

"THE TRIALS OF A MIND IN ITS PROGRESS TO CATHOLICISM." By L. Silliman Ives, LL.D., late Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church in North Carolina. D. & J. Sadlier, New York and Montreal.

This long announced, and anxiously looked for work, will, we doubt not, be read with avidity, by Protestants as well as Catholics. It is what its title professes to be: a picture of the "Trials" of an anxious, but honest mind, seeking after truth; and, by this very search, confessing that it had not what it sought; for we seek not after that which we have.

No man, having been born and bred a Protestant, ever became a Catholic willingly; no man ever commenced the search after truth without, in his inmost heart, hoping that it might be found elsewhere than in the Catholic Church; no one, being a heretic, ever did, or ever will, submit himself to that Church, except under strong, and irresistible compulsion, and after long struggling with many and bitter "Trials."—By nature, all men are Protestants; by grace only can they become Catholics:—

"When I seriously approached this question, however, it was terrible to me. No man can well conceive the horror with which I contemplated the possibility of a conviction against my own claims as the result! My claims as a Bishop, a Minister, a Christian in any safe sense; and hence of my being compelled as an honest man to give up my position. A horror enhanced by the self-humiliation with which I saw such a step must cover me, the absolute deprivation of all mere temporal support which it must occasion, not only to myself but to one whom I was bound to love and cherish until death." The heart-rending distress and mortification in which it must involve, without their consent, a large circle of the dearest relatives and friends, the utter annihilation of all that confidence and hope which, under common struggles and common sufferings for what we deemed the truth, had been reposed in me as a sincere and trustworthy bishop. But I forbear. Enough that the prospect, heightened in its repulsiveness by the sad forebodings around me at the renewed symptoms of my wavering, was so confounding, as actually to make me debate, whether it were not better, and my duty, to stay and risk the salvation of my soul,—as to make me supplicate in agony, to be spared so bitter a choice, to make me seize, with the eagerness of a drowning man, upon every possible pretext for relinquishing the inquiry.—p. 21.

Alas! too often nature rebels against the grace of God; and whilst professing, nay—such is the deceitfulness of the human heart—flattering itself that it is sincere in the search after truth, it is, after all, seeking only for some excuse why it should reject the truth when proffered. Thus we see, almost as an invariable rule, that the most envenomed foes, and the bitterest revilers of Catholicity, are men, who, at some period of their lives, have been drawn within the sphere of its attraction; but in whom the lusts of the flesh, and the love of the world, have proved motives stronger than the grace of God. These men have had their day of grace; but for them it has passed, perhaps never to return; called upon to prepare their hearts as temples of the Holy Ghost, they have preferred making them the abodes of unclean spirits, who have thereupon entered in, and taken possession; the last state of these men is worse than the first.—Better, far better would it have been for them, had they never drawn nigh unto the portals of the Church, than that, having approached so close, they should not have sought shelter within. Henceforward those gates, it is to be feared, are finally closed against them; and the remainder of their lives are passed in seeking to still the accusing voice of conscience, by devising all manner of impossible slanders against Christ's Holy Spouse; because therein they seek excuse for their contumacious resistance to Her Divine claims. These men may deceive the world; haply themselves, for a season; but they cannot deceive God, before Whose awful tribunal they must one day appear, to render an account, of grace resisted, light darkened, talents squandered, mercy rejected, and offers of salvation scornfully cast aside.

Not so was it with the author of the little work before us. For more than twenty years, as he himself tells us, had Dr. Ives been a bishop of a Protestant congregation. Change of religion, therefore, to him, implied—the wilful abandonment of all his earthly prospects—the rupture of all his ancient ties, and the renouncing of all hopes of worldly advancement.—For him it was indeed a taking up the cross to follow Christ, having left all things. The man who makes such sacrifices, for conscience sake, may be mistaken, but must be sincere in his convictions; and is entitled to a respectful hearing, when he tells how these convictions were wrought within him. That he had "Trials," who can doubt?—That these "Trials" were great, is also certain; how great, none, save those who have experienced them, can tell. It is of these "Trials," that Dr. Ives would speak: "You call me mad"—he says to his former associates—"listen rather to my reasons; hear me for my honor, and for your own sakes." There are traces in the book before us, of a mind ill at ease, of a mind seeking for rest, where rest was not to be found; but there are no traces of madness, unless it be the madness of a Paul, before Festus and King Agrippa.

The madman, from false premises, draws logical conclusions; grant the first, and you cannot deny the other. Dr. Ives, if in error then, must have erred in his premises; but alas for his former High Church friends! his premises are their's; those upon which alone the Protestant Episcopal communities can base their claims to be considered a branch of the Catholic Church. Dr. Ives differs from his Episcopalian brethren, not in his premises, but in this—that he alone ventures to carry them out, fully and boldly, to their last logical consequences. On its positive side, his formula is—that "two and two are four;" on its negative side, it is expressed in the words of Carlyle—"That a Lie is unbelievable." What first opened Dr. Ives' eyes to the errors of Protestantism, was,

as he tells us, the conviction of its *unreasonableness*.

"I observed that every attempt to understand and rightly appreciate Catholic truth, was viewed by Protestants with jealousy, and treated with harshness. That, while they prided themselves upon the untrammelled exercise of reason in matters of faith, the first effort on the part of any of their adherents to apply this reason in good earnest to an examination of Catholic doctrine, or Catholic institutions, was instantly met by a cry of alarm. 'This practice is highly dangerous. Depend upon it, it will unsettle your faith, wean you from your own Church, and give you a leaning towards Catholicism. There is something in this, so insidious and captivating, that, if you once allow it to get the least hold of your mind and heart, it is sure to bring you under its dominion.' And if the practice was not forthwith relinquished, they would seek to interpose an effectual bar, by loading it with suspicion, and exciting against it the popular indignation; thus often forcing persons who might not have the nerve, for the sake of truth and peace, to face desertion, ignominy, and perhaps starvation, to stifle their convictions, compromise their consciences, and consent, for a time at least, to stumble on amidst the obscurities and miseries of an uncertain faith. This struck me as being so inconsistent with the Protestant principle, that a free and thorough application of each mind to the great question, 'What is truth?' is essential to its solution, as to lead me to suspect more reasonableness and force in Catholic teaching than my education and position had hitherto permitted me to see. For I could not well conceive how, on such a vital question as that between Catholics and Protestants, any practice which might contribute to the fullest investigation should be 'dangerous' to any thing but error. If the mind be capable of the investigation at all, it must be, I thought, to the fullest extent. At any rate, that it would be exceedingly unfair to oblige it to come to a conclusion, or to abide in one, without being allowed an opportunity to examine both sides of the question, the consideration of which might be necessary to render that conclusion safe. Hence I began seriously to fear that 'the danger' apprehended from a thorough knowledge of Catholic teaching, was, not so much danger to the truth of God, as to the system of Protestantism."—pp. 14, 15.

At the same time, Dr. Ives felt the want of certainty; that want which every intelligent being, earnest in his enquiries after truth, and sensible of the supreme importance of religious truth, must feel.—Without faith, it is impossible to please God; without certainty, it is impossible to have faith, which cannot be content with probabilities only, but must have positive assurance; or it is not faith, but only opinion. "Whence"—asked Dr. Ives—"am I to obtain this certainty?" For he clearly saw, that—if God holds man responsible for his belief, and requires him to believe all that He has revealed—that, if He be a Wise and Just God—He has given man some means of knowing, with *infallible certainty*, what He has revealed. But the necessity of certainty, in matters of religion, implies the necessity of an infallible authority; able to pronounce, with infallible certainty, and precision, the whole counsel of God; and for this purpose, by Him commissioned, and by His continually abiding presence, assisted.—This self-evident proposition once admitted, the questions that next presented themselves to Dr. Ives for solution, were—"Is the Anglican church, with which I am in communion, that one divinely commissioned, supernaturally assisted, and therefore infallible, and indefectible expounder of God's will? If it is not—what is?"

Of the first question, Dr. Ives thus disposes:—"Alas! the Anglican church distinctly disclaimed all authority in religion as an *infallible judge*; distinctly disclaimed any such connection with God as would enable it to act as an *infallible* propounder, or interpreter of God's *infallible* will."

"Here I found myself arrested by some magic influence! A voice from above thundered in my ear—'Cursed is the man that trusteth in man.'—Jer. xvii. 5. What but trusting in man, thought I, is it, to lean upon any judgment in matters of faith, short of the *infallible judgment of Almighty God!*"—pp. 85, 86.

Not only does the Anglican church, not profess itself *infallible*, and thereby admits itself *fallible*, but history, history as written by itself, asserts that it has erred; may therefore err again; and may therefore be in damnable error now. Anglican divines maintain that their church is identically the same church now, that it was prior to the Reformation.—But, according to its own Homilies, for eighteen hundred years before that event—"Laity and clergy, learned and unlearned, all ages, sects, and degrees of men, women and children of the whole of Christendom"—no exception made in favor of the Church of England—"had been at once drowned in abominable idolatry."—*Hom. against Idolatry*. Where then, during this long period of eight hundred years—asks Dr. Ives of his High Church friends who contend for the principle of Church Authority, and who assert the duty of the individual to "hear the Church," as the ground and pillar of truth—"where, for that long period, was the poor sinner to go, to 'hear the Church'?" Certainly not to a Church "drowned"—as was the Church of England—"in damnable idolatry." To every reasonable mind, the Church of England has pronounced its own condemnation; and cannot therefore be the one divinely commissioned, supernaturally assisted, and therefore infallible, indefectible expounder of God's will. What then, is?

We cannot follow the writer through all the reasoning which led him to the irresistible conclusion, that the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, all whose members are in communion with the Successor of St. Peter, and through him, with one another, is that one divinely commissioned teacher. We must refer the reader to the work itself; recommending it earnestly to his attention, as the work of one who has meditated deeply, sought anxiously and fervently, and who having found the pearl of great price, has cheerfully parted with all that he had to make himself master of that great and invaluable jewel. That others may be induced, like him, to search, and, by the Grace of

God, enabled to seize upon, when found, that treasure which has brought peace to his soul, after its many "Trials," is the object which the writer had in view. We sincerely trust that he may not be disappointed.

"THE METROPOLITAN."

The May number of this excellent periodical has come to hand. *Maga* is brilliant as ever; the story of Kate O'Connor, continues with unabated interest; and the other articles are all of first rate quality.—We trust that the METROPOLITAN is increasing its circulation in Canada.

EGERTON RYERSON & THE PUBLIC SCHOOL LIBRARIES OF CANADA WEST.

To the Editor of the True Witness.

DEAR SIR—In the July number of the Chief Superintendent's "Journal of Education," it was announced to the Municipalities of Western Canada that he was prepared to apportion the sum of \$36,000 to such as would co-operate with him in the establishment of "Public School Libraries;" that for every pound they would raise by assessment, for that purpose, and pay in cash into his hands, he would return the same amount, with the addition of seventy-five per cent., in books at his prices, as laid down in the "Journal of Education." Several Upper Canadian journals have commented severely on the manner in which Mr. Ryerson has acted; and have pronounced the whole affair a good spec for Egerton. Although he may injure several book establishments in the city of Toronto, what does he care? The Government have placed at his disposal \$36,000; to which the Municipalities will add \$48,000; making an aggregate of \$84,000, to pass through his fingers to purchase books for the public of Western Canada; and he will not allow such a grand opportunity to escape without a *quid pro quo*. A small discount (say five per cent.) for cash, would not be rejected by his reverence, (save the mark), which would only amount to \$4,200; that, added to his salary as "Chief Superintendent of Education," will not be so bad—much better than roving over the country as an *exhorter*. Ah! Altered times with Egerton now-a-days.

I remain yours, for the present,
ONE OF THE VICTIMISED.

We insert our correspondent's letter, as it is important that the manner in which the "Public Libraries," of Upper Canada, are conducted, should be closely looked into; and we know that the Catholics of that section of the Province complain bitterly that, though supported by their contributions, all books of a Catholic tendency, or written in a Catholic spirit, are rigidly excluded from these Libraries; even Dr. Lingard's *History of England*, is tabooed. At the same time we would not be understood as intending to endorse any insinuations against Dr. Ryerson's private character. As a public functionary we have attacked him, and may very likely have to attack him again. But here our hostility ends; for God forbid that we should be thought capable of having recourse to such vile weapons as personalities, and calumnies against the private character of a political or religious opponent. We say this, lest from our giving inversion to the above letter, it should seem that the TRUE WITNESS were inclined to accuse Dr. Ryerson of jobbing and pecuniary corruption. We leave this style of argument to our Protestant cotemporaries: it is altogether unworthy of the Catholic journalist.

The *British Colonist* thus replies to the arguments of the *Canadien* in favor of "Secularisation":—

"We read in the *Canadien*:
"But the *True Witness* will reply to us, if you abandon the Church property of Upper Canada, you create a dangerous antecedent for those of Lower Canada. Not at all, we respond, for if it suits Upper Canada to put an end to the Church property, it does not follow that the same thing will be agreed to in Lower Canada where there is no voice worthy of consideration raised against our Church property."

"The whole then, is reduced to a simple question of suitability; and principles, however sacred they may be, are put aside as a merchandise of no value. The organ is willing that in Lower, as in Upper Canada, all shall exist, or all die by the will of the majority; and when there shall be raised in Lower Canada a voice worthy of consideration against our Church properties, these also will have to perish. This is the Protestant idea, which makes of power and of right, one and the same thing, by the aid of the system of double majorities, preached by a practitioner of the *pis aller*, and a Socialist of 1848; a consoling idea for our religious institutions, which shall rest for the future upon the divine right of property!"

"The *Canadien* tells us:—
"It is lucky that our Church properties, have for their basis, *legality, inviolability*, capitulations, and legislative acts, equivalent to a social contract between the colony and the empire."

"What is the *legality*? what the *inviolability*?—The Imperial act of 1840, relative to the Clergy Reserves, in changing the constitutional act of 1791, gave for basis to the Protestant appropriations, a new '*legality*.' At the same time also the Imperial law took away from the colonial legislature the power of changing the basis of these Protestant appropriations, and gave to this *legality* born in 1840, the strength to remain inviolable up to 1853.

The Imperial parliament in restoring to Canada the power which the act of 1791 gave it, of changing the destination of the Clergy Reserves, has destroyed this *inviolability*, which was nothing else than the *constitutional inability* to make any change.

"Now, you know that the Duke of Newcastle said in the House of Lords, that our religious institutions were, like the Reserves, under the control of the local legislature, that is to say, like these last, under the hand of the majority. That was to say to us: Be upon your guard, Catholics, it will be done to you, as you shall have done to others. It was not possible to render better the Protestant idea: *might is right*;—as Proudhon said: *property is theft*. And before this Protestant axiom, invoked as a guide for the future, what is this *inviolability* of which *Le Canadien* speaks?"

"If 'legislative acts are equivalent to a social contract,' are the legislative acts which follow them and modify them, of less value than a social contract? and wherefore? Legislative acts are not a social contract

—they are the work of a power which can change them when it pleases; while the social contract, supposes the free act of two contracting parties, and the will of the same two parties to destroy it.

"The social contract is, for the rest, an idea of Rousseau, a socialist idea without sense, and the organ would have as much trouble to define the social contract, as the word *nature*.

"But he finds something more cheering still than all this, which is the numerical force of Catholicism; and to prove to you that there is no danger to your religious institutions, he shows you 914,561 Catholics contending against 927,704 Protestants!"

Our talented cotemporary the *Halifax Catholic* gives an interesting account of the spiritual condition of the descendants of the original French settlers in Acadia:—

"The Acadian French in the counties of Yarmouth and Digby, are well supplied with clergymen and churches, and instead of learning from, they could teach christianity to any Board of Schismatics, the members of which have neither ordination nor jurisdiction to evangelize the people in the Acadian or any other mission. There is a Priest at Pubnico, another at Argyle, another at Yarmouth. There is a Priest at Meteghan, and at St. Mary's, Frenchtown, and at St. Croix. All these Priests have been sent by the Archbishop of Halifax to teach the people, and to preach the Gospel of Christ, and the Archbishop has been sent by Pius IX. the successor of St. Peter. Thus each of those Priests is connected through his Prelate with the Apostolic See. They, and they alone, are the legitimate Pastors of all the flock of Christ in those parts, whether French or others. The rest are pretenders, unauthorized mercenaries, 'whose own the sheep are not,' who have come in not by the door of regular Apostolic succession and mission, but have secretly clambered over the fold. Of such the Lord said, 'I have not sent these Prophets, and they ran.'"

It would appear that the Catholics of L'Acadie are infested with a set of canting mountebanks like our French Canadian Missionary Society; but that these apostles of mischief have as little to boast of there, as they have here.—From the style in which the *Halifax Catholic* makes its appearance, its typography, and paper, we should think that that journal, though but lately started, is well supported by a good list of paying subscribers. At least we hope that such may be the case, for we are sure that our cotemporary well deserves it.

THE OPENING OF THE NEW HALL OF THE INSTITUTE CANADIEN.—On Tuesday evening, May 2nd, the New Hall of this valuable institution was opened to the public. It is the large stone building in Notre Dame Street, two doors Westward of the Commissariat Office. The Hall was crowded by a highly respectable and attentive audience, of which a very large number were ladies, and during the evening there were addresses by Messrs. Laberge, Lafrenaye, Ricard, and a discussion between Messrs. Morin and Cassidy on the question, whether the French Canadians ought or ought not to strive to maintain a distinct nationality. We shall give a fuller account of the proceedings hereafter.—*Herald*.

We learn that active exertions, for some time past, have been in progress, for the purpose of erecting a new Catholic Church in the Village of Paris. His Lordship the Bishop of Toronto has taken the matter under his special patronage; and although it is rather an onerous undertaking for the inhabitants of the Village alone, we have but little doubt that, with assistance from other parts of the diocese, it will be brought to a happy completion.—*Toronto Mirror*.

The first case that has occurred under the treaty with England, where an American citizen is demanded to be sent for trial in Canada, is that of Daniel W. Van Aernan, the Bank forger, who has been given up to the Canadian authorities by the United States Government within the last few days.—*British Colonist*.

By proclamation issued in an extra of the *Canada Gazette*, Parliament has been further prorogued until the 15th prox., not then to meet for the despatch of business.

REMITTANCES RECEIVED.

Hungerford, P. Casey, 10s; Maidston, M. Mooney, 15s; Farnham, Rev. Mr. Deynover, 15s; Sherington, J. O'Donovan, 6s 3d; St. Theresa, J. Lonergan, 12s 6d; Picton, Rev. Mr. Lalor, £1 5s; Dundasville, M. Healy, 6s 3d; Vercheres, Rev. Mr. Bruneau, £1 17s 6d; Pockmouche, M. Rivers, 7s 6d; Percy, J. O'Reilly, £1 5s; Norwood, M. Mullin, 10s; Wardsville, T. Fitzpatrick, 6s 3d; Westport, J. Kehoe, 6s 3d; Williamstown, J. McDonald, 10s; Tyendinago, J. Gargan, 6s 3d; Egansville, D. Madigan, 15s; Riddolph, E. Mahon, £1; Morrisburg, A. McDonald, £1 10s; St. Jerome, J. M'Goldrick, 6s 3d.

St. Andrews, per Rev. G. A. Hay—J. A. McDonald, 12s 6d; S. McIntosh, 6s 3d; A. McIntosh, 6s 3d.

Cornwall, per J. Stuart McDonald—J. M'Donnell, 6s 3d; J. Walsh, 6s 3d; O. Glancy 10s.

Died.

In this city, on the 25th ult., Ann Cummings, widow of the late Mr. Thomas Hart, native of Rahone, County Westmeath, Ireland, aged 80 years.

ST. PATRICK'S SOCIETY.



AN ADJOURNED MEETING OF THE ST. PATRICK'S SOCIETY, will be held at St. PATRICK'S HALL, on MONDAY EVENING next, the 8th instant, at SEVEN o'clock precisely.

N.B.—A full and punctual attendance is requested.

By Order, W. F. SMYTH, Rec. Sec.
Montreal, May 4.