

The Catholic Record.

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London, Saturday, November 13, 1897

THEOSOPHY AGAIN.

We have received from Mr. F. E. Titus of Toronto the following rejoinder to our remarks on his explanation of Theosophy given in our issue of Oct. 4. It is not our intention to enter into a discussion of Theosophical principles in the CATHOLIC RECORD, as we have not space for it; nevertheless we deem it right to allow Mr. Titus to give this vindication of them, as the matter has been before alluded to, though slightly, in our columns:

Editor CATHOLIC RECORD:

I thank you for your courteous treatment of my former letter, correcting what I deemed a misapprehension of the relation of Theosophy to Buddhism. A statement, however, appears in your editorial of Oct. 4, which causes me to again trouble you. It is the sentence in which you impudently make Metempsychosis a Theosophical doctrine. Metempsychosis, as usually defined and popularly understood, especially by the followers of Pythagoras, involves the possibility that the human soul in future existences may find itself embodied in animal and even lower forms of consciousness. This is an idea which is repugnant to all Theosophical teachings. Repeatedly has it been explained by our writers, notably Madame Blavatsky and Mrs. Besant, that the human soul cannot descend to a form lower than the human.

The Theosophic teaching is as follows:

Omitting, for the present, reference to the conditionally immortal part of man's nature, man may be divided into two parts: one—the higher, the ego, being immortal; the other, the lower, the personality, being mortal. The mortal has only one life as a distinct and separate entity, but the immortal ego descends again and again into human form, assuming on each descent a new human body. In each body it gains new experiences, learns new lessons; each experience and lesson gives an added touch to the character. Eventually the ego passes through all stages of development on earth, from its beginning in the form of the lowest savage, up to the fullness of the stature of the perfect man.

To this doctrine we give the name Reincarnation, indicating in this word the fact of the pre-existence of this human soul and its repeated plunges into earthly body.

Yours sincerely, F. E. Titus.

Toronto, Oct., 1897.

Our original very brief reference to Theosophy, which elicited Mr. Titus' first letter was, to the effect that there are persons on this continent who are endeavoring to introduce Buddhism into the country as a substitute for Christianity, under the form of Theosophy, whereas in India itself, Japan and China, the religion of Buddha is very rapidly and surely disappearing, either by the conversion of these heathen nations to Christianity, the modifications being made in the religion itself, or the lapse of Buddhists into absolute atheism.

Our last statement can be substantiated. It is known that there are 150,000 Christians in Japan, of whom about 60,000 are Catholics, 23,000 of the Greek Church, the rest being of various denominations. It will be noticed that the Catholic Church stands first in the number of its adherents. In the other countries named a similar state of things exists.

The last statement is not the one to which Mr. Titus objected, but to our representing Theosophy as a form of Buddhism. We showed, however, by his own extracts from Mrs. Besant and Blavatsky that it is derived in part at least from Buddha, and in part from other forms of heathenism, etc.

In his present letter Mr. Titus raises altogether a new issue. It is that the Metempsychosis of the Pythagoreans and other pagans was of a grosser kind than that of the Theosophists.

We accept this explanation; but what difference does this make in regard to the mere fancifulness of the system? It appears from Mr. Titus' explanation that instead of Theosophy being the discovery of ancient truth through the religious books of heathendom, etc., as Theosophists have generally asserted it to be, it is merely the invention of human minds of the present day. Does this fact make it true?

Surely not, unless it be demonstrated, and this can never be effected. A fancy it is, and a fancy it will ever be.

Reason itself furnishes good motives to believe that the human soul is immortal, but without a revelation from God Himself it is doubtful whether or not man would ever have known of that immortality. Cicero in his "Natura Deorum" taught it as a probable doctrine, but added with his usual keenness of thought that it is impossible that we should know it as a certainty unless some god should come to enlighten us. Other ancient philosophers have spoken similarly.

There can be no doubt that this notion of the soul's immortality was derived from the primitive revelation given by God to man, and which we have in the Holy Bible, in Judaism and Christianity. Christ, who is truly God, confirmed belief in it, but without this divine illumination we feel assured that we could not have known it as a truth. But there is no such divine revelation in regard to Theosophy or Metempsychosis. It is simply the invention of man, without a foundation either on our innate consciousness or any solid or reasonable philosophy.

MR. JAMES BAIN ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION.

Mr. James Bain, sr., formerly chairman of the Public School Board, of Toronto, has written to Inspector James L. Hughes a letter in regard to the question of religious instruction in schools, which has been published as an important document bearing upon this subject.

The letter takes a most decisive stand against religious teaching of any kind in the school room, though its writer admits the necessity of such teaching elsewhere. He maintains that it should be confined to the home and to the churches.

As the special object of Mr. Bain is to encourage the Toronto Public School Board in their opposition to the Anglican demand for the introduction of religious teaching into the Toronto schools, this public expression of his opinion does not directly concern us. It is primarily a dispute between the various shades of Protestant opinion, and so far we have no desire to intervene. Nevertheless Mr. Bain does not confine himself to the mere discussion of the local controversy, but deals with the whole question whether religious teaching is advisable in schools at all, coming to the conclusion that it ought to be totally excluded. We therefore deem it right to make some comment on what he has written to show that he has entirely misconceived the true view of the matter.

Mr. Bain having been long at the head of the Public School Board of Toronto is no doubt fairly well qualified to express the views of a large section, and probably of a majority, of the Protestants of Toronto on the question of religious education, and that the people of Toronto hold still the same opinion as they did in the past may be judged from the fact that the School Board is almost unanimous in opposition to the demand of the Anglican body. But we cannot attach to Mr. Bain's utterances so much authority as Mr. Hughes seems to give them. There has undoubtedly been growing up, even among the Protestants of Canada, of late years, the sentiment that religious teaching is necessary, and that there is now too little of it. The Anglican demand is one of many evidences of this, and we may infer that many Protestants believe that they were in error in the past in opposing the Catholic demand for separate schools on the ground that religion ought not to be taught. Mr. Bain says:

"It is now, however, generally understood that the State or governing power exceeds its powers when it attempts to foster religion or interfere with the conscientious religious views of the people, or in any way seek the promotion of any one form of religion to the injury of others. This is the duty of the Church alone. 'Go ye and preach the Gospel to every creature,' is the command given to the Church, not to the State: its duty is done when it affords the Church the same protection it gives to all its citizens; but if teachers are to be paid for teaching theology in our schools, the State will be endowing our schools to that extent."

This is the chief principle on which the advocates of purely secular education have constantly rested their cause, and we should examine it closely.

It is quite true that the command to preach the Gospel was given to the Church alone, and for this reason the duty of presiding over religious teaching belongs to the Church and not to the State, which in this country may be understood to mean a majority of

the people. But does not Mr. Bain see that this principle equally prohibits any majority from interfering with or prohibiting, or impeding the Church, or the minority from supplying religious instruction?

We say, then, that an absolutely secular school system does so interfere.

Let us suppose a case. A minority of the people in any locality are anxious to secure the best possible religious as well as secular education for their children. They are able and willing to do this by supporting schools and supplying teachers who will carry out their wishes.

We admit that the State is justified in insisting that in proportion to the ability of the people, a good secular education should be given to the children in the case supposed, but has it the right to say:

"You shall not teach religion in the way you propose, without incurring our displeasure, and if you adopt that plan a penalty will be inflicted upon you. You shall be obliged to contribute to the support of schools for the majority, while you maintain your own at your own expense?"

We say that this would be an intolerable oppression and tyranny, and a most unjust interference with parental rights to give their children a good education in all departments of knowledge, moral, religious and secular. It would also interfere with that right and duty of the Church to teach the Gospel, which is, we admit, well set forth by Mr. Bain himself as follows:

"Are we, then, to prevent our children from receiving religious instruction? By no means: a heavy responsibility rests upon the Church and every member of it in this respect. Our Lord's command is, 'Feed my lambs,' and every parent is called upon to bring up his children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

It is evident, then, that the State, if it deems it proper to establish State schools, should take care not to inflict on the minority the injustice we have indicated. Perhaps the best way to do this is just the method existing in Ontario and Quebec, and which is practically the same as that which exists partially in England.

Mr. Bain says the children should be taught religion at home. Every one knows that most parents have not the time nor ability to teach their children properly, and it is for this reason that schools are needed at all.

There are some other points in Mr. Bain's letter on which we wish to make some comment, but we must leave their consideration for a future issue.

THE GLOBE'S TEMPEST.

The Globe has certainly the virtue—of virtue it has—of persisting in any assertion it has once made, and in any position it has once taken. Having once asserted that Archbishop Cleary is intolerant, it is unwilling to admit that it has erred, and it continues to reiterate the charge. And on what foundation was this charge originally made? Simply because his Grace pointed out to Catholics that it is unlawful for them to attend Protestant religious services of any kind.

We have shown already that in this neither bigotry nor intolerance is implied. It is the necessary consequence of the doctrine which Catholics have believed for over eighteen centuries, that there is but one true Church, divinely appointed, and that all her children are bound to hear her voice and obey her commands. This law was not made even specially against Protestants, for it existed centuries before Protestantism had a name or a being.

But there is something else. The Archbishop spoke slightly of one of the Protestant sects—the Congregationalist—by calling it "a small sect."

Wherein is found the very great intolerance in this manner of speech? The Protestants themselves constantly speak of their religious divisions as sects, and by what other name are we to call them? If we are duly informed of some more acceptable designation we may adopt it, yet it is undeniable that they are sects according to the usage of our language; and, further, it can scarcely be denied that the Congregationalist sect is a small one—small in comparison with the world-wide Catholic Church, and small even in comparison with other Protestant sects. It may be because of our obtuseness, but we cannot see wherein consists the heinousness of the Archbishop's offence.

We pointed out last week that the Protestant ministers of Ontario are accustomed to speak of Catholics in no such mild terms as these. Archbishop Cleary's pastoral was addressed to Catholics only, and was read only in the Catholic churches of Kingston, whereas such gentlemen as Rev.

Messrs. Carman and Wilde have been accustomed to denounce Catholics in their pulpits, indeed, but also in the press, in the most violent terms, and it may be remembered that one of these gentlemen even undertook to lead the braves of his congregation on a crusade to drive "Jesuits" out of the country, or to shoot them down—an act which he declared would be no crime: yet neither the Globe, nor any other Ontario paper has ever raised such a tempest about these things, as has been stirred up during the last few weeks about Archbishop Cleary.

We have already pointed out also that the intolerance, not of all, but of a large section of Ontario Protestants is a matter of notoriety. We need not repeat our proofs of this. We have no desire to stir up unpleasant matters. We shall merely say that the continued existence of Orange and A. P. A. lodges is proof enough of this. We shall also quote the following from the Globe of last Friday:

"Let us suppose that one of these persons, a Protestant, has been listening to one of the ranters who go about attacking the Catholic Church and its institutions, and warning us that St. Bartholomew or the Inquisition may be repeated unless we keep our eye on Rome. We try to re-assure him and win him back to his normal condition of tolerance and charity by pointing him to the character of the Catholic priests and nuns whom he sees going about their work, and the Catholic laymen with whom he has personal and business dealings."

We are glad to find the Globe express itself so tolerantly, but we do not altogether see this tolerance exemplified in the very different manner in which it deals sometimes with the Catholic and the Protestant clergy.

THE MANITOBA SCHOOL SETTLEMENT.

There have been several rumors published during the last few months in regard to the final settlement of the Manitoba school question, most of these being to the effect that the Pope was about to issue or had actually issued, his decision enjoining on Catholics to accept the agreement arrived at between the Dominion and Manitoba Governments. These rumors do not appear in any case to have been authentic, as the real decision of the Holy Father has not yet been made public in any way.

It will certainly be openly published as soon as it is issued.

There is now a new statement on the subject coming from Rome and sent by the Associated Press as follows:

Rome, Nov. 3.—The new Archbishop of Montreal, Mgr. Bruchesi, has arrived here and will reside at the Canadian College during his stay in this city. He declares that the right of Roman Catholics to separate schools in Manitoba will be supported, and it is said that the Pope will shortly give a decision on the subject, as the moment is regarded as opportune, in view of the calmness of the Canadian press since the mission of Mgr. Merry del Val to Canada.

This bears the appearance of authenticity, but deceptive announcements on the subject have been so numerous that we cannot receive even this one implicitly. The Holy Father's decision will speak for itself when it will be announced, and we give the present rumor for what it may be worth.

A LIVELY DISCUSSION.

An editorial note which appeared some time ago in our columns elicited the interchange of several controversial letters in the columns of the Evening News of this city.

Our note was to the effect that Mr. Moody, the Revivalist, though desirous that his son should be educated for the ministry, fears to entrust him to any of the theological colleges for his education, because they are so tainted with Rationalism, under the name of Higher Criticism, that none of them can be relied on to educate a truly Christian clergyman.

We were loth to make any comments on the discussion as long as it was being conducted in the columns of our lively contemporary, but now that it appears to have been closed it is proper we should make a few remarks thereon.

"Higher Critic" opened the discussion, maintaining that either the CATHOLIC RECORD or Mr. Moody is misinformed in regard to the teaching of the theological colleges, and the character of Higher Criticism. In proof of this, he states that "in our own city, for example, we have numerous college graduates occupying our pulpits. Will the RECORD attempt to say that infidelity instead of Christianity is being taught by them?"

In reply to this we have to say that it was Mr. Moody's views we quoted, as reported in several American papers, and that he was correctly reported to be beyond doubt, as he has given utterance to similar views on Higher Criticism, in Canada. Mr. Moody is probably better acquainted with the general trend of theological teaching than our friend "Higher Critic." It does not appear, however, that Mr. Moody had in view so much the colleges of Canada as those of the United States. We need scarcely recall to the minds of our readers the fearful turmoil raised throughout this continent by the fact that two Presbyterian Biblical Professors—Prof. Briggs of New York, and Prof. Smith of Cincinnati—were brought to task by their Church for teaching what the General Assembly regarded as real infidelity, namely, the practical rejection of the Bible as the infallible word of God. Yet both these professors were sustained by their college faculties. It is Mr. Moody, if he has been reported correctly, who asserts that the colleges generally are similarly tainted.

But we are not surprised at "Higher Critic's" contention that such colleges are very Christian, when we see what he means by Christianity. He says in one of his letters:

"As Protestantism in the past shook herself free from the dogma of an infallible Pope or Church, so to day she is shaking herself free from the dogma of an infallible Bible."

And again: "She is revolting from the teaching of those who would interject a priest, or a Church, a book or a man made dogma between an individual and his God."

We did express our regret that Protestantism is tending toward infidelity, and here is a gentleman calling us to account for so doing; yet he tells us that both bible and dogma are being surely and properly rejected by that same Protestantism!

Certainly we see no difference between Higher Critic's views and complete infidelity. It is true, he says "man-made dogma," but the whole tenor of his letter shows that under this term he includes all dogmas derived from or generally substantiated by the bible—the Trinity, the Divinity of Christ, etc.

It is just such Christianity as this the prevalence of which Mr. Moody deprecates, and we do so likewise. We repeat, as we said before, that it is only by a return to the one divinely instituted Church that the abyss is to be avoided.

Another writer, over the signature E. A. P., ably answered Higher Critic, showing the necessity of clinging to the faith "once delivered to the saints," and the danger of such indifference in religion as is inculcated by "Higher Critic."

EDUCATIONAL PAPER.

At the Jubilee celebration of Toronto Normal School which was concluded in that city last week, a paper was read by Mr. S. P. Robins, LL. D., Principal of McGill Normal School, on the position of Protestant education in Quebec. He declared that great difficulty is experienced in maintaining the Protestant schools in the centre of a mass of French-speaking people, and that the severe financial strain which they entail upon their supporters, who are very much scattered, makes it certain that the Dissident school system is doomed outside the commercial colonies of Montreal and Sherbrooke, and that, even in these centres it may not survive. He admits, however, that should this occur, the fault will not lie with the Catholic majority, for he attested the perfect fairness with which the school legislation in Quebec is administered. He added even the remarkable statement that "the English speaking Protestant element will disappear."

We have no doubt that Mr. Robins is well qualified to speak of the condition of the Protestant schools of his province, which he says are in a high state of efficiency, and we are aware that the ratio of Protestants to the whole population is growing less through the rural districts, but we cannot suppose that the English-speaking population will disappear as he says, especially in the commercial centres, for enterprise will always seek favorable fields for operation; and even in the rural districts, though the English population is comparatively growing less, it has an absolute increase.

In regard to the Dissident schools, it is to be remarked that the Protestant population has probably overdone the thing, as they are more sparse than are the Catholics of Ontario, nevertheless in proportion to population they

have three times as many Separate schools as have the Ontario Catholics. Many of these must be in localities where it is impossible to keep them in a state of efficiency without a great financial strain on their supporters. The Catholics of Ontario as a rule do not establish Separate schools where they foresee they will not be able to maintain them.

At the same session, a curious paper was read by Mr. J. L. Hughes, the Toronto School Inspector. Mr. Hughes took the role of a prophet and foretold that as now the schools are free, in the twentieth century the children will be free. The world will be wonderfully changed indeed if nature itself is to be thus changed, that children shall be no longer subject to parental control, or that their minds shall be those of mature men and women. That this is his meaning appears to be evident, as he explains that "they will be trained to naturally discover their own problems."

STRONG WORDS.

The Ministerial Association of Hamilton held a meeting last week, at which the subject of "Higher Criticism" was discussed in a lively manner. Utterances of Evangelist Moody and Mr. S. H. Blake in which the so-called Higher Criticism was condemned were strongly denounced. The Rev. Dr. Lyle said that the higher critics are doing a good work for Christianity. He added with an elegance and politeness peculiar to himself that "the memories of these higher critics will live when the wretched squealing pigmies who belittle their work shall be forgotten." The Rev. S. Marshall added that it "is doubtful whether those who attack the Higher Criticism understand Messianic prophecy." This, no doubt, was intended as a thrust at Victoria College, which condemned Prof. Workman for denying the reality of Messianic prophecy. Higher Criticism, by which is really meant that criticism which undermines the authority of the Bible, seems to be in favor among the ministers of Hamilton, for there appears to have been not a voice raised against these Latitudinarian views. Messrs. Moody and Blake narrowly escaped being condemned unanimously by formal resolution, but more discreet views prevailed and the motion was dropped.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

MRS. MARGARET SHEPHERD is at present making a tour of the maritime provinces, but as she is now pretty well known all over the country, is not meeting with the success which attended her lectures in Ontario. Large numbers of our Protestant friends in these parts, a few years ago exhibited much enthusiasm in her regard, but now they would prefer not to have her name mentioned, as it brings back to their recollection how easily and completely they were duped by that wily and abandoned character.

We shall always be glad to send free a parcel of sample copies of the CATHOLIC RECORD to any of our subscribers who may wish to circulate them amongst Protestants, or amongst Catholics who are not subscribers. It is to be regretted that many Catholics who can well afford to subscribe for the RECORD make a practice of borrowing it. This should not be the case. The yearly subscription price is only a small item, and few families there are who could not well afford to subscribe. We know many subscribers who have a poor opinion of neighbors who regularly call to borrow the RECORD, oftentimes before the subscriber has time to read it himself.

The Universalists held their General Convention in Chicago toward the end of October. The principal business which occupied their attention was the question of adopting a new Confession of Faith. Two new Confessions were proposed, both of which were rejected, so that they still adhere, nominally at least, to their present Confession. It can scarcely be that they can reject more of Christianity than they have done already, without becoming mere Deists, but we are not informed whether the present tendency is towards becoming more Christian or more Rationalistic and Deistic.

EARL CADOGAN, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, made a speech in Dublin, on the 7th, in which he stated that at the present moment the Government were on the eve of carrying out important changes in the social administration of Ireland which would secure to her liberties which England had for so long enjoyed. These

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