

in the government of the Church. From this ecclesiastical theory the passage is easy to the *civil* theory that grants the citizen a substantive part in the government of the State. The elevation of the individual may however be carried too far. This was done by the Ana-Baptists at the period of the Reformation, and is done in modern days in Democratic theories of civil government. The consequence is that the *order* of society is sacrificed to the *freedom* of the individual. Presbyterianism puts a limit to the exaltation of the individual. According to this theory the *freedom* of the individual ceases where the *good* of the whole church begins. The freedom of the individual must not encroach on the order of the Church; and the order of the Church must not destroy the just freedom of the individual conscience. That church government, according to this theory, is best that most effectually harmonizes these two forces, that most successfully unites individual freedom with good order. Is it not clear that this is the true basis of civil government as it undoubtedly is of ecclesiastical? Presbyterianism is thus ever favourable to civil liberty and order. Where the former prevails the latter will sooner or later follow. Because we believe this we earnestly desire that Presbyterianism should have at least some influence in moulding our character. The extent to which this influence is permitted to work will under God greatly determine our future destiny, and through us the destiny of the empire that is likely to arise north of the American boundary.

2. The leading principles of Presbyterian Church government afford *middle ground* on which opposing theories of church government are gradually finding a meeting place. On the one hand we find American and Canadian Prelacy, by the narrowing of prelatical distinctions, and by Synods, and by lay delegates, gradually abandoning the old ground still occupied by the mother church in England, and tending towards Presbyterianism. On the other hand Congregationalism by its "unions" "advisory Committees," and improvised presbyteries is also tending towards the same middle ground where freedom and order meet together. The cause of this convergence is not found, we believe, in the two denominations above referred to being convinced by any formal argumentation that Presbyterianism is more reasonable or more Scriptural than their own theories, but in the instincts of what might be called the ecclesiastical life. The principle of growth that God has implanted in any animal or tree will constantly tend to that outward form God intended that animal or tree should assume. By the free use of the axe the young oak may be made to assume the form of a poplar. The nature of the oak is still there, however, and as soon as the axe ceases its unnatural work the *form* of the oak will be assumed as quickly as previous mutilations will permit. It is so with the Church of Christ. God has given it a law of growth. By this law it is constantly urged to assume that outward form that is most consonant with its nature. Under the influence of ignorance, prejudice or selfish interest man may succeed in causing this inward law to cease for a time from manifesting itself in the outward form of the Church. The suspension of this activity is unnatural and as soon as the outward pressure is withdrawn this law of growth will flow in its natural channel, and manifest itself in its normal organization. We do not assert that Presbyterianism as it now exists is the strict outward form God intended His Church should assume. But we might challenge reason, experience and Scripture in proof of the assertion, that Presbyterianism is nearer the Scripture, and therefore nearer the divine model than any other form of government now existing. If this is really the case, and if the principle we have indicated be fact, then we may expect this convergence towards Presbyterianism to advance, and to advance with more rapid strides on this continent than in Europe, where the opposing forces are stronger.

It should not, however, be forgotten that as a system of government that sets a high value on order, Presbyterianism, from an evil principle in our nature, is in danger of running its *order* to *dead formality*. This tendency to formalism and indifferentism appears chiefly in two things. There is no church in this Province that makes fewer efforts than the Presbyterian Church to increase its number by additions from without its own communion. In avoiding proselytism, which is certainly an evil extreme, it runs close on the verge of indifference to truth and to the interests of men. It allows multitudes who have nothing but a traditional connection with any church to perish in

the neighbourhood of its churches without any effort to reach them. Again, no church makes fewer efforts to retain its own members within its bosom. If he digs his way to the rock on which the structure is raised then death itself can scarcely conquer the love a Presbyterian has for his church. But how little he gets to dig! Do not the bulk of our smart youth believe that Presbyterianism like other "isms" is built in the sand or at best on "conglomerate." What efforts are being made to show them the rock? The consequence is that the youth of our church are largely a prey to cruel errors. This should not be. Is there no remedy?

With all that has been said let it, however, be borne in mind that church government, though highly important is secondary in importance to *doctrine*. The form of government is the body; doctrine is the soul. Government is the casket; doctrine the jewel it contains. On this account we can esteem as brethren those differing from us in church government who are sound in doctrine. Orthodox Congregationalism, Low Church Episcopacy, Evangelical Methodism, though differing from us in forms and rites we regard as friendly powers in the great work of recovering the world to Christ. Though form of government is important it is not here the true test of a church lies. It lies in doctrine.

AN UNCERTAIN SOUND.—No. III.

MR. EDITOR,—Allow me to congratulate you on the enterprise and taste displayed in the improvements of your hitherto respectable, and now enlarged journal, and fondly hope that it may have a long brilliant career, and not emit a single *uncertain sound* while its name is CANADA PRESBYTERIAN; but of this I am not yet quite sanguine, for had you been truly penitent you would not have pitted the utopian visions of a few misguided fanatics against the *wisdom, power, and grace* of the great I AM.

"Christian worker," is a wide expression, and includes every word and act of a true Christian, but I must narrow my field to ministers of the gospel—those who are charged with the cure of souls, and here I beg to state most distinctly that I have no sympathy with the idea, that is becoming so common now-a-days, of hiring ministers to do so much work for so much money; on the contrary I am satisfied that the office of the Holy Ministry is ordained of God and the duties thereof distinctly stated in scripture. "Go and disciple all nations," and when the incumbent is duly ordained he has a good example in the apostles, who would not so much as serve tables, but gave themselves continually to prayer and the ministry of the word. Thus the gospel minister is at ordination consecrated to a sacred use, and the moment he steps aside from purely spiritual work, he, for the time, lays down his high commission he has from God, and takes up *one* from *man*. Now, sir, I should like to know in what manner or to what extent the temperance pledge can help him to perform these spiritual duties, for even in the case of drunkards he is surely not so ignorant as to believe that he can accomplish any real good without the aid of the Holy Spirit, and is it not egregious presumption to imagine that He (the spirit), will own and bless his labor with the pledge without the gospel, or the gospel with the secular element of the pledge in it, "My glory will I not give to another?" Besides it is an act of *unbelief*, for surely the *restraining grace* of the Spirit is stronger than that of the pledge. Temperance ministers do not, as a rule, visit drunkards at their homes. It must therefore be at public meetings where they preach their so-called christian temperance, and that must be casting pearls before swine to offer the gospel with the least hope of success to a people intoxicated with the comic song with a stiff thread of blue in it, the maddening dance, and questionable music, etc.; but suppose the buffooneries are dispensed with, and his preaching produces anxiety, the pledge must be the remedy or (fair play), at least half pledge and half Christ! The blood of Christ cleanseth from ALL SIN, and that power which broke the bars of death and burst the gates of hell is surely able to rescue the drunkard without the meretricious aid of the pledge. You may say all right, but he wills it so. Answer: He does no such thing. He don't say come to me with or through the pledge, but, "*come to me*." When a minister says sign the pledge and believe the gospel (which they do), he forgets that a man cannot think of *two things* at the same instant; besides, he is degrading Christ and *defying* the pledge. When he gives

the pledge he knows right well that the receiver is taking it in *his own* strength, and that it is perfect weakness, and when he breaks it he commits perjury of the second degree, to which he who gave it is accessory. Far be it from me to palliate drunkenness or even moderate drinking as a beverage; but after all drunkenness is but *one* of the branches of the corrupt tree implanted in our nature at the fall, and in the sight of high heaven, not the most heinous, for even your temperance casuist, Rev. D. J. MacDonnell, B.A., gives it as *three* cases to each hundred of the population, a miserable return of the seed sown by all moderate drinking. Now, it is almost unpardonable for a minister to leave his legitimate work and *nibble* at this *one sin* to the neglect of those more aggravated, see Gal. v. 19. I shall have more to say regarding their baneful influences when I come to discuss the case of the young, but here I must say that their working with the pledge seems to render them less profound thinkers, and by a certain consequence less impressive preachers; one reason for this will be given hereafter.

You say that the temperance movement has done most good among the young. As you are seldom outside your sanctum, such an opinion may be excused, but a more erroneous one could not well be imagined, for in point of fact it is *here* where the *crowning* iniquity is experienced. There are more ways of being intoxicated than with strong drink. Now whatever I may know of the science of mind, I shall here use such words as will be easily understood, viz.: when the organs of emotion or the emotional faculties as they are called are properly exercised they produce calmness, and directed to proper objects happiness, but when excessively exercised they produce *Ecstasy*, and fainting, etc., and when these are combined with the lower or animal propensities they produce *irreverence, rudeness, obstinacy*. Every organ when not used becomes *inert*, while by exercise they become *LARGER*, strong, and active. Now, sir, it is an undeniable and painful fact, that the various buffooneries practised in connection with the temperance movement has kept up such a strain upon these faculties of the young and others, as to train and excite them up to such a state of tension, (and the others being feeble and passive), as to render attention to anything intellectual, moral and religious actually hateful. *Nothing but excitement*. I need say no more, but let the deserted condition of our evening schools, young men's societies, Bible classes, etc., testify. Now what is their condition? *Nothing less than sober infidels!* Living and dying in this state, (as in all likelihood they will) what is their *END TO BE?*

You may ask: And you may lay all this at the door of the temperance movement? Answer, I do lay three-fourths of it and give them the credit, or rather the *discredit* of commencing these exciting exercises. You may ask further, and would you deprive the young of all amusement? By no means, but don't make them believe that they are at the same time entered the straight gate, and are walking in the narrow way. The right thing in the right way. Now, sir, how much of the responsibility of this lies at the door of those ministers who attend and help to promote these excitements? I shall let their own consciences answer and it may be easily seen how injuriously such scenes effect their persons and their other services. I speak from two hours' experience of the latter point. In conclusion I would say of those ministers who have *not* bowed the knee to this modern Baal in these days of defection, but who have minded their own business, and fought their Master's battles with His own weapons, all honor and *increased* confidence and respect.

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