

An effort had been made in Switzerland to reform the Roman Catholic Church in a liberal and democratic way. The result was not a conspicuous success but some progress had been made, and they might hope, he said, that some day religious life in the old Catholic Church might be revived by the operation of the spirit of God. One result at least had followed. The pope could no longer govern the Swiss people against the wishes of the people and without regard to the laws of the state. The prevailing influence in Switzerland was decidedly Protestant, far beyond its numerical strength, and the chief towns and more prosperous cantons were chiefly Protestant. A spirit of kindly tolerance and good-will had been created, and it was a not uncommon thing to see Catholics and Protestants use the same church at different periods of the day.

The Rev. Dr. James Kerr, of Glasgow, took a very different line of argument. He affirmed that those who asserted that the Church of Rome had undergone any change for the better, had been Rip Van Winkles for the last twenty years. The spirit of Hildebrand still reigned in the Vatican. On the contrary, we believe that even the Church of Rome has not been able to resist the broadening and liberalizing spirit of the times, created by the Protestant reformation. "Still the thoughts of men are widened by the process of the suns," and this old and inert Church in spite of itself has been broadened and liberalized with the progress of the ages.

Bishop Foster, one of the ablest minds of the Methodist Episcopal Church, not without reason affirmed his belief that God in His good providence would reform this old historic Church from within, and restore its old Catholics to a purer and more primitive form of worship.

Dr. Kerr exhibited the very spirit of Hildebrand or of Torquemada when he said, "Roman Catholics must be excluded from all political offices." This battle was fought out when the Catholic Emancipation Bill was passed, half a century ago. As an integral part of the empire, they

have a right to their proper share of the duties and honours of citizenship and statesmanship. While there may be disloyal and traitorous Catholics, as there may also be disloyal and traitorous Protestants, yet on many a hard-fought field and in many a high place of duty, the Roman Catholic subjects of our sovereign have sealed their loyalty with their hearts' blood. In the sight of the law, especially in a mixed community of Catholics and Protestants, a man's religious opinions should involve no civil disability. "It is no part of religion to persecute religion," said Tertullian 1,500 years ago. The lesson of toleration and respect for the rights and consciences of others, is a lesson which some men are very slow to learn.

Dr. Laing, of Dundas, very truly said that nowhere in the world was the Church of Rome more securely entrenched than in the Dominion of Canada. We believe it unquestionable that in the city of Rome, under the very shadow of the Vatican, there is more religious liberty than in some parts of our own country. While we may steadfastly withstand all the political aggressions of the Church of Rome, we must as carefully grant our Catholic fellow-citizens all their civil and religious rights.

Dr. Bushnell made the strange statement, as an instance of the power of the Papacy, that "not an associate press dispatch passed through the telegraph office of Washington, without the scrutiny of an agent of the pope." If Dr. Bushnell means that any agent of the Pope has the power to falsify or suppress or change public dispatches sent out by the press of the whole world, in the interests of the Papacy, we would require better evidence than any he placed before the meeting to convince us of the correctness of the statement.

Dr. Carman's fraternal greeting on the part of Ecumenical Methodism was a very able and eloquent address. It was very favourably received, and called forth a very cordial response. Such interdenominational courtesies do much to knit the Churches together in the bonds of Christian brotherhood.