

R. C. Mission Two things may here be noted to Protestants. with regard to the special services which the Roman Catholic authorities of Montreal have been carrying on recently for the conversion of Protestants, bringing in for that purpose an eloquent Paulist Father from New York. First,—such a movement is not only their privilege, but, if they believe they have saving truth which Protestants have not, it is their duty to teach it. Second,—They are permitted to do so in peace and quietness. If Protestants are present, all is listened to with respectful attention. Neither within nor without is there sign of disturbance. It is their right, and they enjoy it in fullest measure.

Two other facts necessarily follow the above. First, that if Protestants believe that they have saving truth which others have not, that they have the Word of God, which it is admitted the French-Canadians in few cases possess, it is their privilege, their duty, to give that Word to their fellow-countrymen. Second,—when Protestants attempt to teach what they believe to be true, even to Roman Catholics who will listen to them, it is to be expected that they will be permitted to do so in peace from this time forth.

“By Their Fruits.” Doctrinal tests are well for those who have knowledge to use them, but when the Saviour was warning against false teachers and wished to give a test that all, even the most simple, might understand and apply, He said, “By their fruits ye shall know them.” The test is still valid, and when R. C. missionaries come and confuse men and women with specious reasonings ’twere well to take Christ’s plan. And in doing so, the fruits of either Romanism or Protestantism are not to be judged by a few individual samples on either side, nor by the results of either one as modified by the other in mixed communities, but by the general results where either system has had full and undisputed sway for a sufficient time to produce its legitimate fruits.

Rome and Its Fruits. Let Christ’s own test be applied along four lines,—civil liberty, religious liberty, education, and the Bible.

As to the first, the claim of Rome is that the Pope is God’s vice-gerent on earth, that rulers and ruled alike are subject to the Church of which he is the head, and where that Church has had the power she has always enforced her claim by pains and penalties. Protestantism, on the other hand, has always been the champion of the fullest and largest civil liberty. It has ever aimed to make freemen, not slaves.

As to the second, in no land where Rome has been supreme has there been liberty for others to worship as they wished. Such liberty has always been won from her by struggle. The history of religious freedom has been one long conflict with Rome. Protestantism demands and allows the fullest, freest exercise of the rights of conscience.

As to education, the command of Rome, where supreme, has always been, “Do not think, but obey.” In lands where she has had longest and completest sway, the ignorance is densest; while Protestantism ever seeks to elevate man from an unthinking machine to the highest exercise of the reason God has given. Rome educates, but not in countries where she has absolute sway.

The Bible! Rome discourages it always, and where she has the power, forbids it. Never in all history, has Rome, where supreme, allowed the free use of the Word of God. Protestantism is builded upon that Word. It is God’s message to man; the Father’s letters to His erring children, asking them to come back to Him, and telling them the way, and Protestantism seeks to put that Father message into the hands of all, and to teach them how to read it.

More Calls Than Evor Before. There is the Century Fund, the Patriotic Fund, and the Red Cross Fund. The Indian Famine is calling for help. Special calls and claims are thronging thick. And they must be honored. It simply means that Christ is allowing us a larger share with Himself in self-denial for the sake of others, and in some of the things the self-denial is a very small part of what others are enduring for the sake of their country. But let not the giving to these mean less to the regular work for which we are responsible. Home and Foreign Mission work cannot be lessened at will, because we have our agents in the field, those who have gone to the front to do our work. Let the reduction, if there must be such, be in spending upon ourselves.

Two Goods. Never before have have so many reports of the annual meetings of congregations appeared in the weekly press as of the year just closed, and never have published reports shown such general prosperity. Another feature of the turning year is the large increase in the fur coat brigade. Many a minister having a large field and long cold drives will do his work for the remainder of the winter with warmer body and still warmer heart, enwrapped by such token of the kindly regard of those for whose well he labors.