

The Planet

S. STEPHENSON, Promoter.

ARE WE TO BELIEVE ALL THE BIBLE?

In spite of the overwhelming attention that the British nation is paying to the war it has found time to watch and discuss with great interest a most remarkable controversy that has been going on in the public press between one of Great Britain's leading scientists and a great church dignitary. The discussion in question is mainly of interest to every Christian, because it involves the question of the literal acceptance of the Bible. Are we to believe everything the Bible contains as the actual statement of the Almighty? The prelate says yes; the scientist says no. The controversy has been a long one, so we can only give a synopsis of the letters which appeared in the London Times.

Dr. St. George Mivart, the scientist in question, entered the Catholic Church when a young man. He is now seventy-four years old, and has been for many years the most distinguished Catholic scientist of Great Britain, and has written much in defense of the Church, especially as to the liberty within it to pursue investigations and reach results of scientific research. As a biologist he has taught Evolution, and has depended on Augustine and the fathers and doctors of the Church down to the time of Cardinal Newman to support his right to accept a liberal view of interpretation of the early chapters of Genesis which tell of the creation of the world and of vegetable and animal life. But in 1893 Pope Leo XIII. issued an encyclical about Scripture, "Providentissimus Deus," in which he said:

"It is absolutely wrong and forbidden, either to narrow inspiration to certain parts of Holy Scripture, or to say that the sacred writer has erred. For all the books which the Church receives as sacred and canonical (including the Apocrypha) are written wholly and entirely, with all their parts, at the dictation of the Holy Ghost. Inspiration is not only incompatible with error, but excludes and rejects it. It follows that those who maintain that an error is possible in any genuine passage of the sacred writings, either pervert the Catholic notion of inspiration, or make God the author of such error." This encyclical gave Dr. Mivart great concern. He did not see how it was possible for him to accept its apparent teaching. After long thought, and after a dangerous sickness which compelled him to think of his duty to his conception of truth, he wrote a long article, which he divided into two parts and published in The Nineteenth Century and The Fortnightly Review. In these papers he insisted that the Catholic Church must be a progressive body, and that serious modifications of its theological attitude ought to be looked for. He insisted the fact that men in good standing in the Catholic Church had acknowledged to him their unbelief in even such important Christian doctrines as the virgin birth of our Lord.

Thereupon The Tablet, the leading Catholic paper in England, owned by Cardinal Vaughan, attacked Dr. Mivart with great severity, charged him with denying the Christian faith, with himself holding the heresies which he specified, and with slandering the faith of Catholics. Upon this followed the correspondence which has been given to the press.

Dr. Mivart's first letter complained to the Cardinal that he had been personally insulted by The Tablet, which had charged him with inanity, and he asked redress. In reply the Cardinal brushed aside his complaint, and said:

"You have publicly impugned the most sacred and fundamental doctrines of the faith, while still professing yourself to be a Catholic. It becomes, therefore, my primary duty, as Guardian of the Faith, to ascertain whether I am still to treat you as a member of the Church and subject to my jurisdiction, or to consider you outside the unity of the faith."

"As a text of orthodox regarding certain doctrines dealt with by you in your articles in The Nineteenth Century, I herewith send you a Profession of Catholic Faith. I invite you to read and return it to me subscribed

by your signature. Nothing less than this will be satisfactory. I need not say how deeply I regret the necessity which compels me to take official action of this kind, and how earnestly I hope and pray that you may have light and grace to withdraw from the position in which you stand and to submit yourself unreservedly to the authority of the Catholic Church."

The accompanying Profession of Faith was drawn up expressly to meet the points involved in Dr. Mivart's articles, and among them were the following:

"I hereby declare that, recognizing the Catholic Church to be the supreme and infallible guardian of the Christian faith, I submit therein my judgment to hers, believing all that she teaches, and condemning all that she condemns."

"I therefore firmly believe and profess that the Blessed Virgin Mary conceived and brought forth the Son of God in an ineffable manner by the operation of the Holy Ghost, and absolutely without loss or detriment to her virginity, and that she is really and in truth, as the Catholic Church most rightly calls her, the 'Ever Virgin'; that is to say, Virgin before the birth of Christ, Virgin in that birth and Virgin after it, her sacred and spotless virginity being perpetually preserved from the beginning, then and forever afterward."

"I therefore condemn and reject as false and heretical the assertion that doubt or denial of the Virgin Birth of Christ or the Perpetual Virginity of the Blessed Mary, Mother of God, is or at any future time ever can be in any sense whatever—consistent with the holy Catholic faith."

"I firmly believe and profess, in accordance with the Holy Council of Trent, that the first man Adam, when he transgressed the command of God in Paradise, immediately lost the holiness and justice in which he had been constituted, and that he incurred through that prevarication the wrath and indignation of God, and that the prevarication of Adam injured not himself alone, but his posterity, and that by it the holiness and justice received from God were lost by him, not for himself alone but for us all."

"I reject and condemn all doctrines which deny the reality and transmission of original sin, and the perfect sufficiency of the atonement by which man is reconciled to God in the Blood of Jesus Christ, as false and heretical, and contrary to the holy Catholic faith now and at all future time."

"In accordance with the Holy Councils of Trent and of the Vatican, I receive all the books of the Old and New Testament with all their parts as set forth in the Fourth Session of the Council of Trent and contained in the ancient Latin edition of the Vulgate, as sacred and canonical, and I firmly believe and profess that the said Scriptures are sacred and canonical not because, having been carefully composed by mere human industry, they were afterward approved by the Church's authority, nor merely because they contain revelation with no admixture of error; but because, having been written by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, they have God for their Author, and have been delivered as such to the Church herself. Wherefore, in all matters of faith or morals appertaining to the building up of Christian doctrine, I believe that to be the true sense of Holy Scripture which our Holy Mother the Church has held and now holds, to whom the judgment of the true sense and interpretation of the Holy Scripture belongs."

Moreover, I condemn and revoke all other words and statements which in articles contributed by me to the Fortnightly Review and the Nineteenth Century, or in any other of my writings are found to be in matter of faith or morals, contrary to the teaching of the holy Catholic faith according to the determination of the Apostolic See; and in all such matters I submit myself to the judgment of the said See, receiving all that it receives and condemning all that it condemns."

To the demand that he sign this Profession Dr. Mivart replied with a letter to Cardinal Vaughan demanding that first reparation be made him for "the four, vulgar and brutal personalities of The Tablet, charging me with cowardice and wilful, calumnious mendacity," in his statements about errors held by Catholics. The Cardinal replied, refusing, and holding him to the sole duty of signing the Profession of Faith. Again Dr. Mivart

wrote, appealing to him as an English gentleman to grant him personal redress, and declaring that the statements in the required Profession included errors to be repudiated, of which he had said nothing. The Cardinal replied, saying that now "for the third and last time" he required him to sign the form of Profession sent, and added:

"I cannot allow you to evade this duty on the ground of anything that may have been written in The Tablet. If you have a grievance against The Tablet you must go to its editor. I am not responsible for its language nor its arguments. My dealing with you is exclusively as your ordinary and as guardian of the faith of the flock. Failing dutiful submission on your part, the law of the Church will take its course."

To this Dr. Mivart replied, asking the Cardinal to resolve him a point of conscience. He asked whether he, if he signed the profession, required to hold, as the language seemed to imply, that there are no scientific errors in the Bible.

"Now, in my judgment as acceptance and profession of the above cited portion of the document sent me would be equivalent to an assertion that there are no errors, or altogether false statements, or fabulous narratives in the Old and New Testaments, and that I should not be free to hold and teach, without blame, that the world was not created in 4004 B.C., or that the story of the serpent and the tree is, altogether false; that the history of the tower of Babel is a mere fiction devoid of any particle of truth; that the story of Noah's Ark is also quite erroneous, as again that of the pagans of Egypt; that neither Joshua nor Hezekiah interfered with the movement of solar time; that Jonah did not live within the belly of any kind of marine animal; that Lot's wife was never turned into a pillar of salt; and that Balaam's ass never spoke. I only put statements of this kind before you, not as any one who holds that the books of the Old and New Testaments with all their parts, were written by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost and have God for their author, and could not for logically or rationally make."

"If, however, your Eminence can authoritatively tell me that Divine inspiration or authorship does not necessarily guarantee the truth and inerrancy of the statements so inspired, it will in one sense be a great relief to my mind, and greatly facilitate the signing of your document, which I am ready to do on the subject being once publicly known, and also the conditions under which I sign it."

The Cardinal again replied: "Let me first of all urge you to place your feet down upon the firm and fundamental principle, which is the groundwork on which every true Catholic stands—viz., that the Church being the divine teacher established by Christ in the world, rightly claims from her disciples a hearty and intelligent acceptance of all that she authoritatively teaches. This principle, given us by Our Lord, will enable us to overcome all objections and difficulties that may spring up along your path."

"But if you are going to give the assent of faith only to such doctrines as present no difficulties beyond the assent of your finite intelligence, to see through and solve by direct answer, you must put aside at once all the mysteries of faith and you must frankly own yourself to be a rationalist, pure and simple. You then constitute your ability to solve difficult, intellectual or scientific, into your test of the doctrines proffered for your acceptance."

"This is to return to the old Protestant system of private judgment, or to open rationalism and unbelief. But you will let me, I hope, be frank and urge that it is your moral rather than your intellectual duty, that new creation, God gives his grace to the humble; it is 'the clean of heart' who shall see God. Let me press upon you the primary necessity of humility and persevering prayer for light and grace."

Without waiting for an answer to this letter Cardinal Vaughan issued a formal document forbidding Dr. Mivart to come to the sacraments or any priest to administer them. Then followed the last letter to the Cardinal from Dr. Mivart, declaring that he would appeal to the Pope. He tells what an ardent advocate of Catholicism he had been, and how his best years had been spent in its defense; how he had depended on the teaching of Cardinal Newman, and had found great latitude of interpretation of scripture among Catholic writers. Then came, in 1898, "that terrible encyclical about Scripture," forbidding the admission that any biblical writer had erred, which had so much disturbed him. He says:

"Thus it is now evident that a vast and impassable abyss yawns between Catholic dogma and science, and no man with ordinary knowledge can henceforth join the communion of the

Roman Catholic Church if he correctly understands what its principles and its teachings really are, unless they are radically changed."

"The who would profess to believe the narrative about the tower of Babel, or that all species of animals came up to Adam to be named by him? Moreover, among the writings esteemed 'canonical' by the Catholic Church are the book of Tobit and the second book of Maccabees, and also the story, which relates how, when Daniel was thrown a second time into the lions' den, an angel seized Habakkuk by the hair of his head and carried him, with his bowl of portage, to give it to Daniel for his dinner. To ask a reasonable man to believe such puerile tales would be to insult him."

"I categorically refuse to sign the profession of faith. Nevertheless, as I said, I am attached to Catholicism, as I understand it, and to that I adhere. If, then, my recent articles have been tolerated, especially my representations as to the probability of vast future changes through doctrinal evolution, I would have remained quiet, in the hope that, lifted by little by little, I might successfully dispose points I and before mistakenly advocated."

"It has long been painful to me to think of the teaching given in Catholic schools and often proclaimed from the pulpit. There need be small surprise at the opposition existing in France to the authoritative teaching of fables, fairy tales and the puerile and pestilent superstitions."

"I can now speak with explicit frankness as to all my convictions. Libera animam meam. I can sing my Nunc Dimittis and calmly await the future."

Joe Chamberlain seems to think Wilfrid Laurier is another Premier Schreiner.

If King Street is not to be paved until an electric railway is built along it, this town's name is going to be Mulville for a few years yet.

The majority of the property owners between the postoffice and Fifth street seem favorable to a new pavement. Why not go on with that section of the work?

How would it do for the city engineer to protect the corporation against liability for accidents on the present King Street pavement by posting up notices at each end labelled, "No thoroughfare. Dangerous."

With the vast quantity of snow on the ground the outlook is for greater frosts than have been, but until we get Mr. Spencer Wilkinson's views on the matter, we really can't guarantee anything more than ordinary spring freshets.

The cable despatches announce that Great Britain wanted 5,000 more colonial troops, but turned to Australia instead of Canada because of the kicking that has taken place over the contingent already sent. We presume Mr. Chamberlain refers to the Tarte and Bourassa episodes. What does the premier intend to do about it?

A Hamilton man dropped dead from heart disease while shovelling the snow from his sidewalk. If shovelling snow were the only menace to the health of Chatham citizens, most of them could count on living to a ripe old age.

The Colonial Secretary is probably wrong in doubting Sir Wilfrid Laurier's loyalty. But though the premier may personally be a good British subject, he cannot complain at the British government putting him on the doubtful list, as long as he retains Thre in his cabinet and Bourassa as the whip of his party.

A new post office has been opened in Victoria county bearing the name of Buller. The name of Upper Thorne Centre has been changed to Lady-smith. This is all right as far as it goes, and the public need not mind if we even get a Roberts, a Kitchener, a French and a White, but we trust Mr. Bullock will draw the line at Blaudsaagte, Grobler's kloof, Modder Spruit, etc.

The New York Herald correspondent, writing of the after-effects of London's reception of the relief of Ladysmith on Thursday, says:—"After the intense and quite unparalleled elation and excitement of yesterday there was this morning a very subdued and somewhat penitient feeling among the men, while the ladies summarized the situation by emphatic suggestions to their erring husbands, brothers and other male relatives that it was lucky for them that the relief of Ladysmith was not a common occurrence." Did they all get "full"?

"As we thoroughly believe that all the race war there is in the country has been stirred up by Mr. Tarte and his friends for the purpose of shodding the minister of public work personally, the following threats against confederation from that gentleman's personal organ, Le Patrie, need no comment:—"Is it not a painful spectacle to realize that we are two steps from civil war? We are not the aggressors, but are strong enough to protect ourselves. We do not hold the majority of the English-speaking population of Montreal, and the country responsible for the shameful scenes which disgraced our streets. This is a decisive hour. The confederation can only be maintained by the two races living harmoniously side by side. There is very little to add to what has taken place to read the federation pact and under and that without much delay."

The Ross Government, in connection with its plan for road improvement, hopes to provide for the abolition of tollgates all over the province. How that arch old Tory, who obstructed the progress of this province for a quarter of a century, Sir Oliver Mowat, must squirm as he reads all the progressive legislation Mr. Ross is proposing with a view of distracting the attention of the people from his government's election misdeeds. Much of his proposed legislation we must say, we favor, but we wish the carrying out of it was in more reliable hands.

A POINTER FOR MAYOR SMITH.

Mayor Tetzl says he will have the Irish flag hoisted on the Hamilton city hall on March 17, if the Irishmen will provide the emblem.

A MODERN JONAH.

American Sailor Duplicates the Prophet's Feat.

He Lived Two Days Inside a Sperm Whale—Comrades Rescued the Indigestible Tar Alive.

Cincinnati Enquirer. "It was quite possible for Jonah to have been swallowed by a whale, if it was the right kind, and to have lived for a few days in its stomach," says Capt. Winfield Scott Hamaker, of Cincinnati. "For I saw a parallel incident with my own eyes."

Capt. Hamaker, though now one of the best known journalists in the state is an old whaler, and should know whereof he speaks. Years ago, as a lad of 14, he ran away from his home in Tiffin, O., imbued with the notion of becoming a buccaner on the Spanish main. He had a vague idea that that mystical land lay somewhere on the New England coast, and after innumerable hardships the boy, worn and weary in body, but undaunted in spirit, arrived at the whaling town of New Bedford, Mass., and soon hired out as cabin boy on a whaling vessel. For 12 years he followed the sea, and visited nearly every country on the face of the globe, rising from cabin boy to the berth of master.

"Perhaps no question has ever been so misrepresented or so little understood as that regarding the size of a whale's throat," he continued, "and, in fact, about everything pertaining to whales. Even in metropolitan cities situated on the borders of the sea, the grossest ignorance is displayed by writers on the subject, who appear to think there is but one species of whale. To them all whales are alike."

LARGE AND SMALL THROATS. "As a matter of fact, there are many species and varieties, with different habits, of different build and inhabiting different waters. Among them may be mentioned the cachalot, the great sperm whale, king of them all, furnished with a double row of teeth in its massive lower jaw, but none in the upper. Then comes the bowhead, or Greenland whale, which has no teeth, but whose tremendous mouth is filled with great layers of 'baleen,' the whalebone of commerce, which is to-day worth its weight in silver. Hundreds of pounds of this baleen are taken from the mouth of a single bowhead whale. To this family, or closely allied to it so far as the construction of the mouth and throat are concerned, belong the 'humpback,' the narwhale, the finback, sulphur-bottom and several other varieties. These species all have small throats and live on very small fish, such as herring and the like, and a sort of insect food that is found in the far north and resembles sawdust floating on the surface of the water."

"Sperm whales, with the grampus, the 'killer,' blackfish, porpoise, etc., all have teeth, and all have been endowed by nature with large throats. Hence, the story of Jonah need not be doubted, for, as I have said, with my own eyes I have been assured that a whale can swallow a man without winking."

SWALLOWED ALIVE. "A number of years ago I was connected with the whaler Star of the East as mate. We were off the coast of Labrador when, one day, we struck a big school of whales. The boats were lowered, and one of them fastened into a big bull. This bull was drawn along at lightning speed, and suddenly sent sky-high by an upward dip of the monster's mighty flukes. All the crew saved, a seaman named James Bartlett was picked up, but no trace of him could be found, and he was given up for lost. Two days later while 'cutting-in' the whale the stomach was opened and the crew were thunderstruck to discover Bartlett unconscious, but still alive. We carefully nursed him, and being a fellow of powerful physique, it was but a short time till he had fully recovered from his horrible experience."

"Another experience I had with a sperm whale was several years previous to this, and occurred off the Australian coast. I was one of a boat's crew that was chasing an immense lone bull sperm. I then belonged to the Tasmanian whaler Fanny Nichols. We had fastened to the whale and had given him a few lance thrusts when the enraged leviathan suddenly turned in the water, grabbed the boat in his ponderous jaws and crushed it as one would an egg shell. Just how I escaped I don't know. When I came up I was on deck the Nichols. All the crew had been saved except one young lad. The last seen of him he was in the whale's jaws. Whether he was swallowed or not no one knew, but that was the prevailing opinion. The lad was a 'bunkie' of mine, and the poor boy was looking forward to meeting his mother and sisters at Hobart Town. Just the night before he had kept me awake talking to me of home, and how happy the little sister would be to see him."

Robert J. Burdette says that Evangelist McCrossan's book, "Love and Life," now on sale at Dingman's Book Store, is one of the finest religious story books he ever read. Bound in cloth, 25c.

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DATED at Chatham, this 27th day of February, 1900.

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W. G. RICHARDS, C. H. RAYMENT.

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