

The Advocate.

LOUIS P. KRIBS

Editor and Proprietor

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TO SUPPRESS LEAGUES.

The movement in the city of Montreal toward legislation suppressing leagues for certain purposes, to which we referred some months ago, has taken a new shape in the form of a petition to the legislature. The petition was sent last week and reads as follows:—

His Honor, the Lieutenant Governor, to the Honourable the Legislative Council, and to the Honourable the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Quebec.

The undersigned respectfully submit: That they are citizens of the Province and especially of the city of Montreal; they carefully follow the legislative as done by the Quebec Parliament.

That they approve every legal and reasonable effort made with an intention to secure social reforms, but they think it worthy to protest against the extreme measures compelled by those who show much zeal in connection with these measures.

That your petitioners consider dangerous to public peace, contrary to the public welfare, and hurtful to business interests and operation of certain associations, composed in most part of persons whose ideas do not tally with those of their fellows, and who, in despair of obtaining the triumph of their opinions by persuasion and the ordinary means, place themselves into bodies, which they name of "alliances" and others; organize themselves into groups of their character, and assume the pretence of guardians of the public peace, as social reformers, or as apostles of temperance.

These organizations are generally composed of unknown people, without any money worth, moral influence, or reputation, men who are incapable of obtaining the suffrage of their fellowmen, which would enable them to disseminate their principles (if these can be qualified by such names) in the councils of the State. Nevertheless these men are heard crying out in the most violent manner that they are possessors of morals, that they alone are the reformers, capable of making the greatness, prosperity, and the happiness of the State. If one believes their acts and exaggerated claims, they aim at nothing less than to constitute a new power in the State to be the only one always to be referred to about as if they were the only ones threatening if need be like new powers to drive from the temples the gods, that is to say all those who do not bow to their narrow fanaticism.

In addition to these associations of immorality and immorality for the safety and peace, encouraged by the community which they generally enjoy have been formed for some time

other groups of people with still worse intentions, who under the name of Protestant Protective Association or other names which they change if need be, aim at nothing less than to destroy in a near future the harmony and the good understanding which ought to exist between the different subjects of Her Majesty in this country if they are not stopped immediately in their bad and criminal projects.

That the said Protestant Protective Association has been born and taken root in the religious and national fanaticism of too great a number of our fellow citizens of a sister Province has extended its branches into our Province of Quebec, where it has thirteen lodges and threatens to extend farther with its pernicious doctrines which, the thing is well known, consist in refusing to certain subjects of Her Majesty equality before the law and continuation of the rights and privileges which have been assured to them by treaties and by the constitution.

That this manner of intolerance that the warmest and most zealous followers of this fanaticism imported from another Province belongs for the most part to alliances and the other groups of the same kind of which mention has already been made and that both work for the same end and with the same tendencies; their aim principally being to boycott all those who do not think as they do or walk as they walk.

That the undersigned citizens and electors of Montreal are for the most part in business, wholesale and retail, in the principal parts of the city and are in a position to know well the danger to which the acts of these different associations expose the public peace by creating clashing between citizens of different origin and religious beliefs and consequently a continual uneasiness in the midst of them and that alarmed by this state of things and losing the security in which they habitually live by the confidence which they repose in those who are charged to safeguard their rights and to watch over their interests they request earnestly the legislature of the Province of Quebec as far as its power lies, to adopt a law necessary to put a check on the invasions of this dangerous fanaticism and to make every vestige of it disappear from the midst of our people otherwise so submissive and so respectful for the rights of each and every one.

The promoters of the petition allege that the movement is not intended because Catholics are threatened, which we can well believe, but because rancor and discord are fostered by the associations referred to. Active support and countenance are being given by high clerical and judicial authorities, the petitions are printed in both French and English, and are being largely signed by both nationalities, many Protestant names being attached.

We confess to being surprised and somewhat disgusted at this move. When it was proposed some months ago we expressed decided disapproval, and now that it is under way we must again take the same course. The societies aimed at are undoubtedly the Dominion Alliance, the Citizen's League, and the P.P.A. No doubt two of these associations are in a great part composed of noisy, clamorous busybodies, insignificant individually and in numbers, but disturbing because of their blatant demagoguery. The P.P.A. is certainly, outside of Rev. Mr. Madill and one or two others, not noisy, though we believe its doctrines pernicious in the extreme, and calculated to do much harm. All three, and especially the

first, beyond question, arrogate to themselves the possession of all good morals and the guardianship of the public; they are truly bigots of almost intolerable fanaticism, having no respect for the rights of the citizen, no toleration for opposite beliefs, no conscience where the laws of God or the laws of Freedom clash with their iron-bound intolerance. In fact with the preamble of the petition, except in where it recites that the Protestant Protective Association is born in the religious fanaticism of this Province, we can heartily agree. And we can understand too the exasperation in Montreal that has led to this petition. Ninety-nine one-hundredths of the residents of that great commercial metropolis are sober, law-abiding citizens, who attend strictly to their several avocations, take their pleasures in moderation, believe in the largest possible amount of freedom consistent with the public good, worship at their several churches and in their several ways in peace and quietness, so far as they are allowed, and willing to tend to others a toleration which they desire for themselves. The other one-hundredth are divided into two classes, those who break the laws of the country through criminal instinct or moral weakness, and those who break the laws of decency by reason of their pernicious bigotry and fanaticism. We can, says the Montrealer, protect ourselves from the first, but how are we to deal with the second, which is by far the most troublesome and the most menacing to the public peace. And it is in the attempt to deal with the second in the same way that this first is now dealt with that the petition has arisen.

But it is wrong. The method is wrong and its result if adopted will be failure, because it is in opposition to a deep underlying natural principle—that of the freedom of the subject. You cannot make that a crime which is not a crime in fact. You cannot declare by fiat of the Legislature, or by any power that can be given to any governing body, that to be a crime which is not a crime. The whole history of the world demonstrates this. And when you attempt this, you simply arouse in support of the oppressed a public sentiment that otherwise would probably be against the very thing sought to be suppressed. Why, the failure, the complete absolute failure of Prohibition, is due to this one fact alone that it creates by law a crime where no crime exists, which the people will not recognize as a crime, and which the law itself is not permitted by public sentiment to punish as a crime. Yet this is the very thing the people of Montreal petition now to have done.

It is the inherent right of every citizen to ally himself with other citizens for the furtherance of any object they may have in view, providing that object is not treasonable to the constitution. A citizen has just as much right to join the Dominion Alliance as he has to join a church or a singing society. He has as much right to belong to the P.P.A. as he has to a rowing club or a baseball association. If he wants to join a citizens' league he violates no rule of the law or the Gospel.

When he becomes pestiferous, as he usually does, it is public opinion that must keep him within bounds. You cannot prevent these things, but you can keep away from them, and by proper care keep them where they belong—in the ditches. Any measure of law looking to the suppression of these societies will simply lead to an enlarged growth.

A WHITED SEPULCHRE.

MR. JOHN R. TAIT was up to a week ago the paying teller of the Chemical Bank of New York.

He was a leading member of the church, superintendent of the Sunday school, a rigid teetotaler, a strong advocate of prohibition, and fought and denounced the liquor traffic and all connected with it.

He was a Sabatarians of the strictest sort. The Department of Public Works of New York gave employment to two little boys to remove a heap of rubbish from condemned land. In order to get through in time they worked upon a Sunday. Tait had them arrested, although they were so poor they were glad of work at any time.

He was a thief and scoundrel of the first water. A week ago he was arrested, and confessed among other things to embezzling \$10,715 of the bank's funds. Now he will go to penitentiary where he should have been long ago.

Bro. Casey, put him into your "Chamber of Horrors."

MOODY'S BOARD BILL.

WHILE Mr. Moody was in Toronto, he, with Mrs. Moody, lived at the Rosin House, which is a compliment to the hotel business—because some of the best private houses in town were open to him—worth more than all his diatribes against the trade. Mr. Moody always stops at hotels.

The Evangelist was here for three weeks, and his bill at the Rosin was \$250. There has been much comment about the same, and many letters have been written and published asking for particulars. We confess to surprise at this. In the first place we cannot conceive that it is anybody's business whether the bill was much or little, and in the second the amount is not out of the way. Mr. Moody and Mrs. Moody were here twenty-four days if we are correct. They would have a bedroom and parlor on the first floor. For this the least they would be charged would be \$10 a day, leaving \$10 for extras in twenty-four days. If anybody thinks that excessive he knows very little about living in a first class hotel.

Regarding about Mr. Moody's hotel bill is a very small business.

"You do not go upon the ice!" she said, "Why then I quaver. When I hear tell of several skates That you've had on this year."