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POOR DOCUMENT

THE EVENING GAZETTE

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JOHN A. BOWES, Editor and Publisher

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ST. JOHN, N. B., TUESDAY FEB. 4, 1890.

For the Latest Telegraphic News look on the First Page.

REVISING THE CONFESSION OF FAITH.

The great interest which is now being taken in the discussion now going on in the Presbyterian church in regard to the revision of the confession of Faith makes it unnecessary for us to apologise for publishing to-day a number of interviews on the subject from our St. John Presbyterian clergy.

The movement now going forward in that church is probably destined to exert an immense influence on other churches in the course of time, because no church has held with a firmer grasp to its ancient creed than the Presbyterian church. At the same time, it is quite evident, and has been for many years, that the doctrines of the Confession of Faith have not been fully accepted even by the clergy of the Presbyterian church, and still less on the part of the laymen.

It seems to be a logical sequence that when the members of a church, or a majority of them, refuse to acknowledge all the doctrines laid down in its confession of faith or its creed, that in the interests of truth there should be a change in it before long. No doubt there are many people who are unwilling to lay what they call sacrilegious hands on a venerable document, which was made more than 240 years ago, and which is supposed to embody the prayerful thought of the distinguished men of that time; but as the men of modern times have better lights to guide their footsteps than those who went before, so it is but reasonable to expect that with the greater knowledge of Biblical criticism which we possess than our ancestors laid claim to, there should be a better understanding of the Word of God, and of the limitations of its doctrines than existed at that time. We shall probably publish on another occasion interviews with a number of prominent laymen on this subject, but in the meantime a perusal of what the clergymen who have been seen by our reporter, have to say in regard to the creed and the Confession of Faith will be of interest.

STUMPAGE.

The views of THE GAZETTE in regard to the stumpage question are well known and need not be repeated. THE GAZETTE condemned the proposed reduction of the stumpage to the North Shore lumbermen, when the matter first came up, and it has expressed the same opinion many times since. During the recent campaign we tried in vain to induce the electors of St. John to give some attention to this important matter, because we thought then and think still that it was of more consequence to us than the issue that was raised by the Opposition candidates. The electors of St. John in their zeal for Mr. Peters, dropped all other issues and defeated the entire government ticket, including the Provincial Secretary, leaving St. John without a voice in the Cabinet. But when the Opposition members from all the counties got together, it was found that Mr. Peters and his back load of grievances would have to be dropped, and this was accordingly done. The official announcement of this fact was contained in the Sun of Saturday, which, in referring to the Opposition caucus, stated that the Opposition members were not troubling themselves about local issues. The previous day the Sun had made a violent attack on the government for the unjust manner in which it had treated the North Shore lumbermen in the matter of stumpage. The Sun in that article declared that it had from the first supported the demands of the lumbermen. That being the case, the announcement that the government had yielded to these demands ought to have given the Sun a great deal of pleasure, but we fail to find any evidences of such delight in the Sun's editorial columns today. One result of the Sun's course will be, that it will be estopped from objecting to any measure for the relief of the lumbermen which the government may propose, and will, perhaps, be forced to adopt a course directly opposed to the interests of St. John. So far as THE GAZETTE is concerned, we have no knowledge of the intentions of the government with regard to the North Shore lumbermen, they, no doubt, will be fully disclosed in due time. But, as a St. John paper, it will be impossible for us to support any course of action which will give the North Shore an advantage over the river counties, and especially over St. John. The interests of this city must be properly guarded. It may be that THE GAZETTE will have to stand alone in this attitude, but we shall not hesitate to do so if St. John's interests demand it. This paper is not tied to the tail of any party or government and is not obliged to say "yea, yea" to every proposition that may be made from the interior of a Cabinet however hurtful to St. John interests.

NOTE AND COMMENT.

It is to be hoped that the evil custom of preaching political sermons which came into fashion in the United States during the civil war will never become common in Canada. The proper function of a minister is to preach the Gospel and when preachers neglect that duty for the preparation of political sermons the result cannot be beneficial to the cause of Christianity.

The libel suit brought by Mr. Van Horne against the Montreal Gazette will hardly proceed to a trial. The story told in regard to the President of the Canadian Pacific for which the action is brought is too improbable and absurd to receive any serious attention. No one who knows Mr. VanHorne would believe he could be guilty of such gross discourtesy. The story was as follows:—

In Portage la Prairie there lives a lawyer, who is a rather nervous and exacting person and somewhat given to fault-finding. Not long ago he ordered some articles shipped to him by freight. There was some delay in their arrival and he went a number of times to the station with growing impatience, to enquire why they did not come. One day the station agent was busy and worried with more important matters. Two trains were coming in and there were lots of things to be attended to so when the importunate attorney began to scold about that freight, he lost his temper and said, "You go to hell." The indignant lawyer, a pious man by the way, wrote a complaining letter to President Van Horne about the delayed freight and ended it thus: "And this is not all. When I again brought the matter to the attention of your agent at this place he treated me with rudeness and told me to go to hell." By return mail a reply came from Montreal, which read as follows:

DEAR SIR,—I am in receipt of your letter of the 16th inst., in which you inform me that our agent at Portage told you to go to hell. In reply I have to say that you need not go to hell.

Yours truly,
W. C. VANHORNE,
President.

From the Capital.

OTTAWA, Feb. 3—In the commons this afternoon, Mr. Massue, the new member for Richelieu, was introduced by Sir John Macdonald and Hon. Mr. Chapleau.

Mr. Brown introduced a bill to incorporate the National Instruction company and Mr. Hesson introduced a bill to incorporate the Canada Cable company.

Mr. Doyon asked how it was that immigrants who landed at Portland were carried to Winnipeg for $13.50 per head, while Canadians going to the same city from Montreal had to pay $30.

Sir John Macdonald said the government had no control over railway companies.

In answer to Mr. Casey, Hon. Mr. Haggart said there was a memorial from railway mail clerks asking for increased pay, and the government were considering the matter.

Replying to Mr. Charlton, Sir John said progress was being made towards settling the boundary between British Columbia and Alaska and he did not anticipate any difficulties would arise.

Hon. Geo. E. Foster announced that it was not the intention to introduce this session legislation to regulate benevolent societies. He also announced that the proposed amendments to the banking act would be submitted shortly.

Mr. Landerkin moved his resolution proposing that farmers who import corn for stock feeding purposes should receive a drawback similar to that allowed to distillers who import corn for use in manufacturing spirits. He argued that the present system of granting drawbacks discriminated unjustly against farmers and the working classes and in favor of special interests. Raw materials required by manufactures were admitted free while materials required by farmers were exhorbitantly taxed. If the drawback system was to be continued it should be equitably administered.

Mr. Corbey (a distiller) contended that the amount of drawbacks allowed to distiller, on corn was too small to be seriously considered.

Mr. McMillan (Huron) quoted statistics showing how taxation has been increased during the past five years upon articles which farmers have to purchase, from 17 to over 30 per cent. If farmers were able to import corn free they could fatten cattle profitably, which they could not do now.

Hon. Mr. Bowell contended that Mr. Landerkin's proposal could not be carried out. The drawback system was necessary to encourage manufactures.

Mr. Fisher said the question was whether under an existing law, farmers should have the same previleges as distillers. Manufacturers were allowed drawbacks to increase their profits and do more business. Why should not similar advantages be given to farmers? Why give manufacturers of whiskey previleges denied to manufacturers of grain, meat, butter and cheese? (Cheers.) He objected to the drewback system, but if it was to be continued there should be one law for all. The government seemed to favor the business of making whiskey at the expense of producers of grain and cattle. If distillers were not allowed a drawback on corn they would be obliged to purchase Canadian grain and pay better prices for it.

The house divided on the resolution which was defeated by 70 to 54. The division took place unexpectedly at six o'clock, when the house was very slim, hence the small majority. The vote was a party one, save that one liberal, Brien of Essex, voted on the government side.

The house adjourned at 6.10 p. m.

A large deputation from Toronto and Montreal, representing the boot and shoe trade, arrived here to-night and will have an interview with the minister of customs in the morning, asking that duties on boots and shoes be raised from 25 to 35 per cent.

The opposition will, either to-morrow or Friday, on going into supply, present a resolution expressing regret that the Jesuits' estates act was not referred to the supreme court or judicial committee of the privy council, to decide upon its constitutionality.

Hon. Mr. Chapleau informed the printers tonight of the government's decision in the matter of wages at the printing bureau. He intimated that the government was favorable to an increase of one dollar per week to the compositors, which would make the weekly pay $12, and that they would allow them pay for three statutory holidays, and finally, that no further application for increase of wages would be entertained by the department. This information was transmitted to the printers, and they decided to accept the terms offered.

It will be remembered that a long discussion took place relative to the seizure of the ship Bridgewater at Shelburne, N. S. Mr. Edgar intends to question the government whether they have received any further representations since the close of last session respecting this seizure, from or on behalf of the owners or from the imperial or United States authorities. He would also like to know if any settlement of the matter has been made and what amount was paid by the Canadian government.

Evidently the opposition intend to have a full discussion on the Harvey-Salisbury short line, for tonight Mr. Laurier has given notice of his intention to make enquiries of the ministry whether there has been any public money spent on this branch of the short line for surveys or other work since the close of last session, and if so what is the amount and under what authority was the expenditure incurred.

An important bulletin was issued by the experimental farm tonight showing that two-rowed barley for the English market is more productive in Canada than the six-rowed now grown for the American market.

President Van Horne of the C. P.R. laid information to-day against Fred Williams, the Montreal Gazette correspondent here for alegged defamatory libel published in his paper. Proceedings it is understood. will be taken against the Gazette.

This evening's report says that although Senator MacDonald is very low, there are still hopes of his recovery.

The following appeals have been inscribed for hearing at the session of the supreme court beginning Tuesday, February 18th:—Spinney v Ocean Mutual Insurance Co.; Kearney v Oakes; Diocean Synod of Nova Scotia v Ritchie; Fitzrandolph v Montreal Relief Insurance Company; Duggan v Duggan et al; Ellis v The Queen; Powers v Meagher; Royal Insurance Co. v Duffus; May v McDougall; Lawrence v Anderson; Archibald v Hubly; Clarke et al v Clarke et al; Providence Washington Insurance Company v Gerow.

A large deputation of members of which Wood of Westmorland, Wilmot, McDougall and Jones of Digby will form part will interview the minister of the interior tomorrow, asking amongst other things that the name of the geological survey be not changed, as it is now the intention of the government to do by a bill recently introduced; that a more liberal distribution of geological survey reports be made, and that the staff be reorganized and their duties be more clearly defined than is at present the case in the amendments to the act now before the house.

Messrs. Weldon and Baird interviewed the minister of customs this morning in regard to the duty on lime already referred to. They were well satisfied with the interview and expect a favorable reply to their wish of the duty being lowered five cents per barrel.

Mr. Landry, of Kent, presented today the petition of L. G. DeBertram and others, for an act of incorporation for the Moncton and P. E. Island railway and ferry company, the said railway to run from Buctouche to Richibucto Cape, with a fast steamship service thence to Cape Wolf, P. E. I., and a railway thence to connect with the present P. E. Island railway.

Mr. Weldon intends moving for a statement respecting the tolls paid by the passenger steamers for the use of the Digby pier, and Mr. Eisenhauer will ask if any changes have been made since last session in the regulations with respect to the bonding of foreign fish and as to whether new regulations are being carried out by the collectors of customs.

Mr. McNeill announces that he will shortly move an address to the crown in favor of penny postage for the British empire.

The secretary of state and minister of interior are to-day gazetted additional members of the railway committee of the privy council.

WORSHIP OF WEALTH.

Canon Liddon Discourses on the Degradation of Marriage.

London Christian World.

Never has Canon Liddon preached a more eloquent or a more practical sermon than his discourse on Wealth, its responsibilities and its dangers, and the shamelessness and heartlessness of those who make wealth the one great object of their desire, preached in St. Paul's Cathedral on Sunday afternoon. The Church he said, has its duties both to the younger and the elder brother of the parable. The idea that the possession of wealth is to minister to amusement is surely a real thing with many Christians to-day. But the very surfeit of pleasure might enfeeble and wear out the faculty of enjoyment. It was a commonplace, but none the less to be regarded, that all these possessions would have to be left behind, perhaps as a legacy of unhappiness and ruin to the children.

What is the true idea of property—something to be left behind when we die, or something which may be interwoven with our immortal nature, and so will last us for eternity? Money, jewels, lands, houses, books, decorations of all sorts and kinds, must be taken leave of at the bed of death. But there are things that last. Habits are wrought into the intellect and will—the love of God and of man, sincerity, purity disinterestedness—these things live, and are really property, for death cannot touch them. Most men regard civilization as mere material progress; but true human improvement must be an improvement of the man himself. And man himself is not what he owns and can handle, nor even his bodily frame, but he is a spirit clothed in a bodily form. His real improvement consists in that which secures the freedom and the supremacy of the noblest part of his nature. A true civilization is that which shall promote this upon a great scale in human society.

The preacher denounced with fierce scorn the worship of wealth in society. What do we see, he said, every year as the London season draws near, but a bevy of mothers, like generals, set out on a campaign, prepared to undergo any amount of fatigue if only they can marry their daughters, not necessarily to high-souled, virtuous men, but in any case to a fortune! What do we see but a group of young men, thinking, after perhaps a career of dissipation, that the time has arrived for settling respectable in life, and looking, each one of them, not for a girl who has the graces and character which will make her husband and her children happy, but for somebody who has a sufficient dowry to enable him to keep up a large establishment? Who can wonder, when the most sacred of all human relations, the union of hearts for time and for eternity, is thus prostituted to the brutal level of an affair of cash, that such transactions are quickly followed by months or years of misery—misery which, after seething long in private, is at last paraded before the eyes of the wondering world amid the unspeakable shame and degradation of the Divorce Court!

They thought, perhaps, the dangers of the existing social order were to be found elsewhere—in man's changing physical condition, in organised strikes and disorderly mobs, but the worst dangers are nearer home. What are we doing with the life God has given us—with the spiritual essence which is our very self and will live in bliss or woe throughout eternity? This was the question that suggested itself on such a day. It was to teach the awfulness, the greatness of our life, that the Highest at this time laid aside His glory, and was born a little Child into this little world of shadows and of sin. While we may, let us lay hold of His strength and pardon.

Mrs. Bennett, wife of the stipendiary magistrate, at Springhill while stooping near the kitchen stove three or four days since brushed her dress against it and ignited her clothing. When her cries brought assistance she was completely enveloped in flames and so horribly burned that she died on Saturday morning. She was fifty-two years of age. Two sons and her husband survive her.

REVISING A CREED.

CHANGES PROPOSED IN THE CREED OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

Interviews With St. John Ministers on the Revision of the Westminster Confession of Faith.

As the debates that have been taking place in the New York Presbytery, over the report of the committee on the revision of the Westminster Confession of Faith, have been attracting a great deal of attention everywhere, it will be interesting to read the views and opinions of some of our prominent Presbyterian ministers in St. John on the Confession of Faith, and the question of revising it. The committee on revision propose to blot out from the Confession of Faith, reprobation and the damnation of infants, the damnation of the heathen, the classification of Roman Catholics as idolators, and the statement that the Pope is anti-Christ. They proposed to introduce two new sections affirming the general love of God for all mankind, the salvation of Jesus Christ provided for all mankind and to be preached to every creature.

Rev. Dr. Macrae was the first minister called on. He handed the reporter a paper which was read before the Presbytery some months ago and which he said gave his views of the confession of faith.

The following are the chief points in the paper.

On the whole, my own ideas upon the matter may be set forth tentatively as follows:—

(1.) The Confession of Faith drawn up by our forefathers, should be regarded as a most venerable historical document, marking a stage of the greatest importance in the development of the church's understanding of scriptural truth. But it should not be exalted or degraded to the position of a fetish to be worshipped as containing "the sum and substance of the scriptural truth," however, warrantably it may be held to contain "the sum and substauce of the doctrine of the Reformed churches" up to the date of its composition.

(2.) The terms of subscription ought to be made elastic enough to cover the foregoing account of the confession's place in the history of the church.

(3.) In my belief it is unfair to demand subscription to the document at all from any office-bearers except ministers, on such grounds as that rightly to understand much of its contents demands special study, and such a knowledge of the controversies of the period, as can not ordinarily be expected to be possessed by any except those academically instructed. Instead of the confession, for all office-bearers other than candidates for the ministry, I would be inclined to substitute, at most, the Shorter Catechism.

(4.) As regards candidates for the ministry, the revival in the full spirit and intent of the words, of oversight and examination by the Presbytery, as prescribed by the "form of church government," might almost be held to warrant dispensing with modes of subscription which, while they cannot exclude the unscrupulous, nor rarely operate, it is alleged, as a barrier to tender consciences; albeit, on the other hand, it may be, and has been contended that subscription does provide a means of capturing and dealing with the would-be heretical. It is the fact, however, that in the great American Presbyterian churches the terms of subscription are elastic beyond, perhaps any other; and yet no church is better entitled to claim the highest place in the ranks of orthodoxy.

(5.) I do not think that the state of the age is favorable to the construction of any new symbol or form of terms of communion. Should the day arrive when, by a consensus of the Presbyterian churches, such an effort may be attempted, a creed or confession, in my judgment, ought to take the form, more of a statement of facts—after the pattern of the so-called Apostles' Creed, and less of lengthy doctrinal exposition.

(6.) In such a new creed, adoption, correlate of the doctrine of the Divine Fatherhood, would, I venture to think, occupy a vastly more prominent position than it now does in a system upon which so genial a Christian as Charles Hodge could write three large volumes without almost the mention whether of the Fatherhood or of adoption.

(7.) Finally, in the event supposed of the construction of a new symbol, I would be no party to touching, altering, amending, abridging, or otherwise meddling with the confession of faith drawn up by the Westminster assembly of divines. It stands a grand historical land-mark. As such, let it be regarded. And it shall be. A proof of its significant value may be seen in the fact that it is the subject of ceaseless assault equally from Papists and Sceptics. No other document of the kind is deemed "a foeman worthy of their steel." Having raised a myriad times a tremendous dust around its walls, they have paused from their labors with the complacent conviction that this fortress has been demolished. But the dust has a myriad times settled down over the very memories of the self-styled triumphant assailants; and the confession has reappeared unscathed—"fair as the moon clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners,"—as, for certain purposes, I venture to conclude, in will do in *seculo seculorum*.

The reverend Dr. then expressed his opinions as regards the question of revision as follows.

"For many reasons I would not have the grand old document altered. An appendix might be added, explanatory of some points, and bringing out more precisely others, upon which, perhaps due emphasis has not been placed. Or, what might be better, a new and simpler document might be drawn up to serve as a symbol or expression of the terms of eommunion between the members of the Presbyterian church. But the Confession of Faith as it is, in my opinion, should be preserved intact, because it represents historically the views and attitude of the reformed churches at the date of its construction, and because whatever changes in its form of presentation of the truth might be now deemed desirable, its underlying principles are, in my opinion, accurately representative of the teaching of the Word of God."

Rev. Mr. Fotheringham then gave his views as follows:

"I would not favor revision of the Confession of Faith at present for two reasons. In the first place I fear that a revision would result in a more cast iron creed than we now have. I look upon the confession as a historical document. If it is revised it is no longer the Westminister Confession. I would let it stand alongside the various other Scottish confessions and manifestations of the church's faith, and would do as the Presbyterian church of England has done, frame a new creed on the same lines adopted to our own way of thinking now. The Presbyterian church of England has formed a series of articles short and clear. That is what we want."

In regard to the statement in the confession that the Pope is anti-Christ he said "my idea is that the marks of the anti-Christ have never been fully displayed in Romanism, whilst I would not say that the Pope is the anti-Christ (because he lacks some of the marks of anti-Christ) yet I believe, that those features which distinguish the church of Rome from the rest of Christendom are anti-Christ; and so far are opposed to the spirit of Christ." But the reverend gentleman was in favor of having such paragraphs in the confession revised so as not to be open to prejudice.

"And" he continued, "the love of God towards all mankind is not sufficiently brought out in our standards. I would favor a revision about every twenty or thirty years, as the light of more knowledge on the subject might warrant. The phrasaology in many cases might be improved, but I feel quite satisfied that there will be no essential change in the doctrines of the church. If the Presbyterian Church of England are successful in establishing their articles, I think their example will be followed by other churches."

"But I see no reason why we should not have a still broader creed that will embrace more denominations than one I see no reason, why Methodists and Presbyterians, for example, cannot agree upon a basis of union; why there could not be a broader union on what we all acknowledge to be the essentials of christianity such for instance as is put down in the articles of the Evangelical Alliance. That would satisfy me as a basis of union amongst the different churches. At the same time my own creed would be the present Westminister confession of faith. But I think I could hold it and not put it so offensively as it is some times put in the Westminister confession."

Continued on Fourth Page.

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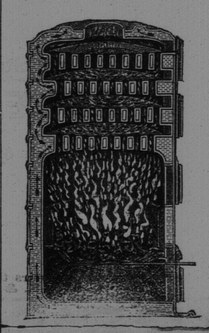
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