

the faith and character of his religious enemies. Another fellow, ex-Bible agent, blossomed out into a reverend after a couple of years in the country. Another took in paying guests, contrary to the expressed rule of the society. American girls' schools are springing up in many cities, but their Methodist propaganda is not at all judicious at times, and they lose many pupils through obliging daughters of Catholics to submit to their particular brand of Protestantism. *The great colleges of the nuns are carried on with much more liberality, Jews, Positivists, or Mohammedans being equally free to practise their own creeds.* [Italics ours.] For the credit of the Anglo-Saxon race, it is quite time there were a few schools run on non-religious lines."

A Contrast

Contrast the foregoing with another passage found in the same book. The author is dealing with the colonisation of Brazil. He gives credit to the Jesuits for what they accomplished, but an ingrained prejudice against the Order makes him view their motives with suspicion. We are not concerned here with his suspicions; it is his facts that are interesting when placed against the doings of the Bible people. He writes—

"By building Sao Salvador de (de Souza) gave a central government to the colony, but the honor of settling and extending it, and of making it really useful to the Mother Country, was reserved for the Jesuits. These men, by their arts of insinuation and address, have been surpassed by none, and they dispersed themselves amongst the savages, and seemingly inspired by peace and charity, succeeded in obtaining their attachment and confidence. The obstacles which they had to encounter were most formidable, but their fiery zeal and assiduity rose with the difficulties met with, and the most salutary effects resulted from their exertions. They began by instructing the native children in the Portuguese language, and thus whilst fitting the Indians to become interpreters they acquired their tongue, and, as we have seen, formed a *Lingoa Geral*. Nobrega had a school near the city, and the children were taught the elements of reading, writing, and arithmetic, to assist at Mass, to sing the Church service, and were frequently led in procession through the town. . . . The greatest obstacle in the path of the missionaries was the cannibal propensities of the Indians. Their very pride and beliefs were implicated in these horrid orgies. In spite of their curing the savages of drunkenness, of polygamy, and of the custom of the vendetta, they still possessed the propensity to delight in human flesh."

Although the above was certainly not written by a Catholic, but was written by a man who expresses very unfriendly sentiments towards Catholicism, it is at once a tribute to Catholicism and a reproach to Protestantism. First, he shows that Protestantism as it is propagated in Brazil is anything but edifying. At the same time he pays a tribute to the religious tolerance exhibited by the Catholic Church Authorities; and then he shows that away back in the Middle Ages (the Dark Ages they are called

by those who know little about them) there was the Catholic Church, represented by brave, zealous, and cultured priests who, having in the name of charity left all things, were to be found educating the savages, humanising them, Christianising them, and bringing into their midst the Kingdom of Heaven.

The Church and the Bible

Let us now say a word on the subject of the Church and the Bible. The Church is certainly not opposed to Bible reading, and never has been. She does not, however, subscribe to the Protestant doctrine of private judgment, which means that each one who reads the Bible (presumably with the proper intention) is inspired by the Holy Ghost with the truth of what he reads. One conscientious man takes one meaning from a text, while another, equally conscientious, takes a directly opposite meaning from the same text. Now God cannot be held responsible for inspiring those two men with conflicting views about the same thing, for God is infinite Truth. The Church knows that the Bible requires an infallible interpreter, and that interpreter is the institution armed with the authority of Christ to preach and to teach. She believes that the Bible is the Word of God, but she does not believe the Bible to be the whole Word of God. The Bible (not the Bible mutilated by the Reformers and the Higher Critics, but the Bible which she has preserved through the centuries) is only the written Word; but there is also the unwritten Word, which is Tradition. And the Church is the Guardian of Tradition. It is impossible for a man to take up an English version of the Bible and say definitely that the meaning he gives to a text is the meaning intended by the inspired writer who wrote it. The Church is able to preserve the Sacred Scripture in its purity because she is infallible, and because her memory stretches back over the centuries to the days of the Apostles; and what she taught in the first century she teaches in the twentieth. If the written Word were intended to be the sole means of salvation Christ would certainly have written the book Himself, and written it in such a way that not only would everyone understand it, but that it would be impossible for anyone to misunderstand it. But Christ never wrote anything. He commanded the Apostles to preach and to teach, but He did not tell them to go about with a book which had not yet been written, and which very few are able to understand now that it has been written. The Church encourages the Laity to read the Bible, but she rightly insists upon proper safeguards against error, and she reserves to herself the right to interpret it. Does Protestantism, however, stand for the "open Bible" within the meaning of the doctrine of private judgment? It certainly does not. Consider the work of the Protestant missionaries among the savages. In the first place the savages cannot read, so that the Bible is useless unless it is interpreted by someone, and that someone is the missionary who distributes the Bibles. The savages, therefore, do not enjoy the sacred right of private judgment: they are forced

to endure missionary judgment. If the doctrine of private judgment were carried to its logical conclusion it would put the Protestant clergy out of existence, for if the Holy Ghost speaks to each individual, what need is there for preachers and teachers? The Church is gravely anxious when she hears of the establishment of centres for Bible distribution among her children, because, by the side of the Bible she sees the Protestant agents, and she knows that the intention is by no means to let the "open Bible" tell its own tale, but to interpret it in the sense which she knows to be utterly false, and, moreover, to spread the customary mis-representations of Catholic doctrine together with the customary calumnies about Catholic history, not omitting, perhaps, to add those temporal inducements to apostasy which have been frequently resorted to with partial success. In addition to providing an authorised text with explanatory notes in her editions of the Sacred Word, she exerts herself to preserve that Word from mutilation at the dictation of merely Rationalistic criticism.

The Church in Britain

While Protestant "evangelists" float about the world telling how Bible societies are defeating the Catholic Church in Latin countries, one wonders why no serious attempt is made to evangelise Great Britain. According to statistics for 1925 the Catholic Church is growing steadily in the British Isles. Is it that the British are becoming more ignorant than they used to be? or is it that there are no Bible societies in Britain? Here are the figures anyway; they speak for themselves:—

The Archbishops and Bishops of England and Wales and Scotland number thirty-one; the clergy 4642 as compared with 4606 last year.

Churches, chapels, and stations have grown from 2412 to 2458; this increase by nearly fifty new churches must be regarded as a most satisfactory one to have accomplished at a time when building costs have been high and many other difficulties abounding.

These statistics are all inclusive of Scotland; but the following apply only to the dioceses of England and Wales. Catholic secondary schools have increased by twenty-three, and elementary schools by thirteen; the numbers are now 471 and 1206 respectively, with an aggregate attendance of more than 413,700 pupils, not counting nearly 10,300 Catholic children in the schools of charitable institutions.

With regard to the Catholic population of the dioceses, the figures given, as the *Directory* points out, cannot in many cases be accurate; but such as they are, they show a present population in England and Wales of 2,080,855 Catholics, 33,575 more than last year.

Statistics of conversions are again gratifying. In 1922 the converts received in England and Wales numbered 12,406; in 1923 the figure was 12,796, an increase of 390. The total number of Catholics in the British Empire is now computed at 14,960,742, an advance of 33,430 upon last year's estimate.