevails amongst us. The steward has been doing something to satisfy the wants of the inner man, so that our friends in the country need not be anxious about our welfare.

A few of our boys have been laid aside for a few days, but happily they are now all right again. Two specific medicines have been found out that work like magic. The one is ginger tea and the other sacred bark. The latter is said to bring about results that will even eclipse a faith cure.

The west wing Grand Union Debating Club was convened for the transaction of business as well as to discuss the advisability of Sunday cars. Though the meetings of this very original society are conducted with great secrecy yet the enterprise of the reporter was not to be baffled, so for once our readers obtain an idea of the proceedings. The sage of Avon more than filled the chair. James the sentinel stated that the club with which he protected the privacy of the society was missing. The chairman explained that it had been confiscated and he did not feel warranted in contesting this claim. The ex-chorister offered to immolate himself for the public weal, if music was desired. The society feelingly but firmly refused to permit him. The man who had preached one summer in Muskoka

was chosen critic on the strength of his clerical experience, and Peter kept the time. The discussion was animated and eloquent. Nothing could exceed the self possession of John L. while the namesake of the Scottish kings declared warmly that there was too much respect for old usages, for the Gentiles had hidden his cane. The critic encountered the Episcopal Crozier and the time keeper was made referee. Complaints were numerous as to the rigidity of the time-keeper. An investigation of the official chronometer was proceeding when the owner objected. It was contended that being local time it should not be accepted as the standard and it was unanimously decided that Peter's services were unsatisfactory. The sentinel escorted the discredited official to the door and there was riotous confusion while the proceedings were being brought to a close.

Indications point to a conversation sometime in the month of January. A committee have the matter in hand.

At the debate on the question that cars ought not to be run on the Sabbath. E. F. M: for the affirmative in a spasm of eloquence

said, "There are students in that college who have to go ten miles to preach the gospel. Do you think for a moment they would take a car? How do they go I ask?" A voice in a back seat, "On a bike."

We trust that the sophomore who went out on the roof of the building to study astronomy will use his head to a better purpose next time. We would suggest that in future he come in by the window when it is open.

Does your dog take well to the water? Was asked by an English tourist of an old Scotch farmer, and and the canny answer of the Scot was, Yes if there's meal in it. It has been proved to a demonstration that two of the students in the Morrice Hall take well to the water at any time, judging from the daily performances of these gentlemen. We would advise one of the belligerents to procure a gun of a more modern type if he expects to hold his own against the enemy.

What is the musical world coming to when the critic at the meeting of the Literary Society compared a violin solo to a toad in a thunder-storm?

A. McCALLUM.

REPORTER'S FOLIO.

PHILOSOPHICAL AND LITERARY SOCIETY.

THE second meeting of this Society was held on Friday evening, November 2nd, with the president, Mr. J. S. Gordon, B. A., in the chair. The program consisted of a chorus by the "Glee Club" and a recitation by Mr. Townsend. The first year men contributed something toward the entertainment. The subject for the evening's debate read as follows: "Resolved that the awarding of prizes in our colleges is injurious rather than beneficial to students." The affirmative was supported by Messrs. Geo. Gilmore and J. A. Cleland, the negative by Messrs. A. A. Graham and J. C. Stewart. By a vote of the students it was decided the affirmative had advanced substantial reasons in support of the resolution. In the absence of a critic, the president, complimented the speakers on the excellent way in which the debate had been conducted, and expressed the hope that the future meetings of this Society would partake of the same excellent character.

* * *

This Society met again on Friday evening, November 15th. The president in the chair. It was decided to invite the Literary Society of Knox College, Toronto, to appoint two of its members to arrange for a public debate to be held in Montreal. Messrs.

A. A. Graham, B.A., and M. H. MacIntosh, B.A., were chosen to represent our Society on this occasion. Messrs. Young and MacCallum played a violin duet, the rendering of which caused a good deal of merriment. Mr. J. M. Wallace read an instructive essay on "The History of Social Contract." The most interesting part of the evening was then taken up.—The debate for the evening was, "Resolved that the running of passenger cars, including street cars on Sunday, is never to be countenanced." Mr. E. F. M. Smith, B. A., in a dramatic style opened the debate for the affirmative. Mr. F. W. Gilmore for the negative. Messrs. Leith and Scott supported the affirmative and negative respectively. The speeches showed careful preparation and on the whole were up to the usual standard. The affirmative won the debate. Mr. Sadler as critic, gave some good advice to those who took part in the proceedings of the evening.

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THE MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

The second regular meeting of the above Society was held on Friday evening, November 8th. The vice-president, Mr. Menançon, in the chair. After opening with prayer, the chairman asked the Society to

elect a president in the place of Mr. J. C. Stewart, B. A., who had gone to labor as a missionary in British Columbia. Mr. Angus Graham, B. A., was chosen to fill this office. After some matters of business had been disposed of Mr. J. M. Wallace, B. A., read a paper on the "Need of South American Missionary Enterprise." The meeting closed with prayer.

* * *

On Friday afternoon, November 1st, the Rev. W. Hay Aitken addressed a large number of professors and students of sister theological colleges in the David Morrice Hall. The reverend gentleman based his remarks upon Isa. vi. He said that the preparation of that prophet for his work was similar to that which God requires of all His laborers; that the necessary preparation for the work of saving men consisted in the consciousness that the messenger himself was forgiven and sent to do such a service; and that, on these two conditions, depended the degree of influence exercised upon the lives of others. He reminded theological students that they were not exempt from temptation, and their only safety was in keeping near to God. He warned them against seeking popularity by preaching sermons that were merely literary productions, without the Gospel truth. Mr. Aitken has been conducting missionary services in some of the Anglican churches of this city, and has just

brought to an end a series of interesting and well attended meetings.

* * *

Mr. B. F. Jacobs, of Chicago, the founder of the International Sunday School Lessons, recently addressed the students. He in a very energetic and heartfelt manner said that it was a grand thing to be a child of God, and when once a child one is exalted to a condition in which one can grow. He spoke of growth in the Christian life as being an absolute necessity; but that this was sadly wanting in the lives of most Christians. Some had been Christians for fifteen years and longer; yet they say that there is nothing new in their lives. Mr. Jacobs then spoke of being called and sent of God to do His work; that John the Baptist was sent from God and that men were drawn to him because he had a message for them from God. We can go aside from the bustle of life and speak to God who can talk to us as no one else. He was convinced that the Sunday School was the most potent institution in gathering souls for the kingdom and that eighty-five per cent of those gathered into our churches are brought directly or indirectly through the influence of the Sunday School. Yet the church is spending seven-eighths of her time and means in other methods and only one-eighth in Sunday School work.

A. MACGREGOR,

OUR GRADUATES.

The Rev. W. J. Jameison has returned to his labors in Central India.

The Y. P. S. C. E. of the Province of Quebec, elected the Rev. W. D. Reid, B. A., B. D., president at their recent convention in Huntingdon.

Rev. R. Frew, of Birtle, Man., spent a part of the summer renewing acquaintances in the Old Land and visiting places of interest.

The Presbyterian Congregation of Thorold, Ont., extended a call to the Rev. W. A. Cook of Dorchester, which he accepted, and was accordingly inducted into the pastorate of that congregation by the Presbytery of Hamilton.

Rev. W. T. D. Moss, B. A., was inducted on May 22, as pastor of the church in Marsfield, P. E. Island.

The congregation of Cowan Avenue Presbyterian Church, Toronto, has extended a call to the Rev. W. M. Rochester, B. A., of Prince Albert, N. W. T.

On Tuesday, November 19, the Presbytery of Toronto met in the Presbyterian Church, Milton, for the purpose of ordaining and inducting the Rev. A. Mahaffy, B. A., as pastor of that congregation. The Rev. Dr. Gregg addressed the pastor and the Rev. J. A. Morrison, B. A., the people. In the evening a reception was held in the school room; at

which addresses were delivered by the Revs. Messrs. Mitchell, Mignot, Cameron and others.

The resignation of the Rev. J. L. Morin, M. A., pastor of St. John's French Church of this city, occupied the attention of Presbytery at a recent meeting. Representatives of the congregation were present, and stated that they were entirely satisfied with Mr. Morin's zeal and devotion to the evangelization of his fellow-countrymen, and of his Christian character. Mr. Morin, however, stated that he could not go out to collect funds for the erection of the new church, as required by the Board of French Evangelization: and accordingly pressed his resignation which the Presbytery reluctantly accepted.

On Sunday, October 27th, Mr. Morin preached his farewell sermon: and on the same day the pulpit was declared vacant by the Rev. Prof. Coussirat, B. A., D. D.: and a meeting of the congregation was called for Tuesday, November 5th: when a unanimous call was extended to the Rev. C. E. Amaron, M. A., B. D., editor-in-chief of *L'Aurore*, the organ of French Protestantism. This call was sustained by the Presbytery of Montreal at its meeting on November 19th, after considerable discussion.

During the summer the Rev. W. C. Clark, of Brampton, Ont., was married to Miss Thompson of St. Mary's. On the afternoon of the following day a reception was held, at which congratulatory addresses were presented to Mr. and Mrs. Clark.

The Rev. P. E. Beauchamp of last year's graduating class, was married on November 12, to Perside E. L., daughter of Samuel Cruchet, Esq., of Fange Gardien, Que.

On Tuesday evening, October 29, the Rev. J. R. Dobson, B. A., B. D., was married in Crescent St. Church by the Rev. Dr. Mackay, to Miss Janet S. Munroe, of this city. On the Wednesday evening previous, Mr. Dobson was presented by his congregation with a purse of gold, and a handsomely illuminated address: as an indication of appreciation and of good wishes for the future prosperity and happiness of himself and Mrs. Dobson.

The Rev. D. J. Fraser, M. A., B. D., is spending the winter at Harvard. He is taking some advanced studies in Philosophy, especially in the department of Sociology under Professor Peabody. He is making a speciality of New Testament work under the supervision of Professor J. H. Thayer, the distinguished

author of the New Testament Greek-English Lexicon.

Mr. Fraser preached recently in the Presbyterian Church in Waltham, Mass., for his old Montreal College friend, the Rev. J. F. Langton, A. M., Ph. D., formerly of Rockburn. This congregation over which Mr. Langton is pastor, is composed chiefly of people from the Maritime Provinces, who, missing the genius of Presbyterianism, are founding a congregation in Waltham, in order that they may worship God after the manner of their fathers. They have already more than fifty names on the roll, and in all probability many more of their countrymen will be gathered into their home like place of worship.

A despatch to the *Globe*, from Constantinople, on November 20, confirms the report that one of our graduates, the Rev. J. C. Martin, B. A., formerly of Dundee, Que., now of Tarsus, Syria, was beaten by the Turks and afterwards imprisoned for sixteen hours at Fekkah.

Mr. Martin is a member of the American Board. He is a native of Heatherdale, P. E. I., and has been a missionary in Syria for over three years.

T. A. SADLER.
Presbyterian College.

OUR EXCHANGES.

The first number of the McGill *Fortnightly* for this session was one of unusual interest. A memorial reference to the late Prof. Cornish from the pen of Rev. W. F. Wariner was among the contents. There was also a sketch of the career of the new principal Dr. Peterson, whose portrait accompanies the *Fortnightly* as a supplement. A well written salutatory by the new editorial staff along with the usual racy class reports make up a most readable issue.

In the "Canadian Methodist Review" for September-October A. D. Watson, M. D., L. R. C. P., treats a subject of more than ordinary interest in his article on "The Psychology of Revivals." Rev. Dr. Rose writes on "The Bible and Newer Criticism," and the Rev. James Henderson, D. D., has an article "Has Modern Thought Disturbed the Foundation of Our Faith." The Review contains some very suggestive reading.

The *Missionary Herald* for November brings its usually interesting budget of news from the foreign field of American Congregational Missions. "The Anti-Foreign Riots in China" are reviewed graphically and the courage of the resident missionaries is highly commended. The "Letters from the Missions" speak of increased progress and

hopefulness in every part of the globe.

The *Knox College Monthly* for November is at hand. Among the general contents there is a thoughtful article by Rev. Prof. MacLaren entitled "The Witness of the Spirit in Relation to the Authority and Inspiration of Scripture." The remarks that bear on the improvement of theological seminaries are timely and suggestive. "Heretics" discusses "Confession of Faith vs. Confession of Love." The missionary interest is well sustained by a letter from Rev. J. Goforth on his Chinese work while the hardships of the student missionaries are recalled in extracts from their letters. The *Monthly* is fully up to its usual high standard.

The *Manitoba College Journal* made a new venture during the past year. Nine numbers were published instead of the customary six. This change is one of the results of the summer session, the extra numbers being issued by the students in theology. From a literary standpoint the numbers are excellent and we hope that the experiment has proved to be gratifying in other directions.

The *Dalhousie Gazette* is before us. The Law and Medical departments are well edited. The first contribu-

tion of the Sunday talker who takes as his subject, "Science, where art thou?" is interesting—curiosity. But to discover its relevancy to either Sunday or science would puzzle the efforts of an expert. Perhaps the clue lies in the article—sentimental love stories and bad tobacco have been known to disorder the fancy in that way before. With the intelligent constituency which

the *Gazette* addresses we exclaim, "Mercifully deliver us from another such Sunday."

Lippincott's Magazine for November contains an interesting serial "In Sight of the Goddess." It is a racy tale of high life in Washington written by Harriet Riddle Davis. Some shorter stories and an interesting book review make up the contents of a most readable number.

Poetry.

MY MOTHER-TONGUE.

(From the German.)

Mother-tongue,—dear, native sound!
Sweetest, best, the wide world round!
Earliest word my ear to greet.
First sweet speech, which love endears,
Earliest lisping lips repeat,
Thou ringest ever in my ears!

Ah, how long's my heart for home
When in foreign lands I roam!
When I alien words employ,
To alien speech my tongue must bring!
Never can they give me joy,
Nor in words of welcome ring!

Wondrous speech to me, and dear,
Ringing out so sweet and clear!
More would I than ear has heard
Of thy wealth and glory learn;
For the Fathers at thy word
From the night of death return.

Be thy praise forever rung
Love-language, hero-tongue!
Rise from out the silent ages
Vanished songs of long ago!
Live anew in sacred pages,
That our hearts in you may glow!

Over all God's spirit goes;
Many a speech from heaven flows;
But by me with thanks and praise
Were my best-beloved sung,
I my sweetest thoughts would raise
Unto thee, dear Mother-tongue!

ROBERT MACDOUGALL.

PRESBYTERIAN MISSIONS IN THE NEW HEBRIDES.

THE New Hebrides lie several hundred miles to the west of the course followed by steamers running between Australia, Hawaii, and San Francisco. They are about 1,200 miles north-east of Australia, and 200 miles east of the large island of New Caledonia. -

Dr. Paton likens them to "a range of mountains bursting up out of the sea clothed with forest and severed from one another by deep valleys through which the tides now flow." Very few of the New Hebrides are as large as the island of Montreal, and many of them are several thousand feet above the sea level. From the top of the volcano, Lopevi, Captain Cook counted seventeen of these islands rising out of the purple waters, their fringes of coral sand glistening under the brilliant rays of the tropical Sun.

These islands are of coral formation and all show signs of volcanic action. Owing no doubt to this fact, many are not encircled by the customary reef. There are three active volcanoes in this group; that on Tanna being the largest in the South Seas. Here also are hot springs in which the natives boil their food. Volcanic action has enriched the soil but made the atmosphere somewhat unwholesome.

One cannot live on the beach without suffering from malaria.

Owing to this fact all the native huts are to be found amongst the trees on the high ground, over which the trade winds sweep.

Indigenous flowering and food plants of many kinds grow in great luxuriance, besides various foreign species introduced by missionaries. The yam, taro and cocoanut are the chief food products. Pork is the only kind of meat procurable. The sea teems with fish, it is true, but they are more beautiful than palatable. Some are poisonous at certain seasons, others are so all the year round. A fish dinner is often used by a dusky Lucretia Borgia as a convenient means of dispatching undesirable acquaintances. Whale fishing is one of the native industries. Numerous turtles are found.

The natives of these "Summer Isles of Eden," as Steele calls them, are the most degraded savages of the South Seas. They are composed of two races. The Papuan, who came from Africa—a descendant of Ham, the Malay, who came from Asia—a descendant of Shem. The former is akin to the negro, though smaller and not always woolly haired. The latter is a much finer type of manhood, being tall and comparatively fair.

The Melanese are found chiefly in the more northern of the 30 islands, and here an improvement in hut

building is at once noticed. Dr. Inglis points out the fulfilment of the old curse of Canaan—"a servant of servants shall he be to his brethren"—in the marked subservience of these children of Ham to the descendants of Shem.

Twenty of the thirty islands inhabited have a population of 70,000, but before the New Hebrides became the traders' prey, it is calculated that they contained a population three times this number. The Papuans speak many languages, the Malays but one. Altogether there are twenty different languages spoken—a larger number than is used anywhere else in the world, in an equal area.

Though conventionally termed "naked," the natives all wear some covering if only a bunch of grass tied round the waist by a string. The men adorn their heads with shells, and spend so much energy on this part of their person that they have none left for the adornment of other parts. They twist their locks into as many as 700 whipcords, each of which ends in a bunch of curls, resembling a poodle's tail. It takes five years to complete this job. Some of the women wear a graceful petticoat while others of them wear two garments. Both sexes paint their faces and this adds considerably to their savage appearance. In their savage state the men are always fighting— island against island, tribe against tribe, family against family. They sometimes do away with their parents when they become old and infirm.

Their occupations are canoe-building, fishing, cultivation of their plantations, and the construction of implements and weapons.

The women are compelled to do most of the hard work. Many widows are strangled so that their spirits may accompany those of their husbands to the next world. Mothers often kill their children in order to rid themselves of the burden of carrying them while about their work. They display great skill in making their clothes, baskets, nets, etc.

Religion in the New Hebrides is a mixture of witchcraft, devil and ancestor worship. They have no beneficent deities. The chiefs are cruel men, and as the people have unlimited faith in their cantations, they are able to frighten to death all who fall under their displeasure.

The experience of witchcraft which Dr. Inglis had, inclined him to a more lenient criticism of our ancestors for their stringent treatment of witches. Mr. Thoms Hardy in one of his little tales, speaks of women's missionary societies as being one of "the various appliances for making happy savages miserable." Perhaps if he had visited these cannibal islands his opinion of the felicity of savages might have been modified. For them, the visible world is peopled with hostile men, and the invisible with hostile spirits. They live in fear and die in darkness.

Low as their condition was before the advent of the white man, it be-

came infinitely lower afterwards. The European and American traders first came to these islands for sandal wood, and then for labourers. These traders were a most degraded set of men. They aimed at the extinction of the natives by introducing fire-arms and disease amongst them.

The labour traffic arose from the Colonial Government's authorizing planters and traders to hire these natives to work on plantations in the adjacent colonies or neighboring islands, where the resident native labour was insufficient. The traffic soon became as bad as the slave trade. The natives signed papers they could not read, and made contracts with men whose language they did not understand. Sometimes they were sold by their chiefs or relatives; at other times all bargaining formalities were done away with. Men at enmity one with another were confined in the same hold, with the natural result, that very few were left at the end of the journey. Of eighty hired in this manner, one evening, only ten remained, the next morning, to fulfil their engagement, the captain having permitted the wounded as well as the dead to be thrown over-board.

The horrors of this traffic have been brought to light through the petitions forwarded by the missionaries to the British Government. The treatment of women on the plantations cannot be spoken of here.

The introduction of a low form of civilization unaccompanied by Christianity is the sure precursor of the Christian missionary's suffering martyrdom.

On the island of Fotuna—which is one of the most difficult mission fields in the South Seas—the proportion of Christians to the whole population is one to five. The traders asserted that one year on the plantations would do more to civilize the natives than ten years of missionary teaching, but facts prove the opposite.

While the influence of the traders was the chief cause of hindrance to the progress of Christianity in these islands, yet it was not the only one. The religion of the people was strongly at variance with the spirit of Christianity. At first the missionary was regarded as a sacred man receiving power from a foreign spirit. Every event of any importance was referred to supernatural causes. Hence those calamities which befel them after the advent of the missionary were regarded as punishments from their own gods who were jealous of the introduction of Christianity. Very often the missionary's life depended on the checking of an epidemic, or on the bursting of a passing cloud. Their sacred men too, were roused into enmity against a religion, which by exposing the impotency of witchcraft, very naturally lessened their power. Then there was that opposition which is always aroused in men by a religion

which condemns their evil deeds. But nothing can withstand the power of human love when sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

The missionaries in those far away isles were able to display in their daily life something of the Christ Spirit, which said, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do." This Spirit soon won many hearts and changed persecutors and would be murderers into friends, who afterwards were willing to lay down their lives in defence of the missionaries.

In 1847 there were no missionaries in the new Hebrides. The latest statistics show that there are twenty ordained missionaries and 150 native teachers, with schools and churches on twenty different islands. The Bible has been translated into thirteen different languages. About 14,000 are under Christian instruction, and the remainder of the population is ready to welcome the gospel.

In 1841 the London Missionary Society sent some Samoan teachers to these islands who in a manner prepared the way for the Rev. John Geddie—who was born at Banff, Scotland in 1815, and educated in Nova Scotia. After four years of dangerous but successful work, he was joined by Dr. and Mrs. Inglis, who settled on the opposite side of the island.

The mission stations resembled boarding schools, in which Mr. Geddie and Dr. Inglis taught the men and boys, while Mrs. Geddie and

Mrs. Inglis were likewise engaged with the women and girls. As soon as converts were able to read and expound the Scriptures, they were sent out to open similar stations at other parts of the island.

The ten commandments and four acts of Parliament, printed by Dr. Geddie, compose the law of the island. Five chiefs and thirty under-chiefs administer justice and punish crime, while the missionaries act as their advisers. The natives are very pious, and family worship is conducted regularly every morning at a certain hour in every hut on the island. When converted, these people become very gentle, affectionate, and lovable. On their first trip to London with the translation of the New Testament, Dr. and Mrs. Inglis were accompanied by a native teacher. This man's letters to his friends are highly interesting both as accounts of Britain and its inhabitants from a South-Sea-islander's point of view, and as an exhibition, of the amount of culture of which the savage is capable.

The native Christians wear European costume in a modified form. They have erected several saw-mills, and made many improvements in the arrowroot industry. These people are sober, moral, and industrious. They possess splendid memories and very easily memorize the Gospels as soon as translated. Unfortunately they belong to a race which is destined to die out and that at a no very distant date.

The story of the New Hebrides may illustrate the truth that Christ's simplest commands are but an authoritative expression of those great laws by which God is working for the highest good of each member in the great human family. "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature," is an unconditional command, and unquestionable obedience to it, as the direct voice of God, has inspired the martyrs of our faith. Apart from the spiritual light and temporal good that have accrued to the simple children of the new Hebrides through the Christian lives spent and lost for

them, the story of these lives has fired the adjacent countries of Australia and New Zealand with an intense missionary spirit. The time may yet come when the New Hebrides will be called the Iona of the Eastern world, where generations yet unborn in the Great Indian and Chinese Empires as well as in the countless islands of the Southern Seas, will bless the heroic souls who met their death in these remote coral islands. "In as much as ye have done it to the least of these ye have done it unto me."

ISA M. MONK.

Montreal.



THE ENDEAVOR MOVEMENT AND THE CHURCH.

THE fourteenth international convention of the society of Christian Endeavor met in the city of Boston during the past summer. It was a vast and in many respects an unique assemblage. According to newspaper accounts there were met in convention over fifty thousand delegates, representing every province, state and territory from Alaska to Florida, and from Newfoundland to Southern California. Among them were to be found adherents of every evangelical denomination: men and women who represented every shade of doctrine but who in all their diversity of creeds found that they were in the possession of one common essential faith. The convention was a landmark in the history of a most successful organization while at the same time it furnished unmistakable proof of a growing catholicity of the churches. We are accustomed to hear the foes of Protestantism refer to the Reformed churches as a loosely bound federation of envious, quarrelsome factions. It is only necessary to point to the recent convention as showing that below all apparent divisions there exists between believers the cemented bond of a deep spiritual union.

Very phenomenal has been the growth of this giant movement among the churches. Its founder,

and those who with him rocked the cradle of its early existence are still living and can scarcely be called old men. It attained a wonderful success because it was wonderfully adapted to draw into active service a piety and fervour that too long had lain latent in the church. Then it was a movement of young people and has in it the energy and hopefulness of youth. Should such a misfortune overtake it as that it shall make only a short-lived outgrowth of the spiritual life of our generation, it will pass to its place in history surrounded by a halo of peculiar interest. Its friends expect much good to result from its influence. Some have gone so far to assert that it shall supersede the church as the instrumentality which in God's hand shall change and regenerate the world.

What is its future to be? Well wishers of Zion are asking that question, with earnestness and with some measure of anxiety. Shall it always retain its present form and take its place among the evangelistic forces in the world quite independent of the churches? This is a most pertinent question in view of its present influence and importance among the Protestant denominations. Nominally it is "for the church" as in truth it should be for what our age calls for is not a dif-

fusion but a concentration of Christian forces. Still there can be no disguising the fact that in some quarters the Endeavor societies are moving farther from the church's control and nearer to a stand of absolute independence. This movement is fostered in a degree by the present organization of the society. Monster conventions are being drawn together with all their accompaniment of badges and banners, partially for deliberation of plans for future usefulness, and partially, we are bound to believe for purposes of parade. The press is forced to do homage to the wonder of the day and the large cities which fail to capture a world's fair or carnival consider they have an equal attraction if they can secure to themselves the sessions of an Endeavor convention. Enthusiasts of the idea are continually reminding the church of her past remissness in caring for the children of her household. Beyond all question the Christian Endeavor Society is asserting itself in a way that is decidedly aggressive. Whether the attention thus directed to Christian assemblages is in all cases conducive to the purposes which these meetings are intended to promote, is in some cases at least doubtful. Concerning the Christian Endeavor movement we are forced to ask whither will it tend? Will it ultimately strengthen the agencies already at work by closely affiliating with them and permeating them with its spirit, or

is it drawing the young people of our church away from their denominational connection and will it seek for itself an independent path as the Salvation Army has done?

It cannot give its entire support to the church under the present circumstances. The sympathy of its members cannot now be wholly in the church's work for the societies have a federal union altogether apart from any or all of the churches, and this of necessity claims a large measure of their sympathy and support. It has its independent undenominational officers, conventions and press, and these draw to themselves a large degree of interest. In so far as these draw about them the religious life and influence of Endeavorers in so far do they draw an interest from members and adherents of already existing churches. The smaller church parliament for the transaction of dry business is overshadowed in interest by the monster muster of the societies. Last June our General Assembly met in session in London. About the same time several hundred Endeavor societies supposedly under the control of our church sent their delegates to the Boston rally. Which gathering, and it is a fair question, was considered by those societies to concern them most. To put it in plain terms do the majority of these societies contribute more to be represented in the parade of an international rally than they do for the schemes of

missionary and benevolent enterprise which belong to our church. I do not depreciate what many societies have done for our missions and for local church work, but I have reason to believe that the majority gave more attention to Christian Endeavor interests in themselves than to that for which nominally the society was brought into existence—the work of Christ through the church. Nor is this all. Most unfortunate seems that distinction now in vogue so many congregations, of the congregational prayer-meeting, and totally separate from it, a young people's meeting. It savours of difference where there should be a oneness of spiritual interest. It has often led to complications of a serious nature in congregations of our church.

There is also such a thing as an overgrown organization which because of its unwieldy dimensions cannot do effective work. Overture follows overture to the General Assemblies of the Canadian and American churches praying for reduced ratio of representation to aid executive puposes. But when fifty thousand delegates met in assembly it taxes the ingenuity of even the 19th century to say they met to plan and deliberate. The truth is that the Christian Endeavor movement was only the formative stage of a widespread revival of Christian interest and activity. There was needed a stirring up of a class of Christians whose talents until that

time had been hidden. There was a great work to be done in utilizing the young Christianity of our time. The Endeavor movement has shown the churches how it could be done. It has given its matchless method to the world. As a semi-independent organization it has served its day. What is needed now is the closest possible relation to the churches. It should in so far as it concerns Presbyterianism cast off its undenominational tendency and become part of the church. Canadian Presbyterianism needs what the Methodist churches already have in the Epworth leagues. What the Episcopal church is fast drawing to itself in the St. Andrew Brotherhoods. These bodies are dealing fairly by the Endeavor movement and by their young people as well. They are giving that movement its best form and may confidently expect from it the best results. They have developed the Endeavor principle and have given their young people a new and peculiar interest in the church of their youth. We have as a church treated undenominational movements with charity and generosity—so much so that others not so deeply embued with that spirit have oftentimes reaped where we have sown. Are we to learn from that experience? It is certainly high time.

At the last meeting of the General Assembly of the American Presbyterian Church (North) at Pittsburg, this question took form

in a proposal to make the Presbyterian societies "Westminster Leagues." The proposal was sent down to the various presbyteries for consideration; and the suggestion seems a good one. At the risk of being considered sectarian we think that the American idea might be well considered on this side of the frontier line. Our own Church has appointed a standing committee on young people's societies. What is more, that step has been hailed with approval by the representatives of our societies. I believe that the American name would be a popular one. Westminster Leagues would be suggestive of our grand historic past. It would stand for a firm well grounded faith whose influence may well leaven the lump of feebly ex-

pressed beliefs that too largely fill the hearts of some who profess to be workers in the cause. There would then be a definiteness of aim to the work of Young Peoples' societies for their members would feel that the church's great work belonged directly to them. The church would be strengthened because her energies would be compacted together and thus more effectively she could do her work. This I believe should be the future destiny of the Endeavor movement and they have the interests of Christian Endeavor most at heart who will aid in promoting a movement of this kind.

HAZEN T. MURRAY.

Presbyterian College.



Talks about Books.

MR. CHAPMAN, of St. Catherine St., sends along with other books Benjamin Kidd's *Social Evolution*. This publication of Macmillans is not a very large book; it has only about 375 pages. But it is a tiring book that fails to repay you for your fatigue, for you drop it feeling that you have reached no finality, have acquired no definite hope regarding the future of society. When a man writes a book it should be because he has something to tell, a message of some kind to deliver to the world. Mr. Kidd is an out-and-out evolutionist to whom the names of Darwin and Spencer are dear, yet he does not deny the existence of God, while he finds the moral law to be that of human development. He is indebted to Sir Henry Maine for a seed thought to the effect that Western Civilization is an exception to the general history of the world. From this he develops or infers that social evolution is not primarily intellectual but religious. His meaning is that the development of society is not to be found in the lines either of general culture or of political science, but in that of benevolence or altruism. Here was a splendid opportunity for introducing the unselfish divine influence that has been contending with the lower instincts of humanity from the beginning of

the world and which was manifested in the personality of Jesus Christ, the real author of all that is good in Western Civilization. Perhaps Mr. Kidd is an apologist for Christianity in disguise. If this be the case he is to be congratulated, for his disguise is perfect. Like Gibbon of old, he fails to recognize a supernatural factor in the world's progress, and, whether God were in any of his thoughts or not, he certainly is not in any of his words. He and the evolutionists generally agree with the shorter catechism in believing that all things have been made out of nothing, or that out of eternal homogeneous matter and blind force were gradually evolved all forms of being and all energies of nature and soul, in either case an evolution of the greater from the less. The proof-text "The things which are seen were not made of things which do appear" conveys no thought of nothingness nor of eternal physical potentiality, but that of a Spiritual Being of infinite resources, in whom also lies the moral power by which human society is to be regenerated. The subjective state of mind called religious, in order to possess practical and permanent value, must be the steady reflection of the divine moral personality more or less clearly perceived. It is strange that men will

doubt the miracles of the loaves and fishes, and at the same time believe implicitly in the evolution of righteousness out of electricity.

From the same source the Talker has received Crockett's "Men of the Moss-hags, being a history of adventure taken from the papers of William Gordon of Earlstown in Galloway." George Bell and Sons, of London and Bombay, publish this 400 page novel. There is no more heroic page in Scottish history than that which tells of the persecution of the Covenanters, between 1662 and 1688. Many pens have striven to do it justice, the most popular of which among Scottish people for a long time was that of John Howie, in his Scots Worthies. Daniel Defoe introduced its narrative into England, and Sir Walter Scott, although with a somewhat unkindly hand, immortalized its chief struggles in his *Old Mortality*. A great many tales of the Covenant have been written out of the material furnished by Wodrow, Laing, Burnet, Defoe, Howie and McCrie, and in Naphtali, *The Cloud of Witnesses*, *Faithful Contendings*, and the lives of individual martyrs and confessors, but very few of them have achieved popularity, owing to the defects in their treatment of the heroic themes undertaken. Mr. Crockett evidently felt it unwise to re-tell the story of Drumclog and Bothwell Brig, but his auto-biographical sketch of William Gordon of Earlstown, founded upon historical and biographical docu-

ments, begins with the disastrous close of the latter battle, and ends with a promise of revolution days. It presents many characters whose names were household words to most of us as children, such as the persecutors Claverhouse, Grierson of Lag, and the bloody Mackenzie, and the witnesses for truth. Peden the prophet, Cameron the warrior, and the women martyrs of Wigtown. Black McMichael and other undesirable allies of the Covenant are also painted in their dark colors, and the publishing of the *Sanguhar Declaration*, the skirmish at *Airmoss*, the meeting of the *United Societies*, and the rescue at *Enterkin Pass* are well told incidents. While loyal to the men of the heather, Mr. Crockett does not disguise their faults. He thinks little of Sir Robert Hamilton who commanded at *Bothwell Brig*, and he puts into the lips of Claverhouse what was unhappily an o'er-true word: "That for ye!" he cried. "Ye stand the day. Ye shall be scattered the morn. I ken ye brawly. Among a' your testimonies there is not one which any three of ye could read over and not fall out about." Therein lay the weakness of the covenanting armies as did those of the German Reformers. A wise commander in chief would have hanged a few of the disputations, ministers, or at least would have flogged them off the field and out of the council of war with the flat of his sword. Then they could have had their revenge on him next time

he went to church. Mr. Crockett treats his theme in a novel and fascinating manner. His young hero, who is more of a patriot than a religious enthusiast, is well drawn, as is the quiet but daring heroine. Their adventures are thrillingly told, and the natural scenes of them are described by a master hand. I know of no better book in all the literature of the romance of the Covenant; yet one would hardly put it into a Sabbath School library.

Still another of Mr. Chapman's books is Ian Maclaren's "The Days of Auld Lang Syne." This 366 page and copyright edition is published by the Fleming A. Revell Company, of Toronto. Nerved to face probable disappointment after the Bonnie Brier Bush, the Talker attacked Mr. Watson's last and had his fears set at rest. The pathos and the humor still hold out and the quality of each is as notable as the quantity. There are ten Drumtochty stories of varying lengths, all exhibiting the character of the place in many diverse moods, grave and gay, religious and secular. Probably the best of them, as it is also the largest, is that entitled "For Conscience Sake." It tells how the tenant of Burnbrae, whose ancestors had held the farm for many generations, was ousted on the expiry of his lease by a new English factor of the Earl because he would not leave the Free Church for the Kirk, to the great grief and indignation of the Kirk minister and the whole country side. The story

is a very simple one, but contains some touching situations, and is admirable for its portraits of many fine characters which cannot be studied without good moral effect. One is pleased to find in this and other stories the total absence of sectarian bitterness, to which many parts of Scotland are far from strangers. "Past Redemption," the story of poor Posty's failing and his fate, is in the latter, a purified version of Bret Harte's Luck of Roaring Camp, but Posty himself is an original. His shrewd evasions of all invitations to reform and sign the pledge or wear the blue ribbon are among the most humorous things in the book, and the climax is reached when, in the study of the Free Church manse, he agrees with the minister that there is an odour of spirits in the room, but assures that simple hearted man that his reputation is safe in his hands. Mr. Watson's literary reputation will not suffer by this new batch of Drumtochty stories, in which those who have read the Bonnie Brier Bush will lovingly follow the fortunes of some of its rural heroes and heroines. They are marked by no fresh theological thought, but a heresy trial seems to be promised by the author, as part of a collection yet to be published. The victim of it is to be the absent minded Free Church minister, whose charitable judgment regarding the future state of the erring but heroic Posty, had won for him in Drumtochty the reputation of a great theologian.

A very different work from the same bookseller, but published by the American Baptist Publication Society, is "How Christ came to Church: The Pastor's Dream: A Spiritual Autobiography, by A. J. Gordon, D.D.: with The Life-Story, and the Dream as interpreting the Man, by A. T. Pierson, D.D." This is a terribly long title for a handsome but small book of 123 pages. Dr. Gordon relates a dream he had one Saturday night, that he was in the pulpit preaching, and that a certain stranger, whom he afterwards learned was Jesus-Christ, was present listening attentively to his sermon. This dream led the eminent Boston divine to consider that Christ is really in every assembly of His people by His Spirit, and to reflect upon the responsibility of preacher and worshippers in general which this consideration involves. The purification of the soul as the temple of the Holy Ghost, and that of the church as part of the Father's house often made a den of thieves, are insisted upon, and much is said of the attitude of the believer towards our Lord's second coming. The author tells of the influence of the dream upon his own work and upon the activities of his people in a simple strain of gratitude. There is intense earnestness and a spirit of deep devotion to Christ in the brief lessons drawn from the vision. In the prefaced biographical sketch and in The Life Story, Dr. Pierson has drawn with a loving hand the por-

trait of his revered departed friend. It would be most ungenerous to deny to the dead above all others the need of praise which generous friends bestow, and as Dr. Pierson is by no means alone in speaking of Dr. Gordon as a very eminent saint of God and a childlike, honorable, and affectionate Christian man, we can only regret that the world has not more that are such, and that when they do appear they are so soon called away to the upper sanctuary.

Finally, Mr. Chapman has to be thanked for The Story of Bessie Costrell, by Mrs. Humphrey Ward. It is a short story of 180 pages and the Canadian edition is published by the Toronto News Company. It contains none of the socialism of Marcella nor of the gospel negation of Robert Elsmere. A record of very humble, even sordid English peasant life, with little of the beauty of romance or of the dignity of religion, it tells of a woman's fall through the life-savings of a relative being left in her husband's safe keeping. She was good-looking and not bad-hearted, but giddy, careless and extravagant, and her husband, a gardener and a prop of the Independent Chapel, by his joint dreaminess and austerity, was a hindrance rather than a help to her moral life. Much against his bitter judgment, he assumed the care of old John Bolderfield's money box. Bessie fell into debt, and conveniently found a key which placed the treasure at her mercy. Hungry for affection of any

kind, she spent a large part of it in treating men at the public house and in other extravagances, but went no further in her degradation. The vicious son of her husband by his first wife, surprised her at the box and took the rest away. On John Bolderfield's return, she strove to get her husband's help to make restitution, and after he had refused to do so and had disowned her as his wife, she threw herself into a well and was drowned. Isaac Costrell repented when it was too late. The theme is far from attractive, but the story is simply and graphically told. Like Miss Dougall's *Zeitgeist*, it contains the moral that a religion which makes people harsh and censorious even towards great sinners is not genuine Christianity. Many a man assumes the air of outraged virtue simply to cover his own moral deficiencies and to gain a reputation for sanctity that is none of his. This was not Isaac Costrell's case. He was just and conscientious according to his light, but it was the light of Sinai and Ebal, not of Calvary. Yet, such as he are the people whose voices are most heard in the churches and on the streets. The best men and the worst are in equal danger of suffering at the hands of these.

Miss Cornelia Horsford, daughter of the late Professor Horsford of Cambridge, Mass., has published a handsome quarto brochure of 22 pages, entitled *An Inscribed Stone*. Miss Horsford found the stone in

question in Weston, near Boston, and had it photographed. She kindly sent me a copy of the photograph and of her article upon it. The unmistakable runic characters on the stone are of the same nature as those of the Scandinavian area, and at the same time, as those of Siberia, Japan, and the Mound-Builder country in America. The Norsemen and the Siberians, etc., gave totally different phonetic values to identical runes, because the original hieroglyphics from which they were derived had different word equivalents in their diverse languages. The question arises, is this stone of Norse or of Sibero-American origin? As it is unpunctuated, it can be made to yield sense both in Japanese, the literary language of the Sibero-Americans, and in Icelandic. In either case I read it as a sepulchral inscription, but unhappily no trace has yet been found of the grave to which it belonged, which, if discovered, would go far to settle the question of the Scandinavian occupation of Vinland or Massachusetts about the year 1000. Miss Horsford, contrary to the bent of her studies and her sympathies, regards the Sibero-American as the better translation, and, by a similar perversity or ingenuousness, to call it by a better name, the Talker favours the Scandinavian. What the translations are it is Miss Horsford's province to tell, and doubtless those who are favoured with her valuable privately printed works will soon learn.

There are about 100 large octavo pages in the Bulletin de la Société Ramond which comes to me from Toulouse in France. The society is in the thirteenth year of its existence, and its great work is the exploration of the Pyrenees. M. Adrien Plante, who is no stranger to Dr. Coussirat, writes charmingly on a supper with Gaston Phébus, generally known as Gaston de Foix, renowned in the chronicles of Froissart. The Rev. Wentworth Webster contributes a valuable article on the Cantabrian Grammar of Pierre d'Urte; Count H. Russell tells a remarkable story of living in caverns he had caused to be excavated in the lofty mountain region of Vignemale, where he found himself, though at a great elevation, as comfortable as an ancient troglodyte; and M. Gordon gives a list of Pyrenean plants, with the months of their flowering and the names of the localities in which they were found. One would be hard to please who would ask for more varied and enjoyable reading than this number of the Bulletin affords.

Professor James Fletcher sends a copy of the author's edition of the Report of the Entomologist and Botanist of the Central Experimental Farm at Ottawa, which contains a great deal that is of interest alike to the horticulturist, the farmer, and the student of biology. From Lieut.-Col G. T. Denison comes Canada and her relations to the Empire, a reprint from the

Westminster Review. It contains some important historical facts illustrating Canada's wrongs at the hands of the United States, and certain parties in Great Britain, and takes Dr. Goldwin Smith severely to task for his unpatriotic attitude. Dr. Coussirat's valuable treatise on Christian Baptism, published in French by Messrs. Drysdale & Co., though brief, extending only to sixteen pages, is most complete and comprehensive as to the subjects and the manner of baptism. It is gratifying to know that it has had a large sale, and that it is checking the mischievous influence of Baptist proselytizers both here and in the United States. Dr. Bourinot is the industrious compiler of the Bibliography of the Members of the Royal Society of Canada, a quarto of 79 pages. Many of these are taken up with the works of well-known Presbyterians, clerical and lay. Such are Dr. Robert Bell, Sir William Dawson, Professor Dupuis, Dr. Sandford Fleming, Principal Grant, Sir James A. Grant, Professor Harrington, Dr. Moses Harvey, Dr. George Lawson, President Loudon, Dr. J. Clark Murray, Dr. George Patterson, Dr. John Watson, and the late Dr. Williamson, and to their names many more may no doubt be added.

The transactions of the Society for 1894 are before me, a quarto of over 750 pages and many illustrations. The French Literary Section comes first with historical

papers of much interest by the Abbé Gosselin, Dr. Dionne, ex-lieut.-Gov. Royal, and MM. Roy and Le Moine. In the corresponding English Section, Dr. George Patterson gives the history of Sable Island, Dr. Samuel Dawson treats of the voyages of the Chabots, Lieut.-Gov. Schultz describes the Innuits or Eskimo of our Arctic Coast, Archbishop O'Brien apologizes for Roman Catholic miracles and Bishop Howley defines Cartier's Course. Professors Girdwood, Bovey, Penhallow and MacLeod contribute to the Physical Section; and Sir William Dawson, Dr. Wesley Mills, and others, have valuable papers in that of Geological and Biological Science. Sir William's paper on Palaeozoic Air-breathing Vertebrates has an important bearing on the study of cosmology, in connection with the first formation of a terrestrial atmosphere, or perhaps with the clearing of an existing atmosphere from its over-load of carbonic acid. The carboniferous era is the logical prelude to that of the air-breathers. The pathetic reference of the ex-principal of McGill, at the close of his article, to the approaching close of his scientific labours, is, it is to be hoped, a pessimist prophecy. Sir William Dawson is still a man in the full vigour of life, so far as intellect goes, and fit for good work in many years to come. It is not meet that he or any other veteran in the world's best service should leave it in obscurity and in neglect of those

who would have been little but for him.

The Fleming H. Revell Company of New York, Chicago, and Toronto, send to the Journal for review a neatly printed and bound volume of 270 octavo pages, entitled, Questions of Modern Inquiry, a series of discussions by Henry A. Stinson, D.D., pastor of the Broadway Tabernacle Congregational Church, New York City. I have read Dr. Stinson's discussions, and I like them. This author speaks good English, and what is more important, excellent sense. He is practical, devout, earnest and charitable. He does not run with the hare and hunt with the hounds as a time-server and please everybody, but is an honest conservative liberal in theology, a man who knows his Bible well enough to put broad foundation principles in the place of the flimsy ladder of ceremonial observance by which the Pharisees took their exercise over dead mens' sepulchres. Recognizing three attitudes of the soul towards Christianity, that of the prejudiced opponent who will believe nothing good of it, that of the prejudiced adherent, who has never had honest manliness enough to interrogate it, and finally that of the candid enquirer, open to conviction and satisfied only with the truth, Dr. Stinson devotes his large reading, his sanctified common sense, and his soul conviction to the help of the latter class. These modern Bereans he considers more worthy

and more noble minded than the prejudiced of Thessalonica, inasmuch as they search the Scriptures. The dead scholasticism of Protestant Holland raised a great outcry against the philosophy of Descartes, because it taught that all true knowledge begins in doubt, but Dr. Stinson is no dead scholastic. To him doubt is the manifestation of a spirit of enquiry, of soul earnestness, and the true answer to enquiry is investigation, sifting of evidence, free discussion. In discussing the question, how far is the Bible inspired, he so insists upon it being an authoritative message from God to man that one imagines he hears Dr. Gordon or Dr. Pierson pleading for plenary inspiration; but, harking back to, What am I to think about the Bible? something very different appears. "Is the Bible inerrant? Certainly not. Did man ever do anything that was altogether free from error?" The manliness of being persuaded, in an admirable address, exhibiting the dignity of him who cordially accepts truth presented in a reasonable and kindly way, and, above all, the condescension and winningness of God in Christ, not lashing the world into line by harsh enactments of an external and temporary nature, but drawing it by great principles of truth, good for all time and for eternity, into the way of God-likeness. Dr. Stinson is a man of large heart and large mind, and of such charity that he is never bitter even when he rebukes.

His very language commends the gospel, and constitutes a valuable lesson in homiletics. Did space permit, I should like to have given some of his excellent thoughts about God, the Bible, Miracles, and the story of Jesus, of Faith and Prayer, of a Saviour from Sin, and of various phases of Immortality, as well as on the Kingdom of Heaven, the Christian Religion as compared with all others, and the reason why God does not personally convert men. Anybody can read these simple yet weighty discussions, and nobody who does so can fail to be profited by them. As the publishers' review slip makes mention of the fact, it is right to add that the price of the book is a dollar and a quarter.

From the same source comes the *Two St. Johns of the New Testament*, by James Stalker, D.D., although its original publishers are Isbister & Co. of London. It is a somewhat larger book than *Questions of Modern Enquiry*, but of 285 pages only, and its price is a dollar and a half. Dr. Stalker's name is so well known in connection with New Testament studies, and as a writer of classical English in a devout spirit, that this new work of his needs little introduction. It is not, as one might at first glance imagine, a higher-critical study of the Johannine writings corresponding to a treatise on the two Isaiahs, but a series of character sketches of John the Baptist and the disciple whom Jesus loved. An instructive

parallel might have been added in John Mark the evangelist who had traits of character peculiar to himself. Those who have read any of Dr. Stalker's former books will find the same charm that won their attention and sympathy in this. The two biographies are treated distinctly, first that of the Apostle in twelve discourses, then that of the Baptist in seven. Whatever profane history and ecclesiastical tradition have furnished to illustrate the careers of the two men, the preacher has gracefully woven into the threads of his discourses. In treating of the composition of the Revelation, Dr. Stalker follows Theophylact and the Syriac version in making the apostle's banishment to Patmos fall in the reign of Nero. The general tradition of the church sets it almost twenty years later, or in the reign of Domitian, and thus some time after the fall of Jerusalem. The chapter or discourse on John's besetting sin of pride is worthy of attention and full of instruction. The destructive example of Elijah quoted by James and him, when they desired to call down fire on the inhospitable Samaritan village, is said by the writer to belong to the spirit of the old dispensation which was legal and stern, and to be inconsistent with Christ's dispensation of love and salvation. Any candid thinker, who knows that the heart of God is the same all through the ages, will perceive that this statement does not go far enough to

satisfy the truth, but Dr. Stalker prefers to help the cause of truth by positive suggestion within the lines of orthodoxy rather than by logical negations of cherished yet untenable beliefs. It is the safer course, but the process by which it will arouse the Christian world to earnest thought concerning the Divine Character will necessarily be a slow one. Doubtless the author is right in rejecting the fable about St. John and the gnostic Cerinthus at Ephesus as inconsistent with the character of him who had been taught many a lesson in divine judgments, and who preached incessantly, "Little children, love one another." In the story of John the Baptist, he dwells upon the diversity of the ministrations of the gospel as illustrated in the contrast between his life and that of Jesus, compares their teaching, and exhibits the superior dignity of the child in Christ's Kingdom to that of the greatest prophet before it came. How little those who juggle with holy writ, employing it promiscuously as a charm or talisman, without regard to its progressive development from feeble dawn to noon-day, appreciate our Lord's decided words on this last point. Dr. Stalker believes in the temporary eclipse of the Baptist's faith which I have heard more than one preacher try to explain away, and he notes the gracious manner in which Christ dealt with his doubts begotten of distress. Blessed the man who

even through distress has achieved the dignity of a soul that wrestles into light and sure conviction. It is not likely that the two St. Johns was written *currente calamo*; it is too carefully penned for that. But

it is on that account all the more easy and pleasant to read, and is calculated to captivate the attention and instruct the heart, which holds instruction longer than the mind and makes a more practical use of it.

J. M. Campbell



Editorials.

Principal Peterson :

'Tis now forty years since McGill University, then in her day of small things, entered upon an era of remarkable progress under the guidance of Sir William Dawson, to whose influence and exertions the present prosperous condition of that institution are in no small degree due. The "gentle scholar knight," whose name has long been a household word throughout Canada, is now engaged in collecting and arranging in permanent form the results of the researches of a busy life; while the labor and responsibility connected with the Principalship of the great Canadian University, in the development of which he has had so large a part, have fallen upon the shoulders of his worthy successor, Dr. Peterson.

Our College is so intimately associated with McGill University, that her good fortune must ever be matter of gratulation to us. Consequently we have felt great pleasure in observing the manner in which Dr. Peterson has entered upon the discharge of his functions as Principal. He has already made his influence felt in his new sphere of labor, and is fast winning for himself a place in the esteem and affection of all those who are interested in the welfare of "Old McGill."

Dr. Peterson's past achievements justify high expectations. After an exceptionally brilliant student career, he entered, at the age of twenty-five, upon the Principalship of University College, Dundee; which position he filled for thirteen years with conspicuous ability. As Sir William Dawson is eminent in Science, so Dr. Peterson is deeply versed in classical lore, and under his regime we anticipate that literary studies in the University will receive such an impetus as scientific studies did under that of his venerable predecessor.

It remains only to add that Principal Peterson is a Scotchman and a Presbyterian.

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The Sultan and the Powers:--

The desperate condition of things usually attendant upon a civil and religious war, now exists and grows daily worse in the Ottoman territory. The amount of property plundered, the number of Armenians and Christian missionaries massacred, the extent of destitution among the mothers, wives and children of those who were slain can, as yet, be only a matter of conjecture. Over thirteen thousand Armenians, it has been estimated, have been slain in the provinces; and, according to a recent despatch from Dr. Dwight of the Bible House Mission

of Constantinople, a very much larger number than this are destitute of the common necessities of life. Whatever the immediate causes of this outbreak may have been, and the Mohammedan seems to have had some provocation, it can no longer be doubted that the Sultan, while pretending to the powers to be carrying out the promised reforms, is openly tolerating and secretly promoting a systematic persecution of his Christian subjects. What the final issue of this misrule will be, no one can at present venture to predict. The words of Lord Salisbury uttered a few weeks ago, seemed significant to the degree of a threat, and, although it was tolerably certain that peace would not be restored under the administration of the Sultan, no one doubted but that the Powers intended to take united action to secure this end. But as time goes on and nothing is being done to relieve the embarrassment of the situation, there is a growing suspicion abroad that this great confederation of Christian nations is less concerned about the extermination of the Armenians than the profit the occasion may afford. In fact, it is now generally considered that the agreement to act only in concert was a strategy of those who are jealous of Great Britain's influence, by which they may check her aggression in that much coveted key to the East. By allowing herself to be drawn into this agreement, Great Britain has forfeited the privileges

by which, according to the Berlin Treaty of 1878, she was to preserve the integrity of the Turkish Empire and to see that the reforms were carried out.

At what price this lost advantage can be regained, if at all, remains to be seen. Meanwhile, she has no sufficient reason for acting independently of her Allies and, if we may believe that "she has gone to the limits of prudence in her desire to effect substantial reforms," it only remains that she should use her influence to remove a tyrant who has been a continual menace to the peace of Europe, and seek to redress the grievances and relieve the exigencies of her helpless brethren in a land already red with their blood.

* * *

The Financial Agency:—

It is now well on towards twenty years since Dr. Warden became Treasurer of the College as well as of the Board of French Evangelization. When the last General Assembly offered him the chief financial agency of the church as successor to Dr. Reid in Toronto, it showed a just appreciation of the marked energy and business ability with which during all that time he has administered the funds entrusted to him. But it was with some anxiety the friends of the College feared the possibility of his removal from Montreal, owing to the difficulty of finding any other equally suitable to replace him. That anxiety, we are happy to say, has been set at rest in

the meantime by the assurance that he has decided to remain here.

However, we should be glad to see the Church get the fullest benefit of his services, and we see no good reason why he might not continue to occupy his present position and at the same time meet the wishes of the Assembly as to the larger work. With the necessary clerical assistance such as can easily be secured, he could manage all the funds of the church now under Dr. Reid's care, except the Knox College funds, in addition to what he has now, and manage them as easily from Montreal as from Toronto. Montreal is the most advantageous point for the direction of all other kinds of business affecting the whole Dominion, and but for the unfortunate incident of the burning of the Parliament Buildings in 1847, it would have been the political as well as the commercial capital to-day. With the chief financial agency of the Church at Montreal, it would be possible to make our Church really one in the administration of its main funds. The present arrangement makes it necessary to have two Home Mission Committees, two Augmentation Committees, two Foreign Mission Committees, two Committees for the Widows' and Orphans' Funds and two for the Aged and Infirm Ministers' Fund. In fact, the benefit of the Union of 1875 has been largely nullified by the mistaken policy of putting the chief agency in Toronto. A good opportunity is offered for

rectifying the blunder then made. It is to be hoped the Church will avail herself of it. This is no selfish attempt to claim for Montreal a position that might increase its importance in church affairs, but sound business policy such as will appeal to the common sense of every business man. If sectional feeling, either east or west, prevails against it, as it may, the Church will long have cause to regret it, and in the end be compelled to adopt this policy, when perhaps it will be too late to derive the full advantage of doing so. Let some of our business elders take the matter up in an earnest, practical way, and we feel sure the Church as a whole will respond.

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Spelling Reform :—

From time to time the question of "fonetik refawrm" is brought before the public. Occasionally an Educational Journal renders itself ridiculous by printing a few columns after the ideal manner of the reformers. Opinions of various great and learned men that seem to favor the fad are again and again retailed. The fact that children in our schools must spend years of weary toil in mastering the orthography of their own language, is lamented. The difficulty, which the anomalies of the English tongue place in the way of its being acquired by foreigners, is represented as retarding the time when that speech shall be universal, and as being therefore a clog upon the wheels of the world's progress.

For these reasons the public are called upon to adopt phonetic reform : but having heard the demand and having learned the arguments upon which it is based, the public continue the even tenor of their way. The things that have been, are, and we trust, shall be.

We entertain the wish we have expressed for several reasons. In the first place, our sense of the fitness of things causes us to shrink from following even the more moderate reformers in writing beauty, skul, leag, prolog, hopt, etc. ; and further, we fear that the danger of our becoming dyspeptic would be much increased, if we were compelled each morning to look upon a bill of fare headed Brekfast. In the second place, we have no desire to see that literary wealth which we find stored up in the forms of words blotted out, for we believe, with Archbishop Trench, that there is no conceivable method "of so

effectually defacing and barbarizing our English tongue, of practically emptying it of all the hoarded wit, wisdom, imagination, and history which it contains, of cutting the vital nerve which connects its present with its past, as the introduction of the scheme of phonetic spelling," which finds so many zealous advocates. Finally, we have been accustomed to look upon our language as a living growth governed by laws of its being, and we have no wish to change it for a "machine made" tongue.

Indeed, when we consider with what difficulty new words have been introduced into our speech, and what failure has ever attended attempts to control the development of language, we feel safe in concluding that spelling reformers shall be compelled to be content with such moderate and gradual changes in that direction as time shall sanction.

