

BIBLE READING.

Continued from page 1.

decrepitude. Only the other day a leading English Protestant newspaper exclaimed: "In this England of ours, at the end of this century, there are millions upon millions as utterly unsaved as the wildest savage roaming the forests of Africa."

The Ven. Archdeacon was careful not to mention France or Belgium, though from his point of view, being Catholic countries, they are supposed not to know the Bible. They are too obviously thrifty and progressive to suit his special pleading.

I congratulate him also on having said nothing about his own native province of Quebec, of which he was wont to speak in bygone days as "the frozen foot of the Dominion." Such a metaphor would hardly square with its actual preponderance in the politics of Canada. But I venture to make up for this omission by stating one remarkable contrast. The Province of Ontario is commonly considered by men of the Archdeacon's school as vastly superior in solvency and thrift to the Province of Quebec. The admirers of the former point to the success of its Government finances as a result of its Bible-reading, while they attribute the financial indebtedness of the Quebec Government to a supposed lack of Scripture knowledge. I admit that Ontario does make a very good public show, but statistics prove that private indebtedness is far greater there than in the Province of Quebec, that there are two or three times more mortgages on property in the former than in the latter. Like the Pharisees of old, the people of Ontario "make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter," whereas the people of Quebec, though undoubtedly less careful of outward show, are, in their private lives, far less "full of extortion and excess." Which of the two methods, I ask you, is more conformable to the sincerity of the Gospel?

Having thus disposed of every single allegation brought by the Ven. Archdeacon against my sermon, I would, in conclusion, earnestly exhort you always to consider the Holy Scriptures, in the words of his text, "as a lamp unto your feet and a light to your path."

A Game of Base-Ball.

[This is a bona fide description written by a French resident of Manitoba who is learning English.]

The base-ball is an athletic exercise played in a field. The place for play the game is marked by a losange. At one corner of this figure stand the bat's man and this place is called "Home-base"; the corner on the right is called the first base, the one on the left is called third base, and the opposite corner is called second-base. Between the second and Home base is the pitcher's room. Behind the bat's man stand the catcher man. The playing men are divided in two camps. When one camp is to the field, the other is to the bat. The bat's man have all the other camp's men in front: the pitcher send to him the ball and the bat's man must with the bat send it away. Then he run at the first, afterwards at the second, at the third, and he come again to the Home base. But if somebody of the opposite camp catch the ball the bat's man is out, and if three of the same camp are setted out by the same manner, this camp must go to the field and the fielder-men come for strike the ball.

This game is very entertaining and for the players and for the people who consider it.

When a Protestant Is In Good Faith.

Possibility of Salvation For Those Outside The Body of the Church.

In the sects which accept the divinity of Christ there not only is a possibility of salvation, but there are hundreds and thousands of their members who live united to Christ by faith, hope and charity, and die in the grace and love of God. These belong to what is called the soul of the Church, though not to its body; they are under sad disadvantages as compared with Catholics, and never can attain to that holiness which belongs only to the children of the Church, though they may and often do practise a true and genuine piety. If the num-

ber from the sects who save their souls is comparatively small, it is chiefly for two reasons—either because they have committed mortal sins and do not know how to get rid of them, or it is because they are directly in bad faith. They have no tribunal of penance, none of the unlimited stream of graces that flow into the soul of a Catholic through the Sacraments, the Sacramentals, Holy Mass and the other means of grace, and, above all, they have for the most part no idea of the way to make an act of contrition or of its efficacy in restoring the soul to the favor of God and to its inheritance in the Kingdom of Heaven. Beside this, there is an ever-increasing number who are not in good faith.

A man is said to be in good faith with regard to the religion that he professes when in his heart he firmly believes it to be the true religion and when there is present to his mind no serious doubt which shakes his confidence in it. He is in bad faith when he does not believe it to be the true religion, or when he is inclined to think that there is some other religion which is equally in the possession of the truth, or still more so. But this is not all. What I have laid down are the conditions of good faith in the present. In order to constitute the good faith required for the virtue of divine faith it is also necessary that he should never, in the course of his whole life, have had such a serious doubt about his own religion, or such a strong conviction that some other religion was true as to lay upon him the obligation at least of further inquiry, and this under pain of serious sin.

With this definition before us we can easily lay down the necessary conditions of good faith among those outside the Church. He who has never once doubted the truth of Protestantism is in good faith; he who has once seriously doubted about its truth or has entertained a strong suspicion that the Catholic Church, and it alone, is the true Church of Jesus Christ, and has put his doubts aside and not followed them up, cannot be said to be in good faith. It is not necessary to bad faith that he should at the present moment be conscious of the falsity of the religion he professes or that he should be in a state of doubt. He may be perfectly satisfied at the present time of its orthodoxy, he may have no sort of attraction to the Catholic Church, he may even hate and condemn her, yet the mere fact that at some privious period of his life he suspected the existence of a religion nobler, truer, holier than his own, and that through indifference or self-interest or pride or human respect, or some other tie binding him down to earth, he put that suspicion aside, deprives him of the plea of good faith and makes him responsible before God for the heresy from which at one time he might have escaped, but through his own fault did not. The initial grace was given him, that was intended by Almighty God to lead on to other graces, which, if accepted, would have culminated in the grace of conversion. But that initial grace was lost to him through his own fault. The seed was sown, but the birds of the air devoured it.—Rev. R. F. Clarke, S. J., in the Ave Maria.

Died.—At Oak Lake, Man., on Xmas Eve, 1897, Edith Mary Downe Harper Manbey, eldest daughter of Mr. John Manbey, and grand daughter of George Manbey, late of Drummondville, Quebec, J.P., and great grand daughter of the late Rear Admiral John Harper, C.B., Knight of Leopold of Austria, of Halifax, N.S., aged 16 years and 4 months.—R.I.P.

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