



*S. H. Macvicar*

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Eccle. B  
M.

# LIFE AND WORK

OF

## DONALD HARVEY MACVICAR

D.D., LL.D.

BY HIS SON

### JOHN H. MACVICAR, B.A.

MELVILLE CHURCH, FERGUS, ONT.

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To My Mother

WHO DID MORE TO PROMOTE  
MY FATHER'S LIFE-LONG SUCCESS  
THAN ANY PAGE IN THIS  
BOOK SHOWS

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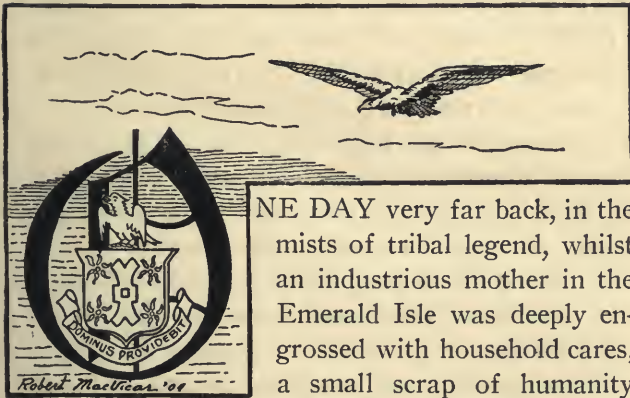
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# Life of Principal MacVicar.

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## CHAPTER I.

### *THE FUTURE FORESHADOWED IN LEGEND AND PARENTAGE.*



"Eagles' Wings."

ONE DAY very far back, in the mists of tribal legend, whilst an industrious mother in the Emerald Isle was deeply engrossed with household cares, a small scrap of humanity was left out of doors to shift

for itself. A great eagle swept down, seized it, and carried it across the North Channel from Antrim to the Mull of Kintyre. There the infant voyageur, so strangely wafted, was taken up and nursed by a foster-mother. His Irish parents never got word of him again, and, like Jacob over Joseph, mourned his untimely end; but the babe survived,

grew to manhood, and became known as Mac-Vicar —“ Son of the Eagle.”\*

In the course of time, on Scottish soil, one of the descendants of this fabled Irish boy rose to distinction sufficiently conspicuous to claim and secure a coat-of-arms. That he was registered as a man of some account in the annals of the nation, the pages of Burke's Heraldic Dictionary reveal. The arms are ingenious and significant. The crest is an eagle, in proper color, about to rise. On the shield there is a millrind, sable, charged with four estoiles of the field: which millrind, representing the iron set into the centre of a millstone, may not improbably have had reference to the peaceful and honorable occupation of some ancestor. The motto, *Dominus Providebit*, is the Vulgate rendering of the Hebrew text, *Jehovah Jireh*. The eagle perpetuates a legend regarding the founder of the house, which, in its recognition of Unseen Control over seemingly fortuitous circumstances, is as unique as that of Romulus and Remus.

My father often said to me that people were mistaken who imagined that he had “planned” everything in his life just as it had turned out. He

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\* I pronounce no judgment on this derivation of the name. My father himself accepted it, though aware of the more common interpretation, “Son of the Vicar.” Rev. Prof. John Campbell, LL.D., tells me that he has come across an old Celtic word resembling Vicar, which denoted an eagle. Rev. Murdoch Mackenzie suggests as a possible Gaelic equivalent, *Mac Mhic an Athair*, approximately pronounced MacVeek-an-är, “Son of the son-of-the air.”



claimed never to have planned anything, but simply to have trusted from day to day, and year to year, in a personal Redeemer, who revealed Himself in never-failing, and often utterly undreamt-of, Providences. A Voice reached him out of the Past, saying, "Ye have seen . . . how I bare you on eagles' wings."

The part of Scotland from which he came to Canada can scarcely be surpassed for beauty. The original seat of the Scottish monarchy,\* it is a region invested with not a little historic, and even tragic, interest. On the Peninsula of Kintyre, in the far-famed Firth of Clyde, is the promontory of Dunavarty, on which stood the fort or stronghold of the MacDonalds, a large number of whom were surprised and slaughtered by the Campbells of Argyle. It was a ghastly struggle, hand to hand and foot to foot, in which victory turned upon muscular strength and dexterity in the use of the two-edged broadsword and the clansman's *sgian dubh*. The MacDonalds were smitten hip and thigh. Their heads were cloven by giant blows. Their corpses were hurled remorselessly over the precipitous rocks to the seashore below, where for many a year their bones lay bleaching in the sun. Close by is an ancient and picturesque cemetery, believed to have been used by the contemporaries and disciples of St. Columba of Iona. In this spot

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\* Several centuries before Edinburgh was known, Campbeltown was the capital of the kingdom.

rest the mortal remains of many of the MacVicar ancestors.

John MacVicar, the father of Donald Harvey, was physically and mentally a powerful man. He stood over six feet high, erect, spare, sinewy, without waste soft muscle. Long after he emigrated from Scotland, the memory of his strength and courage was cherished by those who remained behind. The village blacksmith of South End, John MacCallum, whom he had set up in business, once related with suppressed enthusiasm the story of a prodigious feat performed by John, when single-handed, to the wonder of all beholders, he lifted a huge millstone.

By all accounts he was an outspoken man, with a wholesome abhorrence of sham, quackery, meaningless formality, or forced demonstrativeness. On one occasion he is said to have interrupted the noisy devotions of an excited worshipper who in prayer kept pleading for "mercy on the wicked Scotch."

"The God o' the Scotch," he said, touching the offender on the shoulder, "is no that deaf!"

Unswerving truthfulness, even if the truth hurt, was the backbone of his character. His yea was yea, his nay nay.

"His eye, though turned on empty space,  
Beamed keen with honor."

The sacred volume he loved, and studied both in Gaelic and in English. If visitors happened in,

especially on a Sabbath, and showed a morbid disposition to dissect the character of their neighbors, the big man would take in hand the Family Bible and begin to read, without note or comment, some well selected chapter, with the result that shame-faced gossips, one by one, withdrew from the company. After the Bible, the works on which he chiefly relied for guidance were the Westminster Shorter Catechism, Boston's Fourfold State, Baxter's Saints' Rest, and Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress.

In social life, while not obtrusive, but rather diffident, he was ever ready to enliven a company by contributing his full share of cheerful, amusing incident and repartee. He often settled trivial difficulties and reconciled contending disputants by an unexpected flash of wit. In this respect he must have been near of kin to the notable MacVicar to whom Sir Walter Scott refers in "Waverley"—the honest Presbyterian clergyman, who, on the advent of Prince Charlie to Edinburgh, prayed in the presence of the Jacobites, not unaware of the castle cannon covering the spot where he stood, that as the Prince "had come among them seeking an earthly crown, his labors might be speedily rewarded with a heavenly one."

John MacVicar manifested intense practical sympathy with the poor and oppressed, and a marked detestation of tyranny, whether exhibited by dukes, landlords, or ecclesiastics. On his native soil, round Campbeltown, his kindness to the poor was con-

spicuous. In Canada, he especially befriended the many negroes who, in that day, sought shelter on our shores from the cruelties of slavery; a circumstance that lends significance to the heroic share in the work of uplifting the Southern negro which his son Malcolm, as President of Virginia Union University at Richmond, has had towards the close of his brilliant career as an educationist.

When Donald visited Campbeltown in 1862, a pathetic interview occurred with a woman of eighty-two years, whom he overtook upon the road. As a stranger, he asked her if she knew anything of a man called John MacVicar, and what had become of him.

"I ken him weel," she answered. "He went to Ameriky long ago. It was a sad, sad day when he left. I can see still the crowd that gathered on the quay. They stood greetin' and wringing their hands as the ship moved off."

"Why! what had he done? Was he running away from his creditors?"

"No, no," she replied, in a voice trembling with emotion. "It was no that. But he was awfu' kind to the poor; and they kenned they would never see him again."

When informed that she was speaking with John MacVicar's youngest son from Canada, and might hear him preach next morning in the Free Kirk, she turned her tearful eyes with a look never to be forgotten. The group that greeted the preacher at

the church door that Sunday morning showed with what diligence she had reported her discovery to a circle of friends.

It was in that romantic region of Dunglass, Argyleshire, in the parish of South End, where John MacVicar himself had been born in 1785, that he married Janet MacTavish, of the same parish, who became the mother of his twelve children, Donald enjoying the "apocryphal advantage" of being the seventh son.

Janet MacTavish was a woman of rare energy and marked executive ability, capable of enduring protracted exertion without fatigue. She possessed a large measure of commonsense, a strong will, untiring perseverance and tremendous force of character, not unmingled with pawky humor. Her fondness for elevating society was on one occasion expressed in words hardly complimentary to her own sex.

"I like to sit beside a *man*," she said, "for then I am sure to hear sense."

She had good imaginative powers and fully appreciated the romantic legends of her native land, her own life reaching back to a time when young girls dreaded to go abroad for fear of witches and warlocks. She had a pronounced faith in Divine Providence, and, like her husband, was "ready to distribute." She enjoyed vigorous health, and, with faculties unimpaired and cheeks withered but still rosy, attained to the ripe age of ninety-two,

falling asleep in Jesus in the home of her son-in-law, Donald Guthrie, Q.C., M.P., Guelph, Ontario, honored and loved by her children and children's children.

“There is truth,” wrote the man whose career is to be traced in these pages, “solemn and instructive truth, in the doctrine of Heredity, although like other good dogmas it is easily abused. I am conscious of what I have frequently been told, that I inherit in many respects the intellectual and physical characteristics of my mother in a larger degree than those of my father. I can truly say that the one precept of the Decalogue which I have found easiest to observe is that which reads, ‘Honor thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.’”

## CHAPTER II.

### *BOYHOOD AND COLLEGE DAYS.*



“Canvas wings.”

NOT BY the wings of an eagle, like his fabled ancestor, but by the canvas wings of an old-time sailing vessel, called “The Platina,” Donald MacVicar in 1835 was brought with the rest of the family across the Atlantic to Canada. The same ship conveyed the Armours, afterwards to become known from Chicago to the ends of the earth for their Extract of Beef. Donald, at the time of the voyage, was four years old, having been born at South End, near Campbeltown, Argyleshire, on November 29th, 1831.

He was a quiet little fellow, grave, and, in his own recollection of himself, “absurdly fat.” He could only prattle Gaelic. Even sometime after

reaching Canada, when sent to borrow an axe from an English-speaking neighbor, he had to signify in pantomime what he wanted; though in his after career he became so fluent in English that one enthusiastic visitor from the United States likened him to Wendell Phillips.

The pioneer conditions of those days have, in more than one portly volume, been reproduced from the recollections of early settlers with so much fidelity and vividness that we are able to obtain not a few interesting glimpses of the environment and interior of a typical log-house, primitively furnished: the bedstead, according to the Misses Lizars, "roughly hewn out with a felling axe, the side posts and ends held together in screeching trepidation by strips of bass-wood bark;" the mattress, so-called, a heap of fine "field feathers;" the table, like "a butcher's chopping-block;" the benches, a slight improvement on a saw-horse; the baby's cradle, a mere make-shift adaptation of a sap trough. The undaunted pioneers, who, in such cheerless homes, remained in the forest depths of Canada, to sing their chopping songs and light their logging fires, needed all the resources of manhood and womanhood that make our land to-day so largely what it is.

The MacVicars settled near Chatham, and in the process of clearing their farmstead burned a great quantity of walnut, which would probably bring now, in cash, tens of thousands. Cash in those





DONALD H. MACVICAR,

In his student days, about 1856.



days was scarce—facilities for reaching a market scarcer. No other course was open than to sacrifice the timber, and, at any cost, get the land cleared. This task necessarily absorbed the main attention of the family. Yet from the first, mental acquirements were neither despised nor neglected. Both parents devoted themselves to the training of their children, assisted by their eldest son, Duncan, who had enjoyed the advantage of attendance at a parish school in Scotland. The rudiments, at least, were mastered; and, in the process of time, a private tutor was introduced into the circle in the person of a capable, but eccentric, dominie, whose fate it had been to become a “stickit minister.”

It was a proud day for the growing lads, Malcolm and Donald, when they left this tutor's hands and trudged several miles through the swamps to what was known as “Barefoot's Hen House,” a primitive log-school, in charge of an old soldier, called Dominie Black, whose scars of war, and especially his one arm and one eye, inspired becoming awe in his pupils. “Barefoot” had nothing to do with the illustrious Magnus\* of that ilk of boat-carrying fame in Scotland. He was merely a local celebrity who had shocked the countryside by a profane brag that he would be able one day to make himself comfortable in his own coffin.

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\* Magnus Barefoot from Norway conquered Kintyre in 1098. He vowed that he would take possession of every isle round which his galley sailed. In order to treat Kintyre as an island he had his boat dragged or carried across the isthmus at Loch Tarbert,

Tallow dips were rare, and many a night when the lads came home they studied by the light of a "chip blaze." On their way to and from school, they became expert log-walkers through the swamps, and, frequently, by way of respite from such exciting athletics, indulged in a squirrel-hunt by day, a coon- or wolf-hunt by night. In these pursuits we may well believe them to have been as dead-in-earnest as each afterwards became in his life-calling. Though in their public careers they both developed more than an ordinary amount of "fight," Donald used to say that for his part, as a lad, he never fought with his fists. He admitted that he was only restrained by a wholesome dread that if once provoked he would hit so hard as to kill.

The days of boyhood passed. The big, stout-hearted Scotchman, who had brought his family over sea, wished his lads to settle down to the kind of life that had most attractions for himself. He took Malcolm and Donald one day to look at a farm on the Thames, and offered to buy it for them. They had other ambitions. Malcolm went off to Cleveland to learn shipbuilding. On his return, he resolved to make for Toronto, and pursue a course of study. A year later, Donald, following his example, mounted the lumbering stage-coach to accomplish the three days' journey over the wretched roads: now "bump against a stump, now thump into a hole; here stuck in the mud, there

jolting on big stones" or over a stretch of corduroy. Tired and sore, but with ambition whetted by the difficulties in the way, he joined his brother in Toronto, and entered the Academy of a distinguished educationist of that time, Rev. Alexander Gale, M.A. He found amongst his school-mates two sons of the patriot, William Lyon Mackenzie; and also a youth who afterwards became Chief Justice of Ontario—Thomas Moss, with whom he pleasantly renewed acquaintance on a voyage over the Atlantic in 1877. Of his career in Gale's Academy he rarely recalled anything, save that his French—as he put it—was "murdered" by a teacher wholly ignorant of that tongue.

He passed into old Knox College, at "Elmsley Villa," on the present site of Central Church, Toronto, and early gained a reputation as a hard student, his favorite subjects being mathematics, metaphysics, logic, dogmatics and apologetics. In common with his fellow students, he felt the full influence of Principal Michael Willis, Dr. Robert Burns, and Dr. George Paxton Young, the last of whom made the deepest impress on his mental life and habits, and had most to do with the subsequent direction of his career.

Dr. Young was a man of exceptional magnetism, profound, modest, sincere. He detested above all things the vice of cram, advising the young men to master the contents of a single book rather than attempt to get a smattering from many. He

despised pretentious display, one of his pet jokes turning on his willingness to sell his own Edinburgh M.A. for a shilling. His most pronounced characteristics as a teacher were to an extraordinary degree reproduced in Donald MacVicar: rare ability in analysis, terseness of style, vividness in discussion, incessant use of the blackboard, resort to the Socratic method, fearless enunciation of his own conclusions, "whether right or wrong," and evident sincerity and marked independence in forming those conclusions. His pupil has left a vivid account of what transpired when men like Locke, Brown, Reid, Stewart, Descartes, Cousin, Mill, McCosh, Hamilton and others were weighed in the balances and found wanting.

"Even the canons of logic did not escape what some might think drastic treatment. The slaughter of the innocents, with a smile of triumph over their downfall, was, on some days, in the classroom, simply appalling. Their inconsistencies and inconclusiveness were displayed in a startling manner. Imagine the jubilant feelings of ingenious young men, not yet fully trained in dialectics, in witnessing the exposure of the failures of such giants! Sometimes a student ventured to take sides with the illustrious dead, but was usually vanquished by a prompt fusilade of sharp, unanswerable questions. So free and friendly and inspiring were these encounters that one often wished that Cousin and Hamilton were there in person to

defend themselves. Then we should see a clash of arms !”

For such a “clash,” none could have had a keener zest than the writer of that paragraph, between whom and his master relations of the utmost confidence and freedom were early established and long maintained. During one summer vacation, they were both the guests of the Honorable Isaac and Mrs. Buchanan in Hamilton, spending their mornings apart in the diligent study of Plato, their afternoons together, in a charming garden-booth, discussing the principles of the old Greek sage. In after years an elaborate correspondence was carried on with Professor Young on stiff metaphysical themes. It became a not infrequent thing for the professor to submit to the young pastor (by this time settled in Montreal) his manuscripts for thorough criticism before they should be sent to the printer for publication.

Not a few racy stories might be recalled of the influence exerted on student-life by the kind, gentle, cheerful disposition of Principal Willis, who seemed to have “a summer warmth always circulating round his heart,” as well as by the witty sallies of Dr. Burns to the accompaniment of an inimitable groan. The sober and the merry intermingled in the same wholesome proportions in college life then, as now. Many a former and present student of the Presbyterian College, Montreal, can recall hearing from Principal MacVicar’s lips gleeful remin-

iscences of college escapades, told with such a vivid mimicry and bubbling sense of fun as would have startled that portion of the public who knew only his sterner, graver side.

As a student he sometimes sat up all night to master the contents of an intricate book, and he showed a decided relish in the preparation of metaphysical, theological, or temperance essays. But he would just as freely rhyme an acrostic in the praise of some fair friend, jingle an ode of thanks for the gift of a pair of gloves, write a comical sketch of the college dandy, or dash off a screed of scorching doggerel to some anonymous "Pat O'Nontry," of whom he drew a grotesque caricature, with an index finger pointing to it, on the reverse side of a sheet of note paper which the irrepressible "Pat" had spoiled on his desk during a temporary absence; to say nothing of so-called "dramatic poems" composed for public examination day in a country school in which he taught during vacation.

His more sober side was exhibited in the regular habit of tract-distribution; in resolves to read four chapters of Scripture every day, with prayer—besides devoting half an hour to self-examination; in months of anxious doubt as to whether he had received a proper call to the ministry; in recurrent fears that the study of classics had a hardening effect on the mind, tending to cool the devotional flame and dull the affections ("Is it possible," he wrote with fine impatience, "that reading the pure



nonsense of the ancients is what is going to qualify me for proclaiming the everlasting Gospel ?”); and in an aversion to social gatherings, such as one attended towards the close of his first session, of which he wrote: “I must say that I would just enjoy myself as much in one of the cells of the Toronto gaol as at these frolicking parties.” This aversion was due, not to puritanical notions, or any radical lack of social qualities, but to an innate bashful nervousness, so pronounced that it startled him to hear the sound of his own voice in the presence of company. To the end of life—though not all suspected it—he never wholly mastered this nervous temperament, which in college days kept him from eating his dinner before some simple public effort, like the reading of his essay on “Bacchus and His Friends,” or prevented him from sleeping on the eve of an examination.

Some of the crude reflections of his student-days are refreshing. He was particularly severe upon a minister whom he heard in Chatham; needless to say, one in no wise to be confounded with his pastor there, Rev. Dr. Angus McColl, for whom he always expressed unstinted admiration, and to whom he was indebted for much help and encouragement in his studies. “He prayed,” wrote the youth, “that he might be able to speak with profit to himself and his hearers. This was quite out of place. All that he needed was strength to enable him to read the words that he had prepared. Oh, how lame, how floundered, a minister of the Gospel is, hemmed in

and circumscribed by a bit of paper ! How unfit to feed a hungry soul ! How unlike Paul, who could preach in a Macedonian prison, and, when his hands and feet were bound, so that he could not write one syllable, could yet make Agrippa say, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian." This young censor lived not only to modify such an extreme view of a manuscript, and to use it freely himself, but to accept without reserve Dean Alford's interpretation of Agrippa's language as intended to signify not conviction, but scorn. "Too lightly you persuade yourself that you can make a Christian of *me*"—even without a manuscript !

The early crystallizing of his faith in the authority and power of Scripture is indicated in another entry, *apropos* of a minister who, after making keen thrusts at the conscience of his hearers, apologized for doing so. "This was altogether out of place," he wrote. "The truth of the Bible needs no apology. The tinkering and improvements of man are only perversions of it. The sword of the Spirit should not be dulled, but allowed by its plainness and purity to be 'quick and powerful.'" On another occasion he heard a preacher condemn creeds, on the ground that, if already in the Bible, they are unneeded; if containing less than the Bible, they are defective; if containing more than the Bible, they are human. "This is not to the point," wrote the student. "Creeds only fix what we believe to be the meaning of the Bible. Men have creeds, who say they have none. If they fix a

meaning in opposition to the creeds, it is as wrong to do it in the one case as in the other."

Here, too, is an early expression of that real catholicity of spirit that characterized him to the end, notwithstanding a strange reputation for sectarian bias. "Denominationalism must not take the place of the Gospel. One preaches Presbyterianism, another Methodism, another Lutheranism. But what did Christ commission His apostles to preach? 'Salvation through faith in His name.' Keep me to the pure, clear, never-tarnished Word of God. It is that which will move the world. God will work with any servant of His who works through His Word. When men take to their isms, they only serve the devil."

There were depths in Donald MacVicar's nature of which those only obtained knowledge who came really near to him. Few who knew him in the light of a public controversialist ever suspected the wells of emotion that flowed deep in his heart whenever the vision recurred of the old log-home near Chatham, and the unpretentious creek, on the banks of which his father, "with tearful eye and thrilling voice," had taken farewell of him on his departure for college, never to meet again in life. Still fewer would have suspected the romantic element that led to the adoption of his middle name. "Harvey" had not been pronounced over him at the baptismal font. It was deliberately adopted out of regard for the young girl who, in his college days, won his heart and afterwards became his wife, and who

had been talking much about a hero of that name in a work of fiction which she happened to have been reading.

One day, as a student in Knox College, he drew up and signed a document which might be counted too sacred for publication, were it not for the ease with which his characteristic readiness to probe the consciences of others was so often misunderstood by people who little dreamed of the fidelity with which he could probe his own. Let this chapter, therefore, close with an unveiling of the hidden life, sincere as it must be admitted frank.

Knox College, 22nd Jan., 1854.

BALANCING SHEET WITH MY OWN SOUL.

Am I a Christian ?

The question is an awful one. Let me, however, assume that I can answer it in the affirmative. I am.

When did I become one? For I was not born one.

I have some difficulty in giving a precise date. I remember many seasons in which I had very humbling views of myself, and bright and pleasing views of Christ. I continually have a strong desire to be saved.

Do I desire salvation because of the fearful consequences of the want of it, or because of the glorious things which it secures?

Partly on both accounts. I often tremble at the thought of the consequences of sin, and often am enraptured at the thought of heaven, and of the company of the redeemed there.

But what evidence have I that I am converted, that I have passed from death to life?

I very often am tempted to believe that I am not; but still I feel that I can appropriate to myself St. John's test. "I know that I have passed from death to life, because I love the brethren." I feel entirely resigned to God's will and ready to serve Him, so far as the exerting of my bodily or mental powers is concerned; but still I am often tempted to wish that the service of God could be relaxed somewhat, or that sinful pleasures were not as sinful as God has declared them to be.

But is this love for the brethren a sectarian thing? That is, do I love them because they are Presbyterians?

No. I have many faults to find with you Presbyterians. Your coldness I often cannot endure. I know brethren of the Methodist and Baptist connection whom I can love as much as any Presbyterian I ever saw.

Is the willingness which I experience to serve God any sign of true conversion?

Yes. For the carnal mind is enmity to God, and surely being in that condition it can have no willingness for God's service.

But do I think that this feeling merits the favor of God?

I know that it does not; but I must say that when the devil thinks for me, he whispers through my mind, "With such sacrifice God is well pleased, and if you keep on you will gain heaven." How often have I had to command him, "Get thee behind me, Satan," thou foul fiend.

When does he tempt me most?

In prayer, in private, in church, and in company. I give too much way to him and to the corruptions of my heart.

How am I tempted in prayer?

He used, some years ago, to tempt me to conclude that God never heard me, that I was not His son, but an heir of hell. I have overcome this, and all the devils in hell cannot persuade me that God has not heard me. But still he assails me by prompting me to think that my pleading, that is, the manner of it, will avail with God. He often tempts me to cherish a feeling of pride whilst in the presence of Jehovah, and to formality. He tempts me to think that I am speaking to man, when I pray in public, and throws into my mind a thousand thoughts of an earthly character, when I hear others pray.

What are my temptations in private?

Horrid thoughts of unlawful pleasures. I am often tempted to forget God, instead of making Him my meditation night and day.

What of temptations in church?

They are chiefly to unbelief and wrong desires.

What of temptations in company?

Suspicion of others, and feelings of pride, and sometimes too much abasement. Very often I do not keep a sufficiently strict watch over the door of my lips. I speak evil.

What are my besetting sins?

Want of humility, wrong desires, and a passion for vain-glory. Selfishness I need to war against. Forgetfulness of God and heaven. Oh, I cannot count them. God alone knows them.

What will be the result, if I continue my inquiry?

If God directs it, I will see myself more as He sees me. Oh, that I may be led to abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes.

Can I obtain any balance in favor of myself?

No. I am a debtor to Divine Grace for whatever good I have, and still it is only because of the death

and sufferings of Christ that I can hope to be delivered from the pains of hell. O God, pardon mine iniquity, for it is very great. The greatness of mine iniquity I, with Thy servant of old, would make a plea for Thy forgiveness.

Have I come to any new resolutions to-day?

I have. I have resolved, and do hereby resolve, that notwithstanding anything that I have heretofore experienced, I come anew to the blood of sprinkling, and for the remainder of my life live to the glory of God. Not pleasing myself, but mortifying the deeds of the flesh, I shall live righteously, soberly, and godly in this present world. O Thou Triune Jehovah, in whose hand are all things and the hearts of all men, enable me to fulfil my vow. May this covenant be had in everlasting remembrance by my soul.

But have I any assurance of acceptance with God?

Yes. "Him that cometh to Me, I will in no wise cast out." I come, Lord. Heal me of all my backsliding. Cleanse me from mine iniquity, and perfect holiness in me in the fear of the Lord. Make me to walk in the path of the righteous.

But what are my views in going on into the work of the holy ministry?

I confess that sometimes I have had wrong and earthly views of it; but thanks be to God who giveth me the victory over my own heart, I am now ready to spend and be spent for the glory of that Divine Redeemer, who has done for my soul more than I can speak of in an eternity.

Am I as actively engaged in my present duties as I ought to be?

No. My mind often wanders on unprofitable things. Vain thoughts trouble me.

Do I cherish that feeling of love for my fellow creatures that becomes a Christian?

I think I do. I do not find so much cause to complain of myself in this respect as in many others. Indeed, I believe I am often too open-hearted and reveal my thoughts too freely. By this means, I lessen my influence. This I think was my failing at Mr. ——'s in 1853.

I close my present sheet as a dark catalogue. The mercy of God is my only hope. "I will cease from man whose breath is in his nostrils."

D. MACVICAR.

It was during his college course that he developed the marked teaching faculty which ultimately brought him to distinction. He assisted then in his brother Malcolm's Academy on Jarvis Terrace, Gould Street, Toronto, opposite the present Normal School, and afterwards in Georgetown, to which place the Academy was removed.

His brother made an earnest effort to persuade him to continue in this educational work, but the passion for the ministry burned too strongly in his soul. For six months previous to his settlement in Guelph, he preached in Brock Street Temperance Hall, Toronto, and then, having been pressed to accept an appointment to what was called "Foreign Mission Work" in British Columbia, and also calls to Collingwood, Bradford, West Gwillimbury, Erin, Hogg's Hollow near Toronto, and Guelph, he decided in favor of the last place as his field of labor.



## CHAPTER III.

### *PASTORATE IN GUELPH, ONTARIO.*



“The Old-time Pulpit.”

THE CHURCH was not full at my ordination. My soul faints in view of the labors to which I am now set apart. Lord, if Thy Presence go not with me, and if Thy strength be not within me, I

shall sink beneath the load. Who is sufficient for these things? The care of souls is entrusted to me. I have to set before them a momentous choice. I am to be a savor of life to some and of death to others. Great God! and shalt Thou one day place me on Thy left hand for my unfaithfulness in dealing with my fellows! I roll my burden upon Thee! God of my salvation, sustain me.”

This entry, made in his *Index Rerum*—for he never kept a diary—on the day of his ordination,

October 19th, 1859, shows that in the interval since the balancing sheet was drawn up, his serious view of life, and the work to which it committed him, had not weakened.

It was far from an encouraging prospect that faced him that day in Guelph when "the church was not full." The fact is, the church had rarely been full for some time previous. A kind, genial, thoroughly good man—none other than a brother of Professor Young—with profound learning, but no pulpit gifts, had been his predecessor. One surviving member of the congregation recalls that sometimes there were as few as ten people at a service, at other times not more than twenty. Mr. Young had actually put upon his memory the entire contents of the Hebrew and Greek lexicons; but that kind of accomplishment did not prove any more "drawing" then than it would now.

A struggling Sunday School of eighteen scholars, with a superintendent and two teachers to look after them, fairly represented the organized activity of the congregation. No wonder that his soul fainted on assuming such a charge. He little dreamed how characteristic of his entire career it was to be that, through the blessing of God, he would become the means of making two blades of grass—for that matter a myriad—grow where only one, or none, had grown before. It was not to be long before the old-fashioned stone church, which stood on the present site of the Raymond Sewing Machine



REV. D. H. MACVICAR,

As pastor in Guelph, 1860.



Factory, would be crowded in pews and aisles, and the initial steps be taken to build a more commodious structure.

Guelph, in some respects, was even more important then than now, affording as it did an outlet for the whole country as far as Owen Sound and Southampton. Teams, by the hundred, daily made their way down the road from the North, in order to ship produce on the Grand Trunk and the Great Western Railway, of which Guelph was, at that time, the terminus. It augured some prospect of congregational growth that in an era of railway development the young man from college should assume work within the walls of quaint old Knox Church—walls so thick that it used to be said that powder and shot could not penetrate them.

The powder and shot that began to explode and fly from that high pulpit into the square box-pews succeeded in penetrating the thickest bulwarks of "Scotch reserve." The building was filled to its utmost capacity. The Sunday School revived. A large Bible class was formed to study with analytical thoroughness the Word of God, which, from start to finish, was counted an infallible rule of faith and conduct. The prayer meeting took a new lease of life. A band of missionary collectors was appointed in order to bring to an end the frequent inquiries of Dr. Reid as to the reason for chronic delinquency. A provisional constitution was drawn up, in which no detail of congregational manage-

ment was overlooked, even to the clear definition of the beadle's duties, which were to include not only attention to the cleanliness of the building and the orderliness of its furniture, but the "cutting and carrying in of all necessary firewood."

The pastoral work was prosecuted with thoroughness, frankness and fidelity in personal dealing. One good soul, much given to absenting himself from the communion table, dearly loved to talk about his "unworthiness." The young pastor, with a shrewd understanding of human nature, having failed to bring "assurance" by other lines of approach, suddenly exclaimed:

"Come, come, my friend! I am fast reaching the conclusion that you are right about yourself. You must be hopelessly wicked! I doubt not you will be finally cast away from the mercy of God!"

"Eh, mon," replied the astonished parishioner, up to this point confirmed in Scottish self-depreciation, but now startled into Scottish self-confidence—"Eh, mon, Aw hae a guid hope!"

"He was a good-looking young man, full of energy and zeal in the discharge of his duty, and healthy, both mentally and physically. When he preached he delivered himself with force and power, impressing his hearers with the conviction that he felt in his own heart the truth of the Gospel he proclaimed." Such is the recollection cherished by James Gow, of Windsor.

The truth was delivered with such intensity as

to leave indelible impressions on more than one memory after the lapse of nearly fifty years. One, at that time, in his youth, has reproduced with a fidelity confirmed by comparison with the original notes, yellow with time, the graphic introduction to a sermon on the text, "Prepare to meet thy God." Another recalls a sermon on "Escape for thy life!" so dramatic that every hearer seemed to see the fire and brimstone falling on the doomed city, and was seized with an irresistible impulse to get as quickly as possible out of the way.

One theme, treated with all the impulsive earnestness of youth, caused a sensation. The attendance at his prayer meeting was affected one evening by the withdrawal of a considerable number of young people who had begun to attend a newly started dancing school. The following Sunday the congregation were electrified by a pointed discourse on the words, "There is a time to dance," the one defect in which, according to the judgment of worldly-minded "sermon tasters," was that the preacher rather established it that there was *no* time to dance!

In May of this year, Eleanor Goulding was united with him in marriage—the daughter of a man of sterling worth then living in Toronto Township, but best known in Downsview, a few miles from Toronto, where he had previously lived. He obtained in his bride a life-long helpmeet, cheerful, resourceful, hospitable, and to the end of

his days enjoyed unclouded domestic happiness. Five children were born: three sons, John Harvey, Donald Norman, and Robert Malcolm, and two daughters, Annie and Jessie Guthrie. Up to the time of his marriage, his sister Eliza, afterwards Mrs. Donald Guthrie, acted as hostess in his home, with an attractive graciousness that marked to the end her influential life in Guelph. Her husband, who was closely and actively associated with the young minister, early established a high reputation in the legal profession, of which he is now so bright a light, and became known as a prominent member of the House of Commons in Ottawa and the Provincial Legislature in Ontario. Several of their sons have risen to distinction, Hugh at present serving in Ottawa, as the representative of South Wellington, and Donald in Baltimore, Md., as minister of one of the most important churches in the Southern States.

The pastorate of thirteen months in Guelph was altogether too brief to develop the young preacher's powers. It is recalled to-day, as much as anything, for its incompleteness. One lady, whose husband at the time filled the position of precentor, when asked if, after the lapse of all these years, she could remember much about the young pastor, replied with emphasis:

"I can remember that I had a good cry when he went away!"

John Rannie, the most staunch supporter and en-



thusiastic admirer of any, is rumored to have said, after the severance of the pastoral tie:

“We have had our house burned, we have lost our children, we have lost friends we loved, but we never had any loss approaching this.”

The attachment to the young pastor reached white heat a twelvemonth after his settlement in Guelph in the panic created by the arrival of a call from Coté Street Free Church, Montreal. Suspense as to the attitude which he would assume became intolerable.

“If I thought I could do the work,” he confided to one, “I would go. The same sermons I preach here would do; but the work will be heavier. Where I reach a few hundreds every week here, I may be able to reach thousands there. I want to be where I can do the most good.”

The intense feeling of the hour found vent in a three-barrelled resolution passed at a meeting called to discuss the situation. The first barrel was loaded with pained surprise at the action of a city congregation which, in “direct opposition to the Golden Rule,” proposed to disturb a pastoral relation so recently established. The second was charged with what was considered to be none too extravagant a description of the prosperity of the work in all its departments. The third fairly exploded with solicitude as to what would become of the flock, not only in the “disastrous results” to those in full fellowship, but in the “endangered” prospects of

seeking souls. "The case of anxious inquirers," concluded the resolution, "would be much endangered, and a ministry which has been so auspiciously begun, and which in the Providence of God gives promise of such beneficial results to His glory and the good of His Church, would be most prematurely brought to a close."

A strong deputation, at the Presbytery meeting in Galt, did their best to express the sentiments of the people; and when, with due recognition of the mutual attachment of pastor and flock, a definite purpose was expressed to proceed to Montreal, the deepest disappointment was manifested on the part of both Presbyters and congregation. In many parts of the country, as the decision became known, something approximating to indignation found place.

In those days the thought of a Canadian-trained minister for any charge of first importance was counted preposterous. In Guelph, especially; the step was severely commented upon, both in public and in private; but notwithstanding the violent wrench involved, often afterwards when the Pastor or Professor from Montreal visited there, he was enthusiastically welcomed. In 1894, when pressing duties made it impossible for him to attend in person the Semi-centennial celebration of Knox Church, to which he had been invited, he wrote from the Presbyterian College, Montreal, in the following strain:

“In 1860, I parted with the members and adherents of the old Knox Church amid such strong and tender emotions on their side and on mine as I can never forget. Especially was this the case in taking leave of the young, and of the members of my Bible class. Some of them are now far removed from Guelph, and some have entered eternity. I was then constrained to yield to an urgent call to enter upon a larger and more difficult field of labor and usefulness, and God in His good Providence gave me one which has continued to extend through all these years, and never was more promising than at this moment. To Him be all the honor and glory.

“I cannot feel oblivious to the brief chapter of my life in Guelph. The too kind estimate of my youthful and very imperfect ministrations formed by the people makes it impossible for me to become indifferent to their spiritual prosperity. I have observed with delight their steady growth in Christian activity under the several pastors whose services they have been privileged to enjoy. Instead of one church, as in my day, you have two, both zealous and vigorous in the service of the Master. May they ever continue to be united in purpose and effort for the glory of God and the good of men, and may they be abundantly anointed by the Holy Spirit that their fruitfulness may be increased an hundredfold.”

## CHAPTER IV.

### REMOVAL TO MONTREAL.



Montreal, from St. Helen's  
Island.

THE SPHERE of labor is, in my judgment, out of all sight the most important in our church." So wrote Professor Young, in urging the Guelph pastor to give serious consideration to the call which had come from Montreal. "I think," he continued, "I have as good a conceit of myself as the circumstances warrant; yet it would never enter my head that *I* would do to be the minister of Coté Street. There are many of my brethren whom I admire and love, and under whose ministrations I would gladly sit, who, nevertheless, are not fitted for the charge of which I am speaking. *You* possess the qualifications which so many of us lack. It is, of course, an awkward thing to be praising you in a letter addressed to yourself; and

I am not often guilty of doing such a thing to those with whom I correspond; but in the present case it is necessary to speak plainly. I believe you would suit Coté Street. I believe that *few of our ministers besides you would suit*. I believe that the position is so important that Coté Street has a claim to any minister in our church. Therefore do not lightly come to a conclusion, through modesty, or any other cause, to shut your ears to their call."

"I am inclined," wrote Dr. Willis at the same time, "to advise your acceptance of that call. If you continue your studious habits, and the practice of preparing thoroughly, I have no fear for you, by the Divine blessing. It is a great door which is opened to you in the East."

Coté Street Free Church, situated in what was then a most respectable up-town quarter of Montreal—the present up-town regions being then far out in the fields—was the largest and finest Presbyterian Church building of its day in the city. It stood immediately opposite the Christian Brothers' Schools, the mother-house of which had originally been the Maison de Maricour, the place where Le Moyne de Maricour, celebrated in the early military enterprises of the colony, had died in 1704.

The volume of Christian influence exerted by the congregation that worshipped in Coté Street and subsequently removed, under the guidance of Dr. MacVicar, to Crescent Street, would require for its

proper discussion a separate work. It was organized in 1845, in connection with the concerted sympathetic movement in Canada which followed the Scottish disruption. For the first six or seven years, the pulpit was supplied by deputies sent across the Atlantic by the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland, including such notabilities as Rev. W. C. Burns, the evangelist and missionary; Rev. John Bonar, of Larbert; Rev. William Arnot, of Glasgow, and Rev. A. N. Somerville, of Glasgow.

In 1851, the Rev. Donald Fraser, afterwards the distinguished preacher in Marylebone, London, England, became the first settled pastor, upon whose translation to Inverness, Scotland, in the beginning of 1859, the pulpit became vacant for two years. Donald MacVicar, still an unlicensed graduate, was sent by Dr. William Reid as "supply" for a couple of Sundays. He was in poor health at the time, and quite unconscious that he was making any impression upon the people.

Their thoughts, however, turned definitely in his direction. They wrote to Professor Young for advice, asking him whether it would be wise for them to extend a call.

The answer was, No !

The ground on which this advice was based is best disclosed by the insertion in full of Professor Young's letter :

Toronto, Sept. 9th, 1859.

J. REDPATH, ESQ.

My Dear Sir,—I have this morning received yours of the 7th, and hasten to reply. Mr. MacVicar has received the whole (I may say) of his education under my immediate care and guidance, and I have watched the development of his mind with much interest. I know him thoroughly, and can say without hesitation that his natural thinking powers are of a very high order. I found him capable of entering into the profoundest metaphysical questions. He was not, perhaps, very *rapid* in seizing hold of views remote from those popularly entertained; but by patient reflection, he was able after a while to enter *deeply* into the subjects brought before him, and to take a firm and most intelligent grasp of them. Indeed, I am perhaps inclined to think too favorably of him, because he was one of the very few students who have been under my care, who thoroughly mastered the peculiar system of metaphysical truth which I am accustomed to deliver. I do not mean that he swallowed my doctrines, bones and all, without hesitation. The reverse was the case. He was slow to believe; had many difficulties; and it was only after the fullest discussion of these that he at length grasped the subject fully. But I value an intelligent persuasion, founded upon the thorough discussion and mastery of apparent difficulties, infinitely more than a ready, wholesale, otiose assent, which may be accorded without the least reflective energy being exerted. I enter into these particulars to show you the sterling character (at least in my opinion) of Mr. MacVicar's mind, as regards its

thinking power. And this is a very important quality, because it renders it morally certain that he will never lapse, as a preacher, into mere declamation, or be satisfied to present his hearers with anything in which there is not definite, well-digested, and important thought. I hope he will be a *popular* preacher; but I think it certain that he will not be a *mere* popular preacher.

With respect more particularly to the subject of your letter, I would consider it a matter of consequence for Mr. MacVicar himself to be for some time in a situation where he would have more opportunity for private study and personal improvement than in Montreal. His mind has not yet attained its full development. It is one of those minds which are rather slow of ripening; and I should fear that, were he at once settled in Montreal, even with an assistant (which, by the way, would be very awkward), his capacity for enlarged usefulness would be hindered in its growth.

I am, my dear sir, yours truly,

GEORGE PAXTON YOUNG.

P.S.—In what I have said above, I do not mean to intimate that, were Mr. MacVicar called to Coté Street, he would be found insufficient for the work. Quite the reverse. I believe he would not disappoint you. It is solely because I believe his own improvement would be retarded by his at once entering on so great a charge, that I have written as I have done.

G. P. Y.

This communication, so far from quenching the ardor of the Montreal people, increased their desire

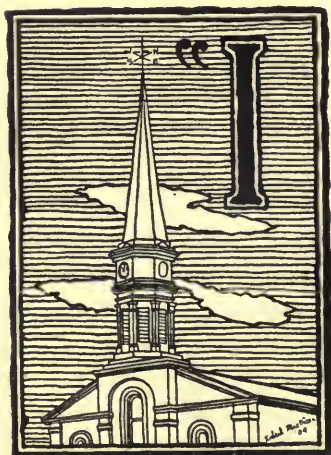


to secure this young man as their minister. Within a year, they sent a deputation West to inquire how the Professor's favorite was getting on; with the result that, finding things as described in the preceding chapter, hesitation vanished. After a health-trip to Boston, New York and Philadelphia, he was inducted into the charge of Coté Street Church, on January 30th, 1861.

Those were the exciting days of agitation against slavery, when Wendell Phillips lectured on—"a pretty subject for the Sabbath," the young traveller characterized it—"Mobs," and had a fresh mob on his heels along the road home. The enjoyment of this brief visit to the States was enhanced by the purchase in New York of some four hundred volumes for his library, the gift of his new congregation. Their desire to facilitate his fuller equipment for the work to which they had called him was to be the earnest of many practical demonstrations in the future of their faith both in the man and in any enterprise to which he saw fit, even against his better judgment, to commit himself. He often said in after days that it was with fear and trembling that he assumed the work of the pastorate in Montreal, just as at the conclusion of that pastorate, he assumed, only with gravest misgivings, the work to which he was called in connection with the founding of the Presbyterian College, Montreal.

## CHAPTER V.

### *THE COTÉ STREET PASTORATE.*



Côté Street Spire.

HAVE BOUGHT a new Boston hat, which makes me look exactly like the Prince!" So he wrote gaily from the States. Then, as if abashed at the thought of his own vanity, he sobered down, and added, "But what folly!"

Folly or no, it was a happy omen on arriving in Montreal to "look like the Prince," for the visit in 1860 of that youth—now His Majesty King Edward VII—was commonly interpreted by Montrealers as having afforded an auspicious inauguration to a new era of prosperity after many struggles and sorrows on the part of Canada's premier city. If, at Guelph, the young man had been fortunate enough to take up a disheartening work

at a time of railway development, he was still more fortunate to reach Montreal at a time when the population had been increasing with tremendous strides—doubling itself within a single decade—and when new buildings were rising from year to year by the thousand.

It was a transitional period. Old things were passing away, and all things were becoming new. Beaver Hall, once the seat of the Frobishers, had gone up in flames. Burnside, the residence of the founder of McGill, had become a scene of desolation. Simon MacTavish's 'haunted house, where fabulous hosts of spirits used to dance on the tin roof in the moonlight, had just been pulled down. The quaint old Château de Ramezay, as the residence of the British Governors and the centre of court life, had been abandoned. The march of modern progress absorbed attention. The horse-car system, then as marvellous for its convenience as it is now antiquated, had just been introduced. The Crystal Palace, in all the glory of putty, glass and paint, glittered in the eyes of the populace. The Prince of Wales had driven home his rivet of gold in the centre span of Victoria Tubular Bridge, then regarded as the greatest feat of engineering skill in the world. The Grand Trunk Railway was rapidly advancing in its development. The 'first ocean steamship line had been established. A huge bonfire blazed from the top of Mount Royal in jubilation over the laying of the Atlantic cable. John

Redpath, the recognized pioneer of the industrial movement, had started his great sugar refinery on the canal. Axe factories, tool factories, soap factories, nail factories, rubber factories, rolling mills and a great many other manufacturing interests were springing up. The city had, in fact, started along all those lines of industry that have made it the commercial metropolis of the Dominion. The war in the Southern States, too, had broken out, and the consequent blockade diverted much trade to the shores of the St. Lawrence. The wharfage accommodation presently quadrupled.

All these things had their bearing upon the growth of the congregation over which the young pastor from Guelph was now placed. An open field for development existed, such as is not found in the case of many a faithful minister with equal ability who is settled in some region where the population is either at a standstill or going back. In the unfolding of an ever-widening sphere of influence that carried him to heights he never planned to reach, prominent though the factor always was of personal determination, none recognized more fully than himself that his circumstances were as much determined for him as by him.

Reliance on the Unseen Power that bore him up led him to give prominence to the constant necessity of waiting upon the Lord. The printed reports for one year speak of as many as five prayer meetings regularly sustained every week, besides a



REV. D. H. MACVICAR,  
As pastor of Coté Street Church, 1867.



number of "cottage meetings." One innovation, in those days almost as marked as the substitution of communion cards\* for lead-tokens, was a woman's prayer meeting, led by his wife and his sister Eliza.

To the end of his days it was characteristic of him to be conservative in his views, radical in his actions. He had as little use for the organ as for the lead-token; though he stoutly and openly advocated the legitimacy of singing hymns. In the church courts he resisted the introduction of instrumental music. His own congregation was one of the very last to fall in line, and that long after he had ceased to have charge of it. But he came in the course of time to enjoy more thoroughly the strains from a "kist o' whistles" than he ever enjoyed certain other strains that floated through the windows of his building; for a service rarely closed but he had to raise his voice to its highest pitch in order to make himself heard above the roar of the Notre Dame bells, which, heard at a distance are clamorous enough, but heard so close at hand as Coté Street bid fair to drown all other sounds.

The first sermon in Coté Street, by a striking coincidence, was upon the same text which his predecessor, Dr. Fraser, at the beginning of *his* ministry there had chosen: "We preach not ourselves,

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\* This substitution, he claimed, was first made in Montreal by the Coté Street Session. His impression that it was the first time in *Canada* that communion cards were adopted in place of tokens, I believe to have been erroneous.

but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake." The discourse emphasized the co-operation of the divine and the human in a faithful ministry, as disclosed in "The Preacher's Theme, and the Preacher's Essential Relation to it."

"His delivery," remarked one prominent member, "is not quite so good as that of Mr. Fraser; but his gifts in other ways are as good, if not superior. I have not the least doubt that if spared he will be a very able man."

His pulpit style continued to exhibit much of the exuberance of youth that had characterized it in Guelph. Some of his students may recall how, in the course of his lectures on homiletics, he used to say sarcastically that at the beginning of his career he was as fond as anyone of referring to the stars, and even of picturing the mystic dances of cherubim and seraphim. This style, in later days, he came heartily to despise. By the end of his pastorate in Coté Street he had in fact pruned it so severely that it became almost baldly doctrinal.

His appeal to the conscience was at times irresistibly terrible, and brought to him in the privacy of his study strangers about whose lives he knew absolutely nothing, who yet confessed that from the pulpit he had been laying bare the innermost secrets of their lives.

One poor girl used to slip into a back seat in the gallery and listen to the rugged, prophet-like denun-



ciations of sin. She took ill, and was carried to the General Hospital.

She sent for the Coté Street minister.

"How can I die," she sobbed, as she pointed to the name-card above her cot. "How can I die, with a false name over my head?"

She told her story.

She had been led astray, changed her name, left her country home, and went as a nurse to New Orleans, where she took yellow fever. Broken in spirit and worn in body, she came to Montreal, found every door shut against her, and turned again to vice.

A mysterious fascination kept drawing her to that back seat in the gallery. Under the bold, stern exterior of the frowning preacher, she had apparently discerned what many another was almost startled to discover, along with a fiery indignation against wrong-doing and falsehood, a heart that beat in real sympathy with those who are down.

A strange impulse led her to send for this "harsh" man, as some counted him.

In response to her cry of anguish, he spoke soothingly.

"If your name is in the Lamb's Book of Life," he said, "we can soon get that card changed."

Then he urged upon her the Saviour's tender assurances to the penitents who feel that their sins, as Coulson Kernahan puts it, "like the dead weight of wet clothes about a drowning child, are drag-

ging them down and down, till the waters close above their heads.”

Within a week the poor girl had passed away.

Towards the close of his second year in Montreal, a wave of revival swept over the Protestant population in connection with the labors of Evangelist Hammond. Both the pastor and the people of Coté Street Church shared in the spiritual uplift, though none of the meetings were held in their place of worship. The last day but one in December, 1862, is carefully noted in the Index Rerum, with this self-revealing confession attached:

“That night I experienced more of the grace of God than ever before. If I was before converted, I was living and preaching in a very lapsed and improper state. But that night, I know, God gave me His Holy Spirit, and since I have continued, these two weeks, sensibly to enjoy His Presence. I see truth in new and surprising relations. The Bible is a new book to me. I have a heart for my work. I can pray and weep for my people, and they are now coming to Christ. I have spoken these two weeks to fifty-nine anxious souls. May God increase the number greatly, and increase my light and power. I need and I desire much more of the Holy Ghost. But, oh, eternity will be too short to express all my gratitude for what I have already enjoyed.”

Within a few days seventy persons had sought him to speak of their relation to Christ, and week after week he held classes in which to strengthen

their knowledge and deepen their spiritual experience.

This is not unfamiliar ground to those who are acquainted with the story of the great revival in Indian Lands, under the ministry of Rev. Daniel Gordon, the father of "Ralph Connor." That remarkable awakening is all but literally described in "The Man from Glengarry," in which work the "recently appointed college professor" with a reputation for doctrinal preaching, who was counted "grand on the attributes and terrible fine on the law," was Dr. MacVicar. On the eve of the historic revival in Indian Lands he had assisted Mr. Gordon at a pre-communion service, and after the lapse of some years the Canadian novelist has vividly set forth the general and particular impression of the sermon when, taking as his theme, "Love, the Bond of Perfectness," the professor, not long released from Côté Street Church, "pursued" his hearers ("pursued" is the right word) into all their relations of life, with the question, "Am I a loving man?"

"He would not let them escape. Relentlessly he forced them to review their habits of speech and action, their attitude toward each other as church members, and their attitude towards 'those without.' Behind all refuges and through all subterfuges he made his message follow them, searching their deepest hearts. And then, with his face illumined as with divine fire, he made his final

appeal, while he reminded them of the Infinite Love that had stooped to save, and that had wrought itself out in the agonies of the Cross. And while he spoke his last words, all over the church the women were weeping, and strong men were sitting trembling and pale."

Ralph Connor says that he intended in this picture to make it transparent that with Dr. MacVicar the doctrinal was singularly combined with the practical. He had no affinity for creedless mist, fairly abominating what George Eliot called "disembodied opinions that float in vapory phrases—a bigotry against any clearly defined opinions—a lack of coherent thought, a spongy texture of mind that gravitates strongly to nothing" save "private haziness." The truth had to be brought into clearest daylight in definite doctrinal propositions; but that was simply in order that the way might be open for definite personal action. Doctrine was but the summing up of a relation to be sustained, a life to be lived, a duty to be discharged, a work to be done, under the inspiration of eternal principles that centre in God and the Living Christ.

Happily, he was surrounded by strong, like-minded men in his Session, who evidently had great faith in this Applied Doctrine. John Redpath, the originator of the House of Industry, had a prominent part in the initiation of what grew to be a strong self-sustaining congregation in St. Joseph Street (now Calvin) Church, towards the support of

which the Coté Street people for a number of years annually contributed a thousand dollars. James Court, rich in faith and prayer, with a set time for devotions in his business office, which none could interrupt, along with John Redpath, and others, was a conspicuous supporter (as he had been a joint founder) of what has since become a large and prosperous work of French evangelization. James Ross, quick, intense, unflagging in spiritual energy, tireless in effort to look after non-churchgoers, entered during this "doctrinal" ministry upon the faithful work which he has long continued in the Nazareth Street Mission. Judge Torrance, scholarly, dignified, high-principled, and taking a deep interest in the welfare of the young, was chiefly instrumental in securing the erection of the Mission House at Petite Côte, and, along with David Morrice, at considerable personal outlay, sustained for a time a similar undertaking in Côte St. Antoine, not far from the site of Melville Church, Westmount. Judge Torrance, too, with James Phymister as superintendent, was instrumental in opening the Mile End Sunday School, which in time became Chalmers Church. The congregation took a practical interest as well in a Sunday School in Quebec suburbs.

Few, if any, of the city congregations ever showed a more unselfish, aggressive spirit in manning the outposts for evangelistic effort. If "doctrinal preaching" invariably stood for such an output of practical missionary activity, one might well long for a revival of it.

None recognized more frankly than the young preacher himself how much of his personal success was due to the presence on his working force of such men as those named, and many others, like Archibald McGoun, Sr., John Campbell, James Davison, P. S. Ross, John Stirling, Peter Redpath, Joseph Mackay, Thomas Davidson, Peter Nicholson, Alexander Walker, William Greig, besides a large number in the rank and file who showed ambition to excel. He was fortunate, too, to have as his ministerial assistants, from time to time, Rev. John Davidson, afterwards of Alma; Rev. John Thompson, afterwards of Sarnia; Rev. J. W. Mitchell, afterwards of Thorold, and Rev. William Moore Mackey, a young man of brilliant promise, who through an early call to higher service became one of "Life's withheld completions."

Nor, speaking of assistants, must Peter Adam, the beadle, be overlooked.

Peter was a man of decided character, a veritable Jeems.

Whether or no he knew, like Dr. Brown's hero, how to give a look of general wrath "at lairge," he certainly knew how to express scorn in particular.

His judgments on visiting brethren who occupied the pulpit were expressed in graded degrees of Scottish caution.

"Yon's rich!—yon's real rich!"

That was the most extravagant endorsation any could receive.

If an "effort" reached half way up, it was:

"Yon will do!"

But if a visitor's abilities happened to be less than middling the fact was unsparingly announced.

"It's no much yon!"

If the stranger failed utterly to awaken enthusiasm, Peter grew vehement.

"I'm thinkin' yon man's mista'en his callin'."

On one occasion the minister was searching through the church library for a copy of the Confession of Faith, and asked the beadle if he knew where it was.

"We hae yin whiles aboot the place," was the answer, "but,"—with a pause and a withering look—"it's nae a book I'm carin' for!"

The name of a probable "supply" having been mentioned in Adam's hearing, he stepped forward—after his kind—to volunteer advice.

"It's nae canny to bring yon man," said Peter, scoring the proposed "supply."

"On ma soul, it wad nae dae to bring him. We hae been feedin' a' these days on tairts and cream" (Dr. Donald Fraser had recently been occupying the pulpit), "and ye need nae bring us doon to porridge!"

Dr. Fraser, in his autobiography, tells how deeply he was impressed, at the beginning of his ministry in Côté Street, with the sage counsel of a friend who held to the opinion that a young man taking a city charge should not "put up all his sails at once."

His successor, already conscious of reserve power, lost no time in putting up at least one sail that carried him steadily into channels where his strongest life-work was to be accomplished.

He organized a Bible class.

This, though there have been larger since, speedily became the largest in the Canada Presbyterian Church at that time. Several hundred, including not simply young people, but prominent citizens, gathered at this class from Sunday to Sunday with an enthusiasm that did not succumb even to the languors of midsummer heat.

His unabashed purpose was to treat the Bible as a source of delight, a source of wisdom, a source of safety, and a guide to God. At every meeting he exalted it to that unique supremacy which it had long obtained in his own settled convictions, and from which, to his dying hour, it was never to be dashed down. The hop-step-and-jump method of study received absolutely no favor with him. Toilsome, patient, consecutive mastery of the contents and interpretation of entire books were aimed at; a course that involved constant and severe critical, exegetical and homiletical work.

The class was organized, and always conducted, with a view to practical action. It was the regular feeder of the working forces of the congregation; and nothing used to delight him more in ensuing years than to trace definite results, especially in the development of the spirit of liberality, back to the hard toil bestowed on this class.



He held that if people are to form generous habits they must be systematically trained in them. Accordingly he planned, and carried out a series of studies on that all-absorbing topic, Money. The class was never better attended; in some instances, by people who were in the habit daily of handling large sums in the transaction of their business. The course swept the Old and New Testaments with an overwhelming cumulative impression of Scriptural principle that brought direct financial benefit to more than one of the public institutions of the city. He used to say that among the most regular attendants at the class were men like Peter Redpath and Joseph Mackay, one of whom, besides endowing a chair in McGill University and enriching its library, as well as the library of the Presbyterian College to which he donated Abbé Migne's *Patrologia*, built those chaste structures, the Peter Redpath Museum and the Peter Redpath Library; and the other of whom built and endowed that admirable educational and benevolent institution, the Mackay Institute for Deaf Mutes. A broad stream of liberality flowed from this congregation towards the endowment and equipment of the Presbyterian College, to which more specific reference will in due course be made.

These years in the pastorate of Coté Street were filled with incessant plodding, steady study, feverish rush and pastoral activity, not unaccompanied by weariness, sickness and strain, relieved by a

visit to Great Britain. Holidays, however, were uncongenial to him, and, in the strict sense, rarely enjoyed. Work was the passion of his life. He sympathized with Sir Walter Scott's famous protest:

“As for telling me not to work, Molly might just as well put the kettle on the fire and say, ‘Now, don't boil.’”

When induced to relinquish the pulpit for the professor's chair, he said to the flock from whom he parted:

“It is now nearly eight years since I entered on the duties of this charge, one second in influence and importance to none in the Canada Presbyterian Church. I found it a congregation possessed of an historic past worthy of being devoutly cherished. Men of piety, of talent, and of eminence in the fatherland had ministered before me in this pulpit, and as the fruit of their labors under the Divine blessing, a godly membership and a staff of excellent, irreproachable and consistent office-bearers were drawn together, some of whom have entered upon their eternal rest, and many of whom remain unto this day.

“I found you a quiet, united, and devoted congregation, and such you have uninterruptedly continued to be during my pastorate. It is not a little to say that during that period the utmost unanimity, cordiality, and harmony prevailed among the elders, the deacons, and the members of the church. I came

among you not without fear and trembling, not without having many eyes directed towards me throughout the land, because I was young and comparatively inexperienced; but I found the elders and deacons uniformly stand by me like faithful men of God, and sustain me in a work of no ordinary magnitude, and prosecuted under outward circumstances in some respects by no means free from disadvantage. I have found the entire flock treat me with, what I am constrained to denominate, unusual consideration, kindness and generosity.

“What the character and results of my labors among you have been you have been pleased to indicate by a unanimous resolution of the church, in a manner too flattering, but for which I am deeply grateful.

“You are pleased to allude to my daily toils. The record of these I will not, I cannot, recite. It is on high. It is with God, to whom we must all render an account both of our ministry and of the use we make of our Gospel privileges. But it may be legitimate on my part now to refer to facts, and leave these to speak for themselves.

“On coming here I found a communion roll of over three hundred. During my ministry the annual additions to the list of members sometimes exceeded one hundred, and sometimes fell short of that number. The diminutions by death and otherwise were correspondingly large. So that now there are upon the communion roll 572 names.

“The missionary and general income of the church has not been lessened, but augmented, and last year was little short of twelve thousand dollars. You have aided in opening and sustaining five mission Sabbath Schools, and through your efforts and liberality, conjoined with those of the other congregations of our denomination in the city, what is now a self-sustaining mission church has been established; while your church Sabbath School and Bible class have continued to flourish.

“You have done well, and I trust will do still better, in establishing and supporting the Montreal College. ‘Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but to Thy name be the glory.’ We are weak, imperfect, and insufficient to do anything; but our sufficiency is of God.”

## CHAPTER VI.

### *ORIGIN OF THE PRESBYTERIAN COLLEGE, MONTREAL.*



The College Arms.

HERE WAS frost in the air when the first serious proposal to establish a new Theological College in Montreal was made; and there has been frost in the air very often since. The wonder is that the thought was not completely

nipped in the bud that cold winter night in 1864, when two ministers and seven laymen, none of whom now survive, met in the parlor of John Redpath at Terrace Bank, and discussed the need and prospects of a local institution for training preachers to proclaim the Gospel, more especially in the Province of Quebec, "Central Canada," and the Ottawa Valley, as well as in the "regions beyond." The two ministers were Rev. A. F. Kemp and Rev. D. H. MacVicar; the seven laymen, Principal (afterwards Sir William) Dawson, John

Redpath, Joseph Mackay, Laird Paton, George Rogers, Warden King and John Stirling.

As to the need for the proposed institution, there scarcely seemed room for difference of opinion; but as to the prospects, they seemed bleak as the winter night on which they were discussed. Cold winds blew through the discussion from the region of financial impracticability, and the likelihood of serious opposition; and the most accomplished was the appointment of a committee to prepare a tentative proposal to be submitted to a larger gathering called to meet in the home of John C. Becket, Brunswick Street, on the 9th of February.

The atmosphere of the discussion on this second evening was less "chilly." Mr. Redpath presided, and Principal Dawson submitted the committee's report. With eyes wide open to the gravity of the undertaking on its financial side, and the antagonism that would certainly be encountered on its ecclesiastical side, it was resolved, with some approach to warmth and enthusiasm, to go forward, in the faith that a way would open up where no way seemed to be. The spiritual destitution of the regions immediately contemplated must in some manner be adequately met, and the claims of the world-wide field must never be forgotten.

McGill University, as represented by its distinguished Principal, and in the full liberty of its comprehensive charter, stood ready to afford to theological colleges advantages, then desiderated,

but subsequently (in a somewhat modified form) secured, by Dalhousie College, Halifax, and Toronto University. McGill in its Arts course was prepared to give as cordial recognition to the students of affiliated Theological Colleges as to those in its Faculties of Medicine, Law and Applied Science, throwing open to them its library, museum, scholarships, medals and class rooms. An advanced training in the so-called "Humanities" could thus be secured without depriving candidates for the ministry of the advantage of wholesome contact with young men looking toward other professions, and without imposing on the Church a load of financial obligation for secular education which it would not be disposed to assume.

The more the situation was discussed, the more the enthusiasm grew, and it was decided that an appeal should be made without delay to a wider circle for action. This wider circle embraced three congregations, all in Montreal: one situated on Lagauchetière Street (now known as Erskine), another on St. Gabriel Street (now known as Knox), and the third on Coté Street. In this last place, with John Redpath again presiding, the new college, as yet only "in the air," was taken out of the air by an enthusiastic resolution to approach the Presbytery of Montreal; which court in turn, with equal unanimity, agreed to approach the Synod.

The Synod, after the matter had been discussed fully in committee and in open court, saw no harm

in putting the scheme on paper, and granting sanction to the Presbytery of Montreal to obtain a charter, *mutatis mutandis*, similar to that of Knox College, with instructions to report next year. Doubtless many expected that this would be the end of the matter, that the institution would never materialize: for even after it did, one prophet of no inconsiderable standing in the church predicted that it would all fall to pieces within three or four years.

It is easy enough to make a college—on paper—and by formal resolution. No little degree of magnetic personality is required to lift it off the paper. Colleges in the air, like castles in the air, need foundations on the solid earth, before they become important assets in life; and such foundations can be successfully laid only by men who have faith to work out the answer to their own prayers.

The imprimatur of the highest court in the Church had been obtained. Presently, without much difficulty a charter was secured. But where were the funds to come from? Where the buildings? Where the students? Most vexing question of all—one that even now with a wider constituency from which to choose often causes prolonged embarrassment—where the Professors?

One problem were best faced at a time. If the citizens of Montreal seriously desired such an institution, let them get to work and secure the necessary foundation of financial support. That was the



Synod's challenge. It was taken up in earnest by a Committee of Montreal Presbyterians, for whom Alexander McGibbon acted as treasurer, and John Stirling as scribe, the latter to become for the rest of his life the indefatigable secretary of the College Board.

A sum was paid in from the city of Quebec, another from the city of Montreal. The ball started to roll. In 1867, the Synod was informed that from all sources twenty thousand dollars were available; enough, at least, to justify the appointment of one professor. It was not proposed, in the meantime, to erect any buildings. The Synod gave permission to increase the Endowment Fund to at least thirty thousand dollars, provided it were raised within the Presbyteries of Montreal, Brockville and Ottawa. A Senate and Board of Management were appointed, and the most likely man for the place was unanimously offered the position of Professor—the Rev. George Paxton Young, M.A.

The institution was thus fairly started on a career concerning the vitality of which perhaps the most sceptical person was the very man who was destined to give it vitality, Rev. Donald Harvey MacVicar. At the wintry-night meeting at Terrace Bank in 1864, the strongest opposition came from him; and when, against his judgment, the matter was seriously taken up and pushed, and he himself pushed to the front to push it, his one hope of success lay in securing the appointment of his former preceptor

in Toronto, Professor Young, then acting as High School Inspector in Ontario.

It happened that Professor Young had called upon him one day, and in the course of conversation had expressed his willingness to take up this work, should the position be unanimously offered to him. But on fuller consideration, as the event proved, he could not see his way to act. The Board, in its disappointment, turned to the pastor of Coté Street Church, and pressed him to act as lecturer until the next meeting of Synod.

He declined.

So far from having the least ambition for a post which many have thought he always planned to secure, he had in the end to be literally thrust into it.

Rev. William Gregg, then pastor of Cooke's Church, Toronto, afterwards Professor in Knox College, agreed to lecture for three months, and was succeeded for another three months by Rev. William Aitken, of Smith's Falls, Ont. A class of ten students met in the basement of Erskine Church, St. Catherine Street, and became in due time the vanguard of the distinguished order familiarly known in academic circles as "The Cellar Graduates."

In the meantime, the Board, in their persistent search for a permanent professor, aimed high. They approached Rev. A. B. Bruce, then of Broughty Ferry; Rev. Marcus Dods, then of Glasgow; Rev. James McCosh, of Princeton, and Rev. Dr. Ormis-

ton, of New York. These all declined. Who could blame them? The outlook was anything but attractive. To become within "colonial" territory the sole professor of a college that barely existed in its charter, could not be counted a "prize of the profession" that would glitter in the eyes of men with a great future before them.

This was the situation when the Synod met in Erskine Church, Montreal, in June, 1868. A prominent place in the proceedings of that meeting was given to the vexed question of instrumental music, in discussing which the words of Job were freely used, "The wicked rejoice at the sound of the organ." Much time was spent to prove that instrumental music was contrary, in general, to the Word of God, and, in particular, to the genius of the Presbyterian Church. A more important matter, however, was to occupy the attention of the court: the fate of the new institution that had been established in the basement of that very church.

The College Board, through Rev. Alexander Young, who rendered invaluable service in those early days, presented a cheerful, confident report, and wound up by recommending the appointment of Rev. D. H. MacVicar as Professor of Divinity.

Rev. W. B. Clarke, of Quebec, moved the appointment, seconded by Rev. Principal Willis, and supported by Rev. William Gregg. The pastor of Erskine Church, Rev. Dr. Taylor, promptly moved in amendment that suitable applicants be sought by

advertisement in Scotland. He expressed high personal regard for the young man who had been named in the original motion, but believed his appointment would be "fatal to the college."

The truth is, the young man himself believed the same!

At the very first meeting of the College Board which he attended after his installation, his greeting, truly Highland in abruptness, ran:

"Gentlemen, I have concluded to try the work of this new institution, and will continue it so long as I think it the wise thing to do. When I think otherwise, I shall leave."

He said no more, but got to work.

The discussion provoked in the Synod by Dr. Taylor's amendment practically traversed the ground that has so often been beaten hard in the history of the Presbyterian Church in Canada. One party felt it an indispensable condition for success that some scholar of established standing should be brought across the ocean: the other party thought it a pity that Canadian-trained ministers, in relation to high and responsible positions, should never be allowed to show what was in them. When the vote was taken, not more than eight hands were raised in opposition to the appointment. Three recorded their dissent.

All of this may prove not uninteresting history to anyone who takes the trouble to climb the spiral

stairway in the gallery of the David Morrice Library in order to consult, in one of the first alcoves which he enters, the verbatim report of the proceedings preserved in the bound volume of the *Witness* for 1868. To appreciate the full irony of history one has only to realize that this "fatal" appointment led to the attraction of a steady succession of students from far and near, the appointment of a strong staff of professors and lecturers, a long list of endowments and benefactions directly traceable to the personal influence of Principal MacVicar, especially amongst his devoted congregation now worshipping in Crescent Street Church; and, by the time of his death, to the training of 267 ministers and the possession of buildings, library, endowments and other assets amounting to about half a million dollars.

The strangest thing about it is that the young man who lived to see so much accomplished in this and other directions, never dreamed of such results, and was ready to step in only on condition that when the predictions of the prophets of evil, himself among the number, should be fulfilled, he would be free to step out again! What hath God wrought?

Father Chiniquy, in his vivid reminiscences of those early days, probably reflects with tolerable faithfulness the popular impression in contemporary minds with regard to the man and his attitude

to the work into which he had thus been thrust. In his graphic book, "Forty Years in the Church of Christ," he says:

"The basement room I found small, low, badly ventilated, badly lighted. But if the material aspect of this newly improvised class room was as humble and poor as it could be, it was not so with the appearance of the teacher. Nothing could be more pleasant than to look at his honest face. He was the very personification of health, strength and Christian enthusiasm.

"No king on his throne ever looked more happy than the Rev. D. H. MacVicar, in that first hour that I made his personal acquaintance. His high stature, nearly six feet, his broad shoulders, fine and perfectly formed chest, his splendid forehead, the evident dwelling place of high intelligence, all the fine and regular but stern lines of his face, were telling me that I was in the presence of one of those few men whose marble statues will some day adorn the public places of their grateful country.

"After saluting me in that gentlemanly manner which is his own, he continued his lesson. It was the explanation of the binomial theorem of Newton.

"When young, the study of mathematics had not only been a pleasure to me, but it was a real passion, and I felt so pleased and so full of admiration for his ease and lucidity in explaining the most difficult parts of that remarkable problem that the sweet

remembrances of my college days were revived within my heart.

“After taking leave of the Rev. Mr. MacVicar, I said to my companion, ‘I am filled with admiration for the high capacity of that young mathematical teacher. Sooner or later the Protestants of Canada will acknowledge his unparalleled capacity. Such a treasure of learning and zeal will not be left in the low and obscure basement of this church.’

“‘The Rev. Mr. MacVicar is surely an able mathematician,’ answered my companion, ‘but his enormous ambition will destroy him. Do you not know that his dream is to have a large Presbyterian College in Montreal? We have already enough, if not too many, of these institutions for the small means of our young and struggling churches. The theological colleges of Kingston, Toronto and Halifax are as many as Canadian Presbyterian churches can support. Even Mr. MacVicar would see this, if his unquenchable ambition were not blinding him. He evidently aims at being called “the founder of the Montreal Presbyterian College.” But he will be disappointed. I am very sorry for that, for I like him; he is one of our best working men, full of zeal and piety, but his ambition is almost boundless, and it will destroy him.’

“‘Allow me to differ with you,’ I answered. ‘If there is a thing that is needed in Montreal to-day it is a college where our Christian young men will be prepared to spread the Gospel among the

French population of this Province of Quebec, as well as among the English-speaking people. . . . The ambition of the Rev. Mr. MacVicar is a noble one. It is the grand ambition of a true Christian. . . . I would give up this very day the blessed evangelistic work in which I am engaged among my Roman Catholic countrymen, if I had not in my heart the hope that, before long, there will be a Protestant College where the more intelligent of the young men whom we bring to Christ will be trained to preach the Gospel. Before long I will be in my grave with the few evangelists who are helping me and whom I am helping in this precious part of the Lord's vineyard; and who will take our places if there is no college where new recruits will be trained to continue our evangelical work? Surely Mr. MacVicar is too poor to build that college, but the God who has put into his heart the noble and holy ambition of raising it, is rich enough to do it. The gold and silver of the whole world are His, and there are enough noble and rich Christian men to do that blessed work, when the hour appointed by the Providence of God will sound from the clock of heaven.' "

Laudable though the ambition to found a college might have been, nothing had been further from young MacVicar's thoughts. When appointed by the Synod to take charge of the work, he asked three months in which to consider the proposal, and then—as he has distinctly put on record—quite against



his better judgment, decided to attempt what he had little expectation of carrying through.

The real credit for founding the institution would rightly seem to belong to one of Canada's most distinguished sons, that far-seeing educationist, Sir William Dawson. A letter written by him to John Redpath on December 28th, 1863, deserves insertion:

My Dear Sir,—In answer to your inquiries of yesterday, I may say in the first place that the constitution of a theological school, if established in this city, would of course be a matter for the determination of the Synod; but it appears to me that one competent professor, with the aid of resident ministers, would at first be a sufficient staff; and that no expense need be incurred in the erection of buildings, as class rooms could no doubt be rented, and board for students could be obtained on easy terms.

With respect to advantages to be anticipated, I may mention the following. It would make this city a more powerful centre of influence for the Presbyterian Church in Lower Canada, and would enable more missionary and aggressive effort to be put forth. It would secure to the Church the services of many young men who will not or cannot go to Toronto, and would bring into the field men particularly suited for the work in Lower Canada. The wealth and influence of Montreal would be enlisted in support of the Seminary to a much greater extent than is possible in the case of an institution elsewhere.

The University here would be made more useful to the Presbyterian Church, and on the other hand

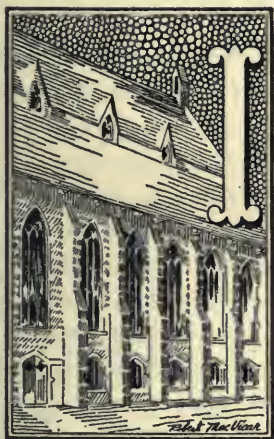
would be strengthened by such usefulness. If the institute were affiliated to the University its Principal would have a seat in the corporation, and its students could have such privileges as would enable them to take the degree in Arts without interference with their theological studies. . . . The literary and scientific education given by McGill University is quite equal to anything of this kind accessible to theological students elsewhere, and its Protestant character enables it to take its stand on the side of evangelical Christianity, while avoiding denominational contests.

There is a good feeling in behalf of such an institute in the city. In evidence of this I have been informed that one gentleman is ready to endow it to the extent of one thousand pounds, and another offers to be one of twelve who will give five hundred pounds each in aid of it. These sums could not, I presume, be secured for any other locality. Trusting that the above rough hints will give you the information desired, I am, yours truly,

J. W. DAWSON.

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE "CELLAR" DAYS.



The "Cellar" Entrance.

IT IS NOT in our stars, according to Shakespeare, but in ourselves, that we are underlings. The stars had twinkled in a frosty atmosphere that historic night when the first concerted step was taken to establish this work in the half-underground basement of Erskine Church—an imposing structure, since altered into a dry-goods store, on the corner of Peel and St. Catherine Streets—but already experience had revealed, in connection with every disguised or open effort to "freeze" the movement to death, that the responsibility to keep it alive rested on more than the ambition of an underling.

The students, men of no mean calibre, one of whom wrote his Arts valedictory in Hebrew and only with reluctance consented to turn it into

English, would no doubt seek relaxation, between lectures, in their improvised ecclesiastical gymnasium, by vaulting over the backs of the Sunday School forms, and setting in motion imaginary "trains," other than of thought, with realistic shunting and blowing of whistles; to the lasting scandal of the beadle, old John Austin, a veteran who had fought at Balaclava and in the trenches before Sebastopol.

Some of the traditions attaching to this so-called "cellar" have an exaggerated sound in the mind of those of us who cherish happy thoughts of Sabbath School days passed in the same quarters. The after-recollections of young folk, however, who spent there only one hour a week are not to be pitted against the positive statements of mature men who spent twenty-eight to thirty hours. This may account for any dimness of memory regarding the damp atmosphere, of which others have spoken, "best breathed by lungs of leather and throats of brass," and in which text-books were speedily covered with green mould.

The frame of mind in which the newly appointed Professor entered on his work appears to be indicated by the subject of his inaugural lecture—"Miracles." Nothing short of the miraculous would appear to be needed in order to evolve any permanent element from this beginning. As a matter of fact, the subsequent history of the institution was to be a miracle of downright hard work—at

times, of almost grim staying power; for more than once life trembled in the balance. Dr. Willis openly stated on the floor of the Synod assembled at Hamilton, in 1869, that he had come even to that meeting prepared to propose a motion which contemplated the closing of the institution. He added that he had not seen his way to abandon this purpose until he had listened to the masterful plea made by Professor MacVicar in demonstration of the necessity of such a college in the heart of the French-speaking population of Canada.

Though in doubt from the start, as to ways and means, the young professor thoroughly believed in the inevitableness of the work itself, having known from experience, as a Presbytery convener, the difficulty of persuading men to travel from the remoter colleges in order to occupy the strategic positions in the Province of Quebec and the Ottawa Valley, a territory which then embraced fully a million Roman Catholics, with minds so corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ as to afford ready lodgment for puerile superstitions and expose a worthy race to tyrannies that would not be tolerated in Rome itself.

Naturally courteous, vivacious, volatile, yet capable of exalted feeling and noble effort, the French-Canadians were the victims of ultramontanism. Protestants, who appreciated their own liberties and desired to share them, could not but regard it as both a Christian duty and an imperative, patriotic

act to attempt the deliverance of these people from a servitude that hindered social progress and frustrated the development of that type of character which most contributes to higher citizenship. A system of education that could actually allow children to pass through school without learning to read was intolerable. No less reprehensible was the priestly dictation from the altar that told bakers not to bake bread, millers not grind wheat, tailors not to make clothes, for the proscribed. To live in close touch with such a state of things, and remain neutral, was impossible.

From the city of Quebec, that "dream of the Middle Ages on the shores of the St. Lawrence," as Howells has called it, came, by appointment of Presbytery, Rev. W. B. Clarke, to preside at the professor's induction. He chose as his theme the words, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge," and not simply magnified the practice of the Presbyterian Church in emphasizing the teaching functions of the pulpit and the demand for a fully equipped ministry, but, as was to be expected, vindicated the need for a seat of learning at this particular centre, where agents for special work would have their minds fortified with all necessary knowledge and their hearts inflamed with evangelistic zeal.

Even when Knox College was established in Toronto, many years before—as the minutes of the Synod disclose—the advisability of placing that

institution in Montreal had not been overlooked, and, notwithstanding a contrary decision, the conditions which had suggested the step remained more clamant than ever.

One of the earliest, most natural, indeed inevitable, developments of the work in Montreal was the organization of a class of French students, to whom was allotted a room in the church steeple, to sit at the feet of Rev. Daniel Coussirat, B.D. (afterwards D.D.), a man of distinguished presence and conspicuous gifts, hailing from the ancient residence of the kings of Navarre—Nerac in France—where Calvin, Beza and Lefebvre d'Étaples had labored in the Reformation. Professor Coussirat, later on selected as one of the Revisers of the French Old Testament, has, with the exception of five years' absence in France, rendered steady service ever since in this department of the college.

Apart from lectures on Exegetics delivered by Rev. John Munro Gibson, then winning his spurs as assistant pastor of Erskine Church, and afterwards the notable preacher of Chicago, Ill., and London, Eng., the entire stress of the English work fell upon the broad shoulders of the man whom Chiniquy casually heard teaching the binomial theorem.

He found it necessary to give instruction alike in Mathematics, Latin, Greek, Logic and Moral Philosophy, besides all the regular subjects of the theological curriculum. The old note-books show in the

departments of Systematic Theology, Apologetics and Church History something like the resourcefulness of a specialist. In view of the circumstance that it is intended in a subsequent chapter to present more specifically his characteristics as a teacher, it is unnecessary to say more in passing than that the pedagogic gift was developed in a day when one man was expected to do the work of half a dozen. Dr. Dawson, besides acting as Principal of McGill University, lectured as Professor of Botany, Zoology, Chemistry, Geology, Mineralogy, as well as superintending the financial operations and gathering books for the library, botanical and geological specimens for the museum, and who knows what besides.

In Canada, history is not made. It is only in the making. They who make it now, are not compelled to scatter their energies over quite so wide a field as their predecessors, who, as wise master-builders, according to the grace that was given them, laid the foundation, that others might build thereon.

The particular department of Professor MacVicar's duties which proved most irksome and became more and more harassing, was that of college finance. His own income was barely adequate for the high rate of living in Montreal, and his generosity in any case would have left no margin.

A crisis soon threatened.

Born by the sea, there was inbred in his nature



a love for its saline breezes. He felt it necessary, after the exhausting work of a hard session, to recuperate at the seashore, but was often hard put to it to find the wherewithal. Whilst debating how to spend the summer of 1872, an opening occurred to fill the pulpit of the Old South Church in Brooklyn, N.Y.

He decided to go.

His preaching attracted attention. It was reported at length in the daily papers. His open-air sermons, especially, were spoken of as drawing exceptional crowds. His powerful presence, his incisive style, his sonorous voice, his positive accent of conviction, notwithstanding that he read every word of his sermons, created an enthusiasm that did not easily evaporate.

The church happened to be vacant. As things go, a congregation, looking for a minister, turned to a man who was in no sense looking for them, and extended a call at a salary of \$7,000. Letters and deputations passed to and fro. So great was the eagerness to secure a settlement that an offer was made to bring the stipend up to eight or nine thousand dollars. No encouragement was given to these approaches.

The fact that negotiations were in progress reached the ears of the College Board. Without delay they waited upon the Professor, and urged him to defer his decision till they could do something to put things in Montreal on a more satisfactory basis,

An editorial appeared in *The Daily Witness*, headed "Must We Lose Our Best Men?"

It betrayed a complacent willingness to sacrifice able divines in Toronto, or Hamilton, for commanding positions in the States, but grudged any proposal that came nearer home than that. One professor had recently been taken from Knox College, Toronto, for a pastoral charge in Brooklyn. "Now it appears," ran the article, "that another Brooklyn Church wishes to rob us of Professor MacVicar, the principal of the Canada Presbyterian College here—a man of far-reaching influence as an educator, and whose labors in connection with the Public School Board, and with the French-Canadian Missionary Society, have been of great value to the country. We do not know whether he will accept this call. If he should, our best wishes will go with him to his new sphere, where he will be the companion of such men as John Hall, Beecher, Cuyler, and Taylor; but if he can be induced to remain we shall be glad, as he is a man we can ill afford to spare."

The call, as the correspondence reveals, was, under a firmly expressed sense of duty, declined.

Not a year later, a renewed, and more importunate, call from the same congregation was also declined. The official overtures stated that after trial of not a few ministers of standing, whom they had every assurance of being able to persuade to assume the pastorate, the hearts of the people still

turned "in a degree altogether unusual" to the Canadian professor, and pressed him to reconsider a field of such widely extended usefulness and so filled with attractions to a man of his culture.

"We have no desire," they concluded, "to worry you with our importunities, but we do feel very much in earnest about this matter."

In subsequent years, when pressed to discuss his reasons for remaining in Montreal at this and other crises, he admitted that, in addition to the advice and importunacy of loyal friends, one strong factor that determined his decision was the open opposition to the college that was manifested in some quarters. It stirred his Highland blood, and fired him with a resolve to stand his ground and carry the enterprise to some point of appreciable success before entertaining any thought of abandoning it.

Hopefulness as to ways and means might be in the shade; but in a clear, confident light he still read the family motto, "Dominus Providebit," and resolved to press forward in the spirit of a quick retort which he once gave to a devout merchant, who, in the process of evading a subscription list, spoke of the need of greater faith in carrying on an undertaking of such gravity.

"Yes, yes, Mr. Blank, we need faith; but faith without works is dead—how much are you ready to *do*; here is the subscription list!"

The world hears much about, and gloats not a little over, tales in which the glitter of gold is

detected in the eyes of some of her distinguished sons; but it passes lightly over the evidence that in Canada at least many of our most influential leaders have betrayed no passion whatever for the accumulation of this world's goods.

A Montreal clergyman, on a health trip to Rome, fell in with a travelling companion from the United States, who no sooner learned from what region he had come than he exclaimed:

"Montreal? Why, friend, do you happen to know a man called MacVicar who lives there?"

"Certainly. I know him well."

"Then I'm heartily glad to meet *you*; for you happen to be acquainted with one of the most remarkable men within my knowledge. Our church in San Francisco tried hard to get him to leave a salary of \$2,000 in Montreal and accept \$10,000 from us, but he would not even look our way."

On his return home, the Montreal clergyman, to whom this was news, took pains to seek confirmation of the story. It proved to be true, though it happened at a later period than that now under discussion; as also did overtures from the Brick Church in New York, and correspondence mooting the question of removal to the Northwestern (McCormick) Theological Seminary in Chicago.

It is not true that money can secure anything, and that the strongest genius is powerless to resist its allurements. Even Major Pond, that prince of

persuasiveness, preserved among his archives a letter from Charles Spurgeon which ran:

"Dear Sir,—I am not at all afraid of anything you could say by way of temptation to preach or lecture for money; for the whole United States in bullion would not lead me to deliver one such lecture. It would only waste your time and mine for you to see me, though I feel sure that you are one of the pleasantest men upon earth. Your good-natured pertinacity is so admirable that I trust you will not waste it upon an impossible object; but be content to have my acknowledgment that if success could have been achieved, you would have achieved it. Yours truly,

"C. H. SPURGEON."

It may be mentioned that one of Principal MacVicar's most enthusiastic and attached admirers expressed a strong personal desire that a contemplated donation to the college should go exclusively towards increasing his own salary, but he persuaded the benefactor instead to devote the amount towards the endowment of a fellow-professor's chair.

It may also be mentioned, as illustrative of the absolute confidence which his closest friends felt in his disinterestedness, that when a spiteful letter was sent to another benefactor, intended to create a prejudice against the Principal, the offensive missive was promptly handed over to the man whom it abused, with an exclamation of affected gruffness.

“I’m saying! The writer of that has no great love for you. You needn’t wonder if his view of your mercenary aims makes *me* love you less!”

Then, with a twinkle in his eye, the millionaire drafted a document which stipulated that so long as Principal MacVicar should be able to discharge the active duties of the professoriate, a particular endowment, which this friend was contributing, should be available for no other object than his salary. Was it the experience of Tennyson over again?

This faded leaf, — our names are as brief ;  
What room is left for a hater ?  
Yet the yellow leaf hates the greener leaf,  
For it hangs one moment later.

The call from Brooklyn gave momentum to a movement, already making headway, towards the erection of college buildings. The number of students now in attendance in the so-called “cellar” had exceeded expectation; but timid friends still doubted whether it would be wise to find a permanent home for a work which many were firmly convinced could only be temporary. The prospect of losing from the city one of such influence weighed with the most timorous, and earnest efforts were put forth to raise a Building Fund not without some measure of success.

The first thought was to purchase a brick structure already standing on Mansfield Street, a

little above Burnside Place. Shut in by other buildings, it lacked breathing space, and was, in other respects, so unsatisfactory that it was resolved, with increased diligence, to augment the Building Fund, and erect a more substantial stone structure on a lot on McTavish Street, adjoining McGill University.

The plans were prepared on a scale that gauged the faith of that day in the future of the institution. The utter inadequacy of the accommodation, within a few years, would alone disclose the rapidity with which concentrated work was to outstrip Faith.

Still, however modest the architecture, it was chaste, and there was no little rejoicing over it. If, at an earlier stage, the visible good-will of Knox College had been represented by the act of Principal Willis in seconding the motion to appoint one of the Knox alumni as the first Professor in Montreal, it was further evidenced by the presence of Principal Caven at the opening ceremonies in 1873, when, in extending greetings from without, he shared the honors with Dr. Narayan Sheshadri of India.

Nothing succeeds like success. Once the work obtained a distinctive home it began to expand and deepen. The friends of the institution realized that the staff must be strengthened without delay.

They had their eyes upon a young man whose boyhood had been spent in an atmosphere redolent of letters in his native city of Edinburgh, as well as in London and on the continent, where he had

become proficient in French and German, before entering mercantile life in New York.

The year in which Coté Street pastorate had commenced, this young man was entering on a distinguished career in Toronto University, during which he carried off many scholarships and prizes, culminating with two gold medals.

His theological studies in Knox College were enlivened by a call to arms, as senior sergeant of a company of the Queen's Own Rifles, with whom he went into action to resist the notorious Fenian Raid at Ridgeway; and his last session was taken in New College, Edinburgh, under Dr. Candlish.

Here was the very person, now settled in Charles Street Church, Toronto, for whom the Montreal people were looking. By spontaneous consent, he was marked out for a professoriate, and had, indeed, been nominated for a chair in Knox College.

Montreal succeeded in securing him.

This young scholar was Rev. John Campbell, M.A. (afterwards LL.D.), who was destined to exert no inconsiderable influence in the attraction of students to the foot of Mount Royal. On his appointment as Professor of Church History and Apologetics in 1873, Dr. MacVicar, honored several years before by McGill University with the degree of LL.D., became Principal.



## CHAPTER VIII.

### *EXPANSION.*



The Old Building.

CARCELY two men could have been found more unlike in their temperaments, habits, tastes and convictions than Principal MacVicar and Professor John Campbell. Yet the correspondence of those earlier days reveals how absolutely they enjoyed each other's friendship, entered into mutual confidence, and loy-

ally paid deference to each other's judgment.

The Principal used to speak with lively satisfaction of the charm of Professor Campbell's personality, his singular passion for ethnological research, his devout, glowing fervor in expounding the Fatherhood of God, his pungent sincerity of utterance, his chivalrous sense of honor, all of which, combined with rare scholarship, created among the students, too, an enthusiasm which the gentle ripple of necessary names and dates in his lectures could not dampen.

In their dormitories men spoke with awe of the strange tongues in which he could "readily converse" and the unreckoned number of stranger tongues of which he had "a working knowledge." In the class room they loved nothing better than the flashes of genius that were periodically called forth by invited or uninvited digressions from the note-books; digressions which showed that he had a far higher conception of the functions of his office than that satirized by Dickens in his caricature of educationists who suppose that the one end of life is to fill empty pitchers with imperial gallons of facts.

The Professor's own easy control of a large mass of information accentuated the ideal, which he was fond of exalting, that Christian manhood ranks higher than Christian scholarship. The sparkle of his zest for a wide full view of life, in contrast to a cramped mentality that can be content with mere *post-mortem* investigations of ancient heresy, often reached incandescence in these "asides," which never really were aside.

Many a student, listening to him, might have said:

"Give me a spirit that on this life's rough sea  
Loves to have his sails filled with a lusty wind,  
Even till his sailyards tremble, his masts crack,  
And his rapt ship runs on her sides so low  
That she drinks water, and her keel ploughs air."

If, at one crisis, the keel seemed to have ploughed the air too alarmingly, his friends, however they

may have emulated his own bold publicity in expressing their sincere convictions, felt not less the old-time affection for the man. Principal MacVicar, on the eve of the ecclesiastical "Trial," in which he found it impossible to be silent, invited Professor Campbell to be his guest; and only the acceptance of a previous invitation stood in the way of this hospitality extending to more than a meal or two. They who were able to detect in the Principal's features nothing but unrelenting marks of austerity, and, in his temperament, chronic lack of consideration for the views of others, must often have been perplexed to account for the harmonious relations which, throughout a long career, he was yet able to sustain with those from whom he radically and openly differed.

At the period now under consideration, however, divergence of views was not conspicuous. The two men had much in common, especially in their practical estimate of the definite work which they had in hand.

Professor Campbell, with a happy coincidence of sympathy in regard to the peculiar mission of the institution, as a citadel of Protestantism in the midst of a Roman Catholic population, early identified himself with a French congregation in the city, where he and his wife practised zealously the principles for which the college so strongly stood. Though in this, and other ways, thrown, with the Principal, into what some mistook for a mere con-

roversial and proselytizing movement, in the prosecution of which they faced together more than one violent French mob, it should not be forgotten that they both had not a few friends amongst the Roman Catholics; and whatever differences may have arisen between themselves later on, the combined attractiveness of their work in the class room during the period under review was such as to induce not only some stray student on his way to Princeton to reconsider his course and remain in Montreal, but to draw thither men of promise from the extremes of the country, as well as from the other side of the Atlantic.

The prestige of the teaching staff was greatly increased through the services of Rev. John Scrimger, M.A. (afterwards D.D.), then minister of St. Joseph Street Church, who ungrudgingly took up the work laid down by Dr. Gibson on his removal from the city, and for eight years acted in the capacity of lecturer in Exegesis till he was unanimously appointed by the General Assembly to that chair, which he has made a tower of strength.

A Galt boy, trained under Dr. Tassie, and taking a high stand, both in his university course in Toronto and in his theological course in Knox College, Dr. Scrimger early displayed studious habits, executive ability and pronounced initiative. Few men have been able to bring to bear upon critical questions sounder scholarship, more impartial judgment or riper appreciation of the need of adapta-

tion to modern thought in order to solve modern problems; and fewer men have more thoroughly mastered the art of teaching.

He, too, has been keenly alive to the call for an aggressive work of French evangelization. The citizens of Montreal will not soon forget the vigor, resourcefulness and fairness with which he carried on, from night to night, in the *Daily Star*, a controversy with a Jesuit priest who had challenged some of his statements. He has always taken a large share in the work of the church courts.

Rev. James Ross, M.A., B.D. (afterwards D.D.), an Aberdeen man, the youngest member of the staff, came to Canada about the date of the origin of the college, and received his training in Queen's University, Kingston, from which he graduated with distinction. He was appointed to the chair of Practical Theology in 1893, after valuable experience in the pastorate and the performance of the duties of a lectureship in Queen's University. Not the least of his qualifications for the position which he fills is his high standing as a preacher.

From time to time, the work of the regular staff has been supplemented by the services of special lecturers. Invaluable service was rendered in the early days by Rev. Dr. William MacLaren, afterwards Professor in Knox College, Toronto. The Gaelic language and literature were treated by Rev. Dr. MacNish, of Cornwall; French Theology, by Rev. C. Doudiet, Rev. Dr. C. E. Amaron, and

Rev. B. Ourière; Science and Theology, by Sir Wm. Dawson; Sacred Rhetoric and Elocution, by Rev. Dr. J. S. Black, Rev. Dr. A. B. Mackay, Rev. J. C. Baxter, Prof. J. Andrew, J. Mitchell and J. P. Stephen; Pastoral Theology, by Rev. Dr. John Jenkins; Evangelistic Theology, by Rev. W. MacKenzie; Church Government, by Rev. L. H. Jordon; Ecclesiastical Architecture, by A. C. Hutchison and A. T. Taylor; Sacred Music, by A. C. Becket (Principal MacVicar's precentor in Coté Street), John MacLaren, Prof. S. P. Robins, and others. In the Literary Department may be mentioned Revs. Peter Wright, J. Y. Cameron, A. MacFarlane, Goodwin Gibson, W. J. Dey, D. M. McLeod, J. C. Robertson, J. McCaul, A. C. Morton, J. Allen, W. M. Rochester, A. MacWilliams, C. W. Whyte, W. L. Clay, D. J. Fraser, H. C. Sutherland, J. R. Dobson, E. A. MacKenzie, W. M. Townsend, J. S. Gordon, F. W. Worth, D. J. Keith, J. B. McLeod, A. W. Lohead, Dr. J. Clarke Murray and Dr. Alexander Johnson. One session when Principal MacVicar was absent in Europe, Rev. Dr. James Barclay, of St. Paul's Church, Montreal, lectured on Systematic Theology. Special lectures have also been delivered by Rev. Dr. D. W. Forrest, of Edinburgh; Rev. Dr. James Orr, of Edinburgh; Rev. Dr. S. D. F. Salmond, of Aberdeen; Rev. Dr. A. H. McKinney, of New York; Rev. Murdoch MacKenzie, of China, and others.

Long before this fuller expansion of the work

the accommodation had become cramped. The library, which has since accumulated among its treasures the *Patrologia* of Abbé Migne, a *facsimile* of the *Codex Sinaiticus* (presented to the college authorities by the Emperor of Russia), as well as *facsimiles* of the *Codices Alexandrinus* and *Vaticanus*, was beginning to spill over the building, and a growing number of students were obliged to seek lodgings at widely scattered points in the city.

At the close of each session the announcement was made, with a reiteration which must have grown monotonous, that the staff needed to be increased and the building enlarged:

“What friend will come to our help with the necessary funds?”

This appeal became stereotyped.

Friend after friend had responded hitherto; was it reasonable to look for a larger response? The Principal in this connection has left on record a statement which deserves insertion:

“Financing for church purposes is not generally regarded as an easy or agreeable business. Some call it a science. Others prefer a less complimentary name for it. Not a few knit their brows, shake their heads and ominously refuse to open their mouths on the subject.”

For his own part, as he was ready to hint, a long and curious chapter might have been written.

“But lest any should think that we claim superior wisdom in the matter, or that we have some

mysterious secrets to conceal, we hasten to say that there is nothing of this sort in the background.

“There have been all along a delightful naturalness and spontaneity in the manner in which our resources have come together. We are constrained to think that a good cause, prayer, business energy, and strong faith in God are the best means of getting a revenue.

“At first the members of the Presbytery of Montreal were charged with this work, and again and again the Synod and Assembly told them to push forward and get more money. Slowly and cautiously the territory upon which they were to draw was enlarged, until finally the Presbyteries of Ottawa, Brockville and Kingston were united with that of Montreal. This state of things did not last long. Great constitutional changes emerged. The Presbyterian churches of the Dominion drew near to one another, and after long years of separation were ready to unite. The college question, as it was called, became a prominent factor in the movement. The negotiating churches were embarrassed with an undue number of colleges, and a concentration of them was desired. The Presbyterian College, Montreal, at once expressed its willingness to unite with Morin and Queen’s upon equitable terms; and a scheme to that effect was prepared and printed by the Union Committees acting jointly.”

It was proposed that the united institution should



be situated in Montreal, and Principal MacVicar volunteered to relinquish his position in favor of Rev. Dr. Cook, of Quebec, who was greatly his senior.

“The whole proposal, however, was summarily rejected by the General Assembly of the Canada Presbyterian Church. Union came on. It was consummated in Montreal, in June, 1875. All the colleges entered into it under specific provisions, contained in the Basis of Union, to the effect that they were to hold relations to the united Church similar to those which they had held to their respective churches, and to preserve their corporate existence, government and functions, on terms and conditions similar to those under which they then existed. The effect of this arrangement upon our college finances can hardly be said to have proved satisfactory. The Board soon found itself, through the efforts of others, which it is now unnecessary to trace, practically limited for purposes of revenue to the city of Montreal.

“The outlook was not cheering, but it was faced with resolute faith and courage. Earnest appeals for help were made to all friends of the institution, rich and poor alike, and the responses were prompt and generous. Instructive examples of liberality might be cited. Children gave their offerings, widows bestowed their mites, Sunday Schools and Bible classes contributed bursaries. Young men and young women did their part, and their names

hold honorable places on the subscription lists. In one instance a pious mother, bereaved of a son, gave the entire portion which had been laid up for him, along with fervent prayers for God's blessing on our work. Special subscriptions extending over five years were obtained in support of different chairs.

"In 1871, the General Assembly launched a scheme by which to raise two hundred and fifty thousand dollars for the endowment of the Presbyterian College, Montreal, and Knox College, Toronto. Dr. John Laing, of Dundas, was appointed agent to carry out the proposal. The details of this scheme are now of no interest. In spite of vigorous and persistent efforts for several months, it proved an utter failure.

"Our Board once more resumed with increased energy its own work, adding slowly to its invested capital, and securing special contributions, such as those already mentioned. In 1877, the executors of Mr. Hall, of Peterboro', paid to the Board a bequest of fifteen thousand dollars, which was added to the endowment fund, and brought it up to over forty thousand dollars. That the fund reached even this amount showed no small degree of liberality, when we take into account the limited area from which it was drawn, the large sums raised at the same time for current expenses, and the amount laid out, in the purchase of a site for, and the erection of, the first buildings."

## CHAPTER IX.

### *FURTHER EXPANSION.*



Morrice Hall and Library.

OUR BUILDING should be enlarged. It is not half sufficient for our immediate wants. It is vain to add to our library until we have a proper room in which to place it."

This announcement, made at the closing exercises in the spring of 1880, was the echo of so much that had been stated during the brief decade of the institution's history, that some who listened felt but a languid interest. The proverbial "friend in need," however, could not let the matter drop out of mind—one whose confidence had always meant much in a practical way to those who enjoyed it.

David Morrice, leaving Perth, his birthplace in Scotland, had gained business experience in Dublin, Cork, London, Liverpool and Manchester, and

shortly after he came of age, resolved to cross the seas, and, in the contagious hopefulness of the New World, try his fortunes on Canadian soil. "Muddy York" by that time had emerged from its mud, and offered attractions which held the young man for some years in mercantile service.

Not less attractive proved Christian service. The Sunday School of Knox Church, Toronto, found in him an indefatigable worker, and later on he became "a leading spirit in a little company of earnest Christians who gathered round Dr. John Taylor in founding the Gould Street United Presbyterian Church, now one of the strongest and most active congregations in Canada, worshipping in St. James Square. Dr. Taylor, in addition to discharging the duties of the pastorate of his little flock, was sole Professor of Divinity in the U. P. Hall, and performed the work of his chair with much learning and ability. For his congregation it was the day of small things and the struggle for existence was hard and protracted. To this good work David Morrice gave ungrudgingly time and thought and money without stint, indeed all that he acquired except what was absolutely necessary for personal support. He acted as elder, Sunday School teacher, and member of the Board of Management, and a director of the U. P. Magazine. In all these capacities his services were abundant and invaluable, and before leaving the city he had the satisfaction of seeing the congregation beginning to emerge from its weakness and difficulties."

When he removed from Toronto to Montreal, he was so attracted by Mr. MacVicar's ministry as to leave the United Presbyterian Church, and worship henceforth in Coté Street Free Church, where he was soon called to office as an elder, and where for many years he acted as Sunday School superintendent.

A masterly influence in the commercial world, as head of a firm which for many years has carried on the largest business in their line in Canada, controlling a considerable number of cotton and woolen mills in different parts of the Dominion, David Morrice, with dignified bearing, confident energy, ready grasp of detail and executive enterprise, has always discharged in a practical manner the duties incidental to his office as chairman of the College Board of Management.

A member of the Montreal Microscopic Club, and of similar institutions, and an enthusiastic patron of art, it would not have been surprising had he devoted his attention and means, like other large-hearted citizens, to fostering the interests of secular education. He appreciated, however, the incalculable influences exerted by a properly equipped theological institution, with its annual output of men whose training fits them to touch at so many vital points the higher personal, social and religious movements of an extensive territory. To a man of his temperament, a business-like appeal "appealed." Already there was forming in his

mind a purpose that would result in the erection of a pile of buildings where increased numbers would assemble to taste the fruit of knowledge, on a spot where then stood a straggling clump of trees, up the branches of which street urchins were in the habit of swarming to taste luscious varieties of the "apple"-haw and "pear"-haw.

One evening, shortly after the opening of the ensuing session, Principal MacVicar, his mind keen and face aglow with satisfaction, appeared on the platform of a crowded meeting of Montreal Presbyterians who had been in session from night to night to consider the great departments of the Church's work at home and abroad. Without the usual manuscript in his hand, he proceeded to discuss, with suppressed energy, some notable causes in the city which had evoked Christian munificence, and after arousing no little curiosity as to the drift of his further remarks he asked leave to read a letter from a friend, which, only after much insistence, he had secured permission to make public. It ran:

My Dear Principal MacVicar—

You are aware that the work of our college has occupied my serious attention for some time and has caused me considerable anxiety in planning how to place it, as regards equipment and endowment, on a more satisfactory basis than at present.

The matter has pressed upon my mind more particularly of late, and on looking over the general work of our Church, especially in connection with our mission fields, so much in need of service, for

which assistance must come from our colleges, where provision is made for a thoroughly educated ministry, I have resolved after mature consideration of the whole matter to erect for the purposes of the college a Convocation Hall, and suitable library buildings, with a much needed dining hall, and twenty-five or thirty additional dormitories for the use of students.

I shall have the necessary plans prepared and submit them at an early date, for the approval of the Board.

The matter of the endowment I must leave in the hands of other friends of the college, who, I sincerely trust, will help us in this good work.

This outlay will cause me considerable personal sacrifice, but I make it with pleasure, believing it to be of God. Yours faithfully,

DAVID MORRICE.

The applause which greeted this announcement was echoed all over the land, and even beyond the seas, both in private correspondence, on public platforms, and in the press. "Mr. Morrice," said one of the city journals, "has been so generous a giver of the good things with which he has been blessed that this, his latest act of liberality, was little more than was to have been expected. He had only to discover the educational needs of the church to which he belonged to be impelled to give of his bounty and help forward an enterprise second to no other work."

The Principal lost no time in acting upon the hint thrown out in regard to a probable willingness

on the part of friends to implement the financial requirements of the institution. He appealed not in vain to one and another, who, like David Morrice, had sat under his ministry in Coté Street Church. As a result, the name of one prominent citizen, in whose home on the mountain side the college had practically come into being, is perpetuated by the endowment of "The John Redpath Chair," through a donation from his widow of twenty thousand dollars, afterwards increased to forty thousand. "The Joseph Mackay Chair" perpetuates the memory of another indefatigable worker in Coté Street, who had bequeathed a sum which his surviving brother, Edward, a man as forceful as he was true, increased to fifty thousand dollars. Another fifty thousand dollars was devoted to the endowment of "The Edward Mackay Chair," by the generosity of his large-hearted nephews, Hugh, James and Robert Mackay, who supplemented a bequest made by their uncle. The Principal always spoke with grateful satisfaction of the practical confidence exhibited by these and other benefactors of a work into which he had been providentially led against his own inclinations; for, notwithstanding a widespread impression, his inclinations more strongly called him to the pulpit than to the class room, and, throughout his career in the college, a Sabbath rarely passed, summer or winter, on which he was not preaching. He appreciated, too, the skillful generalship of Rev. R. H. Warden, D.D., in the management of the



finances of the college; the liberality of an anonymous friend who for years met in full the salary attaching to one of the chairs; and the generosity of a long list of donors of competitive fellowships, scholarships and prizes. Bequests to the institution from former worshippers in Coté Street Church and other personal friends of the Principal from time to time gladdened his heart; but the disappointing way in which some definitely expressed intentions of this kind failed to materialize confirmed his admiration for those who chose to be their own executors.

The pride which he felt in the hearty response made by old-time friends to his appeals for financial aid was really bound up in his satisfaction with the men who, under his guidance, were diligently preparing themselves for the work of the ministry. On one occasion, looking back to the conditions that had necessitated the establishment of the college, he said:

“ We have, by the grace of God, more than met the destitution then so clamant, and we have done it, and mean to do it, in a manner which secures general approbation. In a true patriotic and cosmopolitan spirit we unite various races in our class rooms, men speaking five or six different languages, and thus seek to bind together in Christian harmony the diverse elements of our youthful nation. It is well known that the population of the Dominion is heterogeneous; and no one will deny the right of

all to hear in their own tongues the wonderful works of God. To secure this, we have lectures in English, French and Gaelic. There are in Ontario alone, I am credibly informed, at least twenty congregations, and many more in Cape Breton, in which a knowledge of Gaelic is indispensable to the minister, and it is unnecessary to say how extensive the demand is for French.

“While beginning at home, and giving attention to parts adjacent, our institution seeks to extend its Christian influence and usefulness to the ends of the earth, and thus to act upon the Saviour’s declaration that the field is the world. To us Home and Foreign Missions are akin—only two departments of one great enterprise. We, therefore, rejoice in being faithfully represented by our alumni in England, Europe, the United States and all the provinces of the Dominion, as well as in foreign countries. Our students are drawn from this wide area, which shows their courage and enterprise, and our graduates are pastors in chief cities and towns such as Quebec, Antigonish, Montreal, Ottawa, Pembroke, Perth, Brockville, Peterboro’, Bowmanville, Toronto, Brampton, Goderich, Hamilton, London, Chatham, and Victoria on the Pacific coast, as well as vigorous missionaries in some of the roughest and hardest fields in the Dominion east and west. A large number of our most energetic men are settled in the North-West. Nor must we forget those of our number who have borne the Gospel to foreign lands, to Asia Minor, India and China.





DAVID MORRICE HALL AND LIBRARY.  
From McGill College Grounds.

“The results thus far achieved in our brief history are such as should inspire us with thankfulness and courage. But we cannot stand still. We must go forward. With such a record as God has enabled us already to make, with our large band of alumni, heartily loyal to the truth and to their *Alma Mater*, and with new friends and benefactors arising throughout our great country, why should not the college advance to more complete and greater prominence?”

At the dedication of the Morrice Hall and Library, on November 28th, 1882, greetings and congratulations were conveyed by Rev. Dr. Cochran, Moderator of the General Assembly; Rev. Principal Caven, of Knox College, Toronto; Rev. Principal Grant, of Queen's University, Kingston; Principal Dawson, of McGill University; Rev. Principal Henderson, of the Montreal Diocesan College, and Rev. Dr. Wilkes, of the Congregational Church. The modest words spoken by the donor of the new buildings reached a climax in the disclosure of Mrs. Morrice's part in the gift.

“From the very first,” he said, “I can sincerely say that I took a deep interest in this college, because I felt that it was destined to become the means of large and lasting good to our whole country, and especially to the Province of Quebec; and in this respect none of us have been disappointed. Many young men who might not otherwise have entered the service of the Church have

been attracted to its classes, and its rapid growth convinced me years ago of the necessity of the buildings, which I have now passed into your possession, *and the thought of erecting which originated with Mrs. Morrice.*"

Principal MacVicar's rejoicing on the two days of the dedicatory services, one of which happened to be his birthday, was profound.

"What mighty potencies," he remarked, "lie concealed in the future in connection with this gift, I shall not venture to forecast, for I have already learned from experience that we usually project our plans on far too small a scale, and always expect far too little from our God and Saviour, and from those of His people who are filled with all the fulness of God, and who have truly consecrated themselves and their substance to His service. I believe it to be the determination of Mr. Morrice and of all of us, with God's help, to leave nothing undone that is necessary to place this already strong institution in the very highest state of equipment and efficiency."

Fired with this ambition, he settled down once more to the routine of daily class-work, and participation in the weekly round of committee and public meetings, sending up in spirit and in act such petitions as were embodied in the Hymn of Dedication which he had composed for the opening of the new buildings:

Do Thou, O Lord, accept these halls,  
Erected to Thy praise ;  
And fill them with Thy glory now  
And in succeeding days.

Here may Thy Truth be held supreme,  
And fill each soul with might,  
To pray, to toil, to wrestle hard,  
And conquer in the fight.

Here may Thy Spirit come with power,  
And heavenly light impart ;  
Inspire with courage, faith and love  
Each earnest, waiting heart.

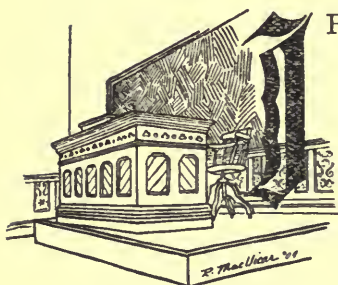
Forth from these halls let many go  
To preach the Christ of God,  
To glory in His Cross alone,  
And spread His name abroad.

Through all this great and favored land  
Their message may they bring ;  
And far beyond, on distant shores,  
Exalt their Saviour King.

To those whose generous gift, O Lord,  
Is offered now to Thee,  
Let mercy, grace and truth abound  
To all eternity.

## CHAPTER X.

### *AT WORK IN THE CLASS ROOM.*



The Professor's Chair.

IF THERE should happen to be anything wooden about a man, a professor's chair is the last place in which he ought to sit. Dr. Stalker calls students the chartered liberties of criticism, and expresses a fear that if professors only knew what is said about them, "three-fourths of every faculty in the country would disappear some morning by a simultaneous act of self-effacement." It would be a plain mark of unfitness on the part of a biographer to claim that every student who passed through Principal MacVicar's hands would be ready to concur in the estimate published by one graduate, who, after an extended course in Europe, said that he had yet to find anywhere a professor who could begin to equal him as a teacher; though (with those who have been in a position to institute the comparison) this has been neither a single nor a singular verdict.



It might be difficult to establish for him a claim to marked originality of thought and expression. His mind was more logical and analytical than creative. As men, after leaving college, went on to study independently, they may have been able to trace, one after another, the sources whence the crude substance for lectures had been gathered before it had been dissolved in the alembic of the teacher's mind. There were certain epoch-making personalities who came frequently into the open in frank acknowledged quotation, and there were certain others, like Charles Hodge and John Calvin and Jonathan Edwards, who—whether they came into the open or not—in their permanent influence on a susceptible mind determined more or less the perspective of every discussion. But through the exercise of natural pedagogic gifts and a studied mastery of his science, the assimilated thoughts of others were made to “quiver with life.”

The conservative bent of his mind may, in the judgment of some, have imposed limitations. He may have used archaic expressions and resorted to lines of argument that are considered to have had more cogency in former days than now. But this did not at least impose restrictions in the range of investigation; for notwithstanding his unwillingness to accept as established every statement made in the name of progressive theology, he examined with painstaking conscientiousness the most radical movements of thought.

The tenacity with which he held fast to the form of sound words may have exposed him to the risk of being claimed as the champion of a dead, unreasoning orthodoxy. Such a claim he personally resented. He believed his orthodoxy to be the outcome of deliberate judgment, based on a wide induction of facts and a thorough process of reasoning. Both in public and in private he insisted that Christianity is a rational religion, and that nothing is to be feared by the boldest scrutiny of its fundamental positions; but so fully was he persuaded in his own mind that God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in His Son, that he may have been misunderstood to assume that an explicit "Thus saith the Lord" necessarily settled questions of hermeneutics and criticism.\*

Limitations of temperament, also, must be admitted. His sharp, ringing tones; his cool, incisive deliberation; his determined manner; his confident assertiveness; his Highland bluntness; his dangerous gift of mimicry; his frequent touches of

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\* His real position may be stated in his own words: "We avail ourselves of the ripest scholarship which the universities and the Church can supply, and we do not hesitate to make use of all the verified discoveries of science which shed light, directly or indirectly, upon the subjects of our investigation. So far are we from being actuated by a spirit of narrowness and timidity, that we gladly accept any real information which the Higher and the Lower Criticism can impart, at the same time exercising our unquestionable right to discriminate sharply between truth and conjecture, between gold and dross."

sarcasm; his sometimes explosive temper; all needed the balance they received from unquestioned devoutness, magnetism, resourcefulness, thoroughness, manly straightforwardness, accessibility to his students, vivacious conversational powers, readiness to make open apology, and, especially, a saving sense of humor.

With every deduction made, however, it remains true that, whilst he could do many things well, he could teach best. The biographer enjoys the advantage of having passed through his class, neither in the "cellar" days, when he was but developing his natural and acquired skill along lines projected in Bible class work; nor during his closing months when the wear and tear of incessant toil and worry may have begun to impair the vigor and freshness of attack that were thoroughly characteristic of him at his best; but in the years when he was in his prime, and charged, like an electric battery, with currents of thought and will-power that were instantly communicated to each man in the class who made the necessary connection of mental and spiritual alertness.

His own view of the influence of ideal class work was that the teacher, if rightly directing his power, and making all due allowance for the difficulty of impressing a dull nature, would reproduce himself in the pupil.

"It is no easy task," he would say, "to emancipate oneself from the influence of what is incor-

porated in his very nature by the efficient drill of the class room."

For that drill he took infinite pains to prepare. He gave himself up to vicarious toil in order to become saturated with the discussions predetermined by the curriculum. In the intervals between his whirl of engagements he studied incessantly. It mattered not how foreign to his own views a new theological work happened to be, pencil in hand he plodded through it, intimating assent or dissent by some mark on the margin, and reading out, in the family circle, passages that struck him either for their sanity or audacity.

His lecture notes were written, re-written, and written again. He never felt satisfied that he had reached finality. Like the watchmaker's apprentice in "The Fortunes of Nigel," he knew critical excellence too well ever to be satisfied with practical mediocrity.

After unrelenting preparation, he would sit in his study with the note-book open before him, brooding over the theme, till his face became transfused with the glow of thought and (as it seemed to one observer) of prayer. It was part of his theory that the lesson to be taught must take thorough possession of the teacher's own mind and reach white heat in the communication of enthusiasm. A teacher without enthusiasm had no right to usurp the teacher's desk. He had no use for mere "dungeons of learning."

“A few months ago,” he wrote, “I entered a school, hundreds of miles from here, and saw at once that the dull, sleepy, sickly, gloomy state of the teacher’s mind spread itself over all the pupils. It seemed as if they had been buried, and had risen from the dead in their grave clothes. Their aspect was sepulchral. Their tones were sepulchral. They appeared incapable of being roused to activity, and I could not help feeling that the parents paid the master to ruin their education. He asked me to address the pupils, but I felt that he had far more need of being addressed himself, and being plainly told to bestir himself, and to throw life and energy into his responsible task.”

“When the soul of the teacher,” he would say, “is burning with intense, consecrated enthusiasm, over the matter in hand, whatever it may be, he will lay the truth thus apprehended upon the mind of his pupil with such transforming power as to throw him for the time being into a precisely similar condition to his own. When this is the case, success is achieved—the work of teaching is really done.”

In the “Cellar” days he does not seem to have resorted much to the Socratic method. He was more satisfied to question *himself*, and in the presence of the class answer his own questions. But he came to hold the view that a steady fusilade of questioning is indispensable in the class room, not only for the sake of calling forth a return fire that will disclose the point at which the attack on ignorance needs to

be concentrated, but above all for the sake of killing conceit, intrenched in fancied knowledge. Henry Drummond's mode of humbling pretentious freshmen by asking them, "What is the color of the stars?" greatly took his liking.

The Socratic method, as he pursued it, served the additional purpose of arresting and sustaining attention. Symptoms of listlessness were calculated to draw from him a sudden, catechetical exercise pertinent to the subject in hand that compelled the weary note-taker to straighten himself up and keep his ears open, in spite of the fact that it was the fag end of a hard day's work, in an atmosphere none too fresh, and with premonitory intimations in the gastric regions that the supper bell would presently begin to ring.

There was one radical departure from European methods which could not but impress favorably any Canadian student who ever "walked" the British colleges in a post-graduate course. Dr. MacVicar, like his colleagues, and most professors on the continent of America, not simply held to the view (and acted on it) that a class should be constantly questioned by the teacher, but that the teacher should be constantly questioned by the class.

"I don't think," he said, "that a teacher is properly equipped for his work, unless he is ready to be questioned to the utmost on the subject that is being taught."

The license which Canadian students enjoy to

interrupt a professor with a view to securing fuller explanations that may help to remove passing or standing perplexities, jarred seriously upon one Scottish visitor's sense of the fitness of things. It came to him as a shock in Principal MacVicar's class room to see the students exercise any privilege akin to "examining their professor." That looked too much like turning the tables the wrong way.\*

Dr. MacVicar's ideal of teaching, whatever his practice under routine may have grown, never sank to the level of merely giving information. He demanded that every man's mind should be alert and working. If he were unable to command respect by his ability to meet intelligently interjected queries, he counted himself by so much unde-

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\* In an interesting brochure on "The Protestant School System in the Province of Quebec," by John Adams, M.A., B.Sc., Professor of Education in the University of London, England, who visited Canada in 1902, to take observations at first hand, striking reference is made to this difference of standpoint. Professor Adams, after mentioning instances in which pupils were allowed to discuss matters with their preceptors, says: "The same feature is prominent in the higher schools, where its effect upon the visitor is distinctly unpleasant. One requires to detach oneself from preconceived ideas about the relation between pupil and teacher to get at a true conception of that relation as it exists in Canadian schools. I am convinced that the comparatively greater independence of the Canadian pupil is an advantage, and tells in his favor in educational work. The teachers do not seem to mind the free-and-easy way in which their pupils treat them, and at bottom the pupils are as respectful to the teachers as our British pupils are to theirs. Perhaps the difference may be best expressed by saying that in Canada the teachers command respect as man or woman rather than as teacher. The class takes the teacher for what he is worth as a man and treats him accordingly." (P. 48.)

serving of respect. Education, to him, was a process of drawing out, more than a process of pouring in. He could not have had any sympathy—indeed he could scarcely have exercised patience—with an illiterate parent in Ontario who, when a child happened to seek information which the teacher had encouraged him to obtain by independent investigation, wrote an indignant letter complaining that it was the teacher's "bisness" to teach "all that." Such notions of education he did not hesitate to hold responsible for most of the "dunce-making establishments" in the land.

"A teacher," he would insist, "should rouse his pupils to the repeated exercise of the highest states of mental activity, and train them to think for themselves, that they may thus develop their mental faculties and grow in intellectual and moral strength. A little that the pupil does for himself, under proper stimulus, is vastly better for him than a great deal that may be done for him by the teacher." Whilst he endeavored not to wound the self-esteem of maturer minds, he saw no reason to abandon the application of these principles in the training of candidates for the ministry.

He was a great believer in the use of the black-board. An appeal to the eye was his favorite method of elucidating obscurities in the truths which his science required him to systematize. Illustration he regarded as necessary to make truth plain, impressive and memorable. Once, in addressing a



body of professional teachers upon this point, he said:

“ There are three ways in which you may give a child correct notions of a lion. You may describe the lion in words—you may speak of his mane, his tail, his head, his ears, his terrible roar. This is the least effective way of teaching. Then you may appeal to the eye—you may show the child a picture of the lion, and join your speech to this picture; and now you have tenfold more success in giving a true and abiding conception of the lion than by your first method. Best of all, you may take the child by the hand and bring him to the lion’s cage and let him stand and look in through the iron bars with his own eyes, and let him hear the terrific roar with his own ears, and he has a truer conception of a lion in a few moments than you can give him in a hundred descriptions, and the certainty is that your home will be full of roaring lions for weeks and months to come.” In the practice of this theory he may not always have been quite happy; but he was at least conscientious.

In the earlier days—those described by Ralph Connor—the doctrine of election, perhaps, received larger attention in the class room than later on, though it was never tabooed. He believed too intensely in the sovereignty of God to pass it over in silence; but he grew accustomed to expect questions at this point. There was sure to be some one ready to voice a personal difficulty about recon-

ciling the mission to preach a free Gospel with the inscrutable decrees. I do not remember that in my own day he ever made Rowland Hill's reply, when advised to preach to none but the elect, that "he would certainly do so if some one would chalk them all on the back first," but probably every class that passed through his hands can remember the peculiar use he *would* make of chalk in an effort to demonstrate on the blackboard the necessity of preaching the Gospel to all in order to reach the elect. He would make a rough sketch of the interior of a church, with the pulpit well in view, and people sitting in the pews.

"Now," he would say, "Jones here may be elect. Smith over there may not. The preacher in the pulpit knows nothing about that, however, and the only thing that he can do is to preach the Gospel to both."

"Gentlemen," he would add, in an aphorism of his own coining, "our knowledge is finite and our ignorance is infinite."

It fell to him, as to his colleagues, to appoint texts and themes for sermons, which the students were obliged to read before the full class, subject first to the criticism of their comrades, then to the criticism of the professor. The ordeal was often less trying than anticipation painted it; but sometimes the summary of defects and merits was given with scant regard to the sensitiveness of the victim.

One man, of more than average ability, had done

his best to discuss the text, "Walk about Zion, and go round about her; tell the towers thereof," and had fallen upon the divisions:

First—A distant view of the city.

Second—A nearer view of the city.

Third—A view inside the city.

The Principal's judgment, delivered in a quiet, matter-of-fact tone, was more caustic than he himself may have been aware.

"Mr. Blank in this discourse is at his best when discussing the distant view; he is not so satisfactory in the nearer approach; and I am constrained to say that he is at his worst when he gets *inside* the city."

If, however, in the process of criticism, he happened to do a real injustice to a student, he was too honest to shrink from the *amende honorable*. In one case a man, who has since given full proof of his ministry in an overflowing city church, submitted a sermon which the Principal severely described as lacking in evangelical explicitness. The student sought him afterwards and indicated that the points which he had recommended for insertion in the discourse were already there, in proof of which he re-read certain passages. Evidently, through fatigue or pre-occupation, they had escaped notice. Frankly the Principal expressed satisfaction and voiced his regret that he should have misrepresented the spirit of the discourse. The student left him, quite contented with this private word, and with no thought of anything further.

To his astonishment, next evening, before work was resumed, an explicit acknowledgment of the incorrect judgment was made before the full class.

"I felt then," says this graduate, "and I feel still, that it takes a big man, a man with a strong sense of justice, and a brave man, to do that unasked. My respect rose accordingly."

In the course of time, Systematic Theology became his special department as a teacher, and in a subsequent chapter an attempt will be made to discuss the Theologian. But in view of the fact that he regarded it as his specific work to train not simply theologians but preachers—preachers with a definite mission to sway the hearts and wills of men by bringing them to Christ and building them up in Christ—the remainder of this chapter may be devoted to some indication of the color of his instruction in the principles of Homiletics.

"Don't be ensnared," he would say, "by the delusion that you are to do for the community in which you are to be placed the work of the novelist, the secular press, the daily paper or the magazine. You are to preach. That is to be your specific work; the work of preaching, proclaiming, *announcing* the truth of God.

"What are you to preach?"

"You are not sent to preach science, or literature, or crude speculations, much less to amuse and entertain the people and carry on the work of the churches after the manner of lyceums and theatres;

you are sent to preach the Gospel, to proclaim the great doctrines of grace in the proportions and relations to each other in which you find them stated in the Word of God. I need scarcely remind you, after the discussions to which you have listened in my lectures on Theology, that in your public ministrations peculiar prominence should be given to the subjects of the atoning sacrifice of our Redeemer and the work of His Holy Spirit."

Strongly as he believed in the work of the Holy Spirit, he believed not less that the most effective way of preaching is the scientific way. He defined science as "systematized knowledge." His men were before him, not to obtain what Samuel Johnson called stare-compelling power, but to gain a systematized knowledge of the most effective way of announcing the Gospel. Plainness, directness, conclusiveness, variety of matter, earnestness in delivery, and purposely varied method were essentials. He encouraged his men to practice without delay, counting it a blunder to restrain students from pulpit work till they were ordained. He held that no person ever mastered the fine arts by borrowing notes and passing examinations upon them. Culture was needed in the soul, rather than in the note-book.

Drawing himself up to his full height, he would announce:

"Gentlemen, preaching is to be your main business in life. It will be most unwise of you to know

more about everything else than that upon which your usefulness and success depend.”

How to preach, as well as what to preach, was the all-important question. An inductive examination of Old and New Testament references to preaching was therefore made and side-lights sought from the views and practices of the Greek rhetoricians. Pulpit eloquence, in Emerson's phrase, might be the ability to take sovereign possession of an audience; but the sovereignty aimed at must exceed the druidical notion of merely binding the audience to some little god of eloquence by chains of gold and amber issuing from his mouth and attached to their ears. The inner man must be reached and the whole being brought into captivity to Christ.

In order to such a result, preaching must be packed with logical definition. Without this, he held, clearness, directness, convincing force are impossible. Until a man can differentiate the innumerable objects and interests amidst which his thought moves he can never gain sovereign control for Christ of those whose eternal destiny it is his mission to affect.

A prolonged drill was accordingly instituted in the principles of definition to ensure that it should be at once adequate and clearer than the thing defined. He would make the class practice first with the commonplace terms of everyday life, and then with the special terms that cannot be avoided in

the pulpit, if the Gospel is really to be interpreted and persuasively enforced.

Logical division followed. Texts and passages must be treated according to a uniform mark, with a certain comprehensiveness, distinctness and due subordination of the parts. Unity, progress, completeness, should be aimed at in every presentation of the truth, else logical, rhetorical and spiritual power will be lacking. These, in brief, were his criterions of effective preaching.

"In criticising your own sermons," he would say, "and those of others, do not overlook these principles. Criticism, without a correct standard, is absurd. It is like measuring cloth without a yard-stick, or weighing sugar without scales."

He had enormous faith in that commonly difficult order of preaching known as The Expository. He held that in every attempt to array before a congregation the chief facts and illustrations belonging to a subject, preaching must be chiefly analytical and lead the hearers in a clear and natural way to see the synthesis aimed at. Only so could the text, whether a single clause, or a full verse, or a section of a chapter, be inwoven into the sermon. A hotch-potch of pious remarks, destitute of any train of thought, could never constitute a satisfying dish to an intelligent congregation, or for that matter, one devoid of intelligence.

He advised that the selection of texts should be made with due regard to what the old theologians

called "the analogy of faith," with special reference to the needs of the congregation, and in accordance with the bent of the preacher's own mind. The theme should always be definitely determined and as definitely discussed. Scrupulous pains should be taken to avoid inconsequential rambling, vulgar levity, or ludicrous associations.

Here he would lean back in his seat and convulse the class by describing, with irresistible mimicry, the self-complacency of an aged minister, within the circle of his own acquaintance, who was asked by some practical joker to repeat a sermon which only a few weeks before his marriage to a rich widow he had preached from the text, "Get her for me: for she pleaseth me well."

The structure, mode of treatment, and matter of a sermon, as well as the mode of delivery, received careful attention, and curiously enough, though his own habit became more and more to read closely, the extemporaneous method received in his lectures by far the larger attention and (provided it did not degenerate into hap-hazard "thinking on one's feet") the most cordial commendation. Only self-distrust prevented him from exercising to the full his own gift of extemporaneous utterance. When he occupied his son's pulpit in Fergus he seldom, if ever, took notes with him, and always acknowledged that the judgment of his early days as to the unwisdom of using a manuscript had much to justify it, since without a paper what one loses in precision,



one gains in directness, grip and fervor. But whether a man read or spoke his sermon, he insisted that one thing there should invariably be in it: Order! Confused arrangement and slovenly expression were his *bête noire*.

It was one of his favorite points that in the delivery of sermons right feeling must be cultivated. He was disposed to agree with Timothy Titcomb that persons devoid of lively imagination and warmth of feeling should be banished from the pulpit. He loved to illustrate from his own knowledge of life how the dominant feeling of a speaker will spread through an audience.

He would tell of a panic that nearly occurred in Christ Church Cathedral, Montreal, at the funeral of his friend, Rev. Canon Bancroft. He attended on that occasion as a pall-bearer. A woman began to sob. Her uncontrollable feeling so affected a large company of children present that they had to be removed. Then, to illustrate the dominating power of the opposite emotion, he would mention the experience of his earlier friend, Honorable Isaac Buchanan, whose sense of merriment was so contagious that, one evening in a place of amusement, every time he laughed the whole audience became convulsed. Next day, the manager waited upon him to offer a permanent engagement as *professional laughter*, urging that his presence alone would render it practicable to economize by employing inferior artists.

“It is obvious,” he would conclude, “that this law of feeling involves the preacher in a very grave responsibility. If you are in pain yourself through some unnatural mode of oratory, you reproduce it, more or less, in your hearers. You may have seen an acrobat balance himself on his rope, sometimes leaning over to the right, sometimes to the left, and you may have noticed the tendency of the crowd of spectators to sway in the same direction with him. It is thus that we carry our hearers with us into the mental and spiritual states strongly dominant in ourselves while we preach, and the stronger we are, the more certain is this to happen.

“It is most necessary, therefore, to define the right feeling by which to be actuated in preaching. Since the objects aimed at in sermons are various—indeed multitudinous—the dominant feeling cannot always be the same. Yet there is a great generic feeling which should rule to some extent in the delivery of every sermon, or, at least, during some part of it.

“What is it?”

“*An intense desire to save men.*”

## CHAPTER XI.

### *AT WORK IN HIS OFFICE.*



The Office Chair.

HE MYSTERY in the cooking of a dumpling, which Carlyle said perplexed certain minds, as to "how the apples were got in," was exceeded by the amusing bewilderment which casual observers felt as to how Principal

MacVicar could find time to bring so many interests into his busy life. He seldom seemed in a hurry, yet was never really exempt, even in his summer "holidays," from an excessive strain of work. The telephone was kept ringing steadily with inquiries as to when and where he might be seen. His meal hours, morning, noon and night, were encroached upon by people who had learned how hard it was to find him free from engagements. In spite of protestations that the visitors could wait, he would rise from the table and see them at once.

It was part of his secret.

He took things as they came and dispatched them without delay. His temperament could not brook even a temporary accumulation of undischarged duties. Arrearage of work was all but unknown to him. Not only was the business of the moment promptly put through, but some of the demands of the future were anticipated weeks and months ahead.

Experience led him to realize the advantage of concentrating his daily toils in his recognized business office in the College, where the bookshelves gradually came to hold his working library, culled from the crowded cases of his private "study,"—a room in his residence seldom occupied, save for the reception of meal-time visitors and for completing tasks at which he had been interrupted an hour before midnight by the turning off of the gas at the college meter.

One advantage which the office afforded was its general convenience for the performance of administrative duties and the readiness with which the students would come there without feeling that they were invading his private hours. It was understood that he was invariably accessible; and the men came in to consult him about all kinds of things. The "cheeky" student seldom ventured. If he did, he hardly ever repeated the experiment. The "genial" student sometimes presumed, and found the Principal ready to meet him more than

half way, for he was a racy conversationalist and could entertain his visitors with a wealth of personal reminiscence and laughter-provoking mimicry. The "perplexed" student never found him too busy to meet a real difficulty with all the impromptu explanation it was possible to give, or advice as to the alcoves in the Morrice Library in which works could be found for the pursuit of independent study. The "needy" student met with unexpected sympathy; for although eleemosynary practices were distinctly ruled out in the policy of the college, "loans" from the Principal's personal income (not always intended to be repaid) were arranged in a manner that at once avoided wounding the self-respect of a deserving borrower, and prevented paralysis of hopefulness as to ways and means in the hard struggle through a protracted course of training. If the "need" was not temporarily met in this way, the Principal would diligently seek and secure remunerative work for the applicant. The "discouraged" student—so be it power of *application* was not lacking—often returned to his dormitory with a fresh heart. But the "stupid" student who was determined not to exert himself, was bluntly told of the hopelessness of his case and in more than one instance "weeded" out, either to try a vocation for which his gifts suited him better, or to seek recognition in some other institution. Though he was the means of inspiring not a few to become preachers. and

though he succeeded in drawing out the latent powers of some who at times despaired of themselves and yet in the end became influential ministers, he never hesitated to discourage the advancement into the pulpit of mere weaklings.

“What is needed,” he said, “for this exalted service is intellectuality and spirituality united, strong sanctified commonsense enriched by simple stores of knowledge and wisdom, secular and sacred, and the exercise of a true spirit of self-abnegation, which is more arduous and more commendable than the efforts of genius.”

He often spiced a conversation in the office with the story of the Scottish elder who remarked:

“Gin a man hasna learnin’, the colleges may gie him that; gin he hasna piety, the grace o’ God may gie him that; but gin he hasna commonsense, whar will he get that?”

In his personal estimate of the nonentity who added conceit to his stupidity he was quite as unrelenting as Robert Burns:

“A set o’ dull, conceited hashes  
 Confuse their brains in college classes,  
 They gang in stirks, and come out asses,  
 Plain truth to speak,  
 And syne they hope to speel Parnassus  
 By dint o’ Greek.”

Our theological colleges are sometimes blamed for the encouragement they extend to unsuitable candidates for the ministry. The trouble probably

lies further back, in the Presbyteries by which such men—fortunately few in number—are certified; though it must not be forgotten that even a Paul did not discern all the aptitudes for effective service in a John Mark; and the world *has* sometimes heard from men who did not particularly distinguish themselves in their college days. It would have been unfair to Principal MacVicar to have insinuated that all were fish for his creel. Only those who have been behind the scenes know the painfulness of some sorting that has been done by conscientious college authorities.

There happened into the Principal's office one day a man who was fully persuaded in his own mind that the Lord had need of him in the pulpit. A few moments were sufficient to reveal an utter lack of qualifying gifts. The visitor pressed for an immediate answer, and, upon mentioning that a business man stood ready to employ him should the road to the ministry prove closed, he received an answer more immediate than he was expecting. The Principal firmly closed the road.

“I think it would be perfect folly for you to begin a course of study. Your gifts do not run in that direction at all. It is my conviction that you can serve God far better in some other calling. We need pious men of all kinds—pious doctors, pious lawyers, pious tailors, pious grocers, pious butchers. Now, it seems there is a pious butcher down town who needs your services. Let me advise you to go

to him. You are much better fitted for the work which he will give you to do than for the work of the ministry!"

Another applicant stuck like a bur. He had repeatedly invaded the office to obtain permission to enter the halls. Each time he was told he need have no hope. He made a final appeal, accompanied by his Gaelic-speaking mother, who shared his own view that he had received a distinct "call" to the ministry, but had herself no English in which to plead. As the interview proceeded indications multiplied that patience was stretched to the snapping point. The Principal's voice became almost strident.

"I have told you over and over again that it is no use! You could never stand the strain of severe study that will be necessary in order to equip yourself for this work!"

The anxious mother, judging from the tone and manner that the verdict was unfavorable, interjected in Gaelic:

"Come away, come away, my son; he's a fierce man!"

Without betraying the least consciousness that he had caught this remark, the Principal maintained his emphatic bearing till the interview closed, and then deliberately overwhelmed the worthy woman by addressing to her in magic Gaelic a farewell greeting of studied cordiality and devoutness, and so dismissed the case.



Besides receiving numerous visits from students and would-be students, he was besieged in the office by persons having business with the Protestant Board of School Commissioners, of which in his later years he was chairman. The routine duties involved by this unremunerated post were not inconsiderable. Every year he signed four thousand cheques to cover the salaries of teachers and other running expenses of the system. So pressing, at times, became this work that if visitors interrupted him he would excuse himself for resuming the task in their presence, and discussing whilst he wrote the business on which they came. On one occasion he frankly greeted a lady teacher, possessed with an exceptional fluency of speech.

"I am exceedingly busy, Miss Blank, to-day, and shall be obliged to ask you to state your business *in three words.*"

Like a flash the answer came:

"Raise—my—salary!"

It was a case of merit. The salary was raised.

Treasurer Binmore, of the School Board, speaking of the routine duties of the Chairman's office, says:

"I never heard him utter a single impatient word, although the nature and circumstances of the monthly task thus imposed upon him might at times easily have provoked the impatience of a man less quick to recognize the dignity of even a trivial duty."

That was another part of his secret.

His readiness to look into, and after, petty details of administration kept many things running smoothly and efficiently that would not have run themselves. Some matters in which he interested himself may, in other eyes, have seemed almost beneath his dignity; but they all counted in the sum total of his success. Nothing was allowed to go haphazard. Everything was carefully scrutinized, even to the supply of stationery. The critic who blundered into the studio of Michael Angelo to express a contempt for precision, would not unlikely have been severe on Principal MacVicar.

"You have been idle since I saw you last," said the critic.

"By no means," replied the sculptor. "I retouched this feature and brought out this muscle; I have given more expression to this lip, more energy to that limb."

"Well, well," said the critic, "all these are trifles."

"It may be so," said the sculptor; "but you must recollect that trifles make perfection, and perfection is no trifle."

In a preceding chapter, some readers who knew Principal MacVicar intimately would smile to themselves at the carefulness with which the duties of the beadle in Guelph were defined in the provisional constitution of the young pastor's congregation. It was a characteristic that came out many a year afterwards in the detailed instructions which

the faithful college janitors, Lyons, Young and Kerley, each in turn became accustomed to receive.

No detail was counted too trivial to be managed properly; just as no investigation could be considered misdirected that aimed at maintaining a healthy discipline in student life. One of his colleagues says: "His rule in the college was paternal, all the students knowing of his personal interest in their welfare. Zealous for the moral well-being and reputation of the college, he was no lax disciplinarian, but, in the comparatively few cases, in which it became necessary to uphold the law against offenders, he never acted without the concurrence of the Faculty, even at times of the Senate. Young men, in the exuberance of animal spirits, will sometimes be guilty of disorderly conduct that has in it no immoral quality beyond that of disturbing peaceful workers. With such he was very patient and forbearing, and his reward of recent years had been the sympathetic avoidance by the student body of anything calculated to annoy him."

Among the visitors who found their way through the tiled corridor and up the rubber-softened stair to the Principal's office were Roman Catholics anxious for an interview: an ex-professor in Laval University, a proscribed journalist, an ex-priest seeking light, or one of the humbler laity. He would devote all the time they desired to discuss in a calm, unimpassioned manner the conflict between Catholicism and Protestantism, first massing the

persuasions held in common, then clearly indicating the vital points of departure. Colporteurs and missionaries would call to narrate their experiences. City pastors and church members would come to seek his guidance in personal or congregational perplexities. "Prudent in counsel," says Dr. Scrimger, "his advice was constantly being asked on a great variety of matters by all kinds of people, and it was always freely given whenever he felt that he had a sufficient knowledge to warrant him in forming an opinion." As a rule, those who followed the course recommended had little occasion to repent it; though sometimes people came with tangles which it would need two worlds to unravel.

It was in his office that he attended to his correspondence. Many letters had to be written to intending students. In the studied absence of any "bid" for a clientele, they were yet made to feel that the stranger with whom they had opened communication was no stranger, but a man deeply interested in their personal movements. When they announced their definite decision to study in Montreal, detailed information was sent them as to the best route by which to reach the city; perhaps, if they could afford the time, they would find it a little more economical to sail down the St. Lawrence, and the passage—especially through the Thousand Islands and over the rapids—might prove exhilarating before a term of hard study. They need have no anxiety about opportunities for

work during the summer holidays since employment was almost certain to await them either on the mission field, or as tutor in some Montreal family, or in some other congenial sphere. Even such a minute detail as the legal tariff for the cabman's charge on bringing the student and his trunk up to the college building would not be omitted, and a cordial assurance would be added of the Principal's readiness to render every service in his power on the new-comer's arrival. These were not empty formalities intended as "bait," but were voluntary pledges thoroughly redeemed in the relations afterwards sustained with the men.

In his general correspondence he was prompt, concise, and careful to retain in his letter book copies of every important communication. He made a point of consulting his colleagues over all official matters and of recognizing them in replies to critical demands from any quarter. Though his opinion might seem at times to dominate, he seldom, if ever, really moved alone.

Great correspondents, it is commonly believed, must be men of great leisure. Perhaps this accounts for a dearth of printable letters. The Principal was no man of leisure. His mail brought him communications from all quarters of the Dominion and of the world. He was writing incessantly; but apart from a certain outspokenness and spiciness in his more familiar correspondence (Item, to one of his graduates in Chester, England:

“I have heard a pile of semi-Popish twaddle in the churches here, and may have something to say about it in the Canadian papers when I get to Switzerland!”) he did not commonly let himself out at the point of his pen. Appeals for financial help and friendly offices of various kinds constantly reached him. Some boy whom he might have met in a journey and have forgotten the next day, would write to ask for points in a debate in which he was about to take part, and would not fail to receive by return post what he desired. Some minister at a distance would ask him to call upon a patient in one of the city hospitals. He would tramp long distances on such errands. Some other minister would drop a sprightly note inquiring:

“Do you number amongst your friends in Montreal a merchant doing a large retail grocery business? Of course you do.”

Then would follow a request to secure in some such establishment a situation for his son, aged nineteen, tall, strong, active, with a fair knowledge of French, and who knows what other desirable qualifications.

The position would be secured. It is impossible to say how many young men made a start in a prosperous business career through openings secured by the Principal's influence; in one case, at least, to reach a continental reputation in railway circles.

Then there was much correspondence over the

work of French evangelization, over the School Board, over Bible distribution and Sabbath desecration. His sympathies were actively shown towards the British and Foreign Bible Society, the Lord's Day Alliance, and world-wide missionary endeavor. In a note to his son and daughter-in-law in China he said: "You are both equally in my heart and in my prayers. You come up before my vision side by side in my sleepless moments at night, and often break in upon the toils of my office, not apart, but together. I can see you in your Oriental compound, now imitating the soft twang of your native tutor, now writing the complicated symbols employed to record the thoughts of the Celestials; now going to prayer meetings, or sitting at all that the stormy Pacific left of your little organ and singing the old hymns with which you so often gladdened our home. Take courage and go resolutely forward in your initial toils. The more I contemplate the lethargy of the Church, the deeper my detestation of her cowardice and unbelief. She has had proof upon proof of the fact that the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation; and her Master's command is unmistakably plain that she should preach it to every creature; but how many of her members and ministers are hankering for *some evidence* of the truth of the Gospel."

He received many letters from graduates, giving accounts of the work going on in their congregations, or of their travels abroad, or of their recent

reading; and these he seldom failed to answer, sometimes by post card, sometimes more at length.

In 1881 he was made the recipient of a diploma appointing him a member of the Athénée Oriental of Paris, and another appointing him a corresponding member of the Société d'Ethnographie, institutions of world-wide repute. In 1883 he acknowledged and accepted the honor bestowed upon him by his *Alma Mater*, Knox College, Toronto, in the conferring of the degree of D.D.

It was in the office, too, that the many sermons and special addresses and lecture-notes and magazine articles that embodied the results of years of study, and book reviews and papers for the interdenominational Protestant Ministerial Association or the kindred Presbyterian Society the Young Men's Christian Association of the city, and the McGill Y.M.C.A., were composed and the regular monthly contributions prepared for the Toronto Sunday School *Teacher's Monthly*, edited by one of his "Cellar" graduates, Rev. R. D. Fraser, M.A. The larger number of his published writings appeared in the *Presbyterian College Journal*, an organ of student opinion founded by his eldest son in 1880, and subsequently handed over to the students and graduates, to hold steadfastly on its way thus far for about a quarter of a century. Among the themes which the Principal discussed in the *Journal* were, "The Study of Sociology," "A Glance at Apologetics," "Current







PRINCIPAL MACVICAR,  
1880.

Unbelief," "How to Meet Unbelief," "The Apologetic Outlook," "The Westminster Confession," "The Meaning of French Evangelization," "Signs of National Degeneracy," "Selfishness," "The Temperance Reform," "The Holy Ghost: the Author and Interpreter of the Scriptures," "Presbyterianism and Education," "The Preaching that Tells," "The Young Man and the Church," "Prayers for the Dead." His more solid articles were published in different quarterlies and magazines in New York, on such themes as "The Teacher Reproduced in the Pupil," "Social Discontent," "Romanism in Canada," "How can Jesuitism be Successfully Met?" "Is the Religion of the Old Testament a Religion of Fear?" In Montreal were published, "The Position and Attitude of Romanism," "The Office and Work of Elders" (which ran through several editions), "Recent Aspects of Materialism," "Presbyterian Doctrine and Polity," "The Strong Helping the Weak," "Eternal Life," "Moral Education in Public Schools." He frequently sent signed and unsigned articles to the Toronto religious weeklies, among the more notable being a series of contributions to the *Westminster*, "A Character Sketch of Professor George Paxton Young," "A Character Sketch of Sir William Dawson," and "A Character Sketch of Father Chiniquy."

Some have spoken out of knowledge incidentally obtained, of seasons spent upon his knees in this central work-room of his life,

That was still more of his secret. *Bene orasse est bene studuisse.*

All these activities and the frequent appointments to meet which he left his office, constituted, in addition to his professorial, pulpit and platform labors, a life of ceaseless industry. Rev. J. R. Dobson, B.A., B.D., of Montreal, says: "During five years in college, my room was just across the quadrangle from his study. There the midnight gleam spoke of the bent form and earnest face, poring diligently over ponderous volumes. Oftentimes, since leaving college, when tired and overburdened with study and engagements, the shining of that midnight lamp and the image of that earnest, persevering face have come to me as an inspiration. No other impression has been more indelibly stamped on my mind than this, and evermore I shall remember our revered Principal, as one who had an unlimited capacity for work, and was toiling upwards in the night while others slept."

## CHAPTER XII.

### *THE EMANCIPATION OF THE FRENCH-CANADIAN.*



The Wayside Cross.

HIGHLAND  
blood is hot.  
It easily boils  
in revolt  
against the  
perpetuation  
on Canadian  
soil of condi-  
tions at all  
analogous to  
those that  
roused the

great soul of the Scottish Reformer who never feared the face of man. Dr. MacVicar, on more than one public occasion, expressed his conviction that this country can never be in a satisfactory state until the Church of Rome,—in common with all other churches anywhere pretending to exist by law,—shall be disestablished, and the French-Canadian population be set free to “elect their own clergymen and pay them as they please.” He

openly expressed his judgment that the time had come to send men to Parliament who would lift up their voices on this question, and by acts, as well as words, tell every Protestant that he had no right to make fetters, in the form of laws, to bind men to the feet of a priest of any sort—Protestant or Catholic—not even as willing slaves, since it was a distinctive duty to prevent suicide.

His own father had left Scottish soil in order to escape an atmosphere murky with ducal oppression, real or imagined; and practically all his life Dr. MacVicar fought to secure for the French-Canadians freedom from ecclesiastical tyranny, under which, only in recent years, they have begun to exhibit hopeful symptoms of restlessness.

Though forced by conviction and the trend of public events to assume at times the rôle of an agitator, there was, underlying his most vehement denunciations of Romanism as a system, a sincere regard for the people who adhered to it, with some of whom he maintained the most cordial personal relations. The desire to communicate to them the fullness of blessing, unfolded in a pure Gospel, reached back to his student days, when he had reproached himself for "unaccountable timidity" in having presented a subscription list for the French-Canadian Mission to fewer persons than conscience impelled him to canvass.

His brief ministry in the Royal City had not been completed without the initiation of a movement

which had for its aim the public discussion of the Romish question: and in the busier pastorate on the shores of the St. Lawrence there was no incident on which, for years, he loved more to dwell than the bold action of a French boy, with glowing cheeks and quick, dark eyes, whom he called down one afternoon from a load of hay on Fletcher's Field, then the property of a Coté Street church-member.

This little fellow, choosing Christ as his only Mediator, and refusing to pray to the Virgin Mary, in whose name, according to "the official standard of prayer—the beads," ten petitions are offered to every one addressed to God, was, at the instigation of his relatives, arrested and thrown into goal by the Mayor of St. Jean Baptiste village.

Challenged the next day to give an account of himself, he created no little horror by his determination to persist in the course which he had adopted.

"You ought to be ashamed of yourself," exclaimed the Mayor. "Do you know that Jesus Christ came into the world to set up the Holy Catholic Church?"

"I am not ashamed of myself," replied the *garçon*, pulling out of his pocket a French Testament. "I am not ashamed of myself. I read here in my Gospel how Jesus said that if anyone is ashamed of Him, *He* will be ashamed of that one before His Father and the holy angels."

The Testament was snatched from his hand.

The boy was locked up in gaol, threatened with the penitentiary, and then dispatched home in a primitive French cart with his widowed mother, a brother and a sister; but the passion for Christ, which, in the primal days of Christianity separated so many families, had taken full possession of the little fellow's being, and, whilst the party was resting at an inn, he made his escape and hid in the woods till he could find his way back to Montreal, which practically meant back to spiritual liberty.

No amount of apathy, or antipathy, on the part of others toward this work of enlightening the French-Canadian could ever convince Dr. MacVicar that he had blundered in giving this youth the evangelical instruction which enabled him in the hour of crisis to assert his freedom and exercise the right of conscience to follow Christ. The bugbear of so-called Proselytism, spelled with the biggest and ugliest capital, could never make him waver in the opinion which, in clear-cut words he had expressed at a public meeting in Montreal, when he had become a member of the old undenominational French-Canadian Missionary Society.

"The position of the Church of Rome in this Province," he said, "viewed in reference to its rich endowments, thorough organization, increasing political influence, growing ultramontaniam, and especially in reference to the strong hold which her unscriptural dogmas and idolatrous practices have upon her adherents, should alarm and arouse all to the



serious consequences to us and to our children which history shows to result from such power and influence, as well as to excite deeper sympathy for our beloved fellow-subjects more immediately under her sway."

The superstitions, sedulously fostered by the hierarchy, perhaps as much as anything steeled his determination to do what he could to relieve the pitiable, spiritual destitution of his compatriots; for scarcely a year passed without some fresh extravagance of faith in saints and relics coming under his notice.

In 1885, for instance, the smallpox epidemic, which created so much trouble for an energetic French mayor who had to call out the fire brigade, and, with streams from the water-hose, dampen the fanatical zeal of howling mobs, risen in hot rebellion against the regulations of the health department, also created a brisk trade in a peculiar fetich, printed on thin paper, credited with efficacy not only to stay the plague, but to remedy all the ills that flesh is heir to.

These curative images of the Virgin Mary—some of which fell into Dr. MacVicar's hands—were to be swallowed, according to ecclesiastical prescription, in a little water before each meal. To one variety was attributed power fully as marvellous as that ascribed in the seventeenth century to the powdered bone of Father Brebeuf, of which Parkman tells in his "Old Regime." A Huguenot of that time, who

resisted all attempts at conversion, took ill and lay in the hospital. He refused to renounce his faith, till a happy thought seized Mother Catherine de St. Augustin, who ground to dust a small piece of the Jesuit martyr's bone and mixed it with the patient's gruel; "whereupon, says Mother Juchereau, 'this intractable man forthwith became gentle as an angel, begged to be instructed, embraced the faith, and abjured his errors publicly with admirable fervor.'" Not less influential in the nineteenth century were believed to be the curative images employed in the Montreal epidemic. If one were surreptitiously placed in the pocket, or elsewhere, on the person of a heretic, apart from any attempted injection into his system through gruel or soup (but not without an earnest prayer to the Virgin) his conversion would be assured.

One day, when the smallpox stalked through the city—doing its worst to defeat the efforts of the medical men and health officers, as *they* did their best—a monster procession was organized in connection with the Feast of the Rosary, instituted by Leo XIII. A concourse of eight or nine thousand persons assembled. The procession formed outside of the Church of Notre Dame, headed by the beadle in crimson uniform, and a number of high church dignitaries. One prominent feature of the manoeuvres was the carrying of a brass statue of the Virgin Mary, which had been used many years before to mitigate the scourge of cholera. Thou-

sands of men, women and children moved in the procession through the streets, telling the beads of the Rosary, singing the Litany of Loretto and the Ave Maria, and imploring the Virgin to deliver the city from smallpox. Needless to say, with many from infected homes mingling in the crowd, the plague, instead of being stayed, spread.

In the panic that followed, a pilgrimage was proposed to the tomb of Archbishop Bourget, in the then unfinished structure on Dominion Square, erected in imitation of St. Peter's at Rome. Archbishop Bourget, in his life-time, had been revered as a distinguished ultramontane prelate, and at his funeral an arch spanned one of the city streets with the inscription:

“Thou wast our Father on earth; be now our Father in heaven.”

In less than a year after his death his bones had become celebrated for miraculous efficacy; and, though they may never have been ground into powder and mixed with gruel, they were treated with a superstition exceeded only by that which currently ascribed to St. Roch the power to secure for little ones dying of the loathsome disease exemption from the torments of purgatory; a persuasion which distinguished 1885 in the minds of the French-Canadians as “Angels' Year,” because so many little ones were suddenly—by smallpox, and the aid of St. Roch—transformed into angels.

It was a standing mystery to Dr. MacVicar how

anyone could move in the midst of such things and feel no need for the work of Christian enlightenment with which he was identified as Chairman of the Presbyterian Board of French Evangelization.

He became familiar with so many facts of the nature just described, that it was a comparatively mild course for him to endorse, as he did, at a meeting of the teachers of Ontario, Joseph Cook's statement that "on the shores of the fertile banks of the Lower St. Lawrence we have a French population living in a state of prolonged childhood under Romanism—ignorant, industrious, social, but non-progressive." In the newspaper controversy, precipitated by this statement, with a Jesuit priest in Lindsay, who brooded over it for a year and then made public challenge, it was scarcely within the likelihood that Dr. MacVicar would be worsted. He had spent far too many years in a province where, not very long ago, a bill which proposed to make it compulsory that a school trustee should be able to read, was thrown out of the Legislature on the ground that, were it enacted and enforced, some communities would have to go without school trustees.

His aversion to the Romish system, however, passed beyond mere pity for the crass ignorance which it engenders. It flamed in indignation at what he considered the insatiable greed of the Church and the preponderance of unfair influence, especially with politicians, which the reputation of

its enormous wealth (to say nothing of its threats and penalties) was calculated to command.

One figure that emerged on the field of contemporary history and disappeared under a cloud, caused serious misgivings in his mind in this connection. He had little reason to entertain cordial sentiments towards the North-West rebel, Louis Riel. His own nephew, George MacVicar, had been among the number seized by Riel at the time of the first rebellion, and would likely have been executed along with his fellow-prisoner, Scott, had he not managed to effect his escape from Fort Garry, and, after circling round and round the fort all night in a blizzard, succeeded by daylight in gaining a place of asylum. This passage in his nephew's life gave a personal interest to the subsequent movements of the rebel; but when indications began to multiply that the Church of Rome, too, had more than an ordinary interest in him, he could not avoid sharing the suspicion, for which Lord Wolseley has been criticised, that the Church expected by these rebellions to gain material advantages. Concerning Riel, Dr. MacVicar wrote:

“This unprincipled man whose doings have cost the country many millions and the lives of not a few citizens, was undeniably the child of the Church, trained in her institutions, well drilled, it may be presumed, in the moral theology of the Jesuits. He stirred up two rebellions in the North-West; the

first in 1869, and the second in 1885, when he raised an army of half-breeds and Indians, and caused murder and bloodshed in the most cruel manner. He assumed at different moments the *rôle* of a religious teacher, a prophet, a patriot, and, withal, offered to sell himself to the Government for thirty-five thousand dollars. He was finally captured, tried and hanged for treason at Regina.

“In spite of this criminal career, about a month after his execution, Archbishop Taché published a manifesto in which he spoke of him as his ‘*protégé*.’ Churches, up and down the country, were draped in token of respect and sorrow for him, and many masses were celebrated for the repose of his soul. His remains were brought from Regina to St. Boniface, treated with the veneration usually accorded to the body of a distinguished ecclesiastic, and placed with imposing ceremonies in the crypt of the Archbishop’s Cathedral.

“The reasons for lavishing such honors upon him are known to the Church only, and will never be disclosed; but there are some who profess to understand the workings of our complex politico-ecclesiastical machinery, who think that Louis Riel was the instrument of the Church for purposes of aggrandizement as long as he could be managed; and that when this ceased to be the case he was cast off, and finally, with the secret consent of the ecclesiastical masters of the French vote in Parliament, suffered the extreme penalty of the law. Then

to quiet the people, who were much excited over the matter, and burned in effigy Ministers of the Crown, and could not understand how one who grew up in the bosom of the Church, under the fostering care and guidance of an Archbishop, and a Frenchman, could come to such an end—to allay these feelings, and to show the kindness and unspeakable tenderness of the Church under all circumstances, the public performances referred to were enacted. Be this as it may, certain it is that she has already made no small progress in securing real estate in these new territories, and is far from satiated in this respect in the older provinces.”

This was written at a time when Dr. MacVicar had begun the agitation, in which his friend, Principal Caven, took a leading part in Ontario, known as the Equal Rights Movement, which the politicians, perhaps too successfully, pooh-pooed, but which—not without a wholesome effect for the future—more than disturbed the surface of Protestant indifference in the face of Romish aggression.

It did really look as if the Church had become dissatisfied with the quieter process long at work of supplying money to buy out Protestant farmers piecemeal in order to replace them with Catholics, and so bring hitherto unremunerative territory under the operation of the Tithing System, which enables the priests (if need be) to collect through the law courts the value of one-twenty-sixth of cer-

tain grains, and impose certain taxes, as they may determine. To drive out all the Protestant farmers from Quebec practically meant an increased revenue for the Church approaching one million dollars a year.

Where lay the mystery in the gradual evanishment of entire settlements of Highland Presbyterians?

This quiet process of elimination was at least business-like, and not wholly opposed to the recognized principles of honest competition; but in the judgment of Dr. MacVicar, and those who sympathized with him, there was a palpable lack of ethics in the compensation of \$400,000 given by the Quebec Legislature in alleged restitution of the Jesuit Estates, which, in 1774, had been confiscated by a Royal Decree of the Imperial Government, when the Society of Jesus was suppressed. The act of tossing \$60,000 to the Protestants, to keep them quiet, was still more objectionable. His contention was that if the Jesuits had a real and moral right to their forfeited estates, which had been valued by themselves at two million dollars, they should have received them in full, and not what the Provincial Government granted them—less than one-fourth of their claimed value; and, further, that if the Jesuits had such a right, Protestants should not have obtained one cent.

But, however pronounced his opinions may have been in regard to political movements in which



the Church of Rome became deeply interested, his consistent aim through every agitation was not merely the conservation of Protestant rights, but the ultimate emancipation of the French-Canadian. At no stage of his career did he deserve the reputation of a mere iconoclast. If in the one camp his fearlessness provoked excessive abuse, in the other it provoked extravagant hero worship. Father Chiniquy, discussing a situation of some moment in regard to the imperilled rights of free speech in Canada, dramatically exclaimed, "MacVeekar ees—a lion!" and one of his French students confessed that often in his thoughts he substituted Dr. MacVicar's face and personality for the pictures of the long-bearded god with which he had grown familiar in the authorized publications of the Church of Rome.

For a brief period previous to the union of the Presbyterian churches in 1875, he succeeded Rev. Dr. Robert Burns as convener of the Committee on French Evangelization in connection with the Canada Presbyterian Church. After the union he remained in this position and filled it till the day of his death, which occurred within half an hour after he had been presiding over a meeting of the Executive Committee. In view of the many other interests with which he was identified, the degree of attention which he was able to give to this work, as it enlarged, was remarkable; but it must not be overlooked that he relied very much upon the

statesmanlike mastery of detail, the rare administrative faculty and exceptional foresight of Rev. Dr. Warden whose touch has vivified so many of the Church's missionary operations at home and abroad; whilst later on, he felt supreme satisfaction in the tactful, sympathetic, industrious superintendence of the Secretary of the Board, Rev. S. J. Taylor, M.A., one of his own graduates, who, before his appointment, had had useful experience in connection with the McAll Mission in France, and more extensive experience on the western field of Canada.

The workers under the supervision of his Board he could not in any sense regard as mischief-makers.

"They assail no man's natural rights," he said. "They keep within the letter and spirit of the terms of the commission under which the Saviour sent His servants to preach the Gospel to every creature, and are not to be classed along with narrow, bigoted proselytizers or the propagators of some miserable fetich. Their chief weapon is the Word of God, and their work in point of catholicity is closely identified with that of the Bible Society, by which several of them have been employed.

"They go among the people in the spirit of love, the spirit of Jesus Christ, seeking to persuade them to believe on Him alone for pardon, for acceptance with God, and for eternal life. They deliver no other message than that proclaimed by Moses and

the prophets, and by Christ and His Apostles. They disseminate principles thoroughly patriotic and truth fitted to purify and consolidate human society.

“ This they do from house to house, in the street, and on the roadside. They gather children, as well as men and women, who cannot read, into mission schools and give them the elements of wholesome education that they may be qualified to exercise the rights and enjoy the privileges of free citizenship. They lay the foundations of moral character and seek to develop it, not by pagan precepts, or the theories of modern progressive—or, as it might better be called, retrogressive—theology, but by teaching their pupils ‘ to observe all things ’ that Jesus Christ commanded.

“ This truly apostolic and unostentatious work of faith and labor of love is carried on in many rough, out-of-the-way places where the self-denial, courage, patience and other Christian virtues of the workers are far more severely tested than if they ministered to wealthy flocks; and, to the honor of devoted colporteurs, as a class, be it said, some of them have cheerfully persisted in this form of most useful service for thirty and forty years.

“ A great deal more of such pioneer and foundation work still remains to be done, and we would gladly send out scores of ‘ living epistles,’ of godly, earnest Bible readers and teachers. And when by innumerable visits, meetings, conferences, and prayers in the humble homes of the people and in

little school rooms, success has been achieved, and the Spirit of God has opened the eyes of children and parents, they are gathered into churches and placed under the care of pastors who minister to them the ordinances of grace with apostolic simplicity."

When, one evening, along with Dr. Warden, he battled through one of the most severe snow-storms of a severe winter to visit unannounced a French prayer meeting and found over two hundred present, he formed a very high estimate of the quality of the congregations thus established.

Needless to say, he took a special interest in the educational features of the movement, notably as developed in the Pointe aux Trembles Schools, of which the boys' department stretched back in unbroken influence to the humble beginning of Madame Amaron at Belle Rivière about 1840, and the girls' department to the institution of Madame Tanner, founded in Montreal several years later. He took it as no small tribute to the influence of these schools that they should have been selected for dishonorable mention by Father Salmon in a sermon in St. Mary's Church in which he attacked Dr. MacVicar, whose reply led J. W. Bengough to draw a cartoon on "Ecclesiastical Sport in Montreal," representing the Principal in the attitude of "spearing salmon."

It was no mistaken judgment that led Dr. MacVicar to persuade the Board of French Evangeliza-

tion to bring back to Canada from Kankakee, Illinois, Father Chiniquy, then a minister of the Presbyterian Church. The experiment, no doubt, required careful handling, for no one could be blind to the self-confessed weaknesses of this famous soldier of Christ; but, with a discernment that would have qualified him in a high degree for work on the Foreign Mission Field, Dr. MacVicar recognized that these weaknesses were largely the after-effects of the training received in the bosom of the Church of Rome itself. Every allowance being made, he was convinced that the core of the matter was in this converted priest, and that devotion to the person of Christ, as the only Mediator of sinful men, was the real dynamic of his evangelistic efforts.

Of the immensity of Father Chiniquy's influence in the Church of Rome, before he broke from it, there can be no question, on the testimony even of *The True Witness*, a Roman Catholic organ, which as the name signifies, was founded to dispute the claim and counteract the influence of John Dougall's great religious daily.\*

*The True Witness*, though its columns were far from friendly to Chiniquy during his life, yet said of him when the storms were over, that it would be "untrue and unjust to deny" that he had

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\* This venture, *The Montreal Daily Witness*, in its actual sufferings for principle and the tenacity with which it has held on its way, has far outstripped any dream or evanescent experiment of Sheldon.

been "the author of great good in his time," and that, in fact, he had "crowded into the space of forty years" (the period during which he was identified with the Church) "more than any other man in this country."

A prominent Montreal brewer once confided to Principal MacVicar that the only temperance movement that ever seriously affected his business and nearly closed all the distilleries, breweries and saloons in the province, was that which Father Chiniquy carried on when he was known in the Church of Rome as the Apostle of Temperance, a title conferred upon him by the Pope. He was publicly thanked for this work by the Legislature of the province. A man of such standing could not but exert a powerful influence towards the final solution of the problem of spiritual emancipation.

Father Chiniquy severed his connection with his charge in Ste. Anne, Kankakee, and early in 1875 came to Montreal, to enter upon an evangelistic campaign in which he incessantly addressed crowded meetings, and, as the chairman put it, spent "night and day seeking the salvation of his countrymen."

John Dougall's *Witness*, at a later stage, published from day to day long lists of the names of the converts, in complacent disregard of the fulminations of Bishop Bourget, who in the choicest ecclesiastical phrases doomed all readers of this heretical sheet to instant excommunication and

eternal ruin. So bitter ran the feeling that one French seamstress, employed in a Protestant home, when given a copy of the *Witness* out of which to cut a pattern, crumpled it up, trampled it under-foot, and with flashing eyes declared it fit only for the fire.

The excitement grew apace.

Professor Campbell, with the same courage exhibited in his college days at Ridgeway, threw himself heart and soul into the conflict, of which he has published more than one graphic account. The story is quickly retold.

A service was in progress in the old Craig Street French Protestant Church, when there came a crash of window glass. It was the beginning of what Chiniquy used to call the prolonged "argument of blood-stained stones."

The building was wrecked, and, for a time, no other could be obtained. The managers of Coté Street Church—or the deacons, rather, as they are still called in the good old-fashioned way—rallied round the Board chairman, their former pastor, and for the continuance of the Chiniquy meetings offered the use of their edifice, which stood within easy reach of the French-Canadian population.

The Protestant press was thoroughly aroused, and, under the agitation for freedom of speech, the civil authorities could do nothing else than furnish a strong contingent of police to keep order. A body of volunteer defenders, three hundred

strong, including citizens like Dr. Beers and William Greig, sought and secured the privilege of waiting in reserve in the basement, whilst the students of the Presbyterian College, under the leadership of the stalwart Charles McLean, acted as ushers, armed with walking sticks, and not impossibly, some of them, with less innocent weapons.

Towards the hour appointed, three large sleighs drove up to the building, the first, filled with armed men, breaking the way through the crowd; the second carrying Father Chiniquy, Dr. MacVicar, Professor Coussirat, Professor Campbell and others; the last, like the first, with armed men, acting as a rear guard. The church was packed to every corner with French-Canadians, for the most part respectable and anxious to hear. Professor Campbell accompanied the preacher into the pulpit, "partly," as he puts it, "because the mob would hardly care to injure an English minister, and partly to take notes" for publication in the *Canada Presbyterian*.

Chiniquy's addresses on such occasions were not, as some have supposed, highly inflammatory, but simple, guileless presentations of a free Gospel. Now and then, what looked like a preconcerted interruption occurred; but the police promptly took charge of the offenders and hurried them out of the place.

After the service, as Dr. MacVicar was seeing Father Chiniquy to his sleigh, an excited man



brandished his fist in their faces, and hissed out: "Kill Chiniquy! kill Chiniquy!"

The Père—like Athanasius on the Nile, who boldly turned his boat back to Alexandria, whence he was in full flight, and informed his pursuers, as they inquired for his own whereabouts, "He is not far off!"—made calm reply:

"My friend! The apostate Chiniquy is no longer in that building! He is on his way home. You and I had better follow his good example and go home, too."

The man turned, without having recognized the speaker.

Things were going on so smoothly, that one evening the Professors felt it would be safe for them to absent themselves in order to attend a public meeting in the college halls under the auspices of the students. As the night wore on, Chiniquy, escorted over the snow by his cheering body-guard, appeared on the scene, a pitiable spectacle.

"Pardon!" he said, with a comical look, "but my pantaloons are in a most hor-rable condition!" Well they might be. The mob had stormed his pulpit. In the hurried escape over a back fence, the damage had been done.

He assured the smiling assembly that when the assault was made, and he had been compelled to resort to flight, the thought had crossed his mind that he might die in this adventure, but he tried to

solace himself with the hope that in such an event he would go straight to heaven. That comfort was momentarily clouded as it flashed upon him that a hero like Paul would be ready to reproach him for not having stood his ground in order that he might die like a man. Quickly the retort would spring to his lips:

“Paul! You need not talk! I had at least no basket, as *you* had, to soften the fall when you made your escape from Damascus!”

This fresh outburst of violence roused the city. Vigilance was renewed. The body-guard turned out in fuller force. Chiniquy, in the presentation of a free and simple Gospel, became tenfold more eloquent. Not till the service, the next night, was over were symptoms of renewed disturbance detected; not, in fact, till the preacher and his companions were preparing to withdraw. Then a tumult occurred. Suddenly, twelve hundred English volunteers, in civilians' clothes, responded to a ringing word of command, and, in orderly ranks, charged up the street. The mob, after a brief scuffle, dissolved.

The fight for liberty of speech was won.

About ten years later, the fight had to be resumed. Fresh lawlessness in smashing church property called Principal MacVicar once more to the fore, not simply in a conflict with unruly mobs, but in a conflict with an unruly French Mayor.

Once more, we students organized, as the old

warrior's body-guard, this time under the leadership of the stalwart Alexander Currie. Once more, a regiment of volunteers, in everyday dress, spontaneously came together and made their clock-like movements along the streets. Once more, Principal MacVicar, accompanied by one of the French pastors, claimed police protection for Father Chiniquy.

The day had long gone by when Montreal Protestants could submit to the indignity of having the hats knocked from their heads as the *Corpus Christi* procession passed along the streets and hindered them from finding their way to their own places of worship; but it came out that towards the close of an enlightened century protection was denied to a preacher of the Gospel, whose worst fault was that he exalted Christ to an exclusive place as Lord and Saviour.

The chairman of the Police Committee declared his inability to act without permission, or authority, from the Mayor.

His Worship was hard to find.

They sought him early, they sought him late. Hard pulling at the door-bell of his official mansion brought no response. With Scottish determination it was kept up. At last a window sash was raised. Somebody volunteered the information that the Mayor was out of town and would not be back till morning. Early in the morning he was found.

The interview proved stormy. His Worship

assailed Chiniquy's character. He was a bad man, he said, and should not be protected, so long as His Worship was Mayor.

But even *bad* men, it was urged—even murderers—were entitled to protection from mob violence.

That might be, but Chiniquy would never get it. In that case, would His Worship formulate his charges and come with them into a regular court of law that they might be investigated; else all Canada might go on fire in the exercise of its right to demand an explanation of this unparalleled refusal to afford protection to a British subject, whose character, so far as legal process was concerned, stood unimpeached. In stern tones, and no doubt with characteristic frowns, His Worship was given to understand that his early morning visitors were not to be trifled with, inasmuch as, though in the minority in Montreal, they were in the majority in the Dominion.

The Mayor wavered.

Presently he agreed to give the necessary orders for police protection; and some of us can hear yet, after the lapse of years, the derisive shouts with which the effective charges of the police were greeted that held the mobs as far away as possible from the building in which Chiniquy was calmly delivering in mellifluous French his appeals to the understanding and conscience of his fellow-countrymen.

It was the Principal's last notable battle for freedom of speech, with the exception of one occasion on which he appeared on a public platform to champion the Salvation Army when it, too, had been passing through the fires of persecution.

When Chiniquy's career was ended, Roman Catholics fell on their knees beside his lifeless form and exclaimed with tears: "How wicked we were to have stoned the dear old servant of Christ!"

Dr. MacVicar, in an address chastely worded to reach an audience that embraced people of both faiths, said:

"What if in the conflicts through which reformers necessarily pass there is more than a little which they and we, as well as timid, ease-loving onlookers, deplore! Shall we not in spite of this, and in the exercise of that broad Christian charity which rejoiceth in the truth and thinketh no evil, credit them, in the face of convincing evidence, with sincerity of purpose and manliness of conduct in seeking to be first pure and then peaceable."

Over his own bier, a few years later, when at least one Roman Catholic offered a prayer for the repose of his soul, and when others may have done so who attended the funeral, equal breadth of charity may have been necessary on the part of fervent advocates of an irenicon who, in his lifetime, failed to see the extent to which his strong convictions, straight-flung words and bold actions really con-

tributed towards solving the problem of the emancipation of the French-Canadian. The dying words of Knox would not have been unfit upon his lips: "I know that many have frequently and loudly complained, and do yet complain, of my too great severity; but God knows that my mind was always void of hatred to the persons of those against whom I thundered the severest judgments."

## CHAPTER XIII.

### *THE ECCLESIASTIC.*



“Firmly Bolted.”

AS Dr. MacVicar narrow-minded? The singular unanimity with which, when his life-work was completed, speaker after speaker and writer after writer, felt called upon to certify him innocent of that offence, would

in itself indicate that his attachment to his particular branch of the Catholic Church was at least so undisguised as to bring him under suspicion with those equally attached to other branches. In the face of this circumstance, it is a curious fact that his favorite poem was by a Roman Catholic, Bernard de Morlaix, the Monk of Cluny, whom he frequently read in Latin, as well as in Neale's rhythmical English paraphrase, from which the hymn, “Jerusalem the Golden,” has been imported

into the hymn-books of Christendom; that at the Pan-Presbyterian Council in Belfast, whilst expressing unwillingness to "tone down" his own subscription to the Articles of Faith, he was perhaps the Council's most persuasive advocate of receiving into the Alliance the Cumberland Presbyterians, notwithstanding their historic mistrust of the full Westminster Confession; that at divine worship at the seaside, on one occasion, he led the devotions of the congregation by reading the Church of England prayers; that he numbered among his more intimate friends a High Church dignitary; that all through his residence in Montreal he worked in closest touch with clergymen and laymen of every denomination; and that he held it as a likely theory that the next great union in Canada will be consummated between the Presbyterian and Methodist churches. One day he talked along this line with his friend, Principal Shaw, of the Wesleyan Theological College, who afterwards said: "That Dr. MacVicar was a man of definite opinions and firm convictions everybody knows, but that he was intolerant in maintaining these can be promptly denied. He was, I consider, broad-minded in the truest sense of the word. Men may have the most distinct perception of each other's errors, but if, notwithstanding their divergences they are broad and catholic in their mutual sympathies and generous in judging each other, then have they magnanimity. We do well to aim at the greatest



latitudinarianism of the heart, joined with decided convictions of the judgment, that we may be at once loyal to truth and charitable to men. There is a difference between looseness and proper latitude of view and sympathy. A mote drifting aimlessly in the wide expanse of the atmosphere is no proper type of the best form of being. On the other hand, the astronomer has his telescope firmly bolted and riveted and fastened in its rocky bed, and through it from his secure foundation, unmoved by any perceptible tremor, his clear vision sweeps the immensities of space, the vast domains of the empire of God. So he has true breadth of view who, firmly standing on the sure foundation of truth, the Rock of Ages, looks away through the whole range of being and activity. I consider Dr. MacVicar was thus broad in the truest sense of the word." In keeping with this estimate was an incident which occurred in Philadelphia in 1880. After a heated debate on the question of creed revision and curtailment, in which he advanced his well-known conservative views, he evoked a prolonged cheer from a crowded meeting of the Alliance of the Reformed Churches holding the Presbyterian system, by his bold announcement of his personal conviction that *the weakest part of a man's creed is that which he holds alone or aside from all Christendom, and the strongest part that which he holds in common with all true servants of the Lord.*

That conviction did not, however, nullify his

personal preference for, and acceptance of, the Presbyterian system, both as regards polity and doctrine. When discussing questions of Church Government, apart from the Scriptural argument, which he firmly believed to establish the authority and parity of presbyters, he was fond of instituting a comparison which views Prelatical forms of ecclesiastical rule as corresponding to an Absolute Monarchy, affording too much power to the clergy; Congregational forms as corresponding to a Democracy affording too much power to the laity, and Presbyterian forms as corresponding to a Limited Monarchy, which he considered the ideal—the golden mean—affording proper rights and powers to clergy and laity alike. He would expatiate with a glow of satisfaction on the degree to which the Presbyterian Church, especially as organized in Canada, is calculated to secure fair play for the humblest of its members, through its fixed order of ecclesiastical courts, with regular appellant jurisdiction. His theory was that as the territory widens from which the members of the various courts are drawn, impartiality in regard to judicial findings is bound to be secured. He could not believe that a court like the General Assembly, with a constituency reaching from the Atlantic to the Pacific, could be subject to local prejudice in its findings or willfully do injustice to any man. A decision of an Assembly in his judgment was final; though long experience led him to recognize that through lack

of continuity in the representation from Presbyteries and other causes, future Assemblies might deliberately reverse the action of past Assemblies.

No one need ever have been in doubt as to where he stood as an ecclesiastic. His denominational position, in fact, was more readily recognized than his catholicity. "Presbyterianism," he said, "is not a thing of yesterday. Its doctrines and the fundamental principles of its polity can be readily traced to their Apostolic source.

"The unity, order, and purity of the Church are conserved by our polity. We recognize the existence of 'the Church in the house,' where two or three are gathered in the name of Jesus, as well as in the great assembly, and in the aggregation of all the congregations of the saints. We find evidence in favor of this in the practice of the Church in Jerusalem, Antioch, Corinth, and elsewhere during the days of the Apostles. And the working of our Church courts—Sessions, Presbyteries, Synods and General Assemblies—is admirably fitted to give practical effect to this unity, and to secure the utmost advantage in concentrating the entire strength of the Church upon Home and Foreign Missions. The wise use of the ecclesiastical power accorded to these courts secures order, represses the disputations and revolutionary tendencies of some members, and secures also purity of doctrine and discipline, both of which are essential to the life and growth of the Church."

But whilst, in his eyes, the system on its theoretical side glowed with symmetrical beauty, he was not blind on the practical side to blemishes. He recognized drawbacks incidental to misunderstanding and misdirection in Presbyterianism itself. Indeed, when he turned from the ideal to the actual, and reflected on certain inoperative features and the reasons for them, he could grow not a little trenchant. He once undertook to indicate specific hindrances to the spread of Presbyterianism.

“I am deeply sensible,” he said, “of the delicacy of the subject and the danger of being misunderstood and even misrepresented, but I have unlimited confidence in truth of any sort, and a strong conviction that the time has come when the truth on this subject should be spoken out. I wish it to be distinctly understood, however, that in dealing with Presbyterianism, it is no part of my plan to deprecate other forms under which the Church of God exists. We cheerfully accord them all a proper measure of respect, but claim the liberty to prefer our own and to cling to it because, after full investigation, we believe it to embody more truth, and to be instrumental in the dissemination of more truth, than any other system. If anyone thinks otherwise, he is bound in conscience to leave our communion—and the sooner he does so, the better for himself and for the Church—and to join the body which he honestly thinks possesses these qualities.”

One of the chief hindrances to the spread of Pres-

byterianism, he was persuaded, was persistent ignorance of its fundamental principles both on the part of those within the denomination and those without. Gross travesties prejudice the minds of many.

“They have been led to think, for example, that we hold a doctrine of Predestination, equivalent to fatalism, and which makes God a cruel, heartless despot; that we believe in a doctrine of reprobation which represents God as creating countless millions of men for the very purpose of dooming them to eternal torments; that we sincerely believe in the everlasting perdition of innumerable myriads of infants who die before they are able to discern the right hand from the left; that we delight to limit the Gospel call, the offer of mercy, and the operations of grace exclusively to the elect, and actually teach that these favored few are infallibly destined to unending glory, no matter how they behave themselves in this world; that we ignore the necessity of regeneration and conversion, and openly deny man’s free agency, and thus annihilate his responsibility and the very basis of all human morality.”

He counted it part of his mission as an ecclesiastic to enlighten any who entertained such grotesque notions regarding doctrinal features of the system; and he counted it even more necessary to remedy, if possible, defects that arise from the frequent failure of the eldership to come up to the

Scriptural ideal. With this object in view, he sometimes advocated what many would regard as the utopian plan of sending elders to college to receive a training in their duties.

“Our elders,” he explained, “constitute the local or congregational presbytery, commonly known as the Kirk Session. They sit in equal numbers with ministers, or teaching elders, in all our other courts. They are appointed commissioners to the General Assembly, or Supreme Court of our Church; and no distinction is there made between them and ministers, except that by long established custom” (which he afterward declared to be wrong) “they are excluded from the Moderator’s chair, and are seldom called upon to lead the devotions of the house. They speak (to be sure, not so much as clerical members), they move and second resolutions, they vote, they act on committees, they present reports—do everything that ministers can do. In the meetings of the Assembly, elders are in no sense denuded of the functions of their office, Presbyterian parity being most fully recognized, the Moderator himself being only *primus inter pares*.”

The minister, or teaching elder, he contended, should never be allowed to have a complete monopoly in exercising the functions of his office. That would be unscriptural. The ruling elder must be given his proper place in authority and service.

“It may be laid down as a general principle that

the larger the number of truly devout and able teachers of the Word in any church, the better for its spiritual growth and power. In so far as the thousands of elders belonging to our section of the Holy Catholic Church in Canada are men of the stamp and character that Paul directed Titus to ordain, they constitute an enormous intellectual, moral and spiritual force, for which we cannot be too thankful. It is, let me assure you, a matter of the highest moment for a church to have a wise and strong congregational Presbytery as a court of primary resort in discipline, composed of a body of men given to prayer and good works, to whom members can look up with reverence and affection; for we are enjoined of God to 'count the elders who rule well worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and in teaching.'

"But is this scriptural distribution of authority and work always carried out? Have we not in many instances a sort of autocracy, a one-man-power, in congregations? The minister, according to his own wish, it may be, is expected and allowed to do everything and to be the sole ruler of the flock. Is there no clerical assumption—yes, and youthful presumption on the part of Sunday School boys and teachers and others who ignore the very existence of the bench of Presbyters—in some churches? It may be said that elders in such cases have themselves to blame. They are persons fit only to be superannuated, destitute of culture and

religious activity and the elasticity of youth, behind the age in all respects, chosen only on the ground of their peculiar quietness and supposed piety. I am not going to discuss that point. It may be that sufficient care is not always taken to draw the youthful talent and sanctified business power of the Church into the eldership; and it is certain, at any rate, that in very many congregations elders are not distinguished for activity, they have no special work in hand, there are no districts allotted to them which they are expected to visit, and in which they are to conduct prayer meetings, catechetical services, and classes for the instruction of the young—they do not even believe that it belongs to their office to be thus charged with the care of souls, and hence many of the baptized children of the Church, and even members in full communion with the Church are utterly unknown to them. This is surely not feeding the flock of God over which the Holy Ghost hath made them bishops; and the result is that their work is allowed to fall with crushing weight upon the teaching elder, which inevitably impairs his power in the pulpit, because he has not the requisite time to make his sermons what they should be; impairs his health and usefulness, for he cannot with impunity perform the duties of several men; breeds discontentment with ministers and people; leads to short and unsatisfactory pastorates; stunts the intellectual and spiritual growth of young ministers, and generally inflicts weakness



upon our Presbyterianism. Is it Presbyterianism at all when the majority of presbyters simply hold office and do little or nothing? I utter no censure. I merely state facts."

For himself, the hardest effort anyone could ask him to make would be to do nothing. When his Bible class in Montreal presented him with a gold watch and chain, he remarked:

"It has always been my lot to be busy, and of late more so than ever; and I hope the time will never come when I shall be idle." (It never did.) "It is not good for any man's soul to be idle. Certainly the Lord has no need of idlers in His Church."

He was as incessantly active in ecclesiastical circles as in the class room, the pulpit, the School Board, the city and the country at large. The Session was the only church court in which to the end of his days he had no seat. Even this exile may be said to have been voluntary; for whenever his former charge, worshipping in Crescent Street Church, made overtures with a view to securing his presence on their Session he declined to entertain the proposal. On principle he counted it better to leave his successors in the ministry unhampered, though always willing to place his judgment and services at their disposal when requested; a rule of conduct from which he never deviated *even when requested*, with regard to intermeddling with the administration or constitutional interests of other colleges than that over which he himself presided.

His absence from the lowest court of presbyters, however, was more than compensated for by his activity in the higher courts. He never absented himself from the Presbytery of Montreal without good reason; and he was never present as an automatic voter or bored listener. Carefully he followed the details of reports, discussions, correspondence, recommendations—interjecting corrections or questions or offering suggestions as to procedure—moving motions; joining in discussions and turning the battle in the gates with a well-timed speech; passing solemn reflections on action taken; relieving the tedium with spontaneous humor; serving like a drudge, though acting the while like a free-man, on innumerable routine and special committees; and in general, not drifting, but navigating on the stream of business. He evinced special interest in matters bearing on French Evangelization, City Missions, efforts to reach the Jews, the Italians and the Chinese in the city, and was alert in advocating action in regard to public questions of the day. In judicial cases he manifested an impartial spirit, insisting on every safeguard being taken to secure fairness to the parties concerned and on hearing all the facts as brought out in the evidence before reaching any conclusion.

Though he shared the feeling entertained by many that as things have become constituted in Canada the Synod is very much a fifth wheel in the

coach, he did not regard that a sufficient reason for absenting himself, but all the greater reason why every loyal presbyter should do his utmost to make it of real use. In the proceedings of the Synod of Montreal and Ottawa, and in other Synods which from time to time he visited, on special business, he took a conspicuous part.

But his greatest prominence was in the highest court of the Church. He was perennially there. Regularly every year, from his ordination on, with the exception of two or three occasions when he was absent in Europe, he was appointed a Commissioner to the General Assembly; and though he often started out with an announced resolve to "remain quiet" he was seldom allowed to do so.

He received adventitious prominence in 1876 as the mover of a motion that became the finding of the Assembly in the case of Rev. D. J. Macdonnell, the magnetic Toronto preacher who, in the course of a sermon in his own pulpit, had called in question the eternity of future punishment. Newspaper bruiting had stirred up much excitement throughout the Church, which some feared might imperil the recently consummated union. When the case reached the Assembly, Dr. MacVicar was personally unacquainted with Mr. Macdonnell, knowing him only by reputation as a man whose high character drew to him a loyal following.

The course of duty seemed clear. The excitement in the Church must be allayed. At a certain

stage in the proceedings, he rose, and stated that he should oppose most earnestly any motion which might contemplate the humiliation of the Toronto preacher; but at the same time the Truth of God must be maintained. He was ready to accept all that Mr. Macdonnell's intimate friends said about his Christian worth and purity of motive; but in his own mind the whole discussion narrowed itself into a straight question: Was the Assembly prepared to accept a modified or qualified subscription to the Confession of Faith? He spoke at some length (not without interruptions of applause, in spite of the Moderator's request that there should be no such manifestation of feeling), and he urged the court, whilst maintaining a spirit of kindness and love towards those who differed from them in the expression of their views, to maintain also a judicial spirit. He moved that the Toronto preacher's statement of his position could not be counted satisfactory to the court, and that a committee be appointed to confer with him in the hope that they might be able to bring in a report as to his views which *might* be satisfactory. The way was thus left open for the amicable settlement of the case at the next Assembly, when Mr. Macdonnell signed a statement to the effect: "I consider myself as under subscription to the Confession of Faith in accordance with my ordination vows, and I therefore adhere to the teaching of the Church as contained therein on the doctrine of the eternity or

endless duration of the future punishment of the wicked, notwithstanding doubts or difficulties which perplex my mind." Dr. Robert Campbell, Joint-Clerk of the Assembly, truly says: "No one more heartily rejoiced in the subsequent high estimation into which Mr. Macdonnell rose in the Church than Dr. MacVicar."\* He adds: "When, at a later period, proceedings were taken in the church courts against one of his own colleagues, he was thrown into great distress, realizing on the one hand his responsibility for maintaining orthodoxy, and on the other a tender regard for the brother beloved who was being dealt with. He preserved a dignified attitude in the circumstances, which made it easy for cordial relations to be continued, once satisfactory explanations brought the matter to a happy issue. In one of the last conversations I had with him, he spoke in terms of the highest appreciation of the learning, fidelity, and especially the high sense of honor of that colleague."

Dr. MacVicar paid the full penalty, or received the full reward (whichever it may deserve to be called) of his incessant appointment as a commissioner to the Assembly—he was seldom, if ever, free from the pressure of the proceedings. Besides

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\* When Rev. D. J. Macdonnell, in broken health, was nearing his end at Fergus in 1896, his pulpit in Toronto for several months was occupied by Dr. MacVicar's son. In 1902, when Dr. MacVicar passed away, whilst his son was absent in Montreal to attend the funeral, the Fergus pulpit was occupied by Logie Macdonnell, B.A., a son of the Toronto preacher.

the part which he regularly took in the presentation of reports on his collegiate work, and the efforts to secure the spiritual emancipation of the French-Canadians; the large share he had in the discussions that arose on the floor of the house; the commissions he received to represent the Assembly at the gatherings of sister denominations; he served for years on six standing committees of the Assembly, including the Presbyterian College Senate, the Presbyterian College Board, the Board of French Evangelization, the Western Division of the Foreign Mission Committee, the Sunday School Committee, and the Committee on Sabbath Observance and Legislation. There was scarcely any notable debate in which he did not take part, and scarcely any notable working committee to which he was not appointed; as, for instance, the Committee on the Union of the Presbyterian Churches in Canada; the Committee on Church Union to confer with similar committees in the Anglican and Methodist Churches; the Committees for establishing and controlling the Century Fund; the Judicial Committee; the Committee for the Defence of Civil and Religious Rights; the Committee on Systematic Beneficence; the Committee on the Revision of Rules and Forms of Procedure; and a large number of others.

At the Assembly which met in Kingston in 1881 he was elected Moderator, the highest position in the Church, and frequently afterwards, as ex-

Moderator, took the chair. He ruled with firmness, impartiality, and a ready knowledge of procedure. His faculty of expediting business and side-tracking unnecessary discussion created comment. Dr. Robert Campbell, speaking of him as a commissioner, says: "It was not only when questions in which he had a personal interest came up for discussion in the Assembly that his resonant voice made itself heard. Not infrequently he helped to clear away the fog in which speakers in the Assembly had lost themselves, by calling the attention of the court to the heart of the subject under discussion. None was readier to perceive the flaw in an argument, and keen was the shaft which he let fly at it." One of his most memorable appearances in debate occurred over the temperance question in 1885, when in an earnest plea for prohibition, he followed Principal Grant. This speech, largely impromptu, was in many quarters characterized as a masterpiece of dialectic acuteness. "A spirit of candor and kindness," said one auditor, "ran through it all. It was a splendid example of the *suaviter in modo* with the *fortiter in re*, and went home with tremendous effect. Its telling points—and they were not few—were enthusiastically greeted, and at the close the outburst of applause was loud and long. The more demonstrative citizens attending the evening meeting indulged in waving of handkerchiefs and were otherwise pronounced in their indications of approval." In its cyclonic

tendency and the enthusiasm it evoked, this was perhaps the most successful attempt at spontaneous eloquence in his whole career. It was on the strength of the reputation which this effort made for him that he received shortly afterwards an invitation to become the orator at a special function of the School of Elocution and Oratory in Philadelphia in succession to men like Beecher, Storrs and others.

Dr. Campbell may here be allowed to resume: "Well versed in the law and practice of Presbyterian churches, he invariably advocated the maintenance of constitutional usages, which had stood the test of experience, and proved serviceable to the interests of religion in the past. The last conversation I had with him bore on this point. It was after a discussion in the Presbytery of Montreal, as to the best method of appointing commissioners to the General Assembly. He held that the arguments on behalf of a free choice of commissioners were unanswerable. The plea for the rotation of members on the roll, namely, that every one had the right to go to the Assembly in his turn, he regarded as unsound. The right of representation was only Presbyterial, not individual, and although he took no part in the discussion, lest he should be thought to be arguing in favor of his own appointment, he expressed surprise that the brethren of the Presbytery should not be prepared to trust one another, and accept the verdict given in the ballot. He



thought that they were confounding eligibility with right; and that every voter in a constituency would with as much reason set up a claim to be sent to Parliament as that every voter in a Presbytery should claim to be sent to the General Assembly. Not that he thought that young men or ministers in humbler spheres should not have opinions, but that a free choice would be likely to select the fittest men. He had confidence in the proletariat. Presbyteries might be trusted to elect the best men, if they laid themselves out to do so—men of proven capacity—and, other things being equal, men of oldest standing among them. He was quite of the opinion that the Church at large had a right to expect that Presbyteries would send to the Supreme Court their best men—and that the fact of having been frequently at the Assembly should not be deemed a disqualification, but rather a qualification. Especially will this be the case, as the representation grows smaller. He felt that if the ends of justice were best served by having the ablest judges in the country compose the Supreme Court, it was no less necessary that the General Assembly, as the supreme court of the Church, in order to command the confidence and respect of the Church, and give it wise guidance, should be constituted of the ablest and most experienced men that the Presbyteries can furnish as commissioners. This was the policy which made General Assemblies strong in the past.”

The large place he had in the work of the Church was abundantly evidenced at the Assembly meeting in Vancouver in 1903 when hardly a sederunt passed without some mention being made of the blank created by his removal. When he had completed the twenty-fifth year of service in the College, the Assembly noted the event by granting him leave of absence for part of a Session in order to travel abroad. The Assembly also paid him frequent tribute in appointments to represent the Church at the meetings of the General Alliance of Churches Holding the Presbyterian System (a cumbersome official title abbreviated by the newspapers into "The Pan-Presbyterian Council"). He took a prominent part in the discussions at these gatherings, from none of which was he absent.

At the Philadelphia Council in 1880 he read a paper on "Presbyterian Catholicity." At the Toronto Council in 1892 he read a paper on "The Biblical Idea of the Ministry." At the Glasgow Council in 1896 he read a paper on "The Relation between Philosophy and Theology." He was under appointment to attend the Liverpool Council to be held in 1904, but passed away before the event. At the London Council in 1888 he gave an address on "The Strife between the Rich and Poor," raising a note of alarm at the dangers that grow alike from aristocracy and from mobocracy. At the conclusion of this address he said:

"The Church is not blameless in the matter



PRINCIPAL MACVICAR,  
1892.



under discussion. She has too much allied herself with the rich, and sought their favor, instead of trusting in God. In the great cities of the New World, to which so many of the hereditary paupers of Britain and Europe have been exported, as an easy method of satisfying the conscience of those who do this work, the churches have gathered in large numbers along the lines of fashionable avenues—they have given special attention to the affluent. Our great cities are like Ephraim—a cake not turned—the one side overdone and the other underdone. Lavish spiritual care is bestowed upon those who should be very well able to care for themselves. The best churches, music and ministers are provided for them. Rich saints and sinners are served with a plethora of Gospel ordinances, while the poor are allowed to starve spiritually, and to be devoured by the devil and the rum-holes. We do not say that this is universal—there are blessed exceptions, where the munificence and whole-hearted consecration of wealthy Christians are conspicuous—but it prevails to a lamentable degree, and becomes all the more alarming when we remember that the growth of enormous cities in this century is truly phenomenal. Millions of human creatures, characterized by ignorance and poverty and vice, are rushing into them from all quarters, and it is in these dense centres, where men and women are huddled together in tenements reeking with moral and spiritual impurity, that

inflammatory anarchists and nihilists hatch their diabolical plots and do their deadly work. What is the duty of the Church in the premises? She should first of all wash her own hands of avarice and greed. God will not stand by those who have not clean hands and pure hearts. She needs a baptism of the Holy Ghost that she may herself be purified, and thus fitted to wield the Gospel of the grace of God with power, that she may confront scenes of moral disorder, not with scientific and philosophical theories, but with truly practical measures. Then she will cease cultivating fashion, and go down among this squalor with God's sovereign remedy for sin and woe in her hands. She will go down in the self-sacrificing spirit of the Master, believing that the worse men are, the more need they have to be loved and saved. She will go down to them with full faith in love, the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit, and the saving efficacy of redeeming grace, feeling sure that these are the agencies by which all the social and eternal relations of men are to be successfully adjusted."

## CHAPTER XIV.

### *THE DOGMATIST.*



“Squared-off Windows.”

LOOKING OUT, with too much absorption, through squared-off windows of systematic theology, may, as a Canadian writer of fiction suggests, confirm in preachers a harmful habit of viewing life artificially. But to put tight shutters on the windows, or brick

them up altogether, would be deliberately to close the outlook on that One Unique Life which culminated in Atoning Death and Resurrection from the dead. To tell Dr. MacVicar that what men needed was “not theology, but the life story of Jesus Christ, simple and direct,” was as good as to tell him that the life story of Jesus Christ was devoid of redemptive bearings. Theology, so far as it is

Christo-centric, endeavors to construe the significance of the Fact of Christ; a fact which, apart from interpretation, may prove as irrelevant and unintelligible as a rock in the sky.

He was fully aware of the growing estrangement of the modern mind from the subject which he had come to make his specialty; but his convictions and course of conduct were never determined by considerations of popularity. Was a thing true and necessary? That was all he asked; and though the press of the continent, and especially leading New York journals, in connection with garbled accounts of an incident in which he figured,\* ridiculed some

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\* In the David Morrice Hall, at the close of a public lecture by Rev. Dr. J. Edgar Hill, who advocated the remedial view of Future Punishment, Dr. MacVicar read a memorandum, for which he had secured the approval of his colleagues on the platform, in these terms: 'For myself and for the members of our faculty, I desire to say that we have reached different results on the questions discussed before you and must not be understood as endorsing the personal views of the lecturer, of which we had no previous knowledge. I regret that he had not taken occasion to make them known prior to his appearance among us so as not to compromise us, especially as the subject was voluntarily chosen by the lecturer and in no way prescribed by our faculty as the only one he might discuss.' The newspaper correspondents telegraphed sensational reports to the States, embellished with the fiction that the meeting had broken up in confusion without a benediction. The Brooklyn *Eagle* editorially lectured Dr. MacVicar for not having waited till Dr. Hill had finished his address. It commended to him the example of a London vicar who, instead of bringing the exercises to an abrupt and excited close, waited till Charles Kingsley had finished a sermon on Christian Socialism and then said, "In the name of the Bishop of the diocese, I protest against the doctrines you have just listened to as contrary to the teachings of the Church of England." Dr. MacVicar afterwards worked most cordially with Dr. Hill in the defence of the Lord's Day.



of his theological positions, and blanket-clad snowshoers, passing his house on a moonlit night, would pause in their march to raise an ironical cheer for the man who in the nineteenth century openly expressed a belief in the eternity of future punishment, he never under these and other provocations betrayed the least disposition to bend, like a reed, before the popular breeze. By maintaining a firm, upright position in regard to old truths he confirmed in the minds of many the reputation he had established as a "safe" man.

When, from many quarters, the clamor increased against Systematic Theology, as a useless part of the modern minister's equipment, it afforded him no little satisfaction to note the estimate of his science formed by a popular writer like Ian MacLaren, whose own theology he had resolutely attacked in a review article on "The Mind of the Master." At the close of one session he quoted with marked approval Dr. Watson's passage in "The Cure of Souls" in which he says:

"Theologians may console themselves with the reflection that all this railing and girding at doctrine is simply one of the innumerable forms of modern cant, and that theology is an absolute, intellectual necessity. No one can hope to teach religion in even its simplest form, with permanent success, without a competent knowledge of theology, any more than a physician can practice medicine without a knowledge of physiology, or an engineer

build a bridge who has not learned mathematics. Without a system underlying his sermons a preacher cannot grip and impress his hearers. His own creed, instead of being a microcosm, will be a chaos, and his sermons between January and December will not be a picture growing to perfection of perspective and form, but a kaleidoscope of whirling and amazing colors. This type of preacher may have an audience enthusiastic and admiring, but he has no pupils on whom he stamps the lines of truth."

That was precisely Dr. MacVicar's attitude. He did not see how it was possible to stamp the lines of truth without a thorough mastery of what some have called the Science of Religion or the Science of the Supernatural, but what he preferred to call the Science of God's Being, Nature, and Relations to His creatures. Dogma, he argued, is a scientific product, not the mere outcome of "airy speculations" on the part of "brooding" philosophers or ecclesiastics, least of all the creation of "stern canons and decrees of despotic councils" enforced by the sword of civil power or by the spiritual penalties of an hierarchy, Protestant or Catholic.

"We hold our minds open," he said, "to receive light from all quarters, and have no fear of exercising the fullest freedom, thinking and searching as if no one had preceded us in our lines of inquiry. We do not, as votaries of the inductive method, rest satisfied with *scraps* of evidence, drawn even

from such a sacred source as the Word of God, but we seek with untiring industry and perseverance to gather all the facts bearing directly or remotely upon every point regarding which we undertake to frame a dogma." He was a self-declared, unabashed dogmatist, and as such loved to magnify his office. Theology, in his judgment, was the Queen of the Sciences. When introducing his men to the realm which it embraces, he took pains to impress them with what he called the anatreptic force of Coleridge's statement in his Table Talk, that Divinity is essentially the first of the professions, because it is necessary for *all* men at *all* times, whilst Law and Physics are only necessary for *some* men at *some* times.

Natural Theology, with its modern theory of a religious germ awaiting a favorable environment for its development, was waived aside as failing to accord with the verdict of conscience and reason or shed any light upon the problem of salvation from the condemning, controlling power of sin; the one stern, persistent, unrelenting fact in human history. Revealed Theology alone can speak authoritatively in regard to the deep mysteries that absorb man's attention. But in the successive disclosure of the Truth, the data of Revealed Theology have been scattered over a wide field, so that Dogma has to perform towards Religion the same duty which Astronomy performs towards the stars, Botany towards the plants, Geology towards the

strata of the earth, Anatomy towards the structure of animals. The scattered bones of Revealed Truth must be gathered up, articulated, clothed with flesh, and (to use his own words) animated in a "living scriptural orthodoxy—a firm and honest belief in doctrines settled by a diligent, comprehensive, inductive study of the whole Word of God."

To mere theoretical dogmatism, as embodied in the speculative method, he gave no place, nor to the dogmatism of feeling, as embodied in the mystical method. Since moral and spiritual truths are presented in the Word of God in a manner similar to that in which scientific truth and principles are presented in the physical universe, he considered that the Inductive Method alone could lead to satisfactory results in the determination of Truth.

He recognized progress in revelation. Others might have used the word Evolution, but he avoided it, as liable to suggest—what he would never admit—that the contents of the Bible were the mere product of the human mind. But under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit there had been a gradual advance from elementary to ultimate truth; each in its place as valuable as the other; the advance having been made, not by the rejection of what was untrue, but by the discovery of additional and deeper truth. This progress had been from the external to the inward; from the inadequate to the adequate; from mental, moral and spiritual darkness to mental,

moral and spiritual light. The Truth, at every stage of its disclosure, centred in God, and the revelation of God in Jesus Christ. He held to the most uncompromising view of the Divinity of Christ, the Personality and Divinity of the Holy Spirit, and the efficacy of the Atonement. Whilst he warned his men to guard against any travesty on the teachings of the Bible that might represent the work of the Redeemer as intended to purchase a reluctant pardon from a Sullen Ruler, destitute of kindness and tenderness towards His creatures, he warned them still more against the mistake of emptying the Atonement of meaning and value, or ignoring it altogether.

He sometimes proposed in his class to canvass the entire field covered by theology under the dichotomy:

God Absolute.

God Related.

He even suggested a scheme by means of which every vital department of the subject in its proper relation might thus be discussed, but he never actually re-cast his lectures in that form, feeling better satisfied to follow more or less closely the system of Charles Hodge. His friends often regretted that his strenuous life rendered nugatory many a contemplated experiment at the preparation of an original treatise on Theology. What he might have done along this line may be imperfectly gathered from the substance of a fugitive paper which he published on

## DOGMA AND CURRENT THOUGHT.

In formulating dogma our researches should be conducted upon our knees, with our souls turned towards the Fountain of Light and Truth, while our eyes run over the whole field of revelation. Incalculable mischief has been done to the cause of Christ by persons who do not even pretend to be governed by His Spirit who yet come forward to interpret His Word. As well employ a blind man to interpret the grand creations of master painters and sculptors, or a deaf man to criticise the rendering of the classical compositions of Handel and Mozart, as to rely upon the natural man's conceptions of the things of God. It is written: The things of God knoweth no man, save the Spirit of God. Now the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him, and he cannot know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

It is only by the indwelling and illumination of the Holy Ghost that we are qualified to pursue this sacred science. Doctrines framed by persons not possessing this qualification we do not feel called upon to approve or defend. But even with this qualification, we must be thorough-going in our efforts to determine Dogma. We must not limit ourselves, as is sometimes ignorantly supposed and asserted, to a few favorite texts that have been made traditionally to do service for centuries. We must freely examine the entire contents of the

Bible, critically analyze the books from end to end, and determine for ourselves the scope of the thoughts they exhibit; and while thus passing in review the complete area of revelation we must take into account—not that we should always rashly adopt them—the latest results of historical, philological and Biblical criticism.

Current Thought, as voiced in the secular and religious press, in magazines and works of fiction, in the more ponderous volumes of scientific and theological writers, and in clubs, guilds, associations, conventions, ecclesiastical and legislative assemblies, as well as in the pulpits of Christendom, raises the issue: Should Dogma, framed by strict adherence to the principles and rules of inductive logic and under the guidance of the Spirit of God, be opposed and rejected? That there is opposition is undeniable. It comes from within and from without the Church, and assumes many forms. We can now deal with only a few of them, taking the most harmless first. It consists in the popular and oft-repeated assertion that we can easily enough do altogether without Dogma.

This is manifest folly. Every man has a creed of some sort—written or unwritten. The person who has not is an imbecile, or lunatic; because to believe is to act; and the man who believes nothing and does nothing is good for nothing. He is simply a burden upon human society, to be tenderly cared for on account of his helplessness. The

Agnostic has his creed. He may reject and bitterly denounce Calvinism, Arminianism, and all other isms, but in rejecting them all he clings tenaciously to his own melancholy ism, which glories in ignorance and utter inability to know anything with certitude, and emphasizes the poverty of his capacity and resources. The Materialist has his creed. His great point is to get quit of spirit whether finite or infinite—and to place himself on a level with the beasts that perish. The Deist, the Pantheist, the Buddhist, the Confucianist, and the Atheist—all have their creeds. While some of them deny very much, yet they all believe certain dogmas. The human mind refuses to rest in an absolute negation. The Physicist has his creed—more elaborate and complicated than the Westminster Confession of Faith—containing hundreds, if not thousands, of dogmas, laboriously constructed by centuries of observation. And who can tell how many worthless theories had to be endured and discarded before his true dogmatic results were reached?

The world is full of dogmatists; and it is manifestly a shallow mistake to limit the charge of dogmatism to the teachers of Christianity and more especially to the teachers of systematic theology. We have commercial, agricultural, journalistic, ethnological, historical, educational, political, and scientific dogmatists. And if there is to be a



crusade against them, we see no special reason why one class should be selected and all the rest left out.

It is true that some elaborate and publish their beliefs in thoroughly concatenated forms and manfully stand up for them when they are assailed. This is surely no crime, and does not constitute them canting hypocrites or intolerant bigots. Others again are content to carry their fleeting creeds in their heads, and to utter them incoherently in the ears of all listeners. As to the choice between the two—the well-thought-out and carefully written creed, and the one which is daily extemporized—there is to me hardly room for hesitation. Give me, by all means, what has been maturely considered and definitely settled.

A second class of popular writers assume a position, not of direct hostility to Dogma *per se*, but of remonstrance against the detailed comprehensiveness, the logical certainty and rigidity of our articles of faith. These articles, they say, should be short, somewhat tentative, and more or less elastic in definition, enabling each one to find in them the meaning he can approve. This is deemed essential to Christian freedom, liberality and progress and in the interests of Church Union.

Now, it may be granted that infallible certainty, in many instances, is impossible, and that, as Bishop Butler teaches, we must accept probability as the practical guide of life; but this is no reason in

favor of vague creeds or against our doing our utmost to secure perfect precision, as well as the most comprehensive generalizations in the definition of ethical and theological doctrines. The true scientific spirit demands this. The promotion of virtue and the elevation of our race demand it. The churches are not to be drawn into one grand, united body, society is not to be purified, and the world is not to be improved in morality and religion, by loose definitions. No valid reason can be given why we should prefer a vague, elastic creed to one that is clear and decisive in its enunciation of Christian doctrine. Uncertainty does not give peace or comfort or moral and intellectual strength—it inflicts weakness, and does not make heroes, but cowards. And as to progress in the discovery and mastery of truth, and in personal conformity to the truth, this is to be achieved by cultivating the utmost accuracy. To be content with indefiniteness and to crave after it is a retrograde mental and spiritual movement. They are obstructionists, and not the leaders of advanced thought, who set themselves in opposition to the work of testing dogmas already accepted and of formulating others that may become necessary, through the growth of error and the advancement of theological science.

It may be unwise conservatism to say that the creeds of the past are sufficient for all time to come, and that they must in no way be touched or improved. But there is no doubt that a far more

unwise and dangerous extreme is taken by those who allege that they should be wholly discarded as no longer representing the scholarship and belief of the age. Persons of this way of thinking zealously disparage what they call scholasticism, medievalism, puritanism, traditionalism. They maintain that we are wiser than our fathers, and can do better than they did in handling facts in every department. Why then should we be bound with fetters forged by their hands? To submit to such tyranny is weak and cowardly. Now, it is easy and seems brave to talk in this way, and to call upon men to do their own thinking, which is certainly their duty. But we must not imagine that all our predecessors were simpletons. Many of them laid their hands upon much valuable and imperishable truth, and were just as keen, and logical, and learned, and painstaking as the best of the great men of our day; and it is no hindrance or reproach to our independent investigations to accept gratefully the rich heritage they have handed down to us. Conservatism in this sense is not fatal to a man's wisdom and progressiveness.

And now it is time to say that the current tendency to depreciate the past assumes its most pernicious form in the demand that the Old Testament should be treated as practically superannuated, as a book whose usefulness is gone, and from which we should no longer attempt to draw ethical and spiritual lessons, and to the pages of which we have

no right to appeal in support of Christian dogma. Christ and His Apostles thought otherwise. They looked upon these older Scriptures as the foundation of all the work they were to accomplish. They declared, for example, that the same Gospel which they preached had been delivered to Abraham and his descendants centuries before, in forms suited to the times in which they lived. God's promise to Abraham, after his supreme act of faith and obedience in offering as a sacrifice his only son Isaac, contained the germinal principle of all that Christ and His Apostles taught. It was a promise which can be explained only by the recognition in the fullest sense of the thorough, organic unity of the Bible from first to last—a unity which logically demands that if the Old Testament is to be discarded the New Testament must go along with it. The promise, it must be recollected, is of a seed as innumerable as the sand upon the seashore—a seed in which all the nations of the earth should be blessed. But as matter of history we know that the literal descendants of Abraham at no time numbered more than ten or twelve millions. In what sense, then, can this promise of countless offspring be said to be capable of fulfilment? Only in the sense taught by Paul in his Epistle to the Galatians, where he defines the seed to mean Christ and those who believe in Him. "For ye are all sons of God, through faith in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed and heirs

according to the promise." Thus it is that the seed of Abraham comprises multitudes which no man can number, and that men are to continue through the centuries to the end of the world to enjoy the blessings of the old Abrahamic covenant in all their spiritual fulness—so far is it from being obsolete.

But still further; according to Apostolic arguments elaborated in the Epistles to the Romans and to the Hebrews, the Gospel as fully revealed by the incarnation, the obedience and sacrifice of Jesus Christ, is the only completion of the great redemptive work foreshadowed and partially unfolded in the old economy. Accordingly, when Jesus would enlighten the minds of His disciples, He could do nothing better than begin from Moses and from all the prophets to interpret to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. And Paul, when being tried for heresy, because he preached Christ as the Saviour of man, defended himself before King Agrippa in these words: "And now I stand here to be judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers. Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the Prophets and Moses did say should come."

It is thus abundantly evident that Christ and His Apostles, so far from regarding the Old Testament as obsolete and in no sense a fountain of doctrine, constantly appealed to Moses and the Prophets as

of supreme authority—as holy men who spake from God as they were moved by the Holy Ghost—a very decisive and sufficient definition of inspiration, and one which has ever been held and is still maintained by Christendom with almost unbroken unanimity—so unfounded is the boastful assertion of those who challenge the Church to define inspiration, and say that she has never ventured to do so. In this matter she has no need or warrant to go beyond the doctrine of the Master, and of those taught by His lips and filled with His Spirit. It is enough to believe and to affirm with them that “all Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work.” And seeing that we are assured that men did speak from God as moved by the Holy Ghost, we have no right to impugn their testimony, or to cherish the suspicion that the Spirit blundered or partially failed in doing His work during Old Testament times. His resources of knowledge and wisdom were then as infinite and infallible as when Christ appeared. Biblical criticism may, of course, raise the question whether we have the *ipsissima verba* of the unerring Spirit in the Scriptures. This question has been discussed for centuries, with the result that no material change has been made upon our *textus receptus*, and the certainty to my mind is, that no change will be made in future that can affect any article of our creed.

At the same time, while thus repudiating rash and reckless attacks upon the authority and usefulness of the Old Testament, it is manifestly incorrect to assert that Christ and His Apostles added nothing to what was given by Moses and the Prophets. We are distinctly told that "the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ,"—and came in such fulness that John speaks of the revelation in past centuries as "darkness" compared with that of his own day: "the darkness is past and the true light now shineth." And Paul regards it as one of the distinctive glories of the New Testament era that "God hath in these last days spoken to us by His Son," and that the Son "hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel." It is surely obvious that the fundamental miracles of the Incarnation and Resurrection of Jesus Christ shed a flood of new light upon theological and ethical problems, which before could be seen only through a glass darkly.

We are further asked, What of the morality of the Old Testament? Is it not low, corrupting, and unfit for our guidance in this enlightened nineteenth century? To begin with, I answer that we should be very much better than we are could we get all classes in private and in public life up to the old-fashioned standard of the Ten Commandments. And it should in this connection be carefully observed that it is not the morality of the

people of the Old Testament times, or even what God permitted in some instances because of the hardness of their hearts, that we are called upon to follow, but what the Judge of all the earth ordained as right. We must distinguish between the conduct of the people and the mind of God respecting it. We are to follow the latter and not the former. Solomon burnt incense and sacrificed unto the gods of his seven hundred and fifty strange wives. But this abominably polygamous and idolatrous conduct was condemned and severely punished by God. "The Lord was angry with Solomon because his heart was turned away from the Lord the God of Israel," and for this reason He said to him, "I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy servant." So in many other cases. Noah, and Abraham, and Lot, and Elijah and David did wrong, but God condemned their wrong-doing; and it is by the utterances of Jehovah, and not by the views and follies of the people that our moral conclusions are to be determined.

This silly plea as to the record of immoralities that are said to impair the character and usefulness of the Hebrew Scriptures arises from ignorance both of the contents of the books and the ends to be served by them. The Bible as a whole is a revelation of both God and man—of the latter as well as of the former. It discloses what is in man, his state and possibilities, good and bad, as well as



what is in God. It sets forth with sufficient fulness the relations between God and man, and between man and man. For this purpose it contains a thoroughly reliable record of human conduct, under all sorts of circumstances, extending over thousands of years. On some pages the darkest iniquities of which men are capable find a place, and this was absolutely necessary, if the whole truth was to be told about them; and these concrete examples, as well as the direct statements of inspired writers, form the strong basis of our dogma of human depravity; and were they wanting, or by any means eliminated, or even modified, sceptics would not be slow to proclaim the errancy and utter defectiveness of a book which professes to give a full account of what man is and of the conduct which he exhibits.

But passing from this point, we encounter another form of current thought which demands that in framing our creed we should not only avoid the Old Testament, but keep exclusively to the words of Jesus. This course is urged on various plausible grounds. It is said to be honoring to the Saviour that we should hear Him and none other. This is quite true, if others in any way contravene His statements; but seeing that the teaching of Old and New Testament writers is in perfect accord with His, there is no reason for thus excluding them. It is supposed that by keeping to the words of Jesus and avoiding those of the Apostles we

shall be obliged to give legitimate prominence to Divine love as exemplified by our Blessed Redeemer, and escape the unnecessarily strong statements of the old creeds regarding human depravity, the sovereignty of God, the election of grace, future punishment, and other matters known to be repugnant to the feelings of many.

But feeling is not the test or standard of doctrine. The Word of God alone must rule in this matter. And as to giving prominence to God's love, we should insist upon *it*, as well as Divine justice, holding its proper place in Christian Dogmatics. The fact is, that we have no terms in our language sufficiently strong to express fully the love of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Spirit to fallen men. It is simply unutterable. The revelation of it permeates the whole Bible from first to last, and they have read the Old or New Testament to little purpose who fail to see that this is the case, and that the inspired writers are thoroughly agreed about it. It is, moreover, a shallow mistake to suppose that the loving Saviour was silent upon what the critics are pleased to call disagreeable doctrines. He did not take a more lenient view of sin than the Prophets and Apostles. He portrayed with unapproachable vividness and force the wickedness of the human heart, and the punishment which this depravity deserves. See the record of His words in the eleventh, the twenty-third and twenty-fifth chapters of Matthew. He said to men, face to face,

“Ye are of your father, the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do.” “Ye have both seen and hated both Me and My Father.” To what greater depths of malignity could they possibly descend?

With equal plainness Jesus declared the sovereignty of God, and the necessary and eternal opposition of His nature to sin, and consequently the righteous retribution with which it must be visited. So clear and strong were His utterances on these points that on account of them many of His followers forsook Him, and He was even constrained to ask the twelve if they also were about to do so; but He did not offer to modify His doctrine in order to conciliate them. The truth must be proclaimed and maintained in its fulness whatever course disciples, in the exercise of their freedom, may take respecting it. The following and the unity which are secured by the sacrifice of truth are utterly unworthy of God and of honest men.

But we are told, still more, that it is unnecessary and unwise—injurious to the cultivation of true piety—to insist upon men accepting creeds and confessions drawn up even from the words of Christ and the Apostles. We should take Christ as our creed, be content to follow Him as our Leader, and consign to eternal oblivion written dogmas, which are only bones of contention.

This again sounds pious, and is irresistibly captivating to certain minds, while in truth it may be nothing but the seductive watchword of Socinian-

ism. Those who abhor the doctrine of the Trinity, who deny the divinity and personality of the Spirit, as well as the divinity of the Saviour and the vicarious nature and efficacy of His obedience, sufferings and death, are frequently loudest in proclaiming Him their Leader. In the same breath with which they make these destructive negations and denounce dogma, they call upon men to follow Christ. But apart from dogma, how are we to know anything of the Christ we are told to follow? He is not here. He is not walking the streets of Jerusalem and holding personal intercourse with men. We cannot question Him, listen to His voice, look upon His countenance and witness His miracles as did His disciples. We worship and serve an invisible Saviour. We are dependent upon historic records for our knowledge of Him and of His lessons. And in following Him, if we are to avoid sentimental mysticism and to exercise our intelligence, we cannot get away from creeds and confessions. And the clearer and sharper the definitions of our creed, the better for the peace and unity of the Church and for our spiritual power and steadfastness in serving the Lord.

If it be asked, To what extent should we press men to accept and maintain comprehensive creeds? the question must be answered with wise discrimination. For ministers of the Word, for those called and ordained to be public teachers of others, a comprehensive and thoroughly settled creed is

demanded according to the Pastoral Epistles and other portions of the New Testament. But the terms of ordinary church membership and Christian fellowship may be short and simple. And we do not say, as is sometimes hinted, that creeds are to take the place of the Saviour, or that men must master a system of theology in order to enjoy eternal life. No, we do not say how little knowledge may be sufficient for this purpose—it may be very little. We read in the Gospel of one man who was healed and wist not who it was that healed him. The malefactor who was saved on the cross was not a master theologian, and there are millions in glory with him to-day who never heard of the Thirty-Nine Articles, the Athanasian Creed, or the Westminster Confession of Faith. Elect infants and incapables are saved by grace without any knowledge of the Bible. And multitudes were saved by God revealing Himself to them directly before a single line of the Book, as we have it, was written.

But while all this is true it is equally certain that there is no merit in knowing and believing little or nothing. To have a meagre, shabby creed with a few vague and ill-defined articles is nothing of which to boast, but something of which to be ashamed. The man who can find but very little truth to believe must be lamentably ignorant, indolent, weak-minded or sceptical. If his articles of faith are not strong and deep, comprehensive and

invincible, the fault is with him and not with God whose Word is an inexhaustible fountain of truth. And it is not a matter of indifference what a man's creed is, because it defines the nature of the Saviour in whom he trusts, and exerts a powerful influence upon his own character and conduct. If his creed is impure and false, he cannot by adhering to it be himself pure and saintly and an ornament to society.

It is, therefore, in the interests of common morality to insist upon people having confidence in the truth of God. In saying this, we do not encroach upon anyone's personal liberty. Everyone is free, in this century and in this land, to publish on the housetops all his notions and crochets, on two conditions: That he will keep within the limits of decency, and violate no compact into which he has voluntarily entered with his fellowmen. Societies have rights as well as the individual. In our Presbyterian system the rights and freedom of the individual are fully protected.

If anyone thinks he has made a theological discovery, and that he can in the slightest degree improve our articles of faith, he need not rush into the pulpit or into the press and disturb the peace of the Church and gain unnecessary notoriety; he is free to submit the fruit of his research by overture to his Presbytery and to the General Assembly, and, if he can establish his point, it will receive the imprimatur of the Supreme Court, and he will stand before the world as a reformer, "bearing his

blushing honors thick upon him." Such approval of wise and godly men is surely worth seeking, and such deference and caution in reference to the body of Christ is not unbecoming. I am aware that when a person becomes theologically eccentric, moves along the verge of error, and talks a great deal about non-essentials, he is at once esteemed by many as learned and progressive. Now, without depreciating anyone's attainments, it is obvious that it is good for us all to have our conclusions—especially when they seem in advance of the age—sifted by others. I once knew a learned man who was confident that he had trisected an angle; but a better mathematician convinced him of his folly. The method just indicated of verifying theological advances is fair and wise. Our polity, and for that matter our creed subscription, is not tyrannical or unduly repressive to the energies and lawful ambition of sober-minded investigators. It rather spurs them forward to make discoveries by the assurance that if they are real they will gain the approval of the whole Church; but it is confessedly embarrassing to those who crave a license of language that cannot be supported by facts.

But what is to be the outcome of the present unrest regarding dogma? It may be hazardous to utter a confident opinion, but I confess that I am not pessimistic. I venture to think that there is nothing extremely revolutionary at hand. The work of God is not about to be overthrown. The

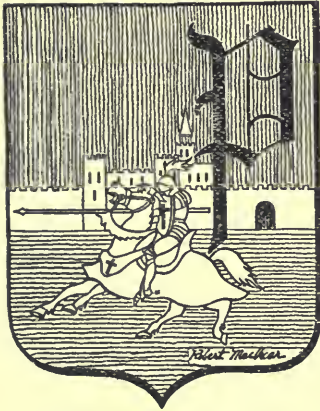
evangelical churches are not to be pulverized by the Higher Criticism, "the newspaper men," or the writers of novels. Our age is far too practical and full of commonsense and piety to admit of this issue. The religious sentiment is yet by far the strongest force in Christian lands. True Christians will hold together, and their venerated articles of faith, so far as founded upon and agreeable to the Word of God, are not about to be evaporated by the heat of controversy. Not one of the Churches of the Reformation has moved away from its old historic moorings during the present century—surely a significant fact worthy of careful consideration by those who imagine that the theological world is being turned upside down, and that there is nothing before it but utter ruin. The foundation of God standeth sure. This is the confidence of all who rest upon His Word; and they are neither few nor insignificant.

The historic faith of Christendom is not tottering to its fall, and unbelievers who strive to raise a shout of triumph over its downfall are deceiving themselves as grievously as when they supposed that Christianity was forever buried with the body of our Lord in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea. It is to-day more vigorous and widespread than for centuries past, and is destined to be quickened and purified by conflict with the powers of darkness. It is moving with mighty energy and daily extending its conquests.



## CHAPTER XV.

### *THE APOLOGIST.*



Fighting for the Faith.

who had made up his mind to regard unbelief in any form as an implacable enemy to whom there could be no surrender, with whom there could be no compromise, for whom there could be nothing but war to the knife. The attempts of some modern apologists to find common ground, however low, from which the argument with Unbelief might be carried into higher ground, were characterized

PRINCIPAL MAC-VICAR, though conversant with a wide range of infidel writings, never seems himself to have harbored doubt. Always, in ringing, positive tones, he marshalled his arguments for Christianity with the fixed confidence of one

by him as "weak-kneed concessions." R. W. Gilder's lines failed to appeal to him:

"If Jesus Christ is a man—  
 And only a man,—I say  
 That of all mankind, I cleave to Him,  
 And to Him will I cleave alway.

"If Jesus Christ is a God,—  
 And the only God,—I swear  
 I will follow Him through heaven,  
 The earth, the sea, the air."

That "if" spoiled everything. In his own life-long conviction, Jesus Christ *was* God, *is* God. There was no "if" about it. All men must be brought to face the evidence and acknowledge that. Personal acceptance of the full deity of Christ solved his own difficulties, and, like Robert Browning, he could not see why it should not solve everybody else's.

Sometimes in conversation he expressed a conviction that the day is fast approaching when far more attention must be devoted to Apologetics in the pulpit than has hitherto been the case; but generally he would end by expressing a conviction that after all what is needed in the pulpit is not so much the presentation of cold, crystalline propositions regarding the truth of Christianity as an earnest, direct, whole-souled offer of a personal Saviour, the living Son of God who by the sacrifice of Himself hath finished transgression and made an end of sin.

It can be fairly said of him that he was pecul-

ially qualified to expose the sophistries and pretentiousness of what he called "flippant, vapping, advanced thought," so often circulated in newspapers, magazines, pulpits and private circles in the form of disguised or undisguised scepticism. He could be particularly caustic in estimating the behavior of those who, in the name of dazzling erudition, presumed to make the Scriptures a happy hunting ground for errors, contradictions and inconsistencies, as with noisy blowing of horns and intoxicated delight they ran to earth each fancied fallibility of which they were able to discover a new scent.

But ready though he was to combat attacks on revealed truth, he realized fully, and often said, that the most convincing polemic in practical life is not controversy, but consistent, kindly action. On one occasion, whilst visiting in Guelph, he was asked by an earnest worker to reason with an infidel who was known to be very defiant in his denial of the possibility of Divine goodness. The Principal opened the interview gently with a reference to the loving Heavenly Father and the mysterious ways in which He often manifests His goodness. The man's indignation took fire. At the close of a prolonged outburst of abusive antagonism to the very thought of the existence of a God, he demanded harshly:

"If there be a God, how *can* He be good, and yet allow me to be a paralytic like this,"

Like a flash there came an unexpected home-thrust.

“You are a paralytic because of your own sin, and you know it!”

The man winced, confessed that the bow drawn at a venture had hit the mark, and for the remainder of the interview listened in silence to an urgent argument that the Divine goodness was being manifested in the very sparing of his life and the opportunity thus afforded for repentance. The Christian worker who was present observed a softer look come into the man's face, a look which did not grow less when, after reading and prayer, Dr. MacVicar, in bidding good-bye to the invalid's old mother, slipped a bill into her hand and said:

“Get something with that which your son can relish.”

The kindly act, as was afterwards learned, had a far stronger effect upon the man's mind than the pointed arguments.

Rev. Dr. R. N. Grant, of Orillia, in an “Appreciation” published during the Principal's lifetime, urged him to lay aside some of his thronging administrative duties and devote the time thus set free to the preparation of a work on Apologetics. Though he sometimes thought of acting on this advice his life closed with no more than occasional efforts in this department. One article, which appeared in the *Presbyterian Quarterly Review* of New York, is here inserted in slightly condensed form;

## SCIENCE AND PRAYER.

Christianity and prayer must stand or fall together. Jesus said, "All things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive." We are therefore bound to regard answers to prayer a certainty, or to treat this statement as utterly worthless, and so discredit the veracity and honor of the Founder of Christianity. But before accepting either alternative, we should settle precisely the sense in which the words are to be understood. There are certain limitations and conditions imposed by Science and Scripture, quite compatible with our Saviour's doctrine, that must be taken into account. The teachings of both make it abundantly evident that prayer is not designed to confer upon us the right of exercising a sort of arbitrary omnipotence, to render us independent of our environment, or to relieve us of the use of means and ordinary precautions and activity. Common sense tells us that we are not to shirk duty by leaning upon God unnecessarily, and asking Him to do for us what we can very well do for ourselves. He gives us faculties and opportunities, for the development and use of which we are responsible. We are able to till the fields, sow the seed, and gather in the harvest, while God alone can send sunshine and showers to cause growth and to bring our labors to a successful issue; but if we refuse or neglect to do our part no amount of prayer can fill our barns with abundance. Terror-stricken communities

threatened by epidemic disease may pray for safety and deliverance, but they should do more—they should work for it, and should ask that their eyes might be opened to see what their imperative duty is in the premises. They should look to God, and look also to the sanitary condition of their homes. Science has shown beyond doubt that stagnant pools, imperfect drainage, want of fresh air, and neglect of cleanliness and vaccination breed miasma, measles, smallpox, typhoid fever, and such like, and, therefore, our first duty in these circumstances is to attend to the laws of health. This is nothing more than to say that we are bound to conform our conduct to the Divine will as expressed in the ascertained laws of the physical universe. To pray in wilful disregard of these is a species of fatalistic presumption which can receive nothing but condemnation from science and sound theology.

The Saviour makes it an indispensable condition that we should pray “believing,” which implies the exercise of intelligence and the possession of some degree of knowledge, for ascertained truth is the warrant of faith. And surely this condition is most reasonable; for if a man does not believe his own prayer, why should he expect God to pay any attention to it? If it is not worthy of the confidence of the one by whom it is offered, why should God be supposed to act upon it as a thing of truth and purity and power?

It is plain that we must at once rule out of our

discussion a good deal that passes current as prayer. We are in no sense called upon to defend worthless prayers—the empty, wearisome talk which some persons designate by that name, or the feeble things that may be said in its behalf. We must discriminate between hypocritical displays and pretensions and what is the outcome of enlightened, honest piety. It is enough for us to stand by the truth without attempting to justify all that is said or done by some who profess to be its representatives; and we need not be alarmed when the apologetic work of the past is fiercely assailed, and in some instances shown to be unsatisfactory and out-of-date. Worthless defences deserve to be destroyed, and the sooner the better, because while allowed to stand they give dishonest antagonists the opportunity of representing them as the best or only ones believers can offer. With this understanding, let us consider some of the difficulties felt regarding prayer from a practical and scientific standpoint.

It is said that prayer is needless. In disposing of this assertion, we cannot overlook the fact that prayer is an intuitive exercise of the human soul. We have intuitive beliefs which admit neither of logical proofs nor disproofs. Among these we place our conviction of the being of God, of right and wrong, of personal identity, personal freedom, of a future state, and of the need of prayer. These are distinctive marks of man, as truly as the facts that he speaks and laughs, cooks his food, and

makes and uses tools. We can no more rid ourselves of these intuitive beliefs than of the thought of time and space as the necessary conditions of all things.

Sceptics, in the seclusion of the study, or in the heat of controversy, may do violence to their nature, and try to persuade themselves and others that they can dispense with prayer; they may laboriously educate themselves to treat it with neglect and contempt, but nature is stronger than science and false education, and usually when in circumstances of extreme peril they become like other men, and cannot resist the impulse to pray. They yield to what is not merely the main current of human thought and feeling but rather a law of our being. The disposition to pray is innate and universal. Men in all ages and of all degrees of culture have been given to prayer, and the privilege and duty have been most highly prized by master-minds. Pagan and civilized nations, past and present, are at one in this respect. If the question is to be settled by numbers and by the illustrious character of the persons giving testimony, there is scarcely any room for doubt as to the decision. We claim not merely a majority of the race, but almost perfect unanimity in favor of prayer. The exceptions are insignificantly few, and consist only of those who have assiduously schooled themselves into dissent. This must be taken as conclusive, so far as opinions *pro* and *con* are concerned; and if



the facts are viewed in a strictly scientific light, they warrant the generalization that the Creator has impressed a law upon the human heart which impels all men to pray. The relation between the Creator and the creature is such as renders prayer a necessity. We cannot conceive God creating any being except as subordinate to Himself and dependent upon His omnipotence. God is our Father, and we naturally turn to Him, feeling that He has not cut us off from His sympathy and care—that He has not shut Himself up in eternal isolation from creatures made in His own image. We are not self-sufficient or possessed of all the resources we need; and we instinctively reach out beyond ourselves and turn to the Source of our being. The eyes of all things wait upon Him, and He has given the disposition and power in some small degree even to the lower animals to express their wants by various signs and inarticulate cries, and they are inferior to man in this as in all other respects. We can surely give more definite utterance to our far deeper wants, and being consciously limited, finite, contingent, we are inwardly compelled to lean upon Another. We do not require to be reasoned with in order to be convinced that we are not almighty and omniscient. We irresistibly feel it. We are conscious not only of the godlike grandeur, but also the abject poverty of our being, and that nothing but omnipotence can supply all our wants. If, therefore, prayer is useless, why has God indelibly stamped this law upon

our being? Has He made the very root of our nature a lie? Has He created us the subject of utter delusion by giving us a voice to cry while He has no ear to hear? Has He made us capable of experiencing and sincerely cherishing inexpressible longings after Himself as our highest good and only satisfying Portion, simply to be doomed to eternal disappointment? And is it in vain that throughout the Word we are again and again enjoined to pray without ceasing, and that the page of revelation teems with instances of successful supplications? We do not discover such lack of adaptation and trustworthiness in any department of the Divine government. The eye is skilfully and delicately constructed to receive the rays of light, and is not left to gaze into perpetual darkness. The ear is made to catch waves of atmospheric vibrations and translate them into sweet sounds, and it is not forced to dwell in unbroken silence with its functions unused. Every organ is fitted into its appropriate environment; and surely the faculties of the soul, the aspirations of our higher nature are not doomed to grasp at nothing. It cannot be. He who taught us to say, "Our Father, which art in heaven," will not allow any true petition to ascend to Him in vain.

The logic of statistics is supposed to show prayer to be useless. It is said that if ministers and other religious teachers would act in a rational and scientific spirit, and apply to this exercise tests such

as are used in daily business, its folly and worthlessness would soon become apparent. Is it not the case that pious people with all their innumerable devotions are no more healthy than others, and do not recover from disease any better and do not live any longer than men who never pray? Insurance companies make no discrimination in favor of praying men and ministers. They take risks upon their lives with the same precautions observed in other cases. They base the granting of a policy, not upon the fervor and multiplicity of the private and public devotions of the applicant—they ask no question about his prayers—but proceed solely upon the certificate of the physician who has examined the condition of the heart and lungs, and other vital organs, and has taken into account the influence of heredity and the risks arising from climate, occupation, general conduct, and such like. Besides, those given to prayer are no better business men, lawyers, doctors, or statesmen than others; indeed, there is a widespread belief that they are rather inferior in these respects; that piety is a drawback instead of a help in commercial life, and the learned professions, theology alone excepted. This is a line of argument to be met with in many quarters, in shops and clubs, and among various classes of persons, and especially with those who are accustomed to determine nearly all things by figures. It was definitely formulated by Mr. Francis Galton, and published in the *Fortnightly Review*. What is our answer?

We deny that the great spiritual benefits of prayer can be summed up by statistics. The pardon, the peace of soul, the purity of heart and conscience, the buoyancy of hope, the elevation and strength of moral purpose, the unspeakable fortitude and comfort in trial and sorrow, which come to us through prayer, are not matters of mere arithmetic, to be tabulated by insurance agents and estimated by actuaries. Let any man try this method in a much simpler case, that he may discover its weakness and folly. Let him devote himself, with the utmost intensity and enthusiasm, to the study of some subject for months or years, and at the end of a set period let him attempt to express by a little sum in addition the amount of his knowledge, and the degree of wisdom and measure of culture he has attained. Will he conclude that study is worse than useless, and that knowledge and wisdom are to be despised, and the pursuit of them abandoned, because they cannot be reduced to statistical tables? Assuredly not. Statistics are valuable, and should be resorted to in departments where they are applicable; but they become dangerous and pernicious when carried out of their own proper domain. It is possible in sacred things to be guilty of arithmetical blasphemy. We may as well undertake to measure music and art by a yard-stick as to estimate the value of prayer by figures. But let it not be supposed that, while this answer alone might be deemed sufficient, we shrink from a comparison

of praying men, such as is suggested, with those who never pray. No. We are ready to meet the issue directly, and to maintain that praying men and women—not hypocrites, but those who are thoroughly honest—are better in every respect, in the estimation of insurance companies and as physicians, lawyers, statesmen, as filling positions of trust and honor of every description, than those who openly despise and neglect this sacred obligation. The issue now raised simply amounts to a comparison of Christianity and Paganism—for praying men are Christians, and those who of set purpose never pray, are practically pagans. Paganism, however cultured, is a failure, always was and will be; but Christianity, never. Who but praying men abolished serfdom and slavery; established and maintained the marriage law, that bulwark of social purity and order; elevated woman, promoted science and discovery, and secured human rights and freedom in all parts of the world? But it should not be necessary in the nineteenth century to urge these considerations. They are so apparent to every candid observer and student of history as to be their own witnesses. The fathers of the early Church triumphantly fought the battle of Christianity against paganism in the apologies offered to rulers and emperors, and now its infinite superiority is everywhere conceded, so that unbelievers make a fatal mistake in attempting to assail Christianity through the medium of statistics as to

its influence upon the human race. These can only show one thing. The universal decision must be, and is, that true godliness is profitable unto all things. And let it not be supposed that this line of thought is irrelevant, or too general for our present purpose because we seem to claim for prayer what are really the results of all the forces, divine and human, embraced in Christianity. We are entitled to make our argument broad, since we are meeting the challenge and sneer of those who deem piety, of which prayer is the vital breath, an injurious or useless encumbrance to the activities of society and to the efforts of the leaders of thought and reformers of the world. We meet the challenge fairly enough by showing that the reverse is the case—that Christianity infuses a new life into the world, breaks up the mental torpidity of heathenism, destroys its moral corruptions, produces the greatest degree of intellectual activity and the highest forms of civilization, and builds society upon the permanent foundation of eternal truth and purity; and that Christianity which is thus potent and irresistible, is that alone in which the spirit of true prayer is a dominant factor.

The outcome of Christianity is before the world for centuries, and so with paganism, thus making it very easy to decide between them. We are willing for this purpose to take paganism not at its worst, as seen among the bushmen of Africa and the aborigines of New Zealand and Australia, but

at its best, when it attained its highest culture in the palmiest days of Greece and Rome. The religious and social institutions which these nations developed, and in which they delighted, were debasing in the extreme. Their very gods were represented as lewd, immoral wretches, habitually given to lies, impurity, treachery, murder, and every imaginable crime. They themselves becoming assimilated to their objects of worship, fell infinitely below the standard of Christian morality. Hence nameless vices and unutterable pollutions defile the pages of pagan literature, to say nothing of its grotesque inanities. Common decency demands that not a little of it should be allowed to remain perpetually locked up, untranslated in the original Greek and Latin. The spirit of impurity thoroughly pervaded art and every grade of social and political life. The filthy, public ceremonies and bloody contests, in which thronging multitudes of men and women rejoiced, are the shocking proofs of their immeasurable degradation. Labor was despised, idleness encouraged, and slavery maintained in its most cruel forms and on a gigantic scale. These and such like are surely not the things which any one will venture to bring forward as surpassing in practical utility and moral worth and glory the fruits of Christianity.

But it is alleged that prayer fails when tested by the experimental methods of science. This doctrine was propounded by an anonymous writer in

the *Contemporary Review*. He proposed that the efficacy of prayer should be scientifically tested in connection with the medical treatment and recovery of sick persons. For this purpose two separate wards or hospitals were to be selected and placed under the care of first-class physicians—the patients in both to be afflicted with those diseases which are most thoroughly understood and the mortality rates of which are best ascertained—the treatment in both cases to be precisely the same and to continue so during a period of not less than three to five years. For the inmates of the one ward or hospital prayers were to be offered throughout Christendom, and for those of the other no prayers were to be offered, and the rate of mortality in both was to be compared at the end of the stipulated period. This scientific experiment, it was averred by the writer, afforded a grand opportunity of demonstrating the efficacy or inefficacy of prayer. The article was publicly endorsed by Dr. Tyndall, and for this reason regarded by many as unanswerable. But the answer is easy.

A scientific experiment, in order to be of value, must be conducted under conditions fitted to secure accuracy; but in the instance under consideration, this is utterly impossible. Why? Because the most eminent doctors on earth cannot give such a correct diagnosis of the condition of sufferers as to enable them to say honestly and with certainty that two companies of patients in two separate



wards or hospitals have precisely the same chances of recovery or death. The elements which enter into the problem are far too numerous and too complicated to enable them to pronounce any such definite judgment. They must take into account a hundred things about heredity, constitutional peculiarities which are not easily discovered, moral conduct, and the antecedent environment and career of each patient. So that Tyndall and his coadjutors cannot even accurately select their patients and thus bring together the elements with which to begin the so-called scientific experiment. And if the initial step is nothing but a pretentious blunder, what need for tracing it further, and what sense is there in speaking of it, as some have done, as having forever settled the value of prayer and even shattered the foundations of Christianity? But suppose they were allowed to begin, and that we accepted their word for it that the two companies of patients were in all respects in the same condition—who will believe that, in spite of the usual possibilities of accident and disturbing causes quite beyond their control, they could keep them in precisely the same condition as to atmosphere, drugs, food, nursing and all the rest during the progress of this experiment extending over three or five years? Yet this is quite indispensable to scientific accuracy and in order to any just comparison between the patients who are to be prayed for and those who are not to enjoy this advantage.

But here is another insuperable difficulty. Do the promoters of this much-boasted experiment imagine that they could secure a universal cessation of prayer for one group of patients while it would be continued for another? Suppose—what is incredible—that a large number of Christians were weak enough, sufficiently recreant in their duty to God and humanity to agree to be silent, to offer no prayer for the inmates of the selected hospital, we are sure that no power on earth could restrain or silence all prayer in their behalf. Some humble, generous, heroic heart in garret or cellar, amid the silence of midnight or the turmoil of life's struggle, would be sure to breathe a silent petition for all sufferers, and this alone would render the experiment totally worthless.

But still more. Who is authorized to engage on God's behalf that He will meekly and submissively be a party to this experiment? After six thousand years, in which He has been answering prayer, God may not in His infinite wisdom judge the neat little experiment arranged and approved by Dr. Tyndall and others necessary for the vindication of His character and glory. God may think that He has already, "at sundry times and in divers manners," given men sufficient reasons for their faith to rest upon, and that is all that common-sense or science can demand. And moreover, He may decline to be dictated to even by great men, or to be challenged to show His power in specific

forms. Jesus Christ did so when Satan asked Him to work miracles, and refused to give a sign to a wicked and adulterous generation. And if the Lord, for sufficient reasons springing out of His own sovereignty, infinite majesty and glory, should decline to accept the challenge, what then becomes of the experiment? How manifestly unscientific and absurd it is in losing sight of all these elements. True, God has promised to answer prayer, but He has not promised to gratify the whims and caprice of men. He has promised to answer prayer, but He has not promised to hold Himself in readiness to be called down from His throne at the instance of a little company of men who may be pleased to arrange a certain medical experiment for Him to perform. God has promised to answer prayer, but He has not promised to ignore His own sovereignty or to trample under foot His own will, whether that will is revealed in the volume of Nature or of the written Word. It is only when we ask for things agreeable to His will in the name of Jesus that we have any right to expect answers to our petitions. And what is needed to greater fervor and power in prayer is not stronger evidence, but stronger faith in the abundant evidence already possessed—not one to rise from the dead to tell us that prayer is good and scientifically right, but One to come down from heaven even God the Holy Spirit to convince us that Christ has risen from the dead who has given full and incontrovertible proof of His willingness and power to answer prayer.

It is urged in the name of science that answers to prayer are wholly incompatible with natural laws. These laws are held to be both uniform and immutable, and admit of no exceptions such as Christians expect and ask God to make in their behalf when they pray. But when we speak of the uniformity and immutability of the laws of nature, it is to be remembered that the statement is not universally true, that it must be limited to the inorganic universe. The moment we pass up from this to the domain of life there is anything but uniformity. The force of gravitation acts with unvarying certainty, and so do the laws of Light and Heat and Electricity; but the eccentric freaks of life whether in the vegetable or animal kingdom, who can foretell? The presence of Will-power introduces the utmost uncertainty. The lady who nurses her lapdog with scrupulous care, and daily studies his disposition and temper, cannot foresee for a moment what may be the outcome of the creature's capricious will, and the wisest savant is equally helpless in this respect. The same holds true in every case as we ascend in the scale of animal life and intellectual development till we reach man. The capacity of the creatures varies, of course, but the same untrammelled freedom attaches to their wills, and it is easily seen that all things subject to their will-power must be regarded not as absolute fixtures, but as liable to be moulded thereby. And if we extend our view beyond the

human will to beings of a still higher order, we feel bound to predicate similar freedom in the exercise of their superior powers, and so till we reach Omnipotence, thus breaking in very decidedly upon the alleged unruffled uniformity which some imagine to be universal.

Here is another vital consideration. The laws of nature are not precisely axiomatic—they are rather discovered and verified by laborious research. Viewed from the Divine side they indicate God's modes of working in the physical universe; but so far as understood and realized by us, they are simply the result of observation and experience, which may be characterized by incompleteness and inaccuracy. Thus, we observe certain phenomena to occur in a particular order of sequence. We notice, for example, that with a low atmospheric temperature water freezes, and that the application of fire to gunpowder is followed by an explosion. We observe this to happen again and again, and we generalize and affirm that it is always the case, and, therefore, call it a law of nature. Hence, so far as we are concerned, a law of nature is nothing more than an inference from certain observations—the inference may be correct or it may not—the latter has often been the case, as the history of science abundantly proves. We may, of course, claim for the inference infallibility and supreme authority; we may declare, as some do, that it renders God Himself helpless in attempting to answer our

prayers; but we submit that this is claiming too much for our inference, giving it a force and value which it does not possess even when it is perfectly accurate. And, in any case, natural laws—indeed all laws—are powerless, useless, non-existent without a law-giver, a self-moved executive to enforce them. We protest against the common error of imagining that law is first and supreme, and that God is second and subordinate—the error of regarding God as the helpless slave of physical laws. Many talk of law doing this and that, and putting its veto on the freedom and actions of God and man, while in truth it does nothing apart from some one to enforce it. When did law ever arrest a thief or convict a murderer? Personal agency is needed to accomplish these things. Hence the simple truth is that when we speak of being encompassed by natural laws, we should remember that we have ultimately to do with a Person—a Person of infinite resources who works according to certain modes which we learn by observation, and which we are pleased to call primary and secondary laws; and, therefore, the question now at issue is, are answers to prayer inconsistent with or contrary to what we know of the Person? Assuredly not, but just precisely what we would expect from Him. For if there is anything to which the united voice of science and revelation testifies in a numberless variety of forms, and with overwhelming clearness and power, it is the fact that God is possessed of

infinite resources and versatility, that nothing is too hard for Him, that He is perfectly free and able to meet all emergencies, and that He is just as willing as He is able to do so in the case of His creature man. To maintain the contrary is to deny the great cardinal facts of human redemption; for the proof of His willingness to help us was furnished by the gift, the sufferings and death of His own Son.

It is alleged that answers to prayer are incredible, because they demand a belief in miracles, to which modern science is opposed. Professor Tyndall says: "The dispersion of the slightest mist by the special volition of the Eternal would be as great a miracle as the stoppage of an eclipse or the rolling of the St. Lawrence up the Falls of Niagara. No act of humiliation, individual or national, could call one shower from heaven or deflect toward us a single beam of the sun." But God has not promised the stoppage of an eclipse, or the reversal of the stream of Niagara; and if we are twitted upon our inability to effect such marvels by prayer, this is the reason, and one which commonsense and reverence for the Divine Majesty will approve. We are not at all ashamed to decline Tyndall's challenge, and refuse to go about to organize a union prayer-meeting to ask for either of these wonders, because there is a vast and essential difference between asking according to our own whim and pleading God's sacred promise. In this con-

nection it is well to emphasize the scientific conclusion formulated in our Shorter Catechism, that prayer is to be offered only "for things agreeable to God's will." Hence, unless a person can be perfectly sure that his petitions are in accordance with the Divine will, he has no right to expect that he will receive what he asks. To urge an answer to prayers not in harmony with the Divine Mind is to desire God to deny Himself, which is impossible. And inasmuch as our knowledge of God's ways and God's will is finite, and our ignorance infinite, we can never be sure that the granting of what we ask, especially in temporal matters, would be for our own good, and the good of others concerned, for His glory, and in accordance with every particular of His All-embracing Scheme of Providence. What are we to do in these circumstances? Must we, by reason of our dense ignorance, never pray at all for temporal blessings? We should certainly pray for such, but always, as Christ has taught us, both by precept and example, in humble submission to the Father's will. And this is surely as reasonable as it is inevitable, because we cannot know, for example, that deliverance from temptation and danger, from suffering and death, is always best for us, and, therefore, we are bound to ask for such conditionally, ascribing to Him the kingdom, the power, and the glory. Prayer for the sick should not be unconditional, and cannot always result in their recovery, for if it did, they them-



selves, or others in their behalf, might render them immortal. But while we are thus necessarily restricted to ask for temporal blessings with limitations, and the fullest recognition of our own ignorance, there is a vast category of spiritual blessings in regard to which our faith and our asking should know no limit but the revealed will of God. But what of the miraculous element involved in answers to such prayers? It is to this that science is thought to interpose an insuperable barrier. A miracle is not necessarily required in all such cases. The results may be wrought out, and the answers bestowed, under the ordinary and special workings of God's providence and saving grace. The true conception of God is that He is incessantly active. He neither slumbers nor sleeps. "My Father worketh hitherto," said Jesus, "and I work." And He has ten thousand methods of working and of answering prayer of which we have no conception. There are infinite interlacings and overlappings of His providences which we cannot trace—good and evil so intermingled, physical and spiritual forces so acting and reacting upon each other, as to baffle our most penetrating research. We do not reckon such works in our behalf miracles. But granting that an answer to any prayer is equivalent to a miracle, that it involves "the special volition of the Eternal," this does not give rise to a valid, scientific objection. Science has not shown, and is not able to show, that God is incapable of such special

volitions. So long as the gulf between different species remains unbridged, and a great impassable gap stands between organic and inorganic matter, and the origin of life remains an impenetrable mystery, science rather points to the exercise on God's part of an infinite number of special creative volitions. The special is not necessarily in conflict with the ordinary. That Jesus ordinarily walked upon the solid earth was not incompatible with the fact that on one occasion He walked upon the rolling billows of the Sea of Galilee. The God who uniformly works in one way can surely work in another without contradicting Himself. Even we, with all our limitations and poverty of nature, can do this much. We can do more. In virtue of that spiritual force, will-power, with which we are endowed, we can interfere with the great laws and forces of the physical universe, and turn them to special purposes. And surely it is not an extravagant claim to set up in behalf of a Being of unlimited resources, that He can do so in an infinitely greater degree. It is not too much to say of Him that He is not limited and tied down to the everlasting monotony of one way of doing things. In creating the universe and establishing its laws, we may be perfectly certain that He left Himself free at every moment to listen to the cry and attend to the wants of His creatures, whether they can understand how He does it or not. And we need not be perplexed by the multiplicity of agencies to be controlled and

of interests to be harmonized. The very greatness of the miracle required makes it all the more worthy of Omnipotence. It is dishonoring to God, and utterly out of keeping with a true conception of Him as the Creator and Universal Ruler, to suppose that He can perform only small and simple works while His wisdom and power are baffled by those that are stupendous and astounding.

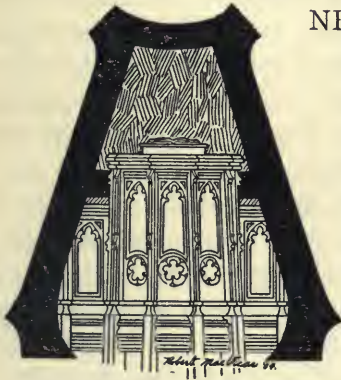
It is argued that men have frequently been imposed upon by pretended miracles said to have been wrought in answer to prayer, and, therefore, we can have no confidence in it. That there *have* been sham miracles and pretended answers to prayer, as there are sham banks, insurance companies, lawyers, doctors, and ministers, no one need deny. But we hold that we should not on this account deny the existence of the true, and that we can never reach the truth regarding what is genuine by persistently and exclusively examining everything connected with impositions. As well might we hope to become pure and saintly by studying perpetually the schemes and tricks of consummate hypocrites. We must turn away from acknowledged impositions and examine the evidence adduced in support of that which is declared to be true. The question is not, Have magicians and mountebanks appeared in all ages of the world from the time when the master tricksters, Jannes and Jambres, contended with Moses in Egypt, down to our own day; but what we want to know is, Have competent witnesses,

having had full opportunity to examine critically the facts, men of truth and honor, solemnly testified to what God hath done in answer to prayer? If so, we are bound in the name of science and common-sense to believe them. If we reject trustworthy testimony we overthrow the foundations of science, of judicial procedure, and of everything that holds together the framework of human society. We conclude, therefore, that the testimony of Jesus Christ and His apostles, as well as of other inspired messengers of God, together with the testimony of millions of intelligent, honest persons since their time, definitely settles this matter.

We unhesitatingly yield to the weight of evidence. As a matter of science, theology and personal experience, our creed is expressed in the words of the Lord Jesus—"All things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive."

## CHAPTER XVI.

### THE PREACHER.



The Modern Pulpit.

NEWSPAPER correspondent, describing the effect of a sermon which Dr. MacVicar delivered as retiring Moderator of the General Assembly, in St. John, N.B., in 1882, expressed an opinion that learned men well enough adapted for professorial chairs, often prove to be very poor preachers. "Their utterances," he said, "are wont to be formal and recondite, rather than popular and impressive. But all this was reversed in the case of Dr. MacVicar. It seemed as if preaching ought to be his proper work. Indeed, we learn, while he is a laborious professor, he seldom fails to fill a pulpit on the Sabbath. His peroration was grand in the extreme. So much apposite eloquence in a political gathering would have been cheered to the echo." Whether the Principal's theory of preaching was the outcome

of practice, or his practice the outcome of theory, there were elements of strength in all his pulpit work that were recognized even by those whom it failed to touch.

He was not a little insistent on having supreme attention and reverence throughout the entire service. In old Coté Street Church, if two late-comers happened to enter together—one on the floor and the other in the gallery—he would deliberately pause and wait till each reached a seat, looking alternately at the one and at the other, till the wonder grew that anybody dared be late. If anything occurred to ruffle the solemnity of the congregation, it would not likely pass unnoticed in the pulpit. Once, when baptizing a child, a ripple of amusement ran through the church as he gravely pronounced the name which had been handed to him on the customary slip—it was something like Darwin Spencer Tyndall Huxley ! Immediately afterwards forgiveness was sought in prayer for “the unseemly levity of some at this service.” In one church in Ontario, after announcing and reading his text, there came a tragic pause. Some wondered whether the preacher had taken ill, others whether his manuscript had fallen out of the pulpit. The tension was not lessened when in a clear, emphatic voice the explanation came :

“When that young man in the choir folds up his newspaper and gives me his undivided attention I shall proceed to discuss this text.”

To be perfectly fair, it was not always easy to give him undivided attention since he rarely preached for less than three-quarters of an hour and purposely ignored Carlyle's cynical estimate of Man as "blockhead and dullard—much readier to feel and digest, than to think and consider." In his simplest deliverances there was always strong food for thought. He never entered the pulpit to fight bloodless battles with impalpable ghosts or enter on sensational recitals of *outrè* and incongruous themes. He was so thoroughly convinced in his own mind that the extempore thoughts of most men are chiefly valuable when imprisoned in their own brains that he shunned any habit that might expose him to the evils of intellectual indolence or dangerous volubility. Yet some of us felt that when, after the taxing preparation to which he was accustomed, he laid aside his manuscript altogether and came into the pulpit to give the substance of his study in the language that came at the moment, he excelled himself.

The preaching that tells, according to his own theory, must be easily understood, instructive, convincing, textual, evangelical and definite in its aim. For this reason he counted expository work not the easiest, but the best, both for the preacher and the people, and as a rule he followed that method himself. If in the course of exposition, the emotional life was awakened, that was seldom, if ever, intended. His appeal to the heart was usually made

by way of the mind; though in an after-communion address the whole tone and bearing were much softened, and at a funeral service a quiet dignity was maintained. But on ordinary, as well as extraordinary occasions, the cumulative energy with which he opened up and developed his theme was largely stored in intellectual force, and expressed in firm, powerful tones, that not infrequently reached a shout. Logical precision characterized every sentence. Loose, incoherent talk, miscalled expository preaching, he condemned as "pious wandering amongst sacred things" and studiously avoided it.

"Twenty-three years ago," writes Professor Ross, "I heard him for the first time deliver his sermon on the Trial of Abraham's Faith, and I well remember the intellectual satisfaction with which I followed him as he developed step by step the magnitude of the task set before the father of the faithful, and the hard conditions under which it had to be performed. I can still recall his graphic and telling illustrations from modern life and the cumulative force of his arguments in support of his theme. He read his sermons, but he read them well. His articulation was very distinct and his emphasis occasionally tremendous. He was perfectly familiar with his manuscript, and it formed a rest or fulcrum from which he moved his audience. He never showed any nervous hurry, or mixed his sentences,



or got hold of the wrong word. Slowly, impressively, with absolute self-possession and the intonation fitted to the sentence, he proceeded with his task. Whether his auditors agreed with him or not, he compelled them to believe that they were in the presence of a strong, forceful personality, whose knowledge of his subject was a source of power, and who had unwavering confidence in the truth as he proclaimed it."

The oft-repeated sermon, to which Professor Ross refers, was characterized by such simplicity that Dr. Donald Fraser, after hearing it delivered before his congregation in Marylebone, commented on the contrast it afforded to the ponderous manner in which men in his position usually seek to overwhelm the audiences before which they appear. Many in Canada can recall the vivid way in which the patriarch was followed up the slopes of Mount Moriah to undergo the mysterious test of his faith—cut off from human sympathy and aid—impelled to a deed repugnant to the deepest feelings of the paternal heart—perplexed to reconcile the strange requirement with the Divine Character—perplexed most of all to account for the conflict between the Divine Promise and the Divine Command. And though the circumstances of the patriarch were seen to be unique, everyone was made to feel that the struggle through which he passed has its modern parallel and the Faith by which he triumphed its direct bearing in the segregated life of each hearer.

“My young friends,” he would interject, “you need to come each one alone to Jesus Christ. The great transaction which is to fix your eternal destiny takes place in the solitude of your heart. It is there that you either accept or reject the Son of God. Yes, and let me tell you, what you know, that it is in solitude that the greatest and keenest conflicts of life occur. In the loneliness of the office, in the isolation of your post, when your employer’s eye is not upon you—it is there that the tempter plies you with his most subtle deceits. How greatly you need faith in God, and in the Christ of God, that along with the temptation you may discover the way of escape.”

Ever so simply, point by point, he would press home the permanent lessons of the narrative. He used to say that few preachers realize how hard it is to make oneself understood by an ordinary congregation. He counted time much better spent in simplifying than in mystifying.

The lucidity of his diction and transparency of his manner when addressing children were particularly striking. On such occasions he scorned the goody-goody, patronizing talk, which young folk so resent; and, in a decidedly virile tone, gave them solid substance, well lighted with windows of illustration. A genial smile would animate his features when expounding, before the boys and girls, his favorite theme: “What I say unto you

I say unto all, Watch." He would show them a strong man in some great city, trying windows and latches of doors, and flashing his dark lantern into obscure corners long after the midnight hour; or else a military sentinel, with fixed bayonet, pacing to and fro in the silence whilst his comrades slept, and suddenly arousing them with the night-alarm that calls each man to the post of duty; and then in clear, crisp, Anglo-Saxon terms, terse and never too big for the youngest to grasp, he would call upon them to watch their thoughts, their words, their acts. Without their knowing it he would, in passing, communicate to them a deep philosophy of life, and the cardinal truths of the Gospel. Many a young face would beam beneath his passing thrust:

"Your thoughts will make you what you are going to be. If you have roguish thoughts all the time—what are you? You are just little rogues—that's what you are!"

After his appointment to the theological chair in the Presbyterian College, he was in constant demand for anniversary services, the laying of corner stones, the opening of new churches, the supplying of pulpits for indisposed or absent local ministers. He oftenest appeared, in the pulpit of his former charge, Crescent Street Church, which he guided through a vacancy of four years, previous to the settlement of Rev. Dr. A. B. Mackay. He fre-

quently spoke of this period as having afforded the hardest work of his life. In addition to presiding over the college, financing for it, and undertaking class-work since divided between two professors, he had the full charge, as interim Moderator, of this large congregation, in which he taught regularly for forty years a large Bible class every Sunday afternoon, and during three vacancies did much of the pulpit and pastoral work. The critical duty of directing a prolonged building movement (which reached more than one acute stage that threatened a serious division of the flock), was performed with such tact and skill as to culminate in the erection of the present handsome edifice, with the loss, as he used to claim, of only one man. Yet, notwithstanding the physical and mental fatigue, caused by all this combined strain, his strongest preaching was possibly done during this period.

It is difficult to select from his sermons any that will exhibit his normal style and yet do him justice in print; for he prepared with the ear rather than the eye in view. One sermon, published in the *New York Pulpit Treasury* in 1885, is, however, germane to the purpose of this Memoir, and though it lacks the direct personal tone that commonly pervaded even his most doctrinal addresses it yet preserves many characteristic touches:

## THE VALUE OF THE WORD OF GOD.

“The law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver.”—Psalm 119 : 72.

Wealth is not here depreciated. When sentimental pietists declare that they despise money and esteem gold as good for nothing, many sensible people set it down as so much empty rant and nonsense. God does not say that gold is good for nothing. On the contrary He makes it the symbol of His richest spiritual gifts and blessings. Jesus says, “I counsel thee to buy of Me gold refined by fire, that thou mayest become rich;” and He represents the streets of the New Jerusalem as paved with gold. What God says is, that while this creature of His is highly prized among men, and made the standard of value in the commercial sense of that term, there is something else of infinitely greater worth to man—something which in its far-reaching influence not only quickens the pulse of commerce and causes general thrift among the nations of the world, but also moulds the character and destiny of man for time and eternity. Gold belongs to a man’s environment, while the law of God enters into the inner man—the immortal spirit. Gold is eminently useful in building a house and fitting it up with beauty and splendor, in providing food and raiment, and enabling a man to travel and secure all sorts of legitimate, temporal enjoyments; but it makes him no wiser, no purer,

no holier—it does not necessarily develop these qualities, or increase his faith, or fortify him against moral and spiritual evil, or expand his love to God and man; it often does the reverse; while the outcome of God's law is always useful and good. Gold and silver are undeniably serviceable in many other directions which it were wrong and sinful not to recognize. The progressive amelioration of our race by which this age is characterized beyond all others is instrumentally due in a large measure to the wise and generous use made of earthly treasures in promoting religious and scientific education, in furnishing better food and clothing and homes for the toiling millions, in founding colleges, hospitals and asylums, and, above all, in scattering broadcast over the whole world the Gospel of Jesus Christ. So far as money is used for such purposes as these its utility and value can scarcely be overestimated. Yet we must place it in the category of the "things which are temporal." We must set a limit to the services which it renders. A man and his gold must forever part company at death—it can only go with him and minister to his wants during the allotted threescore years and ten—while the influence of the truth upon the soul and the benefits he receives from obeying its precepts and resting upon its promises are as enduring as God Himself. But in seeking to form a just estimate of the Value of the Word, let us view it

## IN RELATION TO INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT.

In this connection it has been and is of inestimable worth—"better than thousands of gold and silver." We do not simply ask that it should be tolerated, or plead that it should have some slight recognition in educational work, but we claim for it a foremost place, and it may be said to enjoy this position when the influence of the Christian pulpit and press in moulding public opinion and institutions is taken into account. In the technical process of mental development in our homes and our schools it should be the Alpha and Omega. We should begin with its simple lessons, and we certainly cannot get beyond its sublime and divine teachings. This is no mere theory. The records of the past justify our opinion. The reverent use of the Word has done good and no evil. The great purifying currents of thought that have elevated our race have been formed and directed by the Bible. This alone should be decisive. Without attempting to sketch the history of its brilliant achievements, it may be said in a word that the nations which do not possess or follow the Book move upon a far lower plane intellectually, morally and spiritually than those which have it. Paganism, in its highest forms, has been an utter failure. Pagan lands have been, and are now non-progressive and impure, the abodes of mental stagnation, festering vice and horrid cruelties, while

Bible lands are fruitful in all manner of useful discoveries. They lead the van of the world's mental and material progress. They revolutionize the commerce of nations. Their railways and steamships unite the ends of the earth and place its products and luxuries within the reach of all. They invent spinning-jennies and power-looms, printing presses and telegraphs, telephones and electric light. They circulate Bibles by the million, and wherever the Book has gone it has broken up the intellectual stagnation of centuries and reconstructed human relations and society after a divine model. Its cordial acceptance and diligent study are synonymous with mental growth and vigor. The strongest races draw their inspiration from its pages, the purest and profoundest minds in the world are marshalled on its side. There never was such a vast array as now of learned, critical men, animated by a judicial spirit, who are thoroughly persuaded that in holding fast and holding forth the Word of Life they have not followed cunningly devised fables. They know, because they have tested it, that the Book is accredited beyond all works of antiquity, that it has come down to them substantially as it was delivered by God to holy men of old who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, and that it is attested by internal, external and collateral evidences which are ever increasing in force and conclusiveness, and which to sensible persons have all along possessed over-



whelming power. And surely the enjoyment of this certitude regarding the highest themes that can engage the human mind, and the strength and repose of soul which it imparts, are "better than thousands of gold and silver." Vain is it to raise the vulgar cry that science is hostile to the Bible and destined to consume it; that if we cleave to the one we must abjure the other. None know better the folly of this thought than impartial scientists and accomplished theologians. The truth is, that science and the Bible are mutually helpful and indispensable to each other. The critical spirit of which science boasts is the offspring of Biblical study, that which it begets and fosters. This Book invites and provokes discussion, and fearlessly tells men to "prove all things, and hold fast that which is good." And hence the more fully we imbibe its spirit, the more truly progressive do we become and the less inclined to engage in a wicked and unnatural quarrel with any of the sciences—the more cordially can we bid them all God-speed and rejoice in the efforts and successes of physicists. Let them by all means, under the inspiring and regulating influence of revealed truth, push forward the lines of knowledge and discovery in every direction far beyond their present limits. Let them find out and formulate new laws of the material universe, and let them assail and destroy every form of ancient, mediæval and modern superstition that falls within their domain. But after

Science has nobly done her work, and after she has occupied a much larger place than now in the thought and confidence of the world, let no one be so simple as to suppose that the Bible is superseded as an instrument of intellectual culture. No. We cannot and we would not banish it from our literature and our thinking. Its truth, its spirit, and its very phraseology pervade them in a greater measure than is generally believed. What would be left, for example, of Dante and Shakespeare, Milton and Longfellow and Tennyson, were the Biblical elements removed from them? And what is the practical outcome of study and collegiate training when the central facts of revelation are ignored or denied? Distortion or abnormal development of our nature, if not mental and moral sterility. Men cannot do without the Bible for the symmetrical culture of their faculties any more than they can do without the God whose thoughts and actions in relation to our race it records. It contains the foundations of all history, of which we cannot afford to be ignorant, the earliest and purest specimens of poetic art, the finest examples of rhetorical and logical skill; it settles for the physicist the true starting-point of his investigations and meets an imperative demand of the human mind by speaking in direct and unequivocal terms of the Great First Cause of all things. The fact of creation, so plainly announced in its opening pages, must be postulated before we can take a single step in

physical science or pretend to educate men in its mysteries. Otherwise we have no foundation—nothing better than unsupported assumption and tangled theories upon which to proceed. To be told, as we are, that law and force and unverified molecules exist, and came into existence we know not how, and that these account for all things, cannot set our inquiring spirits at rest. We are by our mental constitution forced to ask whence these molecules and this force and law? Whose image and superscription do they bear? Science has no answer. It is not enough to say that they are self-evolved, for this is taking the very point at issue for granted. How did these dead atoms become transformed into living things characterized by infinite diversity? What is life, and whence is it? How do we bridge over the broad chasm between dead atoms and living creatures? Science cannot tell. “After centuries of research the term life wanders through Science without a definition.” The sublime Biblical solution of this problem of our age is the one to be relied upon, and will be found to accord with the verified results of scientific research; for reason demands a Cause, and Science demands a Cause, possessed of Supreme Intelligence, where Evolution furnishes none. The grand peculiarity of the Bible is that both in the region of intellection and ethics it leads our thoughts up from the elementary, the finite, the phenomenal, to the Infinite—and this is necessary to completeness of

thought and full, intellectual development. Just as we cannot build up strong, physical frames without causing them to undergo vigorous exercise, so we cannot develop well-balanced, robust, manly intellects without teaching them to wrestle with the mighty problems of this Book, without bringing them during the process of education face to face with God as the Creator and Supreme Ruler of all things. Atheism, in its mildest forms, and under whatever name it may be disguised, is a most pernicious force in any educational system. Silence regarding God while we are teaching the hundred subjects of a modern college curriculum cannot but prove injurious. The more we educate the mind while ignoring God, the farther we drive it from the Source of its being, and of its present and eternal felicity. Hence we cannot yield to the persistent cry that the Word is to be excluded from the school-room lest its presence should breed sectarian strife and contention. The study of history has a place there, and we leave impartial judges to say if there is not more in the story of Henry VIII., Charles I., or Charles II., of England, to engender such animosities than in the Old and New Testaments. Why then place the truth of God under ban and not history? Who will have the hardihood to tell us that the study of the life and teachings of Jesus Christ is not good for us? Is the estimate of the Word given in our text totally false? Does the modern educator know better than God what our

souls require? Does the God who created the human spirit offer for its growth and nourishment that which is unwholesome? Nay, verily, Christ's philosophy of education is that which must ultimately prevail, that "man cannot live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Then, the Word is "better than thousands of gold and silver"

IN RELATION TO MORAL CULTURE.

To establish this, it is not necessary to disparage ethical systems of heathen philosophers and others, as if they contained no truth. Some of them contained a great deal. But looking over them from the days of Aristotle and Socrates to the time of the latest pagan writer, it may be said of them all that they lacked the great fundamental principle which is the backbone of Christian ethics, namely, an infallible standard by which to judge of right and wrong. This was their radical defect and what renders worthless or positively injurious many systems of modern times. Men look in vain for the standard of right in self-interest, in utility, in feelings of benevolence, in pleasurable emotions, or in the *dicta* of unenlightened conscience—these are all shifting and uncertain, and, therefore, unfit to serve this purpose. But the Bible reveals an immutable and infallible standard. The ultimate rule of right is God's nature. God is always right. But can we know Him—can this rule be rendered prac-

licable? It can. God is revealed in His works and in His Word; and hence we are bound to observe the laws of the physical universe as they touch our health, our social relations, and general weal as truly as we are bound to keep the Ten Commandments. But it is in the written Word that we have the whole duty of man fully defined—that we have an ethical code which is “better than thousands of gold and silver.” Let us look at its method and value a little in detail. The Word contains a body of abstract moral precepts illustrated and enforced by a multitude of concrete examples. For about fifteen centuries, during the antediluvian period, we have a brief and very condensed record of God’s methods of dealing with men, but no formal code or elaborate system of instruction—only broken notes of certain great transactions—mere jottings of what God did under manifold circumstances, while men were left to infer principles and rules of life for themselves, and were thus caused to undergo moral training. A few chapters in Genesis sum up all that has come down to us of this period. We come next to the Mosaic era, and here we have that marvellous Decalogue, those Ten Commandments which contain such a generalization of all human duties and relations as the unaided mind of man could never have produced. The Supreme Law-giver Himself gathered up into this brief, comprehensive and convenient form all the principles of His moral administration previously announced and

acted upon; and this grand summary continued through long centuries to be taught and exemplified by prophets and priests and in the whole history of the chosen people. Then after four hundred years, from Malachi to John the Baptist, during which there was no open vision and no prophet speaking to Israel, God's Son appeared in human flesh. By signs and miracles which He wrought He produced in many minds the conviction that He was a Teacher sent from God, and spake as never man spake. He taught with a simplicity, directness, reality and power such as men never witnessed before or since. And while unfolding with matchless clearness His own glorious, redemptive work, His theme was also the law of God in all its length and breadth of spiritual significance. By His lessons and His life He illustrated its force. The law is no longer presented to men in the abstract. They see it now exemplified in the conduct of One who is bone of their bone and flesh of their flesh, and at the same time "the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of His person." The Christ of God is the living embodiment of the law. Men see in His deeds, in His career, what it means. The standard of right has become a living, practical reality. The God who before revealed Himself to man's intelligence and conscience in His works, and by types and shadows and distinct utterances, now dwells with men, and they listen to His voice and hear Him say, "Follow Me." What a superlative

system of moral instruction we have thus unfolded in the Word of God. By general principles and specific precepts, by a comprehensive summary in the Ten Commandments, by the chequered and wonder-laden history of the chosen people, by the writings of inspired prophets and apostles, and by the incomparable lessons of the Lord Jesus Christ, and by His spotless life as the incarnate God, the whole duty of man is enforced. Thus broadly and comprehensively viewed in relation to the moral government and culture of the world, who can doubt that God's Word is "better than thousands of gold and silver"? This is especially true when it is viewed as

#### AN INSTRUMENT OF SALVATION TO MAN.

We may safely say that as a means of grace it surpasses all others; and in so doing we do not depreciate the worship of the sanctuary and the sacraments of the new covenant. Christians of all ages have regarded these as exceedingly precious; and with respect to the Lord's Supper there can be no doubt that, were the spiritual life of God's people more fervid than it usually is, it would be desired and observed more frequently than is customary with many churches; but we must not at the same time forget that enormous superstitions have gathered around the sacraments, and that efficacy has been ascribed to them which they in no sense possess. In claiming its true place for the Word as



a means of grace, we do not overlook the necessity of Christian activity and of all the stated services of the Christian home and Church for this purpose. We believe that God's people, for their own good and the good of others, should be far more active than they are; in order to be truly happy, to have rejoicing in themselves and not in others, they should prove their own works. And so with meditation and prayer. Men do not think half enough about the Saviour, and about their own hearts and conduct and business as these appear before God and in the light of eternity. They are by no means sufficiently prayerful. There are a thousand promises that they have not pleaded, and ten thousand blessings which they have not received, because they have not asked, or have asked amiss, to consume them upon their lusts. In one word, we do not depreciate any of the God-appointed appliances which the Church is authorized to use for the development of her spiritual life and power; we believe that she should use them all with more heart and soul than heretofore, but at the same time we place God's truth high above them all as an instrument of good to man. How so? It manifestly underlies all other means of grace. What do we know about the sacraments, their nature and efficacy, apart from the Word? What do we know about good works, wherein they consist, and how they are to be performed, aside from the Bible? How can we engage in meditation and prayer

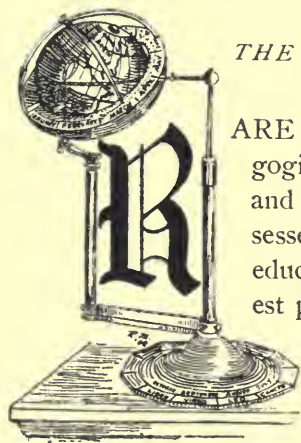
unless we have revealed truth to direct our thoughts and teach us how to pray, and what to pray for? Besides, the sacraments in their use are limited to believers, but the Word is useful to all—to the ungodly as well as the pious. While in unbelief it announces to man the glad tidings of salvation, it tells him that "God so loved the world"—not the world as redeemed and purified, but the world as fallen and guilty and lost—"that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." But this faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God. If we are to believe the truth, we must first of all know it. If we are to believe in Christ, we must hear about Him, and learn something of the glory of His person and work. The written Word must be our medium of knowledge of the Incarnate Word. We do not forget the fact that the Spirit of God alone can give life to dead souls; but we are now dealing with the place occupied by the Word in the economy of saving grace. Jesus Himself taught the doctrine of regeneration by the Holy Ghost, but He preached the Gospel of the Kingdom as well; and He incorporated in His intercessory prayer for His people this petition: "Sanctify them *in* the truth; Thy Word is truth." "The truth," as Alford remarks, "is the *element in which* the sanctification takes place." Jesus does not send down His Holy Spirit to renew and save persons come to maturity without instruction or

knowledge; but He lays it upon the Church as a sacred duty to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. And hence the strength of truly apostolic minds in all ages is laid out not upon a mere *cultus*—the training of men in religious forms and ceremonies—but in declaring the whole counsel of God. And let us understand that it is not alone as an intellectual stimulus and guide, not even as the supreme authority in ethics, that the Word is “better than thousands of gold and silver,” but it is so, pre-eminently, as revealing a gracious and mighty Saviour, and placing the interests of men for eternity upon a sure foundation. If we limit its benefits to this life we rob it of more than half its value—we misinterpret it from first to last. Men may quarrel with the Bible as a mere record of facts and principles; they may apply to every page and chapter and line of it what they are pleased to call “Higher Criticism;” they may investigate all about the origin and history of its different parts, the changes and dangers through which they have passed; they may find fault with its method, its style, its chronology and science; they may try to show that it is all wrong in its botany, astronomy and geology, although the Book does not pretend to teach these sciences, and they may be greatly vexed at its miracles and fulfilled and unfulfilled prophecy, and the unmistakable prominence given throughout to the supernatural, and they may inveigh with the utmost bitterness

and persistency against creeds and confessions and systems of doctrine drawn from the Book; but as perishing creatures with the sentence of condemnation and ruin consciously in their own souls, what can they say against a great and glorious Saviour? If we become vehement in our advocacy and defence of the Book, and strike heavy blows at every one who assails it; if we become rapt and enthusiastic in our admiration of the Word as "better than thousands of gold and silver," it is because it reveals to us Jesus Christ the Saviour, in whom is treasured all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### *THE EDUCATIONIST.*



MacVicar's Tellurian Globe.

ARE in every land is the pedagogic gift which Drs. Malcolm and Donald MacVicar possessed. In time it made them educational experts of the highest prestige. As we have seen, they started out in life together to study for the Presbyterian ministry, but after two years in Knox College, a

change came over Malcolm's convictions, as the result of which he was presently ordained to the ministry of the Baptist Church, though never installed in any charge. Both brothers, with keen logical minds, showed a disposition to assume a polemical attitude; but they soon came to see the hopelessness of every attempt to convince each other; and, with no impairment to their fraternal relations, agreed for the rest of life to differ over a point which the one considered of prime importance, the other secondary.

Malcolm, after completing his academic training, decided that he could best multiply his personal influence by devoting himself entirely to educational work, in which he has since had a notable career as Normal School Principal in the State of New York; as a member of the theological staff of McMaster College and first Chancellor of McMaster University, Toronto; as Superintendent of the Educational Work of the American Baptist Home Missionary Society for Colored People of the Southern States, as well as for the Indians, Chinese and Mexicans; and more recently as President of Virginia Union University at Richmond, Va. An instinct to make things clear led him to invent a tellurian globe, by means of which pupils could readily observe the movements of the earth in relation to the sun; and an instinct to save teachers from drudgery led him to invent an ingenious blackboard, by means of which sums of every description could be mechanically set with a rapidity that quickened the wits of the scholars, forcing them to complete their computations before a particular "example" should vanish from sight and another take its place. He also prepared and published a series of arithmetics intended to give a more logical explanation of elementary principles than is commonly afforded. These arithmetics, at his request, were revised, recast, and republished in Canada by his brother, whose name appeared on the title-page. Dr. Malcolm MacVicar's son, John

George, is at present at the head of a very successful military academy for boys at Montclair, New Jersey.

There never was a period in Principal MacVicar's career in which he was not closely concerned with educational interests. In his college days he disclosed much aptitude as a teacher. In his brief pastorate in Guelph, as the old newspaper files reveal, he was a diligent member of the Board of School Trustees. On his removal to Montreal he was, in 1865, appointed by the Provincial Government a member of the Protestant Board of School Commissioners, in which capacity he acted for nearly thirty-one years, fifteen of which he was Chairman.

At the time of his appointment, he had been displaying almost vehement energy as secretary of the Protestant Education Association, which had been formed for the purpose of inquiring into the actual state of school affairs throughout the Province and of securing necessary remedial legislation. It transpired that the Church of Rome had practically undisputed possession of all the educational interests of the Province. It was not simply—what he objected to on grounds already explained—that the hierarchy had the legal power to levy from their own people tithes and church rates and compel them to pay for the erection of churches and convents put up at any price; but they were receiving, as well, for the equally religious operations of their

day schools, a considerable revenue to which Protestants considered themselves justly entitled. There was not, at that time, a single Protestant in the offices of the Chief Superintendent of Education, whose department controlled all the Protestant schools, administered their funds and determined their school books. The law prevented sparsely scattered Protestants, resident in different parishes, from uniting their weak forces to secure a proper education for their children. The taxes of joint-stock companies, such as railways, waterworks, and gas companies, as well as the taxes of Protestants who happened to live at other places than those in which they owned property, went to the support of the Roman Catholic schools. In Montreal, itself, with a Protestant population of fully 40,000, and with possibly two-thirds of the entire wealth of the city, as represented in real estate and other interests, in the hands of Protestants, there were only three public schools.

The Protestant Education Association, through its secretary, gathered from different parts of the province a great mass of information, to which wide publicity was given with a view to showing how prejudicially the law affected Protestant interests. A measure for remedying the matter was intrusted to Hon A. T. Galt, but nothing came of it, and many thought it would be better to let things continue as they were. The Secretary of the Association, for his part, was determined to keep the



agitation going. He held that where civil and educational rights were imperilled, it was impossible for Protestants to remain silent, merely to please the politicians. If from any quarter he was advised to refrain from further agitation and assured, "There is no danger," he answered firmly:

"Give us the management of our own schools; give us the right to organize such wherever our people are found; give us our own taxes; give us *justice* before you ask us to believe that there is no danger."

In 1868, as a member of a deputation from the School Board, he visited Quebec and joined in an appeal to the Legislature for an equitable system of taxation that would make available for school purposes the moneys of Protestant ratepayers. The previous efforts of Galt, and the sustained agitation, as it turned out, did not go for nothing. A pledge was secured from the Government to introduce, in accordance with the provisions or guarantees of the British North America Act, a satisfactory measure. In the year following, this pledge was redeemed and a law enacted providing for a city school tax. The enactment recognized the equal rights of Catholics and Protestants, basing a division of the taxes upon the amount of assessed property which they respectively held in the city. This meant a great deal to the Protestant Board. When Dr. MacVicar joined it, its entire revenue amounted to less than three thousand dollars. The new law, in

the securing of which he had so conspicuous a part, brought the revenue from all sources up to more than nineteen thousand dollars.

As time went on and the work of the School Commissioners expanded, they became hampered in their operations through the insufficiency of their revenue and grave dissatisfaction began to be entertained with one feature of the law, known as the Neutral Panel Tax, through the working of which it was estimated that the Protestant Board was suffering a loss of revenue every year of from eight to ten thousand dollars. In this Neutral Panel, the taxes of corporations and joint-stock companies, are divided between the Boards of the Roman Catholic and Protestant School Commissioners in proportion as the population of the city is either Catholic or Protestant. Dr. MacVicar, like many who looked carefully into the matter, was convinced that this method of distribution directly reversed the fair proportion that should come to each Board. The larger sum, contributed as a matter of fact by Protestants, really falls to the Catholics, and the smaller sum contributed by the Catholics falls to the Protestants. In 1888 and 1889 he threw himself vigorously into the movement of the Commissioners and ratepayers to secure redress from the Legislature, so that Protestant money should go strictly to Protestants, and Catholic money strictly to Catholics; but the movement ended in disappointment and the Neutral Panel remains as it was.

In all the years during which he served on the School Board, notwithstanding his deserved reputation for conservatism, he was foremost in aggressive and progressive action. Superintendent E. W. Arthy, the official secretary of the Commissioners, after mentioning a long list of schools for the erection of which Dr. MacVicar shared responsibility, states that from the day on which he joined the Board to the day of his death he was closely identified with every important advancement of the city's educational interests, and that by a curious coincidence, "whether accidental or not, the years during which he was not a member of the School Board were years in which there seemed to be a pause in the onward march of school development." Not a single building operation, or extension, for instance, was inaugurated in that period.

His temporary removal from the Board had its own significance. The DeBoucherville Government, which put him aside in 1876, was popularly credited with displeasure at his outspokenness. Sir William Dawson, who had worked beside him for years, publicly protested against the Government's action, declaring that it would be difficult for the Commissioners to dispense with his experience and devotion, which had so largely made for the efficiency reached in the schools. The Commissioners themselves, in the name of their chairman, Canon Bancroft, appealed to the ratepayers to prevent the change; but the appeal came too late and the alleged

“representative of the extreme dogmatist school” was summarily dropped. He remained off the Board for two years, and shortly after his reappointment voluntarily retired, in order to be more free to look after the interests of the arithmetics which he had published jointly with his brother. His service as a School Commissioner was resumed in 1884 and remained uninterrupted till his death. In 1890 a rumor reached the public that it was the purpose of the Mercier Government to remove him again, in consequence of his outspokenness on the Jesuit Estates; but the agitation which this suspected intention provoked was so spontaneous and pronounced that he was left undisturbed.

Educational affairs in Montreal when he first became interested in them were somewhat disjointed. Schools, established through varied influences, moved along independent roads, regardless of mutual relations or any definite place in a general scheme. The Commissioners on taking up their work acted as their own school inspectors. They early came to see how detrimental to progress the perpetuation of such an arrangement would be, and accordingly appointed Dr. S. P. Robins to develop and supervise, under the direction and authority of the Board, a uniform and adequate system of instruction. Dr. MacVicar always attributed the efficiency and success of the city schools to the machinery thus set in motion and to the wisdom of the Board in seeking to recognize

generously the merits of faithful and laborious teachers whose best efforts, he always counted, were most inadequately remunerated. Several times, with his hearty approval, the scale of salaries was raised.

Superintendent Arthy says: "Dr. MacVicar was a permanent member of all committees on the Course of Study, and while exercising a wise conservatism in dealing with many fads that have sprung up in the educational field, he never failed to use his influence towards extending and enriching the curriculum by the introduction of desirable changes, including kindergarten and transition work, Sloyd, cookery and many other improvements.

"During the last fifteen years of his service, Dr. MacVicar occupied the position of Chairman of the Board, a position which imposed upon him special duties both with regard to the daily routine of its administration, the conduct of its meetings, regular and special, and occasions when he was called upon to represent it in public. It is not too much to say that throughout that period not a week of the school year passed in which he was not called upon to give his time in the performance of one or other of the manifold duties that thus fell to him. Many of these, essential though they were in the working of a large system, involved much troublesome and irksome detail. Yet in their discharge he was no perfunctory chairman. He was a man of excellent business habits, punctual and attentive,

never impatient when dealing with small things, and naturally endowed with clearness of mental vision and the power to take a comprehensive grasp of affairs.

“In the Board room he was an ideal chairman, His absolute impartiality, his courtesy and consideration towards his colleagues were well known, and recognized as qualities which materially aided the Board in reaching its decisions and in maintaining the harmony of its deliberations. While he was always willing to permit full liberty of discussion, he constantly maintained a business-like observance of the rules of order, and secured close attention to the questions before the meeting.

“In regard to appointments and matters of patronage, he was entirely unselfish. Like the other Commissioners, although in greater degree, he was constantly approached, directly and indirectly, on behalf of this or that applicant. While he always gave patient and courteous attention to such representations, the merit of the case was the sole consideration which influenced him in the Board room.

“In his public appearances he accepted equally the dignities and the disabilities of his office. The high esteem in which he was held added weight to his public utterances as the spokesman and representative of the whole Board; but upon public occasions he always endeavored not merely to voice his own opinions, but to speak with the authority of the Board, and he was careful not to commit his

colleagues upon questions of policy which had not been determined."

In some respects, it may be said, he took even a deeper interest in these gratuitous labors for the advancement of the educational interests of the city than in his regular work, concentrated though that was. He was particularly proud of the equipment and progress of the High School, and when the building that now covers so large an area between Peel and Metcalfe Streets was about to be erected he devoted much time and thought and energy in co-operating with his fellow commissioners to mature the best possible plans, for this purpose accompanying Archdeacon (now Dean) Evans and Superintendent Arthy on a tour of inspection to leading educational centres in the States. Besides displaying constant activity in connection with the School Board, he was prominent in the counsels of the Corporation of McGill University, of which, by virtue of his position at the head of an affiliated theological institution, he was a member. He also served for seven years on the McGill Normal School Committee, and for some time on the Committee that prepares the International Scheme of Sunday School Lessons.

He was a profound believer in the value and practicability of religious instruction in the common schools, and saw no reason why the study of Scripture as literature should not have a place in a university course.

“It is said,” he once remarked, “that the Bible is too sacred to be placed in our schools and colleges. I cannot believe that the spirit and daily working of our educational institutions are such as to make the Word of God out of place within them; but if in any instances they are such, the sooner we wake up to the fact the better.”

On a visit to England, at a time when that country was in a state of religious ferment over the educational question, he startled some prominent educationists by informing them that in the schools under the supervision of the Montreal Board, of which he was chairman, the children of Anglicans, Methodists, Presbyterians, Baptists, Congregationalists, and even Jews, regularly received Biblical instruction in an efficient manner, and that during a period of thirty years not the slightest difficulty over the matter had arisen among the Protestant denominations. Ideal schools, in his judgment, were those in which the Bible is systematically and honestly taught. He regarded it as quite insufficient to have occasional visits made to the schools by ministers of the Gospel.

“These are good and useful, so far as they go; and ministers do not object to the deference shown by our rulers to their office and work in permitting or inviting them to make such visits, but if this is all that is to be done in the direction of educational effort it is to give Christianity politely the go-by.”

He was a profound believer, too, in the introduc-



tion and development of educational methods in the Church. At a time when the Normal class idea, as a feature in religious machinery, was regarded by many as revolutionary, he boldly advocated it and acted on it. The matter was introduced at a Sunday School Convention in Montreal.

“My views,” he afterwards said, “were opposed. Some people were benighted enough to think that if they became intelligent, God the Holy Spirit would take His flight; and they actually pleaded that ignorant, uninstructed teachers were the best. I ventured to form a class, and after a time succeeded in gathering together three hundred Sunday School teachers. I went further, and proposed that the teachers pass a written examination; and not only the teachers in that class, but the boys and girls in our Sunday Schools, gladly enrolled themselves for a written examination upon the Bible lessons which they had been studying, such as they were passing in our common schools and academies. I am not alone in this belief in a Normal class. The time is not far distant when every village and town, and almost every congregation, will have its normal class, conducted by the pastor or some competent person. I go a little further, and urge that instruction in the art of Bible teaching be introduced as a part of the curriculum of our theological colleges, and that the man who is to receive his license from the Presbytery or other body should know how to manage a Sunday School, and how to manage

Normal classes as well." All this was said nearly twenty years before the Presbyterian Church in Canada began to develop the work which is now assuming definiteness in the directions indicated. It may be some time before the full dream is realized; but he lived himself to deliver lectures to theological students on Pedagogy, and, in fact, drew his last breath over a note-book on that subject.

Besides lecturing on Logic for a session in McGill College he added to his many outside labors several courses in Moral Philosophy before the Ladies' Educational Association of Montreal—a movement that rendered valuable pioneer service in the higher education of women, before the classes of McGill were thrown open to women and the Donalda Department developed.

His educational viewpoint is pretty fairly expressed in the following treatise which he prepared in 1877:

#### THE TRUE AIM AND METHOD OF EDUCATION.

It may be safely said that during the last twenty-five years we have made very decided progress in Canada, as in all civilized nations, in the external organization of schools and colleges, and now it seems right to ask, What is the precise aim of all this machinery? To what results does it tend? Are we moving in the line of true progress and improvement or passing on to deterioration and failure? These are questions which cannot be answered

empirically but should be viewed in the broad light of the historic past.

The schools of the four great nations of antiquity, Egypt, China, India and Persia, were strongly marked by one common feature, in that they trained men to become homogeneous members of the communities to which they belonged. In Egypt the object was to stamp the same religious character upon all, to indoctrinate them in the same rites, ceremonies and traditions, and thus to preserve the same national spirit and character among the people. In China the worship of ancestry has been thoroughly dominant for centuries, and all education has been made subservient to this superstition, and hence the main lesson to children has been submission to the head of the family, and to citizens unreasoning submission to the Emperor as the head of the nation. In India caste determines everything, social, religious, political and educational. Every child must abide in the class to which he belongs by birth, and the work of the educator is strictly limited to teaching him the privileges and duties of that caste. In Persia all power and authority reside in the monarch; and for long generations all born under his sway were regarded as his property and therefore trained accordingly.

Now, it is obvious that we have little or nothing to learn from the study of these systems. They merely rendered masses of men homogeneous by enforcing one dominant thought or principle. But

this oriental stagnation was broken in upon by the grand efforts of the two classic nations of antiquity—Greece and Rome. These threw off the notion of caste, religions or national education and took up the idea of individual development. This was a great advance upon previous conceptions and fitted to promote human progress and freedom, and each of these two wonderful nations fulfilled its own distinctive mission in this respect. Greece aimed at and attained to a high ideal in the direction of what was denominated the beautiful and the good. She produced models in art, in sculpture and painting, in poetry, in Rhetoric, Logic and Philosophy yet unsurpassed in the history of the world. Her sons adorned every walk of Literature and Science, as then understood. Lycurgus and Solon as law-givers, Pythagoras and Socrates as practical teachers, and Plato and Aristotle as philosophers and writers on education, anticipated in many things the best efforts and utterances of succeeding ages. Rome, on the other hand, was more practical and less artistic and scientific. Roman education was strictly utilitarian, and hence the chief studies pursued were Rhetoric, Roman History and Military Science, as preparing the way for promotion and distinction in the State. This was the condition of things until contact with the higher civilization of the conquered Greeks disclosed to the Romans a degree of advancement in Art, Science, Literature and Philosophy of which they were previously

ignorant; but this change came too late to save the institutions of Rome from the flood of corruption by which they were finally overwhelmed.

What is worthy of being remembered in the case of both these nations is the decided impulse which they gave in the direction of individual freedom and development in opposition to the oriental conceptions just described.

The Hebrew nation exemplified another thought which should always find a place in a proper system of education—that man sustains higher relations than those chiefly contemplated in the culture of Greece and Rome and the Oriental nations, and that the Divine claims upon him are paramount. Hence, their children were trained, not for caste duties, the duties of the family or the State, or for the attainment of personal distinctions and honors; but to be servants of the God of Israel. Instead of excluding religion from their schools or regarding it as hostile to mental activity and growth, education with the Hebrews was a corollary of religion.

The introduction of Christianity was the grand turning point in the history of education and of the world. It brought into exercise new forces before which mere pagan civilizations fall prostrate in the dust. It discarded caste and all artificial distinctions, and asserted the common brotherhood of mankind. It taught and defended the right of private judgment in the pursuit of knowledge, and welcomed truth from every quarter. This is still the glory of

Christianity that it feels no jealousy or alarm at the strides of Science; it rather invites and provokes full and independent inquiry into all subjects relating to the universe, and to God and man, and heartily sustains every honest effort for progress and freedom. No student of history can doubt that its power was exerted with masterly efficiency in this direction from the very beginning. In less than three centuries it overthrew paganism in the Roman Empire, and set up its celebrated schools at Alexandria, Antioch, Odessa and elsewhere, in which such men as Clement, Origen, Chrysostom, Arnobius and others flourished. The aim of these distinguished men was to extend the light of truth and the benefits of education to all classes of the people; a thought which, after being suffered to sink out of sight under the influence of various evil forces, was again taken up and prosecuted with vigor by the two great monarchs of the Ninth Century, Charlemagne and Alfred. The former may be regarded as the first sovereign who showed a proper appreciation of the nature and value of public education and set about organizing schools for the people. His efforts, however, were not seconded by his successors, and intellectual darkness deepened until the era of the Reformation, when the elements of a pure and Divine Christianity burst the fetters of ages, and knowledge was sought with such avidity and freedom as can never again be arrested by the power of superstition and ignorance.

Nor should we ever overlook the fact, and especially when the praises of a purely secular education are being so loudly sounded in our day, that the great universities of the world are the offspring of Christian enlightenment and liberality, and that the nations which to-day are the freest, the strongest and the most thoroughly cultured are just those that have based their educational systems upon a distinct recognition of the great fundamental facts and principles of Divine Truth.

The great reformers of the sixteenth century were not only themselves learned men but also distinguished practical educators. Luther, Calvin, Knox, Erasmus, Melancthon, Zwingli and others deserve to be named in this category. Their intense religious fervor and manly assertion of freedom gave tone and direction to all intellectual and educational movements of the period. After them, the great educational reformer, Sir Francis Bacon, appeared. In 1597 he published the first edition of his *Essays*, in which he opposed with masterly power the barren philosophies of the past. In 1604 Wolfgang Ratich, a native of Holstein, gave a fresh impulse to the same work. He and Bacon struck the death-blow to the domination of words over facts and things in education. The knowledge of things they insisted upon rather than the knowledge of words. Their grand maxim was, *Omnia per inductionem et experimentum*. They turned the minds of men away from the impracti-

cable abstractions of the Platonic Philosophy. In the words of Lord Macaulay, "the aim of the Platonic Philosophy was to exalt man into a god. The aim of the Baconian Philosophy was to provide man with what he requires while he continues to be a man. The aim of the Platonic Philosophy was to raise us far above vulgar wants. The aim of the Baconian Philosophy was to supply our vulgar wants. The former was noble; but the latter was attainable. Plato drew a good bow; but like *Acestes* in *Virgil*, he aimed at the stars; and therefore, though there was no want of strength or skill, the shot was thrown away. His arrow was indeed followed by a track of dazzling radiance, but it struck nothing. Bacon fixed his eye on a mark which was placed on the earth and within bow-shot, and hit it in the white." The same may be said of *Ratich*. Fired with the zeal and courage of a true reformer he urged his views upon the German Diet and finally prevailed. He contended that education is not to be undertaken and conducted at random or according to the caprice of mere adventurers; that it has its fixed grounds and assured rules, and that these are based in the constitution of man as well as in the characteristics of languages, arts and sciences. This, I take it, is true. And the aim of true education comprehensively stated appears to be the full development of man's physical and spiritual nature fitting him for all the relations he sustains and all the duties he is to perform to-



wards his race and his Creator. This is a sufficiently comprehensive definition; and in seeking to indicate how it is to be acted upon, it is important to distinguish at once between education as a development of nature, spiritual and physical, and the mere acquisition of mental resources. In the former case our aim is to teach the student the right use of all his powers, to quicken, to strengthen and thoroughly discipline these powers. In the latter case our aim is to aid him in accumulating intellectual wealth, in storing up the products of other minds and the resources of the past. Both these works are within the province of the educator, and are practically inseparable, for it is impossible to train and draw out the faculties of the pupil without at the same time communicating useful information and enlarging his stores of knowledge.

This is true in dealing with his physical as well as his spiritual nature. If, for example, I am to train his muscles and give them vigor, firmness and elasticity, if I am to teach him the full use of his limbs and give him ease, grace and dignity of deportment, I must at the same time communicate to him no small degree of knowledge touching the structure, the anatomy and physiology of his body and the general laws of hygiene. Or, turning from the physical to the intellectual, if I am to make him a painter, it is not enough to cultivate his imagination and thus qualify him to form grand and gorgeous mental pictures, not enough to train

his eye to see and distinguish colors; he must be put in possession of a knowledge of the laws of perspective and of light and shade, and his hand must be trained to hold and wield the pencil and the brush. If I am to make him a mathematician, it is vain to speak of training him to deal with abstract calculations without at the same time giving him a knowledge of definitions, principles, facts and formulæ on which such are dependent. I must not only stimulate his mind to think of lines and angles and circles and magnitudes, but also put him in possession of information of details which must be accurately stored away in memory and ready to be employed in the work of a mathematician. If I am to introduce him to the wide and useful field of the Natural Sciences it is not sufficient to train him to the indispensable habit of sober, accurate, close and painstaking observation, and to teach him to make complete generalizations and logical deductions, I must at the same time put him in possession of a competent knowledge of what others have observed and determined, a knowledge of well-ascertained facts regarding the works of God which he is called to investigate.

And so in every other department. While education has undoubtedly to undertake the primary task of cultivating our spiritual powers, of sharpening the intellectual instrument which is to be employed in the search for truth, it is no less charged with the sacred function of giving a com-

petent measure of accurate knowledge or information; and one of the most difficult, practical problems in the domain of education is to determine how far mere intellectual training—intellectual gymnastics, if the expression may be allowed—are to be carried, and how far our faculties while in the hands of the professional educator are to be loaded with the innumerable details and unlimited stores of information open to us on all sides in modern times. Upon this problem I shall have something to say presently, when dealing with method. Meanwhile, let me insist upon it that there should be as full and harmonious a development of all our powers aimed at as possible, whether much or little information be given. What I mean is this. The senses, the emotions, the understanding, the will, the moral and religious feelings and the conscience must all receive an appropriate measure of attention and discipline. The persistent effort to load the one faculty of memory must be condemned. All partial and one-sided methods by which some aspects and capabilities of our nature are entirely overlooked or treated in such an unnatural, rude and ignorant manner as to do injury rather than good, must be avoided. More than this. There must be special adaptation to the peculiarities of certain constitutions. It will not do to have the same cast-iron syllabus of studies for all, because there is as much diversity among men intellectually as physically. Some persons, in order

to keep their bones and muscles in a healthy state, require food containing a goodly quantity of nitrates; others need phosphates to keep their brains in trim; and others still, carbonates to keep up heat and prevent them from being chilled through and through. So with minds: they must be treated differently; and the defects, the weaknesses, as well as the excellencies, of each must in part determine the proper educational course to be pursued.

Another valuable guide in this respect is to be found in the necessities of the various professions to be followed, or positions in life which persons are to occupy. These, of course, must not be allowed to supersede a sound, general education. This must always come first. But this being secured, it is surely unwise to allow the traditions of the Middle Ages to mould our course rather than the wants of our country and of the Nineteenth Century. The leaders of thought in Europe, Britain, and on this continent are doing right in taking leave of old methods and aims and in asking themselves the question, What is needed by the young men and young women of our age? True, as a recent writer remarks, "State necessities must long forerun State ideals. The recent establishment of chairs of the Institutes and History of Education in the Scottish Universities of Edinburgh and St. Andrew's, although the work of private hands, indicates an acceptance by these seats

of learning of the duty they owe to the education of the people, which must ere long influence other universities, and through them the statesmen who guide national education, both in England and America. Already the question has been under the consideration of the ancient University of Oxford; and a course of lectures on Teaching was last year delivered by J. G. Fitch before the University of Cambridge."

In Canada, to the honor of our country and of our intelligence be it said, we have sought to keep pace with these ancient seats of learning in the adaptation of our work to our wants. We have not only founded Colleges for young ladies, but we have thrown open our Universities to young women as well as young men on the most liberal terms. And instead of crowding a vast number of studies into a limited period of time and thus precluding the possibility of high attainments in any department, special courses and professional studies are now receiving a proper recognition. Common-sense prevails, and the belief is almost universal that the education which does not furnish a person for the position he is to occupy is manifestly mis-directed and tells injuriously upon society at large. It is thus that men and women get misplaced and hold positions for which they are not qualified while perhaps admirably adapted to others. Twenty years ago, I was well acquainted with a minister who knew far more about bees, and cattle and agri-

culture than about the prophets and apostles and patristic and modern theology; and it was not surprising to me that his people came to understand this, and that he had to move on from one charge and one denomination to another until at length he reached his true position—the position for which he was really educated—the care of cattle and fruitful fields.

In determining what is to be aimed at in education, I venture to think that we must not only seek to secure the development, the harmonious development, of all the powers of man, physical, moral and intellectual, and keep in view special peculiarities, and fully recognize the demands of professions and positions for which persons are being prepared: we must also give constant heed to the great intellectual and moral tendencies of our age. I do not say that we are to yield to them in every case, or that we are to resist them in every case. We are to act wisely in relation to them all. The world is certainly growing wiser and better. Improvement is the order of the day, and we do well to keep this in view.

Our age is keen and quick in observing facts and pushing discovery, but not remarkable for a spirit of calmness or caution or for logical accuracy. On the contrary, it has shown a recklessness in speculation and a wantonness of assertion in connection with the facts of nature unapproached in the previous history of the world. Now, how are we to

regulate these tendencies and to adjust the programme of education in relation to them? Must we at once, as some imagine and plead, make our education thoroughly one-sided, abandon the study of Poetry, History, Philology, Literature, Philosophy and Mathematics, and forthwith try to learn all the facts that Darwin, Spencer, Huxley and the rest have collected, or imagined, about pigeons, dogs, cats, protoplasm, evolution and our supposed ancestors in general? Certainly not. What we specially need in view of this tendency is to be carefully trained to discriminate between facts and fancies, between mere sophisms and logical deductions, between imperfect generalizations and conclusions based upon correct and sufficient inductions; in one word, we need a better logical education than many present scientific adventurers seem to have enjoyed.

Our age, too, is prying curiously into the science of Mind. The question is being pressed, Is there any mind? Are we not mere animals, all physical without any spiritual factor in our nature? When we explain the material universe, the correlation and conservation of force, the laws of heat, motion, light, molecular action, and such like, have we not really accounted for all so-called mental phenomena? The old systems of psychology are being rent asunder and cast overboard. Materialism is being put forward as the grand creed of the new school—Materialism joining hands with Pantheism.

Maudsley, Bain, Tyndall, Huxley, Spencer and others have conspired to bring about this revolution. And confessedly not a few of the old views which they combat and explode are absurd. Mind has been treated far too much out of its undeniable relations to brain and nerve force, and the great ganglionic centres of our bodies; and therefore, present tendencies and destructive criticisms will result in good by calling attention to this fact. But we must be wide awake, lest while antiquated rubbish is being cast away truth may be sacrificed along with it.

Still further: our age is much given to the discussion of questions of right and wrong—questions of ethics. This field has within the last half century been cultivated with marked success. The whole science of Jurisprudence, which is the practical outcome of correct, ethical principles, has made marvellous progress. The penalties of the criminal code have been wisely revised and their appalling barbarities in many instances removed. Judicial murders, so common a century ago, are now almost unknown, so much have the constitutions of law courts and the methods of administering justice been improved. International rights and relations are far better understood and observed than ever before, and the horrors of war and reckless, bloody appeals to arms are gradually being displaced by rational methods of arbitration. True toleration in science, in religion, in all departments, has made



wonderful advancement since the somewhat recent days of witch-burning in Europe and Britain, and since "Cambridge had the honor of educating those celebrated Protestant bishops whom Oxford had the honor of burning." The true and universal brotherhood of mankind and the natural rights of human creatures have been more fully thought out and fought out; hence the abolition of the dark curse of slavery and the slave trade on this continent by which seven millions of human souls were set free, and the abolition of serfdom in Russia and elsewhere. But with all this progress there are still great ethical problems to be solved and great battles of right to be fought. The relations of capital and labor, of master and servant, still need adjustment; and it is only by the removal of every ground of complaint and every form of oppression, however seemly, refined and antiquated, that society can enjoy full security from those popular outbursts of vengeance by which the world has been appalled. Error, gross, unjustifiable error, there is in the popular mind; and this very error must be made the mould upon which truth and true education are to be cast. We can only meet and counteract these follies by more persistent and universal instruction in ethical science; and ethical science carried to its full extent, to the full recognition of the Divine existence and of the Divine law as the ultimate standard of Right. I am thoroughly confident that mere formal, heartless, hollow lessons in morals,

which ignore God and the Christ of God, which ignore the Sermon on the Mount and the efficacy of prayer, the life and the lessons of Jesus of Nazareth, will never do much to regulate the passions of man or to give strength and stability to society.

Our age has set itself vigorously to the work of recasting history. As a member of the Société Ethnographique, and of the Athenée Oriental, of Paris, the two great European societies which have this task in hand, I know something of what is being done. The extensive fields of Archæology, Ethnology and Comparative Philology are being keenly canvassed. History is being treated scientifically, and it must be confessed that it is high time that it should be so viewed, for in many respects it has been too long in a state of chaotic confusion. The new science of Historical Criticism is rising into a position of influence; and many of the fine old stories which have long been repeated and taught are now being relegated to the category of unreliable myths and fables.

Now, without enlarging further, let me say, in one word, that a true scheme of education must take account of all these factors and active forces of our age, and of others which we have not time to mention. Hence the supreme importance of the last question to which we now turn attention, namely, How is the process of education to be conducted in view of all that should be overtaken? What method is to be followed? I can only offer hints, rather than elaborated thoughts, and:

First. Let there be far more importance than is usual attached to the mastery of mere elements—the rudiments, the alphabet, the A B C of the several departments embraced in the syllabus of our ordinary education.

Inattention to this simple maxim has obstructed the subsequent career and ruined the prospects of many a scholar. The common school has been rendered oppressive, by crowding into it what really belongs to the university, and at the same time the preparation for higher and ulterior studies has been most imperfect. A German writer truly remarks that the ancient Latins called the school, *Ludus*, play, sport; but many schoolmasters have made it *Carnificina*, a place of torture, and that, by piling on the shoulders of little children burdens oppressive to the backs of even grown-up men and women. Let us resist this tyranny. Let no one, for example, be forced, or allowed to pass on to the study of the higher mathematics, of astronomy, the laws of light, heat, sound, electricity and such like until he has learned to spell correctly words of one and two syllables and to write a decent English sentence. Let no one think it meritorious to plunge into the Philosophy of the Infinite as discussed by Kant, Hamilton and Cousin until he has learned the names and properties of a few finite things and understands something of the laws of his own being. I feel that this lesson needs to be inculcated; for we are in danger of thinking it a grand thing

to have boys and girls intellectually as well as socially precocious. I have known it to be pointed to as an infallible proof of unprecedented progress that a mere child was made to wear out his brains wrestling with the mysteries of the Differential Calculus while not qualified to send home a decently written letter to his mother! This is not progress, but retrogression. This is not natural, but monstrous, not the true aim of education but the fruit of misguided ambition and conceit. In our lectures, our text-books and courses of study we should discountenance this folly, and insist upon rudiments being mastered first, and mastered in as many departments as possible. What then? Then it may be reasonably assumed that the minds of pupils are disciplined to such a degree as to qualify them to judge of the future course to be pursued.

Second. Let the work of instruction and of study—education viewed from these two sides—be at first pursued in outline.

Let germs be first placed in the mind and allowed to grow by a natural process. Let the skeleton, the simple framework, of a given subject be set up and be gradually surrounded by the complete structure. The advantages of this method are numerous and manifest. I claim in its behalf that it is natural and therefore easy, and sure to be successful. It gives the student at once something which he can master and retain as his own; and from what is thus known and incorporated in his very being as indestructible,

mental property he can readily pass to what is new and unknown. He thus becomes from the earliest stage an independent, original worker for himself, and is not the mere passive receptacle of what is poured into him by another hand. A true, self-reliant manhood or womanhood grows along with the daily extension of the boundaries of knowledge. He escapes being discouraged and confounded by a disorderly mass of information, and enjoys the unspeakable advantage of having an intelligible standard to which he can resort in his perplexities and investigations. History, Grammar, Geography and the Sciences generally may be and should be first presented in outline, that the student from the outset may have something definitely settled and accepted as the foundation of subsequent work. This being my conviction, you can easily understand that I am bound to disapprove of many elementary text-books now in use which are packed with all sorts of facts and principles, and which to beginners are first-class instruments of confusion and torture, but not of education. But do not understand me as desiring to lower the standard of education. No. My wish is to elevate it by allowing commonsense to pervade its methods, and by proceeding from primary elements to the profoundest attainments of which the human mind is capable.

Third. Let there be completeness of mental action on every subject taken up.

I do not mean by this that the student must learn

all that can be known about a given department or else not touch it. That would be absurd. You may know something about Geology, Astronomy or Electricity without knowing all. My reference is to a given task or piece of work however small. Once having turned your mind to it, let it be finished; let there be complete, decisive, mental action respecting it before you let it go. By carrying mental action almost to completion, and yet leaving it unfinished, you destroy your will-power gradually, you waste time and contract the indolent and dangerous habit of being satisfied with imperfect knowledge, and slowly but surely you become incapable of decisive effort and of pressing on to full certitude. For example, a student proposes to learn the inflections of Latin verbs of the first conjugation. He masters the indicative mood, and almost masters the subjunctive, imperative and infinitive. An hour or two, or at most a day or two, would complete the work, and put him forever in possession of so much mental property; but these hours or days are not given to the task, and the result is that he goes through his entire career at college embarrassed and tormented with ignorance which very little more effort at the right time would have forever removed. Nothing can be more hostile to the true method of education and to successful, scientific pursuits than the pernicious delusion that we know what we do not. Incomplete or partial knowledge is the bane of students. And the

Teacher, the Lecturer, the Educator is responsible for this vicious method as well as the student. He should demand completeness in the work done, however small or limited the extent, and should persistently decline to accept anything else. I join with this another prime element in the true method of education:

Fourth. The art of putting questions.

This is to be employed at every stage of the educator's work. Written examinations alone are insufficient. They possess a definite, educational value, and should never be dispensed with, but are often overestimated, as well as badly conducted. They should test the self-reliance and promptitude of the pupil, the fulness and accuracy of his memory, his power of concentrated attention and ability to express his knowledge in appropriate terms. But how often are examination questions totally unfit to serve these ends? They are long and commonplace, obscure and pointless, really containing the answer which is called for, or requiring only a simple negative or affirmative. They are sometimes wholly outside the range of classwork and even of prescribed text-books: designed to puzzle and irritate, destitute of all logical order and sequence, and mainly expressive of the examiner's ignorant conceit. Yet let us not be tempted to abandon questions and examinations on account of any abuses that exist in connection with them. Their uses far more than counterbalance such. They

are one of the most effective means of removing mental obscurity and rendering the attainments of the student practically available and permanent. The anticipation of them undoubtedly stimulates to what I venture to call legitimate and necessary "cramming." It is unwise to be frightened by the sound of that ugly little word, "cram." We need, in a certain sense, what is signified by it. We need to qualify ourselves to make great and exceptional efforts on certain occasions. The great battle of life is sure sooner or later to teach us this lesson. And after all, it is the experience of successful educators all over the world that a vastly larger number of students suffer from indolence than from over-exertion. I hold that it is right, most virtuous and heroic, for young men and young women to spend months and years, much midnight oil and many sleepless nights, in overcoming natural laziness and gaining those attainments which are to form their passport to a career of honor and usefulness in the world. I am therefore in favor of keen competitive examinations, giving scope for the very highest exertions, and in favor of countless multitudes of questions wisely and philosophically framed and used during school and college recitations. I would be almost willing to accord teachers their rank as first, second and third class according to their skill, ability and success in asking questions.

Fifth. Let every subject be so treated as to kindle a strong feeling of inspiration in the student,



The best feelings in a pupil are frequently, through unskilful and unscientific treatment, blunted, and their fervor and freshness destroyed; or they are even arrayed as active forces against the attainment of the grand educational results which they should facilitate. As Emerson says, "Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm." One of the most successful educators I ever knew conveyed very little information in the lecture-room, but he kindled in the minds of his students an inspiration and determination to work for themselves and achieve their own success. This is the true function of the teacher and not merely to become a walking encyclopedia. Let him, therefore, give as little information as he may please, if only he can kindle an unquenchable flame of enthusiasm over the subject which he presents!

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### *PRIVATE LIFE.*



On the Look-out.

UN TO the window, Dixie, and see who is coming!"

The little fox terrier, instinct with intelligence, would spring to the window-sill, thrust his nose through the muslin curtain, bound down again with wild excitement, race through the hall, and, with anticipatory

yelps, wait for the Principal to enter the front door.

After premonitory rattlings of the latch-key, to the heightened suspense of the terrier, the door would be opened and then closed—not precisely with a bang, but with a degree of firmness that indicated a forceful will, accustomed to make people and things fall in line.

"Down, down, you little brute! Don't be so

excited! I'm too tired to bother with your demonstrations just now."

The fox terrier was not easily restrained. He presumed on the fact that his exceptional endowment of brains had won a place for him in the Principal's estimation that few dogs had ever come to occupy; and he seriously resented the frequent infringement of his privileges when, in order to avoid the disturbance of some waiting visitor or visitors in the study or parlor, he had to be forcibly removed to the basement. The noisy whine of protest—without any assistance from Thompson Seton, or the author of "Rab and His Friends," one of the Principal's favorite writers—might safely be interpreted as an indignant query:

"Is a public man never to be allowed to have any private life in which an honest pup may frolic with him?"

When the business visitors had gone, and the dining table was surrounded, the terrier's innings came in earnest; for the head of the house never seemed to tire of putting him through his tricks.

"Dixie, you little rascal, I feel a deadly draught; go and *shut that door!*"

The terrier would spring at it with delight, and bang it hard, returning promptly for his *honorarium*.

"Now, then, *beg!*"

That was a commonplace performance for a dog with brains, and was usually executed with all the hesitation of wounded dignity.

“ Well, well, it isn't wise to train you to be nothing but a little beggar. You must earn your meals. Here is something for you. But mind! you cannot have it on *credit*.”

At the prohibitive word, the terrier would crouch within a yard of the tempting morsel, perfectly still, but for a wagging stump of a tail, until the permission reached him, “ Paid for!” when the food would quickly vanish.

“ Now, then, show your loyalty, like a patriotic pup. Sing ‘ God Save the King,’ or you will not receive another bite.”

The National Anthem would be rendered with resounding barks that left much for the imagination to fill in.

“ You scamp! If you really are so patriotic as you pretend to be, then *die for your country*.”

Instantly the terrier would fall prostrate on his side and stiffen out, with piteous appeal in his rolling eyes and spasmodic efforts to keep that give-away stump from wagging.

“ Come to life again, and go *work the spinning wheel*.”

The old-fashioned loom that had done service in former generations in a French-Canadian home would be given a momentary whir.

The climax was not reached till, after family worship, the Principal permitted himself a brief respite in the parlor before resuming his endless tasks.

“Dixie,” he would say, “let us have some music. See, I have brought a scrap of cake in for you. You shall have it, if you get up on that chair and *play the piano.*”

Dixie thumped the treble notes.

“No, no, go down the keyboard and *play in the bass!* I like that best. Play a longer tune.”

Prompt obedience was rendered, and Dixie had done pretty nearly all he knew what to do (save “make his bow”) in order to afford relaxation to the man of toil.

People who never saw Principal MacVicar save on a public platform, or who knew no more about him than they could gather from his controversial and theological utterances, his pulpit bearing, his heavier writings in the periodicals, would little suspect the keen delight he could take in playing with a dog, or talking and whistling to little “Bobs,” the yellow canary, whose premature death through exposure to a cold wind on the way to the summer cottage at Bic touched him deeply, and led him, as chief mourner, to join the McNab twins when they solemnly dug a grave beside the fence and gave the silent minstrel—wrapped in a paper Union Jack—a military funeral.

Children he loved with all the simplicity of a strong nature. He never found any difficulty in attracting them to his side and on his knee. A vivid story was at once ready to amuse them, or else their curiosity was aroused by the feeling of

their "bumps" in the light of a smattering of Phrenology which he had obtained in his student days.

The rigors of a concentrated public life had their offset in the hearty relaxations to which he gave himself. He knew how to laugh, and how to make others laugh; though, in the eye of the world, this power was almost always under severe restraint.

"I inherit," he said, "the faculty of recollecting easily, and relating as occasion may occur, the anomalous and grotesque in the past and current experiences of society; but I must admit that on the public platform, in the pulpit, lecture room and ecclesiastical courts I have allowed these to have no place. Hence the public generally credit me with solemn gravity of temperament rather than sprightliness and mirth."

Those who met him for the first time, either on a train journeying to the Assembly, or in his office, or in the privacy of his home, or at the seaside, had all their ideas of the man revolutionized; for whether the Sage of Chelsea was joking or not in that huge jest-book, "Sartor Resartus," it is very true that "great men are often unknown, or what is worse, misknown." To an astonishingly large number of people Dr. MacVicar was at once unknown and misknown. The bold, plodding, fearless, faithful man, who placed Truth and Conscience before all else, was well in evidence on every occasion; but the genial man whose qualities of heart,

no less than of head, inspired his friends and bound them to him as by bands of steel, could best be seen in private. The centripetal force of his personal influence was far greater than any centrifugal force contingent upon advocacy into which he had grown accustomed to put tremendous "drive." Men who disagreed utterly with his ways of presenting motives and arguments, in a pulpit or on a platform, thought him an entirely different person in closer individual contact. The consensus of openly stated estimate that followed his death would almost raise the question whether he had not, in the light of all the known facts of his career, succeeded in spite of his qualities. One fact, best known in private circles, explains much; his unselfish, kind and charitable disposition. Testimony has been borne from all quarters throughout this continent, as well as from beyond the Atlantic and Pacific, to his practical deeds of personal kindness. No one was more ready to speak the condoning word on behalf of the abused and unfortunate, and to give tangible help to those who in any way had spoiled their lives and were anxious to make a new start. If he were covertly approached (as sometimes happened) with a view to exerting his influence to oust from some position a man whose past had come to light, he would answer,

"I have known the facts all along, and so far from taking the course you advise, I shall deliberately help the poor fellow to keep on in the right way."

Everyone knew that, in the open, if he had to hit, he could hit hard; but it was impossible to persuade him to stab in the dark. He was, in American phraseology, "straight-out." In public and in private he acted without concealment, obliquity or compromise. There was no humbug about him, absolutely no posing. To keep the straight course often meant conflict, abuse, misunderstanding; but as the achievements of his life demonstrated, it brought, in the long run, no small reward.

Absent-minded he could not, with strict accuracy, be said to have been; yet he had a peculiar knack of failing to recognize people who greeted him upon the street—even members of his own family—or persons who walked and talked with him long distances; a failing which we sometimes thought could be traced to a defect of vision caused by an injury received in his youth.

We saw comparatively little of my father in the home; but what we did see was genuine and in the best sense human. He had, no doubt, that singular mark of greatness—"moods"—but his normal temperament was bright, eager, vigorous, approachable, and liable to many freaks of humor. About the house he was methodical, and often boasted that, through adherence to the principle, "A place for everything, and everything in its place," he seldom lost anything. He was an early riser. Much of the time before breakfast he spent devotionally, reading the English Bible and Greek



Testament. His spiritual life was full, unaffected, progressive, and had its deeper springs in prayer. He detested cant, and seldom hesitated to scotch it, but in really devout society he would talk out of a full heart of the life that is hid with Christ in God. He was not ashamed in private to make personal application of the great principles of the Gospel which he expounded in public.

He was deeply attached to his wife, his children, and the entire circle of his relatives, with many of whom he kept *au courant* through correspondence and special visits. Keen was the interest which he took in vigorous talks with his brother-in-law, Robert Goulding, who, constantly on the wing in the prosecution of his business enterprises, maintains an unbroken record through the year of Sabbath School attendance, listening, teaching, speaking from the platform, and always noting methods, which he would discuss in transit through Montreal, incidentally supplying illustrations for the lectures on Pedagogics. Versatile, appreciative and quick to adapt himself to changing company, the Principal would welcome a visit from another relative with an artistic and poetic temperament, James W. Bridgland, of the Crown Lands Department in Ontario; or from his friend, James Moodie, who in the earlier days had been one of his deacons in Coté Street Church, and whose artistic skill and ability to maintain a prolonged, metaphysical discussion often enlivened the home. With a large circle of

friends and acquaintances, my father was ever faithful, tactful, cordial. Those at a distance he remembered periodically through the mails with copies of his published articles and addresses, and in cases of bereavement he was instant in communicating comfort.

His desultory reading, apart from the newspapers, largely ran along ecclesiastical and theological lines, though he dipped often into the masterpieces of literature, shunning somewhat studiously the department of fiction. He preferred what really taxed his thinking powers; though strangely enough, in lighter vein he turned to the extravagances of Mark Twain (whose satire on Christian Science he counted the most sensible kind of treatment for that chaotic modern development), as well as the witty analyses of character and philosophies of life in Max Adeler's "Out of the Hurly-Burly." He was fond of poetry, especially Shakespeare, Milton, Whittier, Longfellow, Tennyson, Browning, Burns. He used to say that in youth he had been able to read the Scottish Bard only under protest; but in maturer life he fully recovered from that restraint, and on happy occasions could reproduce the choicest passages in broad Doric. Both in the family circle and in company, he loved to sing Scottish songs. His favorites were "Scots wha hae," "A Man's a Man for A' That," "The Land o' the Leal," "Jock o' Hazeldean," and "When the Kye Comes Hame," the last

two of which he rendered with particular gusto. Music from the violin, an orchestra or a great choir appealed to him. He would leave his dinner half finished rather than miss the beginning of a notable performance of "The Messiah." If extra work did not press outrageously, he could be enticed to a game of crokinole, or an evening at charades. When the air was crisp he relished an outing at the toboggan slide, or a tramp on snowshoes over the mountain. He gloried in our Canadian winter sports, and felt supreme satisfaction when he could hear Dr. Palmer, of New Orleans, or some other distinguished, ecclesiastical visitor from a distance, gasp for breath as the toboggan sped like lightning down the chute.

Dr. MacVicar rarely, if ever, did what he disliked to see other public men do—bare his heart before the world and drag in on all kinds of occasions references to his wife and children; but his conduct in the home, and unfailing correspondence when away from home, revealed all through his career a deeply affectionate nature. My mother, I know, would much prefer that this biography should appear without any reference in it to herself—a desire which justice to the facts makes it impossible to respect. With unselfish tactfulness and literary instinct—qualities to be desiderated in the wife of a public man—she constantly seconded his best efforts, and during many periods when his heart was like to sink, inspired him with fresh resolve. In the

busy pastorate in Coté Street, she entered sympathetically into multiform activities, notably the practical work of relieving distress in indigent homes and the sick-room. Besides taking part in women's prayer meetings, teaching in the Sunday School, and presiding over the Dorcas Society, she made innumerable visits, and to a large extent implemented a lack of personal contact with his people which the pressure of public engagements made inevitable. Her home was ever open, and she graced it.

When the transition had been made from the pastorate to the professor's chair, she still furthered his choicest efforts, listening without wearying to manuscripts submitted for her judgment and sharing the responsibility for important decisions at recurring crises of his work. In the "day of small things," she associated with herself the wives of other professors and persons interested in the college, and raised means to furnish the dormitories of the students and otherwise provide for their comfort. Lonely men, belated in the empty halls during the winter recess, would be invited to Christmas dinner and in other ways thoughtfully treated. In cases of sickness and loss, she was kindness itself. "Students' Receptions" were often held.

Towards the close of life, for some years, Dr. MacVicar, with members of his family, spent a couple of months annually on the Lower St. Lawrence at Bic—an Indian name, meaning "a cluster



MRS. MACVICAR.



of mountains," and designating a region which the Earl of Dufferin called the Switzerland of Canada. He built a summer cottage there, having as his neighbor on one side, Dr. Scrimger, and on the other, Judge Archibald. It was a quiet retreat, uninvaded by the tyrannies of fashion, with many charms of mountain scenery, waterscape, shifting mirage, bracing atmosphere and—what most attracted him—icy salt water. The colder the tide flowed in, the better he liked it. If at the first plunge the bather received no "shock," and on coming out no "glow," he complained in decided tones. He was a great sea-dog, fond of rowing, fonder of swimming. It was a common thing to see him slipping off, with a towel over his arm, to take an extra surreptitious plunge, on learning that his frequent companion at the seaside, William McNab, had just come down from the city, and was of a mind to venture in.

Full rest at the seaside he scarcely ever knew. His correspondence and other duties followed him relentlessly, and he would not have been happy without them. He would write letters by the score, master half a dozen heavy books (his own choice of "seaside literature") and write manuscript after manuscript of sermons, lectures, articles, besides taking his turn at the parlor services on Sundays. In the intervals between work, he would explore the depths of the cave on Isle Massacre, row out into the broad stream of the St. Lawrence to observe

the quick movements of some diving loon, or ramble through the fields and woods in search of wild flowers with which to decorate the cottage. He loved to whittle sticks, make "friendship canes," or peel birch bark off the trees for conversion into parchments on which to convey seaside greetings to intimate friends. On this material he once penned a farewell address to the genial Canon Ellegood, on the eve of his return to the city—a document which the worthy Churchman framed and proudly exhibited in his rectory as the valued autograph of "an esteemed Presbyterian divine." With his facility to relate entertaining stories, sing solos, make impromptu speeches, join in choruses and take part in any innocent fun that was going, he was, at the seaside, as at home, the life (and incidentally the centre) of every company.

His conversational powers were exhaustless. For a whole evening he could draw with witty appositeness from his fund of general knowledge, and relate in graphic fashion quaint experiences that lived and re-lived in his memory. With the ease of a skilled *raconteur* he could provoke at pleasure a roar of laughter over some unexpected *dénouement* in his narrative, and had remarkable aptitude for the reproduction of negro intonations, broken French, the Doric, cockney English or the Irish brogue.

But it was not invariably the incongruous and amusing that afforded him a topic. As an evening began to wear on and the hour approached when,



before dispersing, the company would be invited to join in family worship, he would, intentionally or unintentionally, demonstrate how swift the transition may become from gayer emotions to graver. Of this order was the simple tale which he had received at first-hand from General Fisk during a visit to the Southern States.

The scene lay in Memphis City, Tennessee. The plague of yellow fever had been raging. Whole families were cut down. Carts carrying dead bodies rumbled through the streets all night. In one home three children succumbed. A father and mother and one little girl were left. Suddenly the father passed away. The distracted mother, fearing that her own turn might come at any moment, took her little girl by the hand before retiring at night and said:

“Mary, you know that father is dead, and Charlie is dead, and Willie is dead, and Katie is dead; and God may take me next. But if He should, don't be afraid. Jesus will come and take care of you.”

During the night the Angel of Death again visited that sad home. By the morning's light the mother lay lifeless.

The day passed. The men with the cart took up the still form and drove it to the cemetery, followed by one lonely, weeping child. She stood by the grave, saw the earth piled in upon the coffin, and when the burial was over ran back to the house,

hoping to find that her mother's words had come true. From one empty room to another she passed, but found nobody there. Darkness having fallen, in her desolation she returned to the cemetery, sat on her mother's grave, and wept and sobbed till she fell asleep.

About three in the morning the men with the cart returned and found her sleeping. One of them wakened her and demanded what she was doing in that place. She told her story.

"Mother told me that Jesus would come to take care of me, but I looked for Him in every room and He was not there."

"Ah," said the strong man, brushing away a tear, "Jesus has sent *me* to care for you."

And in the Saviour's stead, care for her he did, till she became a useful Christian woman.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### TRAVELLING HOME.



Homeward Bound.

ACON, in his essay on Travel, expresses surprise at the perversity of human nature which leads a man to keep a diary at sea when there is so little to note, and get tired of keeping it on land when there is so much. Principal MacVicar, in spite of the circumstance

that he suffered invariably from *mal de mer*, went to sea about a dozen times. Even in torture his brain was active, as the following pleasantries show :

Were I not so enfeebled I think I could write an essay on seasickness, at least as good as Dr. Carpenter's chapter on Dreams in his Mental Physiology. I am convinced that it is an affectation first and chiefly of the brain. Then this great nerve-

centre acts upon the stomach, and everybody knows what symptoms follow. For this opinion I have reasons as valid as those relied upon by physicians who are well paid to deliver their dicta, and to enforce them by chemical compounds at the risk of the lives of credulous mortals. For example:

1. Whilst devoutly reading about the fast of Ramadan among the Mohammedans I gradually and completely lost all relish and desire for food. Surely Dr. Dods' lectures, which I was conning, could not be held responsible for this effect! Nor could it be traced to any sympathy on my part with Mohammedan superstition. This is as logical as doctors need be.

Then I saw the boards of the deck move in all directions in the most alarming manner; so much so that I was about to ask my friend, Peter Redpath, if he observed the critical state of our ship! Now, who can say that these phenomena can be traced to the stomach and not to the brain? What doctor can resist the conclusion that this was a case of *mental* aberration arising from a disordered condition of the organ of thought; or, as Huxley would say, a "peculiar" condition—an abnormal state of the molecules of the brain.

2. In confirmation of this scientific conclusion I can certify that while under the influence of this terrible disease my imagination was unusually active. In fact, it has scarcely cooled down to its proper temperature. While awake I could call up at will forms more grotesque and hideous than all that darken the pages of Greek and Roman mythology, or the records of the Elizabethan era when they used to paint the devil as a darkey and burn and drown innocent women as witches. When

asleep I dreamt of being in all sorts of inextricable difficulties. I don't think De Quincey's dreams when he was an opium eater were one whit more awful than mine. Utter and most mortifying failure in preaching was a common occurrence—the pulpit going to pieces under my feet, the Bible flying from my hands, the texts being hidden somewhere and not to be found after the most painful efforts, the congregation sneering in the most unbecoming manner; and, worst of all, in one instance the whole assembly was actually led out of the church by that most seriously sombre Christian man, James Court. All this I could endure; but when remorselessly pursued one night by a savage bull, it was too much. Not to enlarge, or to give anything like a full account of all my “wondrous sights nocturnal,” I ask again, are not these purely *mental* phenomena and in no sense to be referred to the stomach?

3. On reading these two good reasons to Nellie,\* she furnished still more striking examples from her experience, although only very slightly under the influence of the disease; *e.g.*, one night she left the ship, and by some means unknown to her or to me, returned home and found our eldest son, John, in serious difficulties. On another occasion, the good steamship *Peruvian* landed in her father's garden—by what means brought there, rather than to Liverpool, she cannot tell. One thing is certain that such a feat must have been purely mental. Therefore, seasickness in its incipient and more fully developed forms is an affection of the brain.  
*Q. E. D.*

N.B.—All of this essay must, like the decisions

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\*His wife.

of physicians generally, be taken *cum grano salis*. The symptoms referred to may have been merely incidental to general disturbances. Let the whole subject be relegated to the glorious uncertainties of science!

In view of all that he was accustomed to suffer, the wonder was that he ever set foot on shipboard again. But he was always eager for the respite away from home; not less eager to return.

We wish to come back with as fond a desire  
As ever we wish to depart ;  
" I want to go somewhere," " I want to go back,"  
Are the shuttlecock cries of the heart.

In connection with duties, more or less defined, he became familiar with a large area of Canada, from the Atlantic Coast to Winnipeg, and visited most of the leading cities in the United States, north and south; but an ocean trip secured for him more of a real change and holiday by putting a big distance between him and the interests to which he gave such tireless attention.

In travel he manifested the best of comradeship, giving himself entirely up to the delight of visiting historic scenes, observing unfamiliar objects, enjoying novel experiences and the pleasure of coming into personal contact with a large number of the world's most distinguished men in theological, educational and other circles. The few notes of travel which he has left prove to be little more than catalogues of persons and things that interested him in

different climes, evidently jotted down to refresh his own memory. His impressions, sparingly but tersely stated, he scarcely ever published. He travelled for relaxation and secured it in the actual enjoyment of sight-seeing and the peculiar satisfactions that register themselves in memory, rather than on the written or printed page. In conversation he could recall vividly many incidents and facts, but most of these would lose by reproduction in cold type. This was his own view.

The sublimest aspects of nature defy description or delineation by pencil and brush. They can be felt and intensely enjoyed by the receptive soul, but they cast into obscurity the best efforts of Art. As Emerson has truly said, 'Give me health, and an hour to walk afield, and I beggar the wealth of palaces.' To attempt to report the experiences of such moments and visions with logical sequence and in cold prosaic sentences would be atrocious. Life is not logical, but full of eccentric variety; so are the majority of people whom you meet in your journeys.

One pronounced effect which travel had upon his mind was to intensify his love for Canada. When in his last visit to Europe he caught sight of the yellow stream of the Tiber for the first time, as he travelled to Rome, he contrasted it with the noble waters of the St. Lawrence, and likened it for insignificance to the Canadian Thames in which he used to swim as a boy. When he returned from his first trip across the ocean he summed up his impressions in these words:

I started out from a vast continent where we have distances of which the wisest people in London know nothing. In this aspect Great Britain seemed small. But a few weeks dispelled the illusion. As I moved over battlefields, visited birthplaces and tombs of heroes, statesmen and divines, and saw their works, their colleges, their libraries, their monuments, I began to feel that the little isle is the largest place in the world. Still, with all her greatness, let me rather be in a colony than in the throbbing heart of Great Britain. Give me our own clear Canadian sky and free institutions, with a hardy, honest people uncursed by the vices of an effete aristocracy. Here in Canada we enjoy a decided advantage in being allowed to lay the foundations of society, and to build after a plan unrestricted by the cramping influences of other and less enlightened days. We are seriously to blame if, in Church and State, our destiny is not shaped after a proper fashion.

What most interested him abroad were things theological and educational. He had an eye for minor sights, but they were only incidental.

With the Celtic love of color, he revelled in stained-glass windows, jewels, variegated flowers. "On murky nights," says one of his travelling companions, "he would seek refuge from the London fog and cold, and wander about the halls of the British Museum, especially those devoted to Babylon, Assyria and Egypt, studying the monuments of the past. In and out among the deep shadows cast by the winged lions of Nineveh he



would step, and by the aid of the electric light discover fresh objects of interest." He would stand by the hour on Princes Street in Edinburgh in the vicinity of Sir Walter Scott's monument watching a Punch and Judy show—"a standing institution in this pious city," he declared it to be—or would raise a cheer for Charles Spurgeon sailing on a passing yacht as they went through the Kyles of Bute, or would entertain the company with whom he travelled in a spell of racy story comment and reminiscence, or revive his Gaelic in a familiar chat with some quickly made acquaintance in lowly life. At the foot of Ben Nevis he entered a sheeling to be treated with Highland hospitality by an old man who spoke no English.

He told me in Gaelic the simple tale of his life and circumstances, and gave me the ecclesiastical news of the district. They had the Free Kirk, the Auld Kirk, the Kirk of the Sassanach, and the Kirk of the Sacrist. I told him the less he had to do with the last the better. Presently he informed me that he belonged himself to the Kirk of the Sacrist! He seemed devout, and may hereafter turn up with Luther, Calvin and Knox in glory.

Powerful, but always subordinate to religious phases of life, were the attractions glowing in every opportunity which travel gave him to compare and contrast educational work abroad with that to which he had been accustomed in Canada:

My attention is naturally arrested by everything

that concerns schools or schoolmasters. In this respect I have been greatly pleased with the state of things in Scotland. I do not say that my fellow-countrymen have reached perfection. This has not been attained anywhere in educational matters, as the future will certainly demonstrate; but they are doing well north of the Tweed, and their motto is *Excelsior*. Many of their schools, in point of modern improvements, furniture, discipline and methods of instruction, are equal to the best in Canada and the United States; with this advantage in our favor, that we enjoy greater freedom in discarding the obsolete past and adopting the best that scientific discovery can suggest. This is the true line of educational and national progress.

It is far from being followed in many of the rural districts and towns and villages of England and Wales. There conservatism and mental stagnation have reigned among the lower classes for centuries. Do-the-boys Hall and its celebrated head-master, Squeers, may be things of the past, and may have no surviving friends to defend them, but there are still not a few educational establishments under Church and School Board control that deserve the same oblivion. I speak of what I have seen. Fancy a school-house consisting of one long room, with correspondingly long boards for desks, and backless benches of uniform height for pupils of all ages to sit upon. A blackboard about a yard square, set on an unsteady stand in the side of the room. A tattered little map of Britain on the wall. A sort of stoveliike heating box in one end of the long room, by which pupils near it are scorched and those at a distance are allowed to shiver in an atmosphere approaching the freezing point. Three masters and

as many assistants all simultaneously teaching various subjects to some two hundred pupils, with such noise and confusion as baffle description! One wonders how such an institution passes government inspection, but it does; and what is equally surprising is the dogged confidence with which it is believed to be all right, and vastly better than anything that exists in the Colonies.

It is a hopeful omen that just now leading men are discussing this state of things. They begin to see the need of reform, which may be slowly accomplished, unless defeated by bitter contentions among religious and political parties. It is a great step in advance to be able to acknowledge imperfections. Not long ago Earl Spencer declared publicly that he had seen better schools in Japan and Canada than those of England. Sir John Lubbock in a recent speech said that he did not see why England should not be on a par with Scotland in regard to class subjects. Education for good or evil went on through life, nor should it be limited to mental training. In most of the schools, science and modern languages, he said, were sadly neglected; the result of a mere classical education being that boys left school with no love of the classics and little knowledge of anything else. The London University was the only one in Great Britain which required some knowledge of science; while at the other universities it was actually discouraged, only forty out of five hundred scholarships being given at Oxford for science.

The struggle now in progress over educational matters in England is likely to last for some time, and is full of significance in many respects. Its true inwardness is very manifest. High Church-

men, and especially the Romanizing clergy, are determined to get the youth of the country wholly into their own hands, and in seeking this they seem prepared to cripple or ruin the Board Schools. The designate Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Temple, is the champion of this movement, and Nonconformists, whose rights are in jeopardy, are rallying their forces in opposition. They are supported by a considerable number of Evangelical Churchmen, and if Methodists, Baptists, Congregationalists and Presbyterians hold together, they may be able to check the growth of a reactionary ecclesiasticism which threatens to drag the nation back into mediæval sacramentarianism and superstition.\*

The swarms of barefooted boys who ran after the stage on one trip through the Trossachs and cried monotonously as they gasped for breath, "Drop-a-penny, drop-a-penny," captured him by their pertinacity, especially one who had seized a simple flower by the roadside and offered it for sale. In his travels, as at home, children always attracted him. One wee lass, four years old, on the streets of Edinburgh, to whom he gave a gratuity, drew him after her quite a distance by a winding way into an alley where she expended her small fortune in a bull's-eye.

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\*This was written in 1896. Were Dr. MacVicar a permanent resident in England in the present year of grace, there can be little doubt that he would be in the front rank of Passive Resisters, and would take no rest till he had done all in his power to secure the repeal of the Education Act, in default of paying the rates for which so many thousands have been suffering the seizure of their household effects and (strangest survival of an era which British subjects might have thought themselves to have long outlived!) going behind prison bars for conscience' sake.

With another lass—a newsgirl who lived in the Cowgate—he entered into earnest conversation, and found that whilst she regularly supplied reading matter to others she was herself unable to read. Notwithstanding her illiteracy and nurture in a faith to which he was opposed, he drew from her that she knew God had made her, that Jesus is the Saviour, and that there are three Persons in the Godhead.

“Though a Roman Catholic,” he wrote, “she possesses the elements of Christian knowledge, and may be *before many more highly favored in the sight of heaven*. I gave her twopence instead of a halfpenny for the *News*.”

A voyage over the Atlantic usually involved a moderate number of public appointments. In 1888 he read a paper at the London Missionary Conference and took part in its discussions, as well as in the great after-meeting in the Free Assembly Hall in Edinburgh at which Drs. Pierson and Gordon made their notable appearance in Scotland. He never refused an invitation to deliver an address on Temperance at the Saturday night meeting in Carrubbers Close Mission, or to occupy some prominent pulpit on a Sunday; but on the whole, in travel, he was more amenable to reason than at home as to the amount of work which it was right for him to attempt and yet claim to be resting.

One curious fact deserves notice. The incessant strain of his life created in him a real heart-

hunger for final rest. At home and abroad, his mind turned much to his favorite bard's picture of a sunlit land, "that recks not of tempest nor of fight."

The Home of fadeless splendor,  
 Of flowers that fear no thorn,  
 Where they shall dwell as children,  
 Who here as exiles mourn.  
 Midst power that knows no limit,  
 And wisdom free from bound,  
 The beatific vision  
 Shall glad the saints around ;  
 The peace of all the faithful,  
 The calm of all the blest,  
 Inviolate, unvaried,  
 Divinest, sweetest, best.  
 Yes, peace ! for war is needless,—  
 Yes, calm ! for storm is past,—  
 And goal from finished labor,  
 And anchorage at last.  
 That peace,—but who may claim it?  
 The guileless in their way,  
 Who keep the ranks of battle,  
 Who mean the thing they say :  
 The peace that is for heaven,  
 And shall be too for earth :  
 The palace that re-echoes  
 With festal song and mirth.

Often in the home circle we heard him read those lines. When we travelled with him we caught echoes of them in his casual reflections; and it was astonishing how often the sentiment reappeared in his correspondence. An appreciative account of a devotional gathering which he had attended at Mer-

toun House, the residence of Lord Polwarth, was concluded with the simple remark:\*

“But what was it to a day in our Father’s house!”

As he passed an old castle in Loch Foyle, and pictured to imagination the by-gone centuries when youth and beauty met within the crumbling walls and brilliant flashes of wit set the table in a roar, he said:

Here human griefs and joys spent themselves and passions raged which are hushed forever in the great ocean of the past. These massive walls now in hopeless ruins speak eloquently from beneath their green mantle of ivy of the passing nature of men’s earthly abodes, and admonish voyagers whilst they gaze upon them of the superior wisdom of those who seek a kingdom which cannot be moved and a permanent abode in their Father’s house of many mansions.

When he visited Windsor Castle and Hampton Court he wrote:

The splendors of each in its own way are as great as we may hope to look upon in this world. But what are they, compared with the Palace of the Great King!

When he had seen Abbotsford he wrote:

Nellie has now realized the happy dream of many years, and so have I. The sun, the clouds, the

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\*All of the references here incorporated are taken from notes made in 1877 which fell within what he himself considered the busiest period of his life.

Tweed, all lent their highest charms to make our drive such as we may never again enjoy. If heaven be a place of mansions, bowers and silvery brooks of which these earthly ones are but a dim, imperfect shadow, what must its glories and its bliss be!

Finding himself once more upon the heaving waters of the Atlantic he wrote:

What a strange medley a sea voyage brings together from all parts of the world. In this respect what must the future world be, when they shall come from the East and the West, the North and the South, to sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven.

Some one, playing pensively on the piano in the saloon of the steamer, sent his thoughts back through the years to the time when Jamie Caldwell, in his house at Guelph, used to sing, "O, why left I my hame?"

It is pleasing to recall that in his very last trip across the Atlantic in 1896, when accompanied by his wife and several members of his family, he spent about nine months in Scotland, England, Wales, Holland, France, Germany, Switzerland and Italy, and enjoyed his first real and prolonged holiday to mark the completion of his twenty-fifth year of service as Professor in the College. Before his departure he had been made the recipient of congratulatory, illuminated addresses from the alumni, students and citizens, and gifts amounting to over four thousand dollars. When he returned



from this trip, the students planned to meet him at the station on his arrival from Boston, and, removing the horses from his carriage, convey him back to the scene of his labors where an enthusiastic ovation awaited him. But through some mistake in the transmission of a telegram he arrived a day sooner than he was expected, and the earlier part of the demonstration was frustrated. At a supper, tendered in his honor the students hastened, in an address similar to many received in by-gone days, to express their joy over his return:

Your absence has served to strengthen the bond of union which has always existed between you and us. There is within us now a more ardent admiration and a deeper affection for the one who through all these years had the most to do in the upbuilding of our beloved college. Yours is a genuine reign over our hearts, and we rejoice in the unique opportunity of declaring it. This love for you, our Principal, is one of the chief bonds which bind us together as students.

Thus welcomed, he resumed the toils with which he expected to be occupied for many years to come; but as it turned out he was travelling Home by a quicker route than any were aware. Sometimes we urged him to relax his labors. It was not his nature. Throughout life he had attempted and accomplished the work of several men. His days had always been busy. They would be so to the close.

He travelled for the last time in the spring of

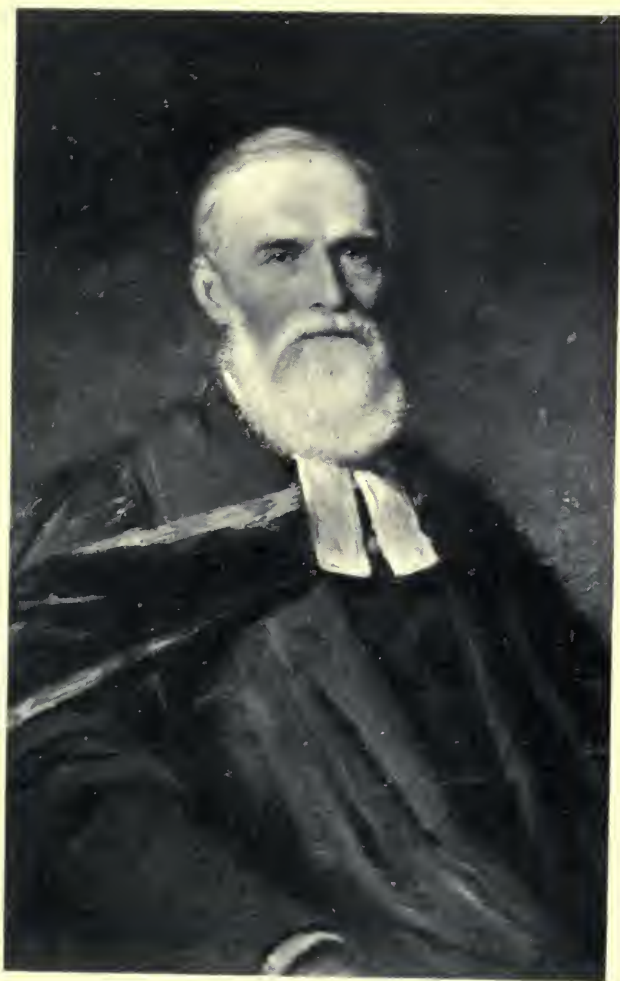
1902 with his daughter, Annie, on a visit to his brother in Richmond, Virginia.\* It was to be their final meeting on earth, though no shadow crept over the occasion. Everything still augured further years of toil.

“I am good for ten years more of active work,” he wrote to his friends. His heart was stout at the prospect. Not only had his students proved more loyal than ever, but the Alumni had given fresh evidence of the esteem in which he was held by requesting him to sit for his portrait in the studio of the distinguished artist, Robert Harris, C.M.G., President of the Royal Canadian Academy. The portrait, in the execution of which he manifested much interest and satisfaction, was completed a few days before the end, and was unveiled at the Convocation in the David Morrice Hall, in the spring of 1903. In the course of an address on that occasion, one of the Alumni, Rev. J. R. Dobson, B.A., B.D., remarked:

“It is surely no disparagement of living men to say that Principal MacVicar was one of the greatest teachers and organizers the Presbyterian Church in Canada has ever produced. His gifts and graces, his weight of character, his indomitable energy and earnestness of purpose eminently fitted him to be a leading spirit in organizing and consolidating the Church. He was a striking and

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\* His brother, on May 18th, 1904, as this work was passing through the press, followed him to the Homeland.



PRINCIPAL MACVICAR,

From the painting by Robert Harris, C.M.G., R.C.A., 1902, placed  
in the David Morrice Hall by the Alumni.



interesting personality in every phase of life in which he appeared, and both in public and private he won and retained the respect and regard of an ever-widening circle."

On Monday afternoon, December 15th, 1902, he attended a meeting of the Executive of the Board of French Evangelization in Knox Church. As the hour approached when he would be obliged to leave in order to keep an appointment to lecture on Pedagogics, he excused himself and hurried towards Mount Royal.

The class assembled.

Punctuality was one of his minor virtues. He had been observed to enter the building. His students took it for granted that in a few moments he would appear before them.

The signal from the belfry rang, but no professor came. Twenty minutes passed. The men began to grow anxious. Two of their number were deputed to proceed to the office door and inquire whether any lecture was contemplated.

They knocked. There was no answer.

Entering, they discovered that the hurried passage up the McTavish Street hill and the college flight of stairs had been the last stage of the journey Home. The Principal's heart had suddenly ceased to beat.

Spread out before him on the desk lay his notebook on Pedagogics, freshly rewritten in large, bold hand, open at a discussion on the Acquisition of Knowledge:

“First, what is it to know?”

Pondering the answer which he was prepared to give his class, he sat waiting for the college bell to summon him to the lecture-room below. Instead a Higher Summons reached him from above; for “God touched him as he sat,” and gently, without pain or “sadness of farewell,” took him from the scene of his incessant toils to receive a fuller answer to his question than a life-time of hard study qualified him to give; for now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face; now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.

Wrote Rev. W. D. Reid, B.A., B.D., in the Memorial Number of the *Presbyterian College Journal*: “As his sun neared the western horizon, his life seemed to mellow and become more beautiful. The sunset was a fitting climax to a glorious day. Not many sunsets leave behind them such a magnificent afterglow. There are sad hearts in many a manse to-day from Halifax to Vancouver, because our master has been taken from us. Our friend, counsellor and teacher is gone. . . . He went Home, well knowing that it had been his privilege to keep many feet from ‘stumbling upon the dark mountains.’ Already he has heard the ‘Well done’ of the Master whom he loved, and in the light of that eternal world, where the morn has dawned and the shadows have fled away, he is solving the mysterious questions with which he so often wrestled hard while here.”

The news spread over the city, and through the press reached Canada and the world.

“There will not be many Scotsmen in Argyleshire,” said the *St. James's Gazette*, “to remember little Donald Harvey MacVicar, who was born at Dunglass, when King William was on the throne, and who was taken to Canada by his father at four years old. That was all but seventy years ago, and Dr. MacVicar has just died a lonely death among his books at the Presbyterian College in Montreal.”

The funeral was one of the largest in Montreal for years. People of every religious persuasion, Protestant, Catholic and Jew, and of every calling and profession, every rank and degree of culture, joined in the procession. The streets were lined with spectators. The flags were flying at half-mast on the schools. Teachers and pupils from every section of the city gathered in the vicinity of the High School and formed in line.

At the brief academic service in the Morrice Hall, at which Professor Campbell presided, an earnest tribute in French was paid by Professor Coussirat, and generous words were spoken by Professor J. Clarke Murray, of McGill University.

“It is within a few months of forty years,” he said in part, “since I first became acquainted with Principal MacVicar, but in truth it did not require that length of time to form a knowledge of his character. The very vigor of his personality forced expression, and his fearless honesty prevented any

attempt at unworthy concealment. There was in him a remarkable harmony of intellectual and moral qualities. His intellect was of the type commonly characterized as logical—the type that demands a clear grasp of truth and the connection of different truths in one organic whole so that their relations may be clearly understood. But truth was for him not merely a beautiful theory with which the mind may dally in hours of idle meditation. It was a principle of life—a guiding light by which life is inspired; and therefore no more fitting aspiration may be awakened in our minds now than that we may live up to our ideals as loyally as he did to his.”

Said Rev. Principal Hill, of the Montreal Congregational College: “He was a master workman, which made him a masterful man and inspiring teacher in the class room. . . . Here was a citizen who was esteemed, working at the foundations of prosperity. It is righteousness that exalts a nation, and he was teaching this to the teachers and preaching it forth in prophetic tones.”

Said Rev. Dr. Shaw, Principal Emeritus of the Wesleyan Theological College, in the course of an address to the great throng that filled Crescent Street Church at the public funeral service on December 18th, 1902: “Devout regard for all that was divine became to him a habit of feeling and life. He proved the sufficiency of the vicarious sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ with a blessed



experience possessed in common by 'all who have obtained like precious faith,' whether Roman Catholics or Protestants, by Christians of all names and nations, and he proved his faith by his works.

. . . . Amid our various callings, whether in publicity or obscurity, whether in commercial or professional pursuits, let us seek by the divine blessing to be animated by the same high and holy purpose which guided and ennobled the long life of Donald Harvey MacVicar."

Said Rev. Dr. Scrimger on the same occasion: "He was a man of strong personality which never deserted him, and which made him easily a marked man in any assembly where he happened to be. In whatever profession he had chosen he would undoubtedly have made his influence felt upon his fellows, for he had those qualities which fit for leadership anywhere. He had the energy and courage as well as the power of giving clear expression to his convictions, which inspired confidence in those who were in sympathy with his aims, and made them willing to follow his guidance when once he was ready to lead the way. These qualities found abundant scope in the Christian ministry, and early made him one of the foremost leaders of the Church in Canada. His co-operation was felt to be necessary on almost all of its important committees, and he was never absent from the Supreme Court of his own Church except when it was that he might attend as its representative in the Council

of the world-wide Presbyterian Alliance, where he was likewise a prominent figure. He was ever a man of strong and clear convictions on all moral and religious questions. There were few such questions which he was content to leave open for further consideration. When he had formed his opinions he had no hesitation in expressing them with all definiteness and force for the instruction and guidance of others.

“This strength of conviction was based not upon any belief in the infallibility of his own reason or judgment, but solely upon his belief in the infallibility of the Holy Scriptures as the Word of God. This was ever with him the final authority behind which he did not care to go. When he had found a ‘Thus saith the Lord,’ it was an end of all controversy, so far as he was concerned. The great aim of all his studies was to find out exactly what the Scriptures had to say. When he was satisfied as to that, the question was closed and rarely troubled him again. He recognized, of course, that in some cases he might be mistaken in his interpretation of Scripture, but he had little patience with long-continued doubt or uncertainty, and could never content himself for any great period in that condition. He always desired to feel the ground firm beneath his feet, that he might be ready for instant action when the need arose. Once he declared himself he rarely changed. The world always knew where to find him. The fact that a

view or cause was for the time unpopular made little impression on his mind, and though he was sometimes tempted to despair of the outlook he was always ready to do battle for the cause he had espoused when the opportunity presented itself.

“Religion was with him the predominant interest of his life, and claimed his whole allegiance. Nothing which did not seem to him to be directly related to religion or morals could ever hold him long. He was not without appreciation of the value of science, literature and art as elements in human life, and he esteemed all forms of culture that ministered to grace and beauty of character, but he was far more profoundly concerned about the moral and social well-being of mankind than he was about anything else. And he thoroughly believed in the Gospel of Jesus Christ as the solution of all the most difficult problems of human society. Finding it impossible to extend his interest and sympathies over the whole of life, he deliberately chose that side of it which seemed to him to be of most import and lasting value. He spent his life in furthering that. His aims were all pre-eminently practical. He early identified himself with the cause of temperance reform and strongly advocated Sabbath observance; but feeling that these and similar reforms were after all only partial remedies for great evils, he was even more interested in the cause of Christian missions, both at home and abroad. One of the last public acts of his life was

the baptism of nine natives of China, who had been led to accept the Gospel under the instructions received in this city. The Gospel itself he felt to be the great remedy for the world's evil, and he never ceased to stimulate the Church to greater enthusiasm and liberality for its promotion among all classes.

“Because of his predominating interest in the religious side of life, and his activity on behalf of it, he was often misjudged as a mere churchman. But he certainly had no undue estimate of the value of any ecclesiastical organization for its own sake. The Church to him was nothing but a means to an end—the moral and spiritual elevation of mankind. If he preferred for the most part to work through the Church, it was because he thought it the best means to secure that end. But his cordial co-operation with those of other Churches in such organizations as the Bible Society, and others of like nature, abundantly testifies to the catholicity of his sympathies and his desire to keep the Church in its true relation to the world's good, while his lifelong interest in popular education showed that he by no means limited his faith to the Church as the only means of elevating the masses of the people.

“As a religious man his piety was of the intellectual rather than of the emotional type. An appeal to mere feeling or sentiment made little impression upon himself, and he rarely appealed to others on these grounds. His own spiritual life

was nourished on clear ideas of divine truth, and he relied upon these as the chief means of developing character. He was a preacher of no ordinary power, and was highly appreciated for his clear, incisive presentations of divine truth, which he always stated with vigor, causing him to be much in demand for special occasions, both in the city and country. But he was much greater as a teacher, and most of all at home in the class room. It was undoubtedly a fortunate thing both for him and for the Church that, at a comparatively early age, an opportunity presented to place him in the professor's chair, where he found a field of usefulness specially suited to his tastes and his abilities. The hundreds of ministers scattered throughout the Dominion of Canada to-day, who passed through his class room, bless God for having given them such a teacher before they were called upon to be instructors of others.

“He was, however, not only the model teacher; he was as well the model Principal of an educational institution. Possessed of executive ability of a high order, he concerned himself in every detail of administration, and allowed nothing to escape his notice. The Presbyterian College of this city will ever remain as long as it continues to stand as the great monument of his work. Whatever credit must be given to others for its present prominent position, its existence and prosperity are due more to him than to anyone else. He was ever the central

figure around whom all else gathered. His wise plans, his patient perseverance, his courageous faith and indomitable energy have most of all made it what it is to-day.

“ His relations to his students were always of the happiest character. His discipline was firm but gentle. He ever sought more to win their confidence than command their fear. He was the friend and adviser of them all, and none of them ever sought his counsel or his help in vain.

“ Not less fortunate was he in his relations to the other members of his staff. As one who was associated with him for many years, I can bear testimony to his uniform courtesy and consideration on all occasions. We were always fully taken into his confidence, and on every matter of the least importance our advice was sought whenever it was possible to ask for it. He was seldom disposed to act until there was entire unanimity of opinion.

“ Dr. MacVicar was often and widely misunderstood, being thought by many to be stern and unsympathetic in his nature. But hardly anything could have been farther from the truth. He was fond of the society of his fellows. To the members of his own family, to the students whom he knew, to the friends who had gained his confidence he was ever the most genial of companions, and few of them will ever forget the kindly humor with which he recalled reminiscences of friends of former

years. His ministrations at the bedside of the sick and suffering were always acceptable, and once enjoyed were eagerly sought for again under like circumstances.

“ And now he who often spoke the consolations of the Gospel in the ears of the dying, has himself gone from us to return no more. We can express no regret for his own sake, that the manner of his death was such as to preclude similar ministrations for himself. For it was the death which he himself most of all coveted, to be taken away in the midst of his work, to die in harness, before he had found it necessary to lay down even one of the heavy responsibilities he had borne so long. He has gone to be with Christ, which is far better. It only remains for us to follow in his footsteps, and continue as best we can the good works which he had so well begun.”