

INFLUENCE OF COLLEGES.

Look then at this mighty moral machinery. It is computed that thirty-five thousand graduates have been given by the colleges to American society. And who are they; and what stations do they occupy? Are they men whose influence is relatively small; men whose minds it was not matter of special importance to guide aright, as they were budding into maturity? Eight or nine thousand become ministers of the Gospel; one hundred and sixty, presidents of colleges; four hundred professors; nearly two hundred governors and lieutenant governors of States; more than five hundred representatives in Congress; one hundred and thirty senators; nearly four hundred judges of the higher courts, to say nothing of the legal profession and its many brilliant luminaries. Harvard college has given one president and two vice presidents to the United States. Nearly seven hundred physicians have gone from Yale alone, since the year 1800. Besides these, her pupils are found among the teachers, merchants, editors, and in fact in every department of society. And is it nothing for the Church of Christ to guide the education of such men; or is it a small responsibility laid upon her?

Nor is it merely the men who are taught there, that are thus put into the hands of the Church. Colleges do more than any other institutions, to control the literature of the country. The professors are, professionally, literary men. They are surrounded with the best aid the country contains, to keep themselves in the front rank of literary men. They may not be able to prevent the vile issues of the press by any direct means; but no man can so effectually and noiselessly counteract any intellectual epidemic that invades a country. Not even the conductors of the daily press wield so sure and controlling a power. Give me the ear and the heart of the young men in our colleges, and I will give you all the rest, in a contest for the intellectual throne of a country.

The college professors are a band of men of the first order of intelligence and piety, devoted to the single work of lifting up the human soul above the control of its animal attendant, and the brutalizing attachment to sordid interests and indulgences. They are men of thought, of knowledge, of wisdom, conversant with the world as it has been, and as it is; with the wisest of every age and nation. They have the science of the world at their command. They understand the structure of human society, and its complicated machinery. They know the laws of matter, and of mind. They are in the earth, but living above it. They have the treasures of rich libraries, of museums of science, of apparatus and instruments of education. They are always labouring with mind. They are always quickening and unchaining the spirit; that it may rise to the highest communion with kindred spirits, and the infinite Father of spirits. And yet the providence of God, and the consent of a free people, put this instrument, at first, exclusively, into the hands of the Church. Just suppose, for instance, that the infidel form of socialist doctrine had captivated our leading statesmen and editors, but that the college professors remained unwarped; what would be the result? The press would teem with these terrific doctrines; legislatures would take incipient steps to produce changes corresponding to their views. But in ten years you shall have a generation issuing from your seats of learning, thoroughly armed on every point of controversy, masters of all the important facts; their most living and direct sympathies being still with the views and feelings of their beloved and venerated teachers. One powerful mind in one college could thus diffuse itself through all the professional corps from Brunswick to the last college in Texas. Logic, learning, and piety, hold in these institutions an impregnable fortress. Furnish christian colleges in abundance and they would pour forth a host of men like a mighty east wind, to sweep these clouds of Arabian locusts into a great sea.

Therefore, brethren, as a part of the Church of Christ, we have a supreme interest in the colleges of our land. It is not only a scientific, a patriotic, a human, but a profoundly religious interest. It is not only that they are very important in the east, but indispensable in the west. And therefore in the name of the Church of Christ, we solemnly charge the people to look well to this great interest, not with reference to any town, or State, or section, but to the whole country.

THE HID TREASURE.

An affecting incident, lately told in a company where I was present, has dwelt on my thoughts ever since. It is highly characteristic of the place, the people, and the times that belong to it.

Private intelligence having been received that in a certain wild district, inhabited by the poorer classes of peasants in Ireland, arms were collected and concealed, for unlawful purposes, a party of military were despatched to make a sudden search in the suspected houses. Among others, they visited a poor cabin, inhabited seemingly, by very quiet, inoffensive people, where after most careful searching, they could find no trace of what they sought. When on the point of departing, one man remarked that the rough stone which served as a sort of hearth, wore the appearance of having recently been moved; the earth about was loose, and the stone seemed to have been hastily laid down. This revived their suspicion, and they promptly lifted the rude flag from its place, and saw under it a parcel, carefully wrapped up in some poor, ragged covering. How many pike-heads, how many pistols, or what quantity of ammunition they had seized, was matter of conjecture, as they carefully unfolded the envelop. This was done, and the captors held in their hands—an Irish Bible.

The fact needs no elucidation; everybody knows, that for a poor Irishman to possess the word of God is high treason against the church of Rome; and that any offence given to the priesthood of that church, in a popish district, is speedily punished with the loss of the little all of the helpless victim. The Bible if discovered would be burned, buried, or thrust into some inaccessible corner, while a terrible penance would await the possessor of such a contraband article; and any resistance thereto would incur the curse of excommunication, with all its subsequent terrors of ceaseless persecution and temporal ruin. This must be avoided, if possible, by the poor creature, who has no earthly refuge to flee to, and as yet too feeble an apprehension of divine realities to endure as seeing him who is invisible. Still the Bible—the story of peace, as the simple Irish rightly call it—which has told him, in his own loved tongue, such things as never before entered his thoughts, to cheer him in his sad laborious pilgrimage on earth,—the Irish Bible once received, it is hard, very hard, to give up. And so the trembling possessors, looked around their poverty-stricken abode, and finding no place where it might rest secure from the prying gaze of the bigoted enemy, they take up the single stone that varies the damp surface of their cabin floor—generally the earth on which it stands—and there deposit the treasure. When night arrives, the door was secured, the aperture called the window blocked up, and the precious Bible, taken from its resting place, was read by such imperfect light as they could manage to afford. And this within the actual circuit of the British Isles—this in the heart of Protestant Britain—the very throne of freedom.—Charlotte Elizabeth.

CLERICAL FACETIOUSNESS.

"Nor jesting, which is not convenient."—We have seldom met with a happier or more just rebuke of facetiousness in the ministry, than in a passage of a friendly letter of Mr. Thornton, to Mr. Berridge, Vicar of Overton. Mr. Berridge, as may be well known to our readers, was a sort of Rowland Hill of his time, and though full of labour, in season and out of season, in his own parish and out of it, preaching for twenty-four years together, ten or twelve times a week, usually riding to his appointments from twenty to a hundred miles, was as remarkable for his irregularity and disregard of Canons, as he was for his ready and caustic wit—replying to the Bishop of Lincoln, who said to him with a good deal of severity, you know that preaching out of your Parish is contrary to the Canons. "There is one Canon, my lord, which I dare not disobey and that is of God preach the gospel to every creature." The active and laborious vicar, whose hearty zeal and great disinterestedness it would be a violation of all charity to question, (as it would be of sound churchmanship to approve his irregularities), greatly marred his usefulness and scandalized the more reverential of his hearers, by freely indulging in witticisms, even in the pulpit.—This is the special point toward which the kind but severe rebuke of his friend in the letter referred to, is directed. "I remember you once informed me,

says Mr. Thornton, that you was born with a fool's cap on: pray, my dear sir, is it not high time it was put off? Such an accoutrement may suit a natural birth, and be of service, but surely it has nothing to do with a spiritual one, nor ever can be made ornamental to a serious man, much less to a christian minister. I waive mentioning Scripture injunctions, such as, 'Let your speech be with grace, &c., as you know them better than I do. Surely they should have some weight, for idle and unprofitable words stand forbidden. If it should please God to give you to see things as I do, you will think it necessary to be more guarded; but should you think me mistaken, I trust it will make no interruption in our friendship that I am thus free with you, and it proceeds from a sincere love and regard."

In another part of the excellent letter of Mr. Thornton, adverting to a humorous passage in a recent publication of Mr. Berridge, he says—"it would pass mighty well in a newspaper, or in anything calculated for public entertainment, but it certainly wanted that solidity or earnestness with which a christian minister should write. What the apostle said in another sense will apply here, 'When I was a child, I spake as a child,' &c. An expression of yours in your prayer, before sermon, when at Nottingham court struck me.—That God would give us new bread, not stale but which was baked in the oven, that day. Whether it is that I am too little, or you are too much, used to such expressions, I won't pretend to determine, but I could not help thinking it savoured of attention to men more than God. I know the apology frequently made for such language is, that the common people require it; it fixes attention and affords matter of conversation afterwards; for a sentence out of the common road is more remembered than all the rest. This may be true, but the effect is only a loud laugh among their acquaintances; not one person is edified, and many are offended by such like expressions.—Gambier Observer.

THE PROPHETS OF OLD.

How wonderful was the prophetic dispensation! What wondrous men were these prophets of the Most High! We speak of poets; but how they sink when compared to the prophet! All that they possess—susceptibility, selection, numbers, imagery—he possesses too, and that in a depth and compass "above all Greek, above all Roman praise." We speak of the poet's eye; his piercing, ranging view of nature; and of the association between natural objects, and sentiments, and morals. But whither ranges the vision of the prophet? And with what does he connect the multiplied objects which nature throws around? They were indeed seers. They bring the seraphs before the throne, veiling their faces, and bending under the weight of the felicity of adoring love; and thus teach us the depths and glory of the Godhead, and that the highest employment of intellect is to meditate on God, and that the sum of rational bliss is the love of him. In the heavens, beaming with the sun, and glowing with the stars, they see different degrees of glory. In the eclipses which darken them, and the last elemental strife which shall shake them from their orbits, they see the overthrow of thrones, and the extinction of all human splendor. In storms, and earthquakes, and the rush of mighty waters, they see the irresistible sweep of the Divine vengeance, chasing the proudest rebels like the sheep of the wilderness, and hurling down the loftiest marks of human power; while the dawning light, the calm which sits enthroned on earth after the tempest, the buoyant clouds flitting across the vernal sky, and dropping fatness on the earth, the spring bubbling forth in the desert, smiling vales and laughing fields, display to them, by images which at once enchant the imagination, and enlarge the heart, the refreshing, cheering blessings of Messiah's free and universal salvation. Christian poets have often well imitated them; and thus has the poet himself been raised above his natural level. But as for the poets of the world, what are all their associations of human passions, and merely human instincts and sentiments, with the imagery of nature, in comparison with these? Theirs was the true inspiration: it opened to them all the mystic ties and chains of sacred association: it gave a hallowed voice to all nature; it erected the whole universe into a system of spiritual types, and made it a pattern of things in the heavens, and of heavenly things in human bosoms: it

did more; for it dispersed the obscurity of the future, and as though invested with the character of omniscience, made the things that were not as though they were.—Rev. R. Watson.

THE SILVER AND THE GOLD IS THE LORD'S.

There is a little scrap of profane history which furnishes us with an illustration of an important subject. Croesus on one occasion reproached Cyrus for his profusion. An estimate was made of what his present possessions would have been worth, had he been sparing in his bounties. To justify his liberality, Cyrus sent despatches to every person whom he had particularly obliged, requesting them to supply him with as much money as they could for a pressing occasion, and to send him a note of what each one could advance. When all these notes came to Cyrus, it appeared that the sum total far surpassed the estimate made by Croesus. Cyrus then said, "I am not less in love with riches than other princes,—but I am a better manager of them. You see at how low a rate I have acquired many friends, an invaluable treasure; at the same time, my money, in the hands of my friends, is not less at my command than in my treasury." Thus spake this wise prince.

Now, our blessed Saviour whose is the silver and the gold, and from whom we have received all bounties, has seen fit to entrust much of the fruit of his bounty with his friends. His Church in effecting the great work to which her Head has called her, is often in pressing need. An acquaintance with this state of things is a "despatch," a call from Christ to help his cause. Besides, as Cyrus, so Christ did not intend, by giving these good things, to deny to the obliged the privilege of shewing their gratitude on all suitable occasions. But the chief object in this illustration is to show that it was highly honourable not only to the friends of Cyrus, but also to Cyrus himself, that they should act thus, so it not only proves the sincerity of our love, but it honours, it glorifies our Divine Friend and Master, when his people shew a willingness on all suitable occasions, to go even to the utmost of their ability in pouring out their treasure for his cause. Neglect, selfishness, niggardliness, here must be sinful. The friends of Cyrus will rise in judgment against us, if we close our hearts and hands against the loud demands of Christ's suffering Church and bleeding cause on earth. O for a primitive liberality. We have received much. Much is therefore justly required. See 1 Tim. vi. 17, 19.

THE KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS CHRIST.

I do not deny but the knowledge of other things is in many cases very useful; some to private persons, some to public societies, some to whole nations, some to mankind in general, some to the right understanding the Scriptures, and to the knowledge of Christ himself; yea, there is scarce any kind of knowledge but some way or other help towards the raising, the refining, and the enlarging of our understandings, and so to the making us more capable of knowing him. But whatsoever it be at present, unless it tends to that end at last, it will stand us in no stead: for what if I was skilled in all the arts and sciences that ever were invented, and could manage them to the best advantage? What if I had the whole system of logic in my head, and could argue with all the art and cunning that ever man had? What if I could dive into the depth of natural philosophy, and see the several springs and movements of all secondary causes? What if I had turned over all the records of the church, and the history of all ages and places since the world began, and could reduce everything to its proper time? What if I could "count the number of the stars, call them all by names," and describe their motion to a hair's breadth? What if I understood all languages, and could discourse with people of all nations upon earth in their own mother tongue? What then? Notwithstanding all this, without the "knowledge of Jesus Christ," I should be lost and undone forever. For "there is no name under heaven whereby we can be saved, but the name of Christ;" neither is there any way possible to be saved by him, unless we know him. For unless we know him we can do nothing that is required in order to our being saved by him.—Bishop Beveridge.

Do good, if you expect to receive any.