

The Christian Conference at Toronto seems to have been a great success, large numbers attending and all yielding to the spirit of hearing and devotion. But it is much to be regretted that the harmony was marred on the first day of meeting. Mr. Denovan was invited to speak on "The Believer in Christ and Christ in the Believer," and it is not to be wondered at that some doctrinal matters were touched upon. How they could be avoided I can hardly see—for if a speaker holds a truth, he must have some theory about it; that is, some method of stating it. He cannot go on repeating the fact, he must explain it, say what it is, and how to be experienced—and then his creed comes out, be it that of Calvin, or some other man. Dr. Potts demurred to Mr. Denovan's statement of doctrine, saying they had "met for the discussion of spiritual and practical topics," but how "spiritual and practical topics" can be discussed without allowing a man to say how he understands these things, I do not know. The statement of any religious fact is in itself and of itself a doctrine.

Dr. Mackay, in attempting to "smooth things over," said, "let us present the truth, not from a Calvinistic point of view, or a Methodistic point of view, but from the Lord's point of view;" but surely the Calvinists believe that their point of view is also the Lord's point of view; and the Methodists believe they are equally right. Why should Dr. Mackay assume that the two bodies had points of view that were not the Lord's. Dr. Mackay told them that while at the Conference they should endeavour to "look at everything as Christ would have them look at it." Exactly, and wouldn't it be as well to advise them to continue doing so after the Conference as well as during its sittings? And might not Dr. Potts' advice "to rise above denominations" in the Christian Conference be also taken as extending beyond it?

But surely Dr. Mackay is wrongly reported in the *Globe* of October 20th; for, in speaking on the text "For I through the law am dead to the law that I might live unto God," he was made to say—after speaking of man's having self at the centre before conversion and God at the centre after conversion—"Truly the history of man was of development. In the Garden of Eden man sold his God for a bit of fruit. Rationalists said that man needed no law, no guidance, no teaching; but man's history contradicted this theory." I should be glad to know what Rationalists have propounded that theory. I have never seen it anywhere. It must be contained in some book or other, and I am desperately anxious to know where it is.

But what follows as given from Dr. Mackay *must* be a mistake:—"God himself had tried Rationalism, but when it was fairly tried the people who had been left to govern themselves were swept away with the flood." It can never be that a man stood before the people and told them that the God of mercy and truth acted upon Rationalistic principles, as defined by Dr. Mackay—that is, left the earth with "no law, no guidance, no teaching," and when they failed to govern themselves swept them away with a flood! It would be nothing short of blasphemy, and I hope Dr. Mackay will lose no time in correcting the report.

Nothing is gained in the way of clearing up the matter by reading on, for Dr. Mackay is made to say that God having failed as a Rationalist:—"After the flood God tried to govern man with a ritual, but this, too, proved a failure, and the Romanists still sought to do the same thing by a feeble imitation of God's ritual." The teaching of the Doctor was, that God had made an effort to save men by various experiments, which failed until man's redemption "was accomplished in a person—God manifest in flesh—Christ on the Cross." I believe in man's redemption by "God manifest in the flesh—Christ on the Cross" as intensely as Dr. Mackay, but I hope never to caricature and dishonour the All-wise and All-loving God in that way.

The Fisheries Question is protean in its shapes. Now we have a long letter from Mr. Secretary Evarts to the United States Minister in London raising some troublesome points of international law. Newfoundland has a law against fishing on Sunday which some United States fishermen disregarded. Thereupon the inhabitants of Fortune Harbour fell upon them and beat them, as any strict Sabbatarian, himself forbidden to fish, would have done; the consequence being that as the Americans could not cure their fish the season's catch was spoiled. Mr. Evart's asks whether Provincial legislation can restrict or define Treaty rights, and claims that regulations for the fishery can be made only by a joint commission. But then what about that rule of international law that States have jurisdiction over aliens? Does Mr. Evarts propose a joint commission to regulate punishment of any citizen of the United States who may be brought before the Recorder drunk and disorderly? And at all events the British fishermen are subject to the same regulation about Sunday fishing. As to the manner in which the Newfoundlanders showed their respect for the Sabbath, that is another question. They are very primitive, if not Scriptural, in their ways.

Mr. Edison is, in truth, becoming a terror to the civilised community, as evinced by the following letter written by "A Ruined and Distracted Gas Shareholder" to the editor of the *World*:—

"What trade can be safe while this terrible gentleman (Mr. Edison) is at large? Time is flying, and even now, having completed the ruin of the gas companies, he may be turning his diabolical attention to his telephone, which at no distant date shall involve in the same fate unlucky holders of telegraph shares; or he may be perfecting the microphone, which shall make all privacy a thing of the past, and which, if rendered invisible and placed in the council room or in a Minister's pocket, shall insure for Cabinet *secrets* a publicity not hitherto attained even when Cabinet Ministers have been near relations. Who knows how long one may count upon having one's thought to oneself, and whether some further development of this machine may not enable it to register our passing ideas as well as our slightest movements, and to record the throbbings of so minute and impalpable a thing as the brain of an Edlin with the same ease as it now makes audible the footsteps of a fly? Armed with such weapons, the malignant magician will have no difficulty in frustrating any designs against his safety formed by helpless mortals. Everybody must see the necessity of prompt and decisive action, therefore. Meanwhile, I am off to Capel-court to sell my shares for what they will fetch, and leave the question as to how to "bell the cat" to be solved by wiser and cooler heads.

The electric light is causing a sensation in England; three more companies having been formed in the last week or two, with an aggregate capital of £205,000. Those who hold Gas shares are wondering whether to hold on or sell. That gas as a means of producing light and heat will soon cease to have any commercial value is not at all likely. But the "Electric Light Company" will doubtless have something to offer the public—and doubtless the swindlers will make something out of it.

The Directors of the Glasgow Bank who have brought disaster and ruin upon so many families are to be treated as they deserve, the Crown authorities having decided to charge them with embezzlement, in addition to fraud, falsehood, and imposition. Under this indictment, bail will be refused, and they will have to stand their trial as felons. They will soon begin to understand a little of the agony they have caused others to suffer.

Pope Leo XIII. is devoted to learning, and shows it in a practical way by spending a considerable sum of money in re-arranging the valuable Vatican library at his own expense. Besides money he gives time to the work, for since his accession to the Pontificate he has ransacked all the disused chambers of the palace, and has himself formulated a plan for the thorough arrangement of all its artistic and literary treasures.

The Roman Catholic Church has lost a worthy son and a sturdy champion by the death of Monseigneur Dupanloup. Born under the First Empire, he was a fiery patriot, and an ardent lover of the military glory achieved by the French under it. Having entered the priesthood under the Restoration, his sympathies were with the traditions of the old monarchy, under which, had it continued, he might have been a sturdy Gallican of the old type; but, the democracy coming into power, his imperious spirit spent itself in combatting the Liberals and the Democrats, and in asserting the rights of the Church against the University. He fought with courage and consistency. At Rome he opposed the Infallibles to the last in the Vatican Council, and only yielded when the decree was voted. He never acknowledged the Second Empire, but was a good Frenchman to the end. As a preacher he was a man of extraordinary power and brilliance: was a fierce polemical writer, and had a marvellous force of character.

The poor Emperor of Germany is *in extremis*. He has lost his strength, and seems to have no prospect of regaining it so as to be able to undertake the active duties of Government again. But he is not indifferent to what is going on in Germany; for, as reports go, he is greatly irritated against the majority in the Reichstag because of the attitude they have assumed on the Socialist Bill. But the saddest thing about it is to see the old man who in 1870 fought and defeated the great Napoleon III., covered the German flag with glory, and added rich Provinces to the Empire, unable to stroll a hundred yards without being surrounded on every side by an army of *mouchards* to protect him from assassination. Verily glory is but a vain show, and the ordinary is a thing to be thankful for.

It looks at last as if war between England and Russia is inevitable. The Berlin Treaty is already so much waste paper, and the Conservatives find it convenient to make but few references to the pompous speeches with which their great Earl regaled them a few months ago. The Jingo was able to bluster in a loud and magnificent way, but the bitter fact of a growing deficit has changed the key. It was right to threaten Russia, and to talk of a "spirited foreign policy," and to chastise the Ameer for his insolence, but it could be wished that the whole thing would cost less in the doing. EDITOR.