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London, Saturday, July 8, 1893.

THE COLUMBUS FLEET.

On Tuesday, June 27, the people of Toronto had the good fortune to behold a sight which was calculated better than any verbal description to impress upon their minds the marvellous courage and faith of the enterprising sailor and his companions who boldly faced the perils of an unknown and apparently boundless ocean in order to discover and make known to the old world the existence and resources of lands as yet unknown.

The three caravels which were begun in Spain in 1492, to reproduce as nearly as possible the three ships with which Columbus set sail from Palos four centuries ago for the discovery of America, have at last reached the New World, and they were viewed by thousands of Toronto sight-seers on the day mentioned above.

It was indeed a rare treat for Canadians to behold, not indeed the very vessels with which the brave deed was accomplished, but three newly constructed ships made as nearly as possible after their model.

The history of Columbus' voyage is too well known that we should need to repeat it here, and of late it has been told often with varied illustrations. It will not be out of place for us to mention, however, that when Juan Perez de Marchena, the good prior of La Rabida monastery, besought Queen Isabella of Spain to assist the enterprise which Columbus was ready to undertake, and of which he had almost demonstrated the feasibility, Columbus was on the point of going to France to ask that encouragement which had been already denied by the rulers of Venice, Genoa, Portugal, and even Spain itself.

The theories of the intrepid mariner, though founded upon carefully considered scientific data, were nevertheless considered as but a visionary scheme, and were it not for the strong pressure brought to bear upon the Queen, Columbus would have met with a new repulse.

At last, however, after seven more years of disappointments, our hero set sail from Palos with one hundred and twenty men manning the three vessels, of which the three caravels now on their way to the World's Fair at Chicago are almost a perfect representation.

The *Santa Maria*, which represents the flag-ship of the Admiral Columbus, is 72 feet long, and has a tonnage of 127. The *Pinta* is 65 feet long, and the *Nina* 50 feet on the main deck.

The *Santa Maria* is furnished as exactly as possible just as was the original ship of the great discoverer, with bedstead, table and chairs, and with the charts and instruments on which the bold discoverer himself relied to direct him on his voyage.

Among the curiosities which are found on this vessel are the two anchors which Columbus himself used. These are in a good state of preservation. Another interesting treasure is the same standard of Spain which Columbus planted on American soil immediately upon landing, and under the shade of which the holy sacrifice of the Mass was first offered up on the soil of America.

The sight of these vessels gives a good idea of the courage of the Spanish mariners of the fifteenth century. It is true that individuals have in recent days made the venture of sailing across the Atlantic in vessels even smaller than those used by Columbus, but they merely risked their lives as individuals in foolish bravado; and they went forth well provided with every necessary for a journey the time required for which they could estimate with reasonable accuracy. They went not forth on unknown waters; nor were they lacking the means of locating themselves wherever they might find themselves after an unusually violent storm.

But the sailors of Columbus, and Columbus himself, knew not the goal

to which they were tending. They found the trade winds to the West so constant that they were led to imagine that they were being borne towards the limit of the earth itself, and that they could never return. The compass, the mariner's guide in unknown waters, had a variation which was to them incomprehensible, because it originated from causes then unknown, and which, indeed, are not entirely certain even to day; and altogether Providence itself seemed to be arrayed against the enterprise. Yet it was pushed through by the indomitable energy of one man, inspired by faith in God, and zeal to make known to new peoples the revelations of Christ, as well as confidence in his own scientific researches and conclusions.

Some of our contemporaries have praised Columbus because he made his discoveries in the face of the terrible superstitions of the age in which he lived. Thus we read in the *Globe* of the 28th inst.:

"If we do not consider the age in which the feat was done we miss a large part of the lesson. It was a superstitious age. The imaginations of the people, learned or unlearned, were peopled with phantasms." (Might not phantasms, or phantasmata be said with more propriety?—Ed. CATHOLIC RECORD.) Angels and demons were alternately working their wonders before men. Every unaccountable circumstance received a supernatural explanation. . . . The mariners of Columbus believed they were flying in the face of Providence, sailing into parts of the universe inhabited by devils and chimeras where even the laws of nature were likely to be suspended."

Now while we fully acknowledge that the sciences of geography and astronomy, electricity and meteorology were in their mere infancy in the days of Columbus, we take it on ourselves to call into question the statement that superstition was more rife in those ages of faith than they are in this enlightened nineteenth century.

There was indeed a real belief in the superintendence of Providence over all things that occur, but we have yet to learn that this belief is a superstition. We have yet to learn that the words of the Redeemer of mankind are a fallacy.

"Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing, and not one of them shall fall on the ground without your father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not, therefore, you are of more value than many sparrows."

But the real superstitions—the biology, the spiritualism, the Mormonism, the Swedenborgianism, the hypnotism of the nineteenth century, the age of enlightenment, were a thing which would have been laughed to scorn by the sturdy fifteenth century Spaniards whom all the talismanic powers of the Moorish dervishes could not terrify.

If the modern superstitions which prevail in our present enlightened age had any influence on Queen Isabella, or Prior Juan Perez, or Christopher Columbus, or his one hundred and twenty sailors, they would not have set sail on a Friday, 3rd Aug., 1492, to discover a new world. They would not have cast their anchors on a Friday, 12th Oct., in the same year.

Science was not so far advanced in 1492 as it is four hundred years later—but it would appear that superstition with a certain class has gone forward with strides equal to those of science.

It was at all events a happy thought in the minds of those who brought the caravels to America to give this object lesson to the multitudes who will be at the World's Fair, and we have no doubt all who see them will receive a profitable lesson when they learn that all the genius and all the courage and fruitful faith of mankind are not confined to our own age so thaumatological in the scientific realms.

HUMOROUS LOGIC.

The funniest commentary we have seen in any journal on the jeremiads of Rev. Dr. Douglas that Methodists are enduring a great injustice because they have not just now a single portfolio in the Ontario Cabinet, was in the *Toronto Mail*. It first remarks that the general opinion is that no injustice was intended, and that at all events appointments to Government offices should not be made on account of religious belief but rather because of a man's fitness for the office; then, as if feeling that so staunch a bigot as the doctor ought not to be abandoned by a journal devoted to the propagation of just the same absurdities as his, it endeavors to give some defence of the doctor's position by telling what a complaint *would* be made by Catholics if they were overlooked as Methodists have

been. As we do not consider it necessary to disprove an impertinent supposition which has no foundation in fact, we shall not take the trouble of trying to tell what Catholics would or would not do under the imaginary circumstances. But let us suppose that they would do just what the *Mail* asserts—do two blacks make a white, that the *Mail* considers its hypothesis a justification for Dr. Douglas? Only under one condition would this be a sufficient justification—that is, that the Catholic Church is infallible in politics as well as dogmatic teaching. When was the *Mail* converted to believe that the Church was more infallibility than the most zealous Catholics claim for it?

A NEWLY DISCOVERED BIBLICAL MANUSCRIPT.

A most interesting discovery has recently been made by Professor Harris, formerly of the Johns Hopkins University, of an ancient manuscript of the New Testament, belonging, as it is believed, to the second century. It is not stated that the New Testament is complete, but the four gospels at least are substantially so.

This version is in Syriac, and the parchment had been used at a later period for the purpose of writing other compositions which had to be erased, and the original writing restored by the use of chemicals to make it legible. Thus it is found to be what is known as the Curetonian Syriac version, and it is believed to have been written in the second century, as the Curetonian preceded the Peshito which has been hitherto the earliest Syriac version accessible in its entirety to scholars. Fragments of the Curetonian Syriac have, however, been obtained from leaves of parchment discovered in another Syrian monastery at Nisitra.

Discoveries like this are of the greatest utility to Biblical scholars; for though there are extant very ancient copies of the New Testament in the original Greek, there are none actually written at so early a date as is attributed to this newly-discovered Syriac version, which is of course a translation, but which, nevertheless, will throw great light upon the question of the most ancient Greek readings from which it has been translated. Every new discovery of this kind affords additional light on this subject, and assists in enabling scholars to determine the original text where there is any dispute.

These discoveries likewise serve to refute the fantastical theories of Paine, Voltaire and other Infidels who pretend that the New Testament is a modern forgery which was unknown in the early ages of the Church.

There are indeed other means of establishing beyond dispute the genuineness of the New Testament, amongst which we may maintain that it is so copiously quoted by early Christian writers that if the text were at this moment to be irretrievably lost, it could be reproduced almost entirely from writers who have quoted from it. Nevertheless each new proof tending toward the same end must be reckoned as of great value, inasmuch as it adds to the repository of arms by which the assaults of the busy Infidels of to-day may be successfully repulsed.

These Syriac copies, whether the Curetonian or the Peshito, are translations from the Greek, and they betoken that the originals from which they have been translated were of much earlier date, and were most highly prized in the Church from the very beginning; as otherwise so much pains would never have been taken to preserve them and translate them into all the tongues which were used by some branch or other of the Christian Church then in its infancy.

It is worthy of being remarked here that though many very ancient manuscripts of the Greek New Testament exist, there are but few which are complete. There are about 450 complete copies of the Gospels, 260 of St. Paul's Epistles, 210 of the other Epistles and of the Acts of the Apostles, and about 100 of the Apocalypse, making altogether over 1000 volumes, of which about 50 are over one thousand years old. To make it understood what an important evidence this is to the authenticity of the entire New Testament we may mention that of all the classical writers which are most highly prized, there is perhaps not a single manuscript in existence which is a thousand years old, though no doubt is entertained of their authenticity. The proofs of the authenticity of the Bible are therefore more complete beyond comparison than those relating to Horace, Caesar, Cicero, Herodotus, etc.

One manuscript of the whole Bible, called the Alexandrine, dates back certainly to the year 850; and there is good reason to believe that it dates from the time of the Council of Nice, A. D. 325. From this copy, some chapters of St. Matthew's Gospel, however, have been lost.

The Vatican manuscript dates back to about the year 800. It also contained the whole Bible, but some leaves of it have also been lost.

The Sinai manuscript was discovered by Dr. Tischendorf partly in 1844 and more completely in 1859, in a convent on Mount Sinai. This contains the New Testament complete, together with the well-known Epistle of Barnabas and the Shepherd of Hermas. There is not a single leaf of the New Testament missing in this copy, which is certainly most ancient, dating probably from the reign of Constantine the Great.

These three are the most important manuscripts of the Greek text known to exist, though there are others which come near them in age, and it is certainly remarkable that with all the variations which might be expected from books written by various transcribers of different countries, there are very few substantial differences between them. We hear a good deal about various readings, but most of these variations consist merely of differences in spelling, or in the collocation of words, without any difference whatsoever in the sense. It is not at all surprising that among so many written volumes there should be such variations; and it must be borne in mind also that not all the volumes are to be regarded as equally reliable; but those which are reliable are perfectly well known.

From these remarks it will be seen how valuable the new discovery will be, especially if it be proved to be as early as is supposed from those portions of the text which have been examined so far.

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT AND LYNCH LAW.

The frequency with which lynching has taken place of late in several of the United States has called the attention of the public to what threatens to become an evil as widely extended as it is enormous and atrocious; and when these lynchings do occur they are now usually conducted with a barbarity which shows a shocking absence of all feeling of humanity in those who perpetrate them.

It is not to be expected that an angry multitude, borne onward solely by the desire of vengeance, should be very discriminating, and it from time to time happens that the victims of such mobs are innocent parties on whom for the moment a suspicion has fallen without any solid reason.

This was the case recently at the town of Gleason, Tennessee, where the intention was to hang a criminal named Leo Bennett, but it now appears that they made an error and hanged brutally an innocent man named Harris whom they mistook for Bennett; and the latter is now in jail in Dresden, heavily guarded awaiting his trial for the offence of which he is accused.

Other cases of lynching have occurred within the last few weeks in Illinois and Michigan, where there is no doubt of the guilt of the parties thus executed; but the brutality with which the penalty was inflicted in these cases is a disgrace to a community supposed to be civilized. In the Michigan case the culprit was taken from the jail soon after dark on May 23rd, by a mob of eight hundred men. Before the mob reached his cell, warned by their outcries, the culprit knew that they were bent on killing him with every imaginable cruelty, and he attempted suicide with a broken bottle which he found in his cell; but before he had effected his purpose, the mob broke in and prevented it. He was then dragged out, and his executioners struggled and fought to tug at the rope which was placed about his neck, the other end being thrown over the limb of a tree. After some time, the body, which was lying on the ground, was suspended by a sudden jerk, and was pushed about, and stabbed with pocket-knives in many places by the men who were engaged in the bloody work, and his clothing was torn into shreds. At last when it was known that he was dead the lifeless body was dragged through the mire of the streets, and around the Court House square.

This fearful act of vengeance was perpetrated but a short time subsequently to the rejection of a Bill by the Michigan Senate, to re-establish capital punishment in that State, which has

been abolished for many years. The Assembly, however, passed the bill for its re-establishment, which the Senate thus rejected. It appears, however, that whatever may be the opinion of the people when in their sober senses, when a truly atrocious case is before them, they are readily induced to inflict capital punishment illegally rather than let a criminal escape under laws which they have themselves established through their representatives. The plea under which Michigan refuses to permit the death penalty to remain on the statute book is that it is an inhumanity. But surely it would have been less inhuman to have inflicted death under the forms of law than in the illegal and demoralizing manner in which this last lynching was performed in that State. As a Rochester paper, commenting on the event, remarked, "there is such a thing as humanity that encourages inhumanity."

To us it appears that nothing less than the dread of capital punishment will deter the majority of those who are inclined to murderous deeds from putting their bloodthirsty propensities into practice. For this reason capital punishment was approved by God when He established the Mosaic Law with the proviso, "He that striketh a man with a will to kill him shall be put to death." The pretence that the carrying out of this law is an inhumanity is therefore an absurdity. We agree with the French statesman who, in answering objections adduced by others in the Chamber of Deputies against capital punishment that it is an inhumanity, said: "If capital punishment be a wrong which ought to be abolished, let those gentlemen the murderers set the example of abolishing it."

The Michigan Senate has not yet been convinced that capital punishment should be re-established, but other countries which have made the same experiment have come to the conclusion that it is necessary to return to the old methods in order to repress the increase of crime. Switzerland is an example of this, for in 1874 the death penalty was abolished there; but later each canton received the authority to establish its own code, and the death penalty has been reintroduced into several of them.

It is probable that if the death penalty still existed in Michigan the barbarous and demoralizing lynching scene we have described above would not have occurred; though it is barely possible that the uncertainty of any punishment being inflicted at all may have been part of the incentive which led the crowd to take justice into their own hands. At all events the occurrence shows that even in a State where anti-capital punishment principles predominate there still lurks among the people an irrepressible notion that such punishment is at least sometimes needful to infuse terror into the worst class of criminals.

The extent to which lynching is carried on is made clear by some statistics given by the Congregational ministers of Boston and vicinity at a meeting recently held in Pilgrim Hall. One of the resolutions passed says: "Lynch law, this barbarous usurper of constitutional law, has recently assumed such activity that no less than one thousand lynchings have taken place in the last ten years, increasing so that last year some one hundred and fifty took place; and these in communities where no one denied that the persons, had they been convicted by due process of law, would have been duly punished. Some of these lynchings were accompanied with fiendish cruelties perhaps unparalleled during the year in any heathen tribe in darkest Africa."

AN EXPLODED FIRST PRINCIPLE.

Treating of the condemnation of Dr. Briggs by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, the *New York Independent*, which is the leading Congregational journal on this continent, representing pretty fairly the present tendency of Protestant thought, says:

"The general consensus of Protestant opinion is that it is far better to have division with liberty than union without liberty." There is, in this way of putting the matter, a flippancy of expression which is very plausible with those who maintain the primary principle of Protestantism—that every human being is himself the ultimate court of appeal on all controverted questions in regard to matters of faith or Church creeds—for if it is really the case that the individual is the ultimate judge, the greatest possible amount of liberty should be allowed to every one as regards what he is to believe and what he is free to reject.

On this same principle Rev. Dr. Merle, pastor of the Central Presbyterian church of New York city, prefaced a sermon which he delivered in his church on the 19th ult. with the statement that

"There is a place in the Church for such men as Dr. Briggs of the Union, and Dr. Hodge of Princeton Seminary."

These two are types of the two extremes of Presbyterianism, the latter believing and teaching the old doctrine of the plenary inspiration of Holy Scripture, and the former rejecting such parts of Scripture, especially of the Old Testament, as may appear to the so-called "higher critic" to be of inferior authority.

The views of the *Independent* and of Dr. Merle are very similar at bottom, though expressed in different language. The meaning in each case is that members of a Church are not to be hampered by creeds. They are not to be bound to belief in any doctrine in particular; and to this extent they have the best of the argument inasmuch as the foundation on which they stand was certainly the original chief corner-stone of Protestantism.

This was certainly the doctrine maintained by Luther and Calvin, and it is asserted in all the early creeds of Protestantism.

Thus in the Presbyterian Confession of Faith we find, "We may be moved and induced by the testimony of the Church to a high and reverend esteem of the Holy Scripture, etc. . . . Yet notwithstanding our full persuasion and assurance of the infallible truth and divine authority thereof is from the inward work of the Holy Spirit, bearing witness by and with the word in our hearts."

And again: "The supreme judge by which all controversies of religion are to be determined, and all decrees of councils, opinions of ancient writers, doctrines of men and private spirits are to be examined, and in whose sentence we are to rest, can be no other but the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scripture."

It is evident that each private individual must be sole judge of what the Holy Spirit dictates to him, so that this rule places the individual in the position of the supreme judge in all controversies; and in this sense this rule has always been urged at least in controversies with Catholics.

But in dealing with those who set up for themselves within their own community, there is another interpretation put upon these words. They are convenient enough to be then twisted to mean that the church must pronounce the final decision; and this is what has been done by the Church courts which decided the cases of Drs. Briggs and Smith, and what will in all likelihood be done in the similar case of Dr. Campbell of Montreal.

The accused in all such cases point out that they have the same right of private interpretation which those Divines had who framed the Westminster Creed, repudiating the only church which could claim to have derived its authority from a succession of pastors extending back to the day when Christ commissioned His Apostles to teach all nations.

But it is clear that no Church could allow the claim of these innovators without giving up the essence of its being. This accounts for the inconsistent insistence on the authority of a Church which proclaims aloud that it has no right to assert such authority.

Can we wonder that Professor Briggs refuses to be ruled by the decisions of such an organization, though it calls itself the only true religion?

Since the decision of the assembly, the belligerent doctor has issued a manifesto in which he calls upon the friends of his cause not to abandon Presbyterianism, but to rally in defence of their views and to convert Presbyterianism to them.

How will the matter end? We shall not pretend to decide, but we cannot well see how Presbyterianism can defend itself from the charge of inconsistency, whatever may be the course pursued.

It is evident that while those who have Latitudinarian tendencies will advocate the platform of the *Independent*, "division with liberty," those who believe that Christ left a creed to be taught will continue to protest against the liberty to reject that teaching.

Did you ever stand out in the soft sunshine of a perfect summer day, and just hug yourself for joy that you were alive? Did you ever look up in the dome of an apple tree in bloom and watch a plump breasted robin brooding a nest of blue eggs, and say to yourself "who wouldn't be glad to be alive in such a world? Who wouldn't thank God for a chance along with the robins and flowers?"—*Amber*.

MR. ESSERY, MAYOR.

Mrs. J. C. Manchester, of Boston, supplement to Mrs. Shepherd, lectured in this city on Friday night. Mr. Essery, mayor, an oratorical Paviour who courts and revels in the kin ring of the rabble, acted as champion. We are not favored with a report of the lecture of Mrs. Manchester of Boston. She is merely on record having exhorted Mr. Essery, mayor, Rev. J. R. Gundy and about forty an audience, comprised chiefly members of the P. P. A., to commandment which tells us we should love our neighbor as ourselves. Essery, mayor, was charitable enough to characterize as a degraded people the individual who, in a weekly paper in this city, found fault with him having presented a bible to a lady meaning Mrs. Shepherd. With humility we acknowledge ourselves to be the person meant, but Mr. Essery, mayor, made a mistake. We did say he had presented a bible to a lady. We stated he had given one to Mrs. Shepherd. Florence E. Booth, the Salvation Army, says of her: "I have no doubt at all but that woman is a fraud."—(Letter to Mayor, of Boston, dated March 10, 1893.) "She was an inmate of our Reformatory, and professed to give information at the time Mr. Stead was sentenced about certain bad houses in this city, with which she said she was familiar. She was allowed to go on day to the city—I think some one sent with her—but by making excuses she escaped out of their charge, and for some time was lost sight of, until she was found much better for drink. She has never been a—(Letter to Wm. Barclay, Esq., Chicago, May 22, 1891.)

This is the lady to whom Mr. Essery, mayor, presented a bible. He did not say the bible was presented by a lady by Mr. Essery; and he lady returned the compliments could not write that the presentation was made to a gentleman.

Mr. Essery, mayor, has a habit of saying smart things to create applause but he would be more admired if he had a greater regard for the hearer.

"If I thought that the de person who wrote that article read a bible I would follow him for a week in order to present with one."

We beg to inform Mr. Essery, that we not only read the bible but keep bibles on sale. We sell many, and our people are recommended to purchase and study the Holy Bible. This, we know, will be Mr. Essery, mayor, but he followers are sadly in need of information on this as well as many points concerning the Catholic Church. If people will make themselves inquisitive by seeking information from graduates of Whitcomb they have only themselves to blame.

Mr. Essery, mayor, is war further on he says: "I can assure Mrs. Manchester as far as the citizens are concerned we are all up in arms, and do the foe that opposes us."

As Mr. Essery, mayor, weighs seventy-five pounds, we can what a titter passed amongst audience when this declaration was made. It reminds us of a very reading given by the great G. I. Grosmith, in this city a few ago, wherein he gave a "Bible" delivered by a illiputian in piping, little voice.

We need fear nothing, Essery, mayor, in the open the injury we anticipate from his followers—comprised for part of the canaille and dim mugwump politicians—will which the assassin and the se are wont to inflict.

Already he has begun the depriving, by his casting v man of seventy of his means a livelihood, because, it assume, he is a Catholic. Press, a paper friendly to described the procedure as and unfair.

On these lines the war is to on—on these lines Thomas Essery, mayor, is thirsting and distinction.

EDITORIAL NOTE.

It is seldom that the Government, whether it be or a Republic, thinks of his salary for the benefit of and indeed we are all will cede that such an official be well paid for his service if he performs them well. Raffaello Nunez, the President of the Catholic State of Col America, however, has set of disinterestedness by re