

## "Cotey, The Fearless"

By J. D. Grey, First Church, New Orleans, La.

Dr. Louis O. F. Cotey, the second French missionary of the Louisiana State Convention, former professor in Baptist Bible Institute, faithful preacher of Christ and veritable "fire brand" for the Lord, entered into rest with his Saviour on the morning of Aug. 3 at the age of 79 years.

Great was the price that Dr. Cotey paid for his health and, indeed, for his faithfulness to the Lord. He was born in La Belle, France, of devout Catholic parents. His father was a cathedral chorister and his mother had been educated in a convent. The family moved to Canada when Louis was just a lad. They decided he should be educated for the priesthood. Accordingly, he was sent to the seminary in Canada. He was a brilliant student and made rapid progress. One day in the library to which he and a few other privileged students were admitted for discovered a copy of the Scriptures written in Latin. Despite the injunction which had been placed on its cover, "this is forbidden," he began to read it. When he read the Word of Christ, "search the Scriptures," he began more seriously than ever to think about his eternal destiny. He was seized by the authorities of the seminary and, according to his own testimony, was incarcerated in a dungeon. Indeed, his life was threatened. Eventually a fellow student liberated him. He escaped from the school and made his way to Montreal. It was here that he became a Christian and united with a local Baptist church.

He answered the call to preach and became a flaming evangel of the cross. His zeal for the Lord roused the animosity of the Catholics wherever he went. But their antagonism did not deter him from his God-directed course. He became in 1897 the center of a great legal battle which grew out of his being persecuted in the summer of that year while holding a revival in the Baptist church of Rockland. So intensive did the antagonism of the Catholics become during that meeting that a riot resulted. To quote the Montreal Daily Witness of Dec. 22, 1897:

"More than 300 persons assembled tumultuously around the church, from which place the uproar could be distinctly heard one and one-half mile distant. The shouting of the crowd was interspersed with revolver shots and the throwing of stones against the door and vestibule of the church. This riotous conduct was accompanied by most dangerous threats, calling for Mr. Cotey's life with oaths unspeakably horrible. The constable who stood at the church door ready to defend Mr. Cotey, who with others was imprisoned therein, had difficulty in restraining the mob which charged the entrance and he himself was struck and seriously injured by one of the flying stones. The siege continued with unabated fury until

French, in which capacity he labored for 15 years. Then for several years following this he taught in the Baptist Bible Institute.

His faithfulness to the Lord and his remarkable courage were an inspiration to all who knew him. It was while laboring as a missionary in Canada that he won for himself "Cotey, the Fearless." Despite the fact that he was persecuted unmercifully by the Catholics, he had an abiding love for them and many of them became his close friends and not a few of them were won to the Lord by him.

After a long, tumultuous and useful career, he "fell upon sleep" at our own Southern Baptist Hospital in New Orleans on Aug. 3. In addition to a service conducted in New Orleans by the writer and his pastor, Rev. W. O. Littlejohn, a service was conducted in the one-hundred-year-old Baptist church near Bunkie, of which he was pastor 25 years ago. This service was conducted by Dr. C. L. Shirar and Rev. L. C. Smith.

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The Montreal Witness of above named date reviews another interesting fact in connection with the trial:

"At the close of the second day, during the cross-examination of the last witness for the defense, Crown Attorney Maxwell, by a series of skillful questions, disclosed a plot which startled the court. On the morning of that day Maville, the unwilling witness from whom the facts were drawn; Trochier, another prisoner, and Father Hudon, in a room at the hotel were seen discussing the case for a considerable time with Seguin, one of the jurymen, who had been strictly charged by His Honor to listen to no person speaking about the case. Besides this, strong evidence is also in hand against another jurymen. Father Hudon, it seems, came to l'Original and remained there during the two days of the trial, not appearing in court but going around the hotels where the jurymen were billeted and seeking to influence them. His Honor, after considering the matter, dismissed the jury and remanded the prisoners for a new trial.

"Crown Attorney Maxwell deserves the highest praise for bringing to light this deep-load scheme of trying to bias the judgment of jurymen and interfering with the course of justice."

After several years of missionary work in Canada and in the Eastern United States, Dr. Cotey was brought to Louisiana and became the second missionary to the