

Our Contributors.

WHAT WILL THE END BE

BY KNOXIAN

An event occurred in Montreal the other day which might well cause patriotic Canadians to pause and ask what are we coming to. The Dominion Government were about to appoint a Superior Court Judge for the Province of Quebec. The learned gentleman named in connection with the high office was a member of the House of Commons, a member of the Administration though not of the Cabinet, a Q.C. and an Irish Catholic able to speak French fluently. As soon as it became evident that the appointment was likely to be made, a petition was signed by a large number of prominent citizens and forwarded to Ottawa, vigorously protesting against the appointment of the gentlemen named, mainly, as we understand it, on the ground that he is a Roman Catholic. The list of names appended to this petition is a study and a revelation. At the head stands the name of the Lord Bishop of Montreal, and then follow the names of representative men in commerce, in finance, in the Church, in fact, in every walk of life. We do not notice the names of any of the Presbyterian ministers of the city. There is a Robert Campbell on the list, but as the name is without the prefix Rev., or the affix D.D., we presume it does not represent "our Robert Campbell." Just why representative Presbyterian ministers did not append their names we cannot say. Perhaps they were not asked to sign. Possibly they took the old Presbyterian ground that the public have nothing to do with the religion of a judge or any other public servant. The Episcopal clergy seem to have had the call when the petition was being signed, and there is one worthy Methodist put on presumably to give the petition the requisite amount of favor.

It goes unsaid that these citizens of Montreal had, or at least thought they had, good cause for entering their protest. There was no politics in it, for many of the most prominent signers are strong supporters of the Government. The plain, palpable and sad fact seems to be that the feeling between Catholics and Protestants in Montreal is so strong that a large number of Protestants felt it to be their duty to protest earnestly, strongly, almost indignantly against the appointment of a lawyer to the Bench, mainly because he was a French-speaking Irishman and a Roman Catholic.

Now for a contrast. Not long ago the Gladstone Government appointed Sir Charles Russell, Lord Chief Justice of England. Sir Charles is an Irishman, a Roman Catholic, and was, we believe, a strong Home Ruler. He supported a Home Rule Government and made what many considered the effort of his life as counsel for Parnell in his famous libel suit against *The Times*. One would naturally suppose that England being against Home Rule, and not being friendly to Home Rulers, and being strongly Protestant, a protest would have been entered by somebody against the appointing of Sir Charles to the highest judicial position in the land. So far as we can remember not a single word of dissent was uttered. Probably not a prominent journal nor a representative public man in England ever alluded to the fact that the new Lord Chief Justice was a Roman Catholic. Some of the religious journals had the highest eulogies on his brilliant career as a lawyer and made the most glowing predictions in regard to his future as a judge. The brilliant Irishman went up to the highest place in his profession amidst the plaudits of the Empire. Even Belfast made no protest.

Now, why are we in Canada so unlike the people in Great Britain? Let every man who really loves his country ask himself that question. Is Roman Catholicism a more aggressive system in Canada than in Ireland? Are we better Protestants than the Protestants of Great Britain? Perhaps

the reason why there is so much bad feeling in Canada as compared with England, is because we are so much more pious than the English people are. At first blush that theory might pass, but when we examine closely the record and daily life of many of those who do all in their power to inflame the feeling of Protestants against Catholics, and of Catholics against Protestants, we find they have no piety at all.

It is easy to say, "this judgeship is a Montreal matter. Protestants and Catholics there have always been at loggerheads." The feeling is not by any means confined to Montreal. The flame is growing and intensifying in Ontario, and is skillfully fanned by those who are in the strife for what they can make. Twenty-eight years ago when Sandfield McDonald became the first Premier of Ontario, there was nothing said about his religion, though everybody knew he was a Roman Catholic. Nor was there much if anything said about Christopher Finlay Fraser's religion when Sir Oliver took him into the Cabinet twenty-two years ago. It was not until after Mr. Fraser had proved himself one of the most honest and capable administrators Ontario ever saw that his religion was attacked.

There is just one remedy for this sectarian strife. Let every man commend his religion by his life. If Roman Catholics think their system better than ours, let them show its superiority in their life. If, as we think, ours is better, we should prove its superiority by the superiority of our daily life. This is a pretty tough old world, and too many people in it are fools or knaves, but the power of goodness is still the greatest power.

That Montreal judge might make the people who signed the petition against him feel small. He might make them feel that way by making himself the best judge on the Bench. It is the only way he can. The best answer any of us can give to the man who says our religion is not good, is to show that the man who professes it is good.

THE PROBLEM OF POVERTY: ITS CAUSE AND CURE.

BY ALAN C. THOMPSON.

In your issue of 25th September you have an article on Sabbath Desecration, by the Rev. James McCaul, in which he says that, "The greed for gold is the vice of the age, forcing men to sacrifice not only the interest of others, but their own highest interests in the struggle." He says, "Against this spirit of our age, this temper of our time, the Church of God is solemnly bound to lift up her clarion voice. And this for two reasons. Because, firstly, she is commissioned to safeguard in every possible way the best interests of men, and, secondly, she is jealously to conserve the honor and glory of God." We have here an example, unfortunately not uncommon, of a symptom being mistaken for the disease. A little thought will show us that this desire for gold has a cause deeper than any mere love for the glittering metal, the cause is not love but fear, fear of poverty, either present or in the future.

It is said that work is scarce, and so it behoves every man to "make hay while the sun shines," he must make money to-day, he may have no chance to-morrow. The struggle for existence is more heartless and intense to-day than it was ten years ago, and it is getting worse. Why? It never was so easy to produce wealth as now, every labor saving machine adds to the productiveness of human labor and throws men out of employment. It seems as if to make a living to-day a man can only do so at the expense of another, he must force some one to the wall. Civilization has degenerated into a scramble not always for wealth, only too often for a *chance* to work hard for a bare living. Everywhere we see the unnatural sight of the laborers, the wealth producers, competing with each other for the chance to make wealth for

others in return for a bare living. Why? Poverty or the fear of poverty is the explanation; they must work or starve. The pressure of immediate want will make a man work for almost anything, and the fear of want of work, which means want of bread in the future, will keep him bound to his burden; the need of daily bread for himself and his dear ones forces the workman, all men but the idler, to struggle fiercely for gold until there seems little else desirable in life. Even in the millionaire the same guiding principle is at work; he desires his children to be beyond the possibility of want, or he seeks the power or influence immense wealth gives. But wherein lies the power of wealth? It is caused by the unnatural premium placed on it by the people, caused again by poverty or the fear of it. The same cause gives wealth social position, as well as power, and strange as it may seem, the way the wealth was obtained has little to do with the result. The mere possession of it covers up the sins of its acquisition in the eyes of the world and too often of the Church.

Abolish involuntary poverty by giving every man a chance to earn a fair living and you go far to destroy the prestige of mere wealth. When men are guaranteed a living they will find time for something else than to chase the mighty dollar; they would then have a chance to be valued for their worth, not for their money. Doubtless few will deny that this would be a good thing if possible. But "alas! it is impracticable! There will always be the miserably poor and the enormously wealthy," which is equivalent to saying that the trouble is inequality of distribution. But this is an economic evil and must admit of an economic remedy. All wealth is the product of land and labor, and as long as there is idle land and idle laborers, the production of wealth is restricted. There can be no such thing as over production of wealth so long as any consumer is unsatisfied, and if from any cause some are idle, whether they be the idle rich or the idle poor, they have to be supported from the earning of the laborers; so is it not to the interest of the workers as well as the State that all should be producers and self-supporters? Then why do many men willing to work seek employment in vain, or are forced into unnatural competitions with their fellow-laborers for starvation wages, in spite of the fact that all wealth is the product of labor applied to land when the latter is but sparsely occupied?

The answer is private ownership in land. God made the earth for the use of the whole people, not for the exclusive use of any one portion. All products of labor require labor to be continuously expended upon them to prevent them from returning again in some shape to raw materials, but the land alone endures from generation to generation. If we of one generation admit the right of only a portion of us to own the whole earth and charge the rest for the use of it, in other words for permission to live, our agreement is not binding on our children, unless they freely consent, and so for those who own land now to be able to pass it on to their children, and so exclude the children of the landless from their share in the storehouse which God has provided for all His children, is to rob not only God's children, but God Himself, as it is a denial of the right of God to do with His property according to His will, besides preventing Him from receiving that love and worship which springs from a grateful heart acknowledging that He has done all things well.

How the abolition of private property in land would restore to men their freedom, stimulate production, equalize distribution, and secure to every one the entire fruit of their labor, and provide them with unlimited opportunities for employment is fully and logically set forth in Henry George's great work "Progress and Poverty." The ethics of the question is thoroughly treated in his "Social Problems," and in the "Condition of Labor."

And that this is a proper subject for the church to take up is freely admitted by Mr. McCaul in the paragraph above quoted. The apostle James too, in the severest language denounced those who kept back by fraud the hire of the laborers, and though it not a question that the church should ignore, but embodied it in his epistle to the church of his day, and not for his day only but for all time.

Then let the church investigate the wrongs of the laborer and land-robbed people; let it join hands with those who would help to establish on this earth the reign of peace founded on righteousness, and instead of trying to stop this evil or that, let it investigate the great wrong which produces these symptoms, and with the cure of the one the others will quickly disappear.

SHOULD WE DEPART FROM THE CHURCH'S PRESENT POLICY IN SENDING MISSIONARIES TO THE FOREIGN FIELD?

BY REV. THOMAS NATTRESS, D.D.

It has been the practice of our Church hitherto to send additional missionaries to the foreign field only when a fixed salary could be guaranteed them. Thus far this policy has proven adequate and has, we believe, been the best one for a young and growing church whose hands have been busy with a vast and fruitful home field. But a question is before the Church, a question that is being discussed by Synods and Presbyteries: *Does not this policy begin to be inadequate?*

These many years our Church in Canada has been doing a very great deal to awaken the missionary spirit among her people, and has been eminently successful in her effort. Already her home field begins to be very fully occupied; and her calls for financial support in behalf of a greatly extended work undertaken in the foreign field are being very fully responded to. Formerly she deplored the lack of men willing to undertake Foreign Mission work; but now more men, well qualified and approved, are offering themselves for this work than her present financial policy will warrant her in sending forth. Moreover, the demands of the foreign field are loud in our ears, and the means of access to heathen countries almost altogether unobstructed. Hence the question as to whether the adopted policy is any longer an adequate one?

We take it that a call to the Church to engage in mission work in a heathen land (or to extend her work therein) is largely to be determined by four things—a country needing the gospel, an open door of access whereby to carry the gospel there, capable men willing to go where the Church will send them, and a treasury from which the laborer shall receive his hire. There is only one of these conditions by reason of which the Church is in any way ill at ease at the present time. It is the last. But to make ability to pay the missionary a stated sum the sine qua non of a divine call would, we submit, be to do what our Lord did not countenance nor the apostles practise.

The Spirit of God has worked mightily through the means we have thus far adopted to extend the kingdom of Christ among the nations. Is it possible to open up new channels for the grace of God to flow in? Interpreting the signs of the times already reviewed, do we not feel that the Spirit is prompting us to go forward, to adopt more comprehensive, more far-reaching measures? That the Church is divine has never meant that she is to grow without human planning. But if our plans are to continue to evidence a leaning upon the grace of God they must be bold, for the work ready to hand to do is great and the facilities for overtaking it marvellous. We are now leaning more on people's pockets than upon divine grace, if it be that men are willing to go where the gospel is not preached, to preach it, men competent to undertake the work for which they offer themselves, and the church does not say