

WHAT IS PERSECUTION?

AS apparently we are to have reopened and rediscussed such questions as "What is Education?" and "To whose care and superintendence ought the instruction of a community to be properly committed?" with some others of a kindred character, it would seem that the one which we have put at the head of this article also requires to be re-examined and fairly and intelligently settled. "Persecution" is, no doubt, a word of evil omen, and naturally suggests all that is cruel, unreasonable and unjust. Yet, after all, is it possible to find a dozen of moderately intelligent individuals who will quite agree in saying either what it is, or what it is not? The fact is, we are in danger of doing with this as *Bardolph* did in his celebrated definition of "accommodate," which, for the benefit of the few who may not be familiar with it, we give entire: "Pardon, sir; I have heard the word. Phrase call you it? By this day, I know not the phrase; but I will maintain the word with my sword to be a soldierlike word, and a word of exceeding good command. Accommodated—that is, when a man is, as they say, accommodated; or, when a man is—being—whereby—he may be thought to be accommodated—which is an excellent thing." Just so! And many who rather think themselves superior persons throw no more light on the subject when they come to give their fellows the "true inwardness" of "persecution." It is very evident that a minority has no right in every case to strike an attitude and appeal to heaven as "persecuted" and oppressed. The work of the world could not get on if the will of majorities were always arrested by minorities, large or small, seeking to get their own way on pain of this cry of "persecution" being raised. Nay, it will not always follow that the plea of conscience on the part of a recalcitrant few establishes a clear case of "persecution," if that plea is not attended to and obeyed. A man may have a thoroughly conscientious objection to paying taxes of any kind, but he could scarcely be always accommodated without society being dissolved. Nay, one can imagine cases in which it would not be very uncharitable to characterize this very plea of "conscience" as a transparent sham. Yet at the same time it is equally unquestionable that there are things which no majority can do without being guilty of inflicting upon a protesting few a grievous wrong, and one which can be properly spoken of in the strongest terms of reprobation.

But where are we to find anything like a general consensus as to what those things are? After all that has been said and written about "toleration," "liberty," "free thought" and "free speech," are we generally agreed on the point, even in this Canada of ours? We fear not. It is very likely that we should unanimously condemn the action of the Swedish Parliament, some thirty years ago, when a few poor, bumble, peace-loving, Christ-loving Baptists were expelled from the country because they would not conform to the established Lutheran Church. It is also possible that not one of us would in words endorse the statement of that Swedish legislator who then said that he "saw no hardship whatever in a person being obliged to leave his native country for his religious opinions," though some at least might not be altogether out of sympathy with the sentiment. We might not even brand an atheist as a "social Pariah," or strip a heathen and an idolater of one what was called his civil rights. But is it quite certain that we might not in conscientious kindness do things which we could not see to be persecutions, but which, in the view of the sufferers, could as truly be so characterized as anything which has ever passed under that name? A majority orders a sewer to be constructed, a tax to be levied, a war to be commenced, a policy to be enthroned, and fifty other things against which a minority may protest, but which could scarcely be stigmatized as persecution. Conscience may be pleaded in opposition to a musical instrument in a church or a text-book in a school, and may even in Canada be pleaded in vain. Where is the line to be drawn? How is the true idea to be settled? The tyranny of majorities may sometimes be very bad: is the tyranny of minorities not frequently a great deal worse? The Roman Catholic conscientiously claimed that in his estimation Protestant opinions were so pestilential and destructive that society was impossible if they were tolerated. And, having a majority, he acted accordingly, even to prison and to death. The United States hold the same opinion

about Mormonism, and they are bound to do the same thing. Protestantism in many countries endows itself at the expense of the whole community, puts down dissent, pays its religious teachers out of the public taxes, and says to the conscientious objector, "Friend, I do thee no wrong." In other cases the ministers of religion sit tax free, and other citizens on that account are made to pay the more; yet how many laugh at the plea of anyone objecting to this latter proceeding, as if it were not a fact that something marvellously like oppression and persecution may be involved in the exaction of a cent quite as much as in the turn of a thumbscrew. In short, we still need wise men to define "persecution" with a little more accuracy and precision than has yet been accomplished.

"CHRISTIAN POLITICIAN."

WE notice in the present keenness of political warfare that name-calling is being resorted to very vigorously, especially by the weaker and baser class of combatants. It would take up more of our space than we care thus to prostitute, to give anything approaching to a complete list of the elegant epithets which it is thought decent to apply to political opponents. "Donkey," "booby," "ass," "ninny," "humbug," "hypocrite," "fool," and such like elegances, are among the milder appellatives which are made to do duty in the most serious and important work in which the citizens of a free country can as such be engaged. If the political leaders

"Had money a pursie bookit,
And had in money a well been dookit,"

they could not have been more roundly and more roughly abused. Hanging is too good for them if they are half as black as they are described. Personally, as well as politically, they are, it seems, rotten to the core. If they are not in the Penitentiary, they are not to blame, for they have, we are assured, done almost everything possible to fit them for that establishment. One or two unfortunates, having exhausted their ordinary terms of reproach and condemnation, are, we notice, falling back on the old brickbat that some time ago was frequently thrown at Mr. Mowat's head, and are calling him, as they suppose, with an amount of withering scorn which leaves nothing to be desired, "our Christian Politician;" laying, of course, great and significant stress on the second word. Now, everyone who has followed Mr. Mowat's career, and read his speeches, must acknowledge that he has never ostentatiously paraded his Christianity or referred with anything like hypocritical grimace either to his "conscience" or his "duty." He has tried to follow his "conscience" without saying anything about it, and to do his "duty" without being in the slightest degree either Pecksniffian or "unco guid." Is it come to this that a man is to be sneered at and derided because he tries to bring Christian principle to bear upon political action, and to be neither ashamed nor afraid to acknowledge, when necessary, that he takes Jesus Christ as at once his Model and his Master? To drink, to swear, to lie, to tell foul stories, and to lead vile lives, are apparently, in the estimation of many, all right and proper in statesmen and politicians—only things, at the worst, to laugh at, and to make people feel comforted with the thought that public characters are, after all, "men of like passions" with themselves. But "Christian! Oh! pshaw! That's too thin!" "Christian politician!" Absurdity can no further go. Now, we don't say anything about Mr. Mowat's political opinions. Some of the most earnest and devoted Christians among British statesmen have been as decided Conservatives as Mr. Mowat has been the reverse. Indeed, we only refer to him in this connection at all because he alone has apparently been made the butt of the smallest and weakest of possible wit-crackers as the "Christian politician." Had his political opinions been as Conservative as those of his keenest opponents, and his personal character and Christian profession, as they easily might have been, and as with some of his political opponents they are, as irreproachable and decided as they are, our protest against such treatment as he has received in the matter of his religious profession would have been quite as strong and quite as unmistakable. Has it really come to this, that it is thought to be a greater offence, and to involve a deeper reproach, to be even suspected of praying than to be openly and ostentatiously profane and godless? It would seem so. Of course it will be urged that all these sarcastic references are only made because Mr. Mowat is a "little hypocrite" and a found-out "hum-

bug." Who has found him out? What evidence of his hypocrisy has ever been adduced? He has lived long enough in Toronto to be pretty well known, and we more than doubt if there is anyone who knows anything about him, be his political opinions what they may, who would not scout the very idea of *Oliver Mowat* being personally or politically either a "hypocrite" or a "fraud." He may be wrong in his politics. He may have made many mistakes in the course of his public career. With that we have nothing to do, and take nothing; but we protest against odious personal imputations, without one tittle of proof, being made to do duty in our political contests; and against the idea that a man who seeks to carry his religion into his politics must necessarily be an odious hypocrite or a conscious and transparent fraud. It will be a sad day for Canada when such an idea is generally adopted, and still sadder when there shall be only too good reason for its being entertained.

THE LATE REV. WILLIAM LOHEAD.

This faithful minister of the Gospel, and one of the fathers of our Church, died on the 25th ult., at Elmwood, Huntley, whilst on a visit to his daughter, Mrs. Hugh Gourlay, in the eighty-second year of his age. He was a native of Glasgow, Scotland. Having completed his Arts course in the University of that city, following the example of many of the students of the Relief Church, of which he was a member, he studied Divinity in the Glasgow hall of the Church of Scotland for two years, and took his last session in the Divinity hall of the Relief Church at Paisley, after which he was licensed in 1829. He was married immediately afterwards, and came to Canada in the same year. He supplied the pulpit of St. Andrew's Church, Montreal, for about six months, during the absence of Rev. Dr. Mathieson in Scotland. When the pastor of St. Andrew's returned, Mr. Lohead went to Kingston, where he preached to a body of Presbyterians until he accepted a call to be pastor to the Third Presbyterian Church, Albany, New York, where he was ordained in December, 1830. He remained in the United States, filling very efficiently several important positions, until he returned to Canada in 1845, and was inducted into the charge of Osgoode and Gloucester, and twelve years afterwards into that of North Gower and Gloucester, which, feeling old age creeping upon him, he resigned, and retired in 1873, taking up his abode at Almonte, on which occasion his congregation presented him with an address, expressing regard and esteem for him, accompanied with a fine silver service. His remains were brought to his son's residence, Almonte, on Monday evening, and from thence on Wednesday were borne to the Old Kirk Cemetery, Ramsay, six Presbyterian ministers acting as pall-bearers. The Rev. John Bennett, of St. Andrew's Church, officiated, and, at the request of the deceased, preached his funeral sermon on the following Sabbath evening to a large congregation. Mr. Lohead was highly esteemed by all who knew him. He was a good man and a faithful minister of the Gospel. He took an active interest in the Bible Society, the temperance cause, and all benevolent enterprises; and though for the last few years out of the pastorate, he still loved to occupy a pulpit, and to proclaim to his fellow-men the Gospel of Jesus Christ. He was a Presbyterian of the good old Scottish type, yet no bigot, loving all God's people and delighting to co-operate with them in the work of the common Master. He made it one of the rules of his life to give to the Lord one-tenth of his income. And this he did to the very end, leaving eight hundred dollars to the Presbyterian College, Montreal, three hundred and fifty dollars to the schemes of the Church, and fifty dollars to the Bible Society. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them." "The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance." The deceased gentleman has left behind him a widow, two daughters, and three sons, two of whom are respected ministers of our Church, the one at Fenelon Falls and the other at Londesboro'.

A PROCESS, known as the Bower-Barff process, has been perfected in England, and is in use there and in France, Germany and Belgium, which makes iron rust-proof, by artificially creating a casting of magnetic oxide of iron on its surface. The discovery, it is claimed, will create a revolution in the iron business.