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THE CATHOLIC.

Hamilton, G. D.

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From the Catholic Advocate.

INTOLERANCE.

We are often told by Protestant writers and declaimers, that the Catholic Church is essentially intolerant, and their charge implies not merely to intolerance of error in the abstract, but a sanguinary and violent coercion of the consciences of men, forcing them by the strong arm of power to consent to her doctrines. In order to prove this assertion, reference is made to the few pages which a lengthened history presents, where religious principles have been, either in part or entirely, the occasion of violent and sanguinary deeds.—We are told of the St Bartholomew massacre, and the Spanish Inquisition.

This assertion has been fairly met by Catholic writers, and to all not determined to maintain it even in the face of argument, it has been shown conclusively, that human passions and the policy of governments, are unaccountable for the evils complained of, and not the Catholic religion. In an excellent article of the Dublin Review, on the *History of England*, by Dr. Lingard, which we design as soon as convenient to lay before our readers, we find a passage concerning the St Bartholomew massacre, which furnishes official evidence that the havoc of that day was owing to the policy and fear of Catherine, consequent upon her unsuccessful attempt to assassinate Admiral Coligny, a distinguished leader of the Huguenots.—Dr. Lingard, after due examination, (and his examinations are always patient and impartial), maintains that the massacre was rather “an accidental occurrence than the result of a premeditated plot.”

The Spanish Inquisition, as all history shows was an engine of state policy.—And if on the bench of the inquisitors, clergymen were found, their office was restricted to the examination of causes; and by positive ecclesiastical canons, they were forbidden to interfere with the execution of the sentences. We refer our readers for information on this subject, to the Letters of Count de Maistre, recently published in the *Religious Cabinet*, of Baltimore.

On the other hand, with many there exists the delusive impression, which is sedulously encouraged by Protestant controversialists, that Protestantism is essentially tolerant. We find the following in a late French writer, and translated it for the information of those who cherish such a delusion:

“The Reformer of Geneva thus wrote in one of his letters. ‘Servetus was thrown into prison; he escaped, I know not how, and was four months wandering through Italy; at length, drawn by his own unhappy destiny, he came back, and was arrested at my instigation.’”

In another place he writes: “Servetus is retained in prison by our magistrates, and I hope he will soon receive his chastisement.”

Again, he thus wrote to Dupont concerning certain persons who were unlucky enough to understand the Bible differently from himself: “Such monsters ought to be strangled like the Spaniard Servetus.”

This tolerant Reformer would also have strangled Gentil, Oekin, Blandrat and others, had they not either retreated or saved themselves by flight. The punishment of Servetus was approved by Melancthon, Bullinger, and the assembled Protestant clergy of Switzerland.

Bucer declared that this wretch ought to have had all his members torn into pieces.

Now let us listen to the words of Luther; “We relieve ourselves of robbers by the ———, of ussains by the sword, of heretics by fire; why should we not employ all these arms against those monsters of perdition, the Popes and Cardinals? Why should we not wash our hands in their blood?”

In England, the history of Protestant intolerance is written in letters of blood. Catholics were there hung, embowelled, quartered, because they refused to acknowledge the ecclesiastical supremacy of Henry VIII., or of his daughter Elizabeth, when this cruel and monstrous Pape assumed the right to govern the Church of God.—John Knox, the Reformer of Scotland, boasted that he could “prove by very clear texts of the Scripture prophets, that the Catholics were a generation of sterile and withered plants, fit only to be cast into the fire of hell.”

Twelve Irish Protestant Bishops decided solemnly, under Charles I., that to grant liberty of conscience to Catholics, and to consent to the free exercise of their religion, was “a grievous sin.” So states Plowden in his history of Ireland.

In 1642, the famous Ushur caused Charles the First to promise that he would never connive at Papisms, and would not give him the sacraments until after he had made this intolerant promise. The poor king did not then imagine, that his Presbyterian subjects would that very year afford him a chance to deserve a place in the martyrology of Protestant persecution.—Under the tyrannical dictatorship of Cromwell, the Puritans in England and Ireland made use of dogs to discover the hiding places of the Catholic priests whom they found and murdered.—(See Harper’s Family Library, Hist. Ireland).

During the last half of the 17th century, and the beginning of the eighteenth, the Irish Protestants continued to amuse themselves in hunting down the priests. The Presbyterians have not only persecuted kings, but also men eminent for their knowledge and genius. Of this the celebrated Grotius is a proof; every one knows what he suffered in his prison.

In the Low Countries the Gomarists furiously persecuted the Armenians, although both belonged to a sect of Presbyterians.

Finally, John Wesley, who is so much eulogised, in 1789, preached that no Pro-

testant government, whether Mahometan or Pagan, ought to tolerate Catholics.

Now I wish to prove, by the avowal of several Protestants who have spoken candidly, that the Catholics have not shown themselves persecutors or intolerant.

Here are the words of the famous Archbishop Taylor: “The justice due to Catholics, so much calumniated, obliges us to add, that having at three different times obtained power in Ireland, they have never caused the least injury to any person from a motive of religion.”

Thomas Campbell, the famous poet, said in a London journal, the *Morning Chronicle*, on the 11th of February, 1833, that the tolerance practised by the Polish Catholics ought to make Protestants blush.

The Catholic colony sent by Queen Mary to America, and which gave the name Maryland to the country where it settled, was made distinguished on account of the paternal and kind reception it gave to the Puritans.

The severe laws enacted by Virginia against the Puritans, obliged them to seek refuge in great numbers in Maryland, that in a Catholic country they might enjoy the liberty of conscience, of which they were deprived by the Protestants.

I beg you now to tell me, if Catholics deserve to be called persecutors. At the epoch of the Reformation, faith, ecclesiastical jurisdiction, civil power, the pulpits, the strong places, the cities, kingdoms, crowns, every thing belonged to the Catholics. Had they no other title, they could at least plead that of the proscription for many centuries. Now, supposing that in defending their possessions they had been guilty of some excess, what just motives could they not allege in excuse? But what excuse can be advanced for the intolerance of Protestantism? All their possessions, both in the temporal and spiritual order, have been alike usurped. They arose, preached liberty of conscience, and the next day denied it. They hanged, embowelled, and quartered the unhappy persons who wished to live according to their maxims. If the Bible, interpreted by private reason, be the only rule of faith established by God, Servetus had an equal claim with Calvin. How then can the punishment of Servetus be justified; will it be said that Servetus would also have had the right to burn Calvin, had he possessed the power? If liberty of opinion belong to all, what right had Henry VIII. to cause those to be burnt, who refused to hold his religious opinions? What right had his daughter Elizabeth to declare herself the head of the Church of England? What right had she to burn or kill those who did not assent to her opinions? How could Wesley sustain in his works that even Turks and Heathens could not tolerate Catholics? How could John Knox preach that Catholics were fit only to be cast into the fire of hell? How had he the audacity to say that both magistrates and people were bound in conscience to murder them? How came the Presbyterians to put to death their co-religionists at Geneva, in England, and in America? And yet, Protestants reproach Catholics for things

which are contrary to the spirit and the letter of the Catholic religion, viz. “for the inquisition of Spain, and the massacre of St. Bartholomew.” But the truth is, the Calvinists, for the sake of their reputation, have more interest than the Catholics to have erased from the annals of history, and from the memory of men, the deplorable catastrophe of St. Bartholomew. The conspiracies of Amboise and Meux, set on foot by them, with a tissue of unexampled outrages, pushed the French government to extremities. Charles IX. was almost driven to despair; they were the aggressors, and drew the evil of retaliation upon them by their numerous atrocities.”

Impartial history will show that in the brief period of three centuries, Protestantism has willingly stained its hands and robes with more blood unrighteously shed, than can by exaggerated construction even with a semblance of truth, be charged against Catholicism during her career of eighteen centuries.

Novel Affair.—A Protestant clergyman of Clifford, Yorkshire, England, recently announced to his flock that “he fasts every Wednesday and Friday, and that he shall sit on certain days to hear confessions. Two old women of the village have actually made their confessions to this pseudo-Catholic minister!” So says a correspondent of the *Tablet*.

The so-called Self-Supporting scheme of colonization.—On moving, on Tuesday, evening, for a further parliamentary grant in aid of the colony of South Australia, now declared to be in a state of insolvency and the Colonists of starvation, Lord Stanley summed up the statement in detail of its financial position with the following remarkable facts:—“The expenses of the colony had been as follows:—£155,000, which was the amount of the parliamentary grant, bills drawn by Col. Gawler to the extent of £27,209, drafts by Capt. Grey on the Treasury, paid by this Government, £17,749. The outstanding debt of this colonial state amounted to £35,000, and there were drawn on the Government at home, which had been allowed, sums amounting to £35,000 more. In round numbers it might be said that if all was defrayed to which the colony was liable, the total amount of its expenses, up to this time, would be found to amount to £400,000.” This colony, he it remembered, was the crack “self-supporting” colony, and the Colonial Secretary, albeit with a certain hesitation of reserve, gravely propounded to the house that, if provision were made for its debts, so that it might once more start clear in the world “he was encouraged to expect this colony would become a self-supporting colony.” His lordship stated that the “colony now consisted of a population of 50,000 souls,” so that the “self-supporting” system will have just cost the country, in hard cash, eight pounds per head, over and above the amount realised by land sales, of which no account was given, and by loans raised by the Australian Commissioners under powers improvidently granted by Parliament to the extent of £200,000. Take it that land sales and loans together produced the sum of £100,000 more, and we arrive at the gross of £800,000 expended in creating a population of 50,000 souls in this one self-supporting colony.—*National Advertiser*.