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INPUDENT IMPOTENCE.

The Mail of the 27th inst., has a lengthy editorial, under the heading "A Chance for the Church," opening with the words: "The Church is known to be a great power in the politics of Quebec."

We are told that "the Church made and unmade Cartier," forced Mr. Joly's retirement, and elevated Mr. Mercier to the Local Premiership. A list of the honors conferred by the Pope on Mr. Mercier is then given, culminating in his elevation to the dignity of "Count of the Holy Roman Empire;" and of course we are desired to draw the inference that the Pope and the Catholic Church are responsible for all the misdeeds which are laid at Mr. Mercier's door in his real or supposed use of moneys for himself or for electioneering purposes.

Once for all we have to say that the Catholic Church has nothing whatever to do with the administration of civil affairs in Quebec, any further than that she has the right and is under the obligation of duty to define that public men should be as honest in their discharge of public functions as they ought to be in private transactions. If they make improper use of public moneys they are bound to restitution, just as a private individual would be under similar circumstances; and if Mr. Mercier should seek advice from any Quebec priest on this point, he would be so informed without hesitation.

Mr. Mercier has done some good things in his administration of the affairs of Quebec, and among these we place his settlement of the Jesuit's claims to the property which had been unjustly alienated from them and from the good purposes for which they had acquired it. But we do not on this account justify him for any misappropriations of public moneys which have more recently been brought to light. By all means we would wish to see the affairs of Quebec properly and honestly managed, and delinquencies punished as they deserve.

But what are we to say of the honors which were bestowed by the Holy Father on Mr. Mercier at a time when there was not a whisper against his character? We say that the Pope had only in view his public character as it was publicly known. He was properly regarded as the representative man of a Catholic Province, and it was fully believed that he was doing his duty faithfully. To all appearance he deserved the distinctions bestowed upon him, but they are by no means to be regarded as condoning any future errors or misdeeds.

The concluding sentence of the Mail's article is a piece of unmitigated impertinence:

"Mr. Mercier pretends that religion is with him despite all that is said; and that Pope, bishops and priests are lending him their support as a reward for the many good things he has done for them. But we have yet to see whether the Church, either through Rome or by way of the Quebec hierarchy, is favorable to booting in high places."

The Pope has not interfered with Quebec politics, nor is he likely to do so. The Bishops and priests have regularly not interfered either, further than to exercise their rights as citizens, or to point out in a general manner the duties of the electorate as citizens and Christians.

If the Mail desired to find clerics who needed to be lectured on their duties, and to be advised not to meddle with matters which do not concern them, it might have found legions of them without going beyond the limits of its own Province of Ontario. It might well have opened with the statement:

"The Churches are known to be a great power in the politics of Ontario; or if they are not actually a great power, it is not because the parsons lack the will to be so, but because the people of Ontario have so little confidence in these spiritual guides that they snow under the clerical candidates when they go to the polls."

It is not easy for us to forget that

less than three years ago five hundred Ontario parsons, together with about two hundred and fifty of their followers, met in Toronto to denounce the Catholics of the Dominion generally, but especially the members of the most honored religious order in the Church, and to ask the Government of the Dominion to pronounce them unworthy of the protection of the laws of the country. And they made pretence that they fairly represented the province. It was of such gatherings that Mr. Holton, M. P., speaking as a representative of the English Protestant minority in Quebec, said in Parliament:

"I do not wish to impute motives to the gentlemen of the Equal Rights Association, many of whom are personal friends of my own. Still, sir, we cannot blind our eyes to the fact that as a most lamentable result of the agitation which they have promoted and so persistently maintained throughout the country, the prejudices and animosities of the different elements of the population have been unduly aroused, and that today we find the public mind inflamed to a degree that has probably not been equalled since the unhappy period of half a century ago."

The Mail contributed all it could toward this unhappy condition of affairs, and we expect nothing better from it now. But we can assure it that its sneers against the Quebec hierarchy will have as little weight now as they had at the time we refer to, when even the people of Ontario refused to be stirred to frenzy by its frantic appeals to their passions.

CHURCH AND STATE IN FRANCE.

The Mail of Jan. 23 says: "In France the Roman Catholic Church owes much of the hostility it meets with to its political interference in the past." In proof of this it quotes the protest of the Pope in 1883 against the law which excluded from the schools the indispensable and traditional religious teaching, against the "measures which banished all the salutary elements of religion from the hospitals, colleges, army, charitable asylums, and State establishments," and against the bills, which are now laws, "concerning divorce and compulsory military service for seminarists" and the deprivation "of certain members of the church" of part of their stipends.

France is undeniably a Catholic country, notwithstanding the unaccountable apathy of the mass of the people, whereby Atheists have been allowed to control the destinies of the country. Why then should not the desire of the bulk of the population be taken into consideration in the making of the laws? Mr. Greevy himself admitted in his reply that the Pope was justified in "complaining of the anti-religious passions which had been aroused, and which were certainly in opposition to the sentiment of the great majority of Frenchmen."

It would be interesting to know by what process if reasoning the Mail would justify the minority in a Republic for legislating against the wishes of the great majority, merely because the Church coincides with the views of that majority.

Even if Catholics were a minority in the country, they could not be justly denied the right to make themselves heard, and to use the influence they possess to make their views prevail. It is precisely that all may make their influence felt, and may advocate freely their own views, that a Republic is by some asserted to be superior to other forms of government. Even in such a case, the clergy should have the right to assert their views and to advocate them. But being acknowledged by Mr. Greevy to be in accord with the great majority of the French people, they will surely not submit to be deprived of their natural right to speak their mind, conscious as they are that the right is on their side.

Mr. Greevy in his reply to the Pope also informed the Holy Father that he could not influence the enemies of the Church, whereas the Pope "could exercise much influence over the enemies of the Republic by enjoining on the Church neutrality on political questions."

The Pope will certainly never ask the clergy to divest themselves of all political convictions. He already informed the Government of M. Carnot that he leaves such matters for Frenchmen to decide among themselves, and as the clergy do not cease to be Frenchmen, they will use their liberties just as other Frenchmen do, whether they are Republicans or Monarchists. There is nothing in the doctrines of the Church to compel them to prefer either the one or the other form of government. Hence many of them are Republicans by conviction, and others are undoubtedly Monarchists.

But even those who prefer the Republic as a form of government are under no obligation to support an anti-Catholic and anti-Christian government, simply because it calls itself Republican. They have a right to endeavor to Christianize the Government, and they will certainly use that right. We have no doubt that in the end they will succeed in making their views prevail, and in sweeping away the anti-Christian legislation of the last twenty years.

A "SIXTEENTH AMENDMENT."

The Mail is in ecstasies over an amendment proposed by John Jay in the United States Congress, to be added to the Constitution of that country. It is called the "sixteenth amendment," and is to the effect that "No State shall pass any law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, or using its property or credit, or any money raised by taxation, or authorize either to be used for the purpose of founding, maintaining, or aiding, by appropriation, payment for services, expenses or otherwise, any Church, religious denomination, or religious society, or undertaking which is wholly or in part under sectarian or ecclesiastical control."

Considering the flexibility of the Mail's views on matters of doctrines, it might not be supposed that it would matter much to that journal what form of religion the Legislature of any State might take a fancy to establish. Any form ought to suit a journal which at one time maintains week after week, against its clerical correspondents, that prayer is useless, and another time declares war to the knife against the advocates of Sunday street cars, because they would tempt worshippers from spending their Sundays prayerfully, as they should do, in the churches.

But it is not really that portion of the proposed sixteenth amendment which forbids the individual States from establishing any form of religion they see fit that pleases the Mail; but it sees in the proposal something more than this. There are over ten million Catholics in the United States, and about nine hundred thousand Catholic children are being educated in Catholic schools without receiving the benefit of a cent of the taxes which their parents are paying for the education of their Protestant neighbors: If the "sixteenth amendment" were to become law, it would be placed beyond the power of any State to do justice to these Catholics, and Mr. Jay's purpose in proposing it is to perpetuate the injustice which is thus perpetrated on one sixth of the population of the Republic; and it is this that the Mail regards as the desirable feature in the scandalous proposal, which it acknowledges in the following words:

"The purpose of this amendment is to protect the Public school system from the sectarian assaults now being made upon it."

The meaning of this is, of course, readily seen. It means that Catholics in the United States aim at destroying the Public school system. This is an assertion frequently made by the Mail and other anti-Catholic journals both in Canada and the United States. But it is nevertheless false. Catholics have no desire to destroy the Public school system. We would, on the contrary, be glad to improve it; but those who wish to keep it without any improvement are quite welcome to their preference. For ourselves, however, we want the improvement that we should have religious teaching along with the secular instruction which the Public schools give. Surely there is no attack thereby implied on the Public school system. We have no objection that the Government should aid education, and we acknowledge that in mixed communities like those of the United States and Canada, it is not to be expected nor is it desirable that the Government should supply or pay for religious instruction. Hence we have never asked for anything of the kind. But we do maintain that the Government has no right to put any obstacle in the way of parents who are willing to furnish it at their own expense. It is clear that such an obstacle is raised if, on account of its giving religious teaching, any school is excluded from participation in the aid given by Government to education, in proportion at least to the secular education given. By this means a grievous injustice is perpetrated on those parents who do the most for their children, for while they are obliged to educate their own children at their own expense, they are also obliged to pay a tax to educate the children of other people. This is the injustice which is at present inflicted on Catholics in the United States,

and which the Mail would like to see incorporated into the Constitution of the country, so as to make it illegal for any state to deal justly at any future time.

Of course we do not expect to induce the Mail to advocate justice. Its aim is to be popular with the Orange lodges and the fanatics who pretend to be advocates of "Equal Rights to all." To please these it must be a relentless enemy to Catholics. It must misrepresent the Catholic Church on every occasion, but Catholics quite appreciate its oft-repeated declarations that it has our welfare very much at heart.

We feel happy in being able to inform the Mail that in the present instance its solicitude to have the United States Constitution amended in the way it would wish is not likely to have the weight of the millionth part of a grain. Mr. Jay is the Newdegate of the United States Congress. Year after year he brings up the same amendment, always to be defeated, though on one occasion, owing to the cleverness with which its purpose was concealed, to destroy the autonomy of the States, it was defeated only by a narrow majority in the House of Representatives. But its purpose is now well known, and, like Mr. Newdegate at Westminster, Mr. Jay is now only laughed at in Washington when he makes his annual motion. Of this the Mail itself appears to be conscious, for it says:

"It is not probable that the sixteenth amendment will pass at once."

No! It is not probable at all. It is as likely to be an abortion as most of the Mail's own bantlings, the Equal Rights Association being one of the number.

But the Mail says: "Ultimately it will be enforced." Perhaps the writer of this ominous sentence is a prophet. But as we read the signs of the times, it seems more probable that the people of the United States are beginning to see how grossly unjust they have been in the past, and are by degrees coming to the point when they will remedy the evil they have done. Several cities in New York have already admitted Catholic institutions to a share in the encouragement which Government has afforded to education. Wisconsin has abjured the unjust Bennett law. The fanatics have failed in passing recently proposed Anti-Catholic measures through the Massachusetts Legislature, and in Boston the tables have been turned against fanaticism by the decisive majority of nearly 16,000. Altogether an era of justice seems to be dawning in the United States, which will put an extinguisher on little lights of the John Jay and Toronto Mail kind.

THE CHILIAN TROUBLE.

It is with pleasure that we record as the result of negotiations between the United States and Chili, that all danger of war between these two powers seems to be averted.

Street broils cannot always be prevented by the best disposed Governments; yet it cannot be denied that it was intensely provoking to the United States Government that sailors from one of its ships of war should have been murdered on the streets of Valparaiso. Concerning the origin of the attack there is a difference in the testimony given. The Chilians say that the sailors became drunk and riotous in the worst quarters of the city, whereas the sailors declare that they were walking inoffensively along the streets, and that there was no other cause for attack than that they wore the United States uniform.

Reparation was demanded by Minister Egan as representative of the United States, whereupon Senor Matta, the Chilean Minister of Foreign Affairs, replied substantially that the matter is being investigated by the Courts, and that his Government could take no action until the decision of the Courts were reached. He denied also Mr. Egan version of the outrage, and the sentence in which Mr. Egan's statement was denied was regarded by President Harrison as an insult to the United States people. Its withdrawal was therefore demanded.

The Chilean Government should undoubtedly have expressed at once its regret for the unfortunate outrage, but instead of this, the dismissal of Mr. Egan was demanded as a preliminary to further negotiation. President Harrison, however, sustained Mr. Egan, and insisted upon an immediate apology, which the Chilean Government at first seemed loth to make. At last, however, the necessary apology has been made. The Chilean Government expresses the most friendly feeling for the United States and its deepest regret for the Valparaiso

outrage; and, further, to show its good will towards the United States, offers to leave the question of indemnity to the United States Court.

More than this cannot be required, and it was stated by Mr. Blount, the chairman of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs at Washington, that the whole trouble is now at an end.

There are some "Jingoes" in the United States who would wish to make the dispute a reason for war, but the common sense of the nation prevails, and Chili's apology is accepted by the authorities as quite satisfactory.

MISSIONS, CATHOLIC AND PROTESTANT.

The last Fortnightly Review gives a gloomy picture of the condition of the English Protestant missions in Africa, owing chiefly to the introduction of drunkenness along with the Christianity inculcated by the missionaries, and partly to the difference of method adopted by English, or at least by Anglican missionaries, from those of the French priests. The Review says:

"The Anglican Church fails in many ways where the French succeed. We preach too much at the natives and hold them at too great a distance; the French priest preaches to them and treats them with love and kindly interest."

It has been recently asserted very gleefully by several of the Protestant religious journals that of late the Catholic missions have fallen behind, owing to the greatly increased zeal of Protestant missionaries during the last few years. This assertion was made also by Rev. Dr. Judson Smith at a meeting of the American Board of Foreign Missions held in November, 1890, at Minneapolis. Mr. Smith read a paper on this occasion on the missionary prospects of the future, in which he stated that Protestants have succeeded in taking the lead in evangelizing the heathen almost everywhere. The article of the Fortnightly Review effectually disposes of Mr. Smith's assertions, and leaves us to infer that the essay of this minister was written for the purpose of inducing the Mrs. Wellers to loosen their purse strings for the benefit of the benighted natives of Borioboola-Gha.

We recognize fully that many of the Protestant missionaries are zealous, and animated by a philanthropic spirit which makes them earnest in their work, but they have not generally that spirit of self-sacrifice which is characteristic of the Catholic priests, who have all these same qualities, and, in addition, the grace given by Christ to His apostles to enable them to preach His gospel to every creature. The promise He made to be with the apostles to the end of the world while they should be engaged in the work of teaching all nations, "baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," extends to their successors; but not to the Protestant clergy, who have no such commission from Him. Hence it cannot be expected that their work should be fruitful in real conversions; and as a matter of fact, notwithstanding the large sums contributed by Protestants for missionary purposes, the results are very meagre.

Among the human causes of the non-success of Protestant missions we have the testimony of many of the missionaries themselves, that a potent one is the diversities of Protestant doctrine. The heathens naturally infer from the conflicting teachings of the many sects which have sent missionaries to them, that Christianity is a tissue of inconsistencies, and as they do not always readily distinguish between true and false Christianity, these inconsistencies have an effect in making even the work of the priests more difficult than it would otherwise be. Those heathens also who become Protestant Christians in name consider that they have the same right to establish new sects which their European and American teachers have. Thus the Japanese Presbyterians will not have the Westminster Confession, and they have accordingly framed a new creed of their own. A large section of the nominal Presbyterians are in reality Unitarians or Rationalists. They scarcely differ from Deists, except in the fact that they call themselves Christians. This state of affairs was the main difficulty which delayed union among the Japanese Presbyterian sects, and though we believe the gulf which separated the parties has been temporarily bridged over, it must soon again become as formidable as are the Drs. Briggs, Newton and Workman cases with the Presbyterians, Anglicans, and Methodists in this hemisphere. But in Africa, according to the Fortnightly Review, the chief

difficulty is the liquor traffic, which comes in along with the missionaries; and it repeats as "a positive fact" a recent statement of the Bishop of London, England, that at the present moment in one place in Africa "the Christians are building a mosque rather than a church, because the Mahometans do not bring drink with them; whereas an increasing number of Christians would mean an increase in the importation of drink."

The Mahometans are actually converting many of the African tribes, and as one tribe embraces the religion of the Arabian mule-driver, it assists in converting the next, and thus the work progresses. The article in the Review adds:

"Many Englishmen are disappointed that Lord Salisbury has not stipulated for a larger portion of the Dark Continent. But it might be well to remember that if by annexing African territory Englishmen win the privilege of destroying the people by the worst kind of alcoholic drugs it would seem that the less territory we have the better."

What is the use of sending missionaries to convert the heathen if our traders in heathen lands thrust upon the natives a poison which destroys them with more certainty than any war, pestilence or famine? Will no one set on foot a holy crusade against this curse? Cardinal Lavigerie and his co-workers, who have undertaken on a large scale the work of evangelization, have quite a different story to tell of the results of their labors. They have established throughout Central Africa missionary stations and villages peopled with native Christians who learn the arts of peace, without being inculcated with the vices introduced by missionary traders. These stations are reported to be in a flourishing condition everywhere; while the Protestant missions of the Niger and Congo have practically collapsed. Indeed in the Congo mission, under Bishop Taylor (Methodist), the missionaries appear to be devoting themselves to trade in hippopotamus meat and elephants' teeth, instead of evangelization. One of these missionaries, Mr. J. C. Waller, who returned to America in 1888, reported that as Christian missions the Congo establishments were a complete failure, though as trading posts they offer a golden harvest to the courageous European or American who will inaugurate a trade with the region.

REV. DR. ABBOTT'S THEOLOGY.

The Rev. Dr. Lyman Abbott, the pastor of Plymouth church, Brooklyn, and successor to the late Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, is upholding the traditions of that Church for the promulgation of new-fangled theories in religion. The last vagary of this kind is that "the Bible is an evolution of man's consciousness of God or a history of the growth of the knowledge and life of God in a specially endowed and chosen nation; and the church is the growth of the human organism inspired by this life making its way against error and superstition and gradually conquering paganism." From this he draws the inference that:

"Theology is the necessary mixture of truth and error, the truth winning its way over theory by intermingling with it. We shall not be surprised to find errors in the Bible. We shall remember that it is the work of God as it is expressed in human lives, struggling through the imperfections of human intellect and human passion. We shall not be surprised to find limitations of knowledge in Christ Himself."

He accepts fully the theories of Charles Darwin in regard to the evolution of man, and applying these principles to the evolution of religion, comes to the conclusion that both the Old and the New Testaments are simply forms in which the human mind develops itself, at one time as Judaism, and at another as Christianity.

These views he has been promulgating in a series of lectures recently delivered before Boston audiences, which have listened to them with rapture, and the Protestant religious press has been discussing the question whether these views may not be accepted as a thoroughly Christian exposition of Biblical theology. To what is Protestantism drifting, that it can seriously entertain the notion that the Bible is a mere product of the human mind as it has developed itself in the course of successive generations? Such views are the natural consequences of the congregational system of religion, which leaves every congregation free to have its own religious fancies and to employ preachers who will teach theories of religion in accordance with the views that prevail in any given congregation at the various stages of its existence. The next step will be the total rejection of Christianity. And why