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FREDERICTON, MARCH, 1902.

THE QUESTION OF CHARITY.

The Gleaner of a few weeks ago in its severe strictures on the management of the charitable associations, and its thinly disguised attack on the principle of charity itself, called forth several replies, chief among which was that of Dean Partridge. Now it is not our purpose to dissect the arguments of either in detail but to draw a comparison between the different schools of thought represented by the writers. The Gleaner's is that cold-blooded, selfish, unscrupulous philosophy—"the survival of the fittest," "every tub must stand on its own bottom;" and "every one for himself and the devil for the hindmost," in short the selfish, commercial spirit which aims at making the normal condition of the poor to be the slaves of the circumstances which the rich and well-to-do chose to make for them, and under the hypocritical declaration of equal rights maintain a condition of serfdom, worse in many respects than Southern slavery, because the class in the ascendant have no moral obligation to provide for the common class any longer than they are useful to them.

The school to which the Dean belongs may be termed the ecclesiastical school, and is different, but bears some strong points of resemblance. While blinking at the unjust and inequitable conditions, and upholding the class distinc-

tions which largely contribute to their perpetuation it cannot bid the poor man go off quietly and die and not disturb the pleasures of the rich and great by their complaints. It acknowledges itself "its brother's keeper" and holds itself bound to keep the letter if not the spirit of the law by patching up the inequalities of society by a little charity here and there—a mess of pottage as it were, for which the poor must be thankful, satisfied with the unjust conditions of society as ordained by God and willing to sacrifice their manhood and self-respect for the crumbs that fall from the tables of the rich and great.

Now, we do not largely blame either of these gentlemen for the opinions they hold; they are to a great extent the victims of hereditary and environment: their stations in life has kept them from intimate association with the poor—thus the former's harshness and selfishness is not so much the result of a bad heart as of education and environment, and the solicitude of the latter, in our opinion, does not spring so much from an enthusiastic championship of the rights of the poor as a vague sense of duty instilled in him from childhood, and largely the result of his calling. Now, we are only an obscure Socialist editor with no education to boast of, a certain sense of right and justice and a little experience mixed with a certain amount of horse sense, and our ideas of society are widely different from that of either of those gentlemen. We believe in the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man to start out with, and that we are all children of the one great Father, who made the earth and waters, and all that is in them for the use and benefit of all his children.

The Father is good, but some of his children are decidedly bad as was shown by one of the boys in the first family he established murdering his brother. The murdering and injustice has gone on ever since, and while the Father allows his sons full scope in their dealings with each other he has threatened a severe punishment for those who maltreat or rob their brother men. There will be a great reckoning some day both in this world and the next for those who advance the claims of aristocracy above humanity, the rights of property above the rights of man, and the irrebensible rule of

the classes in the interests of privilege and monopoly against the expressed will of the masses in the interests of justice and equal rights.

In my next issue I shall endeavor to outline a more rational and just political and social system such as obtains to some extent today in Switzerland and New Zealand.

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