

Our Contributors.

VARIOUS SOLILOQUIES ON THE JESUITS' ESTATES BILL.

BY KNOXIAN.

The Jesuits' Estates Bill puzzles everybody except the people who passed it and the Order that gets the money. Mr. Mercier saw his way clearly enough for even the Protestant members of the Legislature did not vote against the Bill. The people that get the money will see quite clearly that it is their duty to take the cash. They would take more if they got it. Everybody else is puzzled. It is rumoured that some of the Quebec Protestants are puzzled to know whether they should take the \$60,000 that is offered to level up. Politicians are puzzled because they don't care to quarrel with the Catholic vote. Sensible, solid citizens are puzzled. They don't like the Jesuit Bill, but they know that religious strife is the most dangerous of all kinds of strife, and with Ireland before their eyes they hesitate before entering upon a religious war. They know the line must be drawn somewhere, but would much rather not have to draw it if the other party would behave themselves in a half reasonable sort of way. Sensible, patriotic men also know that the constitution of this young country would not stand a heavy strain, and if the Confederation compact were broken we would have annexation or chaos. A great many Canadians don't want either. The ultra Protestants are perhaps the most puzzled section of the community. Everybody asks them to go to the front and justify their claim to superior Protestantism but they don't go.

We may imagine various representative men indulging in a soliloquy on the situation.

THE SOLILOQUY OF THE TORY POLITICIAN.

"I don't like the Jesuit Bill. These people had no legal or moral claim to \$400,000. They are a bad lot, and it is a scandal to endow them with public money in Quebec when they have been chased out of nearly every Catholic country in Europe. If they were mere religionists I would not care so much, but they are politicians as well, and aim at the destruction of civil government. Sir John should certainly have disallowed the Bill. Six years ago he and several of our friends took the ground that "all Provincial Bills should be disallowed if they affected general interests." Another member of the Government declared that a Bill might be dangerous though not unconstitutional, and that the Dominion Government had power to disallow bills against the "peace, harmony and general interests of the country." That same member made a capital point when he said that an unconstitutional bill is not dangerous because the courts can set it aside. The dangerous bills are constitutional ones, that are against the peace, harmony and general interests of the country. Now our friends are forced to swallow all they said about disallowance six years ago, and contend that a Provincial Bill should be disallowed when unconstitutional, and then only. It is a bad business. If the Minister of Justice and Mr. Bowell would only keep their mouths shut, as Sir John does, it would not be so bad, but they go on talking about *ultra vires* and all that sort of thing, when everybody knows they held six years ago that they were bound to disallow dangerous bills whether *ultra vires* or not. Yes, it is a bad business. The Bill ought to have been disallowed. But what could Sir John do? If he disallowed the Bill Mercier would pass it again, dissolve the Legislature, appeal to the people and sweep Quebec like a whirlwind. He would knock the pins from under Sir John's French colleagues, and they would be forced either to go over to him or resign. In any case Sir John would have to go out of office, and of course that is not to be thought of. Office must be kept at any cost. Jesuit Bill or no Jesuit Bill, we must hold on to the solid pudding. Yes, it is a bad business, and there may be some trouble in Ontario too. Pestilential papers like the *Globe* keep shouting at the Orangemen to go to the front, and they may be goaded into passing resolutions in their lodges against the Jesuits. Of course these resolutions are perfectly harmless in Ontario, where they are understood, but the Jesuit papers quote them in Quebec and make capital against our friends down there. Yes, it is a bad business. We may come out all right yet. The Jesuits have their \$400,000, and that will keep them quiet until they want another haul, and as for the Orangemen, some means can be used to quiet them down before the next election. Thanks to a kind Providence, we have turned as bad corners as this in the past, and we may be enabled successfully to turn this one. There is always one comfort left—our party is loyal to their principles and to their chief. We are a unit in saying, Jesuit Bill or no Jesuit Bill, we must keep in office."

THE SOLILOQUY OF A GRIT.

"This Jesuit Bill is one of the worst things Canada has seen for many a day. It is as bad as the Gerrymander Act or the Franchise Bill. And Mercier made it worse by offering \$60,000 to the Protestants to level up. Either the Jesuits were entitled to that money or they were not. If they were entitled to it, then \$60,000 should not have been offered to the Protestants for assenting to what was in itself right. If they were not entitled to it, the \$60,000 were simply a bribe to the Protestants—hush money to keep them quiet, and perhaps it does keep some of them quiet enough. Yes, the Jesuit Bill is a bad one. But then, what can a fellow do? Mercier is out of all sight the most successful leader in Canadian politics at the present moment. He is a brilliant man with astonishing dash and nerve. He has accomplished almost miracles

since he took office, and, even his enemies being judges, he gives the people fairly good government. He has a surplus, which is something new in Quebec. His only fault is that he stands in too much with these Jesuits. Wonder if Mr. Mowat could prevail on him to keep away from these people. Of course it will never do for our party to quarrel with Mercier. Jesuit Bill or no Jesuit Bill, we must avoid a split in the Liberal party."

THE SOLILOQUY OF A SMASHER.

"Let us smash Confederation into its original fragments."

THE SOLILOQUY OF AN EMPTY-HEADED, LONG-TONGUED DEMAGOGUE.

"I never have any chance to exhibit myself in a quiet time. I love excitement, because then I can come to the front and can shout and make myself heard. People pay no attention to me in a quiet time. When a wave of excitement rises, then I mount the wave, and yell, and make the people look at me. I hope this Jesuit excitement may go on, and see if I am not somebody as long as it lasts."

THE SOLILOQUY OF A SENSIBLE CITIZEN.

"This Jesuit Bill is bad, and the situation is made all the worse because the usual crowd of demagogues are trying to make money or capital out of it. Another unpleasant feature is that the agitation seems to be mainly in Ontario, while the Quebec Protestants—the parties chiefly affected—do not seem to be taking much interest in the matter. Be this as it may, this kind of legislation must be stopped. Jesuits cannot be allowed to govern Canada. They must be stopped, if possible, by constitutional means, but stopped they must be, though the last appeal known among nations should be resorted to. We don't want agitation; we don't want a crowd of blatherskites perambulating the country, exciting the worst passions of the people; we don't want strife; we don't want to injure one hair on the head even of a Jesuit, but we do want and shall have at any cost equality before the law in the matter of religion. If Mr. Mercier were given to understand that once for all, he is just the kind of gentleman that would soon accommodate himself to the situation."

A FEW THOUGHTS UPON PREDESTINATION.

MR. EDITOR,—As the teaching of the Word of God upon this particular article of the faith is often maligned by many who still claim to be Christians, by such expressions as "cast-iron Calvinism," etc., a few reflections, therefore, upon the question may not be out of place in the columns of THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN. The consideration of the doctrine of Predestination, when entered into, ought primarily to be with the clearly defined conviction of our Creator's omniscient foreknowledge, kept constantly before the mind as being co-existent with His attributes of omnipotence and omnipresence. And when prosecuted with the same amount of studious perseverance which we would employ in the study of any branch of natural or scientific lore; or with a like energy in investigation, often devoted to the every-day concerns of this life, which may be within the scope of analysis; or the various theories of political economy in our own land, or perchance, as to the relative merits or demerits of the various laws, statutes, or treaties of the several civilized nations of the earth. If an investigation, with a view to the comprehension of the doctrine of foreordination, be conducted with the same tenacity of purpose to have removed all obscurity or difficulty or grasping, at first sight, the meaning intended to be conveyed to the human mind, as set forth in the inspired Word of God, concerning this doctrine, with the scheme of redemption through the merits and atoning sacrifice of an anointed Saviour freely offered unto all the sinful sons of Adam, conditionally upon their believing upon and accepting of this, God's only means of reconciliation with our fallen race; then the trend of the teaching must become comparatively clear to most minds, when exercised in the spirit thus indicated, that is to say by a careful and earnest study of the sacred record given unto us.

When the human mind assents to the Omnipotent's foreknowledge of all events, past, present and future; or rather merges the finite's conception of the same, in the Infinite's capacity of an ever present spiritual cognizance of all things, and thereby takes note that one day, according to man's understanding thereof, and eternity, which passeth his present limited comprehension, are synonymous terms to the Eternal. It must thereupon appear more easy and rational to accept the teaching of Paul "that whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son." And, consequently, from His foreknowledge of all who would resist and reject His call by His Holy Spirit to accept of the provision made for the expiation of all the sins of omission and commission, that these were already sealed unto the day of wrath; and on the other hand, that all who would embrace the only and freely offered substitution for man's transgressions, were foreordained to life everlasting.

But again, although justified by faith upon a crucified Redeemer freely offered unto all, still, man can claim nothing meritorious in the exercise thereof; for though having the freedom of choice, it is nevertheless sovereign grace, seeing that Christ is the author of faith, in and to all, by the power of the Holy Ghost moving us thereto. And man having been allowed the freedom of will to accept or reject, cannot dare to impugn the justice of his Maker's sentence of condemnation upon all who condemn and reject so great salvation, for He willeth not the death of the sinner; but rather that he might turn unto him and live, for lo! He standeth at the door of our

hearts, knocking again and again and again for admittance to our affections, and as proclaimed in the summing up of the sacred canon, inviting "whosoever will to take of the water of life freely."

At the same time, there is something erroneous in the assumption that, because our heavenly Father hath allowed us the freedom of our wills to choose or reject His offered grace, therefore, He may not constrain any of His creatures, by His Holy Spirit, in such a manner, as to cause them to flee into the ark of safety. A striking illustration of His over-ruling interposition must be apparent to all, in the means employed for the conversion of Saul of Tarsus, from being a zealous persecutor of the Christians, so as to be literally forced to surrender and eventually to exclaim "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"

And many in our own time, if they have not known by personal acquaintance, may have read of God's dealings with some sceptics who have trusted to their morality or self-righteousness, and to their worldly possessions, for a peaceful and happy exit from this mundane sphere; but whose prospects have been so completely broken down and destroyed by various and oft repeated sore trials in bereavements in their family circle, and likewise in loss of property as to be compelled to flee to God for refuge in the time of their dire calamities, and have recognized Him to be a strong tower and rock of defence in the time of trouble, the Lord thus asserting and proving His omnipotence to rescue the rebellious.

Again, some have been staggered by narratives in the sacred Scriptures of God's election of certain of the children of men over their fellows; overlooking His ability to scan the inward thoughts and imaginations of the hearts that were yet to hold sway over those who then were unborn. As an illustration, the case of Jacob and Esau has sometimes been cited by controversialists, as tending to show forth some inconsistency on the part of believers in Predestination who, at the same time, claim that the Creator is a strictly just God, considering that he had declared before their birth that the elder should serve the younger, although, as yet, they had neither done good nor evil. Jacob was chosen and Esau rejected previous to their birth possibly, and moreover, probably, from God's knowledge that the former would strive to serve the God of Abraham and Isaac, and from the latter's perverse natural inclinations being as conspicuous to the perception of the Eternal. He therefore did not receive the inheritance of his earthly parent, nor the blessing of being a chosen representative of the people of his heavenly Father, thus exemplifying God's foreknowledge and foreordination, as being co-existent from all eternity, the latter being concurrent with the former. Yet, still the Spirit of God striveth with man in order to bring him to repentance, and to the Saviour for redemption from the penalty consequent upon the violation of His holy laws. But many strive against the inward working of the Holy Spirit, and thereby bring down upon themselves God's wrath and subsequent consignment to future endless woe.

But let none be over-anxious, although, they may not be fully persuaded as the certainty of their comprehending the true and entire scope of the doctrine of election, for the offer of salvation is unto all who will believe, accept and obey. And any uneasiness which may arise in the mind with respect to the fear that they may not be of the number of the elect, may be taken as a token of the stirring up of the Holy Spirit within us to cause us to strive to make our calling and election sure, by yielding up and endeavouring to consecrate our hearts and lives unto God. For thus it is proclaimed; "Ho, every one that thirsteth come to the waters. Incline your ear and come unto me; hear and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David." "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near. Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon. For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts." "Or as in Job, "Canst thou by searching find out God; canst thou find out the Almighty to perfection?" It is satisfactory to realize that such proclamations as the following are addressed to all mankind; "Look unto me, and be ye saved all the ends of the earth; for I am God and there is none else." "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." And when sorely tried, as Paul was, by a thorn in the flesh, he saith unto such, "My grace is sufficient for thee." It is said in the Apocalypse "The Spirit and the Bride say, come, (to whomsoever will) and drink of the waters of life freely," as if to emphasize still further the fulness and freeness of the salvation previously proclaimed by prophets and apostles to all of the human race who may accept of the terms thus set forth: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him might not perish, but have eternal life."

In conclusion, although we may not all be able fully to comprehend the intent of the Scriptural teaching of Predestination, let all rest satisfied that their names are now engraved in the Lamb's Book of Life, that they are of the elect, provided they comply with the Gospel call to true repentance, and faith upon the crucified One; and have therefore been regenerated by the power of the Holy Ghost. And whate'er of mystery may appear to our finite minds, let us ever ponder this, viz., that were there not some truths unfathomable to mortal ken amongst the declarations of the "King eternal, immortal and invisible," the "Great I Am." They would be but, mere