

Duncan Robertson

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The Canadian Evangelist.

"GO . . . SPEAK . . . TO THE PEOPLE ALL THE WORDS OF THIS LIFE."

Vol. V., No. 17.

TORONTO, JANUARY 1st, 1891.

\$1 PER YEAR IN ADVANCE.

THE Canadian Evangelist

is devoted to the furtherance of the Gospel of Christ; and pleads for the union of all believers in the Lord Jesus in harmony with his own prayer recorded in the seventeenth chapter of John, and on the basis set forth by the Apostle Paul in the following terms: "I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beseech you to walk worthily of the calling wherewith ye were called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long suffering, forbearing one another in love; giving diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, even as also ye were called in one hope of your calling: one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all."—Eph. iv. 1-6.

Creeds, Divine And Human.

Which of the two ought we to prefer? There is a composition, said to be of very ancient date, called the Apostles' Creed. So far as I remember it, it contains Scriptural truth. But there is one better deserving the name found in the 4th chap. of the Epistle to the Ephesians, the first six verses; because we know it was written by an Apostle. It has a perfect number of items, seven. The writer, let us say the inditer, evidently assumes that the saints and faithful ones holding under the Head those seven truths ought to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. The points are: 1. One body; 2. One Spirit; 3. One Hope; 4. One Lord; 5. One Faith; 6. One Baptism; 7. One God and Father of all. These points, being held intelligently and reverently by any number of saved men and women, are in every way calculated to bind them together in peace and love. But should any one want a more extensive creed, let us note what the same writer prescribes in order to make men wise unto salvation (2 Tim. iii. 14-17), namely, the holy Scriptures; through faith in Christ Jesus. He says 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 perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

Now we cannot desire for ourselves or for others more than perfection. We are not Romanists and therefore do not believe in works of supererogation.

It has as we know been the dream of Kings, Popes, Cardinals, Archbishops and others to promulgo such statements, called articles of belief, that every one must give assent to no less, no more than they contain, on pain of excommunication. A good way of making intellectual and spiritual dwarfs and hypocrites. No one has yet invented a cast iron skull-cap that can be made to fit every head. The Lord never intended that every head should be of the same size and shape; whether a physical or a mental head.

Your correspondent, "C. G.," seems to be afraid of Baptist churches becoming an "omnium gatherum for Christendom." I am afraid that if all Baptist churches contain many strong advocates for human creeds that honor will not fall to them. All who acknowledge the "One Lord" must desire that his prayer (John xvii. 20-21) "Neither pray I for these alone but for them also who shall believe on Me through their work, that they all may be one," etc., should be accomplished.

I think it must be evident to every thoughtful person that so long as the various Christian bodies have creeds, all of them diverse in some respects from all others, and many of them in opposition and antagonism to all others;

and so long as these creeds are terms of communion, Christians in those bodies can never become united, nor the Lord's petition be answered. Does it not then follow that all human creeds should be abandoned and in their place one that all can unite on be adopted, namely, God's word. This would be a beginning towards unity.

"But," C. G. asks, "Must we not allow the church liberty to defend her self against the leaven of false doctrine, etc.?" I would say the church has that power. Read Paul to Titus iii. 10. "A man that is a heretic, after the first and second admonition reject." And I Cor. v. 11, when he instructs that if any one called a brother be guilty of certain vices he mentions the church should not eat with him. And in many other places there are instructions to keep the church pure.

It is plain to me that no one is authorized to impose his mere opinions on another. One who wishes to do so might do well to remember that this question might be put to him: "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant?"

If individuals in place of studying God's word for themselves choose to buy a document called "The New Hampshire Confession of Faith," or any other creed to try themselves by, I suppose that liberty should be allowed, but they have no right to impose it on others. For my own part, should any church ask me as a term of admittance among them to subscribe to any human compilation, I should respectfully decline. Even if I thought it was correct, I should inquire by what authority such a condition was imposed. And if answered that a convention or union required it, I would reply that I acknowledge nothing short of divine authority. I might think the points all right; another of Christ's freemen might not think so. I should feel it wrong in me to countenance any such usurped power.

So it just comes to this: Test a would-be brother by God's word and his obedience to the commands of Christ. If he is thought to be deficient in knowledge, instruct him; if unwilling to obey, exhort him. So will God be honored and men saved.

I would kindly suggest to all lovers of human creeds whether they may not be infringing on the prerogative of the Lord, and whether the germs of persecution for conscience' sake may not be in their minds because they feel they are backed by numbers and power.

WM. ELLIOT.

337 Sherbourne St., Toronto, December, 1890.

—Canadian Baptist.

[We have no little pleasure in republishing from the Canadian Baptist the above article which is so complete an endorsement of the platform of THE CANADIAN EVANGELIST as presented in the statement which is kept standing on this page. Note these words: "I should feel it wrong in me to countenance any such usurped power." As we point out on page four of this issue, every church in the Baptist denomination, and every member in every church, "countenances such usurped power," even though they have not themselves formally adopted "The New Hampshire Confession of Faith." The last sentence in the article seems to confirm what "C. G." maintains, that the "lovers of human creeds" are "backed by numbers and power" in the Baptist denomination. "'Tis true 'tis pity and pity 'tis, 'tis true.'"—ED. EVANGELIST.]

To be engaged in opposing wrong affords, under the conditions of our mental constitution but a slender guarantee for being right.

In and About Toronto

Because of absence from the city and other minor reasons nothing has been written under the above caption for some length of time. The omission, no doubt, has given more pleasure than the insertion would have given, hence your readers should be congratulated upon the extra enjoyment they have had, and they should continue to express that satisfaction by continued and renewed efforts to increase the circulation of THE EVANGELIST.

I do not purpose, at this time, going farther back in the history of events than the first of last October, and I am led thus far back by the letter of the Secretary of Committee on Education, which appeared in your last issue. In that report we have a record of the beginning of what is hoped to develop into an affiliated college. That being the case I wish to direct the attention of your readers to the Provincial University, the institution with which we desire to be connected, and this I can do best by giving a few extracts from the annual address delivered by Sir Daniel Wilson on Convocation day, 1st of October, 1890. Were it not for trespassing too much upon your space I would give the whole address.

The "residence" began as follows:—

Whatever events may hereafter give prominence to exceptional periods in the annals of this university, the present year must ever stand out conspicuously in its history as an *annus mirabilis*. That we are to-day indebted to the courtesy of an affiliated institution for the hall in which to inaugurate the work of another year recalls to us—if any remembrances could be needed—that the stately buildings in which the work of the university had progressed from comparatively humble beginnings and a limited attendance to its present numbers and efficiency stands roofless and defaced by fire. But happily stone walls and architectural adornments do not constitute the essentials of university life. Deplorable as the calamity has proved, the vigor of the institution was not to be palsied by a disaster that reduced to ruin the stately pile in which its graduates took so just a pride. It has been accredited to us that we did not despair; and had we ever been tempted to do so the generous sympathy so promptly extended to us by liberal benefactors was well calculated to revive the most faint-hearted.

He then dwells upon the world-wide sympathy so promptly extended and so gratefully received; then he speaks of the needs of the university, and the bright prospects of supplying all those in the immediate future, and then closes this part of his address thus:—

Thus we see a silver lining to the cloud that seemed for a time to gather over us with portentous gloom. Stimulated to increased energy, and encouraged by the generous sympathy that our calamity has called forth, our aim is now to place the university on a footing adequate to the great work that lies before it, and to the requirements of our young Dominion, only now entering on the occupation of the vast territory out of which is to be fashioned a greater Britain worthy of the motherland through whom its title is derived.

How much yet remains for us to do in the very initial stage of development is shown by the conclusion arrived at by Dr. George Dawson, after years of exploration, that there is still an area of fully five hundred thousand square miles east of the Mackenzie river; in

within the line of the great fertile belt, of which as yet we know less than of the interior of Africa. The teeming population of the Old World look with longing eyes to this land of promise, with its millions of acres needing only willing hands to make them yield golden harvests. The student of history turns with eager expectancy from ransacking the buried records of decayed monarchies to survey a virgin continent on which the British colonist has already sketched out prospective States—the Saskatchewan, the Alberta, the Keewatin, the Assiniboia, and the Athabaska—of the twentieth century. It is on those who are now in training in our universities, and being equipped and armed by high culture and wise discipline for the work that lies before them, that in no small degree it will depend whether or not the sanguine dream of the philosophic idealist shall be realized, and—

There shall be sung another golden age.
The rise of Empire and of Arts:
Inspiring history's illumined page
By wisest heads and noblest hearts.

The opening up of this vast wilderness as a new centre of civilization gives a practical significance to the widening of the intellectual horizon and the expansion of knowledge in so many unlooked for aspects. In whatever light we view it, the practical importance of higher education, as a grand factor in material progress, becomes ever more apparent, and the economic value of applied science is already so universally appreciated that scarcely any limit can be set to the demands for ampler services. And while we are looking with sanguine eagerness on this birth-time of our own Western domain, the old East is waking up to a new life, and testifies its sympathy in the trials of our own university. Europe and America are paying back their debt to the birth lands of letters and civilization. Schools and colleges are being planted in British India, and letters and science receive a hearty encouragement in Japan, at the very time when the recovered tablets and inscriptions of Babylonia and Egypt disclose evidences of an Eastern civilization dating fifteen centuries before the Christian era, and startle us by their novel elucidations of sacred and profane history.

With our excellent public schools accessible to all, our free libraries, our unshackled printing press—unshackled even by an honest respect for the author's right of property in his work of pen and brain—knowledge is widely diffused, but it is mainly superficial. Smatterers in science cavil at revealed truth, and amateur newspaper correspondents undertake to solve problems that have baffled the profoundest thinkers. The vastness of the ever-widening field of knowledge stands out in startling contrast to all that the most gifted instructor or the ardent student can overtake in the brief years of an undergraduate course; but this at least we seek to secure, that whatever is done here shall be thoroughly done. And if among the contestants in the intellectual arena there are some to whom knowledge brings its own reward, the world needs its thinkers no less than its doers. It is their province to lay broad and deep the foundations of abstract truth, on which their successors build for purposes of utility. Without them the marvellous utilizations of science for the daily service of man which pre-eminently characterize the present age would have been impossible. No nation can flourish by a trafficking in knowledge as the mere outfit for professional life. Yet I am persuaded, from long experience, that no training is better qualified to fit men for many practical duties than the persistent diligence of systematized study in any of the departments of our university honour work. It is accordingly with peculiar pleasure that I note among the acquisitions of the present year the founding of the Ram-

say scholarship in political economy, the gift of one of our leading bankers, in evidence of his recognition of the practical utility of the training now given in this university in the liberal course of studies embraced in the Department of Political Science.

PRACTICAL VALUE OF A LIBERAL EDUCATION.

That higher education in a young country like this—as, indeed, to some considerable extent in all countries—will be turned to account for professional training is inevitable. We may recognize the charms of divine philosophy as "a perpetual feast of nectared sweets," but the prosaic realities of life forbid us sitting down to its enjoyment. The revolution that has marked the progress of school education in Ontario during the last thirty years has been traceable in no small degree to the training which fitted our graduates to step into the vacant masterships of its high schools and collegiate institutes. In spite of the crusade against professional training, which led to the abolition of medical and law faculties for a time, the practical value of a liberal education has been attested by the honorable rank won by our graduates in the learned professions. As instructors in colleges, schools of science, and of medicine, they have reflected honor on their Alma Mater; while in the legal profession they have not only distinguished themselves at the bar, but among them are already numbered a chief justice, a chancellor, vice chancellor, and eminent judges. In the recent provisions for the efficient equipment of the departments of biology and physiology it is inevitable that the students of medicine will largely profit by the advantages thus brought within their reach. It was a practical commentary on the inexpediency of abolishing the medical faculty of King's College that the medical schools of Ann Arbor, Buffalo, and Montreal were the resorts of hundreds of students from Ontario, seeking advantages there that they could not command at home. It is in the interest of all that our medical men should be thoroughly educated; and I have little fear that the people of Ontario will sympathize in a protest against the improvements in the department of biology, lest perchance the students of medicine avail themselves of its advantages, and so some half educated practitioners may be superseded by men thoroughly informed in the science of their profession. Our aim in the faculty of arts is high culture in its truest sense; the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake, and wholly independent of mere professional requirements. But if a result of such training is to secure able and scholarly teachers for our schools; for our bankers men of clearer insight into the principles on which the wealth of nations depends; for lawyers and judges men of cultivated intellect, trained in wide fields of philosophic speculation, and taught to control the seductive powers of rhetoric by the highest laws of ethics; and for physicians men who have advanced beyond the stage of clinical instruction, and as scientific experts can render a reason for the course that they pursue, this is assuredly a public gain.

SPECIAL NEEDS OF THE PROVINCE AND DOMINION.

In the recent revision of the scheme of studies prescribed by the university in all the departments of letters and science, while availing ourselves of the experience of other universities, the special needs of our province and the Dominion have been kept steadily in view. Canada has rare and exceptional advantages. As a people we share in all the grand historic past of the motherland, while we enjoy an immunity from the impediments involved in some of time's bequests to her. We inherit what it scarce seems hyperbolic to speak of as a boundless territory,