

A FRANK CONFESION.

The Very Rev. gentleman welcomes this agitation for unity as a step towards "a better balancing of religious forces in connection with Protestant public opinion on the governments of Canada."

"I am not," he says, "by any means an advocate for a political Church, but there are occasions when a strong non-Roman voice is needed, and that voice is not in existence to-day. There is a strong Roman voice—one voice—and I have always regarded it as a great loss to the whole country that it should possess a monopoly of solo-singing. Protestantism as it stands is a weak chorus constantly out of tune and time."

A frank confession indeed! Some people may advert to the impropriety and irrelevancy of the argument. Others may strive to discover these occasions which demand a strong non-Roman voice. But the question is: If the Lord prayed for unity where are the means to make unity possible? The sects on their own admission do not possess it. They may effect a semblance of unity, but unity fashioned by human influences is not that for which Christ prayed. And He also told us: "Other foundation no man can lay but that which is laid."

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THE BAPTISTS AND CHURCH UNION.

On the question of the present general movement toward the union of several Protestant Churches the Baptists of Canada have taken a very decisive negative stand. While Presbyterians, Methodists and Congregationalists have certainly made during the last few months, a considerable advance toward organic union the Baptists Conventions which have been held have with one voice declared that any movement on their part toward union would be a dereliction of duty since it would imply that they are ready to give up truths which have been revealed by God, for the sake of patching up an apparent unity which does not exist, as the other denominations named teach doctrines and favor practices which are totally irreconcilable with what the Baptists hold to be the unmistakable teachings of Christ and which constitute the foundation on which the Baptist Church rests, and has always rested, from the beginning of its existence.

They maintain rightly that Christ came upon earth to save mankind, that He atoned for our sins, that He enjoined upon us faith in His teachings, and obedience to His precepts, and established a Church to make known to man what these teachings and precepts are, so that the Church has no authority to change them or barter them away. It would, therefore, destroy the purpose for which our Redeemer came on earth to set aside any of these teachings and precepts. The Baptists, therefore, declare that they cannot conscientiously give up their distinctive doctrines on the question of Baptism, for the sake of effecting a Church union. They point out that Methodists, Presbyterians, and Congregationalists are ready to ignore their differences of faith for the sake of union, the motives being mainly to make their united Church more influential, and to economize money and energy. They believe that the purpose of Christ's mission on earth was to save mankind through the truth, and that this purpose must be accomplished by putting the truth as revealed before all considerations of mere economy.

The Methodists are Arminians and maintainers of Free Will, whereas Presbyterians and Congregationalists hold the doctrine of Calvin whereby Free Will of man is destroyed. The Congregationalists, as their name is intended to denote, maintain that each congregation is authorized to hold its own doctrines and select its own pastors who will teach what the congregation desires. This mode of Church government is rejected by Methodists and Presbyterians as subversive of the most important teachings of religion. The Baptists of Canada cannot consent to a union in which matters of such importance are ignored, and whereby the united Church shall acknowledge that it has no settled doctrine on points which affect human salvation so vitally.

But it appears that the Baptists of the United States have not the same objection as their Canadian brethren to fraternize with sects which teach all sorts of fanciful doctrines, if we are to judge from pronouncements of leading clergymen who were present at the Baptist Young People's Convention held last week at Detroit. Over three thousand delegates were present at this meeting which was held in the huge armory, which was filled to overflowing

by the crowd of delegates and other auditors.

The Rev. S. S. Marquis opened the meeting by an address of welcome on behalf of all the churches of the city, and in the beginning of his address made the statement that the assemblage would be filled with admiration at the natural beauties of Detroit, but "the most wonderful thing they would discover would be the Christian unity existing between the various creeds. The Jew and the Gentile, the Methodist and the Unitarian, the Presbyterian and the Universalist, Orthodox and Liberal—all call each other brother, and work shoulder to shoulder for the one cause."

We must say that this was a most remarkable statement, and it is all the more remarkable that it was received with applause and enthusiasm, and without a word of protest by that representative assemblage of Baptists, clerical and lay.

Are we to infer, then, that the Baptist Church recognizes Jews and Gentiles to be Christians equally with themselves? If so, why did Christ establish a Christian Church at all—a Church to which, according to the Evangelist St. Luke, were added daily such as were to be saved?

We do not suppose that by Gentiles the speaker understood Pagans, which would have been the case if these words had been spoken before the conversion of Gentile nations to Christ. We may suppose that he meant that Jews and Christians are united in Christian unity, and work shoulder to shoulder in one cause. But such a statement if true, makes the establishment of a Church of Christ unnecessary. Christ's mission on earth would not be needed, and the whole plan of redemption would be a myth.

Unitarians and Universalists are included by the Rev. Mr. Marquis in his plan. These two sects are practically identical, and both deny Christ's divinity, and the doctrine of everlasting punishment. These fundamental doctrines being eliminated from the Christian creed, and the Scriptures also being regarded as a merely human work, as these sects believe them to be, we shall have nothing left but a mere Deism without Christ or anything supernatural in religion. Hitherto Protestants generally have not regarded such sects as Christians at all, but now all dogma is openly cast aside, and Universalists and Unitarians, Jews and Gentiles are embraced in the wide extended arms of Christian fraternity!

We have often said that Protestantism is drifting rapidly toward the abyss of unbelief. Who can assert now that this is not the case, when only a few of the small sects adhere to any distinctive Christian doctrine.

It will be noticed that Rev. Mr. Marquis omits all mention of Catholics as sharers in his Christian brotherhood. Was this omission designed? Probably it was, and it is better so with so motley a multitude. Catholics would be out of place among them.

A POPULAR GOVERNMENT.

The recent Belgian elections were less favorable to the Catholic Conservative party, which holds the reins of Government, than the previous elections, six seats having been lost to the Government.

Four years ago the Government had a majority of twenty-six seats, but the elections of this year have reduced the majority to twenty. This diminution of strength does not, however, arise from any real weakening of Catholic sentiment in the kingdom, but from the accidental circumstance that a considerable number of disappointed office-seekers threw their influence against the Government. This occurred, in fact, in strong Catholic centres exclusively, namely, such Catholic strongholds as Hasselt, St. Nicholas, etc. There were also local issues which brought about this result, and the questions in which there was a religious issue, being now regarded as permanently settled, local issues came more strongly to the front.

It was in June, 1884, that the Catholic Conservative administration came into office defeating the Liberals by a substantial majority, which they have kept ever since. The Liberals while in power had rendered themselves obnoxious to the Catholics, owing to an educational act passed in 1879, whereby the teaching of religion was forbidden in the State schools, on account of which, within six months, four thousand Catholic schools were opened, and a politico-religious contest began which threatened a revolution in the kingdom. The School question was, indeed, the chief issue; and when the new Government came into power, a new School law called the Jacobs law was passed, and religious teaching was reintroduced into the schools.

The Liberals thus finding their plan to secularize education defeated, felt themselves obliged to submit to the verdict of the people, and the new School law has been in operation ever since, that is to say, for a period of twenty

THE ORANGE CELEBRATIONS.

The Orange anniversary celebration of the Battle of the Boyne took place this year on July 12 in many places of Ontario, and were generally successful in regard to the number of members of the lodges taking part, but on the whole we remark that the general tenor of the speeches with which the participants were regaled was not so aggressive and hostile to Catholics as in former years, or if they were so, the aggressiveness has not been fully reported by the newspapers.

In Woodbridge, York Co., there was a large gathering, and there the County Master of North York displayed in his speech the intolerance of the olden time. He warned his hearers to preserve the principles of Orangism which had been so dearly purchased, and which were at all times being conspired against. Orangemen should be always on guard lest there might come a time when the question would have to be decided as to who would be masters of this country, the English-speaking people or the French Papists. We are not the foreigners in this country as Premier Laurier would like his French compatriots to believe we are, but Orangemen representing the highest ideals in the life of the nation. That slip of the Premier's showed the true principles of the man who is guiding the destinies of this country at the present time. In conclusion he advised parents to fill the ranks of the militia with their sons.

Orangism was at one time dominant in Ontario, but the time is past. Such speeches as this of Mr. Taylor, the County Master of North York, show us that the same spirit of Ascendancy which formerly characterized the Order is still found in it, and the fact that his sentiment was loudly applauded showed that it is largely entertained; but the country, and even our province will not restore the days when an Orange mob could with impunity shoot down independent electors in the streets of Toronto, as was done during the police magistracy of Mr. Gurnet, whom many of our readers remember. About this same period, an Orange procession fired shots at the residence of an aged and brave colonel of the British army who resided at Malton, and it was frequently the case that armed companies of Orangemen paraded the streets of Toronto, terrorizing the peaceful citizens and breaking the windows of Catholic orphanages or other institutions which had no garrison for defence but a number of helpless children and infirm people, and the charitable ladies who had charge of these institutions.

A little later, during the Orange struggle to retain its ascendancy, the Parliament buildings at Montreal were burned by an Orange mob, and the Orange Grand Master of the day led another mob, floating to the breeze the pirates' flag, to the Brockville docks, to insult Lord Elgin, the representative

of Queen Victoria, his unexpected arrival in still fresh memory how Orangemen centres through out King Edward he was Prince of Wales, and we might as well wish to bring order to bring once more, arouse dissent, speaking peace Papists."

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