

the journalist's calling is realized, there will be a steady advance. A well conducted press will diffuse intelligence, and prepare the way for a wider and heartier appreciation of literary excellence. If it is true to its mission it will aid and encourage the advance of a literature that will shed lustre on our growing Canadian nationality.

THE PAPACY AT WAR WITH PROGRESS.

QUESTIONS of national interest are now discussed by all classes. It is not so long since secret conclaves could decide a nation's policy without the people's knowledge, and without their assent. Readers of Metternich's *Memoirs* understand with what assumptions of superior wisdom he sought to regulate the affairs, not only of Austria, but of continental Europe, and how he endeavoured to gauge the calibre and weaknesses of the reigning sovereigns of his time. Even his severest critics are now prepared to concede the sincerity with which he held his convictions. He believed that a reactionary policy was what the best interests of European society required, and that a paternal and autocratic form of government would be most conducive to its stability. The autocratic form of government is a vanished dream. The great currents of national life in their onward rush have swept it remorselessly aside.

The papacy, of all European forces, at the present time is the only one that in all its logical consistency seeks to embody the idea that a solitary irresponsible power is to govern, and that the people must, without question, obey the mandates of the Vatican.

Modern forces and antique despotism have come into collision in Belgium. They now stand face to face in open conflict. For years the opposition between liberalism and the papacy has been quite pronounced, but recent events have given it a prominence it had not hitherto attained. It is seldom that a clear issue between the two opposing forces is presented. Behind the temporary questions of its agreement there is the unavowed determination to gain the mastery. Various questions may serve as occasions of conflict, the ultimate object being to acquire the ascendancy each party desires.

It is over the question of educational control that the struggle between the Catholics and Liberals is now proceeding. The conflict has been going on for years. For a time the decision of the electorate was in favour of the progressive party. The clericals, however, were determined not to accept the situation. Possessing as they do everywhere peculiar means of influencing the popular mind, all the advantages that priestly dictation and the confessional could secure, were perseveringly taken advantage of. Within the Liberal ranks there were those who played into the hands of their opponents. In all countries where Catholicism is in the ascendant, political progressions too often confound the cause of religion with its priestly exponents. They are unable to discriminate between the universal religion of Jesus Christ and its perversion into the autocratic rule of the Vatican, and they rush from the one extreme to the other, landing in the negation of all religion. Some of the Belgium Liberals fell into this mistake, and sought the banishment of all religious teaching from the national schools. To their credit be it said, many of the people were not prepared to follow the extremists who contended for the suppression of religious teaching in the public schools.

At the late elections the Liberal Government was defeated by a decisive majority. The clericals triumphed at the polls. No time was lost in bringing in an educational measure, giving large control to the priesthood. The loss of the election was a surprise to the Liberals, and they regarded the education bill with undisguised alarm. Various demonstrations against it were made during its progress, but these had no effect. The bill was passed in the Legislative chamber by a large majority.

Not content with a decisive legislative gain, the clerical party were resolved on an ostentatious celebration of their victory. A great procession in Brussels of the clerical party, largely increased by accessions from other cities and districts, was appointed for Sabbath, the 7th inst. Vast numbers assembled. Banners floated in the breeze, incense perfumed the air, ecclesiastics and various fraternities fell into line, and music gave its inspiration to the parade. Its progress, however, was soon interrupted. Vast crowds assembled along the line. They were in no mood to

be pleased with a scenic display. They hissed and hooted lustily at the processionists, and emboldened by general sympathy, put an end to the march altogether, not without severe fighting. Over 100 persons were injured, but the fatalities were few. Throughout the provinces delegates to the clerical demonstration were greeted with scorn and derision on their return. At Antwerp the police and *gendarmes* in large numbers engaged in quelling the disturbances. On the following Sabbath the trades federation had resolved on a counter demonstration, but it is said to have been vetoed by the *burgemeister*.

Feeling in Belgium is now at fever heat. Matters will not, and cannot settle down on present lines. Reaction is imminent, and in most cases violent reactions are to be deplored. Street demonstrations, and counter demonstrations are neither the most effective nor desirable methods of settling great principles. These demonstrations, however, if spontaneous, are unmistakeable indications of the popular will. In the end we may rest assured that justice and right will triumph.

MIND IN MATTER. *

THIS is the title of a volume well worth reading. Whether or not one agrees with the author in all his reasonings and conclusions we will find him always fresh and stimulating. Mr. Tait, as might be expected of a Presbyterian minister, is a Christian theist with a firm faith in the Scriptures and the received doctrines of the Calvinistic school of thought in the Christian church. There is in the main no mistaking either the positions he holds or the purpose at which he aims.

The following abstract from the table of contents, will give some idea of the range of topics discussed.

Part I. The Inorganic World. Part II. The Organic World, Growth, Instinct, Utility, Beauty. Part III. The Rational Organic World, Mind, Morals, Enjoyment. In this part we find a sharp but merited criticism of Spencer's *First Principles of a New Philosophy*. Part IV. Universal Relations, Mind and Matter, Natural Inspiration, Supernatural Inspiration, the Old Testament, the New Testament. The last twelve pages are devoted to deductions in which by way of stating conclusions, the Supremacy of the Law-giver over his Laws, Divine Intervention in Human Affairs, the Existence of Evil Spirits, the Necessity of Personal Revelation, and several kindred subjects are briefly handled.

The book is a sustained argument to show that the mind is the ultimate and originating power in nature, and that the cosmos was called into existence in order that created minds might read and understand the thoughts of God.

"The sum-total of things presented in the universe is the gigantic effort of a Spirit to reveal himself."

"The universe is an immense hieroglyphic, revealing by peculiar workings the characteristics of an Infinite mind."

Hence "nature in its various aspects is an instrument of mind revealing itself to mind."

At the outset, however, he is careful to guard against the implication that our knowledge of God is merely inferential.

"The faith of the theist is not a mere conclusion resting on a logical process, it is a truth impressed by the self-revealing power of God. He who created the instruments by which human spirits communicate can penetrate the seat of conviction and demonstrate Himself." In other words, as Dr. Patton puts it, "Man finds God because God finds him."

In the first chapter our author makes the very existence of matter a proof of the existence of mind. "A faith whose fundamental article is creation, must seek for traces of creative wisdom in the materials of the universe. Wisdom may be displayed in the 'Collocations of Matter,' and still greater wisdom in successful efforts with uncongenial materials; but, if the material itself has been created, it will bear traces of skill, striking as those displayed in the purposes to which it has been applied."

The variety, number, weight, proportionate quantity, and finish of the particles of matter, found as the first result of analysis, show that these particles or atoms are themselves the product of mind and have been created expressly for the purpose of combination and

combination capable of expressing both intelligence and moral character. "Matter is not an ultimate; its elements bear marks of design." Examined by the light of modern science, its root-idea is, substantially, the algebraic one of combinations.

We quote the conclusion of this section: "A mechanic fits his materials to occupy one fixed place. Certain parts of factory products are adapted to fill certain identical positions in all articles of the same kind. Atoms are fitted to an unlimited number of positions, and in each case the adaptation is complete. It is in fact their extraordinary versatility and perfection of function that suggests the doubt whether they are the results of skill. Matter is supposed to be greater than mind. Material ultimates, betraying wonderful skill, may exist, but not an ultimate mind pregnant with the skill itself. The purposes served by atoms appeared to Leibnitz so wonderful that he called his 'monads' *minds*. It is because they are not '*minds*' that they must be the *works* of mind. The stones of the builder never put themselves into shape, nor have the little stones of the great Architect. When closely examined, everything points to *mind* as the ultimate.

But if mind be necessary to call matter into existence, mind is also necessary to plan and frame the cosmos. At this point our author comes into collision with the theory of evolution. The question is raised, "Is the constitution of nature determined by the law of atoms?" He answers: "The presumption is against such a view. Mind never limits itself to the production of materials—an alphabet is formed into books. If the raw materials of nature are the products of mind, then it is more than probable that he who made them has also marshalled them.

There is no way to get past the necessity for divine intervention in the combination and arrangement of matter any more than in its creation. A universe of isolated atoms could not originate motion among themselves, and even the motion of such particles among themselves, while in a state of diffusion, would produce neither heat nor light. Heat and light are the result of friction; but there can be no friction between atoms in a state of suspension and which in the absence of external pressure have not yet begun to cohere.

Unless pressure from without can be brought to bear upon the atoms diffused in space they cannot be compacted, but must remain forever in a state of separation. Or if we suppose that in the heart of the cold, dark, silent, motionless abyss of atoms, self-originated motion and condensive pressure or attraction could arise, what is to prevent concentration into a single mass. Almighty power obedient to intelligence and will—that is—mind is thus the necessary pre-supposition to both the consolidation and distribution of matter.

The regulated motions, proportions and distances from their central suns and all their mutual relations among themselves of the members of the several planetary systems; and of these again to the great sidereal system of which they are but co-ordinate parts, are too vast, too delicate, too finely adjusted to be anything but the work of mind. The conclusion to which Mr. Tait leads us seems irresistible.

"The transition from elemental diffusion to complication was effected by divine force."

The superintending presence of mind is further seen in the arrangements of the earth, and of the solar system in relation thereto, which fit the earth for the residence of man. The proportion and distribution of land and water, facilitating intercourse and commerce; the watershed systems, great and small, which form an almost perfect system of drainage, with a margin for the exercise for human energy; the inclination of the axes of the earth to the plane of its orbit, which increases the breadth of the warm belt, raising the temperature both north and south, while lowering it at the equator; the direction of the ocean currents; the location of deserts; the placing of mountain chains to modify and guide the air currents, thus forming on a grand scale an apparatus for the storing and distribution of solar heat; all combine to constitute an environment for man so complicated as to force the conviction that it must be the result of calculation.

The ancients were right when in view of the economic arrangements of nature when they said, "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament

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*Mind in Matter; a Short Argument on Theism, by Rev. James Tait. Lond.: Charles Griffin & Co.