

The Presbyterian Review.

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Presbyterian News Co. TORONTO.

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THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 4TH, 1886.

"PROTESTANTISM NOT IN DANGER."

THE Hon. Oliver Mowat, Premier of the Province of Ontario, in the Globe of the 30th ult., has taken the somewhat unusual course of addressing a letter of over nine columns of solid matter to Rev. G. M. Milligan, of Old St. Andrews, Toronto, under the heading, "Protestantism not in Danger." Though the letter is ostensibly a letter to Mr. Milligan, it is none the less intended to be a reply to the articles in the REVIEW on Roman Catholic aggression, as exhibited in the Central Prison troubles, and Catholic encroachments upon our school system, as well as a rejoinder to the recent letters of Rev. P. McF. McLeod in the Montreal Witness, supporting the position of this journal against the attacks of an Ontario Government official, and to the defence of Rev. P. McF. McLeod by Rev. D. J. Macdonnell against the abusive articles of the Globe. A large portion of Mr. Mowat's letter is taken up in criticising the action of the Mail newspaper with regard to the Central Prison troubles, and in endeavouring to cast upon the Conservative party the odium of instigating and fomenting these difficulties with a view to embarrass the Ontario Government. With this portion of the letter, as well as those referring to the action of Revs. Messrs. Milligan, Macdonnell, and McLeod, we have nothing to do. While we are grateful to these gentlemen for the exhibition of courage they have recently made in defence of Protestant principles and general fair play, and to the independent press for the support it has felt free to give us, we may with perfect equanimity leave the matters that specially concern them to be dealt with as they may deem proper.

The tone of Mr. Mowat's letter is conciliatory and temperate, and except in one instance, to which we shall refer presently, is dignified and courteous, and is in marked contrast to that of the organs that speak for him. Before proceeding however, to deal with those portions of his letter that immediately concern the REVIEW, we must direct attention to the fact that Mr. Mowat seems to regard anyone not a member of his political party as unworthy of reliance and destitute of truth, and every member of his party who may differ from him as warped in judgment or incapable of forming an honest independent opinion on public questions. He has throughout his letter called attention again and again to the supposed political faith of the editor of this journal, and evidently is of opinion that in fastening upon him the name of "pronounced Conservative" he has found an all-sufficient reply to anything in the REVIEW that he fears may be difficult or not convenient to answer. We are satisfied that to every intelligent man who is not blinded by party zeal the only question regarding the statements of the REVIEW should be, Are they true, or are they false? That they are true we hope to show to any one who will take the trouble to examine them.

But it may not be amiss for the information of all who, like Mr. Mowat, manifest an interest in the political creed of any who may presume to resist the encroachments of Roman Catholicism to enter into some explanation. The editor of The REVIEW is not in any sense a party man. He has never belonged to any political organisation or club, has never attended a party committee-meeting, or a caucus, has never canvassed for votes, has never addressed a political meeting of any kind, but has always, when he has felt free to vote, cast his vote for the man irrespective of party, who has appeared to him best fitted to serve the country. He is wholly unknown personally to politicians of both parties, and has no connection open or understood with the party press. A party man so "little pronounced," Mr. Mowat will readily admit, could give but poor service to any party, and can have no very strong political predilections. It may also be stated in this connection, that the policy of this journal upon such public matters as come within its purview is not dictated by any individual, but from the start has been determined by the joint action of an editorial committee who—and Mr. Mowat should note it—are all Reformers, and we dare say are quite as anxious as Mr. Mowat to correct abuses when discovered. We have again and again stated that The REVIEW has no party purpose, but simply the interest of truth and justice to serve; and once more we disclaim any desire to subvert or assist either political party, but insist on our right to discuss all questions affecting in any way the interests of the Presbyterian church or its members. To us it is a matter of perfect indifference what party is in or out, so long as right is maintained, liberty of conscience guaranteed and the general well being of the country secured. We are not opposed to Mr. Mowat, but we desire to strengthen his hands against Romish aggression. Mr. Mowat asks the public to place faith in his statements on the ground of his Presbyterianism. We claim an equal right to credit.

But to return to Mr. Mowat's letter. His ostensible purpose is to assure Mr. Milligan, and through him, the Presbyterian church in particular and Protestants generally, that the Roman Catholic Church in Canada is not aggressive, that she has not obtained recently for herself exceptional privileges, that Mr. Milligan is mistaken in lending an ear to the instances of aggression as specified in The REVIEW and other journals, that in fact we are all utterly mistaken, and some of us designedly false. Briefly put the charges made by the REVIEW with regard to Central Prison affairs are simply these: That Warden Massie having permitted Roman Catholic prisoners to attend the religious services conducted by Protestants in the Central Prison, the Roman Catholic priests with the knowledge of the Palace protested against this action of the Warden, and on his refusal to accede to their demands, was subjected to persecution from the priests; that they formulated charges of cruelty to prisoners against him for the sole object of removing him from his position; that they succeeded in securing a Commission of enquiry in the hope of establishing these charges; that the Palace objected to the personnel of the Committee as first formed; that Archbishop Lynch succeeded in modifying it and placing a Roman Catholic, his confidential legal adviser upon it; that though the investigation resulted as everybody expected it would result in Mr. Massie's triumphant vindication, immediately upon the heels of that investigation a Roman Catholic, for whose services he had no need, was thrust upon him to his humiliation, that this person was the nominee of the Palace, that he acted as a spy on the Warden, and that his presence was so distasteful to the Warden that there was danger, we feared, that Mr. Massie would be compelled to retire from his position. We called upon the Government to remove that pressure and give proof of that confidence which they said they reposed in the Warden. We need not repeat how these grave charges were met, how they were denominated "lying rubbish," how it was stated that Mr. Massie had no grievance, that he was perfectly satisfied with his position, that there was no Roman Catholic pressure to oust him, how the matter went on from week to week until finally, Mr. Massie himself established our complete vindication by requesting the removal of Roman. When this fact was established and when we learned that Mr. Massie was satisfied with the new arrangement that had been effected, we were prepared to let the matter rest. And we were satisfied that we had secured Mr. Massie in his position, and that in one instance at least, we had thrown some light upon the designs of Roman Catholics upon our public institutions.

We are in no way responsible for the use that the party press has made of the facts we brought to light. It is inevitable, we suppose, that the political opponents of Mr. Mowat should try if possible to turn the Central Prison difficulty to his disadvantage, but we unhesitatingly affirm that we did not in our feeling of indignation against submission to Roman Catholic pressure as it appeared to us, care to consider the effect upon either party.

But how does Mr. Mowat meet these charges? He expressly or tacitly admits them all. Let us briefly examine his statements. 1. The REVIEW urged that the whole trouble in the Central Prison arose from Roman Catholic interference. Mr. Mowat says: "I have no doubt the agitation against the Warden was raised by Roman Catholics." But he adds: "They were unfriendly to the Government." With this we have nothing to do. It is news to us that Roman Catholic priests are either Conservative or Liberal when the interests of their Church are involved. They have no politics. Their only party is the Roman Catholic Church. For that party they work with a zeal that no Protestant, Conservative or Liberal, can hope to emulate. It is simply absurd

to talk of Roman Catholic priests working for party as their ultimate object. And no man is more painfully conscious of that fact than Mr. Mowat himself.

2. The REVIEW stated that the immediate cause of the trouble was the refusal of Mr. Massie to accede to an insolent demand of the priests that he should prevent Roman Catholic prisoners from attending the Protestant Sunday school. Mr. Mowat says he "does not remember hearing of this before reading Mr. McLeod's letter," and that "the matter was not brought to the attention of the Government by either party." That does not controvert our statement. Our statement is correct; and we challenge either Mr. Mowat or Mr. Massie to deny it.

But what Mr. Massie refused to concede to the insolent demands of the priests they obtained in another way. With many apologies and references to Inspectors' Reports and the action of the Commission, Mr. Mowat admits—and we can scarcely transcribe the words with patience—that "the Commission expressly recommended that Catholics and Protestants be compelled to go to their own service and be prevented from going to any other unless with the written consent of the clergyman of whom they are in charge." Fancy a Roman Catholic priest giving a written consent to one of his people to attend a Protestant service! And this binding of men's consciences, this odious tyranny, the Government acceded to and Mr. Mowat defends. This is how Mr. Mowat resists Roman Catholic aggression, and answers the REVIEW. "I think that, on the whole, the rule thus stated is a good one."

3. The REVIEW stated that the Central Prison investigation was urged by the Roman Catholics in the hope that Mr. Massie would be convicted of something that would be a cause for his removal. Mr. Mowat admits that Archbishop Lynch requested an investigation. "I had two short interviews—I do not recollect more—with the Archbishop. In the first of my two interviews with His Grace he expressed a wish that I should personally examine into the charges."

4. The REVIEW also stated that the personnel of the Commission was changed to please the Catholics upon the protest of the priesthood. Mr. Mowat denies that there was any "protest," but admits that in his second interview with the Archbishop he consented: "I mentioned to him my notion of appointing two Commissioners only; both were Protestants. The Archbishop made no protest, but suggested that the Commission would give greater confidence to some of his people, and any report they might make would be more generally acquiesced in. If I should add the names of some Roman Catholic gentlemen, anyone I should myself select." Accordingly he selected Mr. O'Sullivan—the Archbishop's legal adviser, the man who has recently received, it is said, a handsome sum for writing a History of England for our schools containing such an account of the Reformation that the Education Department would not dare to print it.

But the events subsequent to the investigation and our statements regarding them as well as Mr. Mowat's reply to them, we must, owing to lack of space, defer to another issue.

In the meantime it may be noted that Mr. Mowat has failed to refer, even indirectly, to the most obvious example of Roman Catholic aggression in this province, Archbishop Lynch's insidious attacks upon our Public School System, as first plainly seen in the Marmion business, and more recently in his effort to get the Protestant Bible out of our schools. The efforts to get control of the Central Prison are bad enough, but they sink into utter insignificance when compared with the attacks on the Protestantism of our School System.

We need hardly assure Mr. Mowat that we shall not fail to express our firm belief that from this direction Protestantism has been attacked and is in danger; and that we shall continue to resist Roman Catholic encroachments, perfectly indifferent whether our action tends to unmake or make governments.

DEATHS IN THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND.

It is but seldom that any Church is called upon to suffer so heavily from death as the Presbyterian Church in Ireland has suffered within a few weeks past. The loss of an eminent standard-bearer is always a source of grief to the Church militant, but to lose three such men as William Fleming Stevenson, Thomas Croskery, and Samuel Annot Bellis must be regarded as a very great calamity.

These men were all in the front rank as scholars as well as in many other respects. Two of these had we believe no superiors in the Church—indeed we might almost say they had no peers. They were remarkable for their resemblances and they were hardly less remarkable for their contrasts. They were about the same age; just turning fifty-five; and thus were in the plenitude of their power. They were both widely known as men of great literary power. They wielded ready pens. They were in their licentiate days far from popular; they came near being what in Scotland was called "stickit" ministers; and while they rose to the very highest rank at home and abroad they were not ecclesiastical leaders. We do not recollect that they ever made a speech on the floor of the Assembly when a grand debate was in progress. On the other hand Dr. Stevenson spent his whole ministerial life in one pastoral charge; while Dr. Croskery ministered to three charges, and sat in two professorial chairs. Dr. Stevenson gave himself to the more practical work of the Church, more particularly for many years

past to the cause of foreign missions. Dr. Croskery was a master in controversial theology.

Dr. Stevenson was a native of the town of Strabane, in the county Tyrone, having been born in 1832, his father being a merchant there in easy circumstances. He received his college education partly in the Old College, Belfast, and partly in Edinburgh University, where he was graduated M.A. He studied theology partly in Edinburgh and partly in Germany. After license he spent three years in the Belfast Town Mission. In those days no respectable country congregation would have him. The time was to come when city congregations on both sides of the Atlantic contended for him. So much for the vox populi. A new congregation in a suburb of Dublin was formed and there he was settled in 1860. His income the first year did not reach \$500. It rose before his death to ten times that amount. He was a fortunate man in many ways, in friends, in the circumstances in which he was brought up, and in domestic life. He was a bosom friend of Dr. Norman Macleod, and for years was a frequent contributor to Good Words. He married into what may be called the Royal House of Presbyterianism in Ulster, his wife being a daughter of the late John Sinclair, a lady who was in truth a co-worker with him in all his labours. One of her brothers, it may be mentioned is now M.P. for the Falkirk Burghs, another was accidentally killed a few years ago in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, where he had a large business. The latter was an elder of great influence in the Church in the United States. Dr. Stevenson's work "Praying and Working" made him widely known as an author. When the Rev. Dr. Morgan retired from the Convener'ship of Foreign Missions, Dr. Stevenson was appointed his successor. Into this work he threw all his energy and enthusiasm, and the fruit of his genius soon began to be reaped. Of late years he was recognized all over the British Isles as the foremost living authority on missions. There can be little doubt that he was over-worked though it is a fact that his father and brother were both carried off while comparatively young, as he was, by heart disease. He was a very lovable man in all the relations of life. His memory will long be green in the Christian world, for his fame is far more than British.

Dr. Croskery was a native of Co. Down and was born two years earlier than Dr. Stevenson. His father was a Unitarian, and until he went to college he was of that faith. In his first session, the winter of 1845-6 he experienced a religious change and henceforth he belonged to the orthodox side. Soon after, owing to the famine, his father suffered reverses, and the young man was obliged to fight his own way in the world. He learned shorthand and got employment on the Belfast News Letter, which led to his giving years of his life to work on the daily press, first as reporter and then as editor. He was licensed to preach when he was twenty-one years of age, but not for nine years after did he obtain a charge. He himself often told that he preached in twenty-six vacancies before he was settled. Two of these years he spent on this side of the Atlantic. The other seven years he spent on the Banner of Ulster, most of the time as editor. His second charge was in the south of Ireland, where he came into contact with the Plymouth Brethren. In consequence of this he studied the peculiarities of these sects and no writer has done more to expose their heresies in doctrine and their deceitfulness in practice. We are told that in the last twenty-four years of his life he contributed no less than fifty-five articles to the higher Reviews and Magazines of Great Britain and the United States, together with a large number of articles to denominational organs and newspapers. Among the many biographical sketches that he prepared, all of them of great value, was one of Dr. James Seaton Reid which ran through the successive numbers of the Evangelical Witness for a whole year. At the beginning of the present year he undertook to write for the Presbyterian Churchman a life of the late Alexander Goudy, and the readers of the magazine keenly regret that he did not live to complete it. It would have been a valuable treatise, had he been spared to finish it: as it is, it is a splendid fragment. For the last eleven years he was a Professor, first of Logic and English Literature, and then since the death of Dr. Richard Smyth, of Systematic Theology. He was a very busy man; his pen was never idle.

The loss of these men is all the greater in that their sun has gone down while it was hardly past noon. But we must reserve notice of Dr. Bellis for another issue.

Since the above was in type, the news has reached us that the well-known Rev. Dr. T. Y. Killen, of Belfast, died suddenly on the 25th ult.

THE twenty-first annual provincial Convention of the Sunday School Association of Canada opened in Hamilton on the 26th ult., and continued in session three days. The retiring President, Mr. J. J. Crabbe, of St. Mary's, welcomed the delegates to Hamilton, the birth-place of the Association, and gave an address full of encouragement and stimulus to those engaged in the work. The reports from the counties presented a number of very interesting facts, showing not only general expansion in Sabbath school work proper, but the dissemination of temperance ideas. Rev. Dr. Burns, Hamilton, in his address of welcome, dwelt upon the fact that Sabbath schools had done much to bring the various denominations together and to foster a desire for ecclesiastical unity. He was pronounced in favour of Biblical instruction in the Public Schools. Mayor Howland, of this city, delivered