

THE "HARP."

HAMILTON, ONT., JULY, 1882.

EDITORIAL COMMENTS.

THE "spirit of the age" is a spirit of insubordination socially and religiously. Many men no longer recognize distinctions in society. Industry must share its fruits with indolence, virtue is no better than vice, the blackguard claims equality with the gentleman, and "Jack is as good as his master." The tendency of this doctrine is towards social and moral ruin. It represses the aspirations of talent, hinders the cultivation of honest principles, puts a premium upon corrupt practices, and brings to the front the unscrupulous demagogue who has no other end to serve than his own.

But when men and women, to the exclusion or in defiance of the properly constituted ecclesiastical authorities, set themselves up as judges in religious matters, the mischief is still further increased. The malcontents themselves are certainly devoid of piety and devotion; their conduct shews that they are wanting in the first principle of religion—humility; and the evil effects are religious bitterness, a shaken if not an expelled faith, and a scandalized community. "Where pride is there also shall be reproach," spoke the wise man long ago. Pride is the foundation of insubordination to proper authority, and it has never failed to bring its own punishment in the shape of personal affliction or mental torture. The public has often been amused at the notion of "lay bishops," but were it not that they form a very dangerous element,

one might indulge in a huge laugh at the idea of *popes in petticoats*.

As far as the world at large is concerned the ages of faith have departed. Time was when religion was all in all to professed Christians, and when fame and fortune were secondary matters or sought for as auxiliaries in the doing of good. Now the position is reversed. Christian nations put religion in the background, and busy themselves about things purely worldly, whose rewards are finally of that bitter and unsatisfactory kind with which the world always pays its votaries. If we question the future as to the consequences of this modern scheme of national economy, the answer comes in the harsh and threatening tones of the Socialist and Communists, already heard rumbling in the distance. It is true that a few exceptional cases still exist, but even in them the keen observer will notice that the thin end of the wedge has been inserted. Violent agitation for freedom, directed by self-interested demagogues, often reacts in the form of that spirit of independence once displayed by Lucifer. We hope, as far as our nation is concerned, that this will never be her fate. Better the penal laws of Elizabeth, suffered ten times over, than we should lose a tittle of that grand old Catholic faith of our ancestors, which has ever been the glory of our nation, and which will ever be her strongest bulwark against the evils of modern civilization.