

A FEW TRUTHS.

BY ELLA WILLIARD ROWELL.

(Concluded.)

Have you forgotten, my dear sir, the many Catholics that suffered death in England during the reign of "good Queen Bess?" Has the tragic death of Mary, Queen of Scots, been forgotten? When you speak of the intolerance of the Catholic Church, do you not recall the record of bigotry that was written in America with the blood of many a priest? All of the colonies, excepting Pennsylvania, instituted an Inquisition of their own on a small scale. As late as 1740 Massachusetts punished the entrance of Catholic priests with life imprisonment; an attempt to escape was punished by death. New York, under Lord Bellamont, passed the same act; yet 1740 is over two hundred and fifty years later than the date of the Spanish Inquisition.

These records do not savor of an intolerant, bigoted religion? These are not the stories that are remembered when we are telling the children of the cruelties that have been perpetrated in the name of the Church. If the Roman Church is so intolerant, how do you account for the fact that the first colony in America, where every religious sect could find a foothold and home, was Maryland, under Lord Baltimore? Your Protestant colonists, with their open Bible, printed in as plain English as was attainable at that time, could not seem to find that little sentence of seven words: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." The meaning of the golden text became distorted, particularly in Maryland, after it passed into Protestant governorship. To be sure they had the Bible: but they read it through the mists of prejudice and bigotry, which cruelly twisted the meaning of the words.

When, in this 19th century, the age of free-thought and reason, as you are so proud to call it, and in these United States where every person's religious opinion is entitled to respect, a body of so-called intellectual men, professing belief in the divine love of Christ, can league themselves against a Church which clearly traces its foundation back to the lowly Christ, and finds in their Christian brethren fit subjects for a foreign mission, we can not say that bigotry and the Inquisitorial spirit died with the uprisal of Martin Luther. When society, with its eyes wide open to grasp and examine every doctrine pertaining to the future life—when, with its loud protestations against all priest-bound ideas, it can ostracize one who, through thorough examination and study, deep and honest conviction, feels called upon to leave the easy and well-trodden path of conventional religious belief, and painfully tread alone the stony path that leads them on to a higher life, it seems as if Protestantism, Free-thought and Reason had not softened the human heart.

When you censure what you call the Jesuitical doctrine, and uphold your clerical friend, the Episcopalian, for believing in the doctrine Colonel Ingersoll expounds, you are, I think, inconsistent. I can see no difference between what you call "Jesuitism" and your friend's explanation. If he thinks Mr. Ingersoll is "ploughing the ground and preparing the field," why does he not alight from his carriage that rides so easily, and assist him in holding the plough to the furrow? If he does not believe that the truths embodied in the Apostolic and Nicene Creeds are such, why does he repeat, and require of his congregation the same, when it only serves to impress an error on their minds, and particularly of the young. If he does not believe he has the power to absolve the penitent from their sins, why does he at every service require

the worshippers to acknowledge their sins, and convey the idea to their minds that he can forgive their transgressions? He is, to me, the very kind of a hypocrite. Why does he not come out and preach honestly before the world what he believes to be the truth? If it needs men like Colonel Ingersoll to do the "sapper-work," why does he not, now that he knows what it needs, take a spade and help Colonel Ingersoll dig the trench?

Like England itself, the English Church, in its covetous desire for all Christianity, has a creed for every individual soul. With an utter disregard for the 89 articles, some have gone so near Rome as to be almost indistinguishable from the true Church. They have their religious orders, have introduced confessionals into their churches, a gorgeous ritual into their services. Others are as far the other way, hardly bowing their heads at the name of the Saviour, but all are Episcopalian. You can confess your sins, or you can go unshrined; you can partake of the sacrament simply as bread and wine, or you can take it in its most solemn meaning. You can believe in universal punishment or eternal salvation; you may wear a crucifix, scapular or other religious emblems, or you may be Puritanical as regards the paraphernalia of religion. Anything and everything, everything or nothing, so long as you acknowledge that the Church of England is the *True Catholic Church*.

I have tried to find out, but have been unable, which was the *original* Apostolic Church—the Low, High or Ritualistic? They condemn "the errors of Romanism"—why are they introducing the doctrine of transubstantiation, confession and all that the Roman Church has always taught? When you accuse the monks of twisting the meaning of the Scriptures, of what do you think the translators of the 19th century guilty? They have removed and added to and so distorted the truths contained in the Book as to make it unrecognizable as the words of Holy Writ in its new dress.

The Catholic Church does not discourage the study of the Scriptures. Instead, it puts into the hands of the children Bible histories, printed in large, clear type, beautifully illustrated—a book that is attractive to young and old. Not only is this done, but every Sunday a portion of the Gospels and Epistles are read from the pulpit or altar in plain English, or the language of the parishioners, and explained, and most of the prayer-books contain Scripture.

As one of the "poor benighted worshippers" you are so pleased to call us. I ask you back over the nineteen centuries that have elapsed since the birth of Christ in Judea. The babe who was born on that far away Christmas morning, whether believed to be Divine or simply like other babes, cast an influence over the world which has never been equalled. We know of the intense light that radiated from the lives of Buddha, Mahomet and other leaders of great religious bodies; we know of the immense numbers who have lived and died, and are living, believing in the divinity of these men, but we also know that under no influence has the world reached such a height of civilization as has been attained under the influence of the short life of Jesus of Nazareth. It is true that cruel and bloody wars have been waged in His name; it is true that persecutions have been practiced for His sake by religious fanatics, but it is also true that the greatest blessings have come from the Christian religion, and the Roman Church has been the able servant of Christianity. It would be more than strange if among so many millions of people who are in communion with the Roman Catholic Church there should not be found those who are lacking many of the virtues that make up the truly Christian character; but as we find,

among the twelve Apostles chosen by our Lord, one who thrice denied his Master, and one who basely betrayed Him, we must not look for perfection among the many professing Christianity since Christ's death.

When St. Peter and St. Paul came to Rome they found the pagan city sunk in the depths of infamy. Her nights turned into days, her days into nights; her religious festivals, drunken orgies; her sacrifice, licentiousness. Amongst the people of this dissolute city they established what has since existed—the Roman Catholic Church. Through long years of persecution the few disciples of Christianity builded slowly, but surely, the great structure, laying carefully one upon another the solid blocks of good works, cementing them together with brotherly love, securing them more firmly with the bolts of faith, and all upon that foundation of truth—the Rock of Ages.

Year after year, century after century, we see the influence gradually extending over the world. Gaul, Ireland, England, Scotland, Germany, Egypt, Palestine, Syria and Greece received the Gospel. Now and then some heresiarch lifted up his voice against the Church; but the movement he would create soon subsided, and it was not until Martin Luther, in the early part of the sixteenth century, protested against the Church that she received a blow that was felt, and although the wound upon her fair face was severe she did not succumb.

From the time of the Protestant Reformation the Church has been assailed by her enemies. Forgetting how much they owed to her fostering care, they added to whatever errors may have been committed in her name, until at the present day intelligent (?) Protestants repeat the most horrible stories of the crimes that have been committed by Catholics, and which are attested to as historical facts. But the power of Protestantism has been insufficient to crush her, even though her destruction has been foretold; and she exists to-day in this American Republic of the United States in a most healthy condition, and by her wonderful vitality and growth has given rise to much apprehension on the part of other religious bodies.

When you write so sarcastically of the symbols of religion you seem to forget what they may be to some poor soul who, with a body weary with labor and starved by poverty—one whose life has not had for a luxury the things we have scorned—such a one looks up to the image of the Infant Jesus with His virgin mother, or the sad representation of the Crucifixion of our Saviour, and feels that it is indeed true—God is the God of the poor—that for them, the poor outcasts of humanity, He died. One whose body and soul has been starved and beaten, whose only idea of life is labor and little to eat and wear, can form no conception of God, that is all love and goodness, excepting they can perceive with their eyes some representation of Him or His life. They must have something tangible whereby to form an idea of the spiritual. They have been so uneducated that the only object they have in looking at the sky is to see whether it portends fair or foul weather. It is the only chapter they ever read in the Book of Nature. To such, then, you would not take away the representations of God, and place instead your Bible?

When you write so forcibly and with such scathing sarcasm of "the biased and bigoted priesthood" you forget it is this same priesthood who have done so much to redeem the world from misery. The different religious orders that have taken for their life work the redemption of slaves, rescuing of fallen women, educating of the poor, nursing of the sick, and every object that could benefit their fellow-men, have done enough good to save their Church

from calumination. Such examples of charity, self-denial and self-sacrifice as the lives of the Jesuit missionaries contain should alone for the vices of those who scolded her pages with dishonor.

Is it nothing that the little volume written by the Augustinian monk in the fifteenth century has saved our soul from despair—has pointed out the way to peace that had been wholly lost? When your apostles of Reason shall write those truths which shall point a sinning soul to a better life; when they shall write the words that shall lift to hope the heart bowed down to despair, then I can more readily believe it is the religion of to-day. But it is to me the most barren outlook into life.

I look out of my window this morning. The ground is frozen; the trees lift their black and leafless branches to the sky seeking the warmth of the sun; but over the earth and through the naked limbs sweeps a cold, moroi-less blast, driving all it can before it, breaking what is not strong enough to resist its force—and that is what your faith teaches me. I see a poor woman, whose soul is dark with sin, looking up, trying to find the sunlight of God's love. But no—there is nothing. Only the pitiless wind of fate that shall blow her farther down into the gulf of despair. What matters it to her whether evil is shadow or substance. She cannot stop to theorize—she only wants to live her little life better, to bring the soul she had dishonored cleansed to her God. Error is to her, not the shadow; it is real. It is something tangible, something she must fight physically. It may be the cloud over the sun, but it is one that will not wear off in this life. It is not how she stands before mankind, but how stands her soul before God?

Your creed, with its plausible theories, may do for joy, but what does it say to misery? I do not believe in anyone yielding up their individuality; but a priest can, with his knowledge of life and the world and humanity, so teach you that you will be able to baffle the waves of life and not get stranded. Individual reason teaches two great dependence upon individual strength. People, with only their personal inclinations to restrain them, do not realize too often how far they are going, and step into danger when a little counsel would have saved them. This is the mission of the Church—to point out the way to a better and nobler life, to save humanity from the consequences of their own misdeeds. She has been maligned. Her children have been persecuted. The sons she nursed in her very bosom have turned against her. Forgiving their ingratitude she points with her wounded hand to Him who sealed her brow with His life's blood, knowing He will not forsake her in her hour of tribulation. She is the embodiment of truth, and as such she knows she cannot die. "Lo I am with you all days even unto the consummation of the world."

AT DEATH'S DOOR—DYSPEPSIA CONQUERED—A GREAT MEDICAL TRIUMPH—GENTLEMEN—My medical adviser and others told me I could not possibly live when I commenced to use Northrop & Lyman's VEGETABLE DISCOVERY for Dyspepsia. My case was one of the worst of its kind. For three years I could not eat meat and my weight decreased from 219 to 119 lbs. All the food I took for thirteen months previous to taking the VEGETABLE DISCOVERY consisted of milk. I am now entirely cured and have regained my usual weight, can eat anything with a keen relish and feel like a new man. I have sold over thirty dozen VEGETABLE DISCOVERY since it cured me, as I am well-known, and people in this section know how low I was, and thought I could not possibly be cured. They are eager to try this grand medicine. It certainly saved my life as I never expected to recover when first I commenced using it. I am not exaggerating anything, but feel glad to be able to contribute this testimonial and trust it may be the means of convincing others of its merit as a certain cure for Dyspepsia.

Signed, JEAN VALCOURT,
Wotton, P. Q. General Merchant,