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SWITZERLAND.

LUCERNE—"HILF MARIA HILF"—NOTES ON FRANCE—ITS RELIGIOUS ASPECT.

Lucerne, upon the lake of the same name, is one of the most beautiful spots in Switzerland, and being close to the Rhine, so famous for its extensive and magnificent Alpine views, it is during the summer months crowded with travellers. Here we arranged to pass several days, including the Sabbath, and enjoy the congenial Presbyterian service we had missed so much in other places, which is here maintained by the Continental Committee of the Free Church of Scotland during the summer months. Our week-day walks about the quaint old town brought us face to face with repeated notices directing us to the "Maria Hilf" Church for the Scotch service. On the Lord's day morning, our entries brought us to a picturesquely situated church, under the castled wall of the city, bearing the name of "Hilf Maria Hilf" or "Holy Mary," but it was full of images and pictures, and surely couldn't be the place, so, with other strangers we explored all the stairways and passages in the neighborhood in search of some place more like the scene of a Protestant conventicle, but were directed back to the church proper, and found that it was indeed so, the Roman Catholic authorities having for a consideration given the use, at 11 a.m. and 6:30 p.m., not being needed at these hours by themselves, the only change made being the draping of the altar. Two or three score of worshippers quietly gathered in the centre of the church and the minister, Rev. Mr. Bain, of Cupar Angus, who is stationed here for six weeks, emerged from the sacristy in gown and bands, took his station behind a small desk in front of the choir, and the service proceeded in the usual style, except that we had mingled with the psalms a number of choice hymns from the new Free Church collection. The discourses, from the texts II Cor. vii., 6, and John xiv. 27, were good old fashioned ones, full of heads and particulars, began with contextual explanations, and closed with pointed earnest applications intended and suited to reach the heart and conscience, this latter element happily prevailing in better proportion than it often does with the average Scotch divine. At least three other ministers were present, though not easily recognized as such in holiday attire, among them Dr. John Hall, of New York, from whom I had the pleasure of learning pleasant tidings of our Canadian brethren in that city. The contrast between the simple service in which we had been engaged, and that for which so much external show was gathered around us, was surely sufficiently marked to be mentioned without Pharisaism. How surely a departure from the simplicity and spirituality enjoined by our Lord, in John iv. leads to sinful will-worship and degrading superstition, was sadly suggested as we left the church, and beheld, beside the holy water font, the tiny floating lights and little waxen figures or parts of figures, representing sick children or friends or their diseased members, and presented here with many vows to the Holy Virgin, in the hope of a cure through her favour. These are things very commonly seen in Romish Churches on the Continent, and tell a pitiful tale of gross popular superstition. At the same time the readiness to rent the church for Protestant worship at certain hours shows the other extreme of popular liberality or perhaps rather laxity in regard to principle, for in this democratic country everything is done by popular vote. In the Canton of Geneva, for example, it has just been decided that the appointment of parish priests shall no longer be an exception to this rule, while M. Mermillo, the Bishop whom the Pope tried to impose upon them, still hovers in exile upon the frontier, without any prospect of regaining admission. But the evil of this interference of the State in matters of religion is sadly evident in the absence of evangelical teaching, spirituality of life and discipline in the national Protestant Churches as well as the Romish. The loose way in which the Sabbath is kept is very significant of this, even the churches at times being employed on that day for political elections, as I have found on going to them for divine worship. In Geneva, a most marked change for the worse has lately taken place since the abolition by popular vote, 80 years ago, of Calvin's strict laws on the subject. Now religion and pleasure proceed, at least among the Roman Catholic portion of the community, as freely as in Paris upon the day of the Grand rest. Still God never leaves a witness, and among the

Eglise libres, (Free Churches), and in the churches of the Evangelical Society, there is much faithful preaching of the truth, and a higher tone of spiritual life, though they have great difficulties to contend with, and we cannot wonder that their numbers are few and their progress slow.

After leaving Switzerland and making a brief tour in the north of Italy, we passed through France, making little stay except at Paris. Time and space do not admit of a few remarks as to the present religious aspect of the country. The fact that the orthodox party in the Assembly of the National Protestant Church last year had a majority, showed that decided progress had been made since they were last permitted to meet under the first Napoleon. In these there are several small Evangelical bodies (societies) of marked zeal and piety of faith who are most earnestly seeking to propagate the truths of the Gospel, and are succeeding wonderfully, notwithstanding the combined opposition of rationalism and civil intolerance, and revived Romish bigotry and persecution. Under these influences they have in the meantime received sad reverses, and over a dozen of promising young stations, chiefly in the south and west, have been closed by the civil powers. The story of M. Dardier, with whom I had a long conversation, is a most interesting and instructive one. He is an Evangelist of apostolic type. Your readers doubtless are familiar with the now rage for pilgrimages which has taken hold of France, even extended to England, and is now bringing over a troop of devotees (said to number 1,000) from that supposed-to-be Protestant land. Well, it was at one of the most famous of these scenes of folly and superstition (to use no stronger terms,) that M. Dardier found himself, when the priest urged the multitude to testify freely to any benefits they had received, irresistibly impelled to bear witness of the goodness and power of Christ as the only and all-sufficient Saviour of sinners. He did so upon asking and receiving permission to speak. The interest of the people was great, as they crowded around him to converse and receive tracts; while the priest denounced him as a Protestant and a heretic. The power of the magistrate was invoked to give effect to the persecution which followed and the result was imprisonment and a fine of 100 francs, (about \$20) for distributing tracts without a licence from government. France, in fact, at present, worse than Italy, where the religious liberty which now prevails is most wonderful. I spent a night at Chambery, near the scene of his imprisonment, and saw much there that was significant of the low state of morality and intelligence prevalent, such as the large amount of petty gambling in the booths which lined the streets, in which persons of all ages and both sexes freely took part. Then the International Rifle match going on at the time was to include the Lord's day, in fact close that evening with a banquet and ball after the distribution of prizes. In the hotel, (said to be a first-class one) I asked for the reading-room and found them to be dependent upon a single newspaper for their intellectual enlightenment; they took but one, nor could any other, they said, be procured nearer than the Railway station, about a mile distant. These are characteristic results of a system which aims at the repression of intelligent and liberal culture. Yet there are many, from various causes, ready to denounce the puerile and wicked absurdities proclaimed by the priestly revivalists of Romish devotion. For example, a poor woman was recently taken from a sick bed and the attendance of her physician, on an exhausting journey to the side of one of these miserable looking wolds, only to meet a premature death, and voices from the press were bold enough to enquire—where now are the magistrates? Why was not an inquest held?

In these pilgrimages it appears that Rome has as usual more than one string to her bow; the political as well as the religious petitions are presented to the pilgrims for signature, to the Virgin Mary and to the Government on behalf of the "imprisoned" Pope. As the full address is carefully taken with each signature, reliable information in the interest of the Ultramontane and royalist party is obtained and stored for future use. These two elements are historically and sympathetically one. The Bourbon has ever been the champion of the Pope and it will be a more than doubtful day for religious and civil freedom in France when Henry II. takes possession of the throne. It will then more than ever appear a providential thing that a Protestant power should have gained the ascendancy in Europe. Meantime it is pleasing to see that there is much intelligent enterprise as well as political moderation and wisdom, and that the country is making some progress in recovery

from national disaster. Paris shows little of it to a stranger either in the tone of the people or the appearance of the city. St. Cloud and the Tuilleries are still in ruins, and the Column of Vendome has not yet been replaced. This is a land exceeding fair, and were it but free with the freedom of the gospel, it were hard to find a brighter spot on earth.

CANADIAN ABROAD.
Paris, August, 1873.

NEW BRUNSWICK.

CALL TO REV. DR. WATERS, ST. MARY'S—OUR CORRESPONDENT ON THE "SCANDAL"—THE POSITION OF THE NEW BRUNSWICK PRESS ON THIS IMPORTANT QUESTION.

It need be secret now that St. David's congregation of this city have given a call to Dr. Waters, of St. Mary's, and that they have determined to use all lawful endeavours to get him. The stipend offered is \$2,200, and should he agree to come, his expenses in removing from there to here will be paid. Dr. Waters spent two weeks of his vacation during the month of August here, and won golden opinions both in a public and private capacity. It has been reported down here that besides being an able preacher and an excellent pastor, he has also executive faculties of a high order, faculties which he has had a pretty good opportunity of putting into practice in the service of the Canada Presbyterian Church for many years past. I understand that the brethren of the Presbytery of St. John are rejoicing in the prospect of securing such a co-worker in church work; assuredly there is field enough for the exercise of whatever powers he may possess in that way. Reciprocity of that kind will do much good, it will make the state of the church in the different Provinces better known by the distant brethren, and consequently bind the sections which are soon to be united the more closely together.

Among other visitors that we had here lately from America and the western Canada, a co-Presbyter of Dr. Waters, Mr. Mitchell, included St. John in his tour. He stayed a few days which embraced a Sabbath, and had much intercourse of a pleasing and profitable kind with the brethren. I believe that in the lengthened interviews which he and some of them had, the condition and prospects of the several synods, as well as the modes of operation in each were gone over in considerable detail. The aspects of Union and the changes that are inevitable in the event of Union being consummated were also discussed. I can in some measure at least imagine the zest with which all the points taken up were reviewed. And such intercourse must of necessity be of great advantage, as well as of much interest. Mr. Mitchell has carried away a very much clearer idea of the condition and wants of these Provinces than he had before, and those with whom he conversed here seem to have a much more vivid conception of things in the west than they had before.

The "Pacific Railway Scandal"—shall I say anything about that puzzling topic? I feel reluctance and that for various reasons. In the first place it is still *sub judice*, and it is difficult what to think about it. In the second place I am not much of a politician, at least in the party sense. As regards some of the public questions in which I take the deepest interest, the logic of events has led me more and more to distrust the Ministry and Opposition alike. And in the third place were I to express an opinion at this moment, before that opinion would be printed and read such developments may have been made in the interval as would render my words stale and useless, beached and dried away far above the limit of the tide-mark. I may, however give some idea of what the current of thought here is. The opinion is largely entertained here that whatever be the merits of the case, Government committed a huge blunder in proroguing the House, in the high handed manner in which it was done. That act has lost some of the best supporters from this Province. There are no men of higher character anywhere than A. J. Smith and Isaac Burpee, and both were up to that time warm supporters of the present Government, but as your readers will have seen they were both prominent in the indignation meeting held in Ottawa. The political papers published in St. John are five, four daily, the *Telegraph* and the *News* being morning papers, and the *Globe* and *Tribune* being evening, and one tri-weekly, the *Freeman*, owned and edited by Mr. Anglin, M.P. The *Globe* and *Freeman* have ever been opposed to Sir John A.; both were anti-Confederate, and the former was Annexationist, but, whether from policy or from conviction, annexation sentiments have not been put so prom-

inently forward as of yore. It seems to fall regularly into line as an Opposition paper. The *News* and the *Tribune* are both Ministerial, but their support is so much of a kind resembling todayism, the advocacy being perfectly *outra* in its nature, that one who is in the habit of forming conceptions of his own is perfectly sickened at the course pursued by them. The *News* is owned and edited by Hon. E. Willis, M. P. P., a member of the Provincial Executive, and the *Tribune* is owned by Mr. Palmer, M. P. for the city and county of St. John. The latter has a correspondent at Ottawa that writes letters occasionally which make a lofty attempt at being statesmanlike, perhaps some of us might take them to be something if we did not know the author. We heard him some years ago making his *debut* in public on the platform of a Y. M. C. A. convention, and few that heard him then forget the *cheek*, there is nothing else to remember. The remaining paper, the *Telegraph*, has been a general supporter of John A., not an out-and-out one at any time, but in general it has been pretty faithful to that standard. In the Pacific Scandal it has taken an independent course, it always professed to be independent. It admitted at an early stage that a *prima facie* case had been made out against the Government, but hoped that all would be explained; then it joined in condemning the prorogation. Because of this it has been assailed in bitter terms by the parasitic papers, taunted with being on the fence, and accused of being ready to join Mackenzie & Co., should they come into power. To those of us who look on from without, the *Telegraph* has followed a very fair course throughout, and what motives have been at work we cannot tell. I suppose we are to assume them to be honorable until proof of the contrary appears. H.
St. John, Sept. 8th, 1873.

The Clergy Mission Again.

Editor BRITISH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN.

DEAR SIR,—I may state at the outset that I should not have written at all about this matter, did I not know and feel that the field of labor and the work done therein were very much misrepresented by a former writer.

I may state also that I did not care much about giving the matter publicity, but seeing that others saw fit to do so, I consider that it would be only making bad worse to let their defective and incorrect statements go without correction.

It has been stated that the parties for whom it is proposed to establish the mission are "inaccessible," and that the mission has hitherto proved a failure—that it is "without any appreciable result."

That the people are not inaccessible I proved before, and that, too, from the words of the person who made the statement.

I showed that, according to his own statements, they were not only not inaccessible, but, on the contrary—Nicomedeus-like—obtrusive. That this is the case is evident farther from the fact that my predecessor had access to about twenty families, and that in addition to this a number of them came out to hear him preach. This appears still farther from the fact that I had access to about forty families last summer, and was permitted to read and speak, and even pray with some of them.

And there, only a short time since, five of the persuasion referred to offered to go into the house of a Protestant family upon whom I called, and with whom they happened to be working at the time, and listened attentively to the word read and expounded. And still more on this point, we were lately favored with the presence of two prominent gentlemen of that persuasion at our services on Sabbath morning, one of them being the most prominent man in the county. And when Mr. MacD. was here quite a number came out to hear him at night.

Let, then, Mr. Ross or any other gentleman tell us that the people are inaccessible. But how, in view of the above facts, can we credit such a statement?

But we have been told again and again that the efforts put forth here during the last two summers were "without any appreciable results," and that, too, by way of showing the futility of establishing a mission here.

Well, upon this point I shall give you the facts, and the public can judge for itself.

My predecessor stated, in his report to the "Students' Missionary Society," that two died "in the faith" during the summer that he was here, and his statements have been confirmed to me by persons well acquainted with the parties referred to.

Since I came here two other persons departed this life trusting, yes, rejoicing in Christ as their Saviour.

Mr. Ross, however saw fit to call my statements with reference to one of these persons in question, but upon what grounds I fail to discover.

From my own personal knowledge of the person, and from the testimony of persons well acquainted with the case, and

well qualified to express an opinion upon the matter, nothing short of seeing with my own eyes upon the great day of Judgment, if not before then, will convince me that this person did not die a Christian. Mr. Ross tells us that this person was confessed shortly before her death, and that the priest declared himself satisfied with her. Well, her sister who was in the house at the time denies most emphatically that she was confessed, states that she and others in the house heard every word between her and the priest, (surely Mr. R. knows too much to call that confession) that all that the priest did was to pray for her and assure her that anything he could do for her would avail her nothing, and that he, as did every one else that saw her, said that she was a Christian.

To say as Mr. R. does that "she died as she lived" is to say nothing to the point. Every person dies as he lives. If a person lives an unregenerated and unscriptured sinner he will certainly die as a sinner. But if a person gets a new nature and begins living a new life as I believe the person in question did, he will certainly die a Christian.

The priest referred to, I may add, is probably as liberal a Roman Catholic as Mr. R. is a Protestant.

I have no sympathy with Protestants who hold and assert that all in the Church of Rome will be lost. Whilst I hate their system, I believe at the same time that Roman Catholics will be saved (the number may be small), in spite of their system.

Besides the above there are a number of persons with whom I had most interesting conversations, and also the French Canadian in connection with whose case Mr. R. at first took credit to himself, but afterwards gave this credit to the Canadian's wife by way of taking it from me. But he thus disclaims the credit he took to himself, and has therefore, unwittingly, I suppose, retracted statements made in his first letter. But, in his second letter he says that for anything done by the Assembly he sees no reason for retracting any of his previous statements.

Well perhaps he made this retraction for some other reason or without any reason at all, that is, unconsciously.

Were it not for the object which Mr. R. had in view in referring to this case, viz. that of showing that a missionary would have no access to these people, and that it would therefore be useless to establish a Mission here, I should not refer to it at all or claim any credit in connection therewith. But, when Mr. R. asserts that my predecessor and I have done nothing appreciable among these people, I am bound in justice to the friends and supporters of the mission and myself, to let the facts be known.

I asked this man's wife whether she was in the habit of reading with him as Mr. R. stated i.e., a portion of Scripture every day for the last five years, and she stated that such was not the case, that he read for himself, she having read at the most, but a few tracts. Mr. R. tells us that he does not anticipate any accession to Protestantism from Romanism.

Now, if this statement means anything, it must mean either of the following, viz., either that the Gospel will not be preached to them, or, if preached, that it will have no effect, i.e., that Isa. lv. 11. is not to be relied upon. The above statement, to say the least of it, does not imply the exercise of much faith.

From what I know of the field, and from my personal knowledge of the interest taken in and manifested towards this proposed mission, I have no reason to think that it will turn out, in any sense, a failure, but, on the contrary, a success. I may add that two Roman Catholics have already subscribed towards the mission, and that a third promised to do so.

I have not the least doubt that if the Home Mission Committee grant the amount asked for, and if Mr. MacD. sees his way clear in coming here, the charge will be a self-sustaining one within two or three years, if not sooner. There are already seventy-five or eighty families that take quite an interest in the mission, and I cannot see why our Church would hesitate to send a missionary to so important a field, and a field that is becoming more important every day, and must, from the situation of the place, continue to do so, notwithstanding the speech, at last Assembly, of a minister late of Glengarry.

By inserting the above you will much oblige,

Yours, &c.,
D. H. MACLENNAN.

Alexandria, Sept. 16th, 1873.

Each change in your inward experience, or external condition, is a new test by which to try your faith and love; and it will be a help toward perfecting your soul, if you receive it with love and submission.—GUYON.

The Presbytery of Bruce held a special meeting at Teeswater, on the 14th ult., for the induction of the Rev. Peter Currie, into the pastoral charge of "the Wm. Ferguson Congregation." The Rev. Wm. Ferguson, of Glamis, preached an appropriate discourse from I Thes. v. 12, 13. The Rev. D. Cameron presided and addressed the minister, and Mr. Davidson addressed the people. At the close of the service Mr. Currie received a hearty welcome from his people as they passed out of the church, and the treasurer of the congregation paid him a quarter's salary in advance. Mr. Currie enters on his labors in this interesting field under very encouraging circumstances.—Con.