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EDITORS.

REV. GEORGE R. NORTHGRAVES,
(Author of "Missions of Modern India.")
REV. WILLIAM FLANNERY,
THOMAS COFFEY.

Publisher and Proprietor—THOMAS COFFEY.
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Catholic Record.

London, Sat., March 21st, 1891.

EQUAL RIGHTERS AT THE LATE ELECTION.

Points.—They never prick their finger but they say, "There is some of the things blood spilt." "How come that?" says he that takes upon him not to conceive. The answer is as ready as a borrower's cap. "I am the king's poor cousin, sir."

Prince Henry—Nay, they will be kin to us or they will fetch it from Japhet.

—Shakespeare

Very like to the king's poor cousin are the Equal Righters since the Dominion elections took place on the 5th inst. When they held their inauguration convention in Toronto in June, 1889, loud were their denunciations of all the political parties. Conservatives and Reformers, the Cabinet of the Dominion and that of Ontario were equally corrupt and venal, and "subservient to the power of Rome." In fact Major Bond of Montreal declared, amid the applause of the parsons and laity who were the self-constituted "delegates" (save the mark) of "one hundred municipalities" of Ontario, that there is a select band of loyal Protestants in Quebec (the Orangemen of course) who would hold the fort there against all comers, in the war of extermination which was to be carried on against Jesuitism, until their Ontario brethren would have time to make the bullets which Mr. Dalton McCarthy was expected to furnish for the special benefit of the people of Quebec. It was agreed, as a matter of course, that the existing Governments should be swept out of existence. "Sweep the board, sweep the board," frantically exclaimed the head minister, or superintendent of Methodism, in a series of letters which constituted the principal part of the campaign literature of the New Party; and even the party journals stood aghast at the belligerent attitude of this very "representative assemblage." It was admitted that "Ontario has spoken," undeniably, and every disaster was thought to be impending over the country unless the mock "Equal Rights" petitions were acceded to.

The petitions were rejected. Themselves said that they were ignominiously and contemptuously rejected. This was not the case, but we may for the sake of argument grant that this was so. And what is the consequence? Have the politicians been swept out of existence? Have they gone on their knees to the Equal Righters begging to be admitted to their ranks? Far from it. There have been two general elections since, and notwithstanding the dire vengeance threatened against the two governments by these imitators of "Ancient Pistol's" oratory, both governments have been sustained, and the Equal Righters are absolutely nowhere.

In order to let themselves down easily, and to make it appear that Equal Rightism is a powerful organization, like the king's cousin aforesaid, they are now claiming relationship with politicians of every stripe; nay with the very men whom they awhile ago accused of the most gross venality.

Thus, L. H. Davidson, the Quebec President of the Association, telegraphs congratulations to J. K. Macdonald, the Toronto President, on result, though the latter is not quite so jubilant in his reply. The *Mail* of the 9th inst. also declares that "the Equal Rights association and its friends have every reason to feel jubilant over the results of the general election" of the 5th inst. This it attempts to prove elaborately by showing that the 2—thirteen who voted for the disallowance of the Jesuit Estates Bill have been nearly all re-elected. Hanington and Muskoka are yet to be heard from, and it is very probable that one of these two seats will be lost to the thirteen. Then seven "or" eleven imaginary Equal Righters are added to the lot as the fruit of the past agitation, and the *Mail* complacently says:

"The expectation is, we believe, that the number of Equal Righters in the new House will be not less than twenty, and it may reach twenty-four."

This very brilliant expectation is the sole foundation for the *Mail's* jubilation—yet that journal is not even sure that there exists such an expectation. It only "believes" that such is the case! Surely these are bright prospects!

Unless it be wise to count chickens before they are hatched, one at least of the two seats which are only prospective may be left out. Then, as Mr. Charlton of North Oxford—notwithstanding the deep interest he took in the Equal Rights movement at first—formally withdrew from it as soon as he discovered that Mr. Dalton McCarthy was manipulating the whole concern for his own purposes, the number twenty must be reduced to eighteen, and as the no-Popery movement began as far back as 1886, this will give the natural increase of Simon Pare no-Popery members at one per annum. At this rate it will take just eighty-eight years for the Equal Righters to obtain a majority in the House as at present constituted. We wish they may enjoy all the jubilation they may extract out of this cold comfort.

But this is not the way that parties grow which are founded on the bitterness of past ages. Orangism was rampant in Ontario, and in the descendant, and almost over Quebec besides, until the great victory for responsible Government was obtained in 1848. Since then the power of Orangism has been gradually broken, till it is now only one of the many factors which enter into the government of the country. The Equal Rights movement is merely a spasmodic attempt to resuscitate the long defunct party of Protestant Ascendancy. Similar attempts have been made from time to time, but all have failed, and the present movement is equally doomed. Indeed, there is no further proof needed that the abortive Equal Rights Party is dead than the persistency with which its adherents, and especially the *Mail*, tell the people that "it is not dead yet." One specimen of this curious pleading is to be found in the *Mail* of the 7th inst., under the heading: "The Thirteen, and How They Fared." If it were a living party it would not be needed to use so much logic of the kind we have quoted above to prove that there is still some life in it.

We have never pretended that there would be no constituencies in which an Equal Righter could be elected to Parliament. We know that there are some corners in Ontario where a no-Popery cry is sure to find sympathizers; but that it cannot any more carry Ontario was proved by the local elections of 1886 and 1890. Hard battles were fought in those years, and the principles of toleration were victorious. If the battle is again to be fought on similar issues, let it come.

We may add that of the half a dozen who held aloft the standard of the Equal Righters outside of the thirteen, Messrs. Taylor and Grandy were routed by majorities of 250 in East Middlesex and 88 in East Durham, respectively, two of the most thoroughly Protestant constituencies of the Province. Of all the Equal Righters perhaps the most contemptible is the person who cut himself into the contest in East Middlesex. A political soldier of fortune, he had nothing whatever to recommend him to the electorate save an assumed hatred of Popery. He was thrown on the surface by the anti-Catholic wave, and now, when our Protestant friends have stopped postponing thought, he sinks to the bottom once more. Mr. Daly of Selkirk was made specially the object of Orange indignation because he had supported the allowance of the Jesuit Estates Act, with the result that he was elected with a majority not yet indicated; and Mr. Martin, late Attorney General of Manitoba, who was "expected" to be another no-Popery recruit, was beaten with the handsome majority of 470 against him.

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THE SANCTITY OF MARRIAGE.

A sermon was preached on the 1st inst. in the Cathedral of Baltimore by His Eminence Cardinal Gibbons which has attracted considerable attention from the press, owing to the vital importance of the subject, the inviolability of the marriage contract.

The Cardinal explained the four distinguishing characteristics of marriage which render it different from all other contracts. The first of these is its antiquity, as the first parents of the human race were the first contracting parties. "The garden of Eden," said His Eminence, "was the scene of the union. God Himself was the minister and the only witness to the marriage." Its second characteristic is its exclusiveness, as it admits of no third party to the agreement. Thirdly: It is the most sacred of contracts, because God Himself is its founder, and the Son of God has elevated it to the dignity of a solemn rite and a sacrament of His Church; and, fourthly, it is an irrevocable contract.

He proved from the words of Holy Scripture the inviolability of the marriage bond instituted in so sacred a manner, quoting the word of our Blessed Lord and the Apostles to the effect that it cannot be dissolved for any cause: "What God hath joined together let no man put asunder."

The laxity of the marriage tie in the United States has been frequently spoken of with regret by thoughtful writers on

the subject. In fact official statistics show that in the twenty years, ending with the year 1886, three hundred and sixty thousand divorces were granted by the courts; and it is well known that every year the number is increasing to an alarming extent, far more rapidly than the population increases; and the pretence on which these divorces are obtained are frequently of the most trivial character.

His Eminence draws the following graphic picture of the evils which flow from the frequency of divorce:

"Let the imagination picture to itself the number of homes made desolate by this destroying angel; the number of wives and husbands whose hearts are crushed, and whose spirits are broken; the number of children who are cast upon the world bereft of a father's protecting arm and of a mother's love, who dare not cling to one of their parents without arousing the jealousy and hatred of the other."

This sad state of affairs is much more prevalent in some States than in others, owing to the differences between the marriage laws. It is certain that people are better disposed to endure a condition of affairs which cannot be changed than one which may be dissolved. Thus, in Catholic countries, where divorce is impossible, the husband and wife manage to bear with each other's infirmities, because they know that their marriage cannot be dissolved; and even in Protestant countries, like Canada, where there is a possibility indeed to obtain a legal separation, but where there is great difficulty in so doing, it is but very seldom that serious troubles arise in families; but when the pretence of "incompatibility of temper," or even more serious matters are made a sufficient cause for separation, it is very easy for one party or the other to produce the trouble on which they desire to found their pretext.

In Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and Connecticut a few years ago it was the estimate that there was one divorce to nine Protestant marriages, and the proportion has certainly not diminished since. This fearful proportion of families broken up led a New Haven journal to say:

"If married people who have a notion to separate should find it more difficult than it is, many who now part would remain together and would probably live as good lives as if they lived alone or with some sinfully. The strictness of the Catholic Church in regard to divorce goes to show this. Divorces are extremely rare among Catholics."

The writer perhaps was not aware that divorces are never permitted among Catholics; though his meaning was, more probably still, that in very rare cases some Catholics violate the laws of the Church by procuring the civil decrees. He adds: "It is also noticeable that any change toward greater liberty of divorce increases the number of divorces. It has been so in our State and we are greatly degraded by it."

The disgrace will certainly continue to exist until the Catholic law of inviolable marriage be made absolute.

COOKING THE FIGURES.

When we were children attending school our readers will recall to mind a favorite amusement whereby the smart boy of our school-mates was wont to astonish the lesser arithmeticians with his superior skill.

In something like this form the trick was usually played:

"Think of any number. Multiply by six. Add thirty-six. Divide by three. Subtract double the number first thought of; your remainder is twelve."

This always created some astonishment in the school room; but we scarcely expected that a similar trick would be attempted seriously before the "Most potent, grave and reverend signiors," composing the Ontario Legislature, and that the Junior Conservative member for the Metropolis of Ontario should figure as the smart conjurer.

The Hon. C. F. Fraser, in the course of his speech in the House on the 11th inst., stated that "the popular vote in favor of the (Mowat) Government is now stronger than ever it was."

Mr. H. E. Clarke replied:

"The Attorney-General had gone on the public platform, and said that the popular majority by which the Government was sustained was something in the neighborhood of 15,000. That is untrue. . . . and instead of being supported by a popular majority the Opposition had a popular majority of the people of the country."

Mr. Clarke figures it out that the Government received 157,444 votes, whereas 158,902 were cast for the Opposition, there being thus a popular majority of 1,458 against the Government.

Figures are very truthful, when they are properly used, but when put on the wrong side of the balance sheet they are very deceitful, and the smart boy of the school may manipulate them so as to bring from them whatever result he thinks proper. Now in Mr. Clarke's case we find the smart boy at work. According as he finds it necessary for his purpose, he swells the figures of the Opposition with the votes given to the Equal Rights candidates and Independents. In the case of elections by acclamation, he once gives the majority of the year 1886, viz., in the case of Mr. Wood of North Hastings, but in the case of Mr. Mowat of North Oxford, he ignores the majority altogether. It is

true, he omits Mr. Meredith's majority also; but as the majorities in North Oxford exceeded Mr. Meredith's by 610, they cannot be looked upon as balancing each other.

Where the Conservatives opposed each other, he puts the whole vote to the credit of the Conservative opposition, whereas it is well understood that in such cases the Reform vote would generally be concentrated on the candidate who would be supposed to come nearest to the Reform policy.

On the other hand, when two Reformers opposed each other, as in Brockville and South Renfrew, he estimates the vote given to one as being for the Government, while that given to the other is for the Opposition, or is quietly set on one side as "scattering."

It is easy to see that such a method of computation is entirely worthless as a test of the popular preference.

We may add that for North Bruce and Hamilton, the figures of June 5th, which are used in Mr. Clarke's calculation, have been reversed within the last few days, so that without going outside of these two constituencies the whole majority which Mr. Clarke has figured out, has been wiped out within a few votes: though the majority is made out only by mixing in one *olla podrida* Conservatives, Equal Righters, Independents, and even Reformers, and by otherwise cooking the returns.

By such a mode of computation almost any result which is desired can be deduced from figures. It is not difficult to estimate the real state of the case upon official returns; but such an estimate as that furnished by Mr. Clarke is absolutely worthless.

But Mr. Clarke's disquisitions on this subject are in vain. If it were intended that Parliament should be dependent on direct popular vote in all things, we would be governed on the principle of a plebiscite, or else each voter would be allowed a voice in the selection of all the ninety-two members who constitute the Legislature. Our system of Government is based upon the representation of localities as well as individuals. It may, therefore, sometimes happen that the popular majority may be at variance with the Parliamentary majority, but that is no reason why the machinery of Government should be stopped.

THE ANNUNCIATION.

The word Annunciation means the act of giving news, and it is applied to the good news given by the Angel Gabriel to the Blessed Virgin that she should conceive and give birth to the Son of God by the power and inspiration of the Holy Ghost. This message which the Angel gives from God the Father is accompanied by the miraculous Conception of our Lord Jesus Christ, or His Incarnation. In instituting this festival, the Church has in view, therefore, the double purpose of honoring Christ in His Incarnation, and the Blessed Virgin at the moment when she becomes truly the "Mother of God."

This feast is kept by the Greeks under the name *Evangelismos*, from the same root as Evangelion, applied to the Gospel, both words signifying etymologically "good news."

The antiquity of this feast is indubitable, for there are two sermons extant by St. Augustine upon it, wherein he speaks of it as an established feast, and as being the day when the Conception of our Divine Lord is believed to have taken place. As St. Augustine wrote towards the end of the fourth century and beginning of the fifth, dying A. D. 430, the antiquity of the feast is obvious; and it is mentioned also by Proculus, who lived at the same period with St. Augustine.

It is also mentioned in the sacramentary of Pope Gelasius I., which was used in Rome before A. D. 480, and St. John Chrysostom also has several sermons upon it at a still earlier date. We thus see that it was kept as a solemn festival in Europe, Asia and Africa. This fact establishes that it must already, have been a very ancient festival.

It is mentioned and ordered by the Council of Toledo in 656 to be kept with solemnity; but as the date of the feast occurred in Lent, the season of penance, the Council ordered its observance on the 18th of December, a time better suited for the solemn ceremonial of the Church. From this some persons have inferred that this is the first clear testimony to the early existence of the feast. But certainly its observance in the seventh century is no obstacle to its having been kept in the fourth. There is, indeed, every reason to believe that the festival is of Apostolic institution. We find it universal at a most ancient date, with no trace of its having been instituted by the Church at any period later than the Apostolic age, and there can be no doubt that the great importance of the mystery commemorated on this day would induce the Apostles to commemorate it annually as a testimony to the immense blessing conferred thereby on mankind. Hence, in accordance with the rule given by St. Augustine to judge of what is really Apostolic in origin, we may very reasonably infer that this is an Apostolic institution.

St. Augustine's rule is: "What the whole Church holds, and what was not instituted by any Council, but was constantly received, is to be believed as coming from Apostolic tradition."

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The mystery which is commemorated by this festival is described in the first chapter of St. Luke's Gospel. The Angel Gabriel was sent by God to Nazareth to a Virgin exposed to Joseph to address her by a mode of salutation never before given to human being: "Hail full of grace, the Lord is with thee: Blessed art thou among women."

The words "full of grace" or "full of the spirit of God," are, indeed, to be found in Holy Scripture applied to others besides the Blessed Virgin, but the Greek word employed by the Evangelist here is *kacharismenos*, which has a special force which is not found elsewhere, as it intimates "formed in grace," or, as St. Sophronius wrote: "Thou hast found with God grace more resplendent than all others; thou hast found with God complete and perpetual grace which no one else received. No one else was made pure from the beginning" (*prokathartai*). Here the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin is clearly implied in the salutation of Mary.

The Angel then reveals to Mary the purpose of his mission:

"Behold thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and shalt bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High."

The Holy Virgin is much surprised at the nature of the revelation which is made to her; and indeed the Incarnation of the Son of God, and the Redemption of mankind, are made to depend upon her consent to the wish of Almighty God. This consent she gives only when she is assured that the state of virginity which she had embraced shall remain intact. It is by a special miracle, by the power of the Holy Ghost, that she shall become the Mother of God Incarnate. It is only then that she gives her consent, saying:

"Behold the handmaid of the Lord. Be it done unto me according to thy word."

There can be no doubt that the Blessed Virgin was aware of the prophecy of Isaiah, which foretold that Christ should be born of a Virgin; but, taken by surprise, it is not to be wondered at that she did not apply to herself the words of the prophet at once.

The great mystery of the Annunciation, whereby the Blessed Virgin becomes "Mother of God," places her in the highest place among the saints of God, and fully justifies the high honor with which she is venerated by the Catholic Church, which addresses her as "Queen of Angels," and "Queen of all Saints." Protestants frequently object to the title "Mother of God" which we give to the Blessed Virgin. We will leave for a future article the full proof that this is properly her title, but we will here merely say that St. Elizabeth, under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, gave to her a title which is equivalent:

"Whence is this to me, that the Mother of my Lord should come to me?" (St. Luke i., 43.)

THE ITALIAN PREMIER.

Every despatch that has been cabled from Italy since our views on Signor Crispi were given helps to confirm us in the opinion we then advanced. It was our conviction that King Humbert's Ministerial Cabinet was well rid of Mazzini's disciple and co-partner in socialism and dynamite conspiracies. It was utterly impossible that any *modus vivendi* could ever be reached between the Sovereign Pontiff and the Italian Government while Crispi held the reins of power. His education, his personal character and all his antecedents were the very opposite of what is required for prudent State direction, or Christian government. A man with blunted conscience and utterly devoid of humane sentiment or fear of God can never be a true patriot. But when we consider such a being at all times the victim of degrading passions and forever, in his political actions, moved by considerations of hatred against the Vicar of Christ and of contempt for everything which ordinary Christian men hold sacred and venerable, it must strike every one that Crispi held too long for Italy's good the very responsible position of Prime Minister at Rome.

Last Friday's despatches describe a scene in the Roman Parliament (Chamber of Deputies) that throws a flood of light on the ill-starred and dangerous character of Signor Crispi:

"Signor Imbriani, who is a practical Catholic, having been grossly insulted by one of Crispi's adherents, exclaimed, 'Ye are the servants of Austria!' to which Crispi replied, 'No, not the servants, but the friends of Austria.' Imbriani repeated his remark with deliberation, hinting that Crispi and his friends, instead of studying the welfare and peace of their own country, were the slaves of Bismarck and the servants of Austria, which had oppressed Italy. To this Crispi retorted with a gross personal insult intended for Imbriani. The latter called upon Crispi to withdraw his remark. Crispi refused, saying, 'While I was Minister of State I was forced by my position to endure such as you; but now (he shouted in angry tones) 'I am no longer bound to

do so: in my pocket is a revolver. Beware!'"

It was at the school of Mazzini and Garibaldi that Crispi had learned the all-powerful influence of the hidden revolver, the lapis lazuli dagger and the destructive dynamite.

The despatches mention that a scene of indescribable confusion and excitement ensued in the House. What a contrast this conduct exhibits beside that of the actual Prime Minister, the Marquis Rudini! and what hopes may not all Catholics and well wishers of Christian progress and civilization indulge in on learning that the successor of Crispi is neither infidel, priest hating nor blood-thirsty! The first declarations of the new Minister were in favor of retrenchment in public expenditure, social economy and non-interference with the Church of God.

The latest news we have received is to the effect that the new Italian Minister, Marquis de Rudini, has made overtures to the Vatican, with a view to bringing about an *entente cordiale* (amicable relations) based on concessions made to Catholics.

The people who control the cable despatches are not expected to understand the difficulties that subsist between the Holy See and the Italian Government, and must be pardoned for making use of the term "concessions" when, no doubt, it should read restoration of privileges taken away or of properties sequestered, or for compensating wholesale robberies committed by the former Government under the sacrilegious hands of Crispi and his vandal followers.

In the change that has taken place it is impossible for the ordinary observer not to see the finger of God made manifest. When the statesmen of any great nation undertake a reversal of policy making for peace with the Church and for public tranquility as well as for political morality it is evident that earnest supplications have been addressed to Him who controls all human affairs and that the nation at large has found grace with God. All men of faith will readily acknowledge that the additional prayers ordained by our present most glorious Pontiff, and offered to God at the end of every church service, have been heard in heaven, and are already producing the most desirable results.

As a still further proof of our contention, it may be observed that the Falk laws of Prussia have been repealed, and still further overtures of peace and perfect good-will on the part of the Prussian Government have been received at Rome. The latest news on this subject was cabled on last Friday. It appears that in Prussia, as in Ontario, there are fanatical howlers who can never hear of any concession or honest fair-play being given to their Catholic fellow-countrymen. When it is rumored in Berlin or Posen that Emperor William or Chancellor von Caprivi are in communication direct with the Vatican and that some new but long sought for concession is granted to Catholic conscience or to Christian education protests are made from the Protestant pulpit, and excitement runs high. The Hunters, the Johnstons and the Wilds of Fatherland exhaust their vocabularies of vituperation, and in their denunciations of the Man of Sin provoke agitations such as Canada witnessed not long ago. In fact, such and so great has been the furor created in Germany by the fanatical preachers, whose ravings resembled more the conduct of howling dervishes than of Christian ministers, that the progress of the Emperor's just and peaceful administration was for a while blocked and impeded in its beneficent march. Now we are informed by no less a personage than the Chancellor of the Empire that "the delay in bringing forward measures to modify the provisions existing against religious bodies is due solely to Protestant excitement, which is now abating."

The Chancellor, von Caprivi, who sends this apology to Rome, terminates his letter with the comforting assurance that the abatement of the religious agitation will enable the German Government to fulfill its intentions of modifying the prohibition against Catholics.

The whole substance and character of these despatches furnish us with the information that Catholic Emancipation, which was repealed immediately after the Franco-Prussian war, would have been restored long ago by Emperor William and liberty of Catholic worship proclaimed if his liberal designs were not frustrated by the bigotry and intolerance of the Wilds and Hunters of the Teutonic race.

When Bismarck's vaulting ambition projected a national Church, over which he could preside as Christ's Vicar, and thus equal the Russian Czar in wielding power over spirituals, his plans were destroyed and his projects of unlimited power balked by the firm attitude and noble stand of the priests and Bishops of Germany. Several Bishops were confined in dungeons; the religious bodies, such as Dominican preachers and Jesuits Fathers, were driven out of the country: colleges and flourishing univers-

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