

A PROTESTANTIC DISPUTE.

A recent number of *Politiken*, a paper published in Copenhagen, contains an account of a serious split in the ranks of the Grundtvigians, a religious body of prominence in Denmark and with followers in Norway and Sweden, and perhaps in Germany. The fact is but one more evidence of the impossibility of keeping the Protestant structures compact on the foundations on which they rest, and for this reason it is of general interest.

Old Bishop Grundtvig assumed a quite peculiar position. His researches in northern mythology and his studies of Icelandic and Anglo-Saxon, and his decided taste for German philosophy were probably more potent in framing his mode of thinking than were his theological explorations. But, nevertheless, he made a fair start on the road of truth, when, as a result of his reasoning, he announced the conviction that the church of God needs something more for its guidance than the written word, which he characterized as the "dead letter." This position was a bold step from Protestantism, whose very essence is to refer to the Bible as the final arbitrator of all questions of faith. Grundtvig contended for a "living word" always present in the church, to animate it and guide it. And as the standard of that living word, he, curiously enough, pointed to the three articles of the *symbolum apostolicum*. This venerable confession of faith, he held, was formulated by our Lord and memorized by His Apostles and by them further transmitted to the church, to be regarded in all ages to come as the correct expression of what a Christian must believe in order to be saved; what is more or less than that, whether stated in holy writ or elsewhere was open to criticism; it may be true or it may be false. On this general principle a new theological system was built, which seems to be a connecting link between Lutheranism and Romanism, although, we believe, the Grundtvigians never formally separated themselves from the Lutheran church.

The idea of the old bishop, when narrowing down the standard of the church to the Symbol of the Apostles, was undoubtedly to find a basis broad enough for any Christian to stand upon and thereby prevent the constant schisms and secure unity. He died in 1872, and now after twenty years his followers are engaged in a dispute about that very standard of unity. The question is stated thus: Are we to suppose that the Almighty ever formulated a condition for the salvation of man? Some of Grundtvig's followers reply in the affirmative. They hold that if the Lord has revealed Himself, He has certainly told us exactly what to believe. His word is given in the three articles of faith, and those who do not believe these articles must be damned. Others say that those articles of faith are not given as a condition but as an offer of salvation; that those who believe in them will certainly be saved, but it does not follow that others must necessarily be damned.

It is, of course, the business of the Grundtvigians only to fight out this

distinction between themselves. But as they engage in the controversy, they teach others that no philosophy, however broad, can save the Christian world from crumbling to pieces. It is true that mankind needs something more than the written word. But what it needs is revelation in the same sense of the term in which it is applied to former ages. We need men, whose minds are so prepared that they are capable of reflecting the Divine mind, whenever circumstances require it; men through whom our Father in heaven can communicate His will to His people and manifest His power to the world. Revelation alone is the remedy against error and schisms. By revelation Israel was saved from Egypt and the Mosaic era instituted. In the same way the Gospel was introduced, and by that means the present confusion of creeds and churches and systems will be terminated. As in the beginning the Spirit brooded over chaos and a beautiful world was created, so by the same Spirit the inharmonious religious elements will at last be brought to submission and give room for a new and glorious dispensation. This is the hope of all who believe in the written word and it is the testimony of the Spirit through the "living oracles" of our Lord.

COMPARATIVE RAILROAD RATES.

The sub-committee on finance of the United States Senate collected a great mass of data during its investigation into the subject of wages and prices. One of the most interesting items in the aggregation is the report upon the changes in railway transportation rates on freight traffic throughout this country for a period beginning in 1852 and ending in the present year. This was made by Mr. C. C. McCain, auditor of the Interstate Commerce commission. The gentleman points out that the investigation conducted by him involved a wider range of inquiry than had probably been previously undertaken. The information sought was not known to have been at any prior time collated to the extent desired either by the railroads or by any of the agencies from which railway statistics frequently emanate. Naturally the success of the investigation depended upon the friendly co-operation of the railroads, and we are advised that wherever the records had been preserved and were thought of service, every facility was offered for their inspection, and valuable assistance was rendered in analyzing the rate schedules, many of which had become obsolete years before the present incumbents in office had entered the service.

The intention was to begin the work with the year 1850, but this was found to be impracticable. Accidents, removals and changes of various kinds had destroyed or misplaced records and in only two cases were whole records for any time before 1864 available. It is also the fact that from 1864 to 1866 the schedules were fragmentary and the conclusion was arrived at that no extended research for material could be made before the year 1867 because of its requiring a great deal of

time with no corresponding assurance of results to justify the expenditure of labor. We are shown that one of the troublesome features of the investigation was to determine the amount of data necessary for such a report, but it was finally decided to collect rates for as long a time as possible in which articles of commercial prominence, such as grain, beef, lumber, etc., should figure, together with freight classifications, changes in competitive rates and miscellaneous data generally.

Bradstreet's says: "The report is well worthy of careful study by all who wish to have accurate information regarding the topics discussed, and will doubtless receive the recognition to which it is entitled as a piece of valuable statistical work. In general it may be said that the figures given illustrate the constant tendency of the character of classification towards uniformity and the growing importance of the classification in the making of rates, as is shown by the fact that at this time fewer articles are rated independently of classification than ever before in the history of the railroad." It is also held that the tendency of the railways towards reduction per ton per mile is plainly shown, corresponding with the increased aggregate tonnage throughout the country as a whole. Also it is held that there are few roads which within ten or fifteen years have not reduced their rates from 10 to 15 per cent. This is not generally understood, but as a matter of justice it ought to be.

QUICKLY MADE—AND LOST!

If the financial pressure existing in all parts of the country brings to light many instances of wild and reckless speculation, it also in some cases serves to recall how some of the big fortunes of the country were made. One of the most surprising of these, revived by the present stringency in St. Paul, is the case of Lyman Dayton, who left millions when he died. He was a pioneer, and built a house in Minnesota's capital when the place was a village on the hills, and what is now the business district was a swamp. One day Dayton and two friends sat on a bluff talking and gazing at the "mud hole." It was suggested that if the town grew the lowland might become valuable. Soon after the three separated, and early next morning one of them saddled his horse and started for the land office at Stillwater, eighteen miles away, intending to, pre-empt the swamp. He had gone but a short distance when he saw a companion of the day before ahead of him, also on horseback and with the same purpose in view. The two raced to Stillwater, and finished even in front of the land office. At the door stood Lyman Dayton smoking his pipe. "You're too late, boys," he said; "I came over last night." In the course of years the "mud hole" made him a multi-millionaire.

AMERICA'S LARGEST corset factory has shut down. If such an institution as this cannot develop sufficient staying power, need any one wonder that other concerns suspend?