

## OUR CONTRIBUTORS.

### ROME STRIVING FOR THE ASCENDENCY.

(Concluded.)

4. This increase is chiefly in Protestant and Evangelical churches. At the beginning of the fifteenth century, and just before the rise of the Reformation, there were in Europe eighty millions of Roman Catholics, while Christians holding the essential principles of Protestantism, the Waldenses among the Alps, and other Evangelical Christians, were too few to be considered; while to-day there are, say one hundred and ninety millions of Roman Catholics, and at least one hundred and thirty millions of Protestants, and eighty millions of the Greek Church—that is, Rome, starting with eighty millions in 1500, has not much more than doubled, whereas Protestantism, starting with a few thousands, has multiplied into more millions than Rome controlled at the rise of the Reformation. At

#### THIS RATE OF PROGRESS

it will not be long until their actual numbers are reversed. At that time, however, Rome held almost unopposed supremacy over all the Governments of Europe. "The States of the Church" were subject to the Pope as their civil sovereign, but all kingdoms were held in subjection to his spiritual authority, and none dared refuse him obedience. To-day there is not one European Government—even among Roman Catholic powers—on which the Pope could venture to lay an absolute behest, or which he could coerce by the spiritual weapons which were once well-nigh omnipotent. The Papal States have disappeared from the map of the world. Rome is the capital of United Italy, and the temporal power of the Roman Pontiff is a thing of the past. France, by whose military aid the Papal throne was sustained for years before it fell, has been humiliated; while Prussia, a Protestant power, has consolidated the German States, into an empire, and become the leading power in Europe. The population of Roman Catholic States has increased slowly as compared with Protestant States. Spain and Italy, 400 years ago, were the leading powers of Europe; now Spain especially has very little influence, and the present era of progress in Italy dates from her disenfranchisement from a slavish subjection to the Papacy. Spain in one hundred and eleven years increased but five millions; whereas Britain in fifty years increased eleven millions. If we take into account the loss of Spain's colonial possessions and the increase of the British empire abroad, the disparity is still more striking. When Spain threatened to overwhelm Protestant England with the "Invincible Armada," she held sway over forty-three millions; while the population of Scotland, England and Wales was only four millions. Now Spain has shrunk to sixteen millions, while the British Isles alone contain about thirty-three millions, and the British empire includes more than three hundred millions of souls. Eight Protestant missionary societies are at work in Ireland, eight in France, seventeen in Italy and Sicily, nineteen in Spain and Portugal, nine in Canada, and twenty-three in Mexico and Central and South America—making eighty-four distinct Protestant missionary movements among Roman Catholic populations, occupying 1,546 missionary stations, and employing more than 1,500 ordained ministers, and more than 2,000 lay helpers. Thirty of these stations a few years ago reported 95,000 communicants. There is no similar work on the part of Romanists extending their faith by direct missionary efforts among Protestants. Besides, Protestants spend five times as much on missions generally as the Roman Propaganda. Thirty years ago the Roman Catholic Church in Mexico was the richest ecclesiastical establishment in the world. It possessed landed property, rents and mortgages worth one hundred and fifty millions of dollars, while untold millions were invested in cathedrals, churches, gold and silver vessels, and other accumulations of the priesthood. One hundred and eight churches in the city of Mexico alone were valued at fifty millions of dollars. Since the Republic has been established the monkish orders have been dissolved and prohibited, and the nation has confiscated a large portion of these possessions. In twenty years six Protestant missions have been established, one hundred and eleven stations, employing fifty-three ordained ministers, and seventy-eight lay helpers, and already reporting 8,700 communicant

converts. (*Gardiner's Cyclopaedia*, Edinburgh: *The Christian Instructor*, Philadelphia.)

It is the frequent boast of Romanists that their losses elsewhere are being more than compensated by their marvellous increase in the United States. They have no doubt made great gains. In 1850 there were about one and a-half million of Roman Catholics in the United States; now there are fully six millions. Its church buildings then were 1,222; even in 1870 they numbered 3,806. Their priesthood then numbered 1,302; now 6,402. But this growth has been almost entirely by immigration, so that what Rome has gained thus in the United States has been taken from her numbers and reserves elsewhere. Moreover, what she has gained is little in comparison with what she has lost by the defection of her own immigrants and children to infidelity, indifference, and Protestantism.

This is admitted by Roman Catholic writers and observed by their dignitaries with profound concern. J. O'Kane Murray, in his history of the Roman Catholic Church in the United States, declares that "more Catholics have fallen away from the faith in this country than are now living in it." *The Irish World*, in 1874, claimed that eighteen millions had been lost to Catholicity in the United States alone. Others say that about five millions of Irish and their children have been there lost to Rome. These testimonies might be greatly multiplied. The knowledge of this fact explains the zeal of the priesthood in the establishment of Separate Schools, and the stringent discipline brought to bear to enforce attendance on them. The priests dread the free atmosphere and the enlightening influence of the Public Schools of our country, in which Protestant and Roman Catholic children may receive instruction together. They know by experience that ingenuous youths receive both information and impressions unfavourable to the system of Rome, which cramps the intellect and confines the sympathies, both social and religious, to the adherents of Romanism.

In order therefore to protect our country from the debasing influence of this corrupt system, social and religious,

#### WE SHOULD OPPOSE TO THE UTMOST

the further extension of the Separate School system, which dwarfs the intellect and hinders the social and moral elevation of the youth of our country. It gives greater breadth and elevation of mind and more liberal views to have the youth of any country of all denominations educated together.

Large, however, as has been the gains of Romanism in the United States, they do not compare with the increase of Protestantism. In thirty years Rome added 5,000 to the ranks of her priesthood; to the Protestant ministry during the same time there were added 44,315. In twenty years (1850-1870) Rome built 2,500 new churches; the Protestants of the United States during the same time increased the number of their churches by 21,000. Rome sways probably six million and a half of the population of the United States. There are more than ten millions of communicants in the Evangelical Protestant churches; while if we add three children and adherents this would give over forty millions of Protestants and 69,850 Protestant ministers and 97,000 churches; besides five or six millions more not connected with any church. Again, the infidel or so-called liberal party in religion are not gaining but rather losing their hold on the country. The great scientists in the United States, such as Dana, Gray and Young, are humble believers in the cross. In spite of all disadvantages the Evangelical churches have far surpassed in growth the wonderful progress of the United States. When we consider the vast extent of the country, the new lands to be broken up, the poverty of the settlers, the flood of eight million foreigners that have spread over the land since 1850, their anti-Sabbath, anti-temperance, and anti-evangelistic sentiments and customs, it would be cause for gratification if the Evangelical Christians had held their own, and thereby kept up their ratio of progress during that period; but they can make a far better showing. In 1800 there was only one church to 1,740 citizens and one church member to fourteen citizens; but in 1880 there was one church to 520, and one member to five of population. In 1870 the population had increased *sevenfold*, but the churches *thirty-sevenfold*. (*Christian Instructor*, 20th Nov. and 13th Dec., 1883)

The increase of Romanists in England and Scot-

land has been chiefly through the settlement of Irish Roman Catholics in these lands, not from the conversion of Protestants—very few of them having gone over to Rome during the last twenty years. The Protestants of Britain and Ireland are looking for more Romanists to join their ranks than the number of Protestants led away by all the arts of the great sorceress. But of course they must boast of the increase in order to encourage their people to work on. They act like the boy lost in the woods, who whistled to keep his courage up.

The number of Romanists in the Dominion of Canada is about 1,800,000, out of a population of about 4,000,000, and though the Catholic Church in the Province of Quebec enjoys all the privileges and advantages of an established church, and is sustained by all the enthusiasm engendered by the love of race as well as of religion which characterizes the French Canadians, acting as they do almost as a unit in the political arena—yet we have reason to be thankful that the Roman Catholic Church on the whole has scarcely held her own with us during the last decade, her increase from 1871 to 1881 being about 21 per cent., while that of the Presbyterians was 24 per cent. and the Methodists 35 per cent. During the last forty years about twenty-five thousand French Canadians have renounced Romanism, and adopted the Protestant faith, and a work is now in process which will ere long lead to far greater results. Finally, it is evident, both from the prediction of the Word and the signs of the times, that the progress of Protestantism and evangelical religion is

#### ONWARD AND UPWARD,

and the destiny of Rome is downward. I would therefore warn politicians that those who ally themselves with Rome, and lean on her for strength and support, are destined to disappointment. They lean on a broken reed—like Israel of old, when they looked to Egypt for help—a reed that will pierce the hand that leans on it.

Dr. Watts, of Belfast, Ireland, after approving of the action of the emperor of Germany in sending his son, the heir to the throne, to take part in the Luther festival last fall, says: "The history of western Europe proves that no government can with impunity espouse the cause of Papacy"—(witness the case of Napoleon III.)—"or treat with indifference the Gospel of Christ, and prosper. The voice of these countries cry out with the voice of a trumpet, 'no countenance to Rome, and no alliance with her.' Statesmen would do well in their capacity as statesmen to hearken to the voice, for the doom of that nation which legislates in the interest of Rome is written so clearly in the history of the past four centuries that he who runs may read. Recent explorations in the ruins of Babylon and Nineveh bring to light the causes which wrought their overthrow. Deeds of cruelty, robbery and oppression, for which the patronage of their false gods was claimed brought down upon them the judgment of Jehovah. And just as clearly are the causes of the judgments wherewith the Papal governments of Europe have been visited portrayed in the history of the post-Reformation period—"In her had been found the blood of prophets and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth." (Rev. xviii. 24.) Cruelties perpetrated in some instances on a scale of provincial, or even national magnitude, and culminating in wholesale massacres—cruelties inspired and patronized by Rome—have been visited by the fearful penalties of judicial blindness and national humiliation. Like causes are always sure to produce like effects in all nations and times. Let us see to it that we do what we can to avert such judgments from our beloved Canada, by not allowing our government to form unhallowed alliance with Rome, for if we do we become partakers of other men's sins, and we must suffer from the judgments that are thus brought on our nation.

Above all, let us each secure our interest in Jesus, by seeking refuge in His precious blood that cleanseeth from all sin, and by giving our hearts to Him to be renewed and sanctified by His Holy Spirit, and by receiving Christ as our Lord, and dedicating ourselves to His service, and doing all we can for the promotion of His glory. If we neglect this, our privileges as Protestants will rise up against us in the judgment and condemn us with a greater condemnation than that allotted to the deluded followers of Rome, for to whom much is given of them He will expect the more, and the servant who knew his Lord's will and did it