

We saw this distinguished man before he had become generally recognized as a political power. Some time about A.D. 1843, we were watching the passengers alight from the Coach that ran from Doncaster to our native town. One was a rather thin, youngish man, in a light grey overcoat, who was, we thought clearly a commercial traveller. With him was a shorter person, with an apple face, round and ruddy, dressed in a broad brimmed hat, brown, quaker cut suit, and shoes most orthodox in squareness of toe. It was soon known by the cry of the town bellman, that the farmers' present in the place, it being market day, were invited to hear speeches on the great Corn Law question by Mr. Richard Cobden and Mr. John Bright, who were to speak at the Cleaver Inn, at 3 p.m. These two visitors were bearding the lion in his den, for they had an audience whose class interests were menaced by the new cry of "Down with the Corn Laws." They spoke from the top of a side table in the farmers' dining room at the Cleaver, amid the fumes of numerous "church-wardens," mingled with the smell of beer and spirits, freely distributed amongst the bucolic audience.

It is an interesting fact that the great Whig Earl, whose famous letter signed "Fitzwilliam" switched that party off in favor of free imports of Corn, stood on the pavement and watched Messrs. Cobden and Bright, alight from a coach on a mission which embraced chiefly his tenants. How little he thought that he was to be their most distinguished convert! Little too did they know that this town was the birth-place of Elliot, "The Corn Law Rhymers," who became one of their most powerful allies!

Before we saw Mr. Bright again, we had heard much of him publicly and privately. Privately through a young relative who was a patient at Ben Rhydding, Yorkshire, a cold water sanitarium, where Mr. Bright was also under treatment. The youth was a red hot Tory, but Mr. Bright took a fatherly interest in him, nay, so tender was his care, so self-sacrificing his affectionate attentions, that he was more like a loving mother watching her boy, than a stranger. Although he detested Mr. Bright's radicalism, how that youth flashed out his fiery words against any one who abused Mr. Bright in his hearing! We are not surprised to learn that whatever house the celebrated Tribune of the people entered, the dogs and cats at once instinctively recognised a friend. Yes! it is universally true of men that those who have the tenderest, gentlest, most self-sacrificing natures, are also those who, like Mr. Bright, cannot speak of injustice to the oppressed, or of hypocrisy, or cowardice, or indifference to principle, without indignant burning words. The nature that is half frozen by self indulgence, or that has been steeled into stolidity by vile training, training that has aimed at rendering the heart as passive as that of a savage, at the sight of human suffering, is often boasted of and admired because of its serenity. This serenity, however, is too much like that of a corpse for our praise, it is a

serenity which indicates the quietude of moral callousness, it is the manifestation of heartless insensibility.

Mr. Bright was the noblest politician England has produced since Andrew Marvel—we say that, who have written and spoken against his views on many questions for years. He had not a vain, corrupt, self-seeking taint in his body. His defiance of public opinion, especially of his constituents during the Crimean war, was heroic. In the House of Commons his defence of the Queen against the sneer that she was overdoing her grief for Prince Albert, was such a splendid burst of manly indignation and tenderness, that all England rang with its praises, and the Queen sent for him to express her gratitude. At the funeral we note that an Equerry of the Queen was present, and supported Mrs. Bright on his arm during part of the service.

His splendid style was the result of severe preparation in his youth. This is known direct from his own lips. He used in early life to write speeches, memorise them, after reading most carefully those authors whose pure, nervous English he desired to imitate. His reading was not wide, *but it was thorough*. We heard most of his historic speeches, and are convinced that they all had been written out, studied in form and phraseology, and largely memorized.

Of Mr. Bright's violence against the Church of England, we can only say this—the Church in his youth and earlier years was, where he lived, dead. Had he been born a generation later his views on the subject would have been different. The Society of Friends are consistent, they repudiate all forms and ceremonies in divine worship, they do not select a few of a particular pattern, and spend money and energy in denouncing and injuring others who prefer a different style. The Quaker's position is a more Christian one than that of the party Churchman. The Society of Friends hold strong views as to the "inward light" of the Spirit. They are consistent in this. At Mr. Bright's funeral a Bible reading was objected to, (fancy such an incident at a funeral), because it was not a motion of the Spirit, or in accordance with their customs. We have amongst us those who believe in individual illumination, apart from the Church, they would be more at home amongst the Quakers.

Well would it be for Canada if she had public men like Mr. John Bright, incorruptible by party, and inspired only by fervent love of humanity, devotion to principle, and loyalty to their country. We forget his faults and his wrong doing to the Church, in remembering his genius as one of the greatest orators who ever used the English tongue, and his moral elevation which kept his name unsullied, even from slander. Mr. Bright leaves his country the legacy of a great memory, and an illustrious example of virtue, shining in splendour where virtue too often finds utter extinguishment.

—Thou dost never ask such labor as keeps us away from thee.—Goodell.

UNION MEETINGS.

SEVERAL meetings were held last week in Toronto of representatives of the Church of England, and of the other religious bodies for the purpose of taking counsel together on the question of Christian unity. As the proceedings were desired to be kept private, reporters being excluded, we respect this decision, although we regard it as of questionable wisdom. Those present either had formal authority given them by the several bodies they represented to enter upon such business, or they were merely a company of very worthy Christian men met for the most amiable and laudable purpose of encouraging each other to cultivate a brotherly spirit. The former view is not tenable. The Bishops and clergy present have not a scintilla of power to commit the Church of England to any such change in her discipline and order as would be necessary before any single practical step could be taken towards the unity contemplated. We say to those meeting to promote Christian union—"Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness," by protecting His Church and people from religious tyranny and "all these things," unity in spirit and union in organisation, "shall be added unto you." Be faithful in little and larger shall be your sphere of honour. We should have had more pleasure in chronicling a meeting of all the chief representative officials of all the non-Romanist bodies in Ontario to concert measures for mutual defence against their common, and their determinedly aggressive foe. That is the practical question of the day, that is an urgent duty, that would in the long run tend more to Christian unity than discussing theoretic views which could not possibly be realized in one generation. If the different religious organisations are now so severed as to be incapable of fusion for so necessary a work as common defence in the face of a dangerous enemy, it is a wild chimera to suppose that union can be accomplished for sentimental reasons. Between those who are ready to stand shoulder to shoulder in resisting Romish aggression upon our civil liberties, and those who take Galliou's view of the most solemn civic responsibilities, there is an impassable gulf—the chasm that divides the man of patriotic duty, from the man of indolent indifference to the welfare of his country.

Home & Foreign Church News.

From our own Correspondents.

DOMINION.

QUEBEC

QUEBEC.—St. Matthew's.—During Lent and Holy Week, the services in the beautiful and well ordered Church of St. Matthew's, have been remarkably well attended. There were services each day at 7.30 a.m., and 5 p.m., with an average attendance of 85. On the Wednesdays, at 5 p.m., special addresses were delivered by the Rev. Canon Richardson, Rector of St. Paul's, subject "Our Lord Jesus Christ." On the Friday evenings a special course of sermons on "Repentance," was preached to large congregations by the Very Rev. R. W. Norman, Dean of Quebec.