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THE ANTI-CATHOLIC AGITATION.

The Rev. Dr. H. K. Carroll, of New York, who is a Methodist, and one of the editors of the New York Independent, has an article in the last number of the Methodist Review, in which he endeavors to convince Protestants that they should overcome their prejudices against Catholics and the Catholic Church.

He reminds his readers that though in his and their opinion, the Catholic Church teaches error, it is still a Christian Church, holding all the fundamental doctrines of Christianity, and that it is not an enemy to mankind. He adds:

"It is surely better than no religion, or than any Pagan religion, or than Christless Unitarianism."

To this the doctor might well have added that, now-a-days at least, when it is the fashion among Protestants to doubt all positive religious teaching, there are very few even among Protestants who will boldly assert that their own religion, or for that matter, that any one of the numerous Protestant sects, is itself quite free from error. They ought, therefore, to be very slow before uttering their wholesale denunciations against the Catholic Church on account of its supposed errors.

There was a time, and that not very long ago, when most Protestants were firmly convinced that their own particular sect is absolutely the true Church, but that time has passed, and we know of very few Protestants who would now maintain such a thesis. Perhaps there is no Church among the various sects which puts forward so pompously the claim to be the only one teaching absolutely the truths of Christianity, as does Presbyterianism in its declarations of faith laid down with the Westminster Confession. Yet elsewhere in the same Confession it is declared that no Church can claim truly to be absolutely pure and free from error. Surely, then, the members of these avowedly erroneous Churches might have some charitable feeling for Catholics who are just as conscientious as themselves in holding to the faith in which they have most confidence.

But we often hear it said that Catholics are not to be endured or tolerated, because they hold that the Catholic Church is so exclusive, claiming to be the one true Church, outside whose pale there is no salvation.

It is true that such is the Catholic doctrine; yet we assert that this does not constitute a good reason why the Catholic Church should be hated, though it is a reason on account of which we should cling to our religion with tenacity.

The most ardent of Protestants will acknowledge that Christ established a true Church on earth, and Protestants themselves belong to their various denominations in the confidence that in each case they are members of the true Church, though there may be some minor errors in the particular denomination to which they have attached themselves. Why should Catholics be hated merely because, in being Catholics, they believe they are members of a Church which does not, and cannot, teach false doctrine? There is no excuse for the entertaining of such a hatred, even if it were enjoined in Holy Scripture, upon Christians, to believe in false doctrine, or to belong to a Church which has some admixture of error.

It is scarcely necessary to say that Scripture contains no such command. Christ speaks of other sheep which He has which are not of this fold; but He declares that He shall bring them to be of one fold and one Shepherd.

Again, the Church of the living God is spoken of by the Apostle as being the pillar and ground of truth. Such language is irreconcilable with the notion that a Christian must be a member of a Church which teaches falsehood, and certainly justifies the Catholic in belonging to a Church which in his belief has no doctrinal

error. To say the least, it is a dog-in-the-manger conduct for Protestants to hate Catholics for believing in a Church in which they have full confidence, merely because they have themselves only a partial confidence in the Church to which they belong.

Catholics have good reason for believing that the real Church of God on earth is exempt from liability to error. We have already referred to one text of Holy Writ which conveys this teaching. We have further the assurance that against the Church which He established, the gates of hell shall not prevail. Are we to be blamed for interpreting these passages to mean that the one Church which He established will remain on earth to the end of time, free from errors of faith, and always teaching the pure doctrines of salvation which He commissioned His Apostles to preach to all nations? But we are told we must be blamed for believing that out of the true Church there is no salvation. Here also we are supported by the teaching of Christ and His Apostles. Christ says, "He that believeth not shall be condemned," and His Apostles teach that "Without faith it is impossible to please God," and that "Even though an angel from heaven teach any other Gospel than that we have delivered to you, let him be anathema." The Catholic doctrine on this point is therefore purely and simply the teaching of Holy Scripture.

Nevertheless this doctrine is to be properly understood. It is an admitted principle of morals that no man is responsible for what he cannot help. We therefore admit that if there are some who are by outward profession Protestants, and who do not and cannot know the truth of Catholic doctrine, by using the means of grace with which God has furnished men, they are not responsible for their rejection of Catholic truth. In such case they are in invincible ignorance and error, and if otherwise, having been baptized, they are freed from the guilt of sin, they are in reality members of the Catholic Church, and in the way of salvation, though not so to outward appearance. We shall not pronounce on the question, how frequently this may happen; but we say there is certainly no more lack of charity in this belief of Catholics than there is want of charity in believing that the persons who are in a burning house will perish in the flames, unless they succeed in making their escape from the building. We may wish them well, we may desire their safety, but we have not made the law by which they are judged, and their destruction does not come from any fault or act of ours.

Dr. Carroll recommends Protestants to show their charity in the first place, by discontinuing the use of offensive names for Catholics, such names as "Romanist, Papist, the Romish, or Papistical Church."

Regarding the loyalty of Catholics to the Government under which they live, Dr. Carroll points out that there has not been any single act of Catholics in the United States which would show them to be disloyal. He points out that those who make the accusation base it upon the Catholic doctrine of the Pope's supremacy. But this supremacy relates only to religion and not to politics. It is true that the anti-Catholic agitators say that if a Catholic had to choose between his faith and his country's requirements, he would sooner give up his allegiance to his country than to his religion. The doctor says every sincere Protestant would do likewise, for "Religion embraces our duty to God. Is not that our highest duty? If the conflict comes, who that is worthy of the Christian name would abjure his faith?"

This is certainly no practical question, for there is no fear of any conflict between duty to God and to the country in which we live. But if the State should be too meddling, and should interfere in what does not concern it, then we know the choice we should make. We should "render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, but to God we must render the things that are God's," and in the conflict of commands, "It is better to obey God than men."

Dr. Carroll's remarks are very timely, and it is gratifying to observe that a prominent Methodist minister is so far in advance of his colleagues in general as to hold these broad and liberal views, and has the courage to maintain them in public. His remarks are as applicable to anti-Catholic agitators in Canada, as to the Know-Nothing of the United States.

The doctor is none the less a staunch Protestant because he holds these reasonable views. He says that he protests earnestly against "The tyrannical

of the Roman Catholic system, and its perversions of Biblical Christianity;" but he declares that in reference to the fundamental doctrines of Christianity, the Catholic Church is orthodox, and he gives it credit for much rare devotion, saintly lives and admirable works of charity. He thinks it should be treated with courtesy at least, by Protestants, and that the latter should abstain from such falsehoods as some of them frequently disseminate against it, as in the recent instance when an encyclical supposed to emanate from the Pope ordering a general massacre of Protestants was industriously circulated among credulous people, causing grave dissensions on account of religious belief. Of course this palpable forgery was believed in only by the ignorant, but even so it brought forth much mischief and discord in the community.

CAESARE CANTU.

Judging from the brevity of the obituary notice we would imagine that Caesare Cantu was a mere village politician and not the greatest historian of the century.

We are too much inclined betimes to indulge in rhapsodical nonsense anent every passing whim and fad and to dismiss curtly men who played important roles in life's great theatre, because, forsooth, the popular mind does not appreciate it.

Caesare Cantu was born December 5, 1804, at Brinio, a village of about three thousand inhabitants near Lecco, in the Province of Como. He was at first inclined to the priesthood, but, feeling that he was not called by God, he gave up the idea and entered upon the duties of a professorship of grammar in the college of Sondrio.

Earnest and enthusiastic to the verge of insensate unreasonableness he devoted every energy of his nature to the chronicling of the deeds of his country. Gradually his influence made itself felt, and the Government, seeing that he was a man who might be dangerous, imprisoned him on the specious charge of high treason. This was in 1833. Many a page has been written respecting the life of Cantu while in prison. It did him certainly no harm, for there he threw aside the trappings of boyhood and came forth a man of high resolve and dauntless courage. He was one year in prison, but the hours went lightly by, for he was busily laying the foundation of his "Universal History," a work that for impartial research is easily the greatest production of the age. One marvels at the many books he found time to write. He was seldom inaccurate. He was always an historian, believing no assertions of prejudiced writers, but gleaming facts and data by his own labor and penning them in clear and forceful style.

Our century owes much to Caesare Cantu. He is a reproach to our half-educated myriads, but he is the pride of all those who do not believe that knowledge hangs upon every bush that our so-called professors like to plant. Labor, silent and unflagging, was his life companion, and she was indeed fruitful.

A HISTORICAL CRITIC ON THE GOSPELS.

The announcement made some months ago that a Russian writer named Notovitch had discovered in a Tibetan monastery a Buddhist "Life of Christ," in which there are many particulars of Christ's acts on earth which are not found in the four Gospels, has attracted more attention from certain men of undoubted learning than the character of the alleged discovery entitled it to.

It was said by M. Notovitch that according to this manuscript Christ had passed many years in a monastery in India, under the name "Issa," and that He had there imbibed the doctrines which He afterwards preached in Galilee.

It scarcely needed that Mr. Notovitch's work should be seriously refuted, for the veracity of the Evangelists, and the reality of the Divine mission of our Blessed Lord, do not depend upon the discovery of some obscure manuscripts which may or may not have been kept among the papers of some illiterate Buddhist monks. Nevertheless everything which bears upon the question of the truth and authenticity of Holy Scripture attracts attention, and for this reason the claims of Mr. Notovitch's document were examined into as soon as his discovery was announced, with the result that it was found out that he had not even been in the locality where he had pretended he made the discovery, so that the manuscript of Mr. Notovitch is simply an impudent forgery.

Max Muller, the well-known and eminent linguist and historian, though himself a Rationalist, and therefore one whom we would not expect to take up his weapons in defence of Christianity, proved at length, and beyond cavil, in an article in the Nineteenth Century of last October, that Mr. Notovitch's pretended discovery is a fraud. Professor Muller, however, in the course of his article, gives utterance incidentally to some of his own peculiar views on the historical basis of Christianity. Thus he says: "If the history of Issa were historically true, it would make plain many difficulties. It would demonstrate once for all that Jesus is a real historic personage."

It is not the first time that forgeries professing to give the real life of Christ have been issued. The learned Wageaseil published such a work under the name Tholodoh or Toldoth Jehoschua, and a second Toldoth was published by the celebrated Lutheran minister Huldreich in 1705. Both these works were translated from Hebrew copies which were in circulation among the Jews of Germany, and they were claimed to be more authentic as histories of the genealogy and life of Christ than the four Gospels. These books are even now being circulated by the New York propagandists of Infidelity, under pretence that they were written at Jerusalem by contemporaries of Christ Himself. They are replete with fables and blasphemies, the object of which is to throw discredit upon Christianity and on our Lord.

That these books are entirely fabulous is evident from the gross ignorance displayed by their authors regarding the history of the period concerning which they pretended to write.

The Jews have a great reverence for the name Jehova, and the authors of the Toldoths take advantage of the fact to concoct a ridiculous story in explanation of the miracles wrought by Christ to prove His divine mission.

These writers admit that Christ performed surprising miracles. They admit that He cured all manner of diseases, and raised the dead to life. Leprosy, a disease which defies the skill of physicians, was also healed by Him; but they claim that all these things were the result of magic, in which He was skilled, and in the use of which He attained great proficiency by stealing the sacred name of Jehova from the Holy of Holies in the Temple. This name was, according to the Toldoth, deposited in the Temple and was guarded by two lions, which roared so terribly when any one approached the sacred spot, that the impious ones who thus attempted to violate the sanctuary were made to lose their memory and reason.

By magic, it is pretended, Christ succeeded in evading the usual fate of violators of the sacred precincts, and procured the Holy Name which was therein deposited, and so was able to perform wonders.

This one absurdity should be enough to stamp these impious works as tissues of falsehood, but there are many other statements in them quite as nonsensical, and contrary to the known history of the period. The admission of Christ's miraculous powers is, however, worthy of remark, as it proves that their exercise was so public and so well known that it was impossible even for His bitterest enemies among the Jews to deny them.

When a work claiming to be historical is put forward as worthy of credence, it is necessary there should be incontestible evidence that it is the work of those who claim to be its authors, and that it belongs to the period when it claims to have been written. These proofs of authenticity the four Gospels possess; but the Toldoths, and M. Notovitch's pseudo-Buddhist work, are entirely deficient in this regard. It is, therefore, a curious lack of accuracy in a man of Professor Muller's undoubted learning to overlook all this, and to pretend that the Gospels need such confirmation as might be afforded by the discovery of some dubious Buddhist manuscript, even though there were evidence that it were a few centuries old.

Mr. Pierre Courbet has answered Professor Muller in an article which appeared in Cosmos of March 30, and wherein he thus disposes of the Professor's assertion. We take M. Courbet's words from the Literary Digest:

"What! because there has been discovered in an obscure monastery of the Himalayas a manuscript that nobody knew about up to this day, do you pretend that this manuscript constitutes such an historic monument that it would smooth away all difficulties relative to the life of Jesus? You who refuse all belief in the gospels, although they are confirmed by an innumerable number of quotations of which the most ancient date from the times of the

Apostles themselves—you would accept as unassailable a work of which you know neither the origin nor the author, a work of which no one has ever heard till to day, outside of a little coterie of Buddhist monks? Is that serious historic criticism?"

In the present case it would be necessary to begin by proving that the Buddhist Life of Jesus really dates from the time of Jesus, and that its authors were really persons who knew Him. How shall we show this when we do not know who these people were, and when no other author has alluded, up to the present time, to a work of this kind?"

"Truly, if we Christians had pretended to attribute such value to a document under these conditions, what a general outcry would be raised against us! We may be sure that M. Muller would not fail to seize the opportunity to exercise his sharp wit at our expense, and, indeed, he would have a right to do so."

There is no need of any new documents to establish the authenticity of the Gospels, and of the whole New Testament. They were written at a time when Rome and Greece were in the height of intellectual culture, and when Roman political power extended over the whole world which had any claim to civilization; and they were not unknown or obscure books at this time. Treatises were written upon them, and they were so extensively quoted by a series of writers, both Christian and Pagan, during the first three or four centuries of the Christian era, that if they had been completely lost in their original form, it is confidently asserted that they could be reconstructed simply by means of collating these quotations. Surely Professor Muller made a serious slip by suggesting that some Buddhist manuscript must be discovered to confirm them before their historic value can be admitted by so learned a man as he.

It would be unnecessary to call attention to the Professor's gross blunder, were it not for the fact that the Infidels of the day will certainly appeal to his judgment as establishing beyond a doubt that the authenticity of the Gospels must be further confirmed before it can be accepted as a certain fact.

Numerous are the witnesses who from the earliest period give testimony, but it would be impossible to cite them within the limits of this article. We shall therefore content ourselves here with stating that S. Justin Martyr states, in his apology to the Emperor Antoninus, that the writings of the Apostles were regularly read in the assemblies of the faithful, and that in one passage alone, Tertullian mentions by name not only the Gospels in detail, but also nine Epistles of St. Paul as being among the writings which were so used. Among the writers of the second century who thus attest the antiquity and authenticity of the Gospels may also be mentioned the Pagan philosopher Celsus, who quotes largely the Gospels and other books of the New Testament for the purpose of attacking them; but even he does not impugn the main facts mentioned in the Gospels. He confines himself to an attempt at refuting details and doctrinal teachings. Very justly, therefore, does Mons. Courbet remark:

"It thus results that our opponents are in a veritable dilemma: either the miracles of Jesus are real, and consequently, Jesus is God, something they do not wish to admit, or to deny the miracles of Jesus, they are forced to put his character, even His existence, in doubt, and to contravene all the rules of logic and historical criticism."

THE MANITOBA SCHOOLS.

It has been asserted over and over again by Mr. Dalton McCarthy, and reiterated by Attorney-General Sifton, of the Manitoba Government, that the Catholic Separate schools of Manitoba have been inefficient and badly managed.

At this distance from the scene it is difficult to ascertain beyond doubt the exact state of the case, especially as there are no official statistics by means of which a certain conclusion can be arrived at, but we are not disposed to accept these statements without proofs; and we notice by a lecture delivered by Mr. J. S. Ewart, who was Counsel for the Catholics of the Province in the appeal before the Governor-General at Ottawa, that the statements of the two gentlemen who are making themselves specially conspicuous in leading on the attack on the Catholic minority, are confidently contradicted.

Mr. Ewart's lecture was delivered in the Central Congregational Church of Winnipeg on the 29th ult., in reply to the Rev. Mr. Peasley, who had some days before delivered a lecture in defence of the course of the local Government, and against the enforcement of the remedial order sent from Ottawa.

The audience consisted almost en-

tirely of Protestants, and the Church was packed to overflowing, so that many were obliged to leave without obtaining entrance.

Mr. Ewart brought what he called an "object lesson" before his audience. In 1890 there were in Winnipeg five Catholic schools with five hundred and seventy-six scholars. To-day the five schools are still in operation, but the number of scholars has increased to seven hundred and four. During all this time, while supporting these schools, the Catholics paid their share toward the Public schools, in submission to the unjust school law which imposed on them a double tax.

Mr. Ewart answered the statement which has been so frequently made by Mr. Dalton McCarthy, and since by Attorney-General Sifton, that the Catholic schools are inefficient. He stated that their work is good, and as it was impossible for him to bring the pupils to the lecture, he exhibited samples of their work, and specimens of their books and time tables, which fully refuted these asseverations.

He invited his Protestant hearers to visit the schools for themselves and to see what is being done, notwithstanding that all Government aid has been withdrawn from them, and they have been kept up solely through the great sacrifices which the Catholics of the city have made.

He asked, "Why do Winnipeg Catholics make this double payment?" "Well," they say, "for conscience sake." They keep up their Separate schools for the same reason that Protestants keep up their separate churches—for conscience sake.

He then made a strong appeal to Protestants to show good-will by assisting to remedy the great injustice which has been inflicted. He said:

"Will Winnipeg Protestants continue to make profit out of the Catholic conscience, and to diminish their own taxes by enforced contributions from those who can make no use of the present schools? Is that fair? Is it just? Is it reasonable? Is it honest? Protestants of Winnipeg: the best of you are you not ashamed of the result to which intolerance has brought us, as well as of the faith-broken path by which it has come? Are you not ashamed to make money out of the religious convictions of your Roman Catholic fellow-citizens? Are you not willing to pay for your own schools, and to let Catholics keep their money, which, under the present system, they have to contribute to your support? I leave it to your judgment, trusting that my effort to place the matter fairly before you may prove of assistance in your reflections."

It is certainly a beggarly piece of meanness, that the majority, which claims to include the wealthiest portion of the population, should use underhand modes of levying a tax upon their less fortunate fellow citizens, to pay for the education of their children, while the latter are made to endure the whole burden in regard to their own. It is a kind of regime very similar to that under which the Turks govern Armenia, differing therefrom only in degree.

In further reference to the assertions of Messrs. McCarthy and Sifton, we may add that it is possible that in the rural sections the schools have not been as efficient as it is desirable they should have been. Mr. Ewart's confident remarks on the known efficiency of the Winnipeg schools, perhaps refer to that city only. But it must be remembered that among the Catholic population there are many poor Indians and half-breeds who are doing and have been doing their best to give their children an education. It is not by upsetting entirely the schools they had that their defects should be remedied, but by assisting them to raise their efficiency that a paternal Government and a generous-minded majority would endeavor to remedy existing evils, but this is exactly what the Manitoban Legislature has not done. May we hope for a peaceful and tolerant settlement of the difficulty?

METHODISTS IN OFFICE.

Lately there has been a revival—no doubt for a purpose—of the charges made by the late Dr. Douglas as to the official positions occupied by the Methodist body in Ontario, Dr. Douglas having, at the Conference in Toronto, in June, 1893—as appears by the report in the Telegram, said:—"How is it, in law, politics and official positions, the Methodism of Ontario is practically tabooed by the authorities of to-day. For fifty years a Methodist never climbed to the position of a Judge in Ontario." At the Niagara Conference he made a similar declaration.

In charity to Dr. Douglas, we must suppose he was ignorant of the facts when he made these statements, but one can scarcely credit the report that the Rev. Dr. Potts, who should know the