

Great Britain owed to the veneration in which the Bible was held by the English people.

The Archbishop of Liverpool said they were not going to swallow new theories about the Bible without giving the old theories a very much longer and better trial. They did not wish to establish their dogmas by any sophistical reasoning, they believed they could commend them to the mind of all reasonable people by arguments which were beyond dispute.

Pontifical High Mass was sung by the Archbishop of Liverpool in the presence of the Cardinals, Archbishops, and Bishops attending the Congress.

The sermon was preached by the Bishop of Clifton, who said that with Catholics the Bible got its hall-mark from the Church, and not the Church her hall-mark from the Bible. It was the teachings and example of Christ which had created our Western civilisation.

Whatever of sound and good Europe to this day retained in her ethical and social system she owed to the Catholic Church, which all along had been, and still was, the great organ of the community of European civilisation.

A great disruption of the sixteenth century could not obliterate her influence, and even Protestant nations that threw off her yoke had been living ever since on remnants of her teaching and tradition. For Protestantism never creates.

"Can they do so indefinitely, and can we in England do so indefinitely?" asked his Lordship. "We at least are agreed that we cannot. The anchor of sanity has been lost. belief in all revelation is crumbling away under our eyes. foundations of even natural religion are breaking up, by some the first principles of reason itself are questioned or denied, family life is in jeopardy, our social order seems to many to be on the brink of a volcano, four years of slaughter have been followed by three of privation, and we can think of the future with nought but misgiving and apprehension.

"Only a new spirit could save us," his Lordship concluded, "and that could be infused by religion only."

Cardinal Bourne presided over the meeting at which the subject under discussion was the Catholic Church and the Bible.

Dr. R. Downey said the Catholic Church was no archaeological society; she was vitally interested in present-day biblical questions, and met them with all the apparatus of modern scholarship.

Rev. J. P. Arendzen referred to a suggestion which had been made that they should abandon the English version and adopt the revised version made in direct opposition to the Catholic Church. He hoped this would not be carried into effect.

Following on the religious festivities on the Sunday the Congress settled down on Monday to earnest investigation of Biblical topics. A number of interesting lectures were given by scholarly divines of the Catholic Church. There has not been any eagerness on the part of Protestants to accept the invitation offered by the Congress to participate in the debates.

At the close of the lectures, however, Mr. G. G. Coulton, University lecturer in English, said he would reply to Congress through the columns of the press.

The Archbishop of Birmingham, presiding at the Church of Our Lady and the English Martyrs on the Sunday, said the solicitude of the Catholic Church for the honor of God's work had been misinterpreted, and the charge had been brought against her that she was afraid of the pure and unadulterated Word of God, and that she strove to hide it from her adherents.

He hoped Congress would do something to lessen that misapprehension and would teach the people how desirous the Catholic Church was of promoting, fostering, and encouraging an earnest study of the Gospels.

The Bishop of Southwark presided over the first lecture on the Monday morning when Father Hugh Pope, sometime Professor of Sacred Scripture at College Angelico, Rome, dealt with the issue as to whether the Bible is an inspired book.

Father Pope pointed to the extraordinary comprehensiveness of the Bible, which took sixteen hundred years to write. When they realised what a gigantic thing the Bible was they would appreciate what a tremendous statement it was to say: "I believe in the Bible."

It means that they were saying they believed that which men of different nationalities wrote in different periods of the world's history.

"Why do you believe it?" asked Father Pope.

The answer constantly given was, because they believe it was the revealed word of God.

Father Pope said he once caused consternation by saying the Bible was not a revealer. One old gentleman exclaimed: "I always thought you Catholics were the limit, but now I know it."

Father Pope added that the Bible enshrined in writing the few revelations God made to man, and went on to analyse various incidents in the Bible, referring particularly to the story of the tax-gatherer, and the details, given by St. John, of the Last Supper. It necessitated tremendous credulity to believe such narratives, but they did so because they have almost certain proof that these works were inspired, and that the authors were definitely illumined by God as to what they were to write, and their wills were moved to write it.

God could be regarded as the author of the whole, but the individual writers could be regarded as the authors of their own books.

Rev. T. E. Bird, Professor of Holy Scripture at Oscott College, Birmingham, lectured on the "Mosaic Law," and urged that the building of Solomon's Temple could be taken as a recognised landmark in the history of Israel. Nearly the whole manhood of Israel was conscripted to carry out the work, and were drafted in bodies to fell timber, quarry stones, etc. In modern values the building cost over one thousand million pounds to erect, and seven and a half years were devoted to this enterprise before the dedication of this national temple.

He pointed out that without Mosaic Law the institutional religion of the Hebrews was without basis.

Subsequently Father R. A. Knox, of St. Edmund's College, Ware, whose conversion from the Anglican Faith caused a great sensation a few years ago, lectured on the "Organised Church in the New Testament." He contradicted the general impression, which some readers of the New Testament half unconsciously denied, that God did not found a visible Church at all, and that the Church was an invisible company of souls that would ultimately be saved.

The Congress concluded on the Tuesday, when an important discussion took place on the question as to whether the authorised (Protestant) version should be adopted by the Church in place of the Douay. Canon Wm. Barry, D.D., said it was impossible to measure the English nation's suspicion of the Catholic Church in this matter, and if they were to convert England they must do so by means of Holy Scripture. He strongly urged that they should consider the possibility of adopting it, whilst safeguarding the official status and authority of the Latin Vulgate. There was great opposition to the suggestion, and Mgr. Barton Brown, a convert, said the proposal, if adopted, would be a stumbling block to would-be-converts.

AN APPEAL FROM THE BACKBLOCKS

At Tuatapere—a bush township in Southland—Mass is celebrated in the most westerly part of New Zealand. The few scattered Catholics are making a bold endeavor to raise funds for a much-needed church but realise their difficulties without assistance from outside. They therefore appeal to the generously disposed readers of the *Tablet* to help them in their enterprise.

Subscriptions may be sent to the undersigned—Presbytery, Riverton—and will be acknowledged in the *Tablet*.

(Rev.) D. P. BUCKLEY.

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