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THE CATHOLIC.

Hamilton, G. D.

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THE STROLLING PREACHERS IN CANADA EAST.—TANNER, WE SUPPOSE, AND HIS PROWLING CREW.

Translated from the *Melanges Religieux*.

We are in hopes that the excursions of the preachers in our peaceable country, among people so moral and religious, will end at last. The reception they have met with almost every where, will doubtless disgust them with their undertaking, little creditable in itself, and still less so in its consequences. These men, who so constantly preach up the *liberty of conscience and examination*;—the *inviolable privilege of Free-thinking* on matters of faith;—the respect for *religious inspirations*;—ought, in fine, to profit by their own lessons, and respect a little more than they do the convictions of others; nor waste their poor and useless lives in endeavouring to pluck from the hearts of such the Catholic belief and profound convictions; far more profound, rational, and durable, than the pretended inspirations of—we know not what spirit; which suggests to them the *white and black*—one thing to-day and its opposite to-morrow—just as their humour varies, or the *maggot bites*. And let not these gentlemen of *free inquiry*—they who claim each the *miraculous inspiration of the spirit*—say that we misreport them. We are quite up to their Protestant principle; and we but rigorously deduce from it its undeniable consequences. We seek no other spot for the contest than the one they have chosen; and as long as there are Protestants in the world, we shall keep our ground, and never cease to hold forth to them, in order to defeat and reduce them to a logical and compulsive silence, this *fundamental principle of the Reformation*—“*You must read the Bible, and nothing but the Bible.*” “*Every one must interpret it according to his own particular inspiration.*—He must examine it himself, and not receive the explanation or opinion of any one on the subject.” This is their all. The thousand Protestant sects agree in this. All the errors—all the aberrations—all the religious idiotisms promulgated since Luther’s time—are sanctioned by this principle: *the right of every one to examine and interpret the Scripture for himself.* Besides, us no reasoning on the subject is were allowable, no authority whatever is

admissible, but the *inspired, the revealed* one; it evidently follows, that in every sect there are as many different inspirations as there are heads and characters; and it would be a wonder if only ten persons were inspired alike on the same subjects. Still more, should there really exist one sole Protestant Church, the members of which believed and professed the same opinions; they thereby give up the principle of *individual* interpretation, and receive the explanation and interpretation of others—of their teachers, their ministers, or some commentator on the Bible, &c. They thus cease to adhere to the Protestant principle, and practically adhere to the Catholic one. The minister preaching, any one teaching, the Book explaining, is their authority. This is a contradiction,—a protestation against the fundamental principle of *free examination*, of their obligatory, their sacred inspiration: it is a formal abjuration of Protestantism. For consistency’s sake, every Protestant should read and meditate his bible, and nothing but his bible. We defy all their preachers in the world to act otherwise, without becoming Catholics in principle; without being forced to own themselves useless intermeddlers; nay, sacrilegious and profane wretches, substituting themselves and their teachings in the stead of the *private spirit* who is to do all with his inspirations. But we must preach, say they: that is written in the Bible. So much the worse for you, if you find that in the Bible.

You are those only whom that word must confound; for, if *to preach* be necessary, that does not mean to *read*, every one, the Bible. If one must preach something, it is doubtless intended thereby to bring the hearers to certain convictions, to feelings and sentiments hitherto unexperienced by them. If one must preach, it is surely to inculcate some doctrine which has not been sufficiently inspired from the reading of the Bible. If one must preach, what becomes of every one’s *inspiration and free interpretation*? So much the worse, then, if you believe that the Bible contains the order to preach—that order is the condemnation of the *free examination*, and you should reject it with so many other truths which you dislike; which you dare not either admit in your Bibles nor preach in your sermons. Whether you will or not, your Protestantism should be a *dumb worship*; your church an assembly of *secluded contemplatives*, waiting, like the *Dervises*, for inspiration from above; and who may think, believe, and do whatever they fancy true and good, without the necessity of advice, or the right of reproach from any one.—We know you like not to be so hard pressed and tormented with that perplexing principle of yours. We know, also, that we are daily obliged to follow you beyond that landmark on questions which allow you more room to move in; and where your allurements are apt to impose upon the simple. We are far from repudiating those discussions which, in spite of all you can urge to the contrary, have for more than two centuries, crushed and overwhelmed you. But because they are

quite useless, we decline them. We wish not to discuss your sayings, because they are all a tissue of inconsistencies. Think as you please yourselves, but force not your opinions upon others. Preach them not to any one; for, by so doing, you attack your own persuasion, and commit a grievous Protestant sin. We are the only people who are free and unembarrassed in our preachings; who are never in contradiction with any bible truth. The Church interprets and explains to us the the Sacred Book, and has done so, for nearly two thousand years; nor ever have we been at a loss to ascertain our principles: never have we found in them any thing contradictory, nor ever have we varied in our faith and teaching. Have you been only two days in a like tranquil mood? Have you ever been two days the same, or like yourselves? Your own history denies you ever were so; and you strangely persist in convincing us of your mutability. \* \* \*

COLUMBIA MISSION.—In the *Melanges Religieux* (Montreal paper) of May 5th, we find something concerning the Mission of Columbia, with an account of a recent emigration from Canada to the fertile regions that are washed by the river Columbia and its tributaries. This country seems to have in prospect a great and important destiny, the magnitude of which it would be difficult to foresee or predict. The tides of emigration from different points, are borne onward to these lands, as to a centre, in which their waters are to mingle and be at rest; while the resources of the soil, the salubrity of the climate, and other important considerations, must, in time, fully realize the high expectations with which the enterprising colonist leaves his home, and submits to voluntary exile.

The Superior of this mission has his residence at St. Paul, a parish numbering 71 families, mostly Canadians. The Catholics at this point, as throughout the country in general, have an uncontested influence. Of this the Methodist ministers loudly complain, and make vain efforts to attract to their cause the Pagan Indians. In place of opening their eyes, and recognizing the sterility of their labours as the fruit of their erroneous doctrines, they blindly toil to attain an end which always flies before them; for if they effect any result whatever, it is that of discovering to the eyes of the idolators, and of Protestants, their weakness and impotence, and consequently by contrast giving increase to Catholic predominance. A large number of Protestants have made their abjuration. Among these might be named individuals distinguished for their talents, information, and social position, who already exhibit the fervor of christians of the primitive church, and are able protectors and zealous apostles of the Catholic religion.

A preacher, who is at the same time a doctor, was obliged to leave the post of *Nesquale*, last lent, because the people would neither receive his remedies nor his sermons.

	souls	farmers	families	indpn't boys.
There are at the post of Wallamette*	350	61	71	10
Do. at Cawlitiz	72	12	14	0
	402	73	85	10

Besides, at Wallamette, there are forty American families, numbering 150 souls.

This mission has been sustained by pious contributions made by Canada Catholics through the Quebec society for the Propagation of the Faith, as also by aid of the great association at Lyons. A Canadian gentleman has recently given proof of his zeal for the progress of religion, by making a donation of £100 for the support of this mission.—*Catholic Advocate*.

\* Wallamette river, flowing from the south discharges itself into the Columbia, while the Cawlitiz comes from the north, and empties into the same great river.

“THE MONTH OF MARY.”—We have already given a few extracts from the little work published under this title. The following passage, extracted from the above publication, will be found appropriate for the ensuing month of May, which is, by excellence, the “month of Mary.”—“The month of Mary originated in Italy, and the month of May was selected in preference to any other from a wish to change a season of dissipation and amusement into one of instruction and devotion. From Italy, it passed into France, and other countries of Europe, where it has been found productive of the most beneficial results. Within the last few years it was introduced into the United States, where it has been practised by numbers of the faithful servants of Mary, who eagerly profited by this opportunity of testifying their love and gratitude to the Holy Mother of God, and of cultivating the virtues which would assimilate them to the perfect model of Christians. On the evening before the first of May, the persons who unite to practise will assemble before an altar (if practised in a church), over which is an image of the blessed Virgin, which should be adorned with flowers and other suitable decorations.—The Litany of the Blessed Virgin is either said or sung. After this the Meditation is slowly read by one. The Meditation read each evening should be carefully impressed on the memory, and made the subject of half or at least a quarter of an hour’s reflection on the following morning. A resolution to practise the particular virtue which it inculcates should be the fruit of this morning exercise. If possible, Mass should be heard each day, and the ordinary devotions to the Mother of God practised with more than ordinary fervour and exactness. As the object of this devotion is to eradicate vice from the heart, and plant in its stead the seed of heavenly virtue, each one should prepare for the exercises of this month by approaching the sacraments of Penance and the Holy Eucharist. If that be not possible, let him excite his heart to sincere contrition for having offended God, and resolve to take the earliest opportunity of being reconciled with Him. Each one should propose to overcome some vice or failing to which he is most particularly subject or inclined, or to acquire some virtue of which he may stand in need, or to which the grace of God may prompt him to aspire. All the exercises of the month should be specially directed to attain this object.—*Tablet*.”