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London, Saturday, June 18, 1892.

THE OBLIGATION OF THE CHRISTIAN CREED.

A correspondent who signs himself "A Christian but not belonging to any church with a paid preacher," sends us a copy of a sermon of Rev. Jas. Henderson, of Carleton street Methodist Church, Toronto, with a request that we should state the Catholic view upon a certain passage in it.

The sermon itself seems to us to be one of the curiosities which are now-a-days so frequently uttered in the Protestant pulpit. It is true that towards the close it recommends a "godly life" as the means whereby we shall be able to appreciate the truths of Christianity. It recommends a "life of prayer," that we may fully realize the power of prayer, and so far the doctrine is sound, but as far as the body of the sermon is considered, the scope is rather to apologize for infidelity, while professedly it is a vindication of Christianity. Thus we are told that Paine, Carlyle and Voltaire were not in reality opposed to Christianity, but rather to human creeds which wrongly claim to be Christian-ity.

The passage on which our correspondent desires particularly that we should express an opinion is a consequence of Mr. Henderson's views on this point. He says:

"I hold that no Church has a right to suppress thought or obstruct progress in any direction. I also hold that while every Church has a right to formulate its own standards of teaching, every man has a right to construct his own creed. In fact you have no creed at all which is not the product of your own personal experience and thinking."

In reference to this our correspondent says:

"It seems to me that the Rev. Mr. Henderson's views are in harmony with the majority of Christians, especially that part of his doctrine in which he says: 'Every man has a right to construct his own creed.' This is my view of Christianity also, with this difference, however, that I do not think that Rev. Mr. Henderson should tax the people for his support; for of what use is a preacher if every man is at liberty to make his own creed?"

Our correspondent is in error in supposing that the majority of Christians accept Rev. Mr. Henderson's doctrine, which means in reality that man is at liberty, before God, to reject one or all of the doctrines of Christianity. A "majority" of Protestants may, and probably do, hold this view, but that is very far from constituting "a majority of Christians." Our correspondent seems to overlook the fact that the Catholic Church comprises within her fold probably seventy millions of adherents more than Protestantism and the Oriental schisms collectively. But we do not dispute his inference that if Rev. Mr. Henderson's teaching be true, preachers are unnecessary.

If the Rev. Mr. Henderson's teaching were correct, Christianity would have no doctrines essential to it. This doctrine is contrary to the terms of the commission given by Christ to His Apostles: "Going, therefore, teach ye all nations." (St. Matt. xxviii., 20.) If there were nothing to be taught, such a commission would be in vain; but we are told further that they must teach "all things whatsoever I (Christ) have commanded you."

Our Lord frequently appeals to His miracles as a proof that we must believe in Him. Would this be reasonable if there were no doctrines which we should believe? We need only refer to a single scriptural passage of this kind: (St. John x., 25, etc.)

"I speak to you, and you believe not; the works that I do in the name of my Father, they give testimony of me. But you do not believe because you are not of my sheep. My sheep hear My voice; and I know them, and they follow Me."

We would therefore suggest to our correspondent that the very fact that there is so much diversity of opinion among Protestants on the obligation of faith in the doctrines of Christianity, and the necessity of teachers, should convince him that he needs instruction.

tion from a pastor: not indeed from a member of a self-constituted pastorate, but from a pastorate which has by Apostolic succession authority to teach just as the Apostles received their commission from our Lord. We learn from Eph. iv., 11, etc., that Christ appointed a teaching body in His Church "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ (His Church.)"

that henceforth we be no more children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the wickedness of men, by cunning craftiness by which they lie in wait to deceive."

It is scarcely necessary for us to add that a duly authorized ministry is to be found only in the Catholic Church. From what we have said it will be seen that we are not to construct creeds for ourselves, but that we are bound to accept the creed which Christ Himself delivered to His Apostles to be taught "to every creature." Further, we are told that if any house or city receive not the Apostles while they are fulfilling their mission "it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorra in the last day than for that house or city."

It would appear from our correspondent's letter that he has a great aversion to pay anything for his religion. We fear that there are many who are not disposed to make any sacrifices for God's sake; but we would remind him that God Himself, under the Old Law, instituted a means of permanent support for the priesthood; and it is but just that they who devote themselves entirely to the spiritual care of their flocks should receive an adequate support.

AT HIS OLD WORK AGAIN.

"The spirit of mutual concession and brotherly love that has attended our Canadian Methodist Union, both in its consummation and operation, is a clear proof of the presence of the Holy Ghost in the movements of the Church of God." (Address of General Superintendent Carman of Canada to the General Methodist Conference held recently at Omaha.)

Undoubtedly that charity which "is patient, is kind, is not ambitious, thinketh no evil, endureth all things," is declared by God's apostle to be the greatest of spiritual gifts. Of this true charity there is not in America a clergyman of any denomination who has shown himself to be more deficient than the Rev. Dr. Carman.

The charity on which he passes such a eulogy is of quite a different character from that recommended by St. Paul. It is entirely a human substitute for true charity, and no more resembles the genuine article than does the charity which would assure a man who is in a burning house that he is secure from danger, resemble that which assures him that there is danger and would rescue him from it even at the peril of the rescuer's life.

It was not heretofore the custom of Protestant sectaries to assert that man is at liberty to reject what he pleases of divine revelation, and to form his creed at will. The doctrine of the Athanasian Creed, that whosoever believeth not the doctrines of the Catholic faith therein declared "shall without doubt perish everlastingly," is still found in the Anglican Prayer Book, and it was certainly the doctrine of the Methodists until recently. It is found also in the standards of Presbyterianism, and it was not until the ludicrous position of Protestantism in the attempts to convert the heathen to its various forms, the absurdity of the principle of private judgment which is the direct cause of existing dissensions, and the advantage gained by the unity of Catholicity in propagating itself, were put strongly before the Protestant mind, that Protestants commenced to look about for some theory which might make their system appear to be more reasonable than it really is; and with this purpose in view the new theory of Charity was invented, to the effect that charity means that we should regard all religions as about equally pleasing to Almighty God, and that the true Christian Church is simply an agglomeration of them all, with all their diversity.

This is the theory which Dr. Carman intends us to accept from his words above quoted from his Omaha address. It would be a doctrine very agreeable to human pride, if we were allowed to construct such a creed as we think proper, and to call it the Gospel of Christ; but we have this positive sentence from St. Paul to terrify us from making up new forms of religion to suit our fancies: JOHN

"But though we, or an angel from

heaven, preach a gospel to you besides that which we have preached to you, let him be anathema."

It is not a matter of charity to encourage those who cling to a false religion by putting before them the hope of salvation. It is the command of God that all men should embrace the truth. Those who reject God's truth cannot be excused from the sin of disobedience to this command, unless it be impossible for them to know the true religion; that is, unless they are in invincible ignorance of the truth. It is no more uncharitable for us to believe this than to believe that they who have disobeyed any other commandment of God shall be condemned. The law is "not of our making in one case or in the other, and the most charitable act we can do is to warn our neighbors not to disobey it. But Dr. Carman's pretended charity is not so universal as the above extract would lead us to believe. During the anti-Jesuit agitation which was raised by uncharitable and untruthful persons, there was no one more virulent and mendacious than Dr. Carman in the utterance of calumnies against the most zealous and pious religious orders of the Catholic Church; and at Omaha the doctor endeavored to make the persons of the United States as virulent as himself.

He also told the conference at Omaha that "the greatest danger to our Public school system and institutions and support of national freedom is the influence of a hierarchy from abroad, and the influence of time-serving politicians."

This sweeping insult to the politicians of the two countries is on a par with Mr. Carman's former diatribes against the most respected leading men of both political parties in Canada, when he declared that the people "should sweep the board." But the public had too much good sense to follow his advice then, and his new vagary will receive just as little attention.

As regards his attack upon the Catholic hierarchy we have only to say that he is perfectly aware that he is guilty of bearing false witness.

The Catholic hierarchy are not hostile to the Public school system. Catholics wish neither to injure nor destroy it. But we desire to improve it by having it educate the whole child. We insist on this, however, for Catholics only, as we have no wish to force our opinions upon Protestants in regard to the character of the education given. If we wish our children to be educated morally and doctrinally as well as in secular sciences there is no injury in this to the Public school system, and the persistence of Rev. Mr. Carman and his brother persons in asserting that we are enemies of the system is none the less a calumny because it is repeated by them so constantly, both in the United States and Canada. It is time that this calumny should cease; and the persons should learn wisdom from the fact that notwithstanding their virulence in attacking the Catholic school system of Ontario, the Protestant people of this Province have already shown twice by their votes that they put no faith in the oft repeated falsehoods of the persons. By persevering in their repetition they will only succeed in bringing discredit on the religion they profess to teach.

SECRET SOCIETIES.

The *Mail* of the 8th inst. has an article on "The Pope and Secret Societies," which is based upon an entirely erroneous notion of the reasons on account of which such societies are condemned by the Church. It says:

"The adverse attitude of the Roman Catholic Church, both in Europe and on this continent, in regard to Freemasonry, and to those secret societies which are conducted somewhat on Masonic lines, arises probably from the fact that these organizations set apart a region of life into which the priest is forbidden to enter. 'All or nothing' is the motto of the Ultramontanes in education, in politics and in benevolence. As neither the Masons, nor the Oddfellows, nor the Foresters, nor the Good Templars, or kindred societies, will place themselves under the command of the Church, any more than the Orange order will, they all alike fall under under the Papal ban, and the faithful are duly warned against joining them."

It is enough that the *Mail* acknowledges that the reason it assigns for the condemnation of secret societies is only a "probable" one, to convince any reasoning reader that the writer of the article knows nothing of the subject on which he assumes that he is qualified to instruct the public with all the authority of an expert. Why should a probable reason be given at all, when the actual reasons for which the prohibition has been issued are perfectly

well known, as they are made public without any hesitation?

It is not because any given society is not under control of the Church that it is forbidden, but because there is something contrary to the moral law in its organization. Thus what is merely an insurance company or any other business association is by no means condemned; but if such an organization has certain secret operations which it is afraid to make known to the public, or to the clergy, who are the guardians of morality, we may very justly suspect that there is something unlawful about it; and if attendance at its meetings becomes a trap leading to evil personal habits, or to neglect of religion, it becomes a duty to abandon it.

The Catholic Church, however, has condemned secret societies on strictly moral grounds. An oath is a sacred appeal to Almighty God, calling upon Him to witness a truth or to accept a promise. This solemn appeal is not to be made rashly or for insignificant reasons. False, rash, unjust and unnecessary oaths are forbidden by the second, or, as Protestants are pleased to call it, the third, commandment of the decalogue. The scriptural conditions of a lawful oath are that it be taken "in judgment, justice and truth." The oaths of secret societies lack these conditions, and it is this fact which usually makes them unlawful.

The Freemasons, especially, have been condemned by numerous decrees of the Popes on account of many iniquities which have been perpetrated under cover of their oath. Plots have been hatched under it against religion and good Government, especially in Europe, and crimes have been committed under command of Masonic officers which made manifest the evil of the Masonic oath. These things have happened even in America; but their actual perpetration was not needed to show that the society is a dangerous one. The obedience which is promised by Freemasons, to an irresponsible head, is of itself an evil promise, of which the worst use has frequently been made.

These reasons of themselves are sufficient to show that the Church acted wisely in prohibiting such societies. But besides what we have stated, Freemasonry attempts to undermine Christianity by substituting a ridiculous ceremonial in the place of religious worship, while it has no faith of its own.

We are told by the *Mail*, as a proof that the Masons are a good society, that the lodges of the "United Kingdom" have solemnly repudiated the Grand Orient of France on account of the omission by the Grand Orient of the name of the Great Architect of the Universe, and of all recognition of the Grand Lodge above from their proceedings." It is true that the European Masons have exhibited more virulence against religion than have those of the United Kingdom, or of this continent, but the language of Masonry is not even Theistic. It is perfectly understood that the Great Architect of the Universe whom the Masons would substitute for God may be understood to mean the imaginary being called by Atheists Chance or Nature, and the term is in fact so interpreted by Atheistic Masons. But in spite of the repudiation of God by the Atheistic French Masons, the English and American Masons still keep their fraternity with them and boast of it. They must, therefore, be held responsible for the Atheism and general hostility to religion so obtrusively manifested by the French Lodges.

The *Mail*'s allusion to a Grand Masonic Lodge in heaven is one of the blasphemies of Masonry, which even in this country endeavors to substitute its absurd ritual for the authorized services and rites of true religion. This is also to be condemned, and it is a sufficient reason for the condemnation of any society that it makes such an attempt. It is likewise one of the reasons for which some other societies besides the Masonic have been prohibited by the Catholic Church.

We will here allow a distinguished Protestant, Prof. Charles A. Blanchard, President of the Chicago Theological Seminary, to enter the arena as a defender of the action of the Catholic Church in regard to Masonry. In an address recently delivered he said:

"Persons who are conversant with the writings on this subject will understand that while Masonry distinctly claims a religious character, and professes to send those who conform to its obligations to the Grand Lodge above, the organization is, clearly and distinctly, not only non-Christian, but anti-Christian. . . . In fact, strange as it may appear, Masons seem quite proud to say that pirates, savages, robbers and murderers are members of their order in good and regular standing. The book entitled 'The Mystic Tie,' containing facts and opinions illustrating the character and tendency of Free Masonry, edited by Albert

G. Mackay, whose Lesson of Free Masonry has already been mentioned, contains, we believe, something like nine different articles showing that pirates, savages, robbers, murderers, of men combining two or more of these characters, have been Masons in good standing and have promptly recognized their Masonic obligations when called upon to do so. It does not require argument with intelligent persons to show that an organization admitting persons of these classes, without any professed purpose to change their actions is not Christian."

Nor is Prof. Blanchard alone in opposition to Masonic and kindred associations. A meeting of the Pennsylvania State Reform Association was held last week at Pittsburg, and among the speakers was a Rev. Mr. Stoddard of Boston, who spoke of ministers who, while persuaded that secret societies were injurious to religion, kept silent for fear of giving offence. He mentioned the Rev. Dr. Bates, of Massachusetts, who, he says, while he is a Mason, is at heart opposed to Masonry. He repeated the oath of initiation into the Knights Templar, and pronounced it blasphemous. Finally, he said that the god of Masonry was not the God of Christianity, and that secret societies are a detriment to the churches, because the lodges have a ritual, a worship and a religion that keep men away from the adoration of Christ. Other addresses, equally hostile to the dark organizations, were delivered, and the association pledged itself to work against them.

MUSTER OF THE EQUAL RIGHTERS.

The strength of the Equal Rights Party, following the leadership of Mr. Dalton McCarthy, was tested in the House of Commons on Friday evening, the 10th inst., on an amendment moved by Mr. McCarthy to the Redistribution bill of Sir John Thompson. As the amendment was somewhat on the line of the principle which has been advocated by the Reform Party, it had the full support of all the Reformers in the House. It was expected by some that under Mr. McCarthy's leadership a strong body of Conservative Equal Righters would also vote against the Government, but the event proved that Mr. McCarthy has just one follower in the House, Colonel O'Brien, of Muskoka, who alone, from the Conservative side, voted with his leader. The Government was sustained by a majority of 47. During the debate, Sam Hughes, M. P. for North Victoria, put himself forward as the champion of Protestantism by referring to Mr. Peter Ryan, of Toronto, as a "Feinian in the gallery."

It is by such contemptible talk as this that Sam expects to please his Orange constituents; but even he repudiated Mr. Dalton McCarthy's leadership. It leaked out during the discussion that Mr. Ryan, to whom Sam referred as a "Feinian in the gallery," was one of several gentlemen through whose influence Sam, some time ago, expected to be appointed to an office under Mr. Mowat's Government.

And have the Equal Righters come to this after all their bluster?

EDITORIAL NOTES.

As will be seen by advertisement in another column, a spiritual retreat for ladies will be given in the Sacred Heart Academy, in this city, commencing on Monday, July 4. These annual retreats have been held for many years, and the amount of good accomplished God alone knows. The ladies of the Sacred Heart deserve the gratitude of the people for their great kindness and thoughtfulness in thus providing an occasion where minds may be taken from the contemplation of worldly affairs and centered on the all-important work of fitting souls for the eternal home of our Blessed Redeemer.

We publish in this issue three speeches delivered in the Canadian House of Commons, on the 6th inst., by Messrs. Curran, Costigan and Devlin, on the Home Rule resolution introduced by the latter gentleman. There was some difference of opinion as to the advisability of introducing the motion—those opposing holding the view that as the Canadian Parliament had already on different occasions expressed itself as strongly in sympathy with the people of Ireland, it were unnecessary to again bring the question to the front. The friends of the present motion contended that on the eve of the general election in England an expression of opinion from Canadians would have much weight in the mother country. We were delighted to note that when the resolution was announced from the Order Paper, all the old fire of the Irishmen on both sides of the House re-kindled, and a hearty endorsement of the sentiments contained in it expressed. The debate closed at 6 o'clock, and a vote was not taken. After recess other business

was taken up, and a division on the question may not be reached during the present session.

The speeches of the Orange members were weak and pointless, and much amusement was caused by the cross-firing to which they were subjected. Mr. Wallace said the people of Ireland were as well governed as the people of any other portion of the British Islands, and almost in the same breath declared that the British Cabinet are busily engaged in redressing grievances that exist. Mr. Somerville quickly reminded him of his inconsistency, and he made a ridiculous attempt to drag himself out of the pit into which he had fallen. Quotations from ancient speeches of Irishmen, delivered in times of great excitement, seemed to be the chief reason advanced why the Orange fraternity should still be allowed to rule the Emerald Isle; and the speakers did not forget to air the stale and preposterous superstition that the Catholics would, in the event of Home Rule being granted, persecute their Protestant neighbors. They do not themselves believe this nonsense, and it is a smirch on their reputations, in the minds of honest men, to make such assertions. Dalton McCarthy was as bitter as a sour, ambitious and disappointed politician could well be. He deliberately threw himself from a lofty political pedestal into Devil's Thirteenism, and it is more than likely he will remain at the foot of the class for many a year to come.

The Ottawa *Citizen* is quite happy in the attempt to show a difference between the recommendation of Canada to the mother country on her fiscal policy and on her treatment of Ireland. It says: "This is like saying that to go into a man's store and offer to purchase goods from him is the same thing as offering him advice as to how he is to conduct his business." We might suggest that when we ask England to change her fiscal policy it comes dangerously near dictation as to how she ought to conduct her business.

Our contemporary's logic is about as halting as that of Grand Master Clarke Wallace, who declared that the Canadian Parliament had no right to pass a Home Rule resolution, or interfere in any way with Old Country politics, when, a few days previously, the Grand Orange Lodge, of which he is the Most Worshipful Grand Master, sent across the ocean a message of sympathy, overflowing with "No Surrenderism," to the brethren in Ireland. While it is perfectly proper for the Grand Lodge to boom the ascendancy system, it is a great crime on the part of the Canadian Commons to recommend justice and freedom to all.

Rev. Dr. DOUGLAS, Methodist, has again entered the political arena, and no doubt both of the great parties in the country will be gratified and horrified in turn at his forcible demagogism. Sir John Thompson, for whom he seems to entertain a very able-bodied and most un-Christian hatred, he sneeringly characterizes "a lay Jesuit." He says he is not a partisan, but in the same breath declares "he holds the Hon. Sir Wilfrid Laurier in the highest honor on the ground of his elevation of character and admiration for his eloquence." Mr. Abbott is worthy of his confidence, too, he says, but he inserts a saving clause thus: "notwithstanding some abate-ments." The abate-ments are brought forth because Mr. Abbott does not keep good company, "the ornamental flag-gart and Caron the exquisite," as he styles them, being considered very bad boys, whom Sir J. J. C. Abbott should shun or "the goblins I'll get him."

But Dr. Douglas, after all, merely touched upon politics and politicians. His utterance was a screech of hatred of Sir John Thompson. We will copy a few of his references to that gentleman: "The dark horse, who, for the uncovering of last conference, might have held power over this Dominion." "Look at this man, son of North of Ireland Protestant and Methodist parents, a humble school-master, who came to Halifax in the forties." "Under the influence of occult forces, which honor forbids that I shall name, he abandoned the faith of his Protestant father." "He entered the Nova Scotia Legislature and worked it for all it was worth." Dr. D. is evidently no novice in the use of slang. Growing eloquent, inconsistent, and robustious, he proceeds:

"Not stainless was Sir Oliver Mowat in his gerrymandering, but the barefaced conspiracy of Sir John Thompson to enhance the political influence of his co-religionists and party would be sufficient, if perpetrated in England, to blight the reputation of any Minister, however influential. The trail of the serpent runs through it all. It cannot be that it

shall pass—that this electorale of this election. We discuss the rancor of party, but in what we write of fairness."

We cannot omit a finale—a magnificent Roman candles:

"Ministers of the within your boundaries of this nuisance and diaphanous strains and that corrupts into your voices will rip diaphanous music in right of justice and respect and peace, and men may sit under constitution of rights, actions, when a liberator pronounced by orator, shall bless of Pronounce your fiat, Stand still with need are forces ascending will drive you beyond your heritage to strait cannot be."

Our Methodist keep a sharp watch coming up the St. have been forewarned in the air. Truly stealthily about. men. Search each have catechisms about their person, and replace their hymns. It is you to your guns, other strains of this music be corrupted.

A few weeks since address Lord S. bishop Vaughan tion this subject

expressing the g must feel this Pope) that the ence which was Cardinal Manning upon a man so d who know him, a shade of opinion Dr. Vaughan all and peculiar pos lies in England, are under two m of thirty million from our faith, it still blinded by England, thank country; Engla Adept religious the souls of mill Anglican Establ senting bodies. increasing activ expenditures."

The *Mail* c posterous in the she does not ad Protestant majo marriage, by authority of P solemnize the m It argues that the Church in therefore the civ marriage should isical, and even of course who denounces "the "to override the which means th testant majorit While we admit to regulate their husband and v we maintain the marriage is a s ment, the cot arising out of w by the Chure ministers are n as being "the di of Christ," as t authority from succession, as we were once has the contr contract, we s mit divorce, w ignore the law between certain etc. But Cath maintaining t

Anglicans hav belief which n marriage sup grees of kind riage is forbid the authority divorces. Wh denounce their ility of the di Probably the m hes alone are c their conscien a pity that th not make her fancies. It m that she will c has taught for even though th change her ter

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