

British American Presbyterian.

Vol 3.—No. 49.]

TORONTO, CANADA, FRIDAY, JANUARY 15, 1875.

[Whole No. 153.]

Contributors and Correspondents

PAPAL INFALLIBILITY.

BY HUGH MAGUIRE, AYLWIN, OTTAWA CO.

That in the nineteenth century, when science has made such rapid strides, and scientific men have almost made the pillars of truth to shake by the repeated shafts of enquiry hurled against them, because of their supernatural origin, it is more than surprising that men of steadiness, culture, and learning, would dare to admit, approve, or support a theory opposed to experience, reason, and revelation. That in the light of civilization, at the very heart of Christendom, men of common sense, of average understanding, without any hope of self-aggrandizement, should plot together against the intelligence of the world; undermine society, degrade the noblest faculty of man, and endeavor to doify one of their peers by investing with the prerogative of God, is something absurd as unaccountable as was ever presented to the mind of man. Were it an abstract principle that would never come into conflict with the practical operation of society, the foolishness of those who ushered the dogma into the world might be overlooked or pardoned, as the result of their deliberation would only cause the rational to lament the folly of misdirected zeal; but when it is considered that the new doctrine is intended to influence the world, that it will give an impulse to all the springs of government and of thought, that it is to direct man in all his acts here, and that his eternal destiny hereafter depends on its credence or disbelief; if it becomes an evil of magnitude sufficient to cause every one believing in personal responsibility, every one desiring the intellectual improvement of his race, to protest against its delusive, unhallowed influence.

That the doctrine of Papal infallibility could ever gain the respect of any part of the religious world is strange; still more strange when revelation and history are examined impartially; but when the whole volume of truth was placed in the keeping of one brain, and since salvation depends on the acceptance of such truth, there is an advance in the road of superstition and error unequalled in any other age. That a truth necessary now to salvation could have been rejected as an error but a few years ago, without imperilling the disbeliever with any consequences whatever, evidently proves that the schemes of Redemption has been changed, that a new revelation has been received, that another Gospel must be preached, and that for 1800 years a truth now necessary to salvation had been rejected by men of the most profound piety.

Papal infallibility is not a question that never was discussed in the Church, that came to light all of a sudden; that men could excuse themselves in disbelieving by the plea of ignorance; it is an opinion that had been agitated and rejected by intelligent laymen, priests perhaps, and Popes, for centuries; it is a dogma which general councils, presided over by a Pope, indirectly denounced, which the greatest defenders of Romanism proved to be untenable and unscriptural, and which would never have been heard of were it not for the ambition of Pontiffs, and the bigotry of their satellites.

It is a doctrine which has changed the whole structure of Popery, which destroyed her boasted antiquity, the far-reaching consequences of which may in the future change all the doctrines, morals, and disciplines of the hierarchy. It invests one man with a power dreadful to his Church and society, dishonorable to the intellectual powers of man, which elevates him to an equality with God, and blasphemously seats him on a throne whence he can change the decrees of Heaven. He who is empowered to give the true meaning of every passage of Scripture, to explain the exact sense in which every doctrine must be received, can easily override the teachings of inspiration, as well as pervert every creed retained throughout Christendom. There is no power on earth to question the correctness of his exposition or decision, and a doubt of the truth of his decision on any article of faith or of morals in the mind of any, consigns the disbeliever to perdition, unless he firmly repents and cordially believes every sentence of every bull emanating from the Vatican.

With many persons, trained in the doctrines of Rome, the decision of the Vatican Council does not appear strange. From infancy they have been taught to regard the Church with extraordinary veneration, to believe it to contain within its fold the entire body of the faithful, to suppose that through its channels alone flow all the means of grace; that in the aggregate of its Bishops was contained the entire volume of religious and saving truth, that these Bishops had no right to exercise their functions before they were appointed by the Pontiff, that it was the sanction of the Pope that conferred on each the mysterious powers of the episcopal office. Now it seemed to be no very illogical step in a course of reasoning, to ascribe to him all

the powers which his more sanction conferred upon others. It was the Pope's sanction that rendered the Bishops capable of making true priests, thus rendered them infallible in understanding and teaching the doctrines of the Church, and certainly he, whose more were caused any to understand and teach correctly, must himself have possessed infallibility in the highest degree. It remained only that a council should proclaim it; but practically, he was always in possession of this enviable and wonderful attribute. Romanists for this reason, can see very little in the great change which has come into the Church. The great evil was the error of admitting the infallibility of the Church, as represented in the hierarchy—the oration of the Pontiff. This also was an evil which could justify the reformation, an evil the adoption of which has for ever shut out all hope of reformation in Catholicism. Should she change from her present position, she would destroy the very principle which distinguishes her as a system, and could no longer be the Roman Catholic Church; she would give the lie to herself, and in rejecting any of the errors she has established and retained, she would proclaim herself destitute of that prerogative which she so arrogantly and exclusively claims. Whatever was proclaimed by a general council must be truth, and can never be admitted as error. There can be no hopes therefore of a Reformation by herself, and all idea of her ever returning to an evangelical standard must be abandoned. All true Christians within her folds should cease thinking of a reformation. From without comes salvation, if it will ever happen, and from heaven comes the voice of authority, "come out of her, my people," to every child of God within her fold.

The Church of Christ has ever been the same from its first establishment to the present, and will continue the same until the great object in its establishment has been accomplished. What it was under the old dispensation in its essential features it must be under the new, and whatever happened to it before Christ could befall it after his ascension. Indeed, an apostasy in the visible Church, in what analogy might be expected in the Christian as well as in the Jewish Church. If there was an apostasy in heaven through which some of the angels fell, an apostasy in Paradise, in the antediluvian world, in the days of Abraham, of Elijah and of Christ, why might there not be an apostasy in the visible Christian Church? Is there any antecedent proof that there would not be such; rather is there not such falling away from the faith, and a denial of the truth through the influence of false prophets bringing in damnable heresies foretold in the New Testament. Has not the Epistle to the Romans given a warning to that Church which insupportably claims infallibility "to be not high minded, but to fear lest the same fate might befall it as happened to the Jewish Church. Christ promised to be with the Church only as long as it would continue steadfast in His teachings, and faithful to its trust, but neglecting the conditions of its charter, the influence of His spirit would be withdrawn, and an apostasy would be the necessary consequence. Other national churches did apostatize; is there any proof that the Roman did not also? Let her present teachings be judged by the New Testament, by the Epistle to the Romans, and of fundamental errors in doctrine and practice, she must stand convicted.

History too will condemn her, for while substituting the traditions of man for the commandments of God, her official acts recorded in the annals of time have incontrovertibly proven her fallible.

Councils acknowledged by her have passed decrees in contradiction of each other; and doctrines held in one age have been rejected in another. Bishops in Council presided over by a Pope have proclaimed the divinity of Christ, and again proclaimed Arianism; adopted the doctrine of irresistible grace, and again denied it. The Council of Constance deposed three Popes, and asserted that a general council is above a Pope, but the Council of Trent and of the Vatican have established the contrary. A general council pronounced an anathema against any who should dare to add anything to the Nicene Creed, but a Pope was found bold enough to brave the thunderbolt by adding twelve new articles to it. Pope Stephen rescinded the decrees of Formosus, and Martin V contradicted himself. Trent decreed that an edition of the Bible not then published would be perfect, and when printed was pronounced infallible by Sixtus the V, who hurled the greatest excommunication forged in the Vatican against any who should change it in the smallest particle, but Clement VIII improved it in more than 2000 places. Certainly these titans alone could play with thunderbolts. Adrian VI denied the infallibility of the Pope, but Pius IX affirms the opposite. Here is the church of one age against the church of another age, one council against another council, one Pope against another Pope; and can this church be infallible, or its supreme ruler incapable of error whose infallible mouth has proclaimed the fallibility of his infallible predecessor?

ALEXANDER THE GREAT, being upon his death-bed, commanded that when he was carried forth to his grave his hand should not be wrapped, as was usual, in a shroud, but should be left outside the bier, that all men might see him, and might see that they were empty.—Archbishop Trench.

The few moments in the course of each day which a man absorbs in some worldly pursuit may ceaselessly expand in kind words or charities to those around him, and are, perhaps, in the sight of Heaven, the only time that he has lived to any purpose worth recording.—Arthur Helps.

LETTER FROM MANITOBA.

HEADINGLY.

The Parish of Headingly, on the Assiniboine, is about fourteen miles from Winnipeg. The houses are built not far distant from one another, and on the banks of the river, and are sheltered by a belt of timber from the winds. Unless on the banks of the river no woods are to be seen, and so uninviting is the surrounding country, for this reason, that within twelve miles to the north, and nine to the south, there not a single house to be seen.

The advantages of residing at the river are obvious, and so well understood in Manitoba, that those who live on the open prairie, if they can at all accomplish it, have a second house at the river for winter. They are thus saved from being isolated, and have water convenient, roads that can be used even on a stormy day, and are generally within reach of churches and schools.

The people of Headingly are a colony from Kildonan, and were brought up and educated at the Red River, those few excepted who came from Scotland. If our church had been able to attend to their spiritual interests, they would, doubtless, still be Presbyterian; as it could not, most of them attached themselves to the Episcopal church, and even when a church of their own denomination was provided for them in the neighborhood, preferred to remain Episcopalians. A considerable number of them joined us recently as adherents, and instead of the few families, as formerly, we now have a considerable number. The church is found, however, to be in so inconvenient a position for a great part of the people, that it was resolved to build a new one about two miles farther down the river. This will, after three "grasshopper years," and the prospect of a fourth, be an arduous work for the people to engage in, but we hope to accomplish it next summer, and already have about half the estimated cost subscribed.

From Headingly, the district in the direction of the International Boundary Line, receives a supply of preaching. Because of the distance, and great danger in travelling in winter, I have only been able to go there a few times. Last time I attempted to go I could find no path, and with difficulty was able to return, after being a day and a night on the plain. Even the grass, which in the commencement of winter, would be sufficient to indicate where the road was, is in many places burned up, and there is no land mark whatever. There is one house not far from the road, about ten miles from Headingly, and on the remaining thirty there is no shelter whatever, but only a prairie as far as the eye can reach, so that in case a storm should arise, or the traveller be frost bitten, there is no place of refuge.

UNION.

At a late meeting of the Presbytery the ministers of the Auld Kirk were received as members with the same status as the other members. The people in Manitoba wish for union. There are many who do not think there ever was a justifiable cause for division in Canada, and that even in Scotland causes that are now known to have been ephemeral ought not to have led to separation. We hope the union, when consummated, will bring us not only greater strength to carry on our work in Manitoba, but greater wisdom in directing it. The missionary, and representative of the Kirk, was lately ordained as a minister in the Episcopal Church. He professes to have long contemplated this step which was taken now because union is inevitable. He was for many years a zealous, successful, and influential advocate for union.

THE NEW SETTLEMENT.

Some settlers here three years have raised no crops, and though still hopeful, will have many difficulties and embarrassments to contend with. Not a few wish themselves back, as formerly, in their old homes in Ontario, in which they were hot or of than here at the present time, and for the future they are beginning to think that "hope deferred maketh the heart sick." Improvement is rapidly going on, but over a very great area. Twenty or thirty years will pass before these plains are populated like the country parts of Ontario. There will, soon enough, be little settlements far away in the interior, but great tracts of country not far from the centre will for some time remain unoccupied. It is a matter for regret that we cannot have missionaries working in more of these new settlements. The progress of this country will, I think, cause our mission to be worked more as an itinerant mission. In a few years a minister cannot be supplied even to a little group of stations. The work, involving a good deal of bodily fatigue at present, will be more toilsome still in the future. The *mens sana in corpore sano* must be a qualification of every missionary. In our work we hope to be aided by the sympathy and prayers of the church at home.

Headingly, Dec. 25, 1874. S. DONALDSON.

RECOLLECTIONS OF STUDENT LIFE IN GERMANY.

IX.—"VIVAT, CRESCAT, FLOREAT NORDALBINGIA!"

Before me lies a photograph that I prize more highly than any other in my possession, for it represents a group of the warmest friends that it has ever been my fortune to associate with. There is not one in that Verbingdung that I could not heartily trust, and who would not claim "brotherhood" with me, should we ever have the good fortune to meet again.

Against the shrubbery in the background of this picture, lean the banner and shield of the society, while at each side and in the centre stand the "Praseses," with tricolor sashes and drawn swords, a token that they are prepared to wield the German sword for German Fatherland as stoutly as the historic "corps" and "burschenschaft." The others bear the more peaceful insignia of pipe and beer mug. The small horn is conspicuous in the foreground, while "Ephraim" (called by the Philistines, Johannes Josephson) elevates the larger one, proud of the honor of bearing it. Three quarts this latter holds, and many times have both passed from hand to hand, and from lip to lip, during the past "semester," as pledges of a brotherhood dissolved only by death. "Latte" supports the flag as if conscious of his dignity, while in front of him Belm is enveloped by the photographer in a fog, through which his happy face can be discovered as clearly as can that of the victim impaled by him every Saturday evening in the editorial columns of the *Spitz-Krug*, which journal is represented symbolically by the rough earthenware jug in his hand. The rubicund countenance of "Molks" beams on us from behind the social board, and "Knickebein" smiles benignantly, as is his wont. In front "Mario" pensively reclines, regardless of extinguished pipe and empty mug, as if meditating deep things concerning the "Ur-ich," and its fleeting manifestations. It is impossible to describe in a few words, all the scenes that have left their collective impression on my mind, as they rise up before me while gazing on these familiar faces. Let me briefly describe the regular meetings of the Verbingdung.

The membership of the society consists of "Conkneipants," "Foxes," and "Burschen," that is, of associate, junior, and full members. "Fox" being college cant for "freshman." Neither the first nor second class had a right to attend the "Convent," or business meeting, but while the Conkneipant was obliged to be present only three nights in the week, the "Fox" must be on hand every evening, and must attend the sword class as well. I cannot tell what went on at "Convent," for being a "Conkneipant" I never was present at one. I can only speak of the regular meetings, and the solemn "Commers" of the last evening in the term. The meeting is in Dresdenor Strasse, and the babel of boisterous greetings and student banter, is lulled by the "Silencium" of the "Fuchs Major," as the chairman is termed. "Shlorum" has not been idle, for no one willingly begins the opening song without the foaming "Vaterland's Getranke" before him. The only formal opening is one of those rousing songs for which German students are famous, closed by the President commanding "Ein Schmolles Brueder! "Grosit," respond the rest, and each one touching the glasses of the around them, they pledge themselves in the national beverage. After this the setting is open, and social talk is the order of the evening. Theology and politics are the all-engrossing subjects, and I owe to these gatherings a tolerably correct idea of public opinion in "Young Germany." Of this, however, I hope to speak in another connection.

In "Kneipe," as this assemblage is termed, no one calls another by his surname, but each one has a "Kneipe-name" by which he is known to his "brothers," but which it would be impertinence for any one else to address him by. Even the waiter who fills the empty glasses, is dignified by a learned Hebrew title, conferred, or at least suggested, by no less a personage than Prof. Kalmus. A stranger would hardly suspect that the demented individual called "Shlorum" (cont. for *asher torum*) was addressed by any other than his proper name. No one is allowed to write a line without permission, or to sit with his glass empty before him. Should any one remove his chair to a side table, the stern command of the "Fuchs-major," *ad locum!* brings him back, for all must sit at the same table. Should any one start a song, all must join in, for if two or three only sing, the "Silencium" of the same officer stops the unpopular melody. In every act, and in the whole tone of the meeting, the idea of a family of brothers must be carried out, and faithfully do these warm-hearted Germans carry it out. They really do try to practice that self-denial and consideration for the feelings of the others; that is the essence of the fraternal spirit.

Each "Fox" must choose his patron, to whom he holds very much the position of a client—the one is called the "Leib Fuchs," and the other the "Lieb Barsche"—all are brothers, but there is a closer tie between these which might be compared with that between father and son.

Of course in all these meetings there was an amount of tobacco smoked, and lager drunk that we can never approve of. To Canadians it would rightly appear shocking, but they are brought up to it, and to them it appears in a very different light. During all last winter I spent three evenings each week with my Verdingung, and am as proud of being a "Nordalbingier," as any native could be. Not once did I see the least excess in drink or language. Manly and courteous, with a patriotism almost too sensitive, they made Leipzig a home to me, and made me feel half a German before we separated. Now, that we are separated, there are no letters that come into my hands so full of warm friendships as those beginning "Lieber Freund, and Verdingungsbruder." Strangers visit Germany, especially at students, and keep within a select circle, making only acquaintances, but they never get the unreserved confidence of a German student until he is able to address them in the second person singular, and then the confidence seems to us almost girlish. Such friends are all the brethren of a "Christliche Verbindung."

A Pertinent Question.

CAN CHURCH MEMBERS CONSISTENTLY ATTEND PLACES OF DANCING IN PUBLIC HALLS, SUCH AS QUADRILLE PARTIES, ASSEMBLIES, &c?

The subject is one pregnant with thought, and should find a place for meditation in the bosom of every member of the Church of Christ. When any person takes in his or her hand the symbols of Christ's broken body and shed blood, they vow in the presence of God, and openly proclaim by the act before the church and the world, that they will consecrate the rest of their lives to the service of Christ, and will use every means henceforth to forward His cause, and will discountenance on all occasions whatever may be in any way damaging to the church, and having a tendency to cause those engaged therein to forget God. The world is ever ready with its eagle eye to scrutinize, and if possible to pick faults in the lives of professing Christians, and to make use of the same as an excuse for themselves.

How often do ministers and those working for Christ (on first speaking to a sister about joining the church,) meet with the answer, "I'll join the church when I see church members live up to their profession." That one thought should never be forgotten by church members, and if they would endeavor to keep that continually before their minds it would certainly have a most beneficial effect upon their lives. In all entertainments that admit of the least discussion as to whether they are right or wrong, church members should at least take a stand on the safe side, and should shun not only evil in its aggravated form, but should shun the very appearance of evil, and be ready to say with the Apostle Paul, "If the eating of meat cause my brother to offend, I will eat no more meat while the world standeth." With regard to the subject, more particularly, "Private Assemblies" as they are called, we find very often church members taking part in them, though perhaps quite innocently, and for nothing else but the enjoyment of the fascinating dance. And while the giddy quadrille is going on most delightfully, and the music most enchanting, we would ask the church members just to pause in the midst of his or her revelries, and remember the hand writing on the wall, and devote just one minute to meditating thus: "I am a member of the Church of Christ, and have openly confessed the same before some who are now here; is my presence here quite in keeping with my profession? Am I engaged in that which I may fully expect the blessing of God?"

Would those addressed just ask themselves the above questions, and allow conscience to answer, and we think in every case the answer would be in the negative.

We hope these few lines hastily penned, may be the means of contributing their mite towards causing church members to think over the matter and take the few thoughts contained for what they are worth.

Yours,
A Subscriber.

Presbytery of Toronto.

At a meeting of the Presbytery of Toronto, in connection with the Canada Presbyterian Church, held on the 5th inst., an extract from the minutes of the Presbytery of Montreal were read, setting forth that a call from the congregation of Chalmers' Church, Montreal, in favour of Rev. George Burnfield, B.A. in Scarborough, had been sustained by said Presbytery. The salary offered is \$1,000 per annum. After some consideration, it was agreed to appoint Rev. D. McIntosh, of Markham, to preach on an early Sabbath to the congregation of Scarborough, to inform them of said call, and to require them to appear for their interests, by commissioners, at the next ordinary meeting of Presbytery, in the usual place, on the first Tuesday of February at 11 a.m. Also, on the 6th inst., Professor Gregg reported that he had moderated in a call from the congregation of Bay street, Toronto, which was given unanimously in favour of Rev. John Smith, Bowmanville, in the Presbytery of Ontario. Commissioners from said congregation appeared, and were heard, who stated that the salary promised is \$1,000 per annum. The call was sustained, and Professor Gregg and Rev. J. G. Robb were appointed to appear and prosecute the same before the Presbytery of Ontario. Further, the Clerk was instructed, in communicating with the clerk of said Presbytery, to represent the desirableness of an early meeting, with a view to the call being brought to an issue as soon as possible.

B. MONTGOMERY, Presbytery Clerk.