

THE THEOLOGUE,

Presbyterian College, Halifax.

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EDITORS.

C. MUNRO, B. A.

HOMER PUTNAM, M. A.

J. A. McGLASHEN, B. A.

J. B. MacLEAN, B. A.

A. J. MacDONALD, B. A.

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THE THEOLOGUE.

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TENNYSON.

“**H**APPY is he whom good report encompasseth.” If this be true, then ample indeed would be the joy of the poet who has so lately passed away, could he hear of the good report that doth so encompass him. And his renown is of such a kind that no noble heart could desire better fame. Tennyson’s greatness is largely due to his being a deeply religious and Christian man; for if he was concerned about anything in life it was about his Maker. He knew that it was “meet for a man to speak honourably concerning God;” and it was his loyalty to Him that was the cause of the generous recognition at his death. When one endowed with the highest gifts of genius joins with his fellow-men in upholding the religion so dear to most, it is natural that humble-hearted men should manifest their pleasure at the gain made to the ranks of a leader who will fight by their side. It is like an additional prop to our faith when the great of the earth believe; and the moral support of a prominent man, although it be merely nominal, is of value. But Tennyson was not a Christian in name only, he was in addition a preacher; for his poems are like sermons, adding greatly to the devotional literature of our time. A sermon aims at making an impression on the soul—an impression of goodness, nobility, and God; and judged by this standard what more impressive sermons on these themes could there be than the “Idylls of the King”—those incentives to a higher life. It is not the pure beauty of the “flower of song” that has attracted admirers to Tennyson; for

art alone can never satisfy a people. Tennyson is universally popular because his music is wedded to such true religious words, because the flower of his song is accompanied with the sweet fruit of a soul that like the noble Arthur "did follow Christ."

Since religion then is so important a factor in the writings of the poet, it is fitting that some time should be devoted to discussing the main elements of his theology, especially in a journal devoted to the "science of divine things."

In saying that Tennyson cannot be understood apart from his religious beliefs, I do not intend it as a general proposition that can be applied indiscriminately to every thinker and writer. There is a sense, indeed, in which each individual has some form of worship; but at present I am referring to the special Christian consciousness of Tennyson, and perhaps the meaning will appear more clearly if we compare him with such a poet as Goethe. Goethe's religion was culture, more especially a culture of self. He tells us that "the desire to raise the pyramid of my own existence scarcely ever quits me." And he hoped to raise this pyramid without the aid of divine power. He had no reverence for God or man, because in his self-sufficiency he had found no need of the intervention of God to satisfy his unspiritual desires. Goethe was a cold refined reasoner, a demigod perhaps; but he had few traces of religion, even if religion were only morality *without* a "tinge of emotion." Who could imagine Goethe praying? Now how different it is with Tennyson. He almost claims a peculiar knowledge of the influence of prayer. "More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of;" and in the "Passing of Arthur" he dwells on its influence. Then there is the Christian humiliation of the soul before its Maker, as expressed in the beautiful invocation of "In Memoriam" ending with the words,

" Forgive them (his cries) where they fail in truth
" And in thy wisdom make me wise."

This resting on a higher power external to self, this finding of the insignificance of human life apart from God, this inability to raise his pyramid alone, and this faith upon a ruling God who causes the darkness of the world to end in light—these are religious conceptions not seen in all men, but they are so prominent in Tennyson that the most secular of critics cannot neglect

their influence if his work of criticism is not to remain a fragment.

But it would be doing Tennyson an injustice to treat his poems as a compendium of theological doctrine. The poet is no dogmatic writer, and we can only hope to find his religious beliefs by an examination of the expression of his life-experiences. Tennyson's theological positions are not the dogmas of the schools, but they are the outcome of his religious feelings. Where his theology is incomplete, his vision has been limited.

If we turn to the "Holy Grail," we shall find the poet's idea of life and doctrine, where in the defence of Bors, Lancelot and Percivale he lays a true foundation for a development of belief :

" For these have seen according to their sight,
 " For every fiery prophet in old times
 " And all the sacred madness of the bard,
 " When God made music thro' them, could but speak
 " His music by the framework and the chord ;
 " And as ye saw it ye have spoken truth."

The poet knew " we are not wholly brain," and that we cannot reason out a revelation ; but it comes in visions to the soul, when God draws nigh and speaks to man. Doctrine with Tennyson as with Paul is a growth of thought parallel to a growth of life ; accordingly he speaks of the passing nature of our systems " which have their day and cease to be." As the fruit ripens in the summer heat, so also man's belief ripens with the heat and turmoil of life, and we can only have a final doctrine when has come that " far-off divine event to which the whole creation moves."

The remainder of this paper may be divided into three parts which treat of *sorrow*, *sin*, and *faith*, as these appear in Tennyson's poems. These are simple divisions ; but the poet is always concerned with such simple yet eternal themes.

First—Tennyson's treatment of *sorrow* is religious if by this we understand that sorrow is a messenger from God. In the prologue to " In Memoriam" we read that God made death, and it is to this poem that we turn for the poet's deepest thought on suffering. In it we seem to hear a real wail of mourning, more real than in many others of his writings. Sometimes Tennyson would appear to clothe sorrow in too lightsome and pleasant a garb, as if it were the thing of all things, to be most longed for. His descriptions of death are so pathetic that it is doubtful if any

poems have drawn more tears, or brought the swelling to the throat more quickly than such pieces as the the "Queen of the May," or Elaine's Voyage of Death down the stream to Camelot; but at times there almost seems to be too great a pathos, for death is sung of in such rhythmic music that "for as many a time we have been half in love with easeful death." But death in actual experience seldom has these easeful features, and it resembles now a darksome night that hides all light and beauty from the eye. "In Memoriam," however, has little of this false sentiment, and is truer to the realism of sorrow. As Job of old longed that the day wherein he was born might perish and that it should be as darkness, so the poet after the loss of his friend must also sing of the uselessness of life :

"T'were best at once to sink to peace
 "Like birds the charming serpent draws
 "To drop head-foremost in the jaws
 "Of vacant darkness and to cease."

The earth is stript of beauty, the purple has vanished from the altered skies, "I sit within a helmless bark."

And there remains for the troubled religious soul the same hope that Job had found. As Job o'erleaped the general knowledge of his time and sought his peace in immortality, and found at best this much, that in his sinless sorrow he could see the possibility of another life and ask the question, "If a man die shall he live again?" so Tennyson, with the fuller knowledge brought by Christ, can only believe that love like his can never die, and that life is part of the eternal :

"Tho' mixed with God and Nature thou
 "I seem to love thee more and more."

His friend now dead is still alive, a "breather of an ampler day." He cannot "think the thing farewell." Death is for him a passing—a "going from this room into the next." Death now has lost the poison of its sting even though the pain remain. The grave has forfeited its victory even though the battle did inflict some loss.

Second. For Tennyson's account of *sin* we turn naturally to the "Idylls of the King." Here he describes the coming of one whose delight is in the "talk of knightly deeds," and who begins a kingdom in which ideal good must reign. King Arthur and Queen Guinevere when wedded will live together as one life :

“ And reigning with one will in everything,
“ Have power on this dark land to lighten it,
“ And power on this dead world to make it live.”

And so it happened that the realm was happy, and the knights did follow Arthur “as the King did follow Christ.” Another paradise on earth when was the May-time and where no sin was dreamt of. But as with its earlier type the time of bliss is short; for evil raised its serpent head, and woman yielding to the tempter’s bait began to sin. Queen Guinevere’s disloyal life has wrought confusion in the holy court, and the lesser names drawing ensample from the names of great repute followed in her train, till sin is uppermost and thwarts the purpose of the King, and the “loathsome opposite of all his heart had destined did obtain.” And in this account of failure how varied is the kind of sin, and how deep into the motives of the evil-doer does the poet pierce;—especially in the portrayal of the lurking sordid passions of the noblest lives. Tennyson had so lofty an ideal of all that became a Christian gentleman, whose conscience was to be “as is the conscience of a saint,” that the highest knights of Arthur’s table are never described as free from guilt. A world of evil, “where all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.” Take some examples of the variety of evil doing. There is Sir Bedivere, who is commanded to fling into the “middle mere” King Arthur’s brand Excalibur; but even this bold knight is tempted by the lust of gold, and “like a girl values the giddy pleasure of the eyes,” so that he hides the weapon in the “many knotted water-flags” forgetting that it is a “shameful thing for men to lie.” As deeper criminals amid this band of chosen disciples come Sir Modred, who was like a cunning beast that waited all the day to “spy some secret scandal,” and Mark whose coarse nature “tarnished the great name of King, as Mark would sully the low state of churl.” Then there was the sensuous Gawain, “that reckless and irreverent knight,” whose eye is so intent on worldly pleasure that he is “thrice as blind as any noon-day owl” to revelations from the sky. And in the “Holy Grail,” that legend of the cup whose beauty is visible to the “pure in heart,” Tennyson would teach that few are pure enough to have the holiest vision. One alone saw the Grail, and even he beheld it afar off. As a last instance of this

general taint of sin we may take Lancelot whom the world had crowned as equal with the king in "Knighthood and pure nobleness." Yet even he is dyed with evil; for he had a darling sin that like a poisonous flower drew the strength from out his nature; and "all of pure, noble and knightly in me twined around that one sin," and naught could pluck the poisonous flower out.

In face of this universal fact of sin Arthur can only stand aghast, to think that all his noble knights should thus "fall back into the beast;" and his only answer to the problem is that "we see not to the close." In "Guinevere," however, there is an attempt to discuss one part of the removal of sin. Guinevere after her fall retires to a convent to mourn the discovery of her fault, but not to sorrow for the evil of her guilt. She discusses repentance, it is true, but it is too logical to be from the heart; and her mind returns to golden days. Then Arthur comes and shows her all the meaning of her error, how it has been the "mockery of his people and their bane." Notwithstanding this cold reception, the queen "crept an inch nearer" and laid her hands upon his feet, trusting that one so powerful to tell the diseases of her soul can also give a healing cure; and in the answer comes the truth that makes repentance possible. "I loathe thee—yet I love thee still." Penitence is possible because the height of love has been revealed. The queen here sees that she had been satisfied with a much smaller soul, and mourns that she did not follow duty, which would have us "love the highest when we see it." And as true repentance thinks more of displeasing the offended source of goodness than of the taunts of the world, so Guinevere allows "the world to be; that is but of the world;" and giving up all hope of killing sin by human means, she throws herself upon the love that hopes for a better meeting in a heavenly sphere. The love that purifies, the love that causes fulfilment of command, the love that casteth out evil; this is one side of the forgiveness of sins—the human part known to all. What still remains of the deep import of the Redeemer's death is not here referred to. Arthur is not Christ; nor is his death atoning.

Third. In referring to *faith* Tennyson does not approach the question, as to how it is just in God to pardon men, or how re-

demption is made possible by a justifying belief on the crucified Christ. Faith in Tennyson is regarded from the viewpoint of man, and it is useless to hunt for any theological explanation of this term. One can only mention some of the aspects of faith. Among these the moral basis required ere man can have a belief in God is prominent. Men must be purged of insincerity and self. The chord of self must so be smitten that it passes trembling out of sight. In the portrayal of this noble, manly, knightly character, requisite for true faith, few poets have equalled Tennyson. His mind was pure, for only such a mind could utter the prayers which everywhere abound in the poems, c.f. "St. Agnes' Eve." But faith does not only presuppose a love of what is noble; it is a trust in a person to whom this love is directed. It is a belief in God. Accordingly, we find that Tennyson's conception of faith fills out as he regards it as a fast clinging to the love and goodness of God despite all apparent contradictions. The world indeed seems lost to purity; and nature "red in tooth and claw" brings its dark tale to contradict the creed that God is love. The sin and evil everywhere lead to some Oriental view of things that there are several gods, one fighting for good, another for evil; and it would seem as if the evil god had gained the day. This world-anarchy was a great source of doubt to Tennyson, c.f. "Passing of Arthur," etc. Now, faith meant a firm trust that God was ruling and bringing all to a successful issue:

"I can but trust that good shall fall
"At last far off. . . at last, to all."

Love for the good and loving God becomes faith in Him, when His word and promise must be accepted apart from the proof of sight and reason. Faith is love in one of its aspects. The love which "never ceases to believe," even though all is shifting, is faith. Faith manifests itself in a willingness to suspend our judgment when a problem arises that would contradict our reason which yet we must accept as coming from our God. However, faith is not a forcing of the mind to gain an explanation of the problem; and perhaps Tennyson has given cause for a little confusion in his often quoted lines:

"There lives more faith in honest doubt"
"Believe me, than in half the creeds."

Faith is not an acceptance of the creeds which try to explain the problem ; nor yet can there ever be faith in doubt. Faith is rather a trust in a living person the explanation of whose life and words may lead to a creed ; but the idea that faith is a belief in some rational mysteries is entirely wrong. Then, as to having faith in "honest doubt," the only sense in which this can be true, is that where the human reason would doubt, then the Christian has the opportunity to believe. Faith in Tennyson is treated as temporary ; for it must vanish with the increase of knowledge and insight into God's plans. As Paul taught that the greatest gift of all was love, for it alone is eternal, so Tennyson also held that when "we know as we are known," then love will no longer require to exercise itself as faith, for all uncertainty will have ceased, when

" We close with all we loved,
" And all we flow from, soul in soul."

There is little space left to touch on the grounds of faith ; but one must be mentioned, which is that faith remembers former visions. At these times of religious experience the soul saw deep into the heart of God, and faith is willing to believe that these visions will return. Faith believes itself and has no scepticism of its earlier religious emotions. Faith is not "disobedient unto the heavenly visions" :

" If e'er when faith had fallen asleep,
I heard a voice, ' Believe no more,'
And heard an ever-breaking shore
That tumbled in the godless deep :
A warmth within the breast would melt
The freezing reason's colder part,
And like a man in wrath the heart
Stood up and answered, ' I have felt.'"

Such are some of what seem to be the more simple of Tennyson's beliefs ; but how bare the frame-work looks when we behold the structures of artistic and moral beauty that everywhere abound in this "stateliest of poets." Style is so involved in thought, and the grandeur of a poet's belief loses so much of its charm when severed from the form of words, that one must always make excuse for attempting to write about such things. Each reader must return to the source for himself : and he will find that there is a "hiddenness in perfect things" that never is revealed at second-hand. He will also find that there are ever

deeper thoughts in the many motioned mind of the great genius ; and his experience will be like that of Sir Percivale, who at the close of Arthur's speech could only say :

“ So spake the King : I knew not all he meant.”

Pictou.

JAMES W. FALCONER.

THE DEAF AND DUMB INSTITUTION.

THE Archbishop of Halifax is spoiling for a fight. Some time ago he wanted to raise a row over the terms of the *modus vivendi* under which the Halifax schools are managed. But nobody would fight with him, or could see the need of fighting, so things remained as before. The incident may have helped however, to stiffen the back of the City Council, when they recently decided to build a new school-house themselves, instead of handing the matter over to the Archbishop and thereafter paying him six per cent. on the amount of the cost. For two years he has checkmated the Council in the matter of purchasing a new burying-ground, by insisting that he must be put in possession of the title to the Catholic portion of it: and the Council have at last concluded to let Catholics and Protestants find cemeteries for themselves. There was a renewed attempt to get grants from the public purse for the reformation of Catholic young women who are going astray. There was a ridiculous fuss raised over the location of some telegraph or telephone posts, that were understood to interfere with the view from a window of the Glebe House. And now the belligerent Archbishop must needs fall foul of the Deaf and Dumb Institution. He proclaims, for the guidance of the faithful, that he has not confidence in its management. The directors explain to him their policy of non-interference with the religion of the pupils. It seems they use a manual of religious instruction, and there is nothing in it that the Archbishop can object to. The Catholic pupils are sent regularly to St. Patrick's Church, of course under the care of some one who can translate the services to them through the finger alphabet. It does not seem to be asserted that any attempts

at proselytizing have been made. But all that amounts to nothing. Catholic parents must keep their deaf-mutes at home, and Catholic contributions must be withheld, because of the Archbishop's want of confidence. He indicates, however, that his attitude might be different if there were a good Catholic teacher on the staff. It might be too previous to inquire how long that would be satisfactory. But it is not difficult to see that the next demand would be for a separate institution, with a grant all to itself.

A superficial observer might be inclined to dismiss the matter with a smile, as amounting simply to a little bumptiousness on the part of an individual. But that would be a mistake. The Archbishop understands the policy of his church. He is only a skirmisher on the outskirts of a great army. The main fields of conflict are Ireland and the United States. The aim is to break down the national or public school system, and secure as large a share of public funds as possible for schools that shall be entirely under the control of the priests. In Ireland a point has been gained for the Christian Brothers already, and the prospects of wider success are brightening. In the United States the struggle is likely to be long and severe, though it is hard to tell what may happen, if a compact body of voters hold the balance of power between democrat and republican. In Halifax the Archbishop will have to bide his time. The mine is charged. School buildings are in his hands; the teaching organization is complete; and some turn of the wheel may give him a local government ready to do his bidding.

The demand to sectarianize education, whether it be of 10,000 wide-awake children or of half-a-dozen deaf-mutes, is fundamentally a war against civilization. For the peace and order of a civilized community are in a very precarious condition if its members cannot mingle in a free and friendly way with one another, and co-operate in the discharge of civic duties in a spirit of mutual respect and confidence. The best preparation for harmony in civil, industrial and social life is to let the young intermingle freely, in lessons and at play, and thus form personal friendships that shall cross the dividing line of sect. And the worst preparation for citizenship in a mixed community is to coop up the young in denominational hotbeds where they can

come across no type of thought or feeling but their own ; so that when at last they leave the school, and take their place in the workshop or the factory or at the council-board, Catholic will meet Protestant and Churchman will meet Methodist with a suspiciousness and embarrassment like the meeting of strange cats. You say that that will wear off. In some it will. In many it will not. And it is for the very purpose of creating a permanent severance from all but the faithful that the hot-bed system is insisted on. If it failed to make the cleavage permanent, it would not be worth fighting for. The question is not one about proselytism. Children brought up in an honestly conducted public school would, as a rule, retain the religion of their parents. The question is whether people should not be prepared for mutual toleration and cordial co-operation as citizens by having the opportunity of exercising tolerance and engaging in co-operation during the formation period of life. The policy of isolation during school life is an attempt to throw the shadow backward on the dial of human progress—to throw the political organization of society back from the civic to the normal stage:—the solidarity of the sect being substituted for the cohesion of the tribe. The ideal is realized in the Turkish Empire to-day ; and those who are enamoured of it should go to Turkey and enjoy it there.

*PERSONAL OBJECTIONS TO ENLISTING AS
MISSIONARIES.*

IT is the aim of this paper to point out as clearly as possible, our personal relation to the great question of Missions. Stirring addresses are heard and instructive papers are read without accomplishing the necessary work of bringing the matter home and making each individual question as to his or her particular relation to the work of spreading the gospel. We hope for the success of missions, we trust that men will be found who will go to the Heathen. We are anxious that the money should be forthcoming to meet the expense, but we do not readily make it such a practical matter that we ask what can I do to bring about the desired result ?

We do not wish to be classed with those who say " be warned,

be filled,' and do not give the needful assistance; yet if there is to be a distinction there must be a difference. It will not do to shift the responsibility to other shoulders. It is our business—yours and mine—to see that the gospel is preached to the Heathen, as much as it is the business of the Missionary who has given himself to the work. We have a part to play in God's plan, let us seek earnestly to discover what it is.

Many of us would be Missionaries, but there are so many difficulties to be overcome that we hesitate. Surely God cannot intend it, or the way would not seem so hard. But are difficulties a sign of divine disapproval? Or is the easy and pleasant path always the one to be chosen? Are not great purposes fulfilled at the cost of overcoming many difficulties? The path of duty is often stern, rugged, and unattractive, but it is better thus. The man, who is always choosing the easy way, may get on in life, but he will never in the true sense be a man. The mariner's skill is gained in the roar of the tempest, out on the bounding ocean, not in the sunny, sheltered haven; the soldier's steadiness comes from the deadly conflict, the life and death struggle, and not from the quiet ease of the barracks. Difficulties make men, and rather than discourage should challenge the energies of every true man.

Some of the objections to making a personal matter of this call for Missionaries have to do with the individual himself; others arise from outside conditions. Perhaps the thought first suggested is that I am not strong enough to undertake such a work. Are we sure of this? It is true that some climates are trying in the extreme, but are there not others where we might be actually healthier than we now are? Have we looked over the field before coming to this decision? Is not this in God's hand: if He sees fit to lead into mission work, can He not give the needful strength? That he can and will do so is seen from the fact that many of our present Missionaries are well and strong to-day, who left for their fields in imperfect health. Some have succumbed to climatic influences, but others have benefited; has it not been so at home?

But some one, who is naturally modest, objects that he has not the talents necessary to fit one to become a successful missionary. Possibly not, but what are the requisite talents? Great mental

power, facility for languages, eloquence? Is the foolishness of this world to take the place of divine wisdom? It does not require great mental power to tell the simple story of the cross. There are places and peoples where great mental power would find use, but there are also many poor, ignorant, simple ones perishing for the lack of the bread of life. Facility for languages you may not have, but it is not essential. There are in India, Japan, South Africa and the West Indies, many English speaking missions. As for eloquence, rounded periods and beautiful figures are not nearly so effective as the living, breathing language of a life lived always in fellowship with Christ. This is surely within our reach, and will help us to win souls better than the wisdom and oratory of the ancients.

Then there is the matter of scholarship. Education is a splendid thing, but Christ took the rude Galilean fisherman, as well as the cultured Pharisee, and made all most effective workmen. The field of knowledge is so large, our courses of study so extensive, that a very considerable fraction of our lives is spent at school. Perhaps this is as it should be. But thousands of our fellows are dying, while we are elaborately preparing ourselves to tell them of Christ the Saviour. After all, the best scholarship is to know Him, to dwell much in His company. Let us look at both sides of the question.

But some one says I am not good enough for this work. It requires persons of great faith and spirituality. This is true, but where do men get faith and spiritual insight? Are not the resources of the Almighty at our disposal. Will He refuse to give us the Spirit to qualify us for the work, if we sincerely ask Him?

But you still further object—I have no desire for the work. I have no love for the Heathen. On the contrary I have a strong dislike to going. Are we only to do what we like? Is that the duty of the soldier? Have we sought to gain a love for our poor fellow creatures, by interesting ourselves in their circumstances and learning about them? Perhaps we might best learn to love them by going to the field and working with them.

So far we have dealt only with subjective difficulties, but there are also certain objective ones which demand attention. Perhaps we are engaged in business, which seems to demand our

time and energies. Success has crowned our efforts; we construe this as an indication that we are filling the right place in the world's economy. But are only the idle, or those who have failed in business to go abroad as Missionaries? Or again, you think that there is work to do for God at home, and as you are busily engaged in that, you should not be expected to leave it. Are there no others who could and would do your work? It would indeed be a poor recommendation for a Missionary, that he could not find anything to do for God at home. Surely our best Christian workers at home will make the best ones abroad. But we feel we do not have a special call to go. Do we indeed need a special call? We have the plain command of our Saviour to "go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." Does this apply to you and to me? What right have we to say that it is for some one else? Millions of our fellows are spending their lives in wretchedness and are going down to an endless night, while we are commissioned to bring to them the knowledge of the true God and of eternal life. They are dying by thousands, daily, while we wait for a special call to go to their help.

But a further objection may be made concerning the place. One is ready to go, but the place does not suit. Where is our place? The field is the world, the harvest consists of the souls of men. Wherever we find men destitute of the knowledge of Christ, and can come to them, there is our place. Oh! you say that there is a risk of failure and waste of money. How many great undertakings have been carried out without some risk of failure and of wasteful expenditure? Men risk life and property for less worthy objects. The battle is won over the bodies of the slain. Are we too cowardly to sacrifice life in a good cause? Shall we run no risks? What sort of soldiers are we? Is it a sin to die? Not so thought our brave martyrs, whose life blood stained the soil of the far distant islands of the South Seas. We need to make up our minds that the gospel must be preached, and then be as prudent as we can after that.

It remains for us now to emphasize the importance of decision. We express our willingness to become Missionaries by deciding that we will work for God in whatever place He may see best. We identify ourselves with the work, and will allow no trivial

excuses to stand between us and a plain duty. It is true that we may never see mission lands, but if we are willing to follow God's leading, we may find ourselves brought step by step to work among the unsaved masses of the Heathen world. Is not this an end to be sought? Is it not worth our effort that millions of our fellow creatures be given a chance for eternal life? This is the day, and we, children of the day; are we working? Are we utilizing our time and opportunities? There are rewards and crowns for the faithful. But we will never hear the "well done" unless we have done well. The day is coming when we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ, and each shall render an account of himself to God. The good works of the Christian will manifest to an assembled universe his union with Christ; he will ascend the throne and concur in the sentence of the wicked. This will be possible only to those who have faithfully held forth the word of God, and warned men to flee from the wrath to come. How can you or I join in condemning to eternal ruin, those of the heathen world whom we would not help to save?

J. D. MACKAY.

Presbyterian College, Halifax.

MISSION REPORT FROM LABRADOR.

ON the 4th of November, I landed at Forneau, on the rocky shores of Labrador, some fifty or sixty miles from the place where I first expected to teach. Next morning I took passage on board S. S. "Volunteer" for Blanc Bolon. Arriving there I found only one man in the place, and he was unable to assist me on my way. So I had to go back to a place called Lance Clare, a small village, principally of poor people. I held a meeting there that night. Next morning, owing to the severity of the weather, I was unable to proceed any further by boat, and so had to start on foot, accompanied by two men, to travel over hill and dale to St. Paul's River. Returning to Blanc Bolon where I left my trunk, school requisites, etc., I took what I supposed I would need and then we set out, each carrying a load which seemed very light at first, but grew heavy as the sun went down. How-

ever, we arrived at Bradore before it was night, feeling none the worse of a fall through the ice. In this place I visited several families, one of which (a family of seven) had very "little meal in the barrel." I did what I could to relieve them and endeavored to lead them to have confidence in God, trusting that he would provide. I promised to make their case known at St. Paul's River, and afterwards succeeded in collecting over thirty dollars for them. Leaving Bradore next morning at the break of day we purposed going as far as Bell's Amour that day, but owing to the roughness of the way and the guides not being acquainted with the lay of the land, the journey was longer and more difficult than it would otherwise have been. However, we arrived at Bell's Amour before night. After sleeping the sweet sleep of the labouring man I bade adieu to my guides, and taking one man with me, we set out for St. Paul's River, visiting Salmon Bay on the way. Shortly after dark we arrived at our destination. Here I found a village of 19 families, divided denominationally as follows: Nine Episcopalians, six Roman Catholics, and four Presbyterians, forming all together a population of nearly 100. My work consisted in teaching five days and three nights, and holding two meetings every week. Religious instruction was given the first half hour every day in school. The people seemed greatly pleased to meet to worship God on His own day, and gave good attention to what was said. The average attendance was about forty.

The work among the young people was very encouraging. They showed even greater ability to learn than children of greater privileges. Some of those who did not know their alphabet when they entered school, could read the *fourth* Reader and write fairly well ere I left. They paid for all their books with the exception of a few who promised to pay H. Fequet the following summer. Thus engaged, the time quickly passed, and as January was drawing to a close, I was preparing to set out for Harrington, a distance of some 150 miles.

On the 6th of February I took leave of my kind friends at St. Paul's River, and we began our journey westward. At Old Fort—a place having a population of 22, we remained over Sabbath. Leaving here Monday, we visited two families, and arrived at Bay De Roche in the afternoon; we visited all the people. After

leaving Bay De Roche our road was very rough. One mountain which we had to climb was so steep that it required the united efforts of three men and seven dogs to drag up the "komitic." Going on a little further we came to a point of land extending out a long distance. The ice did not look safe, but if we could not get past this point we would have to go back several miles and climb the mountains. So, giving the dogs the word of command to stop, we came to a halt. A consultation was held. One of the guides started forward to ascertain the thickness of the ice—he found that the weight of the axe would break it—still on he went. Meanwhile, the dogs grew impatient and started after him. We all followed, and when we came to a place where there was a rapid we saw the first "komitic" bending the ice and one of the dogs fell through. What were we to do? To stop was certain death. Our only hope lay in pressing on. Urging the dogs forward we went on and were borne safely across; and before long reached Checatiwaw. On the following day we went up St. Augustine River, where, owing to severe storms, I was delayed four days. I visited the people, taught school, and held meetings. They were very anxious that I should remain with them and teach their children—one family offered to board me if I would stay—but as I received no orders to remain in this place I proceeded, visiting Lake Salle, Old Post, and Tabothier. At the last mentioned place I met the Episcopal clergyman who was busily engaged "teaching and preaching." From thence I proceeded to Grace Coop and visited some of the people from there to the Sound. All the distance from St. Paul's River to the Sound (about 140 miles) I was carried by "Komitic" (dog sledges) but now I had to don my "rackets," (snow shoes), take a guide and travel to Harrington. We arrived there just as the people were assembling for prayer-meeting. My feelings were somewhat similar to that of a person suddenly transported from the frigid to the torrid zone. I had heard much concerning the people of Harrington, but unlike many reports this was no exaggeration. They held their meetings regularly, and although sometimes they lasted one hour and a half, still there was no "drag."

Harrington is a village of 23 families—17 Presbyterians, 5 Episcopalians and 1 Catholic. They are characterized by a spirit

of religious zeal and earnestness ; they do not believe in living in the old ruts, but are ambitious to press on to higher, nobler and better things. They are therefore a progressive class of people, steadily going on. True, they have neither great learning nor riches, but they have what is better, peace and contentment. I feel confident that in a short time they will be able to do much to support an ordained missionary among themselves. While I was with them I taught school and held five meetings every week. The progress made both in the day school and Sabbath school was remarkable. The attendance was all that could be expected. Out of a population of one hundred, forty would take part in the meetings.

As spring opened up we began to look forward to the arrival of the Halifax vessels, and on the 21st May we spied through the glass the "Minnie Dee" approaching. As soon as she dropped anchor some of us went on board, and found that our expected help had not as yet arrived ; but we were cheered when we learned that Mr. Thompson would arrive in a few days ; so he did, and was warmly welcomed. I was then relieved of the heavier part of my work, although I still taught school. The first prayer meeting conducted by him could not be dismissed inside of three hours, and even then many wished to take part. Children, twelve or thirteen years old, were not ashamed to own Jesus as their Saviour, in fact, the majority of the young people professed a change of heart.

The time was now drawing near when I must say good-bye to all my friends at Harrington and return to my native land. My feelings were two fold ; first, I was very sorry to leave Mr. Thompson and the kind people of Labrador, and second, I was glad to be returning home. On the 10th of June, we set sail for Halifax, arriving there on the 15th. In closing, I would say that the papers and letters received from your secretary and others, were highly appreciated. I distributed the papers among the people, and also a number of books from the library at St. Paul's River. But what I valued most of all was your prayers. Often I met with discouragements and would be nearly cast down ; then I remembered the promise "I will never leave thee, never forsake thee." I also remembered that many earnest Christians were pleading with God to carry on the work in

Labrador. By considering these and other things, I was encouraged to go on and leave results with God. I need scarcely remind you that Mr. Thompson requires all the help you can give him by your prayers and also by writing to him. Although we write here the middle of December, he does not receive his first mail until the last of January, at the earliest, and often then much of the mail has to be left, on account of the impossibility of carrying very much weight.

DAVID C. ROSS.

HATCH'S HIBBERT LECTURES.

THE theme of these lectures is the influence of Greek ideas and usages upon the Christian church. Dr. Hatch's account of Greek education, philosophical and rhetorical, of the college life of eighteen centuries ago, is exceedingly interesting. His tracing of Christian belief and usage to Greek sources may sometimes fail to command our full acceptance. He raises more questions than he finally settles. But the book is none the less—perhaps all the more—a rarely stimulating one for the theological student.

We select for special notice his treatment of two topics—the doctrine of the sacraments and the Nicene orthodoxy.

(a.) Sacramentalism.

He shews that certain ideas and usages were transferred to the sacraments from the Greek mysteries. This Hellenizing of the Christian ritual began as early as the middle of the second century, for we find distinct traces of it in Justin Martyr. In his Apology, addressed to the philosophical emperors, he describes baptism by the use of phrases—regeneration, illumination, and the like—that seem little calculated to explain the meaning of the rite to a heathen. But the matter assumes a new aspect when we find that these expressions belonged to the technical language of the mysteries.

This is not all. Dr. Hatch attempts to go deeper than the intimation of the mysteries. He ascribes to Greek thought the

conception that matter and spirit are varying forms of a single substance. And so when we find a spiritual virtue attributed to the water in baptism, we are to take the statement literally and not symbolically. He merely throws out the thought, without elaborating it or showing the precise mode of its application. How far is it true? And what light does it throw on the Church doctrine of the sacraments?

The position is too broadly stated. That the Greeks, in or near the second century, held a materialistic view of the nature of spirit, will hardly be gathered from Plutarch *De Placitis* or the *Physica* of Stobæus. Hatch's references are to the Stoics, and the proof is not complete even in regard to them. They regarded the *animal* soul as a subtle kind of matter, but the *rational* soul, or ruling principle in man, they held to be a particle of divine essence. On this point Marcus Aurelius is quite explicit. As to other schools of philosophy, Democritus and Lucretius were undoubtedly materialists. But even Epicurus recognized in the soul a principle of feeling or consciousness not resolvable into any of the known elements, as fire, or still air, or wind. Maximus Tyrius argues formally that the soul is not body, and appeals to Pythagoras and Plato, as well as to Homer. Of course Hatch knew all that. He may have overstated the materialistic or monistic tendency of the later Greek philosophy. But after due abatement the question remains, whether there is not enough of truth in the hint he has thrown out to shed some light on the development of doctrine and practice respecting the sacraments.

We think there is. The Greek mind was saturated with a belief in magic. New extravagancies in that line might encounter a sceptical reception. But the Greek believed in oracles, omens, auguries, the power of the stars, the baleful influence of the evil eye, and other kindred superstitions. In these popular beliefs, more than in the definitions of philosophers, the conceptions of physical and spiritual force run into one another, so that the distinction between them and their heterogeneousness are lost sight of. For the believer in magic, things material, things spiritual, and things half and between, such as speech, are thrown together as into a witch's cauldron, and the outcome could not be better formulated than in Hume's philosophical

maxim, that anything might have been the cause of anything. Priest and magician were more or less kindred functionaries. The Christian minister might be either or both. His solemn invocations or consecrations, in the celebration of the Christian mysteries, were spells or incantations, conferring some weird power of enchantment on the sacramental element. It was easy to believe that the enchanted water could wash away sin, that the enchanted bread and wine could communicate the body and blood of Christ, and so his whole being, including his soul and his divinity. The efficacy, *ex opere operato*, of the sacraments was magical, and pre-supposed a belief in magic. So long as the leading minds of the Church were of Jewish training, a philosophy of religion based on the belief in magic was out of the question. There could not be a more bald and unromantic view of Christian ritual than that given in the recently discovered manual of Church order entitled the "Teaching of the Apostles." But when the Church became Greek, its ordinances came to be regarded as a mightier thaumaturgy than that connected with the old religion. Perhaps this link of connection with paganism was partly to blame for the bitterness of early persecutions. Christians were accused of killing children and feasting on their bodies in the church meetings. If such an accusation were brought against a Christian sect to-day, the answer would be an invitation to attend the meetings and witness all that goes on. It seems never to have occurred to any of the second century apologists to give such an invitation. Why? Because the communion service was a dread mystery, and the presence of a heathen might have broken the spell! As well think of throwing open the Eleusinian mysteries. The accusation raised against the Christians seemed credible, because such things were actually done in connection with pagan sorcery. Pliny, the naturalist, speaks with due disgust of magico-medical cannibalism—of the use of the warm blood of dying gladiators, of the marrow of leg-bones, and the brains of children—of Greeks, not a few who could tell the distinctive tastes of the several limbs and viscera. The charge against the Christians was slanderous; the murderous extravagancies of sorcery were an abomination to the Church; yet the transfer of a magical meaning and efficacy to the Christian rites necessitated the exclusion of unbelievers, so that the readiest mode of refuting the calumny was unavailable.

(b.)—The Nicene Creed.

Dr. Hatch reaches the crown and crisis of his argument when he undertakes to show that the Nicene Creed is a result of the Greek love for metaphysical speculation. He does not discuss the question whether the Arianism condemned by the Creed was not a still more characteristic product of Greek thought. Nor does he attack the truth of the Creed. He distinctly disclaims any such intention. What he complains of is its use as the condition and test of Christian fellowship. He traces the gradual process by which the basis of Christian union was transferred from moral to dogmatic ground.

He begins with the "Two Ways," as a manual whose teaching is wholly moral. This account of it, though natural enough, is rather one-sided. The "Two Ways" (the first part of the "Teaching of the Apostles") may be a Christianized expansion of an older Jewish document. But as we now have it, in the Jerusalem manuscript, it does not justify the picture of a community with no bond of union but an exceptionally high morality. Even its morality contains such elements as respect for religious teachers, and guarding against schism. But its very use and purpose is to set forth the life a catechumen binds himself to lead when he applies for baptism. And the baptism, in fresh water if practicable, is to be into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.

Here we have the nucleus of the Creeds, as the indispensable basis of Christian fellowship. There is no escape from this position, in the magical character of baptism; for the consecrated water had not yet become a fetish. And when, some three generations later, a view of this kind did come to prevail, the power of the charm was due to the invocation of the Trinity. It was a work of time to frame, some scriptural data, a formula setting forth the relation of Son and Spirit to the Father, so as to safeguard on one hand the unity of God and on the other hand the divinity of Christ. The Greek intellect found it helpful for this purpose to draw a metaphysical distinction between Being or nature and Person; so that the place of the Son in the sacred Triad of baptism could be justified on the ground that, as Son, He is of the same Being or nature as the Father. The Nicene for-

mula may be open to criticism. A patripassian of the second century might rise from the dead and tell us that his mode of putting the matter is better than ours. A hegelian of our own day may offer the services of his patent tread-mill, to draw a distinction for us and then resolve it into a higher unity. Let the subject be threshed out, though we should have to use Greek logic as the flail. But the teaching function of the Church requires that we do the best we can towards a coherent presentation of what we are to believe concerning God. And it is of no use to arraign the present type of doctrine, unless one is prepared to suggest a better.

The terms of fellowship, however, need not be as high, should not be as high, as the standard of instruction. And even the standard of instruction should be used judiciously. On this point there may be something to criticise in the public services of Dr. Hatch's own Church. The repetition of the creeds, and the frequent recurrence of trinitarian doxologies, force the metaphysics of theology on the attention of the worshipper in a measure to which there is scarcely any parallel in the public worship of other evangelical denominations. Be that as it may, Dr. Hatch's complaint that too much is made of the doctrinal shibboleth is not without foundation, though the outcry may be louder than circumstances warrant. We have a shrewd suspicion, however, that Roman despotism has as much to do with this trend of the ecclesiastical mind as Greek metaphysics. The stand he takes against it is bold, even defiant, yet not so hazardous as it might seem. He plants himself on the crest of an advancing wave, supported on one side by the popular school of German theologians, whose war-cry is "down with metaphysics in theology," and on the other side by a great body of good Christian men and women, who feel that a Christ-like life, springing from love to Him who first loved us and gave Himself for us, is a far more vital matter than the mere reiteration and advocacy of a form of sound words.

The following paragraph sums up his broadside against the Hellenism of current Christianity: "The net result is the introduction into Christianity of three chief products of the Greek mind—Rhetoric, Logic and Metaphysics. . . . Greece lives . . . in the Christian Church. . . . Its ethics of right and

duty, rather than of love and self-sacrifice ; its theology, whose God is more metaphysical than spiritual—whose essence it is important to define ; its creation of a class of men whose main duty in life is that of moral exhortation, and whose utterances are not the spontaneous outflow of a prophet's soul, but the artistic periods of a rhetorician ; its religious ceremonial, with the darkness and the light, the initiation, and the solemn enactment of a symbolic drama ; its conception of intellectual assent rather than of moral earnestness as the basis of religious society—in all these, and the ideas that underlie them, Greece lives." (P. 350.)

This indictment naturally provokes the reply, what do you propose to do about it ? Greek metaphysics : what is it but an attempt to understand the nature of things, what they really are ? Must we abandon all such effort ? Greek logic : what is it but a discipline in clear and correct reasoning ? Are we to gain anything religiously by treating a bad argument as equal to a good one ? As to ethics, there is no antagonism between duty and love. If our locomotive is to climb to heights of moral achievement, duty must define the track, and love supply the steam. As to rhetoric, Dr. Hatch with his "Two Ways" and his Sermon on the Mount, should be the last man to complain of *moral exhortation*. Vapid rhetoric does not belong to the ideal of the pulpit. As regards the sacraments, it is well that ritualists should study Dr. Hatch's exposition of the Eleusinian Mysteries. The magical element was cast out by the Reformed Churches long ago. And finally, as to the demand for intellectual assent as a ground of church fellowship, how shall two walk together except they be agreed ? All moral earnestness of life and action rests on earnestness of belief, and would have no moral or spiritual worth without it. If there are errors in the Creed, correct them. If there are superfluities or unwarranted speculation, remove them. But mere declamation against clear thinking and accurate statement will neither bind men closer to one another, nor raise them nearer to God.

A. MACKNIGHT.

EDITORIAL.

THE pleasant duty of making the usual bow as we open a new volume of the THEOLOGUE is again borne to us on the fleet wings of the flying seasons. The time seems very short as we glance for a moment back, but we are actually four years old. At that age a child should be able to speak for itself, and thus not only please but relieve its parents. But we think it still necessary, in the usual salutatory, to accentuate the prattling syllables our little one would seek to utter. Speaking of the child suggests the parents. But the fathers of the THEOLOGUE where are they? They are not dead but are to be found at various posts in the world's field of battle. They have left their offspring in our hands; and so we come with the child of our adoption and introduce him again to you, who have received him with such favour heretofore. You may look with some disappointment on his little growth. But although we cannot yet quite put away childish things, we trust you may detect some signs of dawning youth and manhood.

Figures aside, for our bow must not be long; what have we to add to what has been said by our predecessors, to justify our continued existence and upon which to base our claim to your further favour? The question with us is not, "to be or not to be," we simply *are*. It is not even, "having been shall we *continue* to be?" We have put our hand to the plough and we must not go back. It is rather, "*being* how shall we *better* be"? Thus, having what we conceive a worthy ideal in life, and striving to realize it we may not only win but retain your confidence, by continuing to serve with increasing efficiency our church and college.

Some may still question our right to exist, and therefore withhold from us that support which alone can make existence tolerable. We may here say that our claim to existence and support are not based on any intrinsic merit in the matter of our Magazine. It is not that in our pages you get better matter for

the same or less money than you get in other publications. We shall always give the best we can obtain. It is simply that our paper is the exponent of college thought and life, and seeks to bring that thought and life in touch with those, who, though not in direct contact with the college, should be keenly alive to her condition and interest. This fact at once forms an apology, if needed, for our reappearance, and furnishes, we think, the strongest arguments why the ministers and elders in our church should support us.

While, therefore, we feel we need not strive to excel, or even rival in excellence distinctively literary or theological magazines, in order to retain your confidence, we shall always endeavour in the future, as we venture to hope we have succeeded in doing in the past, to furnish matter of such varied character and interest, and of such substantial merit that no Presbyterian need be ashamed of us.

We shall still strive to be true to our ideal, to represent the life which pulses through the college heart, which is indeed the heart of the church. In this way we hope to keep the fathers and brethren interested in all that concerns the college, to make their eyes more frequently and fondly turn to the School of the Prophets; where the men are being trained who are to uphold the honour of the standard they have so bravely borne, but which they must soon let fall; to carry it forward and maintain the good fight of faith against the church's foes. The training for such work must be of the highest importance. The church's interest in it should be intense. Feeling, therefore, that you must be deeply interested in your college, and promising to represent as well as time permits her interests to you, we feel justified in claiming your sympathy and support, as we now for the fourth time make our bow.

THE COLLEGE STAFF.

THE consummation so devoutly wished in connection with our College Staff, has at length been realized. That the Professors were overburdened with work, every one admitted. That it was desirable to augment their number all would equally

agree. Two points remained, and both seemed problems hard to solve. The solution of one rested mainly with the Presbyteries; that of the other upon the congregations of the Synod. The one raised the question as to what department in the College curriculum needed strengthening most. The other addressed itself to the rank and file of the congregations, and asked them to wipe out the College debt, and thus make an addition to the Staff possible.

As any one who knows the fibre of Maritime Presbyterianism could anticipate, both problems were promptly solved. The appeal to the Presbyteries to settle the question, as to what work the additional Professor should have, occasioned some debate. But the majority of Presbyteries decided in favor of the New Testament Greek and Exegesis. To the credit of the minority we are glad to say that they gracefully acquiesced. The appeal made to the people also met with a prompt and generous response. Some sections excelled themselves in liberality. In fact all did well and the debt was extinguished. The fears of those who looked for trouble at the Synod were happily disappointed. The report of the College Board through Rev. D. M. Gordon, recommending the appointment of R. A. Falconer, M. A., B. D., as Lecturer in New Testament Greek and Exegesis was unanimously and we may say enthusiastically carried without debate or division.

It is almost superfluous for us to say any more in the way of introduction to our readers than mention Mr. Falconer's name. His father, Rev. Alexander Falconer, Pictou, is well known to the Church as one of her best preachers and most honored Pastors. He himself was a Gilchrist Scholar, and is a graduate of Edinburgh University with honours in Classics and with honours in Philosophy from London. He is also a B. D. of Edinburgh Free Church College. Besides, he has spent several summers in the best colleges in Germany; thus coming in contact with current criticism and thought in its very citadel. His thorough knowledge of Greek and German, and his broad culture, give him peculiar fitness as an instructor in New Testament Greek and Introduction. We feel, therefore, that there is no risk in placing him in such a responsible position. As we have showed, his opportunities for culture of the highest order, and in the line of

his appointment, have been of the very best. His record as a student was more than the most exacting could wish, to prove his intellectual fitness. He comes, literally, with honours thick upon him, to engage in a work which needs the highest talents of the mind; a mind, too, brought into touch with the trend of modern thought at the highest seats of learning in the world.

Without any disparagement to the many cultured and scholarly men in our church, who have, besides, the maturity and experience in other directions which the appointee perhaps should have, we are safe in saying that a candidate could not be found who possessed the peculiar fitness of Mr. Falconer.

The church no doubt did right in making assurance doubly sure by taking Mr. Falconer on probation. In our opinion he has already won his spurs as an instructor, by so conducting his classes that attendance on them is a genuine pleasure.

It is particularly gratifying to Mr. Falconer that he enters on his work with the sympathy of the entire Synod. We have already expressed at least by implication the feelings of the students with regard to this appointment. Most of our readers already know that we were absolutely unanimous with regard to the functions of the new professor. Our opinion was in line too, with the decision of the majority of Presbyteries. It yet remains for us to pronounce upon the appointment. In doing so we are proud to be able to heartily second the decision of the College Board as ratified by the Synod. In the man, as in the chair, we are more than satisfied, we are delighted. We are in a position to say that the students feel that the Synod has done the highest credit to itself, and has served in the best possible manner the interests of the College by the appointment of Mr. Falconer to the College staff.

Doubtless we have already said enough about this matter which we consider so happily settled. We consider it due, however, to Mr. Falconer, the Synod and ourselves, to thus plainly state what we believe to be the feelings of the students.

Before we close there is a word we wish to say about the other members of the college staff. During the progress of the discussion in the Presbyteries, already referred to, we were sometimes pained to hear words which seemed at least to disparage the work being done by our true and tried Professors. Perhaps this could

not be avoided. But we have always felt that if such were intentional, it was most cruel and unjust. We have never wavered, in fact we have advanced from year to year in our appreciation of the work done by the devoted three who have served our church and College so long and so faithfully. We now rejoice with them, not in a better man, but in an eminently worthy helper. We trust, too, that he will have not three, but many years, to prove his fitness, and to build on the foundation so deeply and firmly laid. We rejoice in the appointment, further, because our other professors have now more time to devote to work which they felt, perhaps more keenly than the Synod, was being too much neglected. Also, those who differed in opinion on the functions of the new chair, can now be glad with us in seeing their pet subject receive a great deal more attention. Hitherto our professors were handicapped in their work. No better men could be found in the church to impart instruction in practical training, had they time. Now they are reinforced by a helper thoroughly competent in his department, and their hands are thus untied. What is the result? Simply, that without exception they are seeking to fulfil the desire of the church and are devoting much time and thought to Practical Training.

We shall not here detail the work done by each in this line. Suffice it to say that it meets with the hearty appreciation of the students.

In closing, we again congratulate the Maritime Church College on the new era that has dawned upon it. If in past years, in the days of small things, in the twilight shadows of the college growth, with debt and other embarrassments, she did so well, as a glance at the constitution of the Synod proves, what may we not now expect as we stand and gladly see the shadows flee away as the light of a new and brighter morning breaks upon us?

SUMMER SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY.

WE desire to call the attention of our readers to a happy suggestion thrown out by Dr. Pollok in his inaugural address. We refer to the idea of establishing a summer school of theology. It is scarcely necessary to remark that

such a school could be made a source of pleasure as well as profit to all who could attend. This, it has been said is an "age of laymen." We may take it for granted, then, that there are many who would gladly avail themselves of any opportunity of making themselves better acquainted with some of the questions which are being earnestly discussed at the present day. As loyal and intelligent supporters of the church it is their duty perhaps, to learn something of the strength of those batteries which her enemies are erecting against her. It may be said indeed, that we have only to wait and these frowning batteries will go up in the smoke of their own discharge. But it may save us some disquiet if we assure ourselves by careful investigation, that we stand on solid ground, and that all the talk of the opposing "critic" is likely to be harmless. We see that he talks learnedly indeed. But sometimes it is because believing only in his own inspiration, he has become exceedingly puffed up.

But a knowledge of the weakness of much modern speculation might be the least important result of our summer school. Other associations show how eagerly we search for truth in other spheres of knowledge. Are we not in danger of neglecting the great store-house of truth—the Bible? The Bible, is the source of the highest truth, the foundation of modern progress and civilization. If we could have a summer school which would show students how to open this mine for themselves and get the knowledge which is more precious than fine gold; if it would lead to a more systematic study of the Bible as a whole, and of its separate parts, we think it would be worth all the effort it would cost. A few weeks of the summer holidays could not be spent in any more profitable study.

It would be hard to find a more pleasant spot for summer recreation than our own College on the Arm. From the class-rooms we see the waves dancing in the sunlight, or dashing their white-caps at the feet of the rocks on the opposite shore. Beyond this, the bare hills rise in rugged grandeur. Surely this would be no unfit place for meditating on the ways and character of Him who laid the foundation of the hills and whose voice is on the waters of the deep.

To this cool and healthful retreat the best lecturers might be glad to come from the hot, dusty and unhealthy cities. Ministers

would be profited by the interchange of thought and sympathy. Congregations too would reap benefit from helping their pastors to renew their youth by living again a few weeks of college life. Here, business and professional men and women would find a pleasant escape from the wearisome routine of daily duty. Here they would enjoy all the pleasures of life in the country and by the sea. The body would gain new strength by rest in such quiet and beautiful surroundings. The mind would be stimulated by the real rest of activity along new lines of thought. The character would be developed by the contemplation of the noblest truth. Thus our summer school of theology would prepare the whole man for the performance of life's work.

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UNIFORMITY IN THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION.

BY the union of 1875 all the work of our church, from Atlantic to Pacific, has been brought under the control of one governing body, the General Assembly. Union has brought us strength. More and better work is being done than a divided Presbyterianism could ever have accomplished. Both Home and Foreign Mission work have benefitted by the change. Perhaps no department of church work has been less affected by the union than our theological seminaries. So far as they are concerned the old divisions might still exist. And yet, we believe, our unity could make itself felt with advantage here as well as elsewhere.

The colleges have a common work to do for their students. The qualifications required for the ministry are much the same in one province as in another. The difference in the men needed in different congregations does not vary more widely in the whole Dominion than within the bounds of a single Synod. The course of study that will meet the requirements of the men in one college will suit equally well in any other. In such a state of matters it would be easy to have the same educational standard in all our theological halls. A common course of study could be prepared by the General Assembly. Examiners could be appointed by that body and the same examination set for the graduating class of the different institutions.

A scheme like the above would have many advantages. It

would tend to deepen the feeling of unity in the church. The examination would be the best test of the work done, and would tend to give greater confidence in all the colleges. The diploma given to graduates would represent the same standard in every part of the church. Professors would be protected from all charges of partiality. They would also be freed from the unpleasant task of refusing diplomas to students who might in many ways be worthy of consideration but who had not attained the standard. Each college, besides, would be likely to hold more largely the students who belonged to her constituency. The time will never come when this will be completely realized nor would it be well that it should. This course would also imply that the same work would be required for the degree of B. D. No student could hope to obtain this degree more easily in one college than in another. This would enable the colleges to set a higher standard for the degree. The degree would be more valued and more students would be anxious to work for it.

Another and one of the chief advantages of this system would be that the church would be in a position to give better opportunities to her students. Two or three scholarships might be offered every year to enable the students who stood highest to prosecute their studies abroad. From this class we could hope to draw men to fill our theological chairs and other important positions. No one can deny that, other things being equal, it is best that these positions should be filled by men whose life-long sympathies and interests are in this country. A unifying of the work done in our seminaries is not visionary. A plan somewhat similar to that suggested above could easily be adopted and its adoption would promote the best interests of the Church and College.

COLLEGE NOTES.

"BACK TO THE OLD HOME." The pro-pastoral work of the summer is over and again the Minor Prophets are gathered together at the feet of the Fathers in our beautiful retreat on the Arm. But in the joyous greetings of re-united friends there is a note of sadness, as memory calls up the forms of some that are far away. What a strange organism is a body of college students. As in the physical man in seven, so in this in three or perhaps four years, there is a total change. It is the same body—the same prison-house bounds—but yet the constituent parts are different. We welcome the new students who are now part and parcel of our college body, and we bid good-bye to those whose place they have taken.

FALCONER, J. P., "the Heaven-born missionary," is fulfilling his destiny on the coast of Newfoundland.

FISHER, J. M., still dwells by the sea. From the occasional glimpses we get of him and the favorable reports we hear of his work among the good people of Lawrencetown and Cow Bay, we can't but feel that he is the "right man in" etc. What's in a name? Everything.

FRASER, DONALD, took us in the Synod this summer; Laird did too, 'but that's another story.' For Donald it was the second act in an interesting drama. He's now at home at the Manse Kennetcook. His former fellow-students join in congratulations.

LAIRD, ALEX., well known to all Theologue readers, is settled at Ferrona, Pictou's new Iron town. A congregation is rapidly growing under his hands. He finds time, however, to make an occasional visit to the city.

MILLER, GEORGE, is settled at Metepedia, N. B. He has been called to the place where he tried his prentice hand in his first summer's labors in the mission field, five years ago. This speaks volumes. And we are glad to hear that his work is being prospered.

MCLEOD, ANGUS, our sturdy Scot spent part of the summer in Cape Breton. He has been called to Little Narrows. At present, he is breathing the pure air of his native hills, his future intention we do not know.

WALKER, JAMES, has been in various parts during the summer. His present address is not known. According to a rumor current in the city, he has left the "gorgeous East" and is following the westering sun toward the land "of Ormus and of Ind," where we hope a "throne of royal state" awaits him.

TUITION in elocution is again this year under the efficient care of Rev. J. Caruthers. Mr. Caruthers is with us from Tuesday until Friday of each week: he has two classes each day, and a third every alternate day. The course will extend up to the Christmas holidays.

WE were pleased to have a visit recently from Rev. W. S. Whittier, '80, of Calcairn, New South Wales. He is absent from his congregation on a year's furlough, and is visiting his native home, Upper Rawdon, Hants Co.

AN interesting feature of the present session is the "Theological and Literary Society." Its object is to stimulate theological thought and make the students better acquainted with the literature bearing on the subjects discussed. The meetings have been greatly enjoyed, largely owing to the help afforded by the President, our Fourth Professor.

At a recent meeting of the Missionary Society, we had the pleasure of hearing from Mr. Ross the report of his year's work on the coast of Labrador. It is published elsewhere in this issue. Mr. Ross is this winter a student at Dalhousie,—taking the classes of the First Year.

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