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Church Observer.

"One Faith,—One Lord,—One Baptism."

MONTREAL, WEDNESDAY, DEC. 28, 1870.

"A Happy New Year."

A FEW WORDS ABOUT OURSELVES.

We have reason to believe that the discontinuance of the OBSERVER, which with this number completes its third year of issue, would be generally regretted. The flattering testimonials which we are constantly receiving satisfy us that we should be throwing away an invaluable means of serving the Church, and one which has been secured by considerable pecuniary outlay. To almost innumerable inquiries as to whether the OBSERVER will continue to be issued after the expiration of the current year, we are happy now to be able to give an affirmative reply. We may, in passing, remark that a Church contemporary has shown a rather unseemly eagerness to settle this point for us, by giving the public in various ways to understand that there was no doubt that the OBSERVER would die with 1870. Were we to expose the matter as it perhaps deserves, we should probably do more damage to our contemporary than he can possibly hope to have done us by singing our requiem before our death.

As most of our readers know, the OBSERVER has hitherto been under the editorial supervision of a Clerical and Lay Board. This arrangement, which was perhaps indispensable at the commencement, and which has doubtless done much to secure for this paper the confidence which it enjoys, is now found to be in some respects inconvenient. A moment's reflection will convince any reader that it is impossible for a journal to discuss questions fearlessly and thoroughly, when its utterances have previously to obtain the sanction of a number of persons who if capable of forming an opinion at all will be sure to have a diversity of opinion on the subject canvassed. It must not be supposed, however, that the change of management which has been determined on has been necessitated by serious disagreement among the members of the Committee of Supervision. On the contrary, we are astonished on reviewing the three years of associated labour to see how few and unimportant have been the differences of opinion. Still, it is thought that the time has arrived for placing the OBSERVER on a different footing. Those who have not had the misfortune to be involved in a newspaper enterprise, or who have never come into contact with those who have, seem generally to entertain the idea that "running a newspaper," is the most unworldly thing in the world. They are astonished that editors should from time to time make pathetic appeals for payment of subscriptions in arrear; they are unutterably amazed that the publisher should send accounts when the contract to supply the paper for a specified time expires. They imagine that newspapers, like bears in winter, or toads in granite, live without "visible means of support." This, we beg to assure all our readers, is a mistake. To produce a newspaper it is

necessary to use such material things as pens, ink, paper, type, presses and steam, to say nothing of brains, all which involve expense—perhaps more than nine-tenths of our readers have the slightest idea of. These few words of explanation will enable our friends to understand why it has been resolved to place the OBSERVER under an individual proprietorship, as well as under an individual editorial management. A journal's chances of thriving must be greater when in the hands of one proprietor to whom its success is gain, and its non-success loss, than when it is owned by a number of persons to whom its pecuniary condition is an infinitesimally-small matter. The effect of the transfer which has been made will doubtless be to raise the character of the journal and make its position at once satisfactory to the gentleman who has taken it and to the public whom it will be his interest to serve.

As to the principles of which the OBSERVER will be the exponent, it is only necessary to say that it will be, as heretofore, the staunch defender of the doctrines and polity of the Protestant Church of England. It will expose and denounce every attempt to bring our communion into closer resemblance to or connection with the apostate Church of Rome. Evangelical truth, that which our Reformed Church has ever held, the CHURCH OBSERVER will consistently and fearlessly maintain.

After a careful consideration of the question of ways and means, it has been decided to enlarge the OBSERVER to the size of the Montreal Daily Witness. This will allow of an addition of nearly one-half to the reading matter hitherto given. The OBSERVER will be printed on a double-royal sheet of good quality, and, it is believed, will be far superior in appearance to any religious paper heretofore published in British North America.

The Editorial management has been entrusted to a gentleman of considerable experience and established reputation in secular and religious journalism, who will be aided by a numerous staff.

Arrangements have been made to obtain from all parts of the country the latest and most valuable church news, as it is intended to make the OBSERVER indispensable to every churchman who desires to be thoroughly "posted" on all that concerns the Church of England in Canada.

The leading articles will, as a rule, be short and lively, few readers caring to plod through a column of dry facts and drier reflections, however sound the first and sagacious the second.

Each number will contain choice selections from the best English and American publications, tales for the young, poetry, extracts from our old divines, and a concise summary of the events of the week. We hope to render efficient help to the clergyman in his study and his parish, to the Sunday-school teacher in his preparation for and direction of his class, to the sick visitor and tract distributor in their important labours,—in short, to all into whose hands we may come.

It is probable that the new arrangements will necessitate a few days' delay in the issue of the first number for the coming year, which will probably not appear till towards the close of the first week in January.

1870.

Even to persons who are unaccustomed to serious reflection the closing hours of the year are suggestive of solemn and affecting thought. The merry chimes of the Christmas bells at once invite us to rational festivity and to equally reasonable meditation. At once we greet the loving friends whom an All-Wise Providence has spared to us, and think of those who, with equal, though often inscrutable, wisdom

have been removed. We recall with thankfulness the mercy-strewn years along which we have travelled, and we gird ourselves for what of our brief pilgrimage remains. It is rather in review than in anticipation that this season of the year is profitable. What answer can we return to such questions as,—Am I, as the result of a year's spiritual privileges, more conformed to the mind of Christ, and more resigned to the will of God? Has the world's harshness soured me, its smile fascinated me, and its impurity defiled me; or have I been "kept from the evil?" Have I striven to answer every call of God, and has each known failure caused that acute pain which indicates spiritual life? Has there been, and is there now, a determination to live wholly to God, a presentation of self on that altar which sanctifieth the meanest gift? Is the bent of my soul more decidedly Godward and heavenward than it was twelve months ago? Questions such as these have doubtless already forced themselves on the mind of each of our readers; the result is with their consciences and God.

The close of the year furnishes an equally suitable occasion for observing the works of God in the world and in His church. To future historians the year 1870 will afford abundant material. The overthrow of personal government in France, the re-establishment of the Germanic Empire, the inauguration of a new dynasty in Spain, the revival of the Eastern Question, the ruin of the Papal Sovereignty, the union of Italy from the Alps to the Adriatic—these are a few of the changes which have come about during the brief period under review. On this continent there have been few events of special importance. Continued peace, abundant harvests, friendly relations with our neighbours, have been among the national mercies vouchsafed us by our gracious God.

It is manifestly a mistake to classify events as secular and religious, since every event which some would place in the latter category has its secular aspect, while such as are judged to belong to the former have their religious bearings. Religion is for man as man—for man in all his relations, and at all seasons,—is intended to penetrate the inmost parts of his being, and to hallow every moment of his life. Adopting, however, this conventional distinction, under protest, we may say that the religious events of the past year have been of almost unparalleled importance. The Church of Rome has added another to its long list of mock Councils, and another to its creed of blasphemies. As if eager to demonstrate that its system is the symbolical "man of sin," whose perdition is foretold in the inspired page, it has left nothing unassumed which could render the identification complete. The pseudo-heir of St. Peter's crook and keys is now the infallible head of the Roman Church, whose faith rests solely on his *ipse dixit*.

The exchange of courtesies between the representatives of our own church and of that of the East has led some amongst us to hope for and desire more intimate relations between the two communions—a consummation which those who are best informed think anything but desirable, and which the frank reply of the English Primate will probably go far to avert.

The orthodox non-Episcopal denominations have evinced increased vigour and influence. However earnestly we may long to have these brethren "not only almost but altogether such as" we are in the matter of ecclesiastical polity, yet so far as "Christ is preached" by them we rejoice—yea, and will rejoice.

The Unitarian Convention, held in New York in November, has demonstrated the impossibility of real union between

churches which, while nominally Christian, do not hold, "whole and entire," the Scriptural truth concerning the nature and office of the Christ of God. In connection with this may be mentioned the deplorable fact that a Unitarian minister was invited to assist in the important work of revising our translation of the Holy Scriptures, a circumstance which elicited a remonstrance so unanimous and energetic as to prove beyond dispute our Church's general soundness in the faith.

That among so many thousands of English clergymen the *ignis fatuus* of unhallowed speculation should lead some far astray is not a matter of wonder. The case of the Rev. Charles Voysey, *quondam* Vicar of Healaugh, has, we think, attracted undue attention. It is right that such men should be called to account for their questionable teaching, but we need not distress ourselves with the thought that the idiosyncracies of an individual like Mr. Voysey can inflict lasting damage on our venerable and divinely-founded church.

The singular judgment of the Dean of Arches in the Bennett case caused great joy in the Ritualist camp, but as the case has been appealed to the Privy Council, it may turn out that the exultation was premature. The temporary triumph of the Romanizing party, moreover, has been more than counterbalanced by the judgment of the Privy Council in the case of the Rev. Mr. Mackonochie, whose disgraceful evasions of the law have been ruthlessly exposed to public view and scorn. In this, as in many other cases, the Church Association has done signal service to the cause of Protestant truth. On the whole, Evangelical churchmen may review the ecclesiastical events of the year with thankfulness. There can be no doubt that the reaction, long inevitable, has already set in.

In our own branch of the Church of England there have been few events calling for special remark. There is reason to believe that in all our dioceses—equally in our large city churches and in our remote mission fields—the work of God is being prosecuted with diligence and success. There is a truer appreciation of the extent of the work which has been entrusted to us by the Head of the Church, and a greater eagerness to fill each opening as it appears. A list of the churches, large and small, erected during the year; of the additional services held by our devoted and self-denying clergy, and of the increased efforts for the spiritual instruction of the young, would show that there is cause for profound gratitude to Him who is "the Head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all."

THE DEMON OF PROTESTANTISM.

Nine-tenths of our readers will suppose that the above heading is either an extraordinary typographical error, or a quotation from one of Cardinal Cullen's ranting pastorals. We hasten to assure them that it is neither, but simply an epithet used editorially in the columns of the *Church Weekly*, an influential organ of the Protestant Episcopal Church. How the conductors of that journal, who we believe are clergymen of the sister church, can reconcile themselves to association with a body which is avowedly under the influence of "the Demon of Protestantism," is a psychological puzzle which some of our readers may try their wits upon at this season, when riddles are in request. It is not often that men voluntarily lay themselves open to suspicion of acting under diabolical influence, and earning a livelihood by demoniac aid. Perhaps, however, the writers in the *Church Weekly* use the ugly word "demon" in its Socratic sense; if so, they might condescend to obviate the