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## Our Graduates' Institute.

### THE MINISTER AND HIS READING.

By REV. D. CURRIE, B.D., Perth, Ont.

Few things enter so largely into a minister's life and work as his reading. Nothing is more important for him to know than what to read and how to read. His books are the minister's companions, and a man is known by the company he keeps. In no way can we form a better estimate of a minister's theological and literary standing than by entering his library and seeing not merely the books on his shelves, but the books whose leaves are cut, whose margins are annotated and whose important passages are underlined. There is danger that after leaving College and taking upon oneself the care and burden of

home and congregation, one should fall into indolent and aimless habits of reading. A minister should give evidence of progress and growth to the end of his life. After he has spent a few years in a parish he should be a better preacher and theologian than at the beginning of his pastorate. He should know Theology and Church History and other subjects bearing upon his work better than when he left the Theological Seminary. But how often do we find that the field of History in a minister's thought becomes an almost unknown land and too often the same may be said in regard to other subjects. No better examples of arrested development can be found than many of our ministers. There is for them no progress, no growth. They conquer no new fields. Too often they fail in retaining the territory they had secured or they allow it to be smothered with weeds of indolence and confusion. And yet few callings give such splendid scope for research and study. In few callings is the reward of industry more certain or more bountiful. The minister is the expounder and enforcer of truth, and all truth being of God, can be made tributary to his work. The truth resulting from the labors and sufferings of the best men of all ages is before him. The use he makes of this will in a large measure determine the wealth and power of his life. Faithful here, he will come to his people from week to week having the smell of his garments like the smell of a field which the Lord hath blessed, having a message fresh from the fountain of truth, a message that will be startling because of its freshness and simplicity.

The arrested development of many ministers is due not to neglect of reading, but to desultory, aimless reading, to reading that takes no hold upon a man's life. There is danger that we should fence in too large an area for cultivation, and that we should fail to cultivate any part profitably. By trying to get too much we lose all. We become mere readers instead of being students of the great works we possess. Reading may be a recreation. It is not always study, but it may become a dangerous recreation, as it is apt to make unlawful

encroachments on real work. Sometimes the question is raised whether it is wise to read Fiction. As works of Fiction are usually read, they fail to be of material advantage to those who read. Often such reading is positively harmful. We begin to read a book, and after having read a few pages, we get excited and wonder whether or not there is to be a marriage. We sit up all night and read page after page until we discover how the parties ended their flirtations. We do not get beyond the letter that killeth. We lose sight of the great underlying principle of the story, the phases of life that are being interpreted, and the artistic organic beauty of the work. Such reading is not profitable, and it is not fair to judge of the value to be derived from the reading of fiction by such treatment as this. Fiction to be profitable must be studied, and no doubt when good fiction is studied it is profitable. But how are you to know whether you are a student of Fiction or not? You have read the works of Sir Walter Scott. Have you studied them? You may have devoured, indiscriminately bolted down all he has written, but that is not study. If you have read a novel three or four times through with pencil or pen in your hand and a note-book by your side in which to jot down the leading ideas of the author, then you will pass for a student of fiction, and you will be competent to tell by your experience and by the influence it has had upon your life and thinking whether it is helpful or not. Let us not confound reading with study. You may read every night of the week till the small hours of the morning, but you may not be a student. You may be spending your strength for naught, wasting your energies and unfitting yourself for your work.

A man takes a book of the Bible, such as Isaiah, and begins to study it. He familiarizes himself with it by reading it carefully with pen in hand in the revised as well as the King James' Version, or better still in the original Hebrew. He makes his own analysis of it and becomes saturated with its thought and spirit. He comes to his own conclusions as to the meaning of the Prophet's teaching. He finds out the great princi-

ples of his life and teaching, and constructs in his imagination the world in which Isaiah lived, the social system of his time, the political intrigues, the foreign alliances and complications of the nation. Having taken himself back to that distant period and lived with the prophet and his contemporaries, he takes him and his country and times into Canada and the nineteenth century, and teaches the old lessons in new form to a new people. In the teachings of the prophet he has discovered principles which are still operating. They may manifest themselves in different forms, it is true, but the principles are the same. He has determined how the truth of Isaiah is applicable to the present day and he has discovered the great lessons he is teaching to every age. So far as his capacity has permitted him, he has become Isaiah for the time being, the ideal Isaiah which he has conceived through study and meditation. Such a man is a student. While he thus studies he reads, reads books that need not be read more than once, such as the contemporary history of Assyria and Egypt and the other nations referred to by Isaiah. He in this way gathers round his knowledge details with which to fill in the somewhat hard lines of his picture with color and beauty. The skeleton begins to breathe with life. Such methods take time and hard work, but the difficult is usually the profitable, and how can one employ one's time better than in seizing and appropriating the great principles of human existence.

Again, you want to study the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, the Atonement, the Future Life, or some other doctrine of the church. You should not forget that you have the same source from which all men have drawn, the Bible and personal experience. You want to know what the Bible teaches on this subject. From your own personal study of the Bible you come to conclusions that are satisfactory to you as being the views presented in Scripture. Your mind becomes so permeated with the subject that it forms a part of your thinking, becomes a part of your make-up. You will at any time be able to pass an examination, or deliver a series of lectures upon it, not lectures which

are a compilation of what Gordon, Murray, Smeaton, Hodge or any other man has written upon it, but what you have acquired through earnest and prayerful study. As before, while studying you will read what other men have written, and you will compare their views with what you conceive to be the teaching of Scripture, and where you find their teaching more satisfactory than your own you will adopt it and assimilate it with your thinking.

As a result of such reading and study as is here indicated, you will always be interesting, you will become daily richer in your intellectual and spiritual possessions. You will never pass the dead line, but you will have the freshness and fragrance of the growing plant, rich and beautiful with the product of its continued labor and abundant vitality.

I have endeavored to indicate how the minister should read and study. It is proper now to add a few sentences regarding *what* he should read and study. Reference has already been made to the study of Fiction, and there is no doubt that the highest truth can be and has been embodied in the garb of story. There are those who entertain the hope that the time may come when Mathematics, Logic and Metaphysics will, to the joy of students, be clothed in the living forms of Fiction. In a word, it may be said that a minister should become acquainted with and be a student of the world's great masters in Literature, Science and Philosophy. These interpret and idealize life. They live beside the life of their country, the life of humanity. They go to the depths of human experience, and reveal men to themselves and to their fellow-men. Each period, especially the great periods of the world's history, has its literary interpreters who unfold not only the life of their own period, but some phase of universal life also. The works of such men never grow old. To-day they stir our feelings and passions as much as when they came fresh from the authors' brains. Shakespeare, Dante, Milton and others are immortal because man is immortal, and has in him what survives all changes. He carries the same life from age to age so that he

who reveals man at any time reveals him for all time. The minister cannot afford to be ignorant of the world's great masters. There are those who are anxious to be up to date in their reading who think it discreditable not to read every new book that is placed on the market. If in some social gathering they are asked whether they have read "Christian" or "Equality," they blush to confess they have not, and too often they are strangers to the world's great thinkers who never become old. These Masters should not be read merely; they should be studied and interpreted. As these are studied it will be necessary to read contemporary history, and as far as possible reproduce the conditions of the time when they were written.

In literature we find the thoughts of the race, in history, we find its deeds. To separate History from Literature is to sunder what God has joined together. In the history of the world we find the tragedy of life. It reveals to us God's Judgment Day in which his angels have been abroad separating the wheat from the tares. Here we see the God of justice and righteousness asserting Himself in relation to the lives of men and of nations, revealing to us the great experiment He is carrying on in behalf of the race. Here we see that God is, that the nations who forget Him and are unfaithful to Him shall perish and that He is steadily leading His people to a happy destiny. Here we behold how the seed of the kingdom has grown and its power widened, and is moving on, a world-conquering force. Thus to follow the church in its struggle on the field of History will widen our horizon and beget in us an unswerving faith in the glory and power of the Gospel. It will inspire us with patience and abiding confidence that there is no power so great as truth and that it is making steady progress and asserting itself from age to age.

It need not be said in the last hours of the nineteenth century that a minister cannot afford to be ignorant of that department of knowledge which has entered so largely into present social and industrial conditions. No one who makes

claims to any kind of intellectual leadership should neglect study concerning those great forces which are being harnessed and brought into the service of man and which have brought such a peculiar charm to modern life. Such subjects as Chemistry, Biology, Geology may be regarded as the offspring of the present century, but they have in a wonderful degree affected every department of human thought, and they have compelled Theologians and Philosophers to recast their theories concerning the phenomena of human existence. It is not possible that we can be authorities or experts in these fields of thought, but it is necessary that we should acquaint ourselves with the fundamental principles of the physical sciences and the hypotheses by which the operations of nature are explained. Such a study will uncover for us the rich treasures the Creator has stored away for us in the world. We shall better understand the rich provision He has made for the race and the inspiring thought will be forced upon us that man seems only beginning to subdue the world by bringing its forces into his service.

Little need be added to what has already been said in regard to the study of the Bible. The Scriptures are the minister's arsenal. Here will be found an explanation of the moral and spiritual laws of life. It shows us as no other literature does that man is a member of a community embracing things visible and invisible, a community stretching from man to God. There is disclosed the splendid destiny of those who seek the things that are most excellent. In this book is found the knowledge that maketh wise unto salvation, and that enables the lost soul to regain the Father's house. The civilization of this closing century would be a hopeless riddle if its interpretation were sought apart from the Bible. Its spirit runs through all our great literature. It has entered into the world's life and progress, and forms the strength of its best civilization. It can never be eliminated from the thought of the world. As well cut the roots of a tree away and expect it to live as imagine that the world can move forward without the great and eternal truths of God's word. This book must be studied with

all the enthusiasm we can command. To the minister it must ever be *The Book*, the most effective instrument for service God has given the ambassador of the truth. At no time in the minister's life should he be without some portion of this book as the subject for earnest and prayerful study.

Finally, let it never be forgotten that, the end of study and reading is culture, the cultivation of all that goes to make men good and great. We read the great thoughts of the world, of the ages, in order that our souls may become the homes of great and good thoughts. To read about the love of God, believe in it and preach it is not holding a creed unless that love of God takes possession of our lives, unless we become through it Divine, partakers of the Divine nature. We read and study and try to understand the story of the Cross, with its comforting assurances and its complete adequacy to meet all man's present and future needs, to little purpose unless through this exercise we get possession of the Spirit of the Cross, enabling us like our Master to live, work and suffer for others. To read about heroic deeds, to be able to speak of them and describe them in glowing language is of but little value unless we become heroic, unless we are willing to do hard things for the sake of truth, for the sake of Christ in behalf of humanity. All reading, all study, should enter into our lives so that we may embody and be witnesses unto all that is beautiful in Literature, in history, and in nature.





## THE CHINESE QUESTION.

By REV. GEORGE R. MAXWELL, M.P., Vancouver, B.C.

It is with considerable hesitation and trepidation that I send an article on this question to Montreal, and especially to a journal associated with the Presbyterian Church. I can remember that immediately after my bringing the views of my constituents before the House of Commons on this matter, that one of the few bodies which condemned my contentions was the learned Presbytery of Montreal. I have great respect for the Fathers and Brethren who compose that influential Presbytery, I admire the soundness of their theology, their theological attainments, and their good works, but it seems to me that they are hardly fitted to pronounce upon this vexed question, at least in the manner indicated. While it is true that this question is looming up in all our great industrial centres, yet it is only in British Columbia where you see it in all its repulsive features, and it is British Columbians who not only ought to be heard, but who ought practically to decide what should be done with the Chinese emigrants who are coming to our shores. I have, however, in this article no expectation of converting the old—they are always hard to convert—the reason is obvious, but the "hopefuls" of the church are more plastic, and I trust that among these we may find champions, who will champion our cause worthily.

Perhaps I may be pardoned for one more reference to the older, and shall I say wiser heads of the church. Their position prompts my sympathy rather than my condemnation. Believing, as they do, in the Fatherhood of God, and the Brotherhood of man, the demand to tax, and to tax highly, a brother man coming to our fair Dominion seems, to say the least of it, unbrotherly. Perhaps stronger terms might be in order, and from a superficial consideration of the demand, might be perfectly justifiable. I can remember the time when I would

have characterized this agitation as almost a disgrace to our common humanity. But doctrines are not the criterion by which grave social, industrial and political evils are decided. Sentiment is not always a safe guide. It is true that circumstances alter and must alter cases. Theories sometimes work badly in practice. Certain conditions demand the application of new remedies. This is one of these peculiar cases which upset the theories of political economists, and make it impossible to carry out the teachings of certain noble doctrines, much as we would like to do so. We have seen the evil complained about. For seven years we have been face to face with it. We have come in contact with all its ramifications, so that having seen what we have seen, we haven't the slightest hesitation in saying, that a prohibitory law would not only be good for British Columbia, but would be good for the Chinese themselves.

Let me now deal with a few points which have some connection with the subject in hand. First, the Chinese are kindly treated in British Columbia. I make that statement, because some might imagine otherwise. Small boys and dogs are their worst enemies—especially the latter. It is strange, but true, every dog has a growl for a Chinaman. I can give no explanation. You must draw your own inferences. There have been a few assaults made on our Celestial band—but very few. They enjoy the same protection as any other member of the community, and an assault upon a Chinaman would be more severely punished than one upon a white man. They are, as a whole, specially favored. They are permitted to congregate, to huddle together, when white men would be brought up and fined for violating the sanitary laws of the city. Every church is open to them. Every denomination has special classes for them. They are given secular and religious education often without money and without price. To draw them more powerfully, a great many young ladies become their teachers. Ninety per cent. of them make fairly good wages, but John is like many Scotchmen—he won't pay if he can get out of it. No doubt he is amazed betimes at his own self-importance, as manifested

by the solicitude on the part of the churches, and when he sees them so eager to bring him into industrial competition with his white brother, he says, it's a good joke, but let them pay for it. The kingdom of money is of far more importance to John than the Kingdom of Heaven. Our jails are open to him, and judging from statistics, he occupies far more than his share of such places, at the cost of the Canadian bread-winner and taxpayer. So, then, John has fair play given him. However the British Columbian may growl, and he has good reason, as we shall see, John is as safe, and as highly respected, as if he were in his own land.

Again, we do not ask for the expulsion of the Chinese. A great many speak as if this was our contention. Nothing of the kind. We are willing to allow those who are with us to remain and make their pile. Granted what some say is true, that a certain amount of cheap labor is required; we reply, that we have enough, and more than enough. We wish to treat fairly and squarely every Chinaman who has been brought into the country; but, at the same time, we claim the right to have a law that will make it difficult for intending emigrants to get in. No injustice is intended.

Again, the demand made that the tax should be raised to \$500 per capita is not a new thing. Of course, neither its newness nor its oldness makes it right or wrong; but there are some people who have a perfect horror of a new thing. To say that a thing is new is sufficient to condemn it in their eyes. History teaches that it is hard to establish new things. So far as this question is concerned, there are quite a few who think that this demand is a new thing, and therefore unprecedented. In short, because it is new, it ought not to be granted. But it is not new. Other countries before us have had to grapple with this self-same question. History is only repeating itself so far as Canada is concerned. Selfishness is largely responsible for what has taken and what is taking place. Sometimes Chinamen "spot" a country, and make a rush for it. They crowd in, and keep crowding in. More often it is employers of

labor, who, having failed to carry out their avaricious designs, have invited Chinamen to come and help them to make more money than they could or can make by means of the white working-man. That's where and how the evil has begun, and the reason why this emigration is commended and encouraged. One of the Australias has had to impose a \$500 tax. New Zealand has followed suit. Hawaii has closed her doors against the Chinamen, and we all know what America has done. We in Canada, then, who are asking the House of Commons to increase the tax to this amount, are but asking for legislation that other countries have passed, and have been compelled to pass. The very same things are staring us in the face as were before them, and I cannot see how we can avoid doing what they have done.

Again, it has been urged by some, that were our House of Commons to increase the tax to the amount desired, it would be vetoed by the British Government. This objection is purely imaginary. It is one of those hobgoblins which an objector will raise for the purpose of frightening the agitators : but there "aint nothing to it." The very reverse will happen. While Great Britain might for her own interests wish that we shouldn't do anything of the kind, and while she might think it objectionable legislation, yet she would do as she has done already with the colonies previously mentioned : that is, she would do nothing. Our problems are different from hers, and she is wise enough now to allow us to settle such questions as this as circumstances demand.

We have now arrived at the crucial point, viz., why do we demand fresh legislation with regard to the Chinese, or, in other words, what reasons have we which together make it necessary that something along these lines should be done. To discuss this matter intelligently, one must have evidence to guide him. We may form our opinions and give our judgments either by means of what we have seen ourselves, or by means of what others have seen. We in British Columbia have all the evidence we require at our doors : you in the

East may consult the Report of the Commission which was appointed in 1884. That report is a voluminous volume, well printed and handsomely got up: but while there is a great deal of matter in it—not always bearing on the point—and while it is not so strongly representative of British Columbia's opinion on this subject as it ought to have been—if the people had been properly consulted and represented—yet one will find enough in it to convince the most sceptical that we have a great deal of right on our side. As I wish neither to overstate nor misstate the evidence, we shall glance at it as fully as possible.

*Firstly*, Some say the agitation against the Chinese is purely a political question. One gentleman who handed in his evidence to the Commission says: "The agitation against the Chinese has been almost coeval with their arrival. It was begun, and has been carried forward, chiefly by politicians who have sought the suffrages of the laboring man by keeping up the cry of 'the Chinese must go.'" I haven't the slightest hesitation in saying that that statement is not true. There is no province in the Dominion that has had fewer politicians and less so-called politics than British Columbia. Party politics up till the last election have cut a small figure in provincial elections. Hence the agitation is not the work of the politicians—it is the work of the people. Sometimes this objection has considerable influence in forming the opinions of others on account of the standing of the men who make it. A great many people rightly or wrongly are prejudiced against politicians, and will believe any charge that is laid against them. I will not defend the professional politician; he can defend himself; but I say it is cruel to charge these men for doing what they have not done, for if ever a question was a people's question, this is the one beyond all mistake. Never was there more unanimity than on this, and they (the people) will fight for the triumph of their views to the bitter end. We have no sooner disposed of this, than another from a different quarter confronts us. A doctor, when replying, and giving his learned

views as to the source of the agitation, instead of laying the blame on the politician, throws the blame on those who throw their earnings away in buying whiskey. These are the responsible ones, according to this disciple of Aesculapius. I characterize this as another departure from the truth. These may growl, but if such characters alone clamoured for this, why, there would be no Chinese question in British Columbia. I make the statement without fear of contradiction, that the most sober, the most intelligent, the most moral, the most religious men we have are the backbone of the agitation, and their superior cannot be found in any part of Canada to-day.

*Secondly*, Moral considerations constrain a great many in demanding this legislation. I do not wish to enter into this question fully—as what I could say would not grace the pages of your “Journal”—but those who urge this point are in the right. You will no doubt be told by some that the Chinaman is a paragon compared with the white man ; but these, in my opinion, spoil their case. The Chinaman is not an angel, as these would have you believe : he is, in truth, a fallen man. As the Hon. John Robson said—who was a good Presbyterian and an elder of the Church—“ I consider their habits are as filthy as their morals.”

Under this head we might state that their habits are most obnoxious. A great many people, especially in the East, think they know all about this problem because they have three or four Chinamen in their town. Let me say, with all possible respect to these, that they don't know anything about it, and have no means for knowing anything about it. A Chinese quarter in a city—such as we have them on the coast—is a damned spot, a spot that no good citizen can behold without indignation. They crowd and huddle together. In small rooms they are packed like herring in a barrel. The smell of opium is stifling. You could set potatoes in the dirt. In the words of our late Premier, their premises are filthy. But perhaps some may ask, why don't you make them live decently ? Why ? because they won't, and you can't make them. As

the Superintendent of City Police said, it is impossible to make them comply with any law, and especially the sanitary laws. That is as true to-day as it was thirteen years ago, only the evil exists in a more aggravated form. I pass over these things lightly, because this deals with evils which no one cares about handling in public. They are there, however, in their most malignant and revolting forms. They are Asiatics, and bring their Asiatic civilization (?) with them. They practise their vices without shamefacedness. They give us spectacle after spectacle of the opium fiend, and breed leprosy in our midst. Why should a self-respecting people be cursed with such things? Why should the fairest province in the Dominion be compelled to nurture such things at its heart? Why should we be forced to admit within our gates such a mass of corruption, then have to look at it from day to day, and at last have to suffer from its corruptive influence? Why, I ask, in the name of our common humanity? I hold no reasonable man can answer.

*Thirdly*, Chinamen give endless trouble. A great many of them are criminals; in fact, we could not expect anything else, considering the class to which most of them belong. They commit offences, minor and major. A Chinaman can take a hand at anything in that line. From keeping houses of prostitution, to gambling, stealing and smuggling, they make up a pretty creditable record every year. A large portion of the time of our police is devoted to these Celestials without wings, and I believe our police force has to be augmented in order to meet their demands. They are expert liars. As one capable witness says: "We have great difficulty in tracing crime through their reluctance to give evidence, and because their evidence cannot be relied upon." Another: "If any crime is committed, you cannot get anything out of them. They tell you, when asked, 'They do not savey.' They are strangers and foreigners to the truth."

*Fourthly*, Their secret societies are a positive nuisance and menace to our civil institutions. It is not necessary to enter into the vexed question of secret societies, but such as are

founded for benevolent and charitable purposes require no defence; their good deeds vindicate them at all times. If such were the kind of societies which Chinamen imported they should have my warmest praise. Unfortunately for our country, they are of another kind. They baulk our law, and frustrate the ends of justice. Within their secret conclaves conspiracies are hatched, and murders determined. As yet these rival organizations have not dared to show their demonish machinations to any great extent: but we are familiar with their workings in places like San Francisco. What they do there will be done here whenever it suits their purposes. We are alive to the possibilities, and we are determined that such things shall not be tolerated under the "Maple Leaf."

*Fifthly*, A large number of these Chinese emigrants are nothing but slaves. We are all opposed to slavery. The very name is abhorrent. As things stand we have a band of the most hopeless and helpless of slaves, and the law as it stands encourages and recognizes the same. The modus operandi is something like this: We have Chinese Bosses. These are our slave owners, and their grip is tight. They hire their weaker brethren in China, and by paying their expenses and other incidentals become the lords of their bodies. The slaves contract to remain in their service, to do their bidding until the uttermost farthing has been paid. They land on our shores, and are at once taken possession of by the slave-masters. From that moment every device is practised to make it impossible for these poor creatures to get rid of their indebtedness. We want to break up this slavery. The present tax only binds the fetters the firmer. The slave-master can pay it, and by paying it, makes the slaves more and more his own. To get rid of him, and to get rid of his nefarious art, we must raise the tax to such a point as will make his business impossible, and in our humble opinion the \$500 tax is the remedy at hand.

*Sixthly*, The Chinese are birds of passage. They are not citizens, and have no intention of becoming citizens. They



haven't the slightest idea of what citizenship means. They come for one purpose only, and that is to make money. That is, no doubt, a weakness characteristic of more than Chinamen, but every other nationality gives something back in return for what they obtain. They are suckers. They will help nothing. Every Canadian institution which is our pride and our boast would wither and die were it left to the tender sympathies of the Chinamen. They bring nothing in save a few rags, and take all they can beg or borrow out. They impoverish everyone and everything but themselves. They are of no use to our churches, schools, merchants ; they are a burden all round and a burden which becomes the more intolerable as their numbers increase. What British Columbia requires and demands is citizens. Foreigners are out of place. We have many things to offer, we have untold wealth. I ask any reasonable man if our demand is unreasonable, when we demand that those who come, should and must come to help us to build up those institutions which are our glory. They must be givers as well as receivers. Schools and churches must be supported. Municipal, Provincial and Dominion Governments must be maintained, and for such the Chinaman is simply no good. He comes to us a stranger, he leaves us a stranger, and all the while he has been with us he has evaded every tax, and refused to bear a portion of any burdens being borne by the people.

*Seventhly*, The Chinese are stumbling-blocks in the way of our own working people. This is the strength of the whole agitation, and is to me the chief reason why Chinese emigration should practically cease. Our working classes are those who are pinched ; they deserve and demand to be heard. Of course there are some, capitalists or the friends of capitalists, who say that the Chinese make work for our own people. That is arrant nonsense. I glance over the evidence given before this Commission, and it is overwhelmingly against this preposterous statement. The Hon. A. E. B. Davie, Attorney-General, says : "A laborer will usually find a market for his labor.

but finds he cannot compete with the Chinaman." Dr. Helmcken testifies : " The Chinese take the work from the white laborer, and take it at a cheaper rate." The representative of the working classes declares : " Their mode of living, a few cents per day, and the absence of families among them, will make the white men powerless to compete against them for labor." That is the real Chinese question. Now, my sympathies are all with our own people. Charity begins at home, so should fair play. We ought to be just before we are generous. I wish no harm to befall the Chinaman, but I say that our first duty as a church and as a nation is to see that those who build our churches and support them, that those who are building up Canada, and helping to maintain her institutions shall have fair play, so as to earn what will support not only themselves, but also their wives and families. In spite of " gush," I say it's a crime to starve our own people in order that Chinamen may become rich.

But it is said : We require cheap labor. I am no lover of cheap labor. As a minister, I know what that means. A cheap minister is a dear minister. Cheap laborers are not very beneficial to a country. Cheap labor is synonymous with poverty. However it may be true that cheap labor may be necessary. Granted. Let it, then, be white and not Asiatic cheap labor. In the name of our common faith, let us not drag down our white brother, after educating him, to the level of a semi-savage. In my opinion, this cry for cheap labor is dust thrown in the eyes of the public. It's a cry for outrageous profits. Live and let live is not a bad motto, and if our Western capitalists would but carry it out, it would be found that every business would produce enough for the master and the servant.

Again, it is said we require population. Yes, that is true. We require more people, but less Chinamen. God help British Columbia if it is to become a Chinese colony ; and as the law stands, it may if the Chinese are minded to make it so. We ought to have had more people. The prospects are good,

the chances are inviting ; in short, everything invites the settler. Why have we so few people ? The Chinese are the reason. Our late Premier declared, and said what was true, that " the Chinese prevent white laborers from coming into the country, as the whites look upon it as slave labor." What a different country we would have, had we whites instead of Chinese. Why, we would have more churches and more ministers ; more schools and more teachers ; more stores and more business men ; more labor and more laborers. All round a glorious change would be manifest. The question, then, is not whether certain doctrines shall be literally carried out, but whether we should be true or false to the interests of our brother whom we teach in the school, preach to in the church, and who is one with us in our desire to make Canada a great nation. From what I have seen with my own eyes, my duty is to my Canadian brother, and hence my work is to see that he shall have a fair share of the wealth which he produces, and that there shall be room for him in the land he calls his own.

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## Poetry.

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### BIRDS ON THE BOUGH.

High in the boughs two birds are calling,  
 (The frost lies heavy on rock and tree !)  
 Out of the grey sky snow is falling,  
 (Oh, but the earth is white to see !)  
 Tho' the spaces of dusk thy heart is calling :  
 " Hither, my love, come home to me !  
 Tho' the frost lie heavy on rock and tree  
 A fire of coals on my hearth is lighted ;  
 (Oh, its flame burns clear for thee and me !)  
 Tho' the outer earth with snow be whited  
 In the house of my heart there is mirth and glee,  
 So hither, my love, come home to me !"

ROBERT MACDOUGALL.

Western Reserve University  
 Cleveland, Ohio.

## WINTER IN NORTHUMBERLAND STRAIT.

No ripply water laughs to-day  
 About our prow ; no sunny view  
 Of lily sail bends far away,—  
 A blossom on the blue.

An icy fleet, moor'd all around,  
 Throngs the dark sea : the anxious eye  
 Looks from the water's wintry bound  
 Up to the wintry sky.

But, like a thing of power and will—  
 A creature resolute and strong—  
 Our iron-mail'd steamer still  
 Urges her way along.

The icy shelves are crush'd aside ;  
 In vain their clust'ring forces close,  
 While onward thro' the inky tide  
 Indomitably she goes.

Best emblem of a steadfast soul—  
 That, while the hind'ring legions strive,  
 Pushest a pathway to thy goal,—  
 Thou wilt at last arrive !

A harbor spreads its sheltering arms  
 Where, when the strife and storm are o'er,  
 The voyagers rest from their alarms,  
 Safe sheltered by the shore.

The breath of God is in the sail,  
 Love's light yon tossing berg hath past ;  
 Let not our hope or courage fail,—  
 We shall be home, at last !

PASTOR FELIX.

Hampden Corner, Maine, Jan., 1898.

## THE BIBLE AND EVOLUTION.

By REV. PROF. SCRINGER, D.D.

## III.—ORIGIN OF SIN.

The origin of evil in the universe is one of the unsolved problems of philosophy and of theology. Numberless theories have been advanced to account for it, only to be rejected by the sober second thought of mankind. The Evolutionists among the rest have had their try at it, and there are not a few who claim that at last they have touched the core of the whole matter by showing that it is a necessary concomitant of the struggle for existence by which alone progress is possible in building up a world of life, and that the suffering of the individual finds its justification in the ultimate good of the race or of higher races. Evil is therefore only blessing in disguise, the true nature of which can be discerned only by taking long views of its ultimate outcome in the world.

To the religious thinker, naturally jealous for the character of God as a beneficent ruler having at heart the good of all his creatures, this view is certainly not free from difficulty. It does seem a little hard to think of Him as constituting a world on such a basis that progress should be possible only by the suffering of myriads of creatures whom He has brought into being, and we desiderate something further to justify that.

If the only evil in the world, however, were of the kind that is known as physical, we might make shift with this theory, as being at least as good as any other that can be suggested. Indeed, it falls into line with the Biblical doctrine that the trials and afflictions which befall men are meant for the discipline of character and are fitted to be of benefit to those who receive them with the right disposition. But the real difficulty arises when we take into account the existence of moral evil, or sin, to explain how it can be reconciled with the character of God

who is holy, if He is anything, and must be assumed to deplore both it and its consequences more deeply than we do ourselves. Even supposing it true that in some way the ultimate result will be to the advantage of those who escape from its power, and that they attain to a virtue otherwise impossible, in the meantime it is the cause of untold miseries and, inasmuch as man is immortal, must involve endless punishment for those who fail, as many undoubtedly do. The price seems too tremendous and awful for us to contemplate it as an intentional part of any scheme of the world planned by a merciful and loving God.

It would relieve us to some extent of this particular difficulty to adopt a dualistic view as to the world, and suppose the existence of a personal Devil, antagonistic to God, who is practically independent of him in origin and activity. But that supposition raises more difficulties than it settles, and must be discarded. The devil himself must be simply part of the problem of evil and can in no wise be the explanation of it. The only relief from the pressure of the problem must come from the consideration that man is a free agent, that those who are sinful are therefore sinful by their own choice, and that if they finally fail the fault is wholly their own. It is not sin that is necessary for the attainment of the highest virtue, but only the possibility of sin, or in other words, moral freedom, and the presence of temptation. Attainment is ever the result of successful resistance, and it is only for the appointment of the conditions which call for resistance and make success possible, though not certain, that the loving Father of all can be held justly responsible in his government of the universe. Whatever view as to divine foreordination we may hold, it must be always under this reservation, as expressed by the Westminster Confession, that "neither is God the author of sin, nor is violence offered to the will of the creatures."

If this be sound theology, it is equally consistent with the theory of evolution. It is perfectly true that according to that theory the advance in physical structure from the lowest form

to the highest has been necessarily accompanied by the disappearance of the unfit, and that their unfitness arose from causes practically beyond their control. They could survive only by conforming to the conditions of their environment, and yet they had almost no power to conform, but were dependent upon the accident of birth in possession of the necessary organs. Their destruction sooner or later was inevitable. But it does not follow that exactly the same law holds in the moral sphere. Here by the very nature of the case the power of conformity to the laws of virtue is involved in freedom of will, and there was no absolute necessity why any single human being should ever have perished.

From this brief discussion of the existence of sin, let us now turn to the question of the introduction of sin into our world. It is very commonly assumed that in the story of the Fall we have a point on which the Bible and the Evolution theory are irreconcilably hostile to each other. It certainly seems on the face of it as if they were wide apart.

The theory of Evolution supposes that when man first appeared on the earth it was as the immediate product of some lower form of animal life possessing at most the faintest hint of a capacity for distinguishing between things that should be done and things that should not be done, such as we sometimes see in the more intelligent among horses or dogs, but with no real moral character. Man could have had at the outset no real moral character either, but only a much higher capacity for moral distinctions than his predecessors. He was what may be called a candidate for morality, being in that respect greatly similar to every child that comes into the world to-day. Conscience was already there potentially, but it had not come to birth. It needed to be developed by some test which should raise the question of right and wrong, which would involve a definite choice between inclination on the one hand and obligation to some higher authority on the other. Science, of course, has no independent information as to what the actual test was, but it sees no objection whatever to that

given in the Bible as to eating the fruit of the forbidden tree. Something like that it must have been, for it is by some similar experience that every child to-day awakens to the consciousness of moral distinctions. Commonly it is by some clashing between inclination and a command of its mother. It was not necessary for man to disobey in order that conscience should be awakened to activity. It would have been evoked with equal clearness and of course far more happily for himself if he had obeyed. But as a matter of fact, having the power of choice, he disobeyed, and thus what was meant for the birth of conscience became at the same time the birth of sin into our world, with all the consequences, immediate and remote, that have depended therefrom.

The Bible account is supposed to differ from this mainly in the account which it gives of man's original condition before he comes to his probation. That is commonly represented by theologians as being not only a condition of innocence or freedom from positive sin, but also a condition of matured intelligence, of clear, enlightened conscience, and even of character positively righteous. For the most part they regard that primitive period as the real golden age of man, and his state as one unspeakably superior to anything that he has known since. It did not continue long, for his testing time soon came, and by his perverse choice he forfeited not only his possibilities but his actual possessions in the way of character. The facts as to the testing may be the same according to both views, but the change which it brought takes on a very different complexion according to what we suppose his previous condition to have been. The contrast is often sharply put by saying that according to the theologians the fall was a fall downward; according to the Evolutionists the fall was a fall upward.

A moment's examination, however, will suffice to make it clear that this sharp contrast between the two is based on an exaggeration of one side and perhaps of both sides, which are really not so wide asunder after all. It is certainly an exaggeration to say that the early moral probation of man by



which, according to the evolutionary view, conscience was awakened was a fall upward. In a sense that would be true, as it led him into the apprehension of moral distinctions of which he was previously ignorant. But it was also a fall downward, for as between the two paths by which he might have reached that knowledge he took the descending one, when he might just as well have taken the other and ascending one of obedience. He threw away his higher possibilities and made of himself an infinitely lower being than he might have been had he taken the other choice. Like the reckless youth of to-day who plunges into vice in order to see life, as he puts it, he gained a knowledge to which he was before a stranger, but it was at the awful price of his own moral degradation. Even the Evolutionist who has any sense of moral value cannot look complacently on that early experience as a thing to be regarded calmly, for it was the degradation of a being meant for much higher things. To him it was as truly a fall as to the theologian.

Then as to man's original condition before the fall, is it so certain that the theological view which has mainly prevailed is the Bible view of the matter at all? On this point our Church standards are very much more reserved and cautious than the theologians, and I am bound to say that a fresh inquiry into the subject has made me feel that a great deal has been read into the language of Scripture by the latter which has no foundation except in their own imagination, or is based only on a crass pragmatical interpretation of the Genesis narrative worthy only of the schoolmen and now rapidly becoming obsolete. It is true that man is represented as being created in the image and likeness of God, but there is nothing in the context to show that this involves anything more than the capacities or possibilities of his nature to become like God in intellectual and moral characteristics. Every newly-born child bears the image of its father in that sense, and no one ever dreams of understanding it in any other. Man was entrusted with dominion over the other creatures, but that does

not naturally mean anything more than that he was given those faculties or capacities which would enable him to assert and acquire that dominion as he found needful for his own ends. He is represented as naming the animals that pass before him, but it is simply incredible that that can be intended to mean, as some assert, that he had a full scientific knowledge of all the genera and species of life on the earth, or even that he had from the outset an unlimited vocabulary to bestow upon them whereby they should afterwards be distinguished. It was sufficient that he should have been able in course of time to invent names for the few that crossed his path or which he had occasion to need. With reference to the image of God, we frequently find theological writers seeking to establish their position by quoting Col. iii. 10 and Eph. iv. 24 as showing this image to consist in "Knowledge," "righteousness, and true holiness." But they entirely overlook the fact that these passages relate, not to the first man in his original state, but to the new man created in Christ Jesus in contrast to the first man, who had none of them in actual possession, but only in potentiality. Fairly interpreted there is no necessary antagonism between the Bible statements and the evolution view.

It will perhaps seem to some that this modification in the old view as to man's original condition as it is presented, for instance, in such a work as Boston's "Fourfold State," endangers the foundations of the evangelical theology. If that were the case, we might well hesitate to accept it, for that evangelical theology is too firmly based in Bible teaching and in Christian experience to be set aside by the requirements of any apologetic reconciliation of Christianity with science. But it really makes no change that is vital to that theology at all. The gospel is meant to meet the undeniable fact of sin as we actually find it in the world, and it does not make a particle of difference whether the first man, from whom has come our sinful bias, fell from a previous state of maturity or from one of infancy.

The consequences to us are the same in either case. According to the former supposition the change would certainly be more dramatic and startling ; according to the latter, it would be more in accordance with the analogy of the experience of all his descendants. And if it be said that the change ceases to be in any real sense a fall, the answer must be that this term is purely a theological one, never found anywhere in Scripture, and that as with every other theological term, our aim should be to define it in accord with the facts, and not to invent facts for the purpose of justifying the term.



## WORDSWORTH'S POETRY.

By PROFESSOR WM. CROCKET, M.A., *Morria College, Quebec.*

No true poet, with perhaps the exception of Keats, has ever been subjected to such severe criticism or has had to contend against such an amount of prejudiced opposition as Wordsworth. The critic, the philosopher, and even the poet took sides against him. The general public, of course, echoed the views of their literary sentinels, and denounced with all the assurance of ignorance the poetry which they had never read and probably would not have understood even if they had. The poet had a message very different from that to which several generations had been listening. Had he immediately succeeded Shakespeare or Milton, that message would have met with a different reception.

The characteristic literature of the eighteenth century both in fiction and poetry, was a radical departure from the spirit that animated the best literature of the preceding century and a-half. There was not only wanting in it a positive character of good, but it was pervaded with positive elements of evil. It had vigour and robustness of thought, grace and finish of style, but little that was elevating, even when free from the taint of grossness. It failed to represent life as a whole. Nowhere do we meet with life struggling with difficulties, beset by temptations, and victorious by principle, but mainly with fashionable comedy, or the mere tragedy of the lower passions. The *Clarissas* and *Belindas* pass through life without a serious thought of its purpose, and even the good-natured *Sir Roger de Coverly* is nothing higher than a gay-hearted country gentleman. If heroism was held up before youth it was the heroism of the conquering hero on the field of carnage. Thus the old heritage of English poetry passed away, other ideas permeated it, other garments clothed it than those of Milton and Shakespeare. When Wordsworth appeared and beheld the seeds of decay in the glittering form, he felt that his task was

to uproot this artificial growth and bring poetry back to simplicity and truth. He knew he had to demolish the popular idols of the day, and create the taste by which he himself was to be judged. He sent forth his first message. The assault commenced. The poems were denounced and held up as sins of mighty magnitude and an outrage upon art. Wordsworth could not be swerved from the task he had assigned to himself, nor from the principles he had thought out. He lived to witness the triumph of his views and to see himself regarded as a great and an original poet whose works must form a part of literary history and literary education.

The "Lyrical Ballads," as his first published work was called, no doubt contained poems that could not but be regarded as failures both in matter and style : yet there are poems as perfect as anything which he produced in his maturest years. "We are Seven" is a poem which touches the heart of every parent, and which every child loves to read. Its first stanza.

A simple child  
That lightly draws its breath  
And feels its life in every limb  
What should it know of death ?

is the keynote to its philosophy, and the dialogue which follows it is as true an exposition of the nature of child mind as has yet been given to the world. Scarcely less effective in its purpose is that other poem, "Anecdote for Fathers," intended to show how the practice of lying may be unconsciously taught by parents. With singular insight into child nature and with marvellous skill the poet conducts the "intermitted talk" between the father and his boy of five years old, until the parent, the scales now fallen from his eyes, exclaims :

O dearest, dearest boy ! my heart  
For better lore would seldom yearn  
Could I but teach the hundredth part  
Of what from thee I learn.

"Expostulation and Reply" and "The Tables Turned"

showed that a new seer had arisen, one who saw "into the life of things," one who saw :

That there are Powers (in Nature)  
Which of themselves our minds impress

and

May teach us more of man  
Of moral evil and of good  
Than all the sages can.

Of these two last-named poems, his biographer Myers says :  
" It is hardly too much to say that if they were all that had remained from Wordsworth's hand, they would have spoken to the comprehending of a new individuality as distinct and unmistakable in its way as that which Sappho has left engraven on the world forever." The " Lines written above Tintern Abbey," in the same volume, is a poem in Wordsworth's highest strain, and sets forth his faith and doctrine with respect to the unconscious influence produced by the forms of Nature. To these influences Wordsworth ascribed the highest of his poetic moods—that mood in which the soul transcends the world of sense and beholds the mysterious harmony of the universe :

Nor less I trust  
To them I may have owed another gift  
Of aspect more sublime : that blessed mood  
In which the burthen of the mystery,  
In which the heavy and the weary weight  
Of all this unintelligible world  
Is lightened, etc., etc.

" This unintelligible world," with its " heavy and its weary weight," is to the poet in this ideal and lofty mood the work of a *spirit working harmoniously through all things, and making all things work together for good ;* and thus freed from the bonds of sense, he " sees into the life of things, and enjoys a quiet undisturbed by doubt."

These are some of the poems which the public taste of the day was not prepared to receive. They were regarded as

failures in matter of style, and offending in this point they offended in all. Wordsworth's hidden and remote meaning was also a barrier to their reception. The reader had often to pause and ponder over the thought not only underlying the expression, but running through the poem. The public had been accustomed to have their curiosity kept on the stretch, and their fancy amused without the trouble of thinking. This was just what Wordsworth could not do, nor would he do if he could. He had a far higher idea of his mission. His mission was to educate, not to amuse :

'Tis my delight  
To pipe a simple song for thinking hearts.

He wished to impart something of that poetic insight which he himself possessed.

In common things that round us lie  
Some random truths he can impart—  
The harvest of a quiet eye  
That broods and sleeps on his own heart.

In early youth he became conscious, he tells us, of the infinite variety of natural appearances, which had been unnoticed by the poets of any age or country, and made a resolution to supply in some measure the deficiency. His subsequent works testify how steadily and successfully he pursued his purpose.

Several poets immediately preceding the generation of Wordsworth, as Thompson, Cowper and Burns, had each in his own way and for his own purpose directed attention to Nature, but merely to its aspects or phenomena. It was left to Wordsworth's penetrating power to give these spiritual significance. To him there was more in Nature than meets the eye—there was a relation between the natural and spiritual world. There was some hidden power or agency underlying all and working through these phenomena. So intense was his poetic feeling of life and spirit in Nature, that he gives it such utterance :

Great God ! I'd rather be  
 A pagan suckled in a creed outworn,  
 So might I standing on this pleasant lea  
 Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn ;  
 Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea  
 Or hear old Triton blow his wreathed horn.

He would rather believe in the mythological Proteus—in all the deities with which our primitive races peopled earth, and sea, and sky, in reverence for Nature's powers—than contemplate her phenomena apart from a spiritual presence. In the course of time this original conception became anthropomorphic, and the "spiritual presences" fled. Wordsworth revived the primitive creed, but gave it a higher and holier complexion. He had glimpses of that mysterious relation between Nature and man's inner being, which, though often felt and in some vague way often uttered, he was the first to announce in clearer tone and more enduring form. Thus he ushers in his new gospel :

Wisdom and spirit of the universe  
 Thou soul that art the eternity of thought  
 And giv'st to form and images a breath  
 And everlasting motion ; not in vain  
 By day or starlight thus from my first dawn  
 Of childhood didst thou intertwine for me  
 The passions that build up our human soul ;  
 Not with the mean and vulgar works of man,  
 But with high objects with enduring things—  
 With life and Nature—purifying thus  
 The elements of feeling and of thought  
 And sanctifying by such discipline  
 Both pain and fear until we recognize  
 A grandeur in the beatings of the heart.

Here the poet is conscious of a spiritual presence—a presence not like "the oracles that now are dumb," but a presence that elevates and ennobles all his moral being. This presence is the "Wisdom and Spirit of the universe"—the intelligence, the *nous*—the "Eternity of Thought," which originates and directs all things. It is a presence "not far from any one



of us." It is in the light of setting suns in the round ocean, and the living air, and "gives to forms and images a breath and everlasting motion." It lays its touch upon the heart of man, too, for "it intertwines for us the passions that build up our human soul." And thus we share in its workings and are drawn into communion with it, and "pain and grief are sanctified for us," and so we rise in the scale of being and "recognize a grandeur in the beatings of the heart." In short, the outer world was to Wordsworth only the symbol of something that is real and substantial—the manifestation of eternal ideas of the "Eternity of Thought." This special characteristic abounds in all his poems dealing with Nature.

To me the meanest flower that blows can give  
Thoughts that lie too deep for tears.

From this conception of the relation between Nature and man—the contemplation of Nature leading him to "see into the life of things"—Wordsworth's position in the "Ode on Immortality" seems not inconsistent. From the acuteness of the senses in our earliest years, and the vividness of the emotions and from the close connection between these emotions and external nature which appears to the child, "apparelled in celestial light," the poet infers the pre-existence of the soul and the hope of immortality :

The soul that rises with us, our life's Star  
Hath had elsewhere its setting,  
And cometh from afar ;  
Not in entire forgetfulness,  
And not in utter nakedness,  
But trailing clouds of glory do we come  
From God who is our home.

Here the poet represents the soul with the gleam of the sanctuary upon it, as a wanderer from afar tabernacling in "houses of clay," until its return to its divine mansion, where it set before to rise with us.

All things on earth tend to make us forget, our former state:

The homely nurse doth all she can  
To make her foster-child, her inmate-man,  
Forget the glories he hath known,  
And that imperial palace whence he came.

At length the glory and the freshness die away

But yet I know where'er I go,  
That there hath passed away a glory from the earth.

And although the youth

By the vision splendid  
Is on his way attended ;  
The man perceives it die away  
And fade into the light of common day.

But all is not lost. There still remains some recollections of the "celestial light," some feeling which comes back upon us in our highest moods and reminds us of our heavenly origin :

O joy that in our embers  
Is something that doth live,  
That Nature yet remembers  
What was so fugitive !

Which are :

Those first affections  
Those shadowy recollections  
Which, be they what they may,  
Are yet the fountain light of all our day.

And

Our souls have sight of that immortal sea  
Which brought us hither ;  
Can in a moment travel thither,—  
And see the children sport upon the shore,  
And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

Therefore

Though nothing can bring back the hour  
Of splendour in the grass, of glory in the flower.

we can still rejoice in Nature, for the loss is more than compensated by the human sympathies of riper years through which we see new and nobler meanings

In the faith that looks through death.

Such is Wordsworth's most characteristic message ; but he does not urge its acceptance. He says himself in a note prefixed to the poem, that although he has regarded the vividness and splendour which invest objects of sight in childhood as presumptive evidence of a prior state of existence, he does not mean to inculcate such a belief. It is far too shadowy a notion to be recommended to faith, as more than an element in our instincts of immortality. "But," he continues, "though the idea is not advanced in revelation, there is nothing there to contradict it, and the fall of man presents an analogy in its favour."

Another characteristic of Wordsworth's teaching is his constant assertion of the dignity of virtue, of simplicity, of independence wherever found, and quite apart from all external surroundings.

In the poem "Resolution and Independence" the interest turns upon the simple, steady resolution of an old leech-gatherer who pursues his trade in extreme old age about the lonely moors, and the strength, firmness and perseverance which the sight of the old man brought to the poet, who represents his own poetic nature as inclined in a moment to turn from hope to despondency. But he took courage when he saw such a man rise above his surroundings, sad and desolate as they were, and at the close of the poem thus expresses himself :

I could have laughed myself to scorn to find  
In that decrepit man so firm a mind,  
God, said I, be my help and stay secure :  
I'll think of the Leech-gatherer in the lonely moor.

The whole of this poem embodies with singular beauty and

power Wordsworth's higher strains of melodious composition as well as his characteristic philosophy.

Again he invariably holds up before us the doctrine that Nature rejoices with the glad and brings comfort to the sorrowful, and puts on her sad attire for wrongs to man or beast. In the poem "Hart-Leap-Well," the story turns upon the death of a stag which had been unmercifully pursued. The place ceased to show Nature's charms afterwards: "The trees were grey with neither arms nor head." "Nature leaves these objects to a slow decay." Hence the lesson:

Never to blend our pleasure or our pride  
With sorrow of the meanest thing that feels.

And in that grand classic poem "Laodomia," the poet strikingly brings out his dominating thought in the closing stanza:

Yet tears to human suffering are due  
And mortal hopes defeated and o'erthrown,  
Are mourned by man, and 'not by man alone,  
As fondly he believes. Upon the side  
Of Hellespont (such faith was entertained)  
A kind of spiry trees for ages grew  
From out the tomb of him for whom she died.  
And ever when such stature they had gained,  
That Ilium's walls were subject to their view,  
The trees' tall summits withered at the sight  
A constant interchange of growth and blight.

"The White Doe of Rylston" is a poem in which the imagination has perhaps never taken loftier flight. Emily, the heroine of the story, has been called upon to undergo intense and terrible sufferings, but the poet brings her out of these purified and elevated. The White Doe is the embodiment of that which is invisible—the sanctity of Emily's chastened soul. So entirely has the poet's imagination transmuted the Doe, that it is no longer a thing of the flesh, but has become a creature of the mind and taken to itself the permanence of an ideal existence. The poet not only represents Nature as sympathis-

ing with Emily, but makes the poem the means of unfolding to us the grand purposes of the Divine mind in relation to human suffering :

Distress and desolation spread  
Through human hearts and pleasure dead—  
Dead—but to rise again on earth  
A second and yet nobler birth  
Dire overthrow and yet how high  
The re-ascent in sanctity.

The poem has no definite ending, but passes off, as it were, into the illimitable, carrying our thoughts with it up to calm heights of eternal sunshine.

I have said nothing of "The Excursion," nor in a short article upon Wordsworth's characteristics is there much need. It embodies the same principles as have been referred to. Wordsworth has himself informed us that it was after the composition of "The Prelude" that the idea of this still greater work occurred to him. He concluded to compose a philosophical poem containing views of man, nature and society, to be called "The Recluse." The Recluse was probably the personage introduced in "The Excursion" as the Solitary—a man driven into the despair of bereavement by the death of his wife and children, roused again into feverish excitement by the breaking out of the French Revolution, led to wild excesses during its progress, and finally hunted back by the deeper despair caused by its bloody and terrible failure into a lonely nook among the mountains, where a misanthrope and sceptic, disbelieving God and doubting man, he consumed the weary days in absolute loneliness. The subject of "The Excursion" is the contrast between this lonely embittered and miserable man and the impersonation of Christian philosophy, cheerfulness and wisdom, called the Wanderer. No doubt the poet's purpose was to reconcile the Solitary to the universe and bring him back to God and man. This, however, he never completed. Throughout this poem every page breathes the atmosphere of

the mountains at once invigorating and subduing. No passion, no excitement is there, and the poet who reveals to us the solemn grandeur of his hills sheds over our hearts their calm and repose.

To those who study intelligently Wordsworth he will create in them a sympathy with loftiness of character and purity of soul. In these days of hurry and high pressure man's nature is apt to become hardened and his finer feelings obliterated, and we need to study such a man as Wordsworth to prevent or tone down our grossness. He presents to us life in its complete conception of a moral reality, struggling with difficulties and beset by temptations, but victorious by principle. In our pleasant thoughts he tones us down by sad thoughts, but in our sorrow he gives us joy and in our despondency, hope. He is ever true to the highest instincts of humanity—seeking its worthiest inspiration and most touching pictures in the common life we all live—in the darkness and the light to be found in all human hearts, in the joys and griefs, the struggles and heroisms that are everywhere around us. His pictures, if we study them, come home to us—moving us with a holier tenderness for suffering, a higher admiration of those simple virtues of gentleness and love and affection which more than all heroic deeds beautify and ennoble life. John Stuart Mill, a philosopher of a very different school from Wordsworth, says, in his *Autobiography*: "What made Wordsworth's poems a medicine for my state of mind was that they expressed not mere outward beauty, but states of feeling and of thought coloured by feeling under the excitement of beauty. They seemed to be the very culture of the feelings which I was in quest of. In them I seemed to draw from a source of inward joy, or sympathetic and imaginative pleasure, which could be shared in by all human beings which had no connection with struggle or imperfection, but would be made richer by every improvement in the physical or social condition of mankind. From them I seemed to learn what would

be the perennial sources of happiness, when all the greater evils of life shall have been removed. And I felt myself at once better and happier as I came under their influence." Besides the high moral culture which a study of his poems will secure, there is not perhaps a human writer better fitted to awaken in his reader a more kindly spirit inciting to all that is noble and self-sacrificing, and rejoicing in all that is tender and true and beautiful. No safer literature can youth read than that with which Wordsworth has blessed the world. If they study him they will find him like one of his own mountains, in whose shadow they may sit and whose heights they may scale, sure that they will always return strengthened in mind and purified in heart.



## College Note-Book.

### STUDENT LIFE.

We are informed that the gentlemen of the graduating class discussed at their last meeting the custom of "writing up" the individuals of the class in this department of the "Journal." It appears that some of them feared they would be disappointed in that they would not be honoured as were their predecessors. Gentlemen, you shall not be disappointed. To overlook so illustrious a body of men would indeed be unpardonable. So, here goes !

Beaton, L.—Bruidhne an duine sò a' Ghailig gu ficanta. A square-jawed, canny, typical Gael. It is well for one to be sure of the ground before trying to play a trick on this man. Came here from Auburn Seminary to complete his training in Divinity, thereby showing his good sense. The one Benedict in this year's class.

Coburn, D. N.—A lean, athletic, long-haired Eastern Townships man. The youngest member of the class, and somewhat heterodox on certain points of doctrine. His voice, especially on a cold and gloomy morning, reminds one of fog-signalling on the high seas. Is a good student, a graduate of McGill, and backs up college societies well. As Treasurer of the "Journal," he fills an arduous position with efficiency.

Curdy, E.—A versatile, well-informed son of the race of William Tell, with the cast of features called "spirituel." His linguistic attainments are such as any man might well be proud of. A thoroughly capable French editor of the "Journal."

Elmhurst, J. R.—An Ontario man, and, like most men from the premier province, has a fairly good opinion of his own gifts. A would-be ladies' man. Mr. Elmhurst took his preparatory course in Knox, and did First Year theology at Win-



nipeg. He has done faithful and efficient work in the Mission field.

Genova, V.—An Italian with the reserve of a Saxon. Complexion, eyes, nose, mouth, hair proclaim a child of the sunny south. Speaks Italian and French with fluency and has a fair command of English. A good student.

Jamieson, S. D.—Another Eastern Townships man, but of a different type from Coburn. Takes great interest in the mission work of the church, still his forte lies in the singing of long metre psalms. Did excellent service as precentor in the Dining Hall. We are told he preaches long, doctrinal sermons. Amend thy ways, Jamie!

Keith, N. D.—Valedictorian of his year, President of the Literary Society, representative in Knox College Debate, past secretary McGill Y.M.C.A., etc., etc. Graduated at the University with honours in Semitic Languages, and is an ideal college man. Has a weakness for the college cuisine. A good man to have on your side in a scrap or a basket-ball game.

Leith, M. J.—A man who has met with much success in the mission field. Would make an excellent chaplain for one of our new hospitals. A regular tartar in a free-and-easy *mêlée*. Made a good secretary for the Missionary Society last session.

The Twenty-ninth Annual Report of the Students' Missionary Society reflects credit upon the officers of the Society. It should be circulated freely both in those congregations which have helped our work in the past and in others which may reasonably be expected to take an interest in our efforts.

The Mistletoe was intertwined with Orange Blossoms at Fitzroy Harbor, Ont., on Christmas Day, for on that day our popular fellow-student, Mr. Archibald Gardner Cameron, was married at the residence of the bride's parents by the Rev. A. MacGregor, B.A., to Elizabeth Annie, only daughter of David MacLaren, Esq. Mr. and Mrs. Cameron have the very best wishes of all here for a long and happy life.

The very acme of sarcasm was touched the other day when

somebody sent a moustache cup as a Christmas present to a Fourth Year Arts man who is laboriously cultivating a most miserable specimen of upper-lip adornment.

We have reason to be pleased with the result of the Inter-collegiate Debate which was held in the Convocation Hall of the Diocesan College on January 14th. The selection of Mr. J. Tudor Scrimger, B.A., as our representative was thoroughly justified by the result, and the contribution of Mr. N. V. McLeod to the programme was choice in every way. What's the matter with the Presbyterian College ?

Freshman.—“Say, Thom, won't you buy this coat of mine?”

Thom (holding up coat).—“What ! I wouldn't be seen dead in it.”

Mr. George Yule has left college, under medical advice, and is now in charge of the work at Gainsborough, Manitoba. The Aberdeen man made lots of friends during his brief sojourn here.

At the last regular meeting of the Third Year—it numbers fifteen—Mr. N. D. Keith, B.A., was elected valedictorian by acclamation.

It is sad to think to what an ignoble use places, which once were revered by reason of their associations, may be put. No. 49, North Flat, once the abode of great men and good, has, we are sorry to say, deteriorated to such an extent as to become an abbatoir.

We hope the Basket-Ball people are not losing heart. “It's a long road that has no turning.”

Questions of the day (and night) :

- (1) Do you skate ?
- (2) What do you think about the Klondyke ?
- (3) Who is ——'s girl ?
- (4) What course is Mr. —— taking ?

Pepper and Cress :

G.T.—“ I'll get that cork out if I have to push it in.”

F.J.A.—“ The good I do I would not.”

S.Mc.—“ Bosh !”

A.A.—“ Who's to blame ?”

McInnis.—“ Where did the water come from ?”

M.J.L.—“ Who put that address on my trunk ?”

Greig.—“ You might have played the trick on somebody else.”

K.McL.—“ The trick is all right, but I don't think it shows a Christian spirit.”

J. G. S.

### REPORTER'S FOLIO.

The Intercollegiate debate between the Congregational and Presbyterian Colleges on the one hand, and the Wesleyan and Diocesan on the other, was held on the evening of the 14th, in the new Assembly Hall of the Diocesan College.

The public interest in the subject was shown by the large and thoroughly appreciative audience which came to encourage the speakers by their presence. The judges for the evening were Ven. Archdeacon Mills, D.D., Dean Walton, B.A., LL.B., and Prof. C. Colby, Ph.D. Prof. Charles Moyses, of McGill University, occupied the chair, and discharged the duties of the position in a way that was beyond criticism. In his opening remarks, he expressed his appreciation of the honor conferred upon him in representing McGill on such an occasion as a debate between the Theological Colleges affiliated with the University ; and although the visitors had come to see a battle, yet, they were reminded, the combatants considered themselves as brethren. (Applause.) The chairman then introduced the programme by calling upon Mr. Percy Moore, of the Diocesan College, to favor the audience with a solo, in which he upheld his reputation in an able manner. Following him, Mr. Masson, of the Wesleyan College gave an interesting reading.

Then the chief feature of the programme was reached when Mr. Geo. Bates, of the Wesleyan College, was asked to open the debate. The subject was : "Resolved, that hereditary influences are more potent in a man's life than physical environment." Mr. Bates is an agreeable speaker, and dealt with the subject-proper in a clear and forcible style, and seemed to feel his responsibility in handling so important a subject. He wished to impress upon the audience the importance of the question under debate ; he said that it ought to be discussed from a practical rather than a scientific standpoint, since the issues involved were not only physical, but also mental and moral.

He then proceeded to take up the subject more particularly. What is physical environment ? The answer was : Anything which affects man through any one of the five physical senses ; hence a man's home, his social and business relations were truly physical environments ; for, on account of these, a man's tendencies are directed along certain lines. Yet do they exert over him as strong an influence as they would if these tendencies were inherited ? No ; for circumstances act upon the real man just as the wind does upon the waters of a deep river—it affects the surface only, and makes it seem, as the case may be, as if the current was reversed, while underneath, the great mass of water makes steady and unmistakable progress ; so circumstances affect, so to speak, the surface of man's nature, but beneath, with no retreating ebb, is the mighty tide of his inherited tendencies. His innate qualities of heart and mind will determine what circumstances will do for a man. In closing, the speaker referred to Sir Wm. Turner's opinion that we inherit not only habits but principles as well, which are only developed by environment.

The cause of the negative was then taken up by Mr. J. T. Scrimger, B.A., of the Presbyterian College. This speaker was full of his subject to overflowing, violating once or twice the rules of precision, in his eagerness to make points.

He began by defining physical environment as those cir-

circumstances which influenced a man from without. Thus the son of a Professor or other man of learning would imbibe the spirit of education so constantly shown in his father's home, and would have a taste for the same pursuits as his father, being moulded to them by his environment. Genius is not inherited—as witness the case of Cromwell—the circumstances made the man.

As an example of the terrible effects of environment, Mr. Scrimger said that a man who had been cast into a cell—with no other environment than four walls and his daily food—would become a raving maniac.

The speaker mentioned other environments which had a potent influence on man, such as wealth, making some sordid and warped in their natures, while others look upon their wealth as a possible power for good, and were much benefited in the right use of it. He said that temperature and climate, moreover, had a decided effect upon man, acting indirectly upon his moral and intellectual natures through his body. Further, it was a well-known fact that wild, uncivilized tribes, settling down among a refined and cultured people, soon lost their roughness and uncouthness, and became like the people among whom they settled. Why? Because of their environment; every event left its stamp on a man.

Mr. Scrimger was followed by Mr. T. B. Holland, of the Diocesan College, whose arguments were very clear and logical, but perhaps lacked force in utterance. He began his arguments by pointing out the importance of the question, which, he said, concerned posterity. He admitted the potency of physical environment, but took objection to the view of the negative, that climate, temperature, etc., made the man. A man, great by nature, rises above adverse circumstances. It was absurd to say that civilization, for example, would make wheat grow or raise animals; Nature is not alike in any two species, therefore innate life in each is necessary to produce like kind.

Natural ability, Mr. Holland contended, was proven by history to be the great prime source of strength in the lives of

heroes, and not mere training. A small child, abandoned on the streets of Paris, was found and cared for by a poor citizen ; and although surrounded by adverse circumstances, this child who appeared so unpromising through time became a member of the French Academy.

Natural ability is composed of three elements : High intellectual power, eagerness to work, and administrative ability. With this equipment, a man would make his way even in spite of environment.

Time was called as the speaker proceeded to draw an inference from the fact that nephews, when adopted into a family, and receiving the same care as the sons of the family, were less prominent than they. Great men are the posterity of great men.

Mr. Munroe, of the Congregational College, was next called upon to sustain the side of the negative. He treated the subject in a humorous and yet earnest strain throughout, spending considerable time in answering the arguments of the previous speaker.

Children born, he said, in the West Indies, of the same parents and nourished in the same way as children born in Canada, were sickly, whereas the latter were robust—environment made the difference.

Under the simile of the increased value of a bar of iron, according to the purpose of the article made of it, he attempted to show that environment made the crude intelligence of the boy into the matured and increased powers of the man. Books, too, he said, exerted a powerful influence on a man—perhaps as powerful as any of the great forces that go to wield the tendencies of man ; but a still greater influence was University education—all of which he claimed were physical environments.

Mr. Munroe closed his argument with a volley of briefly-stated facts, and the leader of the affirmative was given the opportunity to reply. Mr. Bates, besides summing up the arguments of himself and colleague, refuted many of the arguments

of the previous speaker. Books and education and like influences were not physical environment, because they influenced a man through his intellect. The previous speaker had claimed that the effects of physical environment were held by heredity ; these effects, then, said Mr. Bates, being held by heredity, would be transmitted to posterity and would thus prove a more potent force in a man's life than environment.

The debate was thus brought to a close. After a solo by Mr. N. V. McLeod (Presbyterian), in which he fully sustained the reputation of the College, the Ven. Archdeacon Mills, D.D., was asked to give the decision of the judges.

The negative won the contest.

After a vote of thanks to the judges, and a few appropriate remarks by the President of the Diocesan Lit. Society, the National Anthem was sung, and the assembly dispersed.

G. W. T.

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## OUR GRADUATES.

At a special meeting of the Montreal Presbytery held on Jan. 18th., Rev. W. T. Morrison, of Ste. Therese, decided to accept the call from Norwood. His induction into the new charge is arranged for Tuesday evening, Feb. 1st.

A letter from Rev. A. S. Grant, B.D., written from Vancouver, tells us that he was that far on his way to the Klondyke. Mr. Grant goes forward full of courage and hopefulness, since he knows assuredly that he is in line with His Master's call. He does not lose sight of the fact that the work is both difficult and dangerous ; yet he has a strong faith in the Mighty God of Jacob.

The Presbytery of Quebec met in Sawyerville on Jan. 11th for the purpose of ordaining and inducting Mr. F. W. Gilmour, a graduate of '97, who had accepted the call tendered to him by that congregation.

Mr. Gilmour is a clear thinker and a ready speaker, and we will look for good results from his labours in that interesting field.

Mr. Major H. MacIntosh, B.A. after graduating last spring, supplied the congregation of Rossland, B.C., for three months. At the close of his engagement there he went on to the coast. In December last he received a hearty and unanimous call from West End and Sapperton congregation, New Westminster, B.C. Having accepted the Call, he was ordained and inducted on Dec. 28th.

From friends in New Westminster we learn that Mr. MacIntosh's genial and sterling qualities have already made him a favourite there.

We wish him every success.

The Pastoral charge of Hallville and Reid's Mills, of which Rev. J. H. Higgins, B.A.—class of '88—is minister, held a very successful entertainment during the holidays. It was a success along every line. The evening was favorable, the attendance large, the programme good and the financial results satisfactory.

Mr. Higgins is known wherever he has preached as an able expounder of the Word of God.—While in College he gained a name for himself in his desire, always, to see through any subject in hand. Wherever he has preached his words have come home with power, and are remembered, on account of their truth and the earnest way in which they are delivered.

In this issue of the "Journal" our readers are favored with an address delivered before the "Re-Union and Institute" in October last by the Rev. D. Currie, M.A., B.D., of Perth, Ont.

The subject, "The Minister and his Reading," was one which Mr. Currie was admirably adapted to deal with from experience, and one which he was quite competent to advise upon.

Mr. Currie is a graduate of '84. He was called from his charge in Glencoe, Ont., to fill the vacancy in Perth, caused by the appointment of Rev. Prof. Ross to this College.



In the Presbytery of Lanark and Renfrew, where his present charge is, Mr. Currie is an active worker. From the time of his settlement he has taken a deep interest in every department of Presbytery work. This can readily be appreciated by those who attended the "Re-Union and Institute," and who heard how intelligently he spoke on the subjects under discussion.

Two congregations pressed their claims to have Mr. George Weir, B.A., as their Pastor. One in the West offering a large salary and a comfortable manse ; the other, in the Presbytery of Glengarry, much smaller and with inferior advantages along many lines. Still Mr. Weir felt it his duty to accept the latter. At a meeting of the Glengarry Presbytery held in Avonmore on Dec. 27th, Mr. Weir was ordained, and inducted into the pastoral charge of the Avonmore congregation. We were not surprised to hear that his answering of all questions put to him by the Presbytery was highly satisfactory, for Mr. Weir is a thorough-going man. It was always his aim to have his work up well while in college. Mr. Weir never was a man for doing things by halves, and this excellent quality is seen in his new work. Just two days after his induction, knowing that the heavy duties there could be better performed by two than by one ; that more could be accomplished, and that with greater comfort, he decided to bring in a helper. On Dec. 29 Mr. Weir was married to Miss Flora McIntosh. Miss McIntosh is well known to a large circle of friends as a talented lady and a devoted Christian worker. We will look forward for good results from their united efforts in behalf of the work in Avonmore.

By a remarkable coincidence, two brothers, graduates of this College, met in Montreal on Jan. 13th. One returning, on furlough, from Foreign Mission Work in Indore, India, and the other from Home Mission Work in Matawatchin, Ont.

About a year ago Rev. W. J. Jamieson was stricken down with typhoid fever. After some weeks of suspense his friends

were rejoiced to hear of his recovery. This, however, lasted only a short time, when a relapse put him back again into a critical condition. When sufficiently recovered it was deemed necessary that he should seek another climate for a time. Consequently he returned to his native land.

Rev. D. M. Jamieson, of Matawatchin, had for some weeks been lying seriously ill with pleurisy and brain fever, and was just sufficiently recovered to return and meet his brother here.

These two brothers entered college together, and graduated together in the class of '90. We trust that their visit together now to their old home in Inverness, Que., where their father and mother are still living, may have the effect of cheering, resting and restoring to their wonted health these two worthy and honored men. They are brothers of Mr. S. D. Jamieson, of the class of '98.

D. J. S.



THE AIM OF A COLLEGE EDUCATION.

The Inaugural Address delivered before the Philosophical and Literary Society,  
January 7th, 1898.

By the President, N. D. KERR, B. A.

Some of you will remember that on the occasion of our last Convocation, the honor fell to me of presenting to the meeting the successful competitors for the laurels of this society last session, and in the course of my remarks I stated, in brief, what I considered to be the object of a college education. Since then, in thinking of a subject appropriate for this occasion, it occurred to me that the germ-thoughts then expressed might be developed with profit to myself and not without interest to you. I therefore propose as the theme on which to speak to you to-night "The Aim of a College Education."

One of the chief elements of success in anything we do or attempt to do is to have a clear conception of the object to be attained. To be in ignorance on this point is almost invariably fatal. The paramount value of clear conceptions we see everywhere exemplified. The man of business never thinks of buying his goods blindly and trusting that somehow he will get purchasers for them. On the contrary, he calculates carefully, and keeps steadily before him the constituency of customers on whose patronage he can depend. The engineer who would build a bridge does not gather together a mass of stone, and brick and mortar, iron beams and steel cables, and think that in some way or other, by some fortuitous chance a Brooklyn Bridge or a Forth Bridge will evolve from the heterogeneous pile. The sea captain knows the port at which he hopes to land. Never for a moment does he take his eye off it. By tack and shift, through calm seas and rough, he is ever bearing down upon it.

The same is true in Education. In order to make the most

of a college course, it is necessary to apprehend clearly the object which one desires to reach. The old proverb has it, "To be forewarned is to be forearmed," and our much-esteemed professor of Mental and Moral Philosophy in McGill University, Dr. J. Clark Murray, used to tell us that a question clearly stated was half-answered; and so there is a sense in which a purpose clearly apprehended, placed before the mind in sharp and distinct outline, is half-attained. It is, then, before us to examine the aim and purpose of a college education.

But here, I would pause to say that it shall not be my endeavor to say anything that is new. My sphere is the trite, the hackneyed, the common-place; and the practical rather than the theoretical. Nor shall I assume the role of the preceptor, and presume to be erudite, abstract, profound. I shall think myself happy if I succeed in translating some of your own thoughts into appropriate language, and in arranging them in somewhat orderly form.

The aim of a college education may be said to be a three-fold one:

- I. To acquire the mastery of knowledge.
- II. To acquire the mastery of men.
- III. To acquire the mastery of oneself.

The first, you will say, is difficult; the second, more difficult; the third, most difficult.

You will kindly bear with me if, for obvious reasons, I confine my remarks to the first named.

A College Education, then, seeks, to give one the mastery of knowledge. "Knowledge is power," said the old philosopher, and the truthfulness of the saying is recognized the world over. The acquisition of knowledge is perhaps what bulks most in one's mind when contemplating a college course. How to acquire it is, therefore, a question of practical value.

i. And first here, I would say, it is of the utmost importance to have a due recognition of one's ignorance. Our good Principal has a hyperbolic way of saying that our ignorance

is infinite. Interpreted literally, the doctrine could scarcely be called Pauline, for Paul says, "We know." Some there are who stop there ; go no further. They say, "We know," and by dwelling long upon this truth—a very minor one—they pervert it into an error. They persuade themselves to believe that their knowledge is greater than the facts of the case will warrant. Their little burrowed ant-hill becomes a mighty mountain. Yes, "we know ;" but do not rest there. Spell out the whole passage, and you get the true statement of the case, "We know in part." When a student enters college he is inclined to lay emphasis on the first member of Paul's statement, on the "we know" ; when he graduates he lays it on the second, "in part ;" and that, perhaps, is the best college course that places ignorance and knowledge in strongest contrast, and that gives one an irresistible inspiration to know. That college has done most for a man when it has given him knowledge sufficient to "take the measure of his own ignorance." To recognize the infinite finitude of one's knowledge, the vast extent of one's ignorance is, then, the prerequisite for the attainment of knowledge.

2. But coupled with this recognition of ignorance, there must be a recognition of the vastness of the field of knowledge. Not only must the gaze be turned within to view the wide wastes of personal ignorance, it must also be directed without to sweep the broad expanses of knowledge. Continued introspection makes one morbid. The soul will shrivel and warp like that of the monk of the Middle Ages secluding himself in his cell. One needs to get out of himself, to look abroad on the world and realize the force of Hamlet's remark :

" There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio  
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy."

Twice, yea, thrice blessed the man, who having taken the measure of his own ignorance, realizes that the river of knowledge is flowing at his feet, and stoops him down to drink, but as he drinks his thirst only increases. What we need is to get

inoculated with the desire for knowledge. Let the universe become a field of discovery. Have an inquisitiveness that cannot be suppressed ; an observation that is always observing ; an eternal curiosity that must know the why and the wherefore. We may learn a valuable lesson from the boy of seven whose irrepressible desire to know becomes almost intolerable.

3. But here, the question arises, Know what? in other words, What are the subjects of knowledge? As well might I try to number the rays of the sun, or the sands of the sea-shore innumerable. Every day a thousand things confront us, laden with mysteries, beckoning us to unfold and explain them. The increase of knowledge, the march of science has not diminished, but rather augmented their number. Nevertheless, there are some subjects of knowledge that we cannot afford to overlook. There are some things of which we may and many things of which we must be content to remain ignorant; there are a few things, knowledge of which is a necessity to him who would pass among educated men.

I may be permitted to mention a few of the great essentials which vindicate their importance the moment they are named.

(1.) First, I would mention the history of our own land and of our own empire. We are Canadians and British citizens, and to discharge the duties of citizenship intelligently we must know our nation's history and traditions. In order to understand and appreciate the movements, social, political and religious, that are now going on around us, we must know the past and be fully alive to the present. "The present," says Westcott, "if we could read it rightly, contains the past and the future," that is to say, given the present, which is but a development of the past, and the true seer could determine what the past has been, and could, likewise, forecast the future, whose germs are found in the present. Hence it follows that if we are conversant with the past and no stranger to the present, we shall have a faithful monitor to guide us in the future.

(2.) Next, I would mention the English language and

literature, our own tongue, the most cosmopolitan of all tongues. Should we not be proud of it? It has given us the title deeds to all the wealth of thought of the great masters of English speech. It has preserved to us the wisdom of Chaucer, the soul of Shakespeare, the mind of Milton. Poverty is not invariably a disgrace, neither is ignorance. We may afford to be ignorant of many things, of the nebulous details of the nebular theory, of the mystical abstractions of many a philosophy, of the cosmogonies of the Assyrians and the theogonies of the Greeks, but ignorance of our own language and of our own literature—never.

If we would pass as educated men, and that ambition, I hope, is not above anyone of us, we must be able to express our thoughts in chaste, clear, graceful English. The office to which we aspire demands this. We are to be ensamples to men not only in purity of life and elevation of morals and devotion to truth, but also in our language, in our walk and in our conversation. A man's language is an index to his life. By it you can judge of the fibre of his moral character. Whenever the language of a nation becomes corrupt, the nation itself becomes corrupt. The two go hand in hand. A barbarous people speaks a barbarous language. You can write a man's pedigree when you hear him speak slang. Every such word is a blow at pure English, and, as history declares, a blow at pure morals. We, then, above all men cannot afford to be neglectful of our English language. It is to be our constant instrument of warfare. Let it be burnished and bright, and capable of the most effective work.

Nor must we be ignorant of our English literature. "Will you go," says Ruskin, "and gossip with your kitchen-maid or your stable-boy while this eternal court is open to you, with its society wide as the world, multitudinous as its days?" In our time a thousand printing presses are clanging off a thousand new books every hour. They are dropping around us like the sear leaves of the autumn woods. We do well to walk

resolutely through them, stopping only here and there to pick up a chance leaf of rare beauty, and perhaps carry it with us. The great bulk is destined to be buried in oblivion by the snows of the coming winter. The authors, writers, scribblers, ink-spillers of the present day are legion. We do well to discriminate carefully. But the great masters whose productions have outlived the frosts and snows and storms of ages and are bound to live, we must not leave unread nor unstudied. The lucre-loving camp-followers of an army we may ignore, but the officers in command and the general whose vision sweeps the horizon, men upon whose skill hangs the destiny of empires, these we must know. We can afford not to know the names of the individual foot-hills of the Alps and the Himalayas and the Rockies, but Mount Blanc and Everest and St. Elias, Mount Sinai and Mount Sion, the eternal peaks whose storm-topping heads tower up into the clouds of heaven, and that are indissolubly connected with human history must not be to us as a terra incognita.

(3.) I have spoken of the English masters and the English classics. I venture to specify one that has become the greatest of all our classics, that has moulded the thought and affected the style of all our great writers, namely, the English Bible. You may think it strange that I should mention this as one of the subjects of knowledge, for you say, Is it not of our chief text-book? Yes, it is. It holds the first place on the professor's lecture-desk. We open and close the day's work with it. Yet, is it not true that although we read it most, we perhaps study and know it least? I speak of it last because I consider it most important of all. No man to-day is educated who does not know the Bible. I take it for granted that, sooner or later, we shall be able to read it fluently in its original languages, which Chalmers calls "the first vocables of inspiration." I am now putting in a plea for the study of it in English. The temptation to neglect it is strong. The multitude of other studies that seem to have a more immediate claim, is apt to



relegate it to a corner. We are apt to read it in a perfunctory sort of way—just to satisfy our conscience ; to have that

“ . . . peace above all earthly dignities,  
A still and quiet conscience.”

And I suppose we should be thankful, if, even in this regard,

“ . . . conscience does make cowards of us all,”

and urge us to the performance of a duty. The Bible is the book, above all others, of which we as students of Theology, should labor to be masters. It is true we can undertake no task greater, and we shall find ourselves led off into innumerable by-paths of knowledge, for there is no study that is so many-sided and that touches men and things at so many points. We are not called to be mechanical engineers, and therefore our knowledge of Dynamics and Hydraulics may be somewhat meagre. We are not called to be medical practitioners, and so need not feel bad if our knowledge of Anatomy and Histology may lack profundity—although the more we know of these the better—but we *are* called to be ministers of the New Testament and to rightly divide the Word of Truth, and it should be our aim to be workmen that need not to be ashamed. Not only is it to be “a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path,” it is also to be a sword which, as warriors, we are to wield on the field of battle, in defense of truth and for the destruction of error. The Bible is the great thesaurus of Theology, and Theology is pre-eminently our science, and we are expected to be at home in it.

4. It remains for me to speak of the method of acquisition.

Wisely has it been said, there is no royal road to learning, and the vast extension of scientific knowledge and discovery in our day has but served to lend additional meaning to the saying. The same road is open to us that all the great and learned of the ages have trod. It is not a race-course, regularly laid out and carefully graded. It is rather a devious pathway with much to cheer and something to discourage :

here, a gentle slope ; there, a rugged steep. Now it leads through pleasant groves where the air is redolent of fragrance and resonant with the singing of birds, and now, through dark ravines where the way is almost lost and one goes groping and stumbling. Here, it winds through well-trimmed orchards where the ripened fruits are inviting, there it becomes a hot and dusty roadway where the burden is heavy and the traveller faint.

As we study the life and read the words of those who have journeyed before us, we learn two lessons :

(1.) The first is, that nothing can take the place of hard study. It is still true, "Labor omnia vincit." Knowledge yields her nuggets only to those who dig for them.

(2.) The second is, the value of prayer. Says A. S. Farrar, "The means used by those who have striven to find truth and become a blessing to the world have been—study and prayer." All Christ's great works—the choosing of the Twelve, the Temptation, the Transfiguration, the collision with the Jewish hierarchy, the final tragedy on the Cross—were preceded by prayer. And from these works, which we call great, may we not make an inference regarding the rest? Henry Martyn mourned that he had devoted "too much time to public works and too little to private communion with God;" and Robert Murray McCheyne wrote, "I ought to spend the best hours of the day in communion with God. It is my noblest and most fruitful employment." It was Luther who said, "Bene orasse est bene studuisse." The study of modern science may tend to make us think only of the reflex value of prayer in stimulating our spirits and purifying our desires ; yet, nevertheless, it is true that prayer has a positive objective value, that it acts really though mysteriously on God. As Farrar continues, "It ascends far away from earth to the spot where He has His dwelling-place. The infinite God condescends to enter into communion with our spirits, as really as a man that talketh with a friend. The Saviour of pity will Himself look

down upon us and condescend to become our teacher, and give us the purity of heart which will lead us into truth."

My words shall not have been spoken in vain if, in our pursuit of knowledge, we shall feel in some greater degree our dependence on Him who is the Author of all truth ; who is Himself " the Way, the Truth and the Life ; " " in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge," and make the poet's prayer our own :

" Let knowledge grow from more to more,  
But more of reverence in us dwell ;  
That mind and soul according well,  
May make one music as before,  
But vaster."



## TALKS ABOUT BOOKS.

"Varia" is the name of a 16mo. book of 232 pages, bound in red cloth, with gilt top, and published by Messrs. Houghton, Mifflin & Co., of Boston and New York. It contains nine grave to gay essays, but gayer than grave, by Miss Agnes Repplier, and its price is a dollar and a-quarter. Miss Repplier has a felicitous style, and by varied reading and some travel has become acquainted with a large number of literary, historical and other facts, with which she pleasingly illustrates her themes. The first of these themes is "The Eternal Feminine," which shews that women's rights are no new thing, but as old as society. "The Deathless Diary" is an interesting epitome of the literature in which Pepys, Evelyn, and Boswell shine. "Guides : A Protest," is an amusing narrative of an attempt to escape these continental plagues. Some people will not like "Little Pharisees in Fiction," which makes grim fun of goody-goody tales of youth for the Sunday School and the Home. Miss Repplier has a special dislike to the Elsie books, and the specimens she gives of them seem to justify it. The "Fete de Gayant" describes a scene in Douai. "Cakes and Ale," remarkable subject for an American lady, is a temperate eulogy of drinking songs. "Old Wine and New" takes Froissart for a text, but really contrasts the romantic ancient with the commonplace modern method of writing and teaching history. The volume concludes with two essays on light literature, "The Royal Road of Fiction" and "From the Reader's Standpoint," equally entertaining to the lover of books. Miss Repplier's repertoire is so large and varied, that all but an omniverous student will be sure to find something new in it, and even the omnivorous will not find a dull page. Her criticism is ever kindly, and betrays a sunny temperament calculated to diffuse happiness in a manner both genial and refined.

Another of Messrs. Houghton, Mifflin & Co.'s books is

"Nature's Diary," compiled by Francis H. Allen. This is a neat 16mo. of about 190 pages of letterpress, as many dated blank sheets, and eight illustrations. The extracts are nature pictures from the works of Thoreau, Burroughs, Torrey, Bolles, Sylvester, Hawthorne, Holmes, Lowell, Whittier, Emerson and others, and the blanks are for the purpose of recording the first appearances of birds, flowers, and similar natural objects. The outlook of a book of this kind, from the middle of December till that of March, is not very lively. Snow can be chronicled, and blizzards, and silver thaws. The English sparrow is always in evidence in cities and towns, and, in the country, stray partridges, hares, muskrats and squirrels may call for record. But it is a long wait for the first crow, and, thereafter, for the robin and the blackbird, the song sparrow and the starling, that come in with the newts and bullfrogs, with the willows for Palm Sunday, the blood-roots, and hepaticas. After them, animal and vegetable life pours in fast and furious, and the diarist of nature who is observant has a busy time of it. Mr. Allen's book is an excellent one for a country parson, who has profited by his botanical and zoological studies at McGill or elsewhere, to record his observations in, and by which to cultivate a love of nature. Drs. James Hamilton and Hugh Macmillan are two of many successful ministers who have made the works of the Creator subservient to their life work, teaching lessons, like their great Master, from the lilies of the field and the fowls of the air. The Canadian poet also will find in "Nature's Diary" ample material, suggestive and descriptive, for his Muse. Mr. Allen draws largely on Thoreau, whose books I read many years ago. Yet I do not now remember, whether or not it was he who told an ancient lady of Maine that he lived in Boston, and who received for answer the enquiry, "How can you bear to live so far away?" Neither of Messrs. Houghton, Mifflin and Co.'s books is theological, but each of them may be helpful to the theologian. I pity the congregation which has to listen to a man who reads nothing but theology.

"The Review of Reviews" always has a Book of the Month to which it pays special attention. The Book of this month's Talk, although it was published in 1896, is "The Nature of Christ; or, the Christology of the Scriptures," by the Rev. William Marshall: London, Hodder & Stoughton, 12mo., pp. 223. This is a Christmas gift to the Talker, and a much valued one. Like many theologians, for the Talker is not ignorant of Theology, he has often asked himself the question, "What relation did the bodies of the Old Testament theophanies bear to that of the New Testament incarnation?" This is the question which non-inspired writers, ancient and modern, fail to answer with any degree of satisfaction; which some modern writers, such as Drs. Dale, Fairbairn, Maclaren, and Oosterzee, have guessed at; but which Mr. Marshall replies to most fully, scripturally, and to my mind convincingly. He draws a distinction between the "morphe Theou" and the "morphe doulou," while regarding both as visible manifestations of God in what, for want of a better definition, may be called human form. He does not hold the eternal visibility of the Son as the divine revealer, but its coincidence with the first act of creation which was the work of the phenomenal God or form of God who is the scriptural Logos or Word. Apart, then, from the accident of sin and fall, God was revealed from the beginning, revealed in a spiritual body, the beginning of the creation of God, the body of all the Old Testament theophanies, of the transfiguration, and of the resurrection. The glory of that spiritual body was more or less veiled out of compassion for man's feeble senses, yet, in the burning bush, at Sinai, and to Manoaah, the God of Glory was partly manifested. In the person of the Man Christ Jesus, this spiritual body was temporarily laid aside for the form of the servant, and Christ appeared in the likeness of sinful flesh, the "morphe doulou." Having in that likeness accomplished mankind's redemption, He reassumed His mediatorial body of glory for all time to come.

Mr. Marshall furnishes the great desideratum of philosophi-

cal apologetics. Kant and others have maintained that the phenomenal world of causality, design, etc., can only lead to a phenomenal God. Our author accepts this, and virtually says that, although our reason may infer an all-embracing infinite and eternal spirit, the only God we truly know is the phenomenal or self-manifesting One. Hence our Saviour's words, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." Of Philip's question, to which this was the answer, Mr. Marshall says: 'His request might just as naturally have been made by the first man in Paradise, and the Lord—the Visible God—could have given the same reply. He could then have said, 'I and the Father are One;' but the oneness was not manifest, and He made no undue haste to make it manifest. Being lowly in heart, He did not count equality with God 'a thing to be grasped,' but was willing to wait for the development of the creature's knowledge concerning Himself and the Father. What a charmingly beautiful thing this non-grasping of equality is seen to be, when rightly apprehended! The humblest Being in the universe is God, and therefore when the Son came as the Creator in human form to reveal the Father, He was clothed with Divine humility." I do not say that the "Nature of Christ" clears up every theophanic difficulty, as, for example, the Shechinah 'of the Holy of Holies, and the relation between Christ's crucified and glorified bodies. but it throws a flood of light upon revelation and incarnation, and makes eloquent many passages of the Word that have been very imperfectly understood. The Spirit of God is working mightily in these latter days, taking the things of Christ and shewing them to men for the instruction of the Church. Mr. Marshall contends that his doctrine has been obscured by the Church since the days of the Apostles until now, and blames philosophy largely for the obscuration. If he be right, how excessively foolish is it for theologians of to-day to try the belief of earnest enquirers by the Procrustean bed of ancient scholastic systems! The "Christian World" says of this book: "A volume which will be welcomed by devout students of

Scripture, to whom the simplification and humanisation of theology is a consummation devoutly to be wished." Amen.

I have received several pamphlets which call for passing notice. The first of these is "Educational Thoughts for the Diamond Jubilee Year, an Inaugural Address delivered by the Rev. Prof. George Bryce, LL.D., Honorary President of the Manitoba College Literary Society." This very readable and at times eloquent address is a very full review of educational progress during Her Majesty's long reign. Under the heading Christian Realism, Dr. Bryce says: "The critical spirit thus aroused in the two great churches of the mother land, while attended with some dangers, worked in favour of a demand for reality in spiritual things. The objects and ends of the church were discussed, creeds were regarded as matters open to examination, portions of the economy of the churches which had lasted for hundreds of years were enquired into and their value questioned, and out of it all, with no doubt some losses to religion, has come a disposition to follow the injunction, "prove all things, hold fast (and we may interject 'only') that which is good." Dr. S. A. Farrand, the headmaster of the famous Newark Academy of New Jersey, sends me a 47-page pamphlet called "The Other Side, a Review of the Trial of the Rev. Charles A. Briggs, D.D." The author quotes Drs. Charles Hodge and F. L. Patton on "Our Confessional Obligations," each manifesting a liberal spirit, and the former going so far as to say: "How do we get along with our more extended Confession? We could not hold together a week if we made the adoption of all its propositions a condition of ministerial communion." Next, Dr. Farrand reviews historically "Some Principles of Our Jurisprudence," dealing with the case of Mr. Craighead in 1824, and with that of Dr. Albert Barnes in 1836. Thereafter he takes up all the charges against Dr. Briggs, and briefly but clearly reasons them to be non-proven. The pamphlet is the briefest and most lucid apology for Dr. Briggs I have yet seen. A valuable historical document is "These Fifty Years (1846-1896), A Brief Epitome of the His-



tory of the Evangelical Alliance," by Mr. A. J. Arnold, General Secretary. In 20 pages of entertaining matter, Mr. Arnold gives the story of this confederation of all the Evangelical Churches, and of its efforts for the commonweal of Christendom. From Sydney, N.S.W., comes the 32-page "Programme of the Sydney Meeting of the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science, commencing Monday, January 6th, 1898." The Association has no fewer than ten sections, represented by eminent Australian, Tasmanian, New Zealand, Polynesian and other scholars, and by an extensive series of papers of local and general interest. From Quebec comes "Le Courrier du Livre, Canadiana, the Official Organ of the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec," published monthly in French and English by M. Raoul Renault. The number before me is of December, 1897, consists of 47 pages, and is largely taken up with a review of Hennepin, His Voyages and His Works, by M. N. E. Dionne, who gives an admirable and very complete account of his subject in French of good quality.

Messrs. Drysdale & Co. send four volumes of light literature appropriate to the past holidays, to the "Journal." One of these is "The Monkey that would not kill," by the late Professor Henry Drummond, with a preface by the Countess of Aberdeen and Lady Marjorie Gordon. It has 115 well-printed 12mo. pages of excellent paper, and 16 full-page illustrations by Louis Wain, and is published by Messrs. Dodd, Mead & Co., of New York. As the work of the lamented Professor Drummond, "The Monkey" is unique, for it arose out of the exigencies of his position as temporary editor of "Wee Willie Winkie." It is a capital story, mirth provoking to a degree, yet not deficient in the pathetic, for the monkey, known first as Tricky and afterwards as Gum, was a hero as well as a sad scamp. Even human beings who are capable of heroism must have something of the scamp in them. The unvarying common-place nature of external propriety has no ravines of scamp-hood, but it also lacks the mountain heights of the heroic. To return to the monkey, he was what in American

parlance is called a Terror. There was nothing too mischievous or daring for him. He carried consternation wherever he went. Condemned to death, on land and water, in at least three countries and three seas, by hanging, drowning, shooting and blowing up, he survived all his executions, and lived to an honoured old age. How he came to learn Gaelic, saved a family from fire, a child from falling over a cliff, and his last master from burglars, after putting him in the way of his fortune, may be learned by those who care to invest the sum of one-dollar with Messrs. Drysdale & Co.

The second of Messrs. Drysdale's books that I have had the courage and perseverance to read is "The Beth Book, being a study from the life of Elizabeth Caldwell Maclure, a Woman of Genius," by Sarah Grand, author of "The Heavenly Twins." It has 573 8vo. pages, is bound in neat cloth, and is published by George N. Morang, of Toronto, at a dollar and a-half. For those who like this sort of thing, this is the sort of thing they'd like, as Artemus Ward first said. It is not unnatural, because human society has a great many unlovely sights, and because there do occur, at rare intervals, girls who are in youth precocious yet sensitive, and beautiful in person as well as beautiful in mind. Such was Beth in childhood, a talking monkey of the most brutally outspoken kind. Her father, a tippling coast-guard captain with a failing for female society other than that of his weak character of a wife, her snobbish spendthrift of a brother, her proper but very dull elder sister, her mother's brother and other relatives in England, and at last, her husband, are a wretched lot, and seem to have been invented as foils to set off the superlative genius of Beth. There are some amusing anecdotes of Beth's youthful escapades, and, when she reaches the stage of Barrie's imaginative boy, she acts almost as tiresomely like him. A child of impulse, she yet happily escapes moral contamination, and, grown up to womanhood, stands out for purity, and against vivisection, achieves success as an author, and reaches the pinnacle of greatness as an orator. There is no beauty in the book, no

plot worthy of the name, no particular moral. It contains language, profane, indecent, and irreligious, such as no self-respecting woman or decent man would dare or care to read aloud, and might blush even to read in secret. It may reflect certain phases of Irish and English society ; so does the Newgate calendar. Most of Sarah Grand's objectionable language is gratuitous, and does not help the story, if story it can be called, in any way. Her attitude in regard to religion is inconsistent, as one compares the Christianity of Aunt Victoria with that of Arthur Brock ; but it is a hostile attitude in any case, and by no means redemptive of the book. Its whole effect on a normal mind is pity allied to contempt for the meanness, the hypocrisy, and selfish aimlessness of nearly all its characters, which at times swells into disgust and loathing. If that is what people read books for, Madame Sarah Grand is a literary success. Pity that she is a woman, whom one might possibly meet. Books that pretend to teach purity by drawing pictures of vice are not few, and they are among the most deadly of the devil's weapons upon the imagination of the young. But even those who shamelessly advertise them do not call them literature. Many a man and woman has been hurried by temptation and passion into an overt act of immorality followed by lifelong regret and penalty, who would not degrade the mind by thinking nor the lips by uttering what is impure. We know the judgment of the world on this subject, but we ought also to know the mind of Christ.

Messrs. Drysdale's third book is entitled "Spanish John," by William McLennan, illustrated by F. de Myrbach, published by the Harpers, of New York, and the Copp, Clark Co., of Toronto. Its pages are 271 in number, and its illustrations 19, and it is prettily bound in red, black and gold. The author of this book is well known in Montreal. Its full title is "Spanish John, being a Memoir, now first published in complete form, of the Early Life and Adventures of Colonel John McDonell, known as 'Spanish John,' when a Lieutenant in the Company of St. James of the Regiment Ierlandia, in the service

of the King of Spain operating in Italy." This is not a love story, but one of wars, embracing that of the Austrian Succession and the Scottish Rebellion of 1745. In 1740 the hero, a boy of twelve, leaves his Highland home for Rome, to study at the Scots College there with the priesthood in view. The main event in his youthful travels is his falling in with one of the rascally followers of the Pretender named Captain Creach, whose enmity to him runs all through the narrative. But young McDonell finds many warm friends, through some of whom he is transferred at the early age of fifteen from college to the cadet ranks of the Irlandia Regiment in the pay of Spain. He distinguishes himself in battle, and obtains promotion, passing through many adventures with his faithful friend, the Chaplain O'Rourke. The Pretender thereafter sends him on a mission to Scotland with money for the Chevalier. He arrives in time to hear of Culloden and the collapse of the Prince's fortunes. The McKenzies steal his money, being incited thereto by Creach, and the story ends with his overcoming the traitor in a duel and cutting off his too prominent ears. Mr. McLennan writes no preface to his book, so that the reader is left in doubt as to whether there is any foundation for it in historic fact, but he has furnished an entertaining, if somewhat lop-sided, story, which preaches a good moral of loyalty and true friendship, all within the bounds of Roman Catholicism. The historical setting and the style of telling are worthy of commendation, but the cutting off Creach's ears is rather a feeble climax, as it is a low revenge, worthy of the Stuart pillory and Santa Anna's Mexican guards, rather than of a Highland soldier of fortune.

It is a peculiar discipline that I have been through for a good many years past, this reviewing of whatever books publishers and booksellers, without the least consulting of my taste, have been pleased to lend me for a day or so, and it brings me into very temporary strange company. However, I am not ashamed of Robert Louis Stevenson and his posthumous work, "St. Ives, being the Adventures of a French Prisoner

in England." The Canadian edition of the Copp, Clark Co. of Toronto, has 438 pages in a paper cover of the ordinary novel size. Of its thirty-six chapters, thirty were dictated by Stevenson, and the remaining six were written by Mr. Quiller Couch. The Viscount Anne de Keroual de Saint Yves, who had escaped the reign of terror and served as a private soldier in Napoleon's armies, being made prisoner in Spain, became an inmate of Edinburgh Castle. I remember my mother, hardly from her own experience, telling me stories of these French prisoners, and I have handled the uniform of my paternal grandfather who, in their time, served in the Edinburgh Fencibles. Mr. Stevenson tells the doings of the prisoners, all mere peasants with the exception of the Viscount, and none higher in rank than a sergeant-major. Miss Flora Gilchrist and her drum-major of an aunt visit the prisoners and purchase their carvings, and a Major Chevenix takes French lessons from Saint Yves, who goes under his mother's name of Champdivers. The friendship of the young Scotch lady leads to a scissor duel between the viscount and a characteristic valiant brute of a Napoleonic corporal, ending in the latter's death. Then a legal agent of the viscount's wealthy emigré uncle, settled on large estates in England, visits the prisoner, and furnishes him with the means of escape. He does escape with the members of his mess, only to find two enemies, in a disinherited cousin who is a Buonapartist spy, and a quondam fellow prisoner whom he had offended. Saint Yves is cheerful, light-hearted, almost a buffoon, and as such is very well, almost inimitably, drawn, often with sad lack of dignity, only true to life on the supposition that the metier of a common soldier had modified the pride of French noblesse. He meets Sir Walter Scott, nearly kills Johnny Faa, the gipsy, runs all sorts of dangers in visiting his benevolent uncle and his lady love, escapes in a balloon which sets him on a ship bound for America, returns to France, and finally settles on his inherited English estates with the lady of his choice. The finest characters in the story are the lawyer Romaine, and Major Cheve-

nix, although the latter did smell of soap. The easy conquest the disingenuous French captive made of the beautiful Edinburgh girl, is without parallel in history, but Stevenson was Stevenson, and must be allowed to tell stories as it pleased him. In the days of my youth I met with very many French noblemen, and there was not one of them who in any way that I remember resembled the rollicking Saint Yves. Nevertheless, the tale is well told, is full of incident, and will delight many to whom Stevenson's name is a household word.

Mr. Chapman, of St. Catherine Street, is in the same holiday mood as Messrs. Drysdale & Co. He sends to the "Journal" six books, one of which, however, is the already noticed "Spanish John." Another is "A Story Teller's Pack," by Frank R. Stockton, of 380. pages and sixteen illustrations, published by the Copp, Clark Co., of Toronto, at a dollar and a-quarter. It contains eleven of Stockton's peculiar stories, which relate in a dry, matter-of-fact way, things probably improbable and ludicrously possible. I like Stockton's tales as a relaxation; they make one laugh internally. In this volume, however, "The Magic Egg" and "The Bishop's Ghost and The Printer's Baby" are serious, while "Stephen Skarridge's Christmas" is a burlesque. "The Widow's Cruise" is in no sense a parody of the Scriptural incident bearing that name, for Mr. Stockton is always reverent, but a woman's seayarn that out-herods those of four ancient mariners. "The Staying Power of Sir Rohan," "Love before Breakfast," and "Captain Eli's Best Ear," are in the author's peculiar vein of sly humor, and much of the same character are "As One Woman to Another," "My Well and What came out of it," and "My Unwilling Neighbor." Mr. Stockton's actors are purely American, New Yorkers, or New Englanders, pertaining to the middle and lower middle classes, shrewdly simple and humbly heroic. They do funny things mean and funny things valiant, funny things clever and funny things stupid, with the utmost nonchalance, as if they were the only right things to do, causing the expansive beam of amusement

to pass over the reader's face as he accepts each comical situation. Ministers ought to cultivate a vein of humor, not to enable them to say funny things in the pulpit or even on the platform, but to hinder them saying and doing things ridiculous. The lack of the sense of the ridiculous makes a man, and especially a public man, liable to all sorts of mirth-provoking absurdities, which are all the more absurd if he be naturally as grave as an owl. To those who are deficient in this sense Stockton's stories may be commended, for they are always pure, and, as a rule, of a kindly tone.

Louise de la Ramée, otherwise Ouida, has written a book that Mr. Chapman sells for a dollar and a-quarter. It has 240 pages, ten plates, and an illustrated cloth cover, and its publishers are Messrs. L. C. Page and Company, of Boston. The title of the book is "Muriella or Le Selve." I do not admire Ouida's novels as far as their moral tone is concerned, but this one is perfectly harmless. Le Selve is a large estate in Italy belonging to the Gandolfo family, the representative of which gave the post of steward over its extensive domain to one who had been a friend of his in earlier days. This steward, known simply as Cyrille, was a fair Esthonian, and had been an officer of the Russian Imperial Guard. Degraded, and thereafter imprisoned, for attempting to educate his people, he had escaped from prison, and in exile gladly accepted the post that banished him from the busy world. He tried to improve the land under his care, and above all the people, who were everything that is filthy and bad. The housekeeper of the great house where he dwelt was but his half-hearted friend, and all else, sub-stewards, servants, wood-men, tenants, and squatters, were his declared enemies, with the exception of a young woman, Muriella Stravolta, whose two uncles were desperate villains. Cyrille had left behind him in Russia his betrothed, the Princess Marie, whom he never expected to see again, and in passing conversation with Muriella, unburdened his secret to her. Knowing all, the beautiful Italian yet loved the steward with the love of faithful service, prayed for his welfare,

and encouraged him to trust in God that he and his princess would yet meet. One autumn night, the post came, bringing him a letter containing the lady's photograph, and her signature over the words "I shall be at Rome in the winter." From his transport of joy he is aroused by the desertion of all the servants, and after midnight a gang led by the Stravoltas attacks the house. Cyrille defends it alone with no weapon but a revolver. The assailants bring faggots in front of a door and are burning their way in, when the carabinieri gallop up and take them prisoners, having been alarmed by Muriella, who accompanies them. But her uncle Alcide struggles free from his captor, and stabs her to the heart, her last words to Cyrille being, "You will go home. The saints did hear!" Unselfish womanly devotion even to death is one of Ouida's common themes, but her women as a rule are not such good characters as Muriella.

Another of Mr. Chapman's dollar and a-quarter books is "The Story of an Untold Love," by Paul Leicester Ford, published by Houghton, Mifflin and Company, of Boston and New York. It has 348 16mo. pages. It is a diary written by a literary man in the form of letters to one whom he had fondly hoped to marry, beginning with February 20, 1890, and ending with January 10, 1895. The lady had been his father's ward, and that father, unknown to his son, and tempted there-to by his wife's extravagance, had speculated with a large part of her fortune. The epistolary diary begins with their mutual reminiscences of early days in America and Europe, and passes on to tell of their parting, of their meeting without recognition in Tangier, and of various similar meetings in New York, where he, Donald Maitland, passes under the name of Rudolph Hartzmann, his *nom de plume* as a German writer, and in literary labour seeks to obtain money to wipe off his father's debt. Hard work breaks him down. A kind lady friend finds him fainting over his journal, which, during his period of unconsciousness, she places in the hands of Maizie Walton with the happiest results. Mr. Ford's book is fresh in form,



literary, almost learned, in matter, and his style reminds one pleasingly of that of Ik Marvel. The chief villain in the volume is a Mr. Whitely, a wealthy oil king and philanthropist, who started a newspaper, of which Maitland alias Hartzmann was virtually the editor-in-chief, although Whitely took credit for all his articles, and even bought a book from him which he published in his own name. The book nearly cost the diarist his wife, as it gave a wrong and very favourable impression of its nominal author. Sentimental people, young and old, will enjoy the story, and some of the fair sex probably even to the luxury of tears.

The name of Jean Blewett as a Canadian poet has been made familiar to me by the magazines, and now her volume of "Heart Songs," a dollar volume of 264 pages, published by George N. Morang, of Toronto, is before me, having been sent by Mr. Chapman. The author is one of the most versatile of our native poets. She indulges in all sorts of verse, from common psalm metre to blank pentameters, including, between them, some very bold original attempts that are not always successful. Her language again is sometimes dignified English, at others dialectic, either rural Canadian or Scotch. She even goes so far as to put broad lowland Scotch into the mouth of a Highlander, which is a mistake. Then, again, her themes are varied, in which connection I may say it is a pity that the poems which contain them are not classified. It is a shock to find a hymn or a piece of sacred narrative following a semi-comic dialect yarn. There are many wholesome religious pieces in the collection, and others that are morally didactic. The proportion dealing with nature, scenery, and the seasons, is not so great as in the works of most Canadian poets. Human nature is more largely represented, and there are songs of home, of friendship, and of patriotism. As a rule, Jean Blewett's verse is correct enough in grammar, rhyme, and rhythm, but occasionally in the same piece "thou" and "you" are employed in reference to the same person, and on p. 57 "gone" rhymes with "son," and on p. 58 "yesterday" rhymes

with "me." The following is a common sense statement, but it is hard to see the poetry of it :

" We quarrel and make up again,  
And then' some day,  
We quarrel, and forget, straightway,  
The making up."


This, however, is not a fair specimen. Our poet's average of excellence is high ; hence it is hard to select any one short piece, such as the Talk has room for, that will do justice to the whole. Perhaps the following will answer the purpose as well as another. Its theme is " Perfect Peace : "

" In an hour when all was anguish, when loss and death were near,  
I sought the Christ and cried aloud for aid,  
Through the heavy mist of sorrow His voice came, sweet and clear,  
Take the promise, let thy mind on Me be stayed ;  
For ye shall have perfect peace,  
And the grieving shall depart,  
And the striving and the bitterness shall cease ;  
Then laid the wounded hand of Him  
Upon my breaking heart—  
Lo, 'twas mine, the precious gift of  
Perfect peace."

The last of Mr. Chapman's volumes is a little treatise of 75 pages, well worth its price, which is half-a-dollar, by Frederick Lawrence Knowles, published by Messrs. L. C. Page and Company, of Boston. It is entitled " Practical Hints for Young Writers, Readers, and Book-Buyers." The rules for writing, both positive and negative, are brief and practical. Especially valuable is the advice as to what should be avoided in the shape of ordinary vulgarisms, American slang and newspaper English. The second part, about Books and Reading, has been written with evident care, and, like the first part, after consulting many worthy authorities. There is a difference, of course, between the preacher's message and his living voice, on the one hand, and the essayist's or story-teller's composition and style, on the other, but the difference is not radical. It is a differentiation which can be made after the man of the

pulpit has acquired the faculty of thinking out a subject correctly and putting his thoughts into good English.

For this purpose Mr. Knowles' book will be found as well adapted as any that I am acquainted with. His lists of the best books for young book-buyers have been carefully selected, and will be of value to those who have not been brought up in libraries. If a boy or a girl with a taste for reading can get access to a good private library of from 500 to 3,000 volumes, and browse there at will, it will do them more good than any catalogued selection. No two minds that are fitted to cultivate originality of selective memory, thought, feeling, and style, can be fed on the same mental pabulum. As the old Scotchman said: "Some beasts are graminivorous, and some are carnivorous, but man, Sirs, is ominivorous." Another Scot applied for a position as librarian, and when asked for his qualification, replied: "I've been amang buiks a' ma life." On further investigation it came out that his mother had kept a small country inn much resorted to by packmen, some of whom were chap-book pedlers of the olden type. It need hardly be stated that the qualification was unsatisfactory. Yet it is a melancholy fact that there are many candidates for literary distinction, whose knowledge of the souls of books is little superior to that of the would-be librarian. The modern book pedler, euphemistically called an agent, with his big, boshy, vulgar subscription book, is the fraud of the century; and ministers, whom he chiefly seeks to victimize, should give him a wide berth. When he is a woman, he is an object of compassion, and twice as dangerous. Give her a quarter, if you have it to spare, to take that book away, lest it tempt you to be an eater of husks, whether these be furnished by N Y. or C. in the U.S.A., or by B. in the Dominion of Canada.



## Editorials.

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### HONOUR COURSES.

Quite frequently we have discussions in regard to the best course of study for under-graduate classes, but very seldom do we hear anything said about post-graduate work. This may be explained in different ways—either that the former is of much greater importance than the latter, or that the one is not yet so satisfactorily settled as the other. There are also no doubt other considerations which combine with these in various ways, but for the present they may be overlooked.

The prevailing tendency in our public schools would seem to be towards keeping the members of the classes together, at the expense of the brighter students rather than of those who are slower in their work. Evidently the opinion prevails that it is better to transform a dull scholar into an average one, than that the brighter scholars should have opportunities of using their intellectual powers to the full.

Without wishing to make this a criticism of existing institutions, we may fairly conclude, that, by those in authority, it is thought better to make sure that all complete their primary work, than that some do advanced work.

The same holds true, although probably not to the same degree, in regard to College courses, but whether in either case it is a conclusion which is justifiable under all circumstances might fairly be questioned, since the same amount of attention on the part of the teacher or professor would certainly produce much greater results in the case of the brilliant student.

It is, however, the other aspect of the subject which we desire specially to consider, viz., the best course of study for advanced work in Theological classes.

Those who are in a position to know, have frequently stated

that, for a well-chosen course in Honour work, our college curriculum leaves little to be desired. The regular work in each department is supplemented by carefully selected works from authors of more than local reputation, in regard to whom the mere mention of the names of a few will be sufficient : Rawlinson, Farrar, Hagenbach, Westcott, Shedd, etc., are too well known to require any words of commendation here. It will be fitting, therefore, that anything said which might suggest changes in this course should be rather in the form of question than assertion.

It is, however, a fact well known to those who have made the trial, that in order to successfully take up the work of the Honour course, the student must completely sever his connection with any University classes, and spend a large part of his time in private study.

Now, if it is advantageous that every student before entering the study of Theology should take up a University course, even when the expenses connected therewith are heavy, might it not be of some advantage to make provision for continuing these studies when there are *absolutely no expenses* ?

And if it is of great importance that every Theological student should take lectures in the various departments in Theology from Professors specially fitted and chosen for that work, rather than that similar instruction should be received from books, might it not be of some importance that the students should have at least a choice whether they would supplement these lectures altogether from books, or have the opportunity of continuing their studies under University Professors ?

Or, to state this in a practical and more local form, why should there not be in the Presbyterian College optional courses in the Honour work where subjects closely allied to Philosophy, Literature, History, Classics, Hebrew, etc., might be taken either from the prescribed text-books, or from the classes of the various professors in McGill University, where all these branches are dealt with in a very thorough manner.

The fact that all the students in our Honour courses take

advantage of the University lectures in Hebrew in so far as they apply to our prescribed work is an indication of what might reasonably be expected, if other departments were similarly arranged.

There are certainly difficulties—serious ones—in the way of making such a change, but they are not, we venture to suggest, of such a nature as to render some plan along this line entirely impossible or unworkable, nor do they seem to us to counter-balance the advantages which would be gained by those desiring to continue their connection with McGill University, and thus take advantage of the generous offer which has always been extended to her graduates.

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### THE CHINESE QUESTION.

It affords us much pleasure to call the attention of our readers to an article under the above heading which appears in another part of our "Journal." The Rev. G. R. Maxwell, M.P., is probably better qualified than any other man to deal with his side of the question, through having spent a large part of his life in British Columbia, and in having made a careful study of this matter in all its phases.

While the impression made upon all who heard the eloquent and convincing arguments against Chinese taxation by our prince of missionaries, the Rev. G. L. Mackay, of Formosa, has not yet faded from the memory of any, still, as those who desire "to do justly" as well as "to love mercy" we are ever glad to have an opportunity of hearing both sides in any discussion upon which it is necessary to pronounce a decision.

This question is of special interest just now, as Mr. Maxwell informs us it is to be introduced during the Session of Parliament in February, and he has given us in advance some of the principal arguments which will then be brought forward.

## Partie Française.

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### VOLTAIRE JUGÉ PAR VICTOR HUGO.

François Marie Arouet, si célèbre sous le nom de Voltaire, naquit à Chatenay le 20 Février 1694, d'une famille de magistrature. Il fut élevé au collège des Jésuites, dont l'un des régents, assure-t-on, lui prédit qu'il serait en France le coryphée du Déisme.

A peine sorti du collège, Arouet, dont le talent s'éveillait avec toute la force et toute la naïveté de la jeunesse, trouva, d'un côté, dans son père, un inflexible contempteur et de l'autre, dans son parrain, l'abbé de Chateaufort, un pervertisseur complaisant. Le père condamnait toute étude littéraire, sans savoir pourquoi et par conséquent avec une obstination insurmontable. Le parrain, qui aimait beaucoup les vers, encourageait au contraire les essais d'Arouet, surtout ceux que rehaussait une certaine saveur de licence ou d'impiété. L'un qui tendait à étouffer violemment ce feu sacré qu'on ne peut éteindre ; l'autre, qui l'alimentait inconsidérément, aux dépens de tout ce qu'il y a de noble et de respectable dans l'ordre intellectuel et dans l'ordre social. Ainsi le génie de Voltaire subit dès sa naissance le malheur de deux actions contraires et également funestes. Ce sont peut être ces deux impulsions opposées, imprimées à la fois au premier essor de cette imagination puissante qui en ont vicié pour jamais la direction. Du moins, peut-on leur attribuer les premiers écarts du talent de Voltaire tourmenté tout ensemble du frein et de l'éperon.

Aussi, dès le commencement de sa carrière lui attribue-t-on d'assez méchants vers fort impertinents qui le firent mettre à la Bastille, punition rigoureuse pour de mauvaises rimes.

C'est durant ce loisir forcé que Voltaire âgé de 22 ans ébau-

cha son poëme "La Henriade" et termina son remarquable drame d'Oedipe. Après quelques mois de Bastille, il fut à la fois délivré et pensionné par le régent, le duc d'Orléans, qu'il remercia de bien vouloir se charger de son entretien en le priant de ne plus se charger de son logement. Il visita Bruxelles pour y voir J.-B. Rousseau. Ces deux poètes qui s'estimaient sans se connaître se séparèrent ennemis. On dit qu'ils étaient envieux l'un de l'autre, ce qui n'était pas un signe de supériorité. Revenu en France il y fit paraître son Eryphile, Zaïre et d'autres oeuvres moins importantes.

Son nom remplissait déjà l'Europe. Retiré à Cirey chez la marquise du Chatelet il y composa Alzire, Mahomet, Charles XII, envoya des madrigaux à Frédéric de Prusse et flatta si bien Mme. de Pompadour qu'il obtint un fauteuil à l'Académie et la place d'historiographe de France. Ces faveurs n'eurent qu'un temps. Il se retira tour à tour à Luneville, chez Stanislas, roi de Pologne; à Sceaux, chez Mme. de Maine et à Berlin, chez Frédéric, devenu roi Prusse. Bientôt fatigués l'un de l'autre, Voltaire voulut s'enfuir, Frédéric le chassa.

Chassé de la Prusse, repoussé de France, il passa deux ans en Allemagne et vint se fixer près de Genève avec Mme. Denis, sa nièce. C'est à cette époque qu'il prit fait et cause pour la liberté de conscience et défendit avec une générosité mêlée de trop d'ostentation, Calas, Sirven, La Barre, déplorables victimes du fanatisme. C'est encore à cette époque qu'il prit une part active à l'Encyclopédie, ouvrages où des hommes qui avaient voulu prouver leur force, ne prouvèrent que leur faiblesse.

Avant d'esquisser les rapports qui existèrent entre l'homme qui, mieux que tout autre, caractérise son siècle et les habitants mais surtout le clergé de cette fière petite république auprès de laquelle il avait élu domicile, je voudrais citer une courte appréciation de Voltaire comme littérateur par Victor Hugo. 'En littérature, Voltaire a laissé un de ces monuments dont l'aspect étonne plutôt par son étude qu'il n'impose par sa grandeur. L'édifice qu'il a construit n'a rien



d'auguste. Ce n'est point le palais des rois. Ce n'est point l'hospice du pauvre. C'est un bazar élégant et vaste, irrégulier et commode; étalant dans la boue d'innombrables richesses; donnant à tous les intérêts, à toutes les vanités à toutes les passions, ce qui leur convient; éblouissant et fétide; offrant des prostitutions pour des voluptés; peuplé de vagabonds, de marchands et d'oisifs, peu fréquenté du prêtre et de l'indigent. Là, d'éclatantes galeries inondées d'une foule émerveillée; là, des antres secrets où nul ne se vante d'avoir pénétré. Vous trouverez sous ces arcades somptueuses mille chefs-d'oeuvre de goût et d'art tout ruisselant d'or et de diamants; mais n'y cherchez pas la statue de bronze aux formes antiques et sévères. Vous y trouverez des parures pour vos salons, pour vos boudoirs; n'y cherchez pas les ornements qui conviennent au sanctuaire. Et malheur au faible qui n'a qu'une âme pour fortune et qui l'expose aux séductions de ce magnifique repaire: temple monstrueux où il y a des témoignages pour tout ce qui n'est pas la vérité, un culte pour tout ce qui n'est pas Dieu!

Certes, si nous voulons bien parler d'un monument de ce genre avec admiration, on n'exigera pas que nous en parlions avec respect.

Nous plaindrions une cité où la foule serait au bazar et la solitude à l'église; nous plaindrions une littérature qui déserterait le sentier de Corneille et de Bossuet pour courir sur la trace de Voltaire.

Loin de nous toutefois la pensée de nier le génie de cet homme extraordinaire. C'est parce que dans notre conviction, ce génie était peut être un des plus beaux qui aient jamais été donnés à aucun écrivain que nous en déplorons plus amèrement le frivole et funeste emploi. Nous regrettons, pour lui comme pour les lettres, qu'il ait tourné contre le ciel cette puissance intellectuelle qu'il avait reçue du ciel.

Nous gémissons sur ce génie qui n'a pas compris sa sublime mission, sur ce poète qui a profané la chasteté de la muse et la sainteté de la patrie, sur ce transiuge qui

ne s'est pas souvenu que le trépid poète a sa place près de l'autel et, ce qui est d'une profonde et inévitable vérité, sa faute même renfermait son châtement. Sa gloire est beaucoup moins grande qu'elle devait l'être, parce qu'il a tenté toutes les gloires. Il a défriché tous les champs, on ne peut dire qu'il en ait cultivé un seul, et parce qu'il nourrissait la coupable ambition d'y semer également les germes nourriciers et les germes venéneux, ce sont, pour sa honte éternelle, les poisons qui ont le plus fructifié.

On sent en le lisant, qu'il est l'écrivain d'un âge énérvé et affadi. Il a de l'agrément, point de grâce; du prestige, point de charme; de l'éclat, point de majesté. Il sait flatter, pas consoler. Il fascine, il ne persuade pas. Excepté dans la tragédie, qui lui est propre, son talent manque de tendresse et de franchise.

On sent que tout cela est le résultat d'une organisation et non l'effet d'une inspiration. Au reste, comme un autre ambitieux plus moderne qui rêvait la suprématie politique, c'est en vain que Voltaire a essayé la suprématie littéraire. La monarchie absolue ne convient pas à l'homme. S'il eût compris la véritable grandeur, il eût placé sa gloire dans l'unité plutôt que dans l'universalité. Et voici la place que Victor Hugo accorde à l'influence Voltairienne. "Il serait injuste," dit-il, "de n'attribuer qu'aux écrits du patriarche de Ferney cette fatale Révolution. Il faut y voir l'effet d'une décomposition sociale depuis longtemps commencée. Voltaire et son époque doivent s'accuser et s'excuser réciproquement. Trop fort pour obéir à son siècle, Voltaire est aussi trop faible pour le dominer. De cette égalité d'influence résultait entre son siècle et lui une perpétuelle réaction, un échange mutuel d'impicités et de folies, un continuel flux et reflux de nouveautés qui entraînait toujours quelque pilier de l'édifice social.

Qu'on se représente la face politique du dix-huitième siècle, les scandales de la Régence, les turpitudes de Louis XV, les violences dans le ministère, dans les parlements, la force nulle part; la corruption morale descendant par degré de la tête

dans le coeur, des grands dans le peuple; des prélats de cour, des abbés de toilette, tout chancelant sur sa base. Qu'on se figure Voltaire jeté sur cette société en dissolution comme un serpent dans un marais, et l'on ne s'étonnera plus de voir l'action contagieuse de sa pensée hâter la fin de cet ordre politique que Montaigne et Rabelais avaient inutilement attaqué dans sa vigueur. Ce n'est pas lui qui rendit la maladie mortelle, mais c'est lui qui en développa le germe; c'est lui qui en exaspéra les accès. Il fallait tout le venin de Voltaire pour mettre cette fauge en ébullition. Aussi doit-on imputer à cet infortuné une grande partie des choses monstrueuses de la révolution.

Quant à la révolution elle même, elle dût être inouïe. La Providence voulut la placer entre le plus redoutable des sophistes et le plus formidable des despotes. A son aurore, Voltaire apparaît dans une saturnale funèbre; à son déclin, Bonaparte se lève dans un massacre."

D.

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### R. TOEPFFER AU POINT DE VUE RELIGIEUX.

Après que R. Toepffer eut conquis une réputation européenne, plusieurs auteurs analysèrent le caractère artistique et littéraire de ses ouvrages; mais dans ces remarquables morceaux de critique, il nous semble qu'on a beaucoup trop laissé dans l'ombre les principes religieux de notre écrivain genevois. Nous voulons essayer de combler cette lacune, en présentant à nos lecteurs quelques réflexions touchant les tendances chrétiennes qui distinguent les principales oeuvres de ce romancier spirituel, dont la brillante carrière fut si prématurément interrompue.

La vie de Toepffer a été simple et laborieuse. Il hérita de son père un naturel artistique singulièrement prononcé. On n'eut aucune incertitude sur sa vocation; de bonne heure, un esprit original, fin, observateur, fit présager en lui un peintre

distingué. La fraîcheur et le piquant de ses essais annonçaient un développement précoce et un talent vigoureux; malheureusement, la faiblesse de sa vue et des irritations constantes dans les yeux l'obligèrent à faire le sacrifice douloureux de ses goûts. Il se voua à l'éducation et y obtint des succès continus. Son habileté, sa science littéraire, lui attachèrent les jeunes gens, et ses élèves comptent au nombre de leurs meilleurs jours les années passées dans le pensionnat de la place Maurice. Plus tard, nommé professeur de rhétorique à l'académie de Genève, il reporta dans ses cours la finesse d'esprit, l'originalité et la verve qui rendent ses divers écrits si attrayants.

On peut presque appliquer à R. Toepffer la fable de *l'Homme qui court après la fortune et celui qui l'attend dans son lit*. Une renommée capable de satisfaire de hautes prétentions est venu l'entourer sans qu'il eût fait aucune démarche pour y parvenir; on l'a vu accueillir les avances de la publicité avec une simplicité modeste; le retentissement de ses oeuvres dans le monde littéraire ne changea rien à son humeur ni à ses goûts. Quand il apprit que ses petits livres et ses premières *Nouvelles* étaient recherchés dans tous les pays où l'on apprécie la bonne littérature française, il doutait encore que ses productions pussent sortir d'un cercle restreint d'élèves et d'amis, et ce ne fut qu'après beaucoup d'hésitation qu'il se décida à livrer au monde les observations pleines de sentiment et de finesse, qu'il enferme dans des cadres si simples et des scènes si familières. Cette modestie doubla pour lui les joies légitimes d'un succès obtenu par la morale, en dehors de l'action des réclames et des prôneurs.

Notre but étant, comme nous l'avons dit, de n'envisager que le sentiment religieux et moral de Toepffer, nous omettons toutes les observations étrangères à notre sujet.

Une des principales qualités de Toepffer, c'est la hauteur du point de vue moral d'où il part pour tracer ses caractères sérieux. Il intéresse et captive pour des êtres honorables et bons, et cela sans sortir des règles de la vie commune. Quels

éloges et quelle bonne part de renommée ne méritent pas les auteurs qui replacent l'histoire humaine sur le terrain de la morale et du devoir, et qui, dédaignant d'exploiter au profit de leurs succès les passions mauvaises, rendent le vice honteux sous quelque forme qu'il se présente ! C'est un des mérites de Toepffer. Les vices sont analysés par lui avec le même talent que les ridicules, la verve sérieuse remplace l'entrain comique. Ainsi, dans *l'Héritage*, il flétrit le vieil égoïste étranger à tout sentiment élevé, et qui attribue à chacun la bassesse de son propre cœur. Ailleurs, les institutions sociales qui peuvent corrompre les mœurs sont jugées comme elles le méritent : le matérialiste dévoile ses misères secrètes et sa vie décolorée ; l'homme laborieux et probe est élevé au rang qui lui convient dans un état social où les ambitieux se précipitent et se foulent ; puis, autour de ces grandes données, se groupent, pour les faire ressortir, une foule de caractères secondaires dont le comique égaye sans effort la tendance sérieuse de l'auteur.

Toepffer n'est guère partisan du vieil adage : " Le vice puni et la vertu récompensée." Le devoir et non l'intérêt anime ses personnages ; leurs succès sont rares et naturels ; il n'y a point de trésors découverts ni d'oncles d'Amérique pour les jeunes gens vertueux : leur récompense est donnée par l'approbation de la conscience ; ils n'en cherchent point d'autre. Toepffer déteste et ridiculise la morale matérialiste dont Berquin infecta le cœur des enfants, en leur montrant le profit assuré qui suit inévitablement toute action louable.

Parmi les romans de Toepffer, nous plaçons au premier rang *le Presbytère*. Ce roman met en relief le société de Genève avec ses travers, son orgueil, son mélange d'idées républicaines et d'esprit de caste. Nos villageois y sont peints au naturel : leur fierté, leurs préjugés indestructibles décorés du nom de principes, l'étroitesse de leurs vues, leurs rudes médiances, et aussi leur probité, leur générosité soutenant souvent avec honneur des épreuves délicates. L'Académie y est digne représentée. Mais l'idée principale du " Presby-

tère" est l'hommage rendu au clergé de Genève dans la personne d'un des plus vénérables pasteurs qui puissent honorer une Eglise par leurs écrits, leurs actions et leur souvenir. Seul parmi les romanciers modernes, il a présenté les ministres réformés sous leur jour véritable. Les jugeant à leurs oeuvres, il a fait connaître au loin le type de ces existences obscures, cette tâche bornée aux limites d'un village, où se déploient, dans une modeste grandeur, la charité, la foi, le dévouement désintéressé, l'amour du bien tel que l'entend l'Evangile, et la récompense cherchée dans l'approbation divine. Toepffer a voulu montrer le pasteur genevois aux prises avec les préjugés contraires au christianisme. Il les dépeint tantôt lassant les résistances par une patience prolongée, ailleurs couvrant d'un oubli sans réserve les procédés les plus pénibles, luttant contre l'égoïsme, l'avarice, la paresse, qui entravent les idées les plus justes au point de vue moral et religieux. Toepffer, dans le même ouvrage retrace la discussion du ministre avec l'incrédule: il montre la supériorité que donne une vie en accord avec les principes du Maître, une abnégation de soi-même qui force le respect et modifie les desséchants souvenirs du siècle dernier.

En considérant les pasteurs réformés sous ce point de vue, Toepffer a fait une oeuvre nationale et nouvelle. On décrit bien çà et là les bons curés de campagne; mais les auteurs français, pleins de tolérance pour les vices du jour, donnent à leurs prêtres des idées larges sur une foule de sujets moraux; ils les rendent, sans doute, agréables aux yeux de leur public. Mais parmi les vrais curés catholiques, lesquels pourraient souscrire à de tels éloges? De leur côté, les ultramontains réservent trop leurs hommages pour les actes de zèle dirigés contre l'hérésie, ou pour les anathèmes contre les idées modernes. Un arrière-goût de miracles apocryphes éloigne de leurs livres la sympathie des esprits sensés. Toepffer comprend différemment l'idéal du caractère du pasteur. Il le montre dans les médiations difficiles, les démarches délicates auprès d'un lit de mort, constamment dirigé par une foi

profonde qui se manifeste même à l'insu de celui qui la possède.

Enfin, le plus beau fleuron de la couronne littéraire de Toepffer, c'est l'éloquence impressive à laquelle il atteint, en dépeignant les misères secrètes de l'homme, les chagrins dont on ne peut se plaindre, et les douleurs qui se consomment entre la conscience et Dieu. Sur ce sujet, il a écrit des pages d'une profondeur peu commune dans la littérature française. Il est également vrai, simple, impressif. Pour émouvoir, il n'entasse pas les faits, il n'accumule pas les phrases laborieusement arrangées, il sait que plus la douleur est profonde, plus l'expression en est brève et énergique. Il atteint ainsi le rare avantage d'être lu volontiers par les personnes malheureuses. Il en est des livres comme des personnes : le nombre des ouvrages admis auprès des gens malheureux est bien restreint ; parmi les traités religieux fort peu remplissent ce but. Les gens qui souffrent, comme ceux qui aiment, savent qu'il est en ce monde bien peu de confidants dignes de voir le fond de leur âme.

Il ne suffit pas à l'auteur qui s'occupe des affligés de se tenir en arrière dans l'exposition des chagrins ; il faudra, de plus, qu'il réussisse à présenter des consolations efficaces. Pour être lu des affligés, il faut unir à la peinture simple et vraie des douleurs intimes, un sentiment chrétien positif, éprouvé. Alors on parle de l'immortalité chrétienne, comme Fenimore Cooper ; de la puissance consolatrice de la Bible, comme Silvio Pellico ; du bonheur de se revoir au ciel, comme Ancillon, et de la persévérance évangélique à souffrir les injustices, les pertes irréparables et les souffrances corporelles, comme R. Toepffer.

Ce qui rehaussera toujours l'auteur genevois, c'est que, lorsque vinrent pour lui les jours mauvais, il sut mettre en pratique les principes religieux qu'il avait répandus dans ses ouvrages. La maladie qui devait l'emporter à quarante-huit ans faisait de rapides progrès ; il l'envisageait sans crainte, avec cette résignation mêlée de rechutes qui est l'apanage des êtres véritablement sensibles.

Toepffer avait l'habitude d'écrire immédiatement ses impressions intellectuelles et morales. Voici quelques fragments de son journal intime, durant sa dernière maladie : " Je crois et je me confie : deux choses qui peuvent être des sentiments vagues, sans cesser d'être des sentiments forts et indestructibles ; et, dans ces maux qui m'assiègent à cette heure, au point de me faire douter si je vivrai dans un an, ces sentiments vagues me sont plus de secours et de consolation que toutes les formules précises que j'y pourrais substituer.

" Ce livre était mon confident et mon ami. La maladie nous sépare maintenant, et voici tantôt quatre mois que je n'y inscris rien. La force manque à mon bras, et l'angoisse est la seule distraction de mon esprit.

" Je redoute peu l'atteinte dernière de la mort, mais beaucoup les longues cruautés par lesquelles souvent elle tourmente sa proie, avant de la dévorer. Les Evangiles sont ma loi, et je ne trouve que dans les paroles de Jésus l'espérance dont j'ai besoin. l'indulgence qui m'est nécessaire, la confiance qui me rassasie."

Dans les derniers mois de sa vie, il savourait les bienfaits du culte intime où la voix d'un ami, associé depuis l'enfance aux joies et aux épreuves, revêt une sympathique autorité. Un jour la prière l'avait particulièrement ému ; il prit les mains du pasteur et lui dit, les larmes aux yeux : " Merci, Munier ! merci de tes bonnes paroles. . . mais, vois-tu, dis-moi : Notre Père !"

Avec de pareils sentiments, Toepffer vit arriver en paix sa dernière heure, et le calme de sa mort rendit témoignage de la puissance de l'Esprit chez ceux qui croient.

J. GABEREL.