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## TALES OF THE TOWN.

*"I must have liberty  
Withal, as large a charter as the wind  
To blow on whom I please."*

THE remark was made recently in these columns that politics did not enter very much into my operations. That remark should have been qualified; as I enter into the discussion of everything that pertains to the public welfare, being prejudiced neither for nor against. So that when I see Oscar Bass enter the lists as a champion of things religious, I deem it my duty (in the interests of the public aforesaid) to say a few words. Now who is this lay theologian, and would be director of the choice of the Synod of this diocese, and what right has he to say who shall or shall not be the new bishop? To the first question, I might answer, as I am informed, that he is an individual who has gone through the whole list of Christian denominations and now wishes to wind up by joining the Church of England, of whose ritual and doctrine he professes an intimate knowledge. He formerly belonged to the Methodist Church, and before that to the Presbyterian, but the ritual did not suit him, and he tried the Roman Catholic Church. There the restrictions were too much for him; he would have to live up to his professions or leave, and he left to enter the Salvation Army. Promotion did not come quick enough; he expected General Booth to abdicate in his favor, and he left in disgust because the General hung on. This is answer enough to the second question. Bass is a queer fish.

But as to the question at issue, I think that Bass must have picked up his facts in some reliable quarter. The Dean is unquestionably one of the most eminent men in the Church of England in Canada; and, from what I have seen of him, is a scholar of whose ability the Church should be proud. I had the honor of listening to part of a course of lectures by him some years ago, on the "Antiquity of Man," which impressed me very much, his rich Irish brogue and pleasant delivery lending an interest even to the driest facts. He has an Irish accent that one reads about but seldom hears, and to hear him is a pleasure. As to his sermons, I have only heard a few; but they were forceful and scholarly in every respect, and were full of Christian sentiment and practical instruction. Altogether, from what I know of the Dean, he is a man who would be progressive, and would win for the Church of England here the place that she seems to have been receding gradually from during the past few years. His church in Montreal which I happen to know, is by no means "low"; there is an excellent surpliced choir, and the music is anything but

"low." Indeed, I have heard the finest church anthems rendered in this church in the few times that I visited it, that I had the pleasure of listening to anywhere in the Church of England.

The Synod met, convened by prayer, like a somewhat similar gathering in a church of another denomination recently; indulged in a discussion that was not at times elevating or edifying, and from which that Christian jewel, truth, was for a great portion of the time absent, and wound up at one o'clock the next morning, with prayer, I believe, because I got tired and went home. Now it is peculiar how the clergy voted, and whatever be the result of their vote they will have themselves to thank. I don't here go into the question of the illegality of this meeting; that was very fully discussed, and more will no doubt be heard of it, if rumor speaks aright. But it seems odd how solidly the clergy went against the laity. They will take the layman's money, or, to use a more polite term, subscriptions, but when it comes to a point of expending them, it is a horse of a different color. Now what is the effect of the vote passed at the meeting in question? It seems very innocent of itself; but practically it amounts to this: The Archbishop of Canterbury will nominate Bishop Hills' nominee. With all due respect to Dr. Hills in his episcopal capacity, it may truthfully be said that he was not the most progressive of men, and it is only reasonable to assume that he will name some one else "after his own heart." The consequence will be that the Episcopal church here will be saddled with another ultra High churchman, with whom the majority of the laity will not be in sympathy. This in its turn will only serve to continue if not perpetuate the present disorganized and apathetic state of the Church of England in this Diocese.

The vote passed at the recent Synod meeting is about the most deplorable confession of weakness that could well be made. It is of course in reality a mean hankering after the few paltry dollars doled out to the church here by the church authorities in England; but, on the face of it, and as the world takes it, it is a tacit acknowledgment by the clergy that there cannot be found in Canada a man qualified to act as bishop of the church here. This is not creditable to themselves as a body. My own impression is that they were actuated by fear; that they dreaded an able, scholarly and executive man at the head of affairs here; that such a man would make it very uncomfortable for holders of sinecures, and that a man of that stamp would want too much work done for the money paid. The poor of Victoria would have to be better acquainted with the

clergymen, and that would be awful, you know. However, we shall see what we shall see; and we won't see the new cathedral on the hill for some time yet.

Pressure on my time and an extra demand on the space of THE HOME JOURNAL last week prevented my referring to several matters, and among them is the fact of what a powerful influence this young giantlike journal is gaining in moulding public opinion. Not a week passes now without some signal showing that this is a people's paper, devoted to the people's interests, and independently courageous in the defence of any encroachment on those interests. Time and again have reforms been advocated in these columns, and been adopted after a month or so by the daily papers with a blow and a blast of originality that has been very amusing both to myself and the proprietors of this journal. The latest to be referred to is contained in a paragraph in the morning paper with reference to the formation of a purely Canadian club or society with "Canada first" for its object and mottoes. Then, again it was in these columns that the idea of an Irish society was first formulated, and look at the result. In a few days afterwards, there existed a strong society of Irishmen in this city, and there is on foot the organization of sister societies throughout the province. I hope the Canadian Club will proceed with the same vigor, and show the world what Canadians are. It is not necessary to exhibit a few at the World's Fair to accomplish this, for I am proud to say that Canadians practically run Chicago, being as they are the most important and useful spokes in the hub of the great wheel of the American continent, and which is known as Chicago. It has ever been my belief and ever will that Canada is the coming country, and that it is never necessary to go outside of Canada to procure men to guide Canadian destinies. This was the uppermost sentiment of the late Mr. Robson, and I felt a thrill of pride at the tremendous burst of applause that went up from over two thousand American voices when the honorable gentleman gave expression to that sentiment some two years ago at Blaine, (Washington). He seemed to stand out like Saul among all those men, and I identified him by the manliness, the fearlessness and yet the courteousness of his telling our great neighbor that Canada can take care of herself.

When will those in high places set us good examples? The reason for the question is obvious, in view of the peculiar way the church authorities are acting nowadays. It must not be understood, because it has been my duty to speak a little plainly to church people lately, that

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