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tion always enjoyed a vested interest in injustice. When, therefore, the Act of Union is described as Lord Durham's solution of the Canadian problem, we should always remember that where the Act departed from his instructions the germs of decay and dissolution entered in.

Whether or not we agree with the contention of Sir John A. Macdonald that the Union was in its nature rather federal than legislative there is and can be no doubt that the English minority insisted on equal representation while the French had the major portion of the population; that they imposed this as a condition of the Union on the French majority despite strenuous opposition and violent protests; and that, "Representation by Population" became a political slogan and party cry in Upper Canada only when Upper Canadians outnumbered Lower Canadians; that when this reversal of conditions had taken place it was a shameful breach of the fundamental condition of the Union to insist on representation by population.

In 1858 the ministry, headed by John A. Macdonald, resigned over the question of the Queen's selection of Ottawa as the seat of Government. George Brown, the great champion of the principle of representation by population and the denouncer, in unmeasured terms, of subservience to French Canadians and Catholics, was called upon to form a ministry. He did so, and Brown-Dorion administration lasted just two days. A vote of want of confidence was carried by seventy-one to thirty-one in the assembly; and a similar motion by sixteen to eight in the Legislative Council.

"The reasons," writes Sir Joseph Pope in his *Memoirs of Sir John A. Macdonald*, "for this prompt and apparently premature condemnation of a Government which had barely come into existence, and had as yet but scant opportunity of defining its policy, are to be found in the reports of this debate. Briefly summarized, they are—(1) an intense dissatisfaction with the personnel of the new Ministry, (2) the absence of any statement as to the policy of the Government, and (3) a feeling among the Upper Canadians that George Brown had sold them to Lower Canada."

"It was believed that no announcement was made, for the simple reason that no policy had been agreed upon. Mr. Brown had for years taken the ground that representation by population was, next perhaps to the repression of Roman Catholicism, the most important question of the day. There was no mistaking his views on this subject. In Parliament, in the press, on the platform, he had enunciated them in language which, if it sometimes lacked polish, was always plain enough to be understood. For many years the people of Upper Canada had been told, through the columns of the Globe, that it was John A. Macdonald who stood between them and equal representation in Parliament—that the same John A. Macdonald denied to them privileges which he accorded to French Canadians—that, in short, he had delivered them bound to the priesthood of Lower Canada, and that he had done these things in order that he might rule. And the electors were solemnly assured that no amelioration of their condition was to be looked for until they had deposed Mr. Macdonald and put Mr. Brown in his place. The electors did not believe him; nevertheless he received the coveted position from the hands of his opponent. 'Here,' said Mr. Macdonald, 'you have long clamored for power; you have for years posed as the champion of Upper Canada, you have denounced me as the slave of French influence; here is my office; let us see what you can do.' With eager fingers he grasped the prize, and withdrew to take counsel with his friends. After a brief space he emerged from his seclusion."

"Men looked with incredulity, amazement, and indignation at the sight which was presented to their gaze. The spirit of religious intolerance for the existence of which Mr. Brown, more than any living man, was responsible, cried out in horror at the sight of the Protestant champion calling to his ministry no less than six Roman Catholics, or one half of the whole Government. People recalled the fact that 'John A.,' slave to the priesthood though he might be, never had more than

four Roman Catholic colleagues at the same time in his Cabinet. The advocates of representation by population viewed with dismay the presence of such opponents of that principle as Messrs. Dorion, Drummond, and Thibault, and shortly afterwards learned without surprise from the lips of one of them that in Mr. Brown's Administration were seven members (an absolute majority) pledged against it."

In the memorandum asking the Governor-General to dissolve the House Mr. Brown expressed the intention of his ministry to propose measures for the establishment of that harmony between Upper and Lower Canada which, in the opinion of Mr. Brown and his colleagues, was essential to the prosperity of the province!

Well, the poor man's conversion seems to have been complete.

This bit of political history, which has been recalled by uninformed references to Representation by Population as a Liberal principle, has its obvious lessons for Canadians of the present generation. The evil men do lives after them; the evil seeds so assiduously sown by George Brown still bear their pernicious harvest. For, to change the metaphor, there have seldom been wanting politicians to fan into flame for selfish purposes the dying embers of religious and racial prejudice.

In the long run their fate is the fate of George Brown. But Canada suffers.

A SOLUTION OF THE GROUT PROBLEM

Much has been said and written in English-speaking countries in favor of the old traditional two-party system of political government; the tendency of parties to break up into groups, or to give place to groups whose common occupational interest forms a bond of union, is deplored as incompatible with responsible government. The course of evolution in the Mother of Parliaments is not difficult to predict. Liberalism will disappear and there will be Conservatives—the political significance of the term coinciding with the literal meaning of the word—and Laborites. The tendency to break up will have come a full circle and the two party system be restored. The basis will be distinct, definite and real—the party of the Haves vs. the party of the Have-Nots.

In Canada where there is no permanent or even real basic distinction between the "two historic parties" the future of the group tendency is more problematical. The difficulties are obvious. The chief advantage of the old order was that the people always had an alternative government when dissatisfied with the one charged with the duties and responsibilities of governing. The chief disadvantage of the group system is the lack of stability which weakens initiative and responsibility as well as real power to govern.

While in England the tendency is plainly to revert to the old two-party political system, on the continent of Europe multitudinous groups are a permanent feature of political life.

The energetic Prime Minister and political dictator of Italy has no liking for the insecurity consequent on the group system.

He would abolish proportional representation and give to the party or group obtaining the largest number of votes three quarters of the seats in the Chamber of Deputies; or, three quarters of the voting power regardless of the number of seats. That is Mussolini's idea of electoral reform. There is no manner of doubt that it removes effectively the paralyzing weakness consequent on the multiplication of groups. It makes the largest group dominant, supreme; giving it initiative, responsibility, and absolute power to govern while it holds together. Nothing but defections from its own ranks could thwart its will, or even delay its triumphant progress. To this measure of "electoral reform" the recent congress of the Popular Party—usually referred to as the Catholic Party—offered opposition. Referring to Fascist movement as a passing phase of Italian politics the Catholic Party congress pledged a very conditional support to Mussolini's idea of "electoral reform."

That is the explanation of recent despatches from Italy. Mussolini demanded the resignation of his "Catholic" ministers,—which is not the same thing by any means as demanding the resignation of all his ministers who are Catholics. Neither in Italy, nor in Belgium, nor in Germany, where there are political parties popularly known as "Catholic" do these parties include all Catholics. It is, in each case, a political party or group. So the Minister of Education in the Mussolini Cabinet though a staunch and loyal Catholic and one of the glories of modern Italy as a man of learning was not affected by the "Catholic" Fascist split.

Just what effect this divergence may have on the politics of Italy is not at all clear at present.

Even conceding that Mussolini is the man of destiny for Italy, that he deserves the confidence and trust which he seems to have inspired, that he will use his power in a wise, just and statesmanlike manner, his "electoral reform" when he passes away might easily become the instrument of tyranny in the hands of an unscrupulous minority of the Italian population.

OLD ERRORS AND NEW PHASES

By THE OBSERVER

When the nations of Europe, which broke away from the Church, took for the main purpose of their existence the making of money, their influence and example were strong enough to affect those nations which still remained in the Church. England was as dominant and successful in war when she was Catholic as after she became Protestant; but she was in her Catholic days less intent on money-making. After the religious revolution of the sixteenth century, business and commerce became the main purpose of national existence; and the main task of a nation's greatness was taken to be her commercial and industrial success.

Since the seventeenth century it has been one of the commonest stock arguments against the Catholic Church that the non-Catholic nations were more prosperous in dollars and cents than the Catholic nations. This ideal, set before the eyes of successive generations of people as the only ideal worth striving for, could have but one effect; it unduly emphasized the importance of money; the importance of being well off. At the same time the new social organization of the Reformed countries put the wealth into the hands of a small minority of the population; and this set up a new ideal, one of social aristocracy.

Social aristocracy was never a Catholic ideal. In the Catholic days, the nobility had always a powerful rival in a social sense in the great land-owning institutions of the Catholic Church which were always the friends of the poor. The poorer classes of the people, in those days, saw that the Catholic abbots and monasteries had a large share of the wealth and that they held it as the trustees of the poor. Therefore there was not much envy. Envy, as a powerful factor in social relations, was born of the changes which took away the patrimony of the poor which had been held by the Church in her great institutions of beneficence and dug deeper the gulf between wealth and poverty.

The new spirit of commercialism and greed made the rich more selfish as they grew richer, and at the same time made the poor for the first time markedly jealous and envious of the rich. The landed aristocracy of the countries which left the Church became the champions of the religious revolution; the leaders of new sects or their political protectors; and the ardent exponents of a materialistic philosophy which made them rich at the same time that it removed the most powerful protector of the poor and delivered those poor into their hands without any authority to call them to a spiritual account for the way they treated them; the lands of the poor, the commons in the rural districts of England were appropriated by the land magnates, though they had been used and enjoyed for centuries by the peasants; and they have remained in the hands of the descendants of the robbers to this day. That is only one instance; there are hundreds of like cases scattered through the history of the nations which threw off the authority of the Catholic Church; the only authority that had ever been exercised in the interests of

the common people in cases where those interests were contrary to the interests of the aristocracy.

The foundations of industrial expansion were laid in the spoils of the Church. The huge private fortunes which later furnished the money for the development of industrial enterprise, were built on the plunder of the capital which the Church had by long and hard work got out of the hands of kings and noblemen and held for the poor until kings and noblemen took it away from her. In the Catholic Church, and in her lands and monies held in trust for the poor, the aristocracy had always seen a formidable obstacle to their dreams of complete and absolute domination of the whole of the people. When the Church was deprived of an stroke of her spiritual authority, of her possessions and her social influence, the landed aristocrats had no longer a rival to fear or a check on their greed. All her acquisitions of nine hundred years they took from her in four or five years, and then the workingman was at their mercy. The social situation which then arose was only possible after the Catholic Church was first destroyed in those countries.

Then came the invention of machinery; and a new impulse to the manufacturing of goods. Who furnished the capital? Those who alone had capital. Those who had plundered and appropriated the capital. Those who had robbed the Church and had built their fortunes on the ruin of the Church. They had the money of the country and its land and its mines; and they had a social and political influence that had always been modified and checked and challenged by the Catholic Church when she had the power; but which there was no longer any power to check or challenge.

This situation went on for a long time and then shaded off into another. A powerful middle class, half way between the workingmen and the aristocrats, and in part recruited from the workingmen, came into existence; traders and manufacturers of humble birth, who had made money in trading, manufacturing, exporting or importing became members of a new order. The attitude of this class towards Labor was modeled on that of the aristocratic class; for the aristocratic class not only were the wealthiest class, but also the class of the socially elect; and as they had eliminated spiritual and theological considerations from their conceptions of the relations of the social classes, their attitude was a purely materialistic one, and this was copied faithfully by the newly rich middle class.

The rise of this new class seemed to emphasize the two extremes between which they stood. Their power did little for the workingman, though many of them had themselves been workingmen, for the reason that their ambitions, social and political, turned their eyes towards the aristocratic class and not towards the working classes. The worst oppression that was ever seen by the poor in England came, not from the hereditary aristocrats, but from the newly rich; in some cases from the workingmen of yesterday turned by success into purse-proud imitators of the aristocrats; longing to be themselves aristocrats to-morrow.

The most intolerant members of the House of Lords have not been those who were descended from a long line of noblemen, but those who had been there only a short time and were eager to prove to the older peers that they were free from any low-class prejudices. The most intolerant members of the House of Lords have often been those whose fathers were workingmen, and who had bought their seats with cash payments into the party funds.

For over two hundred years the slum life of the larger cities of England has been a disgrace to civilization. It still is; for there is no essential difference between the descriptions given by Charles Dickens ninety years ago and those given by Sir Auckland Geddes in 1920. Those slums were made possible by the abandonment in the sixteenth century of Catholic social and moral principles, and by the wholesale robbery from the Church of a sacred trust to prevent just such conditions, which she used as a balance of social and economic power for the benefit of the whole nation.

Is justice at last to prevail. Not by the passing of old errors into new phases; that is sure. What is the main impulse of the hour in every country which has inherited the evils of the great spoliation of the Church? Is there any sober, sensible, considered and calm return to the principles of the Church? Is the golden calf to be pulled down, once and for all? Or, is it merely to be re-shaped and worshipped afresh, instead of being, as it ought to be, abandoned? Not so, we fear. The passion for money is no less; indeed it is growing greater. The passion for money for the sake of money itself or for pleasure, has seized on whole peoples; notably on this side of the Atlantic. Where that passion once swayed thousands it now sways millions. Money is the dear dream and the heart's delight now of great masses of the population; and they are told that it is the supreme good.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

THE LITERARY critic of the Mail and Empire refers to the late Mrs. Meynell as a "much over-rated person." The best appraisers of literature on both sides of the Atlantic must now meekly bow their heads to this crushing rebuke.

THE METHODIST conference has decided that the time has come when definite religious truth must be taught in the Public schools.