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[To make room for the following lecture we are compelled to discontinue the further publication of the Tale for a few weeks.]

LECTURE

ON THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND THE BIBLE.

BY THE REV. H. BRETTARGH.

The subject of which I purpose to treat to-night is 'The Catholic Church and the Bible; or more strictly, I purpose to answer the question 'Do Catholics read the Bible?'

To the Catholics present this will appear a strange question. 'You might as well ask us, they will say, 'Do we breathe? or do we eat our dinners?' And in truth it does appear strange that that Church which for eighteen and half centuries has so religiously and so carefully preserved the Sacred Scriptures: that that Church—our Holy Catholic Church—from which all the sects of Protestantism have received their Bible: that that Church, but for whose pious care Protestantism could not now boast of a shred of a Bible, it does appear strange that that Church should be accused of being wanting in reverence for the Bible, and of not allowing her children to read it. And yet so it is. Constantly we hear the accusation made by interested persons, that the Catholic Church forbids her children to read the Bible, until poor ignorant people, deluded by these catch pennies, by these idle strolling vagabonds, who gain an easy livelihood by bearing false witness against their neighbors, begin to believe the often repeated falsehood, and to believe that the Catholic Church—the Church of God—the only Church that can date back its origin to the time of the Apostles—really does forbid her children to read the Sacred Scriptures.

It happened a few weeks ago that a Protestant 'Missionary' (he called himself) entered by mistake a Catholic store in the village of Trenton. He came, he said, to beg funds to convert the heathens. The Catholic, taking in his man at a glance, replied 'that of course he had no objections to subscribe towards the conversion of heathens, but he feared that these funds gathered under the false pretence of 'converting heathens' were often misapplied in the perversion of Catholics.' The Missionary, when hard pressed, admitted that the funds were in part applied in the distribution of bibles amongst Catholics, adding, as a justification of this misappal, that 'the Priests would not allow their people to read the Bible.' To this atrocious calumny the Catholic very promptly and properly replied: 'Allow me, Sir, to say that what you assert about the Priests refusing to allow their people to read the Sacred Scriptures is UTTERLY FALSE; and what is more, I know that you know that it is false; and I am astonished that a person professing to be a Christian should so far degrade himself as to gain a livelihood by going about the country bearing false witness against his neighbors. Now, to show you, Sir, that what you say is false, look at these shelves in this store, and you will find there every day of the year Catholic Bibles publicly exposed for sale; and as you say you are a Missionary for the conversion of heathens, I will at any time, let you have any quantity of Catholic Bibles at half price for cash.' Need I say that our Missionary to the heathens suddenly found that he had business elsewhere.

It is evident that our opponents know more about what we believe than we ourselves do.—Here are you and I, poor simple people that we are, who have been reading the Sacred Scriptures all our lives, and hearing them read every Sunday in our churches, told by a heathen missionary that we are not allowed to read the Bible; nay! as we shall see before we finish our lecture, one wise man, and an eminent New York Preacher withal, writing against the Catholic Church tells us that we have not got a Bible to read. Well, this at least is news to me. I have now been a Priest seventeen years, preaching every Sunday upon some part of the Bible—taking my illustrations from the Bible—gathering together with greater or less diligence all the texts bearing upon my subject from the Bible, and here I'm told at my time of life that 'it's all a mistake, Sir! all a mistake! you're not allowed to teach your people the Bible; and in point of fact, Sir, you're not got a Bible to teach.'

This persistency of our Protestant brethren in insisting that they know our religion better than we do ourselves reminds me of an Irishman who went to visit a lunatic asylum. As soon as he entered the wards, all the lunatics came running to him, shouting 'Huzza for Prince Charlie!—Here comes Prince Charlie!' 'By yer lave,' said Pat, when he could get in a word, 'By yer lave, gentlemen, but you're under a mistake intirely. I'm not Prince Charlie at all at all, but plain Pat Malony at your service.' 'Oh! oh!' said the lunatics, 'don't tell us such nonsense. We're no fools, and we know very well

that you're Prince Charlie, come to liberate us.' 'Well, gentlemen,' said Pat, 'I'm sorry for you; but there must be some mistake intirely. I'm plain Pat Malony, from the town of Ballina, county Mayo, Ireland.' 'Oh! oh!' said the lunatics, 'you don't want us to know you; but we cannot be fooled that way; we know you are Prince Charlie. Huzza for Prince Charlie!'—'Well, gentlemen, then I'm sorry to contradict you, but I'm plain Pat Malony—more by tokens it was Father Malloy of the diocese of Elfin, that baptized me.' But the lunatics were not to be put off; they still insisted that he was Prince Charlie, until 'at length,' said Pat, 'they were so certain about it, that I began to believe that after all I might be Prince Charlie; and that Father Malloy had made a mistake in the christening.'

Now, our opponents are like these lunatics; they will persist in knowing us better than we do ourselves; and so continuous are they in their assertions, that soon I suppose, we shall be like Pat, and shall begin to believe that Father Malloy 'has made a mistake in the christening,' and that after all we Catholics have not a Bible at all.

There is an old but homely proverb 'Throw mud enough and some will stick.' Our opponents seem to believe in it most piously. Tell lies enough about the Catholic Church and some at least will be sure to stick. It is an undoubted fact, that the purest woman will soon become to be looked upon as a strumpet, if people will only tell lies enough about her. You all believe, I suppose, that 'two and two make four.' But I will undertake to say that you will very soon begin to believe that 'two and two makes three,' provided only people will assert it often enough. These are the tactics of the devil in his warfare against the Catholic Church. Get people to assert lies enough about her, and very soon even her own children will begin to believe them.—The Catholic Church—the pure spouse of Jesus Christ—is very soon began to be looked upon as the Whore of Babylon, through the multiplied lies of her unprincipled enemies.

As it is often useful for Catholics to know the objections urged by Protestants against our holy faith, and as I have here a fair specimen of the arguments used by our opponents against us on the particular subject of our lecture, I will read it for you. But before doing so, I must premise, and the more so, as I shall therein explain the cause which led me to deliver to you this lecture.

In February 1868, Father Hecker, one of the Paulist Fathers of New York City, published a tract containing eight very plain questions, each question beginning with the words 'Is it honest.'

The first of these questions is upon this very subject of Bible Reading, and runs thus: 'Is it honest to say that the Catholic Church prohibits the use of the Bible, when anybody who chooses can buy as many as he likes at any Catholic book-store, and can see on the first page of any one of them the approbation of the Bishops, with the Pope at their head, encouraging Catholics to read the Bible?' &c.

Now, my friends, this is a fact, and a fact is a fact; and all the arguments in the world will never make a fact anything else but a fact. To argue against a fact is like running one's head against a stone wall. I never hear a man arguing against facts, but I immediately look at his forehead to see if I can discover thereon the marks of stone walls. I had a kitten in my house to-day that took a fit, and began running against every wall in the house, until at last, fearing that it would kill itself, I caught it, and took it in my arms, and said to it, 'Poor puss! you are arguing against facts.'

However, against this 'stone-wall' fact a certain Dr. Mattison, a prominent Protestant clergyman of New York, after the example of my kitten, has had the hardihood to argue, in a pamphlet very dishonestly headed 'Is it honest?' It was the finding of this pamphlet distributed amongst my flock, that prompted this lecture.—And how does this Dr. Mattison butt at our stone-wall? To this wise.

After giving Father Hecker's very plain and unanswerable question, he endeavors to answer thus: 'It is both true and honest to say in general terms, that the Roman Catholic Church prohibits the use of the Bible to the people generally, because on the very page of the permission it is also said 'to guard against error it was judged necessary to forbid the reading of the Scriptures in the vulgar languages without the advice and permission of the pastors and spiritual guides whom God has appointed to govern his Church.' So far Dr. Mattison.

Now without waiting to point out the tence of the verb in this caution, which refers to a point of discipline 'three hundred years ago.' 'It was judged necessary' let us examine the logic of the matter. My friends, I have a knocker on my door, at which all who wish to enter my house knock before they can obtain admittance. And THEREFORE no body enters! But this is

the worthy Doctor's logic. Because people have (according to the Doctor) to ask leave to read the Scriptures, therefore no body ever reads it. I know not how the worthy Professor reads those words of Scripture, 'Ask and you shall receive; seek and you shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you.' According to his mode of reasoning, no one will receive because they have to ask; and no one will find because they have to seek; and no one will be opened unto, because they have to knock!—Quoting from a document referring to a mere matter of discipline, which he has, however, the honesty to admit was sanctioned by Pope Clement III. so far back as 'three hundred years ago, (in 1595), he tells us that this permission to buy and read Bibles must be in writing, and can only be obtained by a select few. Oh, skilful and honest Dr. Mattison! a quick change of tenses carries you heu! presto! like a witch on a broomstick, in the twinkling of an eye, over 300 years. It will be well for you, my friends, to note this assertion, that this 'permission must be in writing, and can only be obtained by a select few.' It will be wanted again before long.

After quoting Pope Clement XI. condemnation of the laughably absurd doctrine that 'the reading of the holy Scripture is for every body,' our New York Professor goes on to say—'Whilst the Papal hierarchy have societies for almost every thing else, they have never yet had one for the circulation of any kind of a Bible even among Romanists. Who ever knew a Papal priest to do or say anything to circulate even the Douay version amongst the people?'

Before answering this question, let me say a few words 'en passant' upon a subject of some little importance. Dr. Mattison is or ought to be a gentleman and a Christian; and in his pamphlet is or ought to be arguing from a sincere desire to enlighten poor ignorant Catholics, whom he believes to be in error. Any other supposition would place him in a false position. Why then these opprobrious names? Dr. Mattison knows very well that such terms as 'Romanists,' 'Papal priests,' &c., are not the legitimate names for the things wished to be specified. They are in other words Protestant ecclesiastical Billingsgate. And yet Dr. Mattison is but a representative man of a very large class of our fellow Protestants, who, though they would deem it disgraceful to offer an unprovoked insult to the lowest of their fellow-Protestants, seem to consider it a virtue to be as vulgarly insulting as possible to everything Catholic. Whence does this arise? Has Protestantism no worthier weapons than opprobrious names and fishwife's rhetoric? This is worthy of a passing thought, Rev. Doctor.

But to return to our objection—and I wish you to keep it clearly before you. It consists of this: Catholics have no Bible Societies, and therefore they do not read the Bible; and by implication Protestants have Bible Societies, and therefore they do read the Bible. Passing over the disjointed logic of this objection, I think I can explain to you very satisfactorily why Catholics have not Bible Societies which Protestants have. Were I inclined to be as insulting to our Protestant friends, as they are so apt to be to us when discussing Catholic doctrine (I give you Dr. Mattison as a representative man) I might give you some such reason as this. Catholics when they buy a Bible are willing to pay the full price for it, without being dependent upon the charity of Bible Societies. Protestants when they want a Bible will not have one unless it is given them at half price by the Bible Societies, and in order that the printer may get his pay, the hat has to be sent round under the false pretence of collecting funds for the conversion of heathens. Which, think you, thinks most of this Bible? Pat who pays full price for it?—or John Bull who gets it for next to nothing?

But I am not going to put you off with such an answer as this, though I fear there is some little truth in it. Let us look at these Bible Societies which Protestants have, and Catholics have not. Perhaps they are not altogether what some people picture them to be. Let us look at their enormous wealth, and shall I add, their enormous failure.

To sum all up in as small a compass as possible, we will take the estimate of the London Times as to their wealth. In its issue of Jan. 17, and April 19, 1860, it estimates the working capital of the English Societies alone (without the American and Dutch) at not less year by year, than 'two millions' sterling. Of which almost fabulous revenue 'the large staff of well paid officers whose existence depends upon the success of this system, absorb for their personal share 25 per cent.—£500,000 per annum.

Taking then this Protestant estimate as some guide in the matter, we have for the English Societies alone £1,500,000 paid annually in 1st paying missionaries, and 2nd printing bibles.

Now if you will excuse me, I will give you a few extracts from Protestant authors as to the

kind of missionary towards whose maintenance this one and a half million goes yearly.

1. Medical Missionaries. Our American cousins across the line, always ahead of the rest of the world in all things, religious as well as secular, have a kind of missionary—peculiar to themselves—'half doctor and half preacher,' which Mr. Malcolm tells us was necessary, because the full preachers had failed. His words are—'A sense of failure in regard to direct evangelical labour (i.e. full preachers) renders popular the sending out of physicians.' As to the knowledge of these medico-clerical or clerico-medical missionaries Capt. Granville Locke tells us it was none of the best. They 'do incalculable mischief by their imperfect knowledge of the healing art.' As however the matter of poisoning, 'physically' some thousands of poor heathens is not to our present purpose, belonging as it does more strictly perhaps to the Society for the prevention of cruelty to animals; let us see their success at moral poisoning. In 1845 Dr. Hobson who had in two years seven thousand two hundred and twenty-one patients in a single city deplures that they 'have not given satisfactory evidence that they feel the moral truths inculcated—with their physic. In 1861 Mr. Lockhart himself a 'medical missionary' in China and who had 'attended to more than 200,000 individual patients,' deplures the like results. And all this in face of the fact that at the present moment the Catholics of Canton are building a Cathedral which will cost 3,000,000 dollars.

2. Ignorance of the language. It is a well known fact, that many of the missionaries sent out to convert 'the heathens' are perfectly ignorant of the language of the native, whom they are sent to convert. Dr. Morrison whom Gutziav terms 'the first herald of the Gospel' to China; (although this 'first herald' found the country full of native Catholics and Catholic missionaries,) on his voyage out 'sat him patiently down to the Jesuit Harmony of the Gospels composed in Chinese, and copied out every syllable of it for his own future use' whilst 'angelic eyes (his second wife who writes and accompanies him) sometimes looked over his shoulders' whilst he was so laudably learning his lessons. Arrived at his mission, he put himself under the tuition of Chinese Christians, whom out of gratitude for their instructions he calls 'of the Romish Church.' Advancing a little in his studies, and in politeness he tells us 'I read part of the Exposition of the Ten Commandments 'by the Catholics.' Mr. Morrison who looked himself up in his house for 'fear of the Jews,' studied Chinese for the 'conversion of infidels' whom he dare not face from one Abel Yan a Roman Catholic Chinese from Pekin and a convert of the Jesuits. Speaking still of China Dr. Smith says that it was customary for the missionaries, as they were ignorant of the language to hire unbaptized Chinese to read their bible for them, and he mentions a ludicrous fact of one of these unbaptized Chinese, who after having been hired to read a tract, and having been previously instructed by the Missionary at his own house, in spite of this tuition hazarded comments of his own 'of a rather equivocal tendency.' Dr. Berncastle throws some additional light as to the expense of this deputy ministrations. 'Plenty of men may be obtained, who 'for fivepence a day' would read and speak of the Gospel, as they would of their own God confusious.' In fact so ignorant were the English missionaries in China, that although there are upwards of 200 of them, not one could be found the other day fit to act as interpreter to the British embassy, whilst Baron Gros and General Montauban had only to apply to the Priests of the French Church and they immediately obtained an interpreter. Indeed so well known was this fact of the ignorance of the English Missionaries, that so long as 1851 Lord Jocelyn suggested 'that the Catholic College of Macao would easily be induced to furnish 'at all times' a certain number of interpreters for the use of the British government. It was from the Jesuit College that Lord Macartney obtained two interpreters for his embassy. Our medico-clerical friend Dr. Smith is supposed to have founded a college to supply this defect, and yet in 1858 Mr. Wingrove Cooke asks 'Where are the 'interpreters' who were to be supplied by the bishop's college, an institution that has, I believe, for some years received £250 annually for this purpose? It has never yet turned out one Chinese Scholar.'—(See China, ch. xxvii. p. 359.)

Now this my friends is where the 1½ millions sterling go annually—in paying medico-clerical or clerico medical Missionaries, and in sending out to convert the natives, men who are not fit to act as 'political,' much less, 'religious' interpreters. Let us now see 'what kind' of bibles are printed with this £1,500,000, and this time we will take India as our text-book. We will begin with the testimony of the Rev.

Mr. Adams himself a Protestant missionary. 'Of the 117,000 tracts printed by the Bengal Missionary Society' he says, 'the most part are either mystical or puerile, or both; and there is scarcely one fit to be put into the hands of a native of understanding and reflection.'—(Asiatic Journal, vol. xxi. p. 448.) Nobinkissen an educated Hindoo in answer to Mr. Lang corroborates this testimony. 'You make one convert annually out of 50,000.' 'This is the result,' says Mr. Lang of preaching in the open air, and the distribution of thousands and hundreds of thousands of tracts printed in the Hindostanee and Beagalee languages.' 'They are so grossly absurd says another learned Protestant in allusion to the Oriental translations generally that 'instead of promoting the service of Christianity, it is not 'irrational to impute some of the backwardness of the Hindoos to this cause.'—(Asiatic Journal, vol. 28, p. 303.)

But to come more particularly to our subject. A Protestant missionary wishing to test the value of the Teluga version of the Bible gave a copy of it to some natives, who could make nothing of it, and who gave it to a learned man of the district, to study, who after due investigation pronounced judgment that 'he thought it was a treatise on magic.'

The Tamil version was equally successful. 'The translation is really pitiful, says a Protestant clergyman, and deserves only contempt.' Rheusus declares that he began to edit a new edition of the Tamil Bible before he had been in Madras a year and a half. Other missionaries have confessed to the same folly and have warned their successors against it. On the other hand a Protestant clergyman [Rev. Peter Percival] generously admits 'that some of the Catholic missionaries were the best Tamil scholars of their age, surpassing even the most learned natives, and that their writings are used to this day by Hindoo literates as text books, and quoted with grateful admiration.'

From the Canara version used in the neighborhood of Goa, it will be necessary only to give a few specimens from the first chapter of Genesis. 'In the beginning God created the earth and the air.' Darkness was upon the water but the 'soul of God' wandered with delight over the water.' 'Let us make man like to us and having his form; let him command 'the aquatic insects' of the sea.'

As an example of the merits of the Mabratra version, let us take the words 'Behold the Lamb of God.' Although the Mabratra dialect furnishes a word which renders exactly our word 'lamb' this version translates it 'Behold the young of the sheep of God.'

In the Hindostanee version another Protestant writer tells us the sentence 'Judge not, that ye be not judged,' is rendered, 'Do no justice, that justice be not done to you.'—[See Baptist Missionary Account, 1819, Appendix.]

The Kunkun translation by Dr. Carey is thus described by a native: 'Bad letter and no language at all.' This gentleman with a laudable industry but doubtful gentleness edited translations of the Holy Scripture in no fewer than thirty-five languages or dialects, though he could not make himself understood in one of them. So thoroughly worthless are they that Dr. Brown with euhustic politeness thus describes them: 'They have not all been tested, but those which have, have been found so imperfect, that his versions generally are now given up as of no great value.' Another Protestant writer, more inclined to call a spade, a spade, tells us 'they have been either 'simply useless' or from explaining the doctrines of our faith by ridiculous forms of expression have been 'absolutely pernicious.' Owing to the glaring mistakes with which they abound, the sense of the original was sometimes completely lost and the 'meaning ludicrous and absurd.'

Let us now see what becomes of these Bibles?

Archdeacon Grant in his Brompton lectures [chapter iii., page 93.] says that 'the cause of the eagerness which has sometimes been evinced to obtain the sacred volume cannot be traced to a thirst for the word of God, but to the 'secular purposes,' the unhallowed uses to which the Holy Word left in their hands has been turned and which 'are absolutely shocking' to any Christian feeling.'

According to Mr. Ley in his book intitled 'The Chinese,' [ch. v., p. 54.] In China it has been customary for the distributor of books to scatter his wares in a sort of broadcast, and to give wherever a hand was held out to receive. The natural result of this was the consignment of the books thus bestowed to the shelf, the box or the cupboard, where when sought for by the missionaries they are found in a state of spruce and intact neatness, which seems to say, 'Here we are just as you left us.' But this was a milder fate than awaited them at other hands. 'They have been seen, says Dr. Wells, Williams [The Middle Kingdom, vol. ii., ch. 19, p. 343] on the counters of shops in Macao cut in