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Survey of the World.

Populist Nominees and Platforms

The two Populist national conventions were held last week,

the fusionists meeting in a big circus tent at Sioux Falls, S. D., and the independents, or Middle-of-the-Roaders, in Cincinnati. Everybody knew that the fusion Populists would nominate Bryan, but it was expected that they would not insist upon offering a complete ticket to their Democratic allies, whose convention will not be held until July 4th. It was the desire of Bryan's friends and the Democratic leaders that the convention at Sioux Falls should leave the nomination for the second place to a committee, which should be instructed to confer with the Democratic convention. But the personal interests of two Senators called for a full ticket, and ex-Congressman Charles A. Towne was nominated for vice-president. At the Middle-of-the-Road convention the popularity of the temporary chairman, Milford W. Howard, of Alabama, threatened to upset the ticket nominated in 1898; but Howard withdrew his name, and the nominations of two years ago—Wharton Barker for president, and Ignatius Donnelly for vice-president—were ratified. We publish elsewhere in this issue an article concerning these conventions. The two platforms are substantially in agreement. Both call for the free coinage of silver at the ratio of 16 to 1, but the independents prefer an irredeemable paper currency. Both say that the Government should own the railroads, but the independents add the telegraphs, telephones and mines. The income tax, municipal ownership of public utilities, direct legislation by the initiative and the

referendum, and the election of Senators by popular vote are demanded by both parties, but the independents would have the President and the Federal judges also elected directly by the people. Both platforms assert that the only remedy for trusts is government ownership. The fusionists express sympathy with the Boers, ask for the exclusion of Japanese immigrants, say that the war in the Philippines should be stopped and independence should be given to the Filipinos, denounce injunctions in labor disputes, and call for free trade with Porto Rico. Their platform is said to have the approval of Bryan. Prominent Western Democrats say that the second place on the national ticket ought to be given to a Democrat in the East, and Comptroller Coler, of New York, is mentioned as a desirable candidate. Mr. Towne is a personal friend of Bryan, and some predict that he will withdraw if the Kansas City convention shall prefer another man.

Germany and the Monroe Doctrine

The debate in the Senate on the price of armor plates gave Mr. Lodge an opportunity last week to make some remarks about that impending defense of the Monroe doctrine to which Secretary Root looked forward in his speech at the Grant dinner. Mr. Lodge urged that we should enlarge the navy for the protection of our coast and the control of the isthmus canal. Turning to the question of possible war, he continued:

"We can never allow these Danish islands to pass into any hands other than those of their present possessor except our own. The nation of Europe that would undertake to take

as it is now. Let subscription to it, if required at all, be in the way men subscribe to a political platform with the principles of which they are in the main agreed, altho they may not like all the planks nor their wording. Then every

man in the Church can exercise the inalienable privilege of the Protestant of constructing his own creed and of revising it whenever a new idea gets control of a majority of his brains.

LARAMIE, WYO.

Revision of the Confession.

By Prof. John T. Duffield, D.D., of Princeton University.

IN determining the question of Revision of the Confession the following facts should receive unprejudiced and appreciative consideration.

1. As stated in the original Plan of Reunion of the Old and New School Churches, there are "various methods of viewing, stating, explaining and illustrating the doctrines of the Confession which do not impair the integrity of the Reformed or Calvinistic system." There were different forms of statement held and advocated by different members of the Westminster Assembly.

2. While all who hold the Calvinistic system accept the Scriptural doctrine of Election there was in the Westminster Assembly, and has been since among orthodox theologians, diversity of opinion as to the order of the divine decrees, and the associated doctrine, the extent of the atonement. By the order of the decrees it meant simply our conception of the logical order of decrees that chronologically were simultaneous. Are we to conceive of the decree of election as preceding or succeeding the decree to permit the fall? The former view is known as *supralapsarian*, the latter as *sub-* or *infra-lapsarian*. In reference to the Westminster Assembly Dr. Charles Hodge says:

"Twisse, the Prolocutor of that venerable body, was a zealous *supralapsarian*; the great majority of the Assembly, however, were on the other side. The symbols of that Assembly, while they clearly imply *infralapsarianism*, were yet so framed as to avoid giving offense to those who adopted the *supralapsarian* theory." (Theology, Vol. II, p. 317.) Whatever the explanation, the doctrine in question as stated in the Confession is stated as a *supralapsarian* would state it,

and its place in the Confession is where a *supralapsarian* would place it.

3. With the single exception, if it can be called an exception, of the "Articles of Religion," adopted by the Irish Episcopal Church in 1615, and superseded by the adoption of the Thirty-nine Articles of the English Church in 1635, *the statement of the doctrine of Predestination in the Westminster Confession differs from the statement of that doctrine in the other Calvinistic Confessions of the Reformation*—and we might add the statement in the Shorter Catechism. The Confessions referred to are the Gallican or French Confession of 1559, the draft of which, it is said, was prepared by Calvin; the Belgic Confession of 1561, a doctrinal standard of the Reformed Church in Belgium, Holland and the United States; the Canons of the Synod of Dort adopted in 1615, the prominent doctrinal standard of the Reformed Churches just mentioned; the second Helvetic Confession of 1675. The Synod of Dort was virtually an Ecumenical Council of the Calvinistic Churches of that day. It consisted of representatives from the Reformed Churches of Holland and Belgium, with delegates from the Calvinistic Churches of France, Switzerland, Germany, England and Scotland.

4. On the particular point in question the Westminster Confession does not, while the other Calvinistic Confessions do, express *the common faith of the Presbyterian Church at the present day*.

Dr. Hodge says: "The *supralapsarian* scheme is not consistent with the Scriptural exhibition of the character of God. He is declared to be a God of mercy and justice. But it is not compatible with

those divine attributes that men should be foreordained to misery and eternal death as innocent—that is, before they had apostatized from God.” (Theology, Vol. II, p. 319).

5. As the Confessional statement in question is indefensible, does not express the faith of the Church, is to many of unquestionable orthodoxy highly offensive, and subjects the Calvinistic system to unfounded criticism and unmerited odium, in 1889 sixteen Presbyteries overtured the Assembly to take such action as might be necessary to revise that statement. In response to these overtures, the Assembly submitted to the Presbyteries the following questions: “Do you desire a revision of the Confession of Faith? If so, in what respect and to what extent?”

Of the two hundred and thirteen Presbyteries one hundred and thirty-four answered the main question in the affirmative—that is, *two-thirds of the Presbyteries expressed a desire for a revision of the Confession.*

6. A committee of fifteen ministers and ten elders was accordingly appointed to revise the Confession. To secure a committee representative of different sections of the Church, different forms of statement of Calvinistic doctrine, and different views on the subject of revision, by the direction of the Assembly a committee of one from each Synod was appointed by the Moderator to nominate the Committee on Revision. The following ministers and elders, exceptionally qualified for the grave responsibility, were accordingly nominated and appointed: Dr. Green, of Princeton Seminary; Dr. Hastings, of Union; Dr. Riddle, of Allegheny; Dr. Beecher, of Auburn; Dr. Morris, of Lane; Dr. Herrick Johnson, of McCormick; Dr. Alexander, of San Francisco; Dr. Patton, of Princeton University; the Moderator, Dr. Moore; the retiring Moderator, Dr. Wm. C. Roberts; Dr. Van Dyke, of Brooklyn; Dr. Erskine, of Newville, Pa.; Dr. Leftwich, of Baltimore; Dr. Nicholls, of St. Louis; Dr. Burkhalter, of Cedar Rapids, Iowa; Justice Strong, Senator McMillan, Judge Hand, Judge Saylor, Hon. E. E. White, Winthrop S. Gilman, William Ernest, Barker Gummere, Charles M. Charnley, George Junkin. Dr. Hastings and Mr. Gummere having declined their appoint-

ments, the vacancies were filled by the appointment of Dr. Robert R. Booth and Morris Stratton. The committee discharged the difficult and delicate duty assigned them with painstaking patience, assiduity and fidelity. They reported progress to the Assembly of '91 and tentatively proposed certain changes to be submitted to the Presbyteries for suggestions of amendment, addition or omission. They made a final report to the Assembly of '92 recommending twenty-eight changes in the Confession to be submitted to the Presbyteries for their approval or disapproval. The substantial unanimity of the committee in their conclusions, constituted as the Revision Committee was, is a fact of exceeding interest and importance. In subscribing the report each member of the committee stated which of the proposed changes, if any, did not have his approval. Of the twenty-four members of the committee (the vacancy occasioned by the lamented death of Dr. Van Dyke having not been filled) twelve approved of the entire twenty-eight changes proposed, three of the committee approved of all the proposed changes but one, three of all but two, two of all but three, two of all but four. One of the committee disapproved of seven, one of twelve. The entire committee united in the statement that “altho the changes recommended are numerous and important, yet none of them, if adopted, will, in the judgment of the committee, impair in any way the Reformed or Calvinistic system of doctrine contained in the Confession.” The changes proposed were submitted to the Presbyteries by the Assembly.

7. At this meeting of the Assembly a new chapter, on “Amendments of the Constitution,” was added to the Form of Government. It prescribed that to amend the Confession of Faith amendments should be proposed by a committee of fifteen, appointed by the Assembly, *not more than two from any one Synod.* It so happened that the Revision Committee contained four from one Synod and three from each of two others. In discussing the proposed revision the opponents of revision raised the issue that the Revision Committee was not constituted constitutionally, and that their recommendations if adopted would be

invalid. It also so happened that the case of Dr. Briggs, which had been agitating the Church for several years, was to be decided by the Assembly of '93. Some who were not opposed to revision felt that changes in the Confession at that crisis would be untimely. Under these circumstances fifteen Presbyteries made no report on revision, seventeen reported they had taken no action on account of the doubtful constitutionality of the Revision Committee, and thirteen that they had taken no action without assigning any reason. By the remaining one hundred and seventy-five Presbyteries *all but three of the twenty-eight changes proposed were approved by decided majorities*—in many instances approximating two-thirds of the voting Presbyteries.

The result indicated that had the revision been made by a committee of unquestionable constitutionality and not handicapped by a concurrent trial for heresy, more than a score of the changes proposed would in all probability have been approved by the majority required for their adoption, two-thirds of the entire members of Presbyteries. No one of the amendments having received the required majority, the Confession remained unchanged.

8. If the doctrinal Standard of a Confessional Church means—as it should mean—*an accurate statement so far as practicable of the actual faith of the Church*, then the Confession amended by the changes recommended by a committee so eminent and representative, and approved by a majority of the voting Presbyteries—this and not the unrevised Confession is the doctrinal Standard of the Presbyterian Church of the present day. It states the Calvinistic system as the Presbyterian ministry of to-day are expected to hold and teach it. In a trial for heresy the Confession thus amended would be accepted as the test of orthodoxy. The present status therefore of our nominal Standard cannot be permanent. It is anomalous, indefensible, untenable. Agitation for a change is irrepressible because reasonable, and will continue until the present condition, which is one of unstable equilibrium, is made stable by making the form correspond to the fact, the nominal Standard of doctrine a statement as accurate as

practicable of the actual faith of the Church.

Subscription to "the system of doctrine" does not relieve the situation. It does not promote orthodoxy in either theology or ethics to require the subscription to a doctrinal Standard containing hyper-Calvinistic statements with the understanding that they may be repudiated.

The facts above cited would seem to justify the conclusion that the interests of the truth and the peace of the Church would be promoted by referring the report of the Revision Committee of '92 to a Revision Committee constitutionally constituted, to consider and to report to the next Assembly with such alterations, additions or omissions as may be deemed advisable, to be submitted to the Presbyteries for their approval or disapproval.

9. The alternative proposition is *a new creed*, and specifically a creed that is "irenic." By this we presume is meant a creed acceptable to those who do not hold the Calvinistic system nor the Confessional doctrine of the inspiration of the Scriptures. Scarce thirty years ago the Old and New School Churches united on the doctrinal basis of the Confession and the Catechisms. Within twenty years after the Reunion the leader of the self-styled "progressives" in the Church announced that "the great sin of the Lutheran and Reformed Churches" (including, of course, and pre-eminently the Presbyterians) "was subscription to elaborate creeds." He also announced that "the time had come to reconstruct our theology." After ten years' germination the fruit of the seed then cast into "progressive" soil is the new creed proposition of to-day. It was not originally called "irenic," but, with commendable frankness, "polemic." And so it is; irenic, indeed, with respect to those without the Church, but to those within, not only polemic, but revolutionary—as much so as a proposition in the Baptist Church to allow the baptism of infants, and by sprinkling, or in the Episcopal Church to acknowledge the parity of the clergy.

It proposes that the Presbyterian Church abandon her historic position, encase in a museum or bury with due honor the standards under which she has won her many victories, and henceforth

fight under a new flag—new, indeed, to Presbyterians, but one which has a history, and that history not such as to give it a claim superior to our old war-worn banners on the loyalty of Christ's faithful followers. The answer to this propo-

sition has been given in the action of our Confessional Church during the last decade, and emphatically in the solemn and unanimous deliverance of the last Assembly.

PRINCETON, N. J.

The Prospect in Fiction.

By Maurice Thompson.

THE opening of a new century may be the beginning of a literary revolution. Since the revival of art and letters in Europe at the close of the dark ages there have been many complete turns of the wheel of public taste. Some critics have thought that these changes are to be referred to the influence of certain master minds whose natural bent was in the direction which they forced the popular taste to take. Others have accounted for extreme and sudden reversals of prevailing literary and artistic currents on the ground that the spirit of the world has its cycles of movement, its rings of growth, like those of a tree, and that the prevailing aspiration of civilization controls the movements of the master genius, who does no more than give artistic utterance to that aspiration.

Just how deep and powerful the present distinct movement toward a romantic revival may be no one can tell. Many facts, however, point to a veering of popular interest from the fiction of character analysis and social problems to the historical novel and the romance of heroic adventure. We have had a period of intense, not to say morbid, introversion directed mainly upon diseases of the social, domestic, political and religious life of the world. It may be that, like all other currents of interest when turned upon insoluble problems, this rush of inquiry, this strain of exploitation, has about run its course. The public mind may be tired of contemplating the irremediable weaknesses and ancient corruptions to which human nature is heir. The time may be at hand when in the economy of the world's organism there

must be a renewal of that substance of life and character which is fed through the imagination. Science has overflowed its boundary, and for many years past has been sophisticating fiction and poetry and insinuating itself into the very pores of religion. Probably this overflow has a limit, just where we cannot say, and it may be expected that when the limit shall be reached there will be reflux and undertow. At the present moment the air, so to say, is full of those indefinable indications of a great general change in the trend of public curiosity and taste.

Unquestionably mere commercial considerations are not of highest value in making the reckonings of literature; but in our age the commercial energy does fill one of the tubes—a very important and influential one—in the thermometer of success, a success, resent it as we may, not to be separated from its sordid connections. Great commercial interest seems to be turned or turning from the novel of commonplace life and the story of the analysis of crime and filth to the historical romance, the story of heroism and the tale of adventure. People seem to be interested as never before in the interpretation of history. It may be that signs in the air of great world changes have set all minds more or less to feeling out for precedents and examples by which to measure the future's probabilities. Has a whiff of freshness been let into the world's imagination by a sudden rent made in the order of things?

A few years ago the stories of Zola, Tolstoi and Ibsen fairly controlled book commerce. Certain critics saw no possibility of a return to Scott, Dumas, Dickens and Thackeray. As for Victor Hugo,