

REFLECTIONS

BY STAFF WRITERS

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MANITOBA'S DISAPPOINTMENT

MANITOBA has sought an extension of her boundaries to Hudson's Bay and Sir Wilfrid Laurier has evaded the issue. Last year he outlined a possible scheme for enlarging the boundaries of Quebec, Ontario and Manitoba. Only the latter province is eager to get the additional territory. In addition to the new territory, Manitoba has asked for an increased subsidy or the possession of its public lands. It is willing to accept terms similar to those extended to Ontario and Quebec at Confederation, or those extended to Alberta and Saskatchewan on their creation.

The reasons for temporising with Ontario's fairly just demands are undoubtedly political. At the present time, the Government of Manitoba is antagonistic to the Government at Ottawa, speaking from a party point of view. When a general election took place in Saskatchewan last year, it is said the Manitoba rulers interfered so far as they were able in the neighbouring province against Hon. Walter Scott, the Liberal premier. In the recent federal elections, these same Manitoba politicians did their utmost against the federal Liberal candidates. They must now pay the price of their political activity. It is a very human situation.

Mr. Roblin and his colleagues will shortly appeal to the electors for a renewal of their confidence. Although this is likely to be extended to them, it is but natural that the Liberal Government at Ottawa should not be anxious to furnish them with any additional security against defeat. It may not be high statesmanship but it is certainly accepted politics. The lesson of it is that provincial governments are quite unwise when they interfere in federal elections. There has been too much of this in the past, though perhaps there has also been too much interference on the part of the federal Government in provincial elections. Two wrongs do not make a right.

Probably when the next general election in Manitoba has passed into history, the Ottawa authorities will see fit to grant some of Manitoba's demands. It has a just claim for more territory and for better terms. The only reason why these claims are not granted at the present moment is the doubtful quality of the men who dominate the province politically at the present time. While showing enterprise and courage in several directions they have not appealed to the rest of Canada as high-minded citizens anxious only for the public general good.

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OUR APOLOGY TO METHODISM

LAST week in a "reflection" on this page, it was intimated that the Methodist "priests and elders" had crucified Dr. Workman and proposed to crucify Mr. Jackson. We now apologise, so far as our statement applied to Mr. Jackson. Dr. Carman has withdrawn his opposition, the professors of Victoria College have stated their attitude towards higher criticism, and Mr. Jackson is to be allowed to join the staff of that college without further protest. So far as Dr. Workman is concerned, our remark stands.

The average man will not be greatly concerned with Dr. Carman's motive. He may have been forced to withdraw his opposition; he may have deemed it wise not to force a schism in the church; or it may be that on closer enquiry he found that Mr. Jackson's position was more akin to his own than he had been led to believe. Whatever his reason, his action brings credit upon himself and upon the church over which he presides. We believed that he was mistaken and that his conduct was unwise and his first words ill-chosen. We do not, however, hold this against him, because the best of us, in our zeal, make frightful mistakes. His graceful yielding in the general interest does him enough credit to off-set his previous mistake in judgment.

The Methodist Church is to be congratulated upon having passed

through a crisis successfully. For a time, the situation looked quite dangerous. It was saved by mutual explanations and the exercise of common-sense. The higher criticism has not been adopted nor even approved, but the inspiration of the Old Testament is left an open question. Any college professor who maintains his "personal vital relation to Christ and the Holy Scriptures" is to be "left free to do his own work." Honest convictions are not to be interfered with.

There is only one regret to be expressed. It seems a pity that so honest a teacher as Dr. Workman should have been driven out before this decision was reached. The generosity and fair treatment now extended to Mr. Jackson, were not accorded to Dr. Workman. If the church were now, quietly and without display, to find a professional position for this man whom it has driven out of college work, a wrong would be righted and the connexional reputation of Methodism would be restored to its pristine glory. The suggestion is offered, not in any carping spirit, but simply on behalf of what to us seems best in the interests of true religion and the reputation of a Protestant body to which the world and Canada owe much.

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THE CRITICAL MOVEMENT

IT is a rather curious coincidence that after our reflection "Crucify Him" was written but before it was put into circulation, the Rev. T. E. Burke, pastor of Brock Street Methodist Church, Kingston, should have preached a sermon embodying the same idea. He pointed out that this critical movement, like every other great movement, has its losses and its gains, and that Christ's crucifixion was partly the result of his lack of reverence for some things cherished by the religious leaders of the day. Luther was ex-communicated for the same reason. He apparently was quite in accord with the sentiments expressed in these columns, though they were not given to the public until after his sermon was delivered and reported in the Kingston papers. He admitted discrepancies and difficulties in the Bible, but maintained that their existence in no way impaired its authority. He distinguished, as so many critics have done, between the human and the divine, and declared that the divine is the only important part.

On the same day, the Rev. Dr. Macgillivray in Chalmers Church (Presbyterian) in the same city, talked on this critical movement. He pointed out the same truth that Christ himself was a critic who cast aside ancient laws and formulated new, and that the apostles followed in his footsteps. "Higher criticism is but the earnest search for truth," said the Doctor, and those who believed in the old and those who believed in the new should observe a fair and kindly bearing towards one another. "The higher critics lead just as good lives as those who criticise them."

These two sermons are quoted to show that the Protestant ministry generally is not hide-bound but is fairly liberal in its views. In this lies the hope of Protestantism. Had the Roman Catholic Church been as tolerant of criticism in Luther's day as it is to-day, there had been no Protestantism. Had the Anglican Church been as progressive and as tolerant in Wesley's day as it is to-day (except in Toronto where it is in a serious state of conflict) there had been no Methodism. Religious interpretation must be as progressive as the age, else students of theology become divided into camps. The progressives must be listened to and argued with and tolerated, lest they go out and found new churches, thus creating a disunion which to some extent lessens progress and divides religious effort.

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A PREMATURE REQUEST

THE women who visited the Ontario Legislative Building the other day went on a fool's errand and were not ignorant of the character of their expedition. Neither the standing of the deputation, the arguments they advanced, nor the petition which they presented was worthy of a great onward movement. Sir James Whitney took