

The Catholic Record.

Published Weekly at 484 and 486 Richmond street, London, Ontario.
Price of subscription—\$2.50 per annum.

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Messrs. LEE, KING, JOHN NICH, P. J. NEVEN and M. C. O'DONNELL are fully authorized to receive subscriptions and transact all other business for the CATHOLIC RECORD.

Rates of Advertising—Ten cents per line each insertion, agate measurement.
Approved and recommended by the Archbishops of Toronto, Kingston, Ottawa, and St. Boniface, and the Bishops of London, Hamilton and Peterboro, and the clergy throughout the Dominion.

Correspondence intended for publication, as well as that having reference to business, should be directed to the proprietor, and must reach London not later than Tuesday morning.

Arrears must be paid in full before the paper can be stopped.

Persons writing for a change of address should invariably send the name of their former post office.

London, Saturday, Oct. 10, 1891.

NEW-ANGLED LITURGIES

The Unitarian General Conference, which has been in session at Saratoga, has decided to construct a liturgy for use in their public worship. It has been hitherto the fashion in that Church, as in many other Protestant churches, that each minister should follow suit form of public worship as might suit best his fancy and that of his congregation. Of course the result of this was a most charming variety, not only in the form and style of the prayers which were offered up in the different churches of the denomination, but also in the doctrines which were implied in them. It is impossible that there should be a liturgy, or even an individual form of Church worship, which is not to a great degree a reflex of the doctrines which predominate in the minds of those who have constructed it; and this has been the case among Unitarians, who have used in their churches forms of prayer constructed for the occasion by the minister, equally with those who have used forms prescribed by their Churches.

The Church of England has preserved, amid all the dissensions of the various parties comprised within it, a certain amount of respect for religion, and a desire among all parties to conform to the doctrines set forth in the Book of Common Prayer, as the authorized standard of the Church. There is no doubt that to the really devout prayers and liturgical forms which are in that book is in a great measure attributable the fact that the members of that Church adhere firmly to a belief in the principal mysteries of Christianity at least. This is not due, however, to anything inherent in that Church's Protestantism, nor in any real authority which its adherents recognize in it, but to the unmistakably Catholic tone which pervades the liturgy, which owes its boasted excellence chiefly to the fact that it has been taken out of the liturgy of the Catholic Church, for the most part almost word for word.

The Presbyterians have also a prescribed liturgy, but it is much more flexible than that of the Church of England. The forms of public prayer are laid down strictly, but great latitude is permitted in the choice of those portions of Scripture which are to be read. As to the sermon, the minister is directed how to treat his text, and he is told not to raise old heresies from the grave in order to refute them, but that he should confute such false doctrines as the people are in danger of falling into.

The reason given in the Presbyterian "Directory" for making the liturgy just what it is, are, 1st, "To hold forth such things as are of divine institution in every ordinance;" 2ndly, "To set forth (other things) according to the rules of Christian prudence, agreeable to the general rules of the word of God;" and, 3rdly, "That the sense and scope of the prayers and other parts of public worship, being known to all, there may be a consent of all the Churches in those things that contain the substance of the service and worship of God; and the ministers may be hereby directed in their administrations to keep like soundness in doctrine and in prayer."

We may presume that the reasons here given are somewhat the same as those which have influenced the Unitarians to decide now that it is desirable to adopt a liturgy.

It will be noticed that in all this, even outside of what is acknowledged to be of divine institution, the Kirk claims the right of settling by ecclesiastical decree such forms of public worship as will tend to the preservation of sound doctrine and decorous prayer. Whence comes this right, if it be not plainly derived from God, who is the only source from which ecclesiastical authority can flow?

Yet it is certain, and even Presbyterians will acknowledge the fact, that

there is only one Church which can trace to our Lord Jesus Christ through successive generations its authority to make laws for the guidance of its members. The Catholic Church has liturgies of which she commands all her priests to make use, in the offering up of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and in the administration of the sacraments. Sound doctrine is to be preserved through a uniform liturgy, we are told by the Westminster divines, and on this plea they impose the liturgy of their own make upon all their clergy. We contend that if there was any authority existing which had the right of liturgy-making, it was vested, not in the Westminster divines, nor in the Saratoga assembly of Unitarian ministers, but in the lawful authorities of the Catholic Church, and it is the sin of schism to make a new liturgy, in spite of the decrees of the Church, and to introduce new doctrines into such a liturgy is the sin of heresy, which the Westminster Confession itself (q. 105) declares to be one of the sins forbidden by the first commandment.

In the ruins of the ancient Church of St. Clement at Rome, built in the days of the Emperor Constantine, and destroyed by an earthquake about the year 900, there is to be seen a fresco which shows at a glance whether the ancient liturgies resemble that which is to be found in the modern Presbyterian Churches.

There is an altar, on which lights are burning. The altar is decorated very much as Catholic altars are usually decorated at this day. The Mass-book is on the altar, and the words may be read on its pages: "*Dominus vobiscum: Pax Domini sit semper vobiscum.*" as they are uttered by the priest at Mass in the nineteenth century. Before the altar burns the light which indicates the presence of the Blessed Sacrament of the Eucharist, and at the altar the priest is celebrating Mass. He is turned towards the people in the very position in which the Catholic priest at this day repeats the words "*Dominus vobiscum.*" ("The Lord be with you.") An inscription tells us that the celebrant is St. Clement himself, of whom St. Paul, in Phil. iv. 3, says his "name is in the book of life."

St. Clement is vested on this fresco with the usual dress in which a Bishop celebrates Mass nowadays. Here, then, we have an ancient and apostolic liturgy, in use in the Church of Christ from most ancient days. Why should Presbyterians and Unitarians construct another?

But there is nothing which more clearly shows the absurdity of the Presbyterian and Unitarian claim to have authority to make new liturgies than the way in which the Westminster liturgy speaks of that of the Anglican Church. Surely the Anglican divines who made the Book of Common Prayer had as much authority to make liturgies as the Presbyterians had; yet we find their efforts in this direction thus spoken of in the Westminster "Directory of Public Worship":

"Howbeit, long and sad experience hath made it manifest that the Liturgy used in the Church of England, (notwithstanding all the pains and religious intentions of the compilers of it,) hath proved an offence not only to many of the godly at home, but also to the reformed Churches abroad. . . . Papists boasted that the book was a compliance with them in a great part of their service; and so were not a little confirmed in their superstition and idolatry. . . . and the Liturgy hath been a great means. . . . to make and increase an idle and unedifying ministry. . . . and a snare both to many godly and faithful ministers, etc."

It is, in fact, a matter of history that when the Bishop and dean of Edinburgh attempted to introduce the Anglican liturgy into that city, Jane Geddes, the heroine of Presbyterianism, threw at the dean's head the stool on which she was sitting, saying at the same time, "Deil tak the weam of thee, that ye daur to say the Mass at my very lug."

We know, of course, that the Unitarians will not adopt the Anglican liturgy; but what assurance have we that they will make one more in accordance with the teachings of the primitive Christian Church?

The Toronto Mail, in an editorial comment on this subject last week, alludes to the fact that it has been the case that most Protestants would have no liturgy, also that it has been the favorite view of Quakers and other Protestants for many years that the "truth of religion can be best developed in bare barn-like structures;" but it thinks that the general opinion is now that "the soul of true worship can be clothed by a liturgy as well as by a service in which free prayer and ex-

tempore preaching take a prominent part."

As an illustration of what a non-liturgical service may degenerate into, the Mail also says: "An American reporter once described the supplications of a popular minister as 'among the most sublime efforts ever addressed to an intelligent audience.'"

We have more than once heard prayers addressed to the audience instead of the Creator, and this will continue to be the case where there is no liturgy; but it is not the office of humanly invented associations, calling themselves Churches of Christ, to prescribe the liturgy which ought to be adopted.

THE NEW GERMAN LIQUOR LAW.

The German Emperor has exhibited recently a strong determination to diminish, and repress, if possible, the evil of drunkenness throughout the Empire. He fully appreciates the fact that this evil is one of the greatest dangers to which a nation can be subjected, and that once habits of drunkenness become characteristic of a people, they must degenerate in the scale of civilization. He has, therefore, taken a deep personal interest in the passage of a new law, the object of which is to discourage the use of all alcoholic beverages.

There are twenty-three paragraphs in the law which has just passed through the Reichstag, which may be classified under three heads. The clauses which fall under the first head deal with the conditions under which licenses are to be granted. Those of the second class consist of restrictions which inn and saloons keepers and retail dealers must observe in selling liquors; and those of the third class impose severe penalties upon such persons as become intoxicated under certain circumstances.

A license is to be refused to persons of bad character, and to those who are supposed to use the business as a cloak for gambling, debauchery or other unlawful purposes; and if objection be made by a certain number of householders, a license will be refused for the sale of liquors near a church or school-house.

Retailers will not be allowed to sell liquors in quantities less than half a litre, all being considered as retailers who sell in quantities of less than fifty litres.

In towns and cities containing more than five thousand inhabitants, retailers of liquors are not to be allowed to carry on any other business in connection with the liquor trade. It is believed that this will prevent persons from being inveigled into the purchase of liquors when they go to shops to purchase other articles, as groceries or the like.

Saloon keepers are obliged to keep on hand a supply of non-spirituous beverages for those of their customers who may ask for them, and they must also preserve good order on their premises, under penalty of having their licenses cancelled. The different Governments of the Empire are also empowered to make special regulations in regard to female waiters, in order to prevent certain abuses which have frequently occurred in the past.

The sale of liquor to minors under sixteen years of age is forbidden, unless they are accompanied by a guardian, and it is also forbidden to sell to intoxicated persons, or to those who have been convicted of drunkenness within the period of three years. Liquors are not to be furnished to any one on credit, and if this provision of the law be contravened, inn and saloon keepers will be debarred from collecting their bills.

Habitual drunkards, and those who endanger the public welfare when intoxicated, and those who neglect to provide for their families, can be placed under legal guardians, who, if they see fit, may place them in inebriate asylums.

Physicians, nurses, and all whose duty it is to take care of the sick are to be liable to a heavy fine or imprisonment if they are intoxicated when attempting to fulfil their office, and those who are engaged in the life-saving service or the prevention of fire are subject to the same penalty.

The new law is an experiment, and it is hoped that it will succeed in lessening greatly the evils resulting from intemperance throughout the empire; and even with all the restrictions which are placed upon licensed saloons and inns, no license will be granted unless it be certified that there is need of a saloon in the locality for which a license is demanded.

From the provisions of the new German law we might in Canada derive

many useful hints which would probably be more beneficial to the country than any proposal which has emanated from the prohibitionists.

THE DECAY OF PROTESTANT "ORTHODOXY."

Even a not very keen observer of the nature of Congregationalism would not have required at any time in the past a supernatural gift of prophecy to be able to foretell that Congregationalism would end in a total denial of the mystery of Redemption, and, therefore, of Christianity itself.

Congregationalism as a system is based upon the independence of each local congregation, both as regards the doctrines which it sees fit to hold and the choice of its officiating minister. When the vagaries of the human mind are taken into consideration it will be clear to every one that the natural consequence of such a system must be divergence from the fundamental principles upon which Christianity is based. There is no power to control the wanderings of individuals, and to keep them to the faith which was "once delivered to the saints;" for without a strong central authority which can speak as the Apostles spoke at the Council of Jerusalem—"It hath seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us," (Acts xv.)—the believers must be left in the position from which the Apostle tells us it was the primary purpose of the institution of the Church of Christ to rescue them, of being "children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine." (Eph. v. 14.)

History tells us of the resolute though mistaken earnestness of the Puritans and Covenanters of old who followed the leadership of Oliver Cromwell, until they had established their belief throughout England and Scotland on the ruins of prelacy and all ecclesiastical authority. In spite of their vagaries and absurdities, these men clung to a belief in, at least, the most vital truths of Revelation. They believed in the inspiration of Holy Scripture in the strictest sense, in the efficacy of God's grace, the Divinity of Christ and the salvation of man through the shedding of His blood upon the cross.

They believed without reserve that God governs the universe, not merely by general natural laws, but by a practical Providence which takes cognizance of the minutest details, and it was owing to the firmness of their convictions that they deemed it their duty to transplant to America the theocratical form of government which they failed to establish permanently in England. The theory which the Pilgrim Fathers set up in the New England States is an indisputable evidence to the strength of the religious convictions they entertained.

Congregationalism is, historically, the offspring of Puritanism, but never was there a child more unlike its father. The old adage "like father, like son," is completely set at defiance when we compare the two. There is a most decided tendency in the Congregationalism of to-day to cast aside as worn out and useless material every one of the doctrines which we have enumerated above as characteristic of old Puritanism.

It was at one time a very common practice among New England Puritans to establish Congregational Churches without any special creed at all, or to compose a creed for themselves, or to adopt the Confession of Faith of some Church already existing; for it was a recognized principle among them that any particular creed is not to be imposed upon their body to exclude from communion those who "feel religion." But the inevitable result of such a mode of procedure was seen in the alarming spread of Rationalism among the clergy and laity alike, and the conservatively inclined found that if any remnant of Christian doctrine was to be retained, some standard of faith should be adopted, which was accordingly done by Church Councils held at Andover and Oberlin at a comparatively recent date.

The decisions arrived at by these councils were bitterly opposed by the latitudinarian element, but up to the present time the more orthodox element has been able to uphold the creeds adopted, and to discipline those who wandered from them, notwithstanding the complaints of the latter that the creed party had violated the original compact on which their Church was founded, and exercised a tyranny as intolerable as that of the Pope, by endeavoring to repress that freedom of opinion which they claimed to be the right of every Christian.

But from the account which has been given of the recent general Council of Congregationalism which met in London, Eng., it does not appear that the efforts to keep the body within the bounds of orthodoxy have been eminently successful. The question was discussed "What have the Churches gained and lost in spiritual influence through changes in Doctrinal Belief, and in the type of Social Piety?" The discussion brought into prominence the fact that the whole body is agitated to its foundation by the differences between the "Old and New Schools" of Theology. The Old School, so-called, aims at retaining the doctrines which are held to be the distinctive dogmas of Christianity, whereas the New School would sweep them away entirely, or at least would allow the fullest liberty to preach a doctrinal system which is as devoid of distinctively Christian teaching as is Tom Paine's "Age of Reason."

The public are informed by Dr. Henderson, who was one of the delegates to the council, that "as a whole, the heart of the council was loyal to our Divine Lord and Master, and more especially may this be said of the brethren from America."

The American Congregationalists have, it is true, so far exhibited what is commonly called a preponderance of orthodoxy, but we all know that the Unitarian element is so powerful as to make the battle between the "Old and New Schools" a struggle for life. It is, therefore, not calculated to give confidence that the Congregationalism of the world will be much of a bulwark to orthodoxy, when we are thus assured that the American Congregationalists are stronger in the faith than their brethren in England, Ireland and Scotland. We name these three countries, because it is conceded that, outside of English-speaking communities, Congregationalism has never made much headway.

It is with regret that we notice this decay of what is called orthodoxy among Protestants; because we are aware that unbelief is being installed in its place. But we cannot expect any other result than this from Protestantism in any form. It destroys the authority which Christ gave to His Church to teach His doctrine, and the inevitable result must be the decay of faith even in those doctrines which Protestantism retained when it gained its first foothold in the world.

NEW PROTESTANT ORDER.

We have it on very good and reliable Protestant authority that a new Protestant order has been founded within the last few years, whose principal object is two-fold. First of all, the members are banded together for the purpose of "resisting Catholic aggression;" and, secondly, and more particularly, of "saving our school system from control of that Church."

The Toronto News, of the 25th ult., declares that "a regular organization has been formed with signs and passwords and places of meeting," secret lodges, no doubt, and that "even the name of the new body is unknown outside of the membership, which is said to embrace thousands." Again it is said that "it is as silent as the grave in its movements, and as remorseless as fate in carrying out its decrees. The order originated in Ohio four or five years ago, and the first felt of its influence was in Boston. In that city the Catholics had practically got control of the schools and city government. Two years ago the new order went to work; the women were enlisted, and the result was the greatest revolution at the next election ever witnessed in the history of an American city. We have no reason whatever to doubt the correctness of the statements made in the Toronto News. Any new fad will take for awhile with the gullible portion of the Protestant world, and money will flow into the coffers of the originators, who keep in the background, while their dupes are making clowns of themselves before the public and eliciting the pity and disgust of all sensible people. Other organizations as foolish and as wicked as the "New Protestant Order" have come and gone, with no good left after them, but much irritation, some bad blood and a good deal of uncharitableness and bitter feelings that make life not worth living whosoever they exist.

The Equal Rights party appealed with a loud flourish to the same bigoted principle of opposition to "Romish aggression" and religion in schools; but its insane cry, although repeated from sundry platforms and many a pulpit, found no echo in the heart of the Canadian people. The public men who took up the shibboleth and adopted the war cry of Equal Rights for all—except Christian fathers and mothers who wish to bring up their children as

Christians and save their souls—the public men who swore they would wrest the education of children from the hands of priests and bishops—these men, no doubt, got a hearing in certain halls and at some public gatherings, but the sentiment of the entire country went dead against them. And so it shall be with the "New Protestant Order." Its promoters may derive some temporary profit by the contributions that will flow in while it lasts; they may even get themselves elected to positions of trust—may become aldermen or mayors of cities—but when their true work is known and their actual value as citizens put to the test, an indignant public will scoff at their unfair, jug-handled methods, and the new order will disappear, as the Equal Rights party, of which not a sound can to-day be heard.

The Toronto News goes on to say:

"A high authority in red Orangemen in this city describes the new order as occupying the same position towards Orangemen as the Jesuit order holds towards the Catholic Church."

This is the first time we heard authoritatively of Red Orangemen. They are known better, at least among the uninitiated, as Yellow Billys or True Blues. Probably the red members are so called from the scarlet cloaks they wear officially; and no doubt they occupy a more elevated degree in the hierarchy of most worshipful grand masters. But what knowledge can Red Orangemen presume to possess more than others, about the position the Jesuit order holds towards the Catholic Church? It would be well for Christianity in general if the members of the New Protestant Order could imitate the Jesuit Fathers, by retiring to hard beds at 9 p. m., rising at 4 a. m., administering a little punishment to the old man, by a vigorous use of the discipline on their bare shoulders, then giving themselves up to meditation and earnest prayer for a few hours, and spending the rest of the day in visiting the sick and poor, and, above all, minding their own business. If the members of the New Protestant order are determined to rival the Jesuits in effectiveness and widespread influence they must be ready to buckle on the armor of self-denial, and in all charitableness and Christian humility show themselves patterns of the Christianity they would preach to others. Until they are prepared to do this they must give up all hopes, or rather all pretensions, of being, for Orangemen, or for others, what the Jesuits are for the Catholic Church.

The Toronto News further adds: "The members of the New Protestant order are bound to each other and the order by the most cast-iron of oaths, and woe to him who violates his obligation."

According to this showing, the new order must rank not with the God-fearing, Christ-like order of Jesuits, but with the Mafia of New Orleans or with the Carbonari of Italy.

The Nihilists of Russia and the Thugs of India take similar oaths and bear far closer resemblance to the new order than any Christian body we know of or read of. It is true that during the agitation of '89 a good deal was said and written about the "Jesuit oath." The Toronto Mail and other bigoted sheets printed forged copies of it, but no genuine original of such oath was discovered, because none such ever existed. The Toronto Mail would escape trial and expense and very serious difficulty if the Jesuit oath could be found. A little fortune is in the safe of that journal's office awaiting the Red Orangemen who will prove that the Jesuit oath ever existed or that the New Protestant Order occupies the same "position towards Protestantism as the Jesuit order holds towards the Catholic Church."

PAN-PRESBYTERIANISM.

We would allow the Pan-Presbyterian gathering in Toronto to pass by in respectful silence if the members who spoke there showed better signs of Christianity and less of hostility to other Churches engaged in the same work. If the Presbyterian ministers are true disciples of the God of peace, and if they are duly commissioned to preach the word, they do not pursue the even tenor of their way and realize the words of Holy Writ, "How beautiful are feet of those who announce the gospel of Christ." It is impossible to call feet either beautiful or welcome that cannot make a step without tramping on some one's tender feelings, or hurting somebody's corns.

Rev. Dr. Talbot Chambers, for instance, of the Dutch Reformed Church, of New York, who spoke at the meeting, said:

"We should devise a plan whereby all the different bodies of the Presbyterian faith could be bound closer to-

gether, so could help the Swiss. Every Switzerland and Protest are equally the interest and that, fu to live at pence from Church had ations? in Switzerland favor."

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