

could. The news of a Catholic scandal, a fallen priest, or a wicked nun, acts like magic on their pious, sympathetic natures. They are glad of it; they rejoice over it. Another congenial topic is furnished for Sunday chats, food is supplied for the imagination, and tradition will profit by its influx.

On the question of Catholics, these good-natured, church-going people are hampered by no qualms of conscience. They may scruple to couple their vile epithets and base insinuations with the scoffers of God's holy name, they may shrink from imputing to the basest criminals, the ordinary acts of Romish emissaries, they may see in the Infidel, Jew or Pagan qualities to be admired and praised, but in the Catholic, however so humble, pious and devoted, they see nothing but fraud, treachery and cruelty. They wilfully shut their eyes to everything Catholic, save what may be used to slander or misrepresent. We may endeavor to explain that such or such an accusation is a falsehood, a calumny, a base invention, an effect of blind prejudice, but they will not hear us. We have no right to attempt to rob them of their long-cherished ideas. Better acknowledge our guilt at once, and resign all claim to public notice and social position. It is very wrong on our part, to be so regardless of the public good, as to wish to have a religion considered worthy of attention which smacks so strongly of the Dark Ages. This is the nineteenth century, and Catholicism, with its ignorance, idolatry and superstition, belongs to the forgotten past. Might not all this be termed intolerance? In Catholics much less would suffice, but as Protestants are a superior class of beings, and enjoy rights and privileges peculiar to themselves, and quite unknown to Catholics, they must be allowed to act in these matters as they think best.

For Protestants to revile Catholic doctrines, to style the Pope anti-christ, to term our priests mad-men, and our laymen scoundrels, is not intolerance, but rather a due, a right, which the advancement of society, and the propagation of sound Protestant principles demand. It matters not to us how they may act, how they may abuse or denounce us, we are

too weak-minded to follow their reasonings, too deeply sunk in ignorance to understand what they do, and too servile and obedient to a crafty priesthood to know our own needs. What we want is freedom, freedom to think for ourselves, freedom to act in accordance with our own reason, which though weak may be strengthened by use, freedom to judge for ourselves without any appealing to others, in short, freedom to live as becomes rational beings. Fetters have made us slaves, docile and obsequious. We are not to blame for our miserable condition. Poor ignorant Catholics as we are, trodden upon by priests whom we worship as gods, we should be pitied rather than despised. Give us but to taste of that freedom, heaven's greatest gift to man, and we will sever those bonds which have enslaved us. We will laugh at the papal infallibility, the divine authoritative power of the Church, the Real Presence, the existence of purgatory, the divine maternity of Mary and the necessity of Auricular Confession. We will forget that we have ever been intolerant. We will consider one religion as good as another and all equally bad, we will live in peace and harmony with all men, think only of the goods of this world, and jump the life to come. This is the toleration or liberalism we should exercise. 'Twas thus the apostate Emperors of Rome taught their subjects to act, with the secret design of extirpating Christianity, and this same policy is pursued to-day by the enemies of the Catholic Church. Of course we are not falsely accused, cast into prison, deprived of office, denied justice, despised, shunned and neglected merely because we are Catholics, for that would be contrary to the spirit of Protestant toleration, but it seems rather strange that in proportion as toleration or liberalism increases, the Catholic religion suffers. The reason is evident. Liberalism as understood by Protestants, excludes Catholicity as too intolerant, as something which cannot harmonize with their idea of toleration, which has for its basis, indifference to truth and error, to right and wrong, to virtue and vices.

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