

Our Contributors.

WHY ARE CANADIAN PEOPLE PESSIMISTS?

BY KNOXONIAN.

Addressing a meeting of young Liberals the other evening, the Hon. G. W. Ross is reported to have said that "Canadians are pessimists beyond all the natives of the world," and he added that not one Canadian in five thousand appreciates the great resources of his own country. Perhaps the hon. gentleman might have said *ten* thousand, or even *twenty* thousand, instead of five.

What is a pessimist? Webster says a Pessimist is "one who complains of everything as being for the worst." After giving this definition he puts the word "rare" in brackets, but whether he means that the word is rare or that pessimists are rare is not quite clear. Had Webster lived in Canada he would not have said that either the word or the creature is rare.

A Pessimist is the antipodes of an Optimist. An Optimist looks on the bright side of everything and believes that all events are ordered for the best.

Given a beautiful, red-cheeked, toothsome apple with one small worm-hole in it. The Optimist looks at the apple and pays no attention to the worm hole; the Pessimist sees nothing but the hole.

A crowded passenger train leaves the station. The Optimist thinks that train will arrive safe and sharp on time. The Pessimist more than half expects that it will run off the track and kill at least one-half of the passengers.

A pessimistic citizen is one who continually disparages and belittles everything in his own town. Some times the pessimistic citizen praises other towns, but he does so simply for rhetorical effect. He praises them in order that he may contrast the other towns with his own—and make his own appear as mean as possible. If he lived in any one of the others, he would run it down as much as he runs down his present place of residence.

A pessimistic parishioner is one who constantly speaks ill of everything and everybody connected with the congregation in which he is supposed to worship. Whether a Pessimist can worship is a question which manifestly has two sides.

A pessimistic Presbyterian is a lovely Christian who constantly declares that the Presbyterian Church is on the inclined plane, the lower end of which reaches blue ruin or something worse. He holds that the colleges and the mission committee, and the ministers, and the elders, and the Sabbath schools, and the choirs, (the choirs especially), are all going to the bad. Sometimes the pessimistic Presbyterian praises other Churches, but he does so to make his own look bad. If he furnished the vinegar for any of the others he would like it as little as he likes the Presbyterian.

A pessimistic Canadian is one who delights in denouncing Canada. The people are bad, the climate is bad, the government is bad, the schools are bad, the colleges are bad, the roads are bad, everything is bad. We can remember several men who took up their abode in this country many years ago and denounced everything. When asked to give their grievances in detail, their principal trouble was that Canadian whiskey was not up to the mark. That was about the only grievance that had any real foundation.

A new arrival was once sent into an Ontario harvest-field to "rake and bind." Each time he stooped to bind a sheaf he muttered something. One of the harvesters asked him what he was muttering about. He replied that he was "*cursin' to the country*." Soon afterwards that same man owned a good farm and consumed more good victuals in one year than he could have procured for himself and his family in ten in his native country. He was a model pessimist. He could do nothing better than curse the country that gave his family a home and his children bread.

"*Cursin' to the country*" is the principal business of a pronounced Canadian pessimist.

In another paper we may discuss the question—Why are so many Canadians pessimists.

EXPENSIVE and gorgeous funerals do no good to the dead, and, when practised by the rich, they tempt the poor and those in moderate circumstances to a state of expenditure that they can ill afford.

MUSIC IN THE CHURCH.

MR. EDITOR,—The pulpit has this advantage over the press, that the statements there communicated, cannot be challenged; but when a preacher gives his discourse to the public press he lays himself open to criticism. The Rev. Dr. Kellogg has thrown down the gauntlet, in defence of instrumental music in congregational worship by publishing in the *Globe* newspaper his sermon on that subject. Taking as his text the first three verses of the ninety-second Psalm, he claims that the Holy Spirit therein teaches us three things, viz., 1. That it is a good thing to give thanks to God. 2. That it is a good thing to do so by singing. 3. That it is a good thing to do so with instruments of music. With the first two propositions we entirely concur, as they are fully endorsed by the New Testament Church; but the third, lacking this endorsement, leads to the inquiry, Was there any thing in the circumstances of the Church at the time this Psalm was penned, which justify the language of the Psalmist. We think there was.

It is acknowledged that the Church has existed under three dispensations, the Patriarchal, the Jewish, and the Christian, the mode of worship in each being quite distinct. Under the Patriarchal, it was of the simplest nature, prayer and sacrifice alone constituting the service, no priesthood no fixed times of worship, no special holy places. The head of the house was priest, the times of worship most likely morning and evening, and wherever the Patriarchs pitched their tents there they erected an altar to the Most High. The Jewish worship on the contrary was of a highly ceremonial form. While the Patriarchal was fitted to typify family worship, the Jewish typified social worship, the one pointing out a man's relation to God, the other, God's relation to His Church as a whole. The Patriarchal was thus swallowed up in the Jewish, the Patriarchal altar ceased, and one only altar established in a fixed locality. So with the Jewish when it had served the divine purpose. All that was essential to the exhibition of family and social worship was retained. All that was purely ceremonial or typical ceased in the Christian Church. Under each dispensation the Holy Spirit directed and guided His worshippers. As the Church developed from the Patriarchal, through the Jewish into the Christian dispensation, the needless parts were discarded, the mere individualism of the Patriarchal and the burdensome ritualism of the Jewish economies gave place to the purely spiritual worship of the Christian Church. Neither at Jacob's well, nor yet at Jerusalem, was the Church of God to be found, but Christian worship was to be in spirit and in truth.

The circumstances under which the Psalmist then wrote this third proposition were peculiar to the Jewish dispensation. It will be remembered that after the people of Israel were fairly settled in the land of Canaan, there would be a large number of the Levites thrown out of actual service. The priests the sons of Aaron alone were authorized to offer sacrifice, the Levites were only appointed to take charge of the Tabernacle, and assist the priests, in its journeyings from place to place. When therefore the Ark of the Covenant was permanently settled at Jerusalem, such services being no longer required, David, under Divine guidance, wisely appointed that other service should be given them. Thus, we read in the Book of Chronicles, that he appointed certain of them to conduct the ritual service of praise during the offering up of sacrifice, while others were appointed to take charge of the vessels and implements of service, and others to be doorkeepers, having charge of the gates of the temple. The circumstances of the Church thus fully account for the Psalmist's calling upon this Levitical choir to show forth the loving kindness of God on the psaltery, etc. But unless the Rev. Dr. is prepared to resume all the ritual of the Temple service, I fail to see how he can draw from his text the conclusion that because instrumental music was authorized under the Jewish dispensation, therefore it may be used under the Christian. otherwise the Levitical services would be in force in the Christian Church, but this is precisely what the Judaizing teachers taught, whom Paul denounced.

But it is asserted that what was a good thing under one dispensation of the Church cannot be a bad one under another. That if instrumental music was right and proper in the Jewish Temple it cannot be wrong in the Christian Church. Such, however, is not the teaching of God's Word. The Patriarchs were en-

couraged to rear up altars wherever they went, but in Jerusalem alone were the Israelites allowed to erect an altar to God. Polygamy and concubinage were permitted under the Patriarchal dispensation, but were discouraged under the Jewish, and condemned under the Christian dispensations. This principle of moral development is illustrated in the natural world, the insects which prey upon vegetable matter exist under three conditions, each totally differing from the other; yet still the same insect, the grub, becomes the caterpillar; the caterpillar, the butterfly; what was suited to the circumstances of the grub, ceased to suit the wants of the caterpillar; while the perfect moth or butterfly no longer confines its life to feeding on vegetable substances, crawling from leaf to leaf, but soars aloft on expanded wing extracting sweets from every opening flower. So the Church having passed through its initial state of first existence, is continued under a system of earthly and sensuous forms until, in the fulness of time, she shines forth with a risen Redeemer, clear as the sun, fair as the moon, and terrible as an army with banners. The Rev. Dr. says there is no express prohibition of the use of instrumental music in the New Testament, neither is there of the use of incense, nor the offering up of sacrifice. Indeed Paul himself on one occasion would seem to have countenanced the continuation of the ceremonial law, for we read that he went up to Jerusalem for the purpose of complying with the Levitical law, by paying the ransom required of every one having a vow such as he had taken at Cenchrea; he also authorised the circumcision of Timothy. But while no express prohibition was given, there was clear manifestation made of the change which had taken place in the circumstances of the Church by the decision of the council of Jerusalem, and by the apostle in his Epistle to the Hebrews, where he clearly shows that the ceremonial law having served its end, was eclipsed by the brighter light of the Gospel. Still we do not find any express prohibition of incense, sacrifice, or circumcision, any more than of the Jewish Sabbath; these were all superseded by other ordinances, but might yet be observed by the Christian Jew.

It is not distinct prohibition that is wanted to prevent the use of anything in Christian worship, it must have the sanction, clear or implied, of the Lord and His Apostles. The standards of our Church differ essentially on this point from those of the Episcopal Churches, they require a clear warrant for every doctrine or practice of the Church, while the latter permit of anything being introduced which is not strictly forbidden, indeed it is evident from the whole tenor of the New Testament that instrumental music was never contemplated in the worship of God under the Christian dispensation, but that simple vocal praise should continue to be the practice of the Church (as it did for 500 years), in fact the congregational worship of the Christian Church seems to have had for its base the synagogue service, rather than that of the Temple. It is therefore a mere begging of the question to say there is no prohibition of instruments in the service of the sanctuary; they necessarily were discarded along with the whole ceremonial ritual.

Our Lord and His disciples emphasized this in rendering to God the only true sacrifice of praise, the "fruit of the lips."

But not satisfied with seeking to restore the Jewish ritual into the Christian Church, the Rev. Dr. assumes that the Church triumphant in heaven will still engage in it. He says, "We do still read of the ordinance of praise with music." What he means by "with music" is rather indefinite, but it would appear by his quoting the words, "harping with their harps," that instruments of music somehow enter there. I have actually heard one advocate of his views solemnly say he believed there would be such in heaven. If so there must be labour and suffering there, an instrument such as now fills the place in St. James Square Church, which should be occupied by the preacher, could not be erected without much labour and expense. Metals had to be quarried, smelted, hammered, shaped, wood had to be hewn down, sawed, planed and fitted; painters had to do their part of the work, involving the production of various pigments drawn from the vegetable and the mineral worlds. All this labour and necessary suffering were required ere the idol which now profanes that place of worship was put there, and am I to believe that "the rest which remaineth" is to be