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RECENT DEVELOPMENTS OF P. P. AISM.

"America," the official organ of the Junior American Mechanics, reports that the association is losing ground fast. In Western Pennsylvania alone, during the past few months, seventy-five councils have been dissolved, and from twenty others there had been no reports for 1894. This order is a proscriptive society similar in almost every respect to the A. P. A., having the same objects in view. In Hamilton, which city was regarded, only a year ago, as a P. P. A. centre, the local lodge has actually been disbanded. A few days since it was unable to pay the rent due for a meeting hall, and the furniture had to be sold to meet the rent bill. Aismism and P. P. Aism are evidently going down fast, and the time is rapidly approaching when the members of this society will be ashamed to acknowledge that they ever took part in their short-lived crusade of intolerance.

Even Lambton, the only county in Ontario in which P. P. Aism was able to elect two members to the Local Legislature on the platform of the order, has become ashamed of the regime of bigotry, and the congregation of the Rev. J. C. Madill, late President of the P. P. A., are now up in arms against him. He preached recently in what is called the Reynolds church, in Sombra, but was ejected, and he is now charged with trespass for having used the church without permission of the superintendent of the district.

As a result of the dispute, he has hired a barn near the church; which he proposes to use until his faction build him a church. He held services there on Sunday, 2nd of June; and though some uphold him, the majority appear to have decided to throw him aside, the reason assigned being, that notwithstanding that he has ceased to be President of the P. P. A., he continues at the head of that disreputable association in Sarnia.

To the credit of the Congregationalists, to which sect Mr. Madill belongs, it is to be said that as a denomination they do not approve of P. P. Aism. The Congregational Union last summer passed a resolution as strongly worded as we could conceive to be possible, condemning P. P. A. fanaticism. Mr. Madill and Dr. Wilde took care to absent themselves from the session at which the resolution was passed, under the supposition, we presume, that the blow which they fully expected would strike more leniently in their absence.

The Congregational Union, the Lambton Superintendent, and the Sombra congregation deserve credit for the noble stand they have taken against intolerance. We may indeed reasonably entertain the hope that the day of Christian reunion is not far off when we find the descendants of the English Puritans and the Scotch Cameronians departing so far from the traditions of their ancestors as to have become the advocates of toleration.

We fear, however, that so much of this new toleration arises out of religious indifference, and the conviction that no special faith in Christian dogmas is requisite, that it would be premature to infer that it is a prelude to Christian unity. Perhaps, therefore, we are merely to accept the change at its intrinsic value, and not to draw too many hopeful inferences from it. It is, at all events, a change for the better, and for which we should be duly thankful, to whatever cause it is to be attributed.

We must say we are pleased with these evidences that the spirit of intolerance is dying out; and the fact is due, in great measure, to the exposure of the infamy of A. P. A. and P. P. A. principles and the refutation of their falsehoods by the press, a good work in which many Protestant journals co-operated with praiseworthy zeal.

We are not of the opinion that only some of our friends have from time to

time given expression, that the discomfitures and even the proceedings of the proscriptive association should be passed over in silence. Such facts in connection with it, as we have mentioned in this article, should be made known to the public, that the light of day may be thrown upon what is going on in regard to it. If this were not done the P. P. A. would still be a flourishing association; but when the public become acquainted with the inward history of the order it becomes a laughing-stock, and even its own members become ashamed of it, as is happening now. We may add that almost the entire Catholic press of the continent are of the same opinion with ourselves on this matter, and act upon it without hesitation.

Every recent development points to the fact that P. P. Aism is dying out, and the chief cause of this is that its doings have been so thoroughly exposed to the light.

WHITHER DRIFTING?

There are among the religious journals many which still maintain that the tendency of nineteenth century Protestantism is not toward Deism and the rejection of all revelation, yet the evidences that this is the case are more and more numerous every day. We have seen recently that within a year after the General Assembly of American Presbyterianism maintained its old orthodoxy by a fairly unanimous vote against the upholders of Deistic thought within the Church, the Rationalist party almost captured the assembly at its recent session by leaving their seminaries free to disseminate whatever doctrine such professors as Dr. Briggs of New York and Dr. Smith of Cincinnati think proper to teach.

We are satisfied that whatever may be the preponderance of the old style of orthodoxy just at the present date, in some of the sects the day is fast approaching when most decided Latitudinarianism will prevail, and just as "a little leaven corrupteth the whole lump," we know it is a certainty that such teaching is necessarily disseminated at an alarmingly-increased rate every successive year. It is a case of what arithmeticians style "geometrical progression," reminding us of the old problem of the grain of wheat demanded by the inventor of the checker-board for the first square, as a reward for the ingenious invention, which was to be doubled for each square down to the sixty-fourth. The demand was more than enough to beggar the king and the kingdom which undertook to pay it.

So it is with dangerous teaching. Two or three scholars turned out thus inoculated with it will multiply the results next year so alarmingly that there is no knowing where the thing will stop—and, without exaggeration, this is just what is happening.

The Free Kirk of Scotland is already captured by the Latitudinarians: the Protestant Churches of France were captured years ago, and those of Germany are in a fair way of succumbing, if the majority of them have not already gone over to the enemy. In England matters have not as yet gone so far, but the tendency is in the same direction. We know how the late Mr. Spurgeon, who had a strong faith in Christianity, formally left the Baptist Union because it was "going down the inclined plane with a constantly accelerated velocity toward Tophet."

We have now a more recent example to the same effect. Dr. Clifford, one of the most prominent of to-day's Baptist divines, said a few days ago in a sermon on the Bible, that

"German scissors had simply cut away the creeds and outer accretions which had gathered round the Book. We are not given over to the dominion of the letter; we hold to the unfettered study of the whole revelation. But it is necessary to oppose the usurpations of creeds and Churches, Popes and councils, and even the 'verbal infallibilists' who would not allow us to have free communion with Christ in His Word. Jesus Christ is our revelation; our religion is not the religion of a book."

It would appear from this that in the rev. doctor's opinion there is nothing more in the bible than the statement of some facts of history concerning Christ and perhaps a little which may be true about Moses and some of the Jewish kings, all of which may or may not be believed, as we please. But creeds and precepts of morality must go! They are only "accretions" and human opinions which have been tacked on to the word.

Let us have, says the doctor, "free communion with Christ in His Word." What solid meaning can be got out of this saying, we confess we cannot com-

prehend. What becomes of Christ and His Word, if we are to say that He has given us no positive doctrinal teaching? And what are we to believe even concerning Christ, if "verbal infallibilism" is fallacy?

It is beyond dispute that such doctrine as this which Dr. Clifford propounds will shatter all belief in Christianity, and it is equally true that Protestantism is on all sides coming fast to the ideal of the Baptist divine, an ideal which will leave us as bereft of belief in Christian doctrine as Tom Paine or Col. Ingersoll could desire?

As long ago as two hundred years the following lines were written, evidently by some wag, on a blank page of the parish register of Ekington, in Derbyshire, England:

"Our grandfathers were Papists. Our fathers Oliverians. We their sons are Atheists. Sure our sons will be queer ones."

The writer of this seems to have been gifted with the spirit of prophecy.

We do not mean to say that he was a prophet, really, but he certainly hit the nail on the head—and if the lines were appropriate then, or nearly so, they are more so now.

In further confirmation of what we have stated regarding the condition of the Protestant religion in Germany we may refer to a recent paper written from Heidelberg, in that country, by Rev. Walter M. Paton, which appears in the columns of the Christian Guardian of the 5th inst. That gentleman says:

"During an observation of several months, and after some enquiry touching the subject, I have become convinced that the moral power of the Reformed Church is so far gone as to offer very little promise for the religious future of the people of South Germany. It is true that the outward indications are not at all unfavorable. Congregations are large and attentive, etc. Still with all favorable evidences duly weighed, there is a lack of power in the religion which is current. The attitude, especially of the intelligent male population, would add to the revelation. The views held of moral obligations, of the Church and its ordinances, of the office and work of the Christian ministry, of the Sabbath, and of religious instruction in the schools, give a voice of condemnation on the prevailing character of Christianity; while, finally, the ignorance of the Bible, where it exists, and the knowledge of it, where it exists, in different ways tell a tale which one regrets to hear."

"In a population of Protestants numbering over 20,000, of which nine-twentieths (9,000) may be assumed to be males, there are not more than three hundred of the class specified at the Sunday services of the Protestant churches in Heidelberg."

This gentleman remarks specially that the educated and the humblest classes are alike inadequately represented among the three hundred, who belong, nearly all, to "the class of tradesmen and the better circumstanced mechanics."

The conclusion drawn by the writer quoted is that "the ignorance of the Bible, we have reason to believe, is general, and rank intellectualism and rank ignorance to real religion are the blight of Protestantism among high and low in this part of the province."

The ignorance of the Bible of which the writer complains, after more than three centuries of thoroughly "Evangelical" training, with all the advantage that the wide diffusion of the art, and the perfection to which the work of printing has attained during that period, is a pretty offset to the fable which many Protestant controversialists are so fond of repeating, that Luther knew nothing of the Bible till he accidentally came across a mutilated copy, in the days when printing was in its infancy.

But considering the way in which modern Protestants in Germany and elsewhere now regard the Bible, it is very questionable whether its wide diffusion is of much, or of any, benefit to them. We may well ask: "Whither drifting?"

A SENSATIONAL SYNOD.

The General Synod of the Reformed Church of America, which is one of the forms of religion usually reckoned as Presbyterian, is now in session at Grand Rapids, Michigan. The smallness of this denomination at the present time is a curious commentary on the variations through which Protestant denominations pass, as this Church is asserted to be the oldest Protestant Church in America, having been founded in 1628, and it boasts that it "has continuously existed to this date." Yet so small is it now that though the delegates to synod are sent from both Canada and all parts of the United States, laymen and clergymen together, who are generally selected in equal numbers from each district, amount to only two hundred

and fifty persons who are entitled to sit in Council. Of these the "unusually large number" of one hundred and fifty-six were present at the first session.

A very important piece of intelligence is given to the world by the reporter of the Synod's proceedings: viz., that at the opening synodical service in the church, the eastern delegates were treated to a surprise by the sight of the lady singers appearing in the choir loft without hats!"

It would appear from all this that the Synod has some hope that through sensationalism the denomination may make up some of the progress which the preaching of the gospel has not been sufficient to assure to them. But, perhaps, it may be that these fancies in religion are the very cause why the sect has not made advance with the progress of the nation. There is a certain class which delights in sensationalism in religion, but it is surely not so with those who worship God in spirit and truth, and who desire to serve Him for His own sake, and we are not surprised at the sudden collapses which take place in some of the sects which aim at making their mark by the exhibition of all imaginable vagaries.

The Salvation Army is an example of a sudden popularity arising out of such vagaries. But we doubt whether this popularity will last. Indeed it would be more creditable to human intelligence if it were but short-lived, but there is enough of feebleness of intelligence in the world to make these efforts at sensational religion successful for a time. Yet they are not always so, as the want of success of the devices of the First Reformed Church of America sufficiently prove.

It would certainly astonish St. Paul as much as it did the Eastern delegates to the Synod, to see the women leading in prayer without their hats, in order to attract the notice of male admirers; for that was certainly not the Apostle's idea of what religious worship should be.

Of men, the Apostle said: "Every man praying or prophesying with his head covered, disgraceth his head. But every woman praying or prophesying with her head not covered, disgraceth her head, for it is all one as if she were shaven. For if a woman be not covered, let her be shorn. But if it be a shame to a woman to be shorn or made bald, let her cover her head." (1 Cor., xi.)

In defence of the practice of the Reformed Church Synod, we scarcely expect to hear any one say: "but it was only of prayer that the Apostle spoke—whereas it was the choir of women that appeared without hats at the Reformed Synod—and their object was to sing—not to pray."

To this we have only to say: if their singing was not a prayer, it should have been kept for the theatre and not have been exhibited in a church.

THE MANITOBA SCHOOL QUESTION.

The school question of Manitoba remains in about the same position in which it has been for weeks, as far as public knowledge of what has been done regarding it is concerned. It is generally supposed that some kind of an arrangement has been made between Lord Aberdeen and the principal members of the Manitoban Government, Messrs. Greenway and Sifton, and that some measure of justice will be granted by Manitoba to the Catholic minority, whereby it will be unnecessary for the Dominion Government and Parliament to take the matter out of the hands of the local authorities by Dominion legislation which will have that effect; but as what has been done, or agreed upon, if it amounts to anything satisfactory, has been kept so far as a secret, we are at this moment unable to say whether or not any fair conclusion has been reached. We must say, however, on behalf of our co-religionists, that no agreement will be satisfactory unless the full rights of Catholics which have been so injudiciously and unjustly taken away by Manitoba legislation be restored.

It is the duty of the Dominion Government to see that this be done. The good faith of the Dominion is at stake, and unless this step be taken, it will be equivalent to a declaration that the Protestant majority hold that no faith is to be kept with Catholics. They may, when a point is thereby to be gained, make fair promises that Catholic rights shall be preserved; and such promises were made when Manitoba became part of our Dominion, though there was no intention that the promises should be

the charter of Catholic rights alone. The promise was to the effect that, whether Catholics or Protestants should become the prevailing body in the newly acquired territory, the rights of the minority should be respected in matters of education, by means of the establishment of a system of Separate school.

It appears certain that the general expectation at the time was that the minority to be protected would be Protestant, not Catholic, and for this reason the model on which a Separate school system was to be established was that of Quebec, where the fullest rights are granted to the Protestant minority.

Catholics were the majority of the population when this compact was made a condition of their entry into the Dominion, though their majority was not very decisive at the time. It was an evidence of the desire of the Catholic majority at the time to assure justice to the Protestants, who were most anxious to have this assurance, that this clause was adopted as part of the basis of union; and to make the matter more secure, the Dominion Parliament, by an unusually large majority, on motion of the Dominion Government, ratified the agreement by passing the Manitoba Act establishing that part of the territory into a Province, and stipulating that minority rights should be preserved intact, leaving the Dominion Government and Parliament as the final arbiter to decide when it might be necessary to step in to undo any act of tyranny on the part of the majority, whether it might be Catholic or Protestant.

The Legislature of Manitoba, as soon as it received its powers from the Dominion Parliament, proceeded to legislate so that the compact should be binding and irrevocable, by establishing a regular system of Separate schools, and thus the rights of the minority were made still more secure, as there is special provision in the Imperial Act of Confederation (the British North America Act) to preserve minority rights even when they did not exist at the time of union, provided such rights were afterwards established in any Province by local legislation.

It is needless to say that if the majority had continued to be Catholic there would never have been any attempt to interfere with the rights of the Protestant minority. The example of Quebec is before us to prove that such would be the case.

It is still within memory that, before the British North America Act was passed, there was a demand made by the Protestants of Lower Canada for certain improvements in their status, and a bill for the purpose of establishing these improvements was introduced into the Dominion Parliament, when it became certain that the Confederation Act would become law. The legislators from Lower Canada were quite prepared to aid in passing this bill, but as soon as the Catholics of Upper Canada showed that they wished for amendments to the school laws as they then existed, it was found that the Protestant legislators from Upper Canada raised so many objections that there was no hope of amelioration in favor of the Catholics. Then it was that the Lower Canadians declared that one-sided legislation in the Dominion Parliament could not be tolerated, and the bill for the Lower Canadian Protestants had also to be withdrawn.

It was thus, by the act of the Ontario Protestants, that their co-religionists of Quebec were thrown entirely upon the good-will of the Quebec Catholic majority to obtain the amendments they desired. But the Quebec majority were generous. As soon as Confederation was established, and the Provinces were once more independent of each other, the Catholic Legislature proceeded to grant to the Protestant minority the amendments they sought to be added to the school law. If the Catholics of Manitoba had continued to be the majority of the Province, there is no doubt they would have been as generous as their co-patriots of Quebec. But the matter turned out differently. When Manitoba was thrown open to settlement from the rest of Canada, the Protestants soon preponderated, and as soon as they found themselves sufficiently preponderating, their first thought—or at least the first thought of their representatives—was to sweep away the rights of Catholics by the legislation of 1890-91.

The highest Court of Appeal in the British Empire has declared that the compact has been broken, and we say, on behalf of the Catholics of Canada, that the grievance must be redressed. We are satisfied that Manitoba

itself shall restore what it has unjustly taken away, if the Manitobans think proper to retrace their steps, but if they are not pleased to do this, the Dominion must, and we have no doubt will, act, or, if necessary, the petition for redress must go to the foot of Her Majesty's throne. We have no doubt that the redress we demand shall be obtained.

It is to be deplored that several of the Ontario Protestant Church synods have interfered to prevent redress being given; but these interferences cannot be allowed to stand in the way of justice being attained, and we shall not give up the fight until it be done.

There have been published within the last few days some misleading statements by Mr. E. D. Armour, of Toronto, regarding the inefficiency of the Catholic schools of Manitoba. We shall deal with this matter in another issue. Here we shall only remark in answer to Mr. Armour and the Globe newspaper, that it is not true, as they pretend, that the Catholics of Manitoba wish to perpetuate any deficiencies of the old school system. Everything human has its defects, and we should all aim at correcting such. But it is not by trampling upon Catholic rights that defects are to be corrected.

"THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN THE NIAGARA PENINSULA."

By Dean Harris.

This valuable contribution to our historical literature will be received with joy and gratitude by all who have aught of reverence for the memory of the men who laid well and deeply the foundations of our prosperity and civilization. When Dean Harris gave with becoming diffidence and modesty his first work to the public it was quite apparent that he was no novice in the art of skilful writing and no stranger to laborious and impartial research. The patience of faithful investigation and the faculty of robbing cold historical data in the warm and living vesture of picturesque diction are qualities that must be possessed by the historian. We have no hesitation in saying that Dean Harris' claim to both cannot be denied, and we cherish the hope that the facile pen that has described so well the goodly deeds of the men who lived and died in the work of civilizing and Catholicizing the Niagara Peninsula will ere long re-write another page of Canadian history.

We can readily imagine the labor entailed by the task. The narration of the events from 1626 to 1695 is one calculated to test the patience and perseverance of the historian, and he only whom obstacles cannot frighten and for whom tireless toil has exquisite charms may hope to do it successfully. And it has been done successfully by the Dean of St. Catharines. Wonder it is that, with the cares and responsibilities of a parish, he should have found leisure to compose such a valuable work. Many must have been the interruptions, but the love of his country's past was the source whence he drew the strength that kept him faithful to his purpose of binding up for future use its records, scattered here and there in libraries and known only to archivists, and to preserve the traditions that are still lingering in the memory of a generation that is passing away.

Worthy indeed of portrayal is this glorious past, gemmed with the deeds that shine pure and lustrous with the light of self-sacrifice. Fascinating and instructive is the story, and we forget our trials and cares in the perusal of the lives of the old pioneers. Back from our eyes is swept the veil of years, and we see them, soldier and priest, in the forest primeval. Some are strong and athletic, while others seem weak and ill-fitted physically to endure privation. But the earnest expression and undefinable nobility of countenance tell us that we are in the presence of men—not men, indeed, who are swayed, like aspens, by every wind of interest, but men who are ready to do and die for principle. And away they go, to feel hunger and thirst—and to count it as nothing—to suffer and to die as gladly as ever one goes to a marriage feast. It seems all so unreal to a self-satisfied and grasping generation. Visionaries, it terms them, but visionaries, as they are the salt of the earth. They are beacon-lights to lofty endeavor and well-springs of enthusiasm. But they were heroes, and death oftentimes most cruel could alone stop their onward march. Heroes, indeed, silent and faithful, enthusiastic and earnest, who lived and died martyrs to the noblest cause that can enlist the service of human energy, long years ago in Canadian forests. And as we look in spirit