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THE

PORTFOLIO

THE MAGAZINE OF THE
YOUNG MEN'S ASSOCIATION
- OF THE -
Northern Congregational Church
TORONTO.

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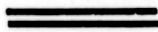
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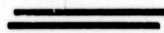
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ROBERTS & SON.



THE PORTFOLIO.

The Magazine of the Northern Congregational Church
Young Men's Association.

VOL. I.

TORONTO, MAY, 1887.

NO. 7.

OUR DOMESTIC AUTONOMY.

On the evening of the 5th ult., our President contributed an instructive paper to the course on Canada. Although necessarily covering some of the ground taken by preceding writers, there was an immense amount of new material, and while our memories were refreshed by repetition of some of the arguments already submitted, much fresh knowledge was added to our store. Having stated the facts of the case and explained the system of Canadian Home Rule now in operation, the writer proceeded to discuss the present effects and future prospects, concluding:—"And now standing as we do in this 20th year of Confederation, and looking back over the past history of our country, and forward to the time when its vast territory shall be peopled, and the busy hum of industry be heard, where now only forest and prairie are seen, we can but exclaim, how great the possibilities of our young Dominion. With a railway stretching from the shores of the cold Atlantic to the warm Pacific slopes—through fertile prairie land and across mountain ranges, sweeping by undeveloped coal fields and over mines of untold mineral wealth, with canals capable of enlargement, so that ocean steamers may yet reach Chicago, and with manufacturing facilities second to none in the world—can we not truly say 'we have a goodly heritage.' I am a Canadian, born, brought up and educated in Canada, and I am proud of it, I love my country, and I hope yet to see her take her place among the nations of the earth. But the question arises, are there no dangers ahead, is there nothing that menaces that autonomy of which we have been speaking?"

I am constrained to reply there is, and now let me briefly state what I consider to be some of those dangers : first of all and at the root of all is the lack of patriotism on the part of our representatives, which leads them to place party before country. I venture to say and I do so advisedly, that out of all the members returned to parliament not a single dozen, aye not half-a-dozen place the true interests of country first—those *in* power gerrymander the counties, pander to powerful cliques and resort to the machinery of revising barristers in order to keep in power, while those who are *out* are ready to adopt all the same doubtful expedients in order to get in—thus it is a game of ins and outs, very interesting no doubt, to the players, but very injurious to the country—party, party, party, is the cry, and meantime secret influences are at work seeking to undermine the Constitution. This brings me to another source of danger, these very influences I allude to, Romish aggression. Suffer a quotation from a fortnightly journal published in this city ; under this heading it says : ‘ The great encroachments which are being made by the Romish Hierarchy upon the sacredness of the Protestant religion deserves our gravest consideration—we concede the privilege of worshipping according as the conscience dictates, but when we see the Romish church assume the aggressive and interfere not alone in the spiritual concerns of their protestant neighbors, but in their temporal as well, we think it time a note of warning should be sounded.’ These are true words—they *are* pushing everywhere, even into some of our best Ontario districts—both political parties are endeavoring to catch the Roman Catholic vote, and are ready to make almost any concessions to them. In Quebec, Protestants and their religion are openly reviled—*L’Etenard* a French Catholic paper, in a late issue thus speaks of our religion—‘ born of corruption and lying, Protestantism exists only by corruption and lying,’ and it goes on to speak of Luther and Knox as the vilest and most profligate of men. In that province the English speaking Protestants cannot obtain their just rights—and I have heard leading French Catholics in the City of Montreal say that they would not rest till they had driven all the English speaking officials out of the corporation of that city. Very many of the French Roman Catholics I verily believe, are not loyal at heart, and would welcome back with open arms a return of French rule—this is a danger we cannot, must not shut our eyes to—and now what is the remedy for all this? In my humble opinion, first of all, the formation of a third party, the principal plank in whose platform shall be “country first,” and the second plank “Protestantism,” and the third plank “such a change in the Constitution as will make the whole Dominion, one country, one language, one law,” and some such change will come. I do not pretend to be a prophet, but there are signs that indicate that the Confederation of

the Provinces, as at present, will ere long have to undergo a change. In conclusion—to the young men of the country we must look, soon our present leaders will have passed away; ere many years the men who tread our halls of legislature will do so no more, and who will take their place?—the young men of to-day. Oh that they would learn to cast off the shackles of party and rise above all selfish notions, and fired with a true spirit of heaven-born patriotism, go to consult how they can promote the truest and best interests of the country we love. Is it a dream or will the time come when our legislative assemblies will no longer ring with the strife of parties and be disgraced by men seeking only their own selfish ends, but when, although not in all things seeing eye to eye, will yet agree to differ and sink self and party in a desire to elevate the standard of righteousness, honesty and truth. May God hasten the day.”

THE DREAM.

Wearied and worn, with earthly cares, I yielded to repose;
 And soon before my raptured sight a glorious vision rose.
 I thought while slumbering on my couch, in midnight solemn gloom,
 I heard an angel's silvery voice, and radiance filled my room,
 A gentle touch awakened me—a gentle whisper said
 "Arise, O sleeper, follow me," and thro' the air we fled.
 We left the earth so far away that like a speck it seemed,
 And heavenly glory, calm and bright, across our pathway streamed;
 Still on we went—my soul was rapt in silent ecstasy;
 I wondered what the end would be—what next should meet mine eye;
 I knew not how we journeyed thro' the pathless fields of light,
 When suddenly a change was wrought, and *I was clothed in white.*
 We stood before a city's walls, most glorious to behold;
 We passed through gates of glistening pearl, o'er streets of purest gold!
 It needed not the sun by day, the silver moon by night;
 The glory of the Lord was there, the Lamb Himself was light;
 Bright angels paced the shining streets, sweet music filled the air,
 And white-robed saints, with glittering crowns, from every clime were there;
 And some that I had loved on earth were with them round the throne;
 "All worthy is the Lamb" they sang, "all glory His alone."
 But fairer far than all besides, I saw my Saviour's face;
 And as I looked He smiled on me with wondrous love and grace.
 Lowly I bowed before His throne, o'erjoyed that I at last,
 Had gained the object of my hopes, that earth at length was passed;
 And then in solemn tones He said, "Where is the diadem
 That ought to sparkle on thy brow, adorned with many a gem?
 I know thou has believed in Me, and life through Me is thine,
 But where are all those radiant stars, that in thy crown should shine?
 Thou seest round yon glorious throne, the star on every brow,
For every soul they led to Me, they wear a jewel now!
 And such thy bright reward had been if such had been thy deed;
 If thou hadst sought some wandering feet in paths of peace to lead,
 I did not mean that thou shouldst trace the path of life alone,
 But that the clear and shining light that round thy footstep shone,
 Should guide some other weary feet, to My bright home of rest,

And thus in blessing those around, thou hadst thyself been blest."
 The vision faded from my sight, the voice no longer spake,
 A spell seemed brooding o'er my soul, which long I feared to break,
 And when at last I gazed around, in morning's glimmering light,
 My spirit fell o'erwhelmed beneath that vision's awful weight,
 I rose and wept with chastened joy, that yet I dwelt below,
 That yet another hour was mine, my faith by works to show—
 That yet some sinner I might tell of Jesus' dying love,
 And help to lead some weary soul, to seek a home above.
 And now while on the earth I stay, my utmost wish shall be—
 "To live no longer to myself, but Him who died for me;"
 And graven on my inmost soul, the word of truth divine,
They that turn many to the Lord, bright as the stars shall shine.

THE NOVELISTS OF THE XIX CENTURY.

At the open meeting of the Y. M. A. on the 15th ult., Mr. H. L. Thompson read, by request of the Committee, his essay, prepared last session, on "The Novelists of the XIX Century." In itself an attractive subject, it is unnecessary to remark here that it lost none of its interest in our friend's hands; and those present were unanimous in declaring that the change from the heavier programme of debate, and so forth, was a very agreeable one.

Opening with a word picture of a typical library at the close of the last century, and noticing particularly the almost complete absence of novels from its shelves, the essayist spoke of the vast change in the history of fiction which the opening years of this century witnessed, the first to bring about the advance being two women, Maria Edgeworth and Jane Austen, followed closely, in point of time, by Sir Walter Scott. Speaking of the last, the essayist said:

"I cannot pass from Scott without asking you to notice two scenes in his life that to me have a charm.

"The first is the boy at school, slow at lessons, and yet with such a vast fund of tales and stories filling his brain, that it meant something worth hearing when he said, 'Come, slink beside me, Jemmie, and I'll tell ye a story.'

"See him in the school yard, the centre of an attentive group of boys, listening for all they are worth to a border tale of chivalry and adventure.

"I take this as one picture, because it foreshadows the coming Novelist.

"Napoleon, born the same day as Scott, was a captain on the play ground, and captured many a snow fort before he crossed the Alps and defeated the Austrians on the plains of Marengo.

"Nelson, at the age of 10, asked, 'What is fear?' Pope lisped in numbers for the numbers came, and little Walter Scott, charm-

ing his schoolmates with old border legends, lived to be the author of 'Ivanhoe' and 'Rob Roy.'

"The second scene is when, at the age of 55, from the summit of his splendid achievements, he fell.

"With his home at Abbotsford, called by some one, 'A romance in stone,' with money coming from his publishers apparently without limit, with plenty to spend upon his armory, his woodlands and lawn, his paintings, and, what pleased him most, his hospitality, the crash came.

"In the money panic of 1825 his publishers failed.

"And this is the second scene: Alone, ruined, all gone but the brave heart and the active brain, he refused to accept a compromise, but pledged himself to devote his life to remove the debt.

"So he stands alone, but firm, like one of his own heroes:

'Come one, come all, this rock shall fly
From its firm base as soon as I.'

"Hair white, frame failing, the evening of life casting its long shadows, he starts to write that he may pay the debt and stand free to say, 'I owe no man a penny.'

From the many most entertaining sketches of the several authors introduced, we have only space here for one further selection:—
"You may at once expect me to choose Charles Dickens as the best illustration of the humorous novelist, and yet his novels are by no means devoted entirely to the humorous; he touches very often upon the tender, the pathetic and the sad, as well as the laughable and grotesque, indeed it would be hard to say what phase of life he has not touched upon. As one has said, 'he has touched largely upon the humor and pathos of poverty'; his novels are emphatically novels of the hearth and home. 'The great aim of his literary labors was to find the good in everything and thus knit mankind together in one bond of union.' * * *

One of his daughters writing of him among his children, says 'Ever since I can remember anything, I remember him as the good genius of the house, and as the happy, bright and funny genius. At no time through his busy life was he too busy to think of the children, to amuse them or to interest himself in all that concerned them. He wrote special prayers for their use as soon as they could speak, he had funny songs which he used to sing to them before they went to bed. One in particular, about an old man who caught cold and rheumatism while riding in an omnibus, was a great favorite, and as it was accompanied by sneezes, coughs and funny gesticulations, it had to be sung over and over again, before the small audience were satisfied."

Unable of course to treat so vast a theme in detail, Mr. Thompson proceeded to classify the authors he had to deal with,

giving typical instances in each case, thus : (1) The Historical novel, Sir Walter Scott. (2) The novel delineating National Character, Hogg, Christopher North and Galt in Scotland ; Carleton, Lover and Lever in Ireland ; Trollope and Bulwer in England. (3) The novel depicting Individual Character, George Eliot, Collins and Dickens. (4) The Sensational novel, Miss Braddon. (5) The novel of Adventure, Fenimore Cooper, Capt. Marryat and Jas. Grant. (6) The Political novel, Disraeli. (7) The Satirical novel, Thackeray. (8) The Humorous novel, Dickens, and lastly, (9) The novel with a High Purpose, Charles Reade. Most of these authors were accorded more or less lengthy criticisms, interspersed with selections from their writings ; we cannot touch further upon them in this brief notice, but, in conclusion, append a receipt (warranted reliable), for the guidance of those who are thirsting to see their names inscribed on the immortal scroll of fame. Here it is :

“ If any of my young friends long to shine in the world of literature, I most certainly advise them to try the Sensational Novel, as being the easiest acquired. The rules are something after this fashion : First contrive to get two young people desperately in love with each other ; she must be beautiful, rich and young ; he must be handsome, brave and poor. Next, place all sorts of difficulties and obstacles in the way of their attachment. A stern father would answer very well. He must, of course, oppose the match, so that, as one writer says, there shall be ‘ Two loving hearts torn bleeding asunder.’ Now bring forward a second suiter, old, ugly, rich. His estates might as well be made to join those of the stern father, or he may hold a mortgage on her father’s property—does not matter which. Father favors the ugly, old and rich one. Next part must be carefully worked out. You might let the girl be out driving, frisky horses, runaway, about to go over precipice. Handsome, brave and poor youth springs out and she is saved. Father relents, or dies, thrown off his horse for instance, does not matter which, and the beautiful, rich girl and the handsome, brave, poor youth spend their honeymoon in Europe. This, of course, is only a bare outline ; your vivid imagination must supply details. Fill in plenty of moonlight walks and sunlight glimmering through the trees ; maiden at casement window, pale, beautiful and sorrowful ; stolen interviews, obtained by gliding along winding passages and in the shadow of high walls. You might vary the runaway horses part of the story ; let her fall into the river if you like, only he must be on hand to plunge in. Remember plenty of love, obstacles and wedding bells, and your novel will be a success. We will each take a copy !”

SELF, ITS INFLUENCE ON THE CHRISTIAN LIFE.

If there is one thing more than another, which to-day endangers the Spiritual life of the Christian, I think it is "Self." We continually meet those who, while making a profession of religion, do not show by their deeds that they have any faith in the Saviour they profess to serve; their one aim is to gratify their cravings and ambitions. Can we wonder that so few are converted to God when we see the professing Christian serving mammon with all the ardor of a devotee, forgetting that while we are *in* the world we are not *of* the world, and that we are warned to lay up our treasure in Heaven. If, while we loudly proclaim that Jesus is dearer to us than life, we anxiously clutch at the bubbles of pleasure as they float past us on the summer air, if we are willing to sacrifice principles for riches, if we are striving after the honor and approval of the world at the expense of our love and faith in a risen Saviour, if we lie, and cheat and defraud, where is the world going to find the evidence of our Christianity? And yet many who do these things are to be found in the membership of our churches. What wonder that the warm life blood of our young converts becomes chilled in the atmosphere which surrounds them. To-day, business, instead of being a means to an end, is rapidly becoming the end itself, and the Christian life is starved on the husks of the world. Oh, that Christians were thoroughly awake to the deadly influence of this love of "Self," which so frequently rules their actions in the world and in the Church. How many of us deny ourselves and take up our cross daily and follow Christ? How many of us are willing to step out of our cushioned pews and go into the streets and lanes of our city to carry the Gospel to the poor and needy, or to persuade them to come into our churches to hear the Word preached? Are we not by our life and conversation, by the things we do and the things we leave undone, publishing to the world that we do not believe in the God we profess to serve? If we only realized the vast possibilities that lie before us, and that thousands are every day passing away to eternal death; and if our faith were but as a grain of mustard seed we should not be content to live in the half dead half alive fashion we do now. We should be up and doing, ready for any duty. If a soldier has confidence in his commander, and faith in the cause for which he fights, he will charge at the enemy's guns no matter how great the odds against him, but let him doubt the ability of his general, let him believe his cause to be an unjust one, and if he advances to the charge at all he does so in such a half-hearted manner that he invites disaster and courts defeat. So it is with the Christian, we must have faith in our great Leader, and if our lives and bodies and all that we possess are not consecrated to the Master's use,

we are not ready to do His work. The great need of the Church to-day is an abundant outpouring of the spirit, and that the deadly disease which is devouring her vitality may be eradicated from her members. Should times of trouble come and persecution shed its dark pall over our land, are we prepared with imprisonment and death before us to witness for the Truth. How many of us would stand the test?

"The love of Christ constrained us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that He died for all, that they who live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him who died for them, and rose again." 2 Cor., v., 14, 15.

CHAS. J. PAGE.

NOTES BY THE WAY.

Our Association has met three times during the past month, though the meeting on the 29th ult., was too late for notice in the current issue. On the 5th ult., at Mr. O'Hara's, the evening was devoted to another of the series on Canadian Subjects, when Mr. Jas. McDunnough read a capital paper on "Our Domestic Autonomy" (see page 63). There was another essay on the programme, but it failed to materialize.

Jupiter Pluvius was anything but good tempered on the evening of the 15th ult., the occasion of our open musical evening, but notwithstanding the storm a goodly number of members and friends, assembled at Mr. Revell's to enjoy an interesting and varied programme, of songs, recitations, etc. The *piece de resistance* however, was an essay by Mr. H. L. Thompson, which was much enjoyed (see page 66). The balance of the programme was made up as follows: *Pianoforte Solo*, "The mountain stream," E. H. Harcourt; *Song*, "They all love Jack," W. Copp; *Reading*, "The death of Little Nell," Frank Hessin; *Song*, "I dreamed a dream," Percy Roberts; *Essay*, "The Novelists of the XIX Century," H. L. Thompson; *Song*, "Fortune of War," A. M. Watts; *Recitation*, Mr. Magillicuddy; *Song (and Chorus)*, "Jack's Yarn," S. C. Cuthbertson; *God Save the Queen*.

At the meeting on the 5th inst., a clause was added to the Constitution providing that, with the exception of the Hon. President, no officer or member of the executive, should hold the same position for more than two consecutive terms, and that

none but retiring committee-men should be eligible for the offices of president or vice-president. Both provisions were adopted unanimously. The offices of Editor and Business Manager of the magazine were added to the executive, and the number of committee-men reduced from six to four.

The last two meetings for the season 1886-7, will be as follows: May 13th, (at Mr. Baird's, 90 Grosvenor St.,) OPEN MEETING. The Canadian series which has occupied much of our attention this session, will be concluded by a "three cornered" Debate on "The Destiny of Canada" the speakers being, for "Independence," Mr. E. H. Harcourt; for "Annexation," Mr. H. Granfield; for "Imperial Federation," Mr. J. G. Thompson. Everything promises to make this the crowning success of the season, and we look for an overflowing gathering. May 27th, (at Rev. John Burton's, 56 Charles,) Annual Business meeting, to receive Secretary's report and financial statement, magazine report, etc., and to elect officers for the session 1887-8.

On the evening of Monday, 4th April, the Rev. W. Cuthbertson, of Woodstock, delivered his lecture on "Great Preachers I have heard and known," in the School Room. The attendance was not large, which was to be regretted for many reasons, not the least of which was the missing by many of one of the rarest treats in the lecture line, which we have had for a long time. As the lecturer sketched preacher after preacher, the word painting stood out vividly, and you saw the great men of our body before you, and could almost fancy that you were listening to their voices. The list included such men as Martin, Harris, Jay, Binney, James, Norman McLeod, and others of like note, their strong points were portrayed, incidents of their lives told, with anecdotes, often irresistibly humorous. The lecture was very enjoyable and elicited throughout repeated bursts of applause, together with a very hearty and by no means formal vote of thanks at the close.

Owing to the Special Services, and Good Friday falling on our meeting nights, only one Social Bible meeting has been held this month, viz., on the 22nd. This meeting was held at Mr. Sykes', Huntley St., the attendance was fair, and all present enjoyed the meeting. The subject considered was "The final triumph and reward of the Christian," being the closing one of the series on the Christian Life. Mr. Clark presided. Miss Clark read a brief essay on the rewards of the Christian, an excellent paper full of

passages from Old and New Testaments, showing that though salvation was of God's free grace, yet He did in His Word promise rewards for faithful service, and that these rewards differed according to merit. Mr. Clark closed with some remarks on the same subject, several others also taking part. The next meeting will be held at the Pastor's house, on May 6th, and the closing one for this season, which will take the form of a Praise meeting, at Mr. McDunnough's, 13 Rosedale Road, on May 20th.

The special Evangelistic services mentioned in our last, were continued for a second week with an increased attendance and interest. Though we cannot point to much outward manifestation of blessing, yet we feel that good was done, our people were stirred up and led to realize more than ever the preciousness of that salvation which is in Christ, and the glorious privilege of being children of God, as well as the great responsibility it brings. The simple earnestness of our brother Crombie touched many hearts, and the earnest words of those who assisted him, our Pastor among them, strengthened the faith of not a few. Our prayer is that God will abundantly bless our brother wherever he goes, and that the blessing to ourselves may not be transient.

In the absence of Mr. Henry Smith, Mr. F. J. Smith has been appointed collector of the subscriptions to the Debt Extinction Fund. All subscribers are requested to send in their first instalment not later than the 5th inst., as the first payment of \$1500 will have to be made on the 8th.

At the Church meeting of the 27th ult., on recommendation of the Finance Committee, Mr. C. E. Nurse was unanimously elected to the office of Treasurer of the Church, Mr. W. W. Copp having resigned that position at the previous meeting. Mr. Copp was presented with a handsomely engrossed address in book form, on the occasion of his retirement, expressing the Church's appreciation of his long and valuable services, he having served in that capacity for the past twenty years.

The June issue of THE PORTFOLIO will complete the present volume. A large number of subscriptions are still unpaid; we would remind our friends of the prosaic fact that the possession of funds is an absolute necessity to the life of a magazine, and ours is no exception. We trust therefore that those whom it may concern will take the hint in good part, and give us practical proof that this paragraph has not escaped their notice.

CORRESPONDENCE.

To the Editor of THE PORTFOLIO :

SIR,—I would like to ask you what our Church Meetings are good for. I have attended a great many, and must confess I do not see what good they do, except it be to confirm what has already been arranged by the deacons on the preceding evening, and relieve them of responsibility. I do not mean to say that there is no business brought up which has not been discussed in the deaconite, but such cases are very few indeed ; and when such a thing does occur, we generally hear the remark, "Oh, that has not come before the deaconite," as though the church was not competent to deal with the matter without the deacons previously deciding what ought or ought not to be. An instance of this occurred at our last meeting. The *church* had ordered a code of Rules of Procedure to be formulated, and had appointed a committee to attend to it. The committee were ready with their report, but it was stated that the deacons had requested that it be submitted to them before being read to the church, and, on motion, that was agreed to. (I might say in parenthesis, that the deacons generally form the majority of the male attendance at the church meetings, and it is not a matter for surprise that other members should stay away, as they know it is all "cut and dried" beforehand). It seems to me that in this, as in other cases, the deacons were wandering from their legitimate sphere, for to whom should a report be first submitted, if not to that body which had ordered it to be compiled? That brings up the question, "What are the duties of the deacons?" This I will not discuss, but merely venture the remark that I had assumed they were to assist the pastor in attending to the spiritual requirements of the people. But if they are merely to act as an advisory committee in the conduct of church matters generally, and serve at the communion table, let the office be at once abolished, and a committee appointed to serve at communion, for surely the church is quite competent to advise itself, and does not require any committee to assist it. My conclusions are these: Either let us abolish church meetings altogether, and elect a committee, whom you may call deacons if you wish, to conduct all the affairs of the church, and who shall be wholly responsible for the same, or else let the deacons hold their monthly meeting on the evening succeeding that on which the church meeting is held, instead of on the preceding evening, and let them, *as deacons*, have nothing to do with the business which is now transacted by the church. To me, and I believe to others also, the church meeting, as it is at present conducted, is a miserable farce.

Yours, &c.,

April 28, '87.

SPHYNX.

LONGINGS.

I long to do some great, some virtuous deed,
 And gain renown, like the brave knights of old ;
 To win some vict'ry, some grand thing achieve,
 And with earth's heroes have my name enrolled.

But better far to win the victory
 Over myself; to conquer sin and wrong—
 Brave in God's sight—and so my name shall be
 Written with all of His immortal throng.

S. A. L.

NOTA BENE.

THE PORTFOLIO is published on or about the first of each month, from November to June, inclusive, eight numbers yearly. Annual subscription, Fifty cents ; Single copies, Ten cents each.

Our friends outside the members of the Association are cordially invited to contribute to our columns, short papers (to fill about one side of a sheet of foolscap), items of news and correspondence on any topic of interest are specially welcome. Articles may appear over writers' signatures or not, as preferred ; but *must* always be signed for the information of the editor and in evidence of good faith, though not necessarily for publication.

Contributions should be mailed by the 20th of each month to insure attention in the next issue.

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