

THE P. P. A.

Of course we must be abreast of the times in Canada; it would not do to let the citizens of the great Republic to the south of us take every initial step along the way of progress. In the politico-religious world of the United States appeared a monster of iniquity, bearing upon its brow the seal of bigotry, with the letters A. P. A. conspicuous in burning form. It would not do were we in Canada to be so far behind our neighbors that we could not rival them in the sphere of religious intolerance. Our friends from beyond the line cannot crow; we possess a real ding-dong, politico-religious-intolerance association of our own. It is called the P. P. A. Its promoters claim that one "P" stands for Protestant; but this we deny—which denial we purpose establishing in a few moments. We are under the impression that the letters represent the words "Public Plague Association." Now this P. P. A. is no myth. It is a living factor in the political element of Canada. There is no denying this fact. In two recent contests in Ontario, the candidates representing the Mowat government were defeated, not because they supported that special government, not because they were members of a particular party, not because of the political platform that they held; they were defeated simply because this P. P. A. had worked its way in amongst the electors and had pointed out the great danger the country was in on account of the offices held by the Catholics, and the privileges accorded to these adherents of the church of Rome. In a word Hon. Mr. Mowat's candidates were defeated by a faction that seeks to grasp the balance of power and between the two great political parties to wield sufficient influence to prevent even common justice being done to Roman Catholics in Canada.

Deeply we regret the result of these two elections, but under the circumstances we hope that the fact of such an Association existing in our midst will be thoroughly understood and that every legitimate step will be taken to counteract its evil influences. We are told that the P. P. A. is an off-spring of the "Equal Rights" movements; it may be so, or it may not. We have no doubt as to Mr. Dalton McCarthy's capability of setting such a movement on foot. Its principles harmonize with those of the "Equal Rights" party. "Equal Rights for me and mine; but when your share is in question it is understood to be nil." Fair play and equal rights towards every one, except a Catholic. These are mere after-products of the famous laws of the "Pale." But whether this P. P. A. establishment is a twin brother of the Equal Rights movement, or not, we most positively object to its being called Protestant. They might style it a "Partially Protestant Association," but beyond that we claim the organizers of the infamous faction have no right to go. We have spent the greater portion of our life in relations, business and otherwise,—more or less intimate—with Protestants. We have lived with Protestant neighbors ever since childhood; we have had business relations, social intercourse and even political dealings with Protestants of different denominations. We have learned to know, to respect, to admire, to honor numbers of our non-Catholic fellow-citizens. They may differ from us upon the great fundamental doctrines of our Faith; but we have found in them a spirit of Christian charity that certainly dictates "to do unto others as you would have others do unto you." We have had friends in the different professions, and in the many walks of commercial life, upon

whose honesty, sincerity, generosity and absence of any prejudice we could depend our lives; and these men were Anglicans, Methodists, Presbyterians, Baptists and members of other sects. We have known some of these men to vote for a Catholic against a Protestant; others of them to hire a Catholic in preference to a Protestant, when the latter had no better claim to the position than his Protestantism. In fine, we do not and we cannot believe that our Protestant fellow-citizens are ready to stand responsible for the evil spirit of the P. P. A. We may differ on the principles of our Faith; we may kneel in different temples and offer up our prayers in varied forms; but we have all learned the great and Christ-given precept, "love one another." From out the volume of Holy Writ the honest minded, true-souled Protestants of to-day, draw lessons of Christian perfection that, if only put into practice, would suffice to banish much of the discord that reigns in the world. For these reasons we emphatically object to an Association with such narrowness of soul and such meanness of spirit, calling itself Protestant. We mean by this that we do not believe in having Protestantism—as a whole—saddled with the bigotry, intolerance, vileness, wickedness, and un-Canadian, un-Christian methods of this hydra.

However, there is one consolation, and it is a great one; we have no fear for the Catholic Church. All the damage that these bigots can perpetrate is to make the way of life more troublesome for a few honest Catholics. Perhaps a number of deserving employees may suffer in consequence of this organized hostility to every person connected with our church. But even like the Knownothingism, the A. P. Aism and other similar spasmodic outbursts of irrational bigotry, this P. P. A. will die a natural death, strangled by the cord that its own fingers are twisting. Still it is to be regretted that the monster ever were permitted to make an appearance in Canada. We cannot afford to be disturbed by fanaticism of this kind. If we cannot all agree upon the principles of Faith that are to guide our lives, at least let us remember that we all adore the same God, and the same God has commanded us all to love each other. We have need of broad Christian charity, and of inter-racial respect. Living in a land where the children of different races are destined to walk side by side along the way of life, and where the adherents of different creeds are placed in contact with each other, year in and year out, we have no room for the P. P. A., and we trust that Protestants and Catholics will join hands to overthrow the giant of politico-religious iniquity.

THE DEVIL vs. THE CHURCH.

When we last touched upon this subject we referred to the struggle between the Devil and God, a struggle that commenced in Heaven, that continued in the garden of Eden over the soul of man and that resulted in the defeat of Satan. We traced the battle between good and evil, from Creation down to the commencement of Redemption. We have now reached the foundation of the Church of Christ, and, as we pointed out in a previous article, the Devil determined to revenge himself against God, by using every means in his power to overthrow the Church of God's Only Son. At present we are dealing with the question of the Devil versus the Church; later on we will find a vast field in the subject of the Church versus the Devil. In this case it is a struggle for supremacy and the Demon will leave no stone

unturned, whereby he might frustrate the designs of God and blast the work of redemption. In order to be more systematic in our hurried study of this great warfare, we will have to divide the subject under several heads. In order to do so, we will consider the different means or instruments used by Satan in his constant attacks upon the Church. They were: 1st The power and hatred of the early Pagans; 2nd the jealousy and the enmity of the schismatics and infidels; 3rd the fury of the Mahometans; 4th the tidal-wave of rebellion call the Reformation; 5th the influence and operations of the Secret Societies. These are the five principal weapons used by the Devil in all that increasing struggle of nineteen centuries, and it will be for us to show how the Church has ever triumphed, despite all the efforts of Hell, and how the words of Christ have been fulfilled—for He promised that the gates of Hell would never prevail against His own institution.

Christ established His Church; He gave to St. Peter the "keys of the kingdom of Heaven;" He appointed St. Peter the head and chief of His apostles and His vicar upon earth. The earthly mission of the Son of God being accomplished, He ascended into Heaven, leaving behind Him an establishment fully equipped to do the work of salvation for all future ages. He sent the Holy Ghost to inspire and to illuminate the Church, and in the fires of pentecost the apostles received the gifts of wisdom, knowledge, languages and all the powers necessary to the accomplishment of their mission. "Go forth," He said to them, "and preach to all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Armed with this mandate the apostles went forth in every direction. Under the divine influence of this command the converted Saul, having become the Christian Paul, stopped in at Athens, and from the Hill of Mars proclaimed the glories of the "unknown God," whose altar already awaited him. Under the same inspiration a barefooted oriental pilgrim, with staff in hand and cross on breast, came along the Appian Way, passed beneath the triumphal arch of the Cæsars, lingered 'neath the shadow of the golden palace, and finally stood in the center of pagan Rome. His name was Peter; he was once a lowly fisherman over in Galilee; he was transformed into the envoy of God, the apostle of a new faith. He had come there to overthrow the altars of paganism, to shatter the idols of the empire, to smash the thrones of the Cæsars, to disband the conquering legions, and to set up a standard that would wave in triumph above the seven hills, long centuries after the eagles of ancient and imperial Rome would have ceased to flap their conquering wings.

But the task before him was no easy one. We can imagine how unequal the struggle must be, when on one side are arrayed all the power, wealth, influence, interest, passions, jealousy, hatred and pride of Pagan Rome, and on the other are collected a handful of devoted but, humanly speaking, powerless followers of One who appeared in the far away East, in an obscure Province of that great Empire. From a worldly standpoint, it required no prophet to foretell the ultimate failure of Peter and his score of followers. But the world did not calculate the Omnipotence of the One who had sent him; and the sequel was to be far other than might then have been expected. The Christian envoys were met with sword and fire; and yet they multiplied in numbers and in fervor. They were hunted like wild beasts from the city; and they escaped and still

multiplied. They were condemned by special imperial edicts, and all the power and machinery of the law were turned against them; yet still they multiplied. By hundreds, and then by thousands they were slain; and yet they multiplied. The trumpets of persecution awakened the echoes of the seven hills and resounded along the Tiber; and still they multiplied. The fires of martyrdom blazed upon the battlements and in the public place of Rome; and yet they multiplied. Hundreds of Christians were flung to the wild beasts in the blood-stained arena of the Flavian Amphitheatre; and despite all they multiplied. Down in the city of the dead, in the winding labyrinth of the Catacombs, beneath the walls of the capital, in the refuge of wild beast and of criminal, they met, held council, studied the glorious mysteries of a True Faith, and escaped, as much as possible, the sword of the destroyers; and even there they multiplied. It was apparently an uneven start; the Devil seemed to have had all the advantage from the very beginning; but still the Church had the Word of Christ and the promise that the "Gates of Hell should not prevail against her."

St. Paul came to Rome; he was beheaded. St. Peter came to Rome; he was crucified. Successors were appointed to those who perished, and in turn each successor perished and left a place for a fresh appointment. And all the time the Catechumens became daily more numerous; Christians multiplied; the Church was becoming firmly established. The Devil made the best use of all the implements at his command to strangle the infant Church in its cradle. But, as in the past, so even here again was he destined to failure.

It was in vain that rock and wheel and axe and sword, were brought into use; nothing could prevent the onward and upward march of the Church; nothing could save from inevitable ruin the giant Empire that failed to accept the envoys of Christ and that turned a deaf ear to the first pleadings of Christianity. The failure of the Devil, in this his first grand attempt to destroy the Church, is clearly written in history. It is easy to mark the increase of Christian influence and the decline of pagan power. The great Empire eventually shivered and rocked on its basis, finally it became split into East and West. The phantom of an Empire hovered over the East; the West, shattered by Hun and Vandal, ravaged by Goth and Ostrogoth, tottered to its ruin.

Meanwhile, forth from the dark caverns of the Catacombs came the light of Christianity; it penetrated the graves where the pagan priests taught the mysticism of the stars; it touched the monuments of centuries and crowned those storied works of a buried time with the chastening light of heaven; it touched the harper's soul and wedded his song to truth, and it dashed upon the clouds of paganism and transformed the whole sky of ages with a glory never before seen by the eyes of man. The cross that was the sign of death, in the days of the Roman Cæsars, has been planted upon the dome of St. Peter's, and that masterpiece of Angelo's genius lifts high to heaven the imperishable emblem of salvation. And from beneath the shadow of that cross the direct successor of St. Peter sits as Vicar of Christ upon a seat that all Hell could never shake, and issues his infallible mandates from the down-fallen throne of the dead Cæsars. In the first struggle with the Church the Devil was conquered.

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