

Pastor and People.

HE CARETH.

What can it mean? Is it aught to Him
That the nights are long and the days are dim?
Can He be touched by the grief I bear,
Which sadden the heart and whiten the hair?
About His throne are eternal calms,
And strong, glad music of happy psalms,
And bliss untroubled by any strife;
How can He care for my little life?

And yet I want Him to care for me,
While I live in this world where the sorrows be,
When the lights die down in the path I take,
When strength is feeble and friends forsake,
When love and music that once did bless
Have left me to silence and loneliness,
And my life-song changes to sobbing prayers,
Then my spirit cries out for a God who cares.

When shadows hang over the whole day long,
And my spirit is bowed with shame and wrong
When I am not good, and the deeper shade
Of conscious sin in my heart is made,
And the busy world has too much to do
To stay in its course to help me through;
And I long for a Saviour—can it be
That the God of the universe cares for me?

O wonderful story of deathless love,
Each child is dear to that heart above;
He fights for me when I cannot fight;
He comforts me in the gloom of night;
He lifts the burden, for He is strong;
He stills the sigh and awakes the song;
The sorrow that bowed me down He bears,
And loves and pardons because He cares.

Let all who are sad take heart again;
We are not alone in our hours of pain;
Our Father stoops from His throne above
To soothe and quiet us with His love.
He leaves us not when the strife is high;
And we have safety, for He is nigh.
Can it be trouble which He doth share?
Oh, rest in peace, for the Lord will care.

—Christian Union.

OUR DUTY TO ROMANISTS AND TO OURSELVES *

BY REV. CALVIN E. AMARON, B.D., EDITOR OF
"L'AURORE," MONTREAL.

More than once of late have I put myself the question, and it weighs heavily upon my heart:

What can we do as ministers of one of the largest, wealthiest, and most influential Churches of this Dominion, to give to our people a true conception of the magnitude and importance of the problems which face us in this country, and on the right solution of which depend the stability of our free British institutions, the peace, the progress, the commercial, intellectual, moral and religious growth of our land?

We, Christian ministers, have given study and thought to the question of Romish theology; we know something of the unscriptural dogmas of that apostate Church, we know how they subvert the plan of salvation, and we feel that it is impossible for us to be true to Christ, loyal to His teachings, without opposing the soul-destroying errors of that dangerous system.

We know what the moral teachings of Romanism are, we know what havoc they make of the conscience, we know that we have here nothing but a grand system of compromises, destructive of principles of integrity, truthfulness and righteousness. We are not astonished at the results which such teachings have produced the wide world over. We understand why the French nation was launched into infidelity; we do not wonder at the poverty and misery of Roman Catholic Ireland; the infidelity and immorality and criminality of Italy do not surprise us. The bloody scenes enacted in the United States, the frightful corruption of the great cities we are prepared for, when we take into account the fact that the foreign element, largely Roman Catholic, outnumbers the American population.

Knowing the teachings of Romanism we understand why so per cent. of the criminal class, in prisons, alms-houses, penitentiaries, etc., are Roman Catholic.

But how many of our people know these facts and believe Romanism to be what it is? Few, comparatively few. The question seldom comes before them. Ministers say

they have other and more important duties to attend to, than that of lecturing on such a theme. And so they have.

The press does not find the topic sufficiently taking, sufficiently palatable and popular to give much space to it. And so our people grow up in blissful ignorance of the nature of a system of education and religion which checks us on every hand. Things have come to such a pass in our country that three-fourths of our people do not know why they are Protestants. They are Protestants because they by chance to have been born in that Church. The moral backbone of Protestantism is gone. Scarcely is one of the great questions of the day discussed on its merits. Everything is looked at from the standpoint of policy. Principles are at a discount and the moral sense is being blunted. Rome knows all this very well. Our weakness and ignorance constitute her strength.

The more I study the history of our country, consider the state of things which has been created and to a large extent exists at the present moment, make myself acquainted with the nature of the forces and influences which have been at work and have so largely moulded and fashioned the people who have so overwhelming a majority in this Province, the less hesitation have I in saying that I see no hope for this land, for its emancipation from the old shackles of medievalism which have so long checked its growth, from the reign of corruption which now disgraces us; I cannot hope for its onward march and permanent prosperity, unless we can convince the Church of God, that such progress is inseparably connected with our ability to cause the truths of the gospel to supersede Romish error, penetrating and permeating the minds and hearts of all who dwell among us and among whom we dwell.

It is a cause of anxiety and discouragement that many of the leading men of our city and other cities of this land are unwilling to identify themselves with this work of reformation. Political, business and social reasons stand in the way. They refuse to give money, or they give a little and object to have it made known. I need not say that this is a source of weakness for us, and one of strength for Rome. We might say that the strength of that politico-religious organization is simply commensurate to-day with the weakness of our Protestantism.

There is no doubt that we must trace much of the indifference and cowardice of which we complain to the want of true religion and consecration to God and duty. But, in the case of many, it can be traced to the fact that these persons have not adequate information, historical knowledge on these questions. If this living issue were brought to the front, if it were made clear to God's people and to the patriots of our country, that we have here a great missionary and patriotic duty to discharge for our God and country, many would respond and take a more active part in this movement.

One of the great reasons why the attention of the Church of God should be called to this theme is that Rome has never been so wily, so cunning as she now is. She has perhaps never put into practice Loyola's dangerous maxim: "The end justifies the means," to the extent she does to-day. The Pope, and his chief lieutenants, do not forget that we are living at the close of the 19th century. The Church is trying, even in Quebec, to make Protestants believe—and with good success—that she is becoming liberal and tolerant. She knows the art of deceiving to perfection. When some end is to be reached, *ad majorem Gloriam Dei*, she can afford to make a fair show of liberality.

In the United States, she holds a council at Baltimore and decrees that parochial schools must be established. Then she sends a Satolli to say, where and when she can't help herself, that she is not opposed to the public school system. And blind, good natured, illogical Americans are hoodwinked and taken in.

In Canada, at the present moment, she is prepared to precipitate civil war, rather than allow a Province of our Dominion to exercise its right to establish a system of public schools.

Notwithstanding such and other most flagrant contradictions on her part, notwithstanding the fact that the dogma of infallibility remains in full force, thousands of Protestants are blindfolded and fail to see the necessity of opposing so dangerous and harmful a system.

It will be time for us to believe in Rome's professions of liberality when she eliminates from her creed those dogmas which preclude liberality and tolerance. We ask any man who reasons how there can be anything but tyranny and intolerance where infallibility is claimed?

There is great need of putting things in their true light before the people, that they may be led to lend a more hearty support in giving the gospel to those who walk in darkness, are perishing for want of saving truth, and imperiling the safety of the ship of state in which we are sailing as well as they.

There is another reason why the attention of the people of our Church should be especially called to this work, the attention not only of those who believe in aggressive missionary work among Romanists, but of those who have a rather exalted opinion of the beneficent effect of the religious and moral teachings of Romanism among the people it controls.

The Province of Quebec of to-day is not what it was fifty, nay twenty-five years ago. If the Church of Rome is strong because of its wealth and influence, because of the hand it has in politics, as a moral and religious power, she is losing her hold upon the people. She occupies the position of a slave-master, she holds the people because they fear the lash of the whip, not because they love the hand that smites, not because they believe with the heart the teachings of this Church. In other words religion is becoming a matter of indifference for thousands, and for as large a number an object of hatred. The extent to which religious indifference prevails, an indifference which amounts to practical heathenism; the extent to which principles of righteousness, of purity, of morality, of common truthfulness and honesty are disregarded, is simply appalling. We have cause for alarm.

Take our civic affairs. Could they be in a much worse state? We have organized pillage, systematic robbery. It is next to impossible to obtain redress, intemperance, gambling, vice, Sabbath desecration we are helpless in fighting and keeping in check, because our civic officers are, for the most part, in open sympathy with all these phases of evil. Who have been their educators? Where did they get their religious and moral training? In the churches and schools of Romanism. Now, I ask, is it true that we, as a God-fearing people, will surrender to the powers of iniquity and give over our city and our province to the tender mercy of the unprincipled and godless? We say, no, no. But when we raise our voices, when we enter our protest, we are simply laughed at and iniquity triumphs. We cannot change the dishonourable and disastrous state of things which prevails, without making a clean sweep of the dishonourable men who are responsible for it. And it is just at this point that our lamentable helplessness reveals itself. The moral sense of the Roman Catholic population is so low that the people will elect again and again these selfsame boodlers and champions of immorality and vice. They can afford to buy the voters like sheep, inasmuch as they will recoup themselves out of the civic treasury, after elections.

Now what we need to make our own Christian business men understand is, that a religious and educational system that produces such sad results, that develops the moral and religious character of a population in such a way that they will elect from year to year men of this ilk, proclaims its

own insufficiency, its lamentable inadequacy to preserve a nation from decadence and ruin.

The conclusion is a very simple one. While we do well to cut down the top branches of that mighty upas tree which over-shadows our land and poisons its life, we must understand that the only effective way to kill it is to attack it at the root with the gospel axe. We must evangelize the masses. Make our people abandon the false notion that the French and Irish masses are being taught the Gospel, or enough of it to make them moral and God-fearing. This is a duty we owe to these perishing souls and also to ourselves as forming part of this nation.

Now comes the difficult question.—How can we educate our own Protestant population on this living issue? I know of only two ways:—

1. Through occasional discourses on the subject by the pastors of our Churches. I don't think this is done very often.

2. Through discourses by those who are in the thick of the battle, who are compelled to make themselves acquainted with the facts of the case and are thus in a position to give valuable information.

The cause has everything to gain from a calm, kindly, Christian, earnest and dignified presentation of this all important question. Denunciations, passionate appeals, personal attacks fall wide of the mark. They miss their aim. Rome does not fear them. But content yourself with a fair and candid statement of facts and reasonings which Rome cannot rebut, and at once you will see that your blows have inflicted serious wounds, because the ultramontane press and pulpit feel the need of raising the voice of warning.

I don't think we are doing enough in that line. The foreign mission work is constantly kept before the people. Returned missionaries are sent all over the country to give information on the foreign field, with the good results which we know. Now the work outside of our country will grow and develop in that measure in which evangelical Protestantism is kept strong and aggressive in our midst.

Personally, I have had a good many opportunities, during the last eighteen months to present the claims of this work in a good many churches. I may say that I find that the people are responsive; there is not much difficulty in creating an interest.

Let us inform, educate our Protestant population on these living issues; let us do it for the country's sake, for Christ's sake.

We have long enough played with these important questions. God calls upon us loudly to act, before we are obliged to save our land by rifle and sword from the terrors of irreligion and lawlessness.

ISAIAH FIFTY-FIVE.

The man who has no money is as well come at God's table as the one who has a million.

If we have thirst it is an evidence that we also have a special invitation from God to come to the water of life.

No matter how far we have wandered, we can come to God in one step.

"Come to the waters." The rivers, the fountains, the oceans. The rich man is tormented begged for a drop.

"Wine and milk without money and without price." Who will be to blame if we starve to death?

"Let your soul delight itself in fatness." And yet the worldling thinks God wants him to have a hard time.

"Incline your ear." We must turn our faces away from the world to hear the voice of God.

"The sure mercies of David." What ever God was to David he pledges himself to be to us.

"Let the wicked forsake his way." The moment he does it he will turn his face toward God.

"It shall not return to me void." No matter how discouraging things may look.

"Ye shall go out with joy." No difference whether we have any money in the bank or not.

"Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree." The life that was a curse becomes a blessing. This is what God's salvation has always done, and is still doing.—*Ran's Horn.*

* A paper read by invitation of the Presbyterian Association of Montreal.