

take, for their country's sake should they not hold themselves ready to take part in the legislation and government of their country when called upon by their fellow-citizens to do so? Our municipal councils as well as our parliaments are morally weakened by the apathetic position in regard to public affairs taken by not a few of the spiritually minded members of our churches.

Can the life of the nation be separated from the life of the Church? Not without great injury. It is the Church's plain duty to influence national life as deeply as possible by permeating it with the spirit of true religion. A general election is a time when national life is aroused, its existing life, is receiving impetus and direction. On such an occasion the Church should be more than usually on the alert to give moral tone and bias to this aroused and active national life. Christian men should see as far as in them lies, that such men are selected as candidates as they will not be ashamed to vote for, and who if elected will bring moral weight to parliament. The members of our churches in simple consistency should not be apathetic but active in seeking to secure the election of the best men and to bear themselves throughout in the calm and charitable spirit that becomes the Christian name. What should ministers do? "Keep out of elections," "preach the gospel" say some. But the gospel they are called upon to preach at that hour may be the teachings of Christ in their bearing upon an election strife that is hurrying even good men beyond the boundaries of truth and charity. It is evident that ministers of the gospel who are expected to stand firm for truth and love among men are not doing their whole duty if they do not speak out frankly in the interests of good government, morality and religion should there be need, during the excitement of a general election.

Ministers of our Church, it will be remembered, have decisions of the General Assembly to support them in this duty. On page 59 of the Assembly's report for 1884, will be found such a decision. Action was taken on an overture from the synod of Montreal and Ottawa which complained of the injury to religion occasioned by the intensity of party politics and the bitterness and strife in connection with political issues. The Assembly resolved as follows: "That the Assembly receive the overture, recognize the evil complained of therein, and urge upon the ministers and members of the Church the duty of fostering in the community a judicial, patriotic and charitable spirit, with regard to all matters affecting the politics and government of the country."

I would also call attention to the fifth recommendation in the report on Temperance, which was passed without a dissenting voice at the last meeting of Assembly: "That this Assembly being fully convinced of the necessity of legal protection against the evils of the liquor traffic, expresses the hope that electors in their choice of members of Parliament will seek to elect able and good men who are well known to be in full sympathy with Prohibitory legislation." The principle here announced with regard to the choice of members of Parliament is one of general application. Let Christian ministers and members of our churches act in the spirit of these decisions of our Supreme Church, and I am satisfied we shall see an improvement in the moral tone of our legislatures.

THE SCRIPTURE LESSONS.

REV. DR. CAVEN'S LETTER.

(To the Editor of the Globe.)

SIR,—The Minister of Education is attacked from various quarters in regard to the book of "Scripture Readings" for use in the public schools. This attack seems to me quite groundless, and such as no exigencies of party warfare can justify. I am certainly not anxious to intervene in the political conflict, but I think it my duty to make a brief statement regarding these Readings.

The Education Department in authorizing selections of Scripture acted in conformity with representations made to the Department by the Churches of Ontario and by the Provincial Teachers' Association. A large deputation of the Church of England, and of the Methodist and Presbyterian Churches, submitted to the Attorney-General a resolution, of which the following is part:—"That this Conference pledges itself to press upon the Attorney-General the making of the reading of the Holy Scriptures by the children and teachers, an obligatory exercise at the opening of the Public Schools of Ontario, the passage of Holy Scripture to be read each day to be prescribed by the Department in conformity with the recommendations of the committee of this Conference, or some other representative of the various Churches of Ontario, etc." The Teachers resolved:—"That the reading of selected portions of Scripture as a part of the regular daily exercises of the school would be a material aid to teachers in the discharge of their duties in respect to moral training," and "that the Education Department do make a suitable selection of Scripture readings for the schools under its charge." A selection of readings was accordingly made, and before receiving authorization was submitted to a large joint committee of the Churches, each member of the committee having had a copy sent to him for examination in advance. When the committee met its first action was to approve of the principle of a book of Scripture readings; afterwards free and general expressions of opinion regarding the proposed selection took place, and a sub-committee, representing the several Churches, was appointed to examine the selections carefully in detail. The writer of this letter, while not a member of the sub-committee, was present at the meeting of the general committee, and knows what was done. The Minister in issuing this maligned book was but giving effect to the strongly expressed wishes of the Churches and the teachers. I am not here arguing for the use of selections in preference to the use of the entire Bible, but stating the circumstances under which this selection received approval; and it will thus be seen how little ground there is for accusing the Department of proceeding in opposition to, or in ignorance of, the opinion of the Churches.

The regulations approved in 1884 do not require "the reading of the Holy Scriptures" by the children and teachers, which I think the committee of the Churches desired, and which seems to me decidedly preferable to reading by the teachers alone; and to this extent effect has not been given to the views of the Church committee; but in regard to the principle of selections, and the main features of this selection, the Minister is sustained by the representatives of the Congregational, Methodist, Episcopal, and Presbyterian Churches.

It is scarcely necessary, therefore, to say that the Scripture readings were not selected by Archbishop Lynch, nor under his direction. The draft seems to have been sent to him in common with all the gentlemen composing this large committee above referred to, and the Archbishop suggested the harmless, if unnecessary, change of "which" into "who" in the Lord's Prayer; further than this the hand of the Archbishop was not applied.

Have those who assert that selections acceptable to the Church of Rome have been made ever examined the book? Have they any conception of the consequences of what they are saying? Are they prepared to admit that selections embracing a considerable part of both Testaments, and regarded, presumably, by the able men who gave the final revision, as exhibiting fairly the teachings of the Bible, are an inadequate basis for Protestantism? If the Archbishop of Toronto entirely approves of the selections I am delighted to hear it; for in them I can find every doctrine of my faith distinctly exhibited.

It was further alleged, if my memory serves me, that selections were made which should not give offence to

Agnostics; but it will hardly be expected that I should refute this absurd proposition.

An able Journal in this city, which cannot be suspected of undue partiality towards the Minister, was pleased to say, "The Minister of Education is to be congratulated upon having adopted for use in the Common Schools a series of readings from the Old and New Testaments, together with a brief form of prayer. The work has been prepared with the greatest care, and cannot fail to commend itself to parents."

My object in writing this letter, as already said, is not to defend selections of Scripture for use in schools, nor to endorse in every particular the compilation in question, but to express my sincere condemnation of all attempts to discredit Mr. Ross by misrepresenting facts which are well-known to many ministers and laymen in all the Churches. I would equally bear testimony on behalf of the opponents of the Ontario Government should their action have been in question. No Government can complain of fair and honest criticism, however searching; but when public men strive to do right, and to follow the best sentiment of the community in its most authentic expression (as Mr. Ross has done in the matter of this book), they are entitled, I think, to expect that those who have prompted their action and, as it were, pushed them forward, shall not without emphatic protest allow that action to become the ground of party attack.

WM. CAVEN.

Toronto, Nov. 16/84.

REV. DR. LAING'S LETTER.

(To the Editor of the Mail.)

SIR,—The *Globe* of today contains a letter from the Rev. Principal Caven and another from Rev. Dr. Dewar, regarding the way in which the Scripture Lessons were prepared. I am happy to be able to agree in their statement so far as to find nothing in them that I need controvert. Nevertheless there are two ways of telling a story, and when the subject is one for which the narrators have largely to trust to memory, and concerning which they may feel differently, we need not be surprised to find a different colour given to the story, and this in perfect consistency with truth and honour. I am not infallible, but I know that in this matter I am not writing in the interest of the opposition to the Mowat Government. I have one object in view, viz: The instruction of our Protestant youth in the most important of all subjects, their duty to God and man; and it is because I have found the Roman Catholic clergy throwing every obstacle in the way, that I have felt called upon to criticize from time to time the administration of our Department of Education. This I would feel bound to do under any government.

But it is alleged that there has been no interference by the clergy in the preparation of the Scripture Lessons. Mr. Editor, I wish I could believe that. It is, as the *Globe's* correspondents say, true. 1. That it was in response to the request of the Protestant churches that the book was prepared. 2. That the representatives of these churches approved generally of the use of selections, and some proposed to read every chapter and verse in the Bible. 3. That the proof of the selections was carefully revised by seven of us, and so far may be said to have the approval of the churches. But there are other facts which must be remembered, and since it seems necessary to lay the matter before the public I will refer to a few things which go to justify the position I take.

1. When the deputations met with the Hon. Mr. Ross, he showed them a letter from Archbishop Lynch, showing that he had been consulted as well as we, and had so far consented to the use of the book. Perhaps Mr. Ross will publish the letter.

2. "That the issue of a daily calendar of readings would have carried out the aim of the Conference" (See memorandum from the revising sub-committee of February 3, 1885), by which arrangement the Bible and Testament would have been in the hands of the pupils. The majority, however, favoured the preparation of a book of selections, though some of us still thought that the Bible would be used by the children, as parents and trustees would prefer a cheap Bible to a costly book of selections.

3. That the deputations were taken by surprise when Mr. Ross informed them that he did not intend that the lessons should be read by the children, but to them by the teacher; and that seeing their disappointment, he promised further to consider the matter.

4. That the Minister of Education avowedly assumed the whole responsibility of preparing and issuing the book. I and some others did not wish to assume the responsibility, acting as we were for others, but Mr. Ross said, "I have no fear of the denominations; I will assume the entire responsibility." On this understanding I acted, and, as requested, helped the Minister in his undertaking.

5. That when the Revising Committee met with Mr. Marling, and found that certain words, phrases, verses and whole passages had been changed or omitted, they discussed the expediency of doing this, and only by a vote of four to three agreed to these changes. One instance of this was in reference to Genesis, chapter xxix., verses 7 to 17, which passage is omitted in the Scripture selections. It was argued by the majority that such passages should not be read in a mixed school of large boys and girls. It was urged in reply that they were read in our churches and Sabbath schools without offence. But the majority carried their point. In this connection Mr. Marling explained that if the reading of the selections were to be made compulsory, they should not be such as to offend the Roman Catholics who in the eastern part of the Province attended the Public Schools, and that such passages as these were what the Roman Catholic authorities objected to as "immoral," indecent, and not proper to be read. The sub-committee then passed unanimously a resolution to the effect that it would be better wholly to omit any passage having anything in it really objectionable than to make the changes proposed and mutilate God's Word. Perhaps Mr. Ross will give the public this resolution in full.

6. I was no party to the removal of the references which indicated from what part of Scripture the selection was taken. I have never learned who removed them, and I regret much that that was done.

7. The regulations were not submitted to the deputations, nor to the sub-committee; although their substance was stated, they were never approved by the representatives of the Churches, for the Minister of Education did not ask our approval of them.

8. When, through Mr. Ross' kind courtesy, I received a presentation copy of the selections, I wrote him privately, stating my dissatisfaction in regard to some things. But I frankly confess that other matters which have occurred since have convinced me that there is more ground for dissatisfaction with the volume, the manner of its preparation and the regulations for its use than I then supposed. The Churches had asked that the Bible, or proper selections from it, should be read intelligently by the children that thus they might become familiar with the Word of God; and that in addition lessons on Scripture history should be prepared. Instead of giving us this, the Department gave regulations for devotional exercises which make it compulsory to open the school with the Lord's Prayer, and close it with reading a selection and prayer, the selection being read without comment or explanation, providing that the Ten Commandments be repeated at least once a week, when required by the trustees. This is no more.

While, therefore, I can rejoice with Dr. Caven and Dr. Dewar, that now the Scripture is thus read in a greater number of schools than formerly, and hope that good may thus be done, I still feel that, in order to avoid giving offence to the Roman Catholic clergy (not the laity), we are deprived of the privilege of giving to our children "such religious instruction as their parents desire." This the law secures to us, but the regulations prevent it being done.

Yours, etc.,

JOHN LAING.

Communications.

CANADIAN SCHOOLS—JUSTICE TO ALL DENOMINATIONS.

(To the Editor of the PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW.)

SIR,—After reading Rev. Mr. Milligan's letter to Mr. Mowat, I almost feel like saying with Solomon, "What can he do that cometh after the king? even that which hath already been done." However, although Mr. Milligan knows so much better than I do the state of affairs in Ontario, perhaps he does not know so much about Quebec Province—as I have lived so long (thirty-eight years) in a purely French district, and have had ample opportunity of observing the schools of both Protestants and Roman Catholics.

Before we got a dissentient school in our parish, the habitants elected me a *Commissaire d'école* for three years, and as the parent was president, all our meetings were held at his house. I only wish that all Roman Catholic priests were as straightforward and liberal as he was, except when we came in contact with his religious prejudices. I was on the building committee once, to build a new school house, and his *ordres* were "Tachez de faire quelque chose de beau." (Try to make something fine). And when a master was wanted for the model school he said, "Tachez d'engager un homme capable." (Try to engage a capable man). That was his nature. But I am wandering from my text which is the words of Christ, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them; for this is the law and the prophets." If this was followed out what a good world this would be to live in!

After the Protestants got a dissentient school I was named secretary-treasurer, and a more difficult office can hardly be imagined, as there were only about thirteen Protestant families in the parish, and the question was how to raise the teacher's salary? That, however, is not the point at issue just now; it is simply this: "What more right have the Romanists to interfere with the public schools of Ontario—now that they are allowed schools of their own—than we had to interfere with the Government schools in Quebec?" In the first place we never thought of doing it, and in the second place—if we had presumed to say "this book is bad, or that book hurts the feelings of Protestants"—we would have been looked upon as lunatics and told to mind our own business. There is an old proverb, though rather vulgar, "that what is good sauce for the goose is good for the gander also." It seems a *propos* in this case. Ontario and Quebec are both British provinces, and there can be no reason for the minority in Ontario being so much more overbearing in Ontario than in Quebec—except this—that Roman Catholicism is not so much a religion as a monarchy (*imperium in imperio*), and the rank and file march wherever the officers tell them; whereas we Protestants are too much the other way; too much engrossed with our own private affairs or with our own political party. Yours, etc.—EDWARD MARSHALL.

Gallingerstown, 18th Nov., 1886.

P.S.—In Quebec one of the chief topics of instruction in the Government schools is the Romish catechism, and the "*Devoir du Chrétien*" (Christian Duty), which are both so full of Romanism that a true Protestant would rather keep his children at home than send them—whilst in Ontario nothing religious is allowed, even the Bible is objected to, which is surely not controversial. I have read that in Ireland the Roman Catholic clergy object to the Government colleges as being "Godless colleges," the fact being that they were made so in the vain hope of pleasing these same clergymen.—E. M.

MEETING OF PRESBYTERY.

ORANGEVILLE.—Met on the 9th inst., all the ministers except two being present, and a fair attendance of elders. A petition bearing 75 signatures, and promising \$250 a year, was laid before the presbytery by Mr. W. H. Hunter, asking for regular Sabbath services in connection with St. Andrew's church, Orangeville, at Vanatter, in the township of Garafra. Mr. Hunter, who owns a church there, kindly offers it for that purpose. Another petition, signed by 31 members and adherents of Knox church, Caledon, and promising \$500 annually toward stipend, was laid before the presbytery by Mr. Rowan, praying for union with St. Andrew's church, Orangeville, under the pastorate of Rev. W. A. Hunter. The clerk was ordered to cite interested parties to appear at next meeting of presbytery. Mr. Crozier reported visiting Gander Station to ascertain their ability to rebuild their church, which was burnt by bush fires last summer when almost finished. They had got subscriptions to the amount of \$320, and wished aid from the presbytery. The presbytery passed a resolution that in view of the loss they have sustained, an appeal be made to each congregation within the bounds for contributions to assist them. Mr. Crozier further reported having ordained two elders, Messrs. R. Black and D. McMichael, at Black's Corners. Mr. Gilchrist reported having visited Price's Corners, and the people agreed to take immediate steps to have the slight arrears of stipend paid. Mr. Ross stated that for certain reasons he would like further time to consider the call from Dundalk and Ventry, and he was given to the next meeting of presbytery. Rev. A. Tait, having been appointed as missionary to British Columbia by the Home Mission Committee, gave in his resignation. The Clerk having previously notified the different stations of his charge, they were all represented, and expressed their strong attachment to their pastor, the universal esteem in which he was held, and their deep sorrow at the prospect of losing him. Mr. Tait, while very sorry to part with his people, thought it his duty, considering the size of the field and the need of re-arrangement, and his great desire to be engaged in mission work, to accept the appointment of the H. M. Committee. His resignation was accepted to take effect on and after the 23rd inst. The Rev. W. A. Hunter was appointed interim moderator of session, and to declare his pulpit vacant on the first Sabbath of December. Delegates appeared from Caledon East and Aljalia asking for re-arrangement of the fields. A deputation consisting of Messrs. McPaul (convenor), Hunter and McClelland, was appointed to visit these stations and report at next meeting of presbytery. Mr. Thos. Russell brought in a motion which was unanimously passed strongly condemning the profanation of the Lord's Day by the running of railway trains contrary to the statutes of Ontario, and instructing the clerk to send a copy of the resolution to the councils of the various municipalities within the bounds of the presbytery, requesting them to put a stop to this disgraceful profanation of the Lord's Day. Mr. McDonald reported having moderated in a call at Southampton and Maple Valley, in favour of Rev. J. B. Hamilton. The call was signed by 115 members and 29 adherents, and guarantees of stipend for \$625 and manse. Mr. Hamilton asked till Dec. 4th to consider it. Conditional on his acceptance arrangements were made for his ordination and in session at Maple Valley on Dec. 21st, at 2:30 p.m., Mr. McDonald to preside, Mr. Ballantyne to preach, Mr. Craig to address the people, and Mr. McClelland the minister. A resolution from the Luther Village congregation changing the name to Grand Valley Presbyterian church, in order that it may correspond with the new name of the village and post office was laid on the table, and the change was endorsed by the presbytery. The presbytery adjourned to meet at Shelburne, on the second Tuesday of January, at 11 a.m.—H. Crozier, Clerk.

Rev. G. Howie has been appointed to the charge of St. Mark's church, King Street W., Toronto. We take the opportunity of stating that Mr. Howie is a native of Lebanon, and has prepared a series of twelve lectures on Palestine and kindred subjects. As Mr. Howie is a gentleman of no ordinary ability, we trust that our Young People's Associations and similar societies will not fail to secure his services.

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