

British American Presbyterian.

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FRIDAY, MARCH 5, 1875.

OUR ADHERENTS.

By the above designation we understand the grow-up men and women of our churches, who worship with the church, and help to support ordinances, but have not yet united in full communion, by making a profession of their faith in Christ at the Table of the Lord. They are a very large class of our religious community, and in many instances manifest a laudable zeal and liberality in the maintenance of the church, and the prosecution of its work. We find also among them a great many, particularly of men, distinguished by their superior intelligence and high-toned morality. Often do pastors anxiously ask the question with themselves, and sometimes of the adherents, why do they stand without, and refuse to enroll themselves with the membership of the church? A variety of answers to the question have been given. Some object to the inconsistencies of professors, and think they can be as good Christians without going to the table. Others tell us they are not Christians, and that none but true Christians should be there. Others acknowledge their duty, but have what they think reasons for their non-compliance. We do not propose to examine these answers; but would rather endeavour to ascertain the underlying cause or causes which, perhaps unconsciously, are at work in keeping good living, intelligent men and women back from the Lord's table. It will be admitted that a revival of religion does lead many of this class to come in; and the present movement in Scotland, as well as among ourselves, is largely characterized by leading to decision many church-going persons who had hitherto held back. The change which such persons experience is generally called conversion; and they naturally fix upon the time and circumstances in which they were led to decide for Christ, as those of their conversion to God. Men are brought to realize what they formerly knew of their lost state, and God's mercy in Christ Jesus; and under the influence of this sense of reality, consciously accept of Christ, and confess him as their Saviour. This happy moment of acceptance and decision is regarded as the moment of conversion.

It is not worth while to combat this view; although there can be little doubt that many are truly converted to God, and are striving humbly to walk with him, in a holy life and use of gospel ordinances, before they attain the happy consciousness and assurance to which we refer. We may, however, profitably inquire whether the prevailing manner of presenting certain truths does not tend to prevent the development of this consciousness, and keep gracious souls in bondage; and whether there cannot be an improvement in this respect. We fearlessly avow, that no truth, however proscribed, will give an unconverted man real assurance; and that false assurance must rest on untruth, or a truth falsely presented. Still an imperfect presentation of truth may trouble an anxious soul, and prevent him from grasping the truth, which would set him free.

We think, then, that possibly the nature of conversion, and its concomitant feelings, may be so exhibited as to make a true child of God question whether he has passed through that change. That the difference between the life of a Christian and an unconverted man may be so exaggerated as to produce doubt, where the new man is earnestly struggling against the flesh, but has not attained the victory. That a distinction may be drawn as to the duty of a Christian and an unconverted man in such a way as to prevent a true Christian, who has not assurance, from daring to avail himself of the privileges, and attempting the work of a Christian, by which he would grow in grace, and gain spiritual strength. That the privileges of a Christian may be so presented as to paralyze all effort on the part of one who is anxiously seeking, and yet cannot attain.

It seems most desirable that on young people should be taught to regard themselves as the Lord's, soon as they are dedicated to Him in baptism,—to feel that

every duty of a Christian is obligatory on them; and that to neglect any duty is sin. That to refuse to accept Christ, and to confess him, is to rebel against God, and despise their birth right. That it is incumbent on them, as the objects of God's redeeming love, to observe all things that he has commanded. That in the use of the appointed means, viz., the word, sacraments, and prayer, they may reasonably expect to be saved, as they embrace Jesus Christ offered in the gospel; and may thus attain to a consciousness of their interest in Him, and an assurance of His love.

There is a danger of putting ordinances in Christ's stead, but there is also a danger of presenting salvation as attainable apart from the use of the ordinary means, by which Christ communicates to us the benefits of redemption; and we may well ask ourselves whether, in our zeal to produce sudden and marked conversions, we are not overlooking the gradual, invisible, and oftentimes to its subject unconscious operation of the Spirit of God, through His own ordinances; thus making more of the visible effect, than of the invisible cause.

FATHER CHINIQUY ON THE CONFESSORIAL.

On Thursday evening, the 24th of February, the Free Church, Cote Street, was crowded to excess with French Canadians, chiefly Romanists, who, in spite of the many warnings of their priests, had come to hear Father Chiniquy's third lecture on "The Confessional." Other engagements prevented the appearance of Principal MacVicar and Professor Coussirat, who had been present at most of the previous meetings, but the French Evangelization Committee was represented by Professor Campbell; and Mr. Vernon, the pastor of the French Canadian Missionary Society's Church on Craig Street, also occupied a place in the pulpit.

A hymn was sung by the choir, composed of some members of the Craig St. Church and the French students of the Presbyterian College. Then Father Chiniquy read the second chapter of 2nd Thessalonians, and commenced his discourse from that suggestive text.

"The Apostle becomes a prophet, and foretells a time when a man will pace himself off for a god. God, to be avenged on men for their desertion of Himself, will suffer them to believe a lie. I have belonged to that Society of which the Apostle speaks, and like all its members, have believed lies. I have deceived others, but I was myself deceived—I adored a man. A most enlightened Romanist, a frank, earnest spirit, a defender of much that the Roman Catholic Church holds, has truly said, 'The worship of Rome is idolatrous—we are idolaters!'

"I can speak to you, not in my own name, nor with my own words. It is not Chiniquy, not the Protestants, who address you. Nor do I come to speak evil of the priests. I love them, while I pity their ignorance. My own shoulder has been galled by their yoke. My own back has been bowed down with their heavy load. What is the Pope? Chateaubriand will tell you. Chateaubriand, the ambassador of France at Rome, in his own words, will certify to the fulfilment of the Apostle's prophecy. He writes 'on the occasion of the Pope's inauguration: 'I must go to the adoration of the Pope.' He describes the ceremony: On the altar is the sacrament, which represents Christ. It is removed—Christ is removed—and the Pope is elevated into His place. He sits upon the altar; and thus in the eyes of his worshippers occupies the seat of Christ, the great Sacrifice. 'Venite adoremus Sanctum Papam.' ('Come, let us adore the Holy Pope!') cry the cardinals. The multitude fall upon their knees, and then prostrate themselves upon the pavement before his holiness. Is not this what Paul had prophesied to the Thessalonians? How wonderfully his words and those of Chateaubriand agree.

"It is by the head of the hierarchy assuming this position that the priest gains his power to forgive sins; for this is the prerogative of God alone. Yet the Scripture which declares that the power of binding and loosing is given to the Church, is held to prove that the Church has power to forgive sin. Several letters have been sent to me, asking me to repeat my argument against this from the Levitical law. The Levitical law seems to say that in cases of leprosy the priest shall either see the leper from his disease or inflict it fully upon him. Yet the true meaning is that the priest shall simply declare whether the man remains a leper or is free from his disease, after he has examined him. It was not priest's words, but the gracious power of God which removed the leprosy; and so, although the Church may declare, 'You sins are forgiven,' after beholding your faith and patience, it is God alone who can remove this leprosy of the soul.

"But to turn to the Confessional. A man in Chicago, while I was lecturing there, asked me why I opposed the system of confession, which I had once so strongly

advocated. I asked him, 'Is it long since you confessed to the priest?' He hesitated, and at last said, 'Seven years.' 'And your son—does he confess often?' 'No, rarely, if ever.' 'And your wife and daughters—do they confess often?' 'Yes; they would go every day if they could.' 'Ah, you have a good old man for a priest!' 'No; he is a fine, young fellow.' 'Yes; and if you had a pretty girl in the box of the confessor, your sin, and yourself, too, perhaps, would go often also.' This may seem very gross, but it is, alas, too true.

"It is very rarely that women and girls make full confession. When a priest, I had confessed seventeen hundred, and few of them confessed any great sins. I went to M. Baillargou, a venerable priest of Quebec, and asked if my case were a peculiar one; if there were anything in me which hindered this frank confession. He answered, 'No; it is the same with all of us. The confessional, I fear, he said, 'is a school of lying.' There are so many secret sins that excite shame at their very thought, that people—and women especially—dare not confess them. If an angel from heaven had told me that ten persons had fully and frankly confessed their sins in the Province of Quebec, I would have thought it a wonderful thing. Some penitents have told me, 'I have sins that I would rather die than confess to man.' Many have prayed to God that they may receive grace and strength to confess, and at last dare not tell the priest what they had poured out in sorrow of soul before God. Who can tell what grievous loads these poor souls carry day by day, and year by year? And as woman is so much more modest and chaste than man, how much more difficult the task of confession: how much more grievous the load of unforgiveness!

"Francis Xavier, in his 'Mirror of Confessors,' recognizing how difficult it is to obtain full confession, gives regulations most minute and numerous for following up the reluctant spirit, and extorting from it a declaration of secret sins. He turns the question about on all sides. He is like a general sitting down before a strong fortress, which he uses all the art of war to take. The father confessor, trained in his school, will make the penitents speak in spite of themselves. He will lead young minds to the knowledge of sins of which they were previously in blissful ignorance. I have asked the question: 'My daughter, since when have you abandoned yourself to such abominable wickedness?' And I have received the answer, 'Since my confessor showed the sin to me.'

"The confessor knows that the license of the confessional is not in accordance with the pure word of God. But, which will be obeyed, the Word of God or the Pope? I have obeyed God rather than man, and therefore, I am here, as I have often been before, to speak, and if it be the will to suffer for His name's sake. Montalambert has said it, and if your priest tells you that he was not of the Roman Catholic Church, you may hang me on the highest tower of your fine Church of Notre Dame—you will be glad to get rid of Chiniquy—he has said that 'the Church of Rome adores a man—it is idolatrous.'

"Listen to what the fathers say about the confessional. (The response, Father Chiniquy read extracts from several of the Fathers, and chiefly from Chrysostom, in which the faithful were called upon to confess to God, not to man.) Once I read these extracts differently, because the true meaning of them was hidden from me. There was in the old church an officer, whose duty it was, when people had committed any great open sin which scandalized the church at large, to publish the confession of the sin before the world, and to pronounce before the congregation the fact, that the offended church forgave this sin. But this was not a case in which the penitent could say, 'Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned.' It was in the case of public and scandalous offences that must be publicly confessed and forgiven by those who suffered from them, as well as by God who only could take their guilt away.

"God made a noble Church, but man degraded and defaced it. A celebrated painter made a beautiful picture, every line and tint of which was executed with the greatest care; it had taken a long time to finish, and when completed, the painter gazed upon it with feelings of deep admiration for his magnificent work. But while he was thus contemplating it, a tame monkey that he kept, and which had before watched him at his work, crouched behind the canvas. The painter left his studio for a short time, and when he returned his face was full of horror and grief; this magnificent picture was destroyed. The monkey had taken the brush and palette in hand, and drawn great streaks of paint across earth and sea and sky, human figures, and noble edifices; the painting was a ruin, a shapeless mass of colour; red and white, blue and green, black and yellow, with nothing meaning or beauty. So God made this glorious Church and institution to be admired, the pillar and ground of the truth, his great instrument for saving and beautifying this lost world, and the papacy is the monkey. Here it has drawn a great streak of confession and penance over God's work. There is a bold rough line, the doctrine of purgatory; now the Pope tries his hand, and blots out all beauty with the immaculate Conception. And again a wide black band runs over the whole picture in papal infallibility. The Church was grand and godlike, but who can recognize it now? All defaced and degraded, the Church of Rome is not the Church of Christ.

"All their lines are chains, chains that the priesthood are binding you hand and foot with. God wills you to be free. 'The truth shall make you free.' Come, take the world, God, and you will be free indeed! The audience listened throughout with breathless attention. Applause was with difficulty repressed, and every word out at the Pope and the priests was received with shouts of genuine laughter, showing that faith in Rome was waning or gone from many minds. No attempt was made to interrupt the speaker, and even no sign of dissatisfaction was expressed during the

whole of the long address. Father Chiniquy, in conclusion, told of the many who had given in their adhesion to the Protestant Church, and who had themselves signed a document to this effect. Some had even come to him in the vestry before the beginning of the lecture. A letter from below Quebec, had informed him of conversions that had followed up a reading of the report of his lectures, in the French column of the Witness. Among others who had come out of Rome in connection with these lectures, was one who had been a papal Zouave, but who had now enlisted in a higher warfare under the banner of Jesus Christ.

Much of Father Chiniquy if he has his fruits, and they are few and small, for those with which he has been charged, are fabrications or exaggerations of the Romish priesthood and their emissaries; and the very good Reformer, Luther and Calvin, and Zangle and Knox. As he said himself concerning Luther, 'he is the lion of the truth, that frightens the frogs of the Papacy into their stagnant fens;' the figure may be quaint, but the same is in accordance with truth. Father Chiniquy is a lion here.

We have gained free speech in Montreal; the whole City is on its side now, and was to the man, and there are many who fear would be such who lay a violent hand on the devoted brave man. There is not another man in Canada, not one in the whole world, that could shake Rome's foundation here as Chiniquy is doing. The Christians are beginning to see this war, and the few cowardly spirits that were afraid of fire and broken windows and damaged books, with the chance of a stare or pistol shot, are preparing to change their tone and emulate the noble and self-sacrificing spirit of the Cote Street congregation, whose record is clear as a fearless, liberal, missionary Church of Christ.

Great things are in store for the province of Quebec, and then for the whole of our great Dominion; for the welfare of every member affects that of the whole body. We need the churches' prayer and support. Chiniquy shall be our power, and wherever he makes a break, we shall plant one of our devoted students; nor must the work cease till Protestant Churches cover the face of Canada from one end to the other, and make 'the wilderness and the solitary place glad for them, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose.' If the Church has faith in God for this great end, let it prove Him by bringing the tithes into the storehouse, so shall the windows of heaven be opened, and a blessing poured out that there shall not be room to receive.

Presbyterian Union and the Quebec Legislative Council.

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

SIR.—You will have the gratifying intelligence to lay before your readers this week that the Bills in the hands of the Quebec Legislature, about which you expressed fears last week, have passed, and are now part of the law of the land. Your information was quite correct as to the state of the vote in the Private Bills Committee of the Legislative Council, when the rejection of the Bills was resolved upon on Saturday evening. But I doubt if it is fair to blame the majority of the members of the committee for that result. The only thing, perhaps, for which they ought to be taken to task is the fact that they did not at once accept the official declarations of the Moderators of the general churches petitioning them to pass the Bills, but allowed discussions on constitutional points, and the merits of the Union Question generally, with which they certainly had nothing to do, to be entered upon.

Having allowed the opposition not merely to appear in defence of any civil rights which they could show were imperilled by the Bills, there was no end to the confusion of mind into which they were led. Up to the time when the Montreal delegation appeared on the scene, and reinforced the friends of the Union Cause before the House, the members of the Committee, most of whom belonged to the Romish church and understood English but imperfectly, were perplexed which of the two parties to believe, Rev. Dr. Cook and L. Croil, on one side, or the Rev. Gavin Lang and Mr. Brynner on the other.

The champions of Union laid the facts before the committee, as shown in the official documents of the churches, but the gentlemen on the other side endeavoured to prove that these documents were unreliable, and that they did not fairly represent the views of the people of the Presbyterian Church of Canada in connection with the Church of Scotland. This they did with an air of unhesitating assurance and apparent fervor which misled the simple minded Frenchmen, who got perfectly bewildered with talk about Barrier Acts and majorities and minorities; and being Conservative, and deeming it their function to put the brakes on all legislation which aims at disturbing the things that are, they naturally enough threw out the Bills. But the prompt action taken in Montreal and Quebec, to show on which side the people's wishes lay, backed up as it was by the meetings at Toronto and Kingston, very speedily put a new face upon things. No amount of audacity or misrepresentation could do away with the impression produced by the excitement, the mass meetings, and the petitions, which came in upon them like a flood within a couple of days of their decision. They could not understand the constitution of Synods and Presbyteries, but they did understand the popular will thus expressed, and the very fact that on Monday when the

report of these agitations reached Quebec, the Council decided to remit the subject again to the Private Bills Committee shows that they felt they had made a mistake. The presence of a large and influential lay delegation from Montreal strengthened the hands of Dr. Cook and Mr. Croil immensely, and made the ultimate passage of the Bills a certainty. The question then became not, would the Bills pass, but would they pass with their efficiency unimpaired, Mr. Lang making desperate efforts to have them mutilated. In this we was foiled at every point, the only important change, extending the limit for congregational action from six months to two years, being made not as a concession to the opposition, who would not accept it as such, but at the instance of one of the Promoters of the Bills within the council, and it improves the Bills so far as the Province of Quebec is concerned. But had the Bills been finally rejected, and a dead lock ensued between the Presbyterians of the Dominion and the Legislative Council at Quebec, the latter would have been "more stoned against than sinning." Upon the head of Mr. Lang, who does not seem to have cared into how false and delicate a position he held the members of the Council, so long as he gained his end of thwarting the Union Movement, the blame would have had to fall. He did not seem to consider any means beneath him to employ to accomplish his end; not only did he make audacious statements that could not bear sifting, but with unfair ingenuity he sought to belittle every fact and principle advanced on behalf of the Union Cause, never admitting the truth of anything that told against his own position. The memorial presented to the Ontario Legislature, the exaggerated absurdities of which made it unoperative in that body, was well calculated by its villainous insinuations, to breed mischief in the minds of the members at Quebec, among whom it was circulated. No matter though Mr. Lang traduced his own brethren and co-religionists by ascribing to them objects in this Union which they repudiate, namely as conspiring against religion as well as political freedom, so long as he could thereby excite the apprehensions and hostility of gentlemen belonging to other religious persuasions. The desperate game failed, but it was very nearly successful. Had the decision of the committee of the Legislative Council, as at first propounded, stood, what a spectacle would have been presented! The Roman Catholic members of the Council throwing their shield over the Presbyterians of the Dominion, to protect them from litigation and internal discussions, out of gratitude to Mr. Lang, who in his memorial and speeches set himself forth as the Champion of the interests of other religious denominations against the overwhelming influence of Presbyterianism in the land.

I know, Mr. Editor, that this will be considered as a strongly worded letter, but it is not nearly as strong as the state of the case, known to myself and others who were on the ground, would warrant; and I think your readers ought to be put in possession of the real facts pertaining to an important crisis in the history of Presbyterianism in the Dominion. So far as Montreal at least is concerned, Union was virtually consummated on Monday of last week, when the Presbyterians met together and made enthusiastic common cause in petitioning the Quebec Legislature—the opposition thus contributing to hasten and cement the Union which they wished to hinder.

Yours Truly, ROBERT CAMPBELL.

Montreal Feb. 22nd, 1875.

Modern Evangelist.

Mr. Editor.—My last paper has evidently served the purpose I intended. It has called attention to the Scripture warrant for, and status of the Modern Evangelist, or Revival Preacher. I do not claim to be a "trustworthy guide," further than my sentiments are scriptural. If Mr. Rogers can show them to be unscriptural, then he is more trustworthy; and I am sure your columns are open to him. I thank you, however, that, while you do not commit yourself to my opinions, you allow their expression, though they are contrary in some respects to your editorials which appeared in connection with the visit of Mr. Verley to Toronto. Mr. Rogers is severe. He protests against my spirit, and says, "It looks as if we held the key of office in the kingdom." Now I am not going to discuss the question of the keys present; nor have I any apology to make. I will simply say, in the clause to which Mr. R. objects, I assail no individual. I speak generally of what every one knows has been done. If any have not done these things they cannot complain. Those who do them are at liberty to do so. I judge them not. I do not say that their "exercises to save souls and to raise the tone of spirituality is criminal, or an uncalculated impertinence." I simply let them alone, to "prophecy" as they will. Still, I have my own opinions as to the methods they employ, and the tendency of their teachings and practices. I decline to recognize them as the New Testament evangelist. And I ask Mr. Rogers's permission, if necessary, to express my opinions in your columns, although they may conflict with his sentiments. I am satisfied that much has been done and said under the name of evangelists and gospel meetings which interferes seriously with the Lord's work, and I think it full time for the Churches to distinguish between evangelists and evangelists between the *sent* and the *self* constituted Communicated.