

1852, 1875, with the principal countries of Europe: the Berne Convention was merely an enlargement and consolidation of these Acts. No literary man or artist who understands the matter and the privileges which are being thrown away, has asked to have the foolish Act of 1889 become law: indeed, it would be folly to suppose so. Canada and the United States are both far behind Europe in art, science and literature: reputation and progress among the nations of the world do not count when the Almighty Dollar steps in. The United States, however, have separate international treaties with all the foreign countries named of the Berne Convention (except Spain and Luxembourg) and also with Denmark and Portugal, which are not members, while poor Canada, with suicidal folly, will, by the passing of the Act of 1889, be completely isolated, and will not retain even the reciprocal advantages granted us by the Imperial Act of 1886.

The Act of 1889 imposes impossible conditions on British authors, whose property is to be taken without their leave, and, besides that, is so badly drawn as to embody several glaring mistakes, so that lawyers will be able to derive the traditional "coach and four" through it in the usual manner; on a future occasion I may take this up.

The official returns from the *ad valorem* duty of 12½ per cent. on reprints of British works hitherto collected in the Canadian Customs since December, 1850, for British authors and now happily ended, show what a farce the collection has been, and arouse grave doubts whether much of the beggarly ten per cent. royalty provided for in the Act of 1889 would find its way to the pockets of the British author.

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103 Bay Street, Toronto, April 3rd, 1895.

DR. GRANT'S ULTRAMONTANISM.

To the Editor of The Week:

SIR.—In your issue of March 15th, Mr. Herbert Symonds reviews Principal Grant, of Kingston, and says that the following is an "illuminating passage:"

"According to Ultramontanism, revelation is the opposite of reason . . . according to Christianity, revelation is the complement of reason."

One wonders if either author or reviewer ever read an Ultramontane, that is, a Catholic book, with understanding—with "a meeting soul." That hint might be impertinent, if Cardinal Newman's words were not literally true that there is nothing absurd enough for wise Protestants to think about the Catholic Church.

May a correspondent humbly suggest that another word of Cardinal Newman's is worth calling to mind, viz., that so many arguments are useless because people do not agree about the premises? That is applicable—is it not?—to Catholic and Protestant discussions where "Faith" is concerned. For, to quote the same writer again: "Faith was—in the Catholic sense—an intellectual act; its object, truth; its result, knowledge."

That leads to some quotations—almost at random—to illuminate the illuminating: but such might be found in any Ultramontane book. These ones following are from Father Hecker, the New England "Transcendental" convert:

"If Christianity be presented to men in such a way as to leave but the one choice, either to become fanatics or to profess no religion, where is there one who possesses a spark of reason, or has a manly feeling in his breast, that would not rather stand aloof from all religious sects, and pay such worship to his Creator as accords with the dictates of Reason and the inward convictions of the soul? Reliance on the rational convictions of our nature is the first of all duties." [*The Aspirations of Nature*, 5th ed., p. 27].

"Endowed with Reason, man has no right to surrender his judgment. . . . The assent of Reason to truth is not the subjection of Reason, but its sublimest assertion. . . . Let the light of Truth be our guide. Let Reason be our Authority. We fear not to follow where they point the way. What contradicts Reason, contradicts God." [*Ib.* pp. 33-34.]

"There is no degradation so abject, as the submission of the eternal interests of the soul to the private authority or dictation of any man, or body of men, whatever be their titles." [*Ib.* p. 40].

And these from the other New England wanderer, Brownson:

"In becoming a Presbyterian I abandoned the use of reason; in becoming a Catholic I used my reason. In the one case I submitted because I despaired of reason, in the other, because I confided in it. . . . All the objections usually urged against believing on authority, were valid against my act of submission to Presbyterianism. But my act of submission to the Catholic Church was an intelligent, a reasonable act. . . . Presbyterianism contradicted reason; Catholicity was above reason, indeed, but still in accordance with it, and therefore credible without violence to reason or nature. In becoming a Presbyterian, I had to surrender common sense, and give up my natural beliefs and convictions; in becoming a Catholic, I had very little to reject of what I had previously held. I have found, on reviewing my past life, hardly a single positive conviction I ever held that do not still hold, hardly a denial I ever made that I would not still make if divested of my Catholic faith. I fell short of Catholicity, but in no instance where I faithfully followed reason, did I run counter to it." [*The Convert*, chap. XIX.]

Or as a Jesuit writer says: "Far from us be those (Protestant) declarations, which in the name of God and of the human race, demand the dethronement of reason." [*Fr. Russo. The True Religion*, Chap. III].

But then these Ultramontanes do not find the Protestant notion of original sin as a doctrine of the Catholic Church *plus* the goodness of God.

Surely it is time for Canadian intelligent Protestants not to be behind the age; but rather to begin to be able to take Catholics at their word, as to what is, or is not, "according" to their faith. Else they must be objects for Mark Twain's question: "What is the use of knowing so many things that are not so?" W. F. F. STOCKLEY.

University of New Brunswick, Fredericton,
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The Confessions of an Agnostic.*

THE intellectual conversion of Mr. G. S. Romanes, from a position of reasoned scepticism to an attitude of reasoned belief, is an event in the history of the thought of our time. The volume before us is edited by Charles Gore, the well-known editor of *Luce Mundi*. It is admirably done. The preface of the editor contains a summary of Romanes' agnostic positions. Then we find two papers which mark the movement of his mind, and finally the "Notes" which are but imperfect fragments of a projected work whose aim would have been not unlike that of Mr. A. J. Balfour, in his recent remarkable work "The Foundations of Belief."

Mr. Romanes is well-known as the author of several works bearing on Darwinism. He occupied a distinguished place in contemporary Biology. His mental history is quickly told. In 1873, at the age of twenty-five, he gained the Burney prize for an essay on "Christian Prayer considered in relation to the belief that the Almighty governs the world by general laws." Three years later he published, under the pseudonym, "Physicus," a work entitled "A Candid Examination of Theism." This work showed that in the interval his mind had moved rapidly and sharply into a position of reasoned scepticism as to the existence of God. The remarkable passage in which he sums up his position, will serve not only to make clear what that position was, but also to reveal what manner of man Romanes was.

"So far as I am individually concerned, the result of this analysis has been to show that, as regards the problem of Theism, it becomes my obvious duty to stifle all belief of the kind which I conceive to be the noblest, and to discipline my intellect with regard to this matter into an attitude of the purest scepticism. And forasmuch as I am far from being able to agree with those who affirm that the twilight doctrine of the 'new faith' is a desirable substitute for the waning splendour of 'the old,' I am not ashamed to confess that with this virtual negation of God, the universe to me has lost its soul of loveliness; and although from henceforth the precept 'to work while it is day' will doubtless but gain an intensified force from the terribly intensified meaning of the words that 'the night cometh when no man can work,' yet when at times I think, as thick at times I must, of the appalling contrast between the hallowed glory of that creed which once was mine, and the lonely mystery of existence as now I find it, at such times I shall ever feel it impossible to avoid the sharpest pang of which my nature is susceptible. For whether it be due to my intelligence not being sufficiently advanced to meet the

* "Thoughts on Religion." By the late George John Romanes, M.A., LL.D., F.R.S. Edited by Charles Gore, M.A. Canon of Westminster, (Chicago: The Open Court Publishing Company, 1895. \$1.25.)