

in the interests of symmetrical intellectual development, moral purity, God-given freedom, and national progress, but the reverse.

Romanism is antagonistic to the legitimate use of the Bible, and does its utmost to keep it out of the hands of the people. It is not necessary for our present purpose to go through the dogmas of Rome, one by one, showing how they contradict God's truth. This would be a large undertaking, requiring many volumes for its execution. Nor do we take the position that Romish theology is wholly destitute of truth. On the contrary, the writings of the Fathers, many of whom Romanists unjustly claim as their exclusive heritage, contain masses of gold as well as heaps of worthless dross and antiquated rubbish. We readily grant, moreover, that men may clearly learn the way of life from the Latin Vulgate and the Douay Bible. Papists and Protestants may even agree in a general declaration of belief in one God and three persons in the Godhead; the divinity, incarnation, sufferings, and death of the Son of God; the divinity and mission of the Holy Ghost; the necessity of prayer, of faith, repentance, justification, sanctification, and good works. All this may be frankly acknowledged as well as the fact that there are great vital matters upon which they differ, *foto cælo*—e. g., the number, the nature, and efficacy of the sacraments, the all-sufficiency of the sacrifice *once* offered by Christ, his exclusive prerogatives as the One High Priest and *only* Mediator between God and men, and the state into which the souls of believers pass at death.

Moreover, the declaration, even upon points of practical agreement, must be exceedingly general and superficial; for when definitions and details are demanded, and what is really distinctive of Romanism receives the prominence which it undoubtedly holds in the working theology of the Church, it will be found that every one of the cardinal doctrines held and taught by Protestants is not only modified and obscured, but fundamentally corrupted. There is much weak and God-dishonouring talk in our day about a universal irenicism, and the substantial agreement of Papists and Protestants. In spite of surface appearances they are, in many respects, as widely and irreconcilably separated as Christianity and paganism. Both may say: "We believe in the Holy Catholic Church," but the one makes Christ

the only Head, and the other the Pope; and as they proceed to work out their respective conceptions of the constitution and functions of the Church, they soon part company so widely as to make it apparent that they really seem to hold nothing in common beyond the fact that there is a Church of God. But this much pagan Africans may admit. Both may say: "We believe in the Bible." But when Protestants add that it is the supreme and only infallible standard of religious faith and conduct; that Christian doctrine and life must in every case be finally determined by its teachings; that it is the highest and best instrument of intellectual and moral culture, and must therefore have its proper place in all educational institutions; that it is a plain as well as a profound revelation of God's saving grace—teaching, in brief, "what man is to believe concerning God and what duty God requires of man," and that it should be diligently read and studied by all the people, and cherished as the bulwark of their freedom; and when, on the other hand, Papists bring forward immeasurable masses of tradition, the voluminous writings of the Fathers, amounting to hundreds of volumes, the innumerable bulls and decretals of so-called infallible Popes and Councils, and demand that these must have as much authority as the truth of God, and that the Bible can be only interpreted and accepted in harmony with the consensus of all these, and that the work of interpretation must be restricted exclusively to canonically ordained ecclesiastics; that the people must be restrained on pain of eternal damnation from attempting to understand or believe the Word except as explained by the Church, and that to save them from this crime and mortal sin the Bible must be snatched from their hands and publicly burned in our streets like the martyrs of former days—when both parties thus declare their creeds somewhat fully, the practical significance of the proposition "we believe in the Bible" becomes apparent. And that the Church of Rome in Canada is a mighty Bible-burning institution admits of no doubt. In the Province of Quebec we are not left to conjecture in the matter. The ashes of God's Book, consumed under priestly injunctions and by priestly hands, bear witness to her zeal and determination in this business. A few months ago Father Gibaud, preaching