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The Defection of Mr. Slattery

(The Catholic Mirror, Baltimore.)
The Rev. J. R. Slattery, formerly well-known in Baltimore, where he was for a time superior emeritus of the St. Joseph's Society for Negro Missions in this city, has renounced his faith.

Those years in Richmond saw the first sloughing off of my priesthood. I entered the capital of "The Lost Cause" with the faith a devout mother had impressed upon her only child.

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criticism had found a disciple, who in accepting them might still be called a good Catholic.

Then come the details of his further readings of schismatic and atheistic writers, at the end of which he forms the following conclusions:

1. In almost every case of a contested point between Catholics and Protestants the latter are right and the former wrong.

2. The widespread use of inventions, forgeries and interpolations on the part of Catholics. The Pseudo-Decretals of Isidore are the main prop of the Papacy.

3. Down the ages what has been condemned at first as heresy becomes later on dogma—e.g., Pelagianism stands condemned, yet the Jesuit teaching on the efficacy of grace is Pelagianism.

4. In some way or other heresies and civil liberty are correlated. The heresies at first ran afloat of the Church, and in former ages of governments also, but in the long run liberty gains the day, and the heresy, its work done, becomes fossilized and useless as church dogma.

There are some further details, more or less nauseating to the average Catholic, of his trend of thought, leading finally to the denial of practically everything of Faith.

Commenting in the Baltimore American, upon Mr. Slattery's article, Rev. William E. Starr, of Corpus Christi, says as follows: "The Rev. J. R. Slattery's renunciation of his priesthood and of the Catholic religion does not in the least surprise me."

"It was in line with his overbearing manner that he undertook to charge the priests and the people of the South with discouraging his labors for the colored people. One would have thought that nothing had ever been done for them until he came to the front."

This was several years before the advent of the Mill Hill Fathers from England. I remember, also, how very distasteful the move was to the old colored people, who had been baptized and brought up in the Cathedral parish and in the old chapel of St. Mary's Seminary.

Any allegation, therefore, of indifference to the work for the colored people is the offspring of a disgruntled man.

Mr. Slattery was and is, I am told, a very wealthy man, and he spent his money without stint, but I have never heard that he was especially fond of personal work among the colored people.

His reasons for discarding the belief in which he was brought up by his good old Irish Catholic mother have in them nothing new.

The Jesuits. Oh, yes, of course, one naturally looks for them to be lugged in upon occasions like this. They are the necessary piece de resistance without which the feast would have no savor.

"They were always most kind and helpful to him in his work, I know well."

One of the most beastly attacks which he has made is that upon St. Mary's Seminary. This institution has been before the people of Baltimore for over 100 years.

Mr. Slattery anticipates clerical ridicule and calumny. He may possess his soul in peace. After the first natural movements of indignation at the unworthiness of his imputations, I can promise him that the clergy of the country will think very little more about him.

Consanguinity and Heredity.

(Catholic Messenger.)

There are not a few people who think that some of the church restrictions with regard to marriage among relatives by blood are founded on something a little better than old fog notions with regard to the possible danger to the offspring of such marriages that has no definite basis in scientific investigation.

As the work will not be readily available to all, though most public libraries will have or can obtain copies of this census report, we have preferred to abstract certain passages which show very clearly the influence of consanguinity in producing congenitally blind and deaf children.

The most significant fact to be derived from these figures given in table XIX, is found in the showing that of the 2,537 blind whose parents were consanguine, 632 or 25 per cent. are congenitally blind, of whom 350 or 55.4 per cent. also have blind relatives of the classes specified, while among the 55,980 who were not so related the number of congenitally blind is but 6.8 per cent., and of these only 1,923 per cent. have blind relatives.

proportion of congenitally deaf among those whose parents were consanguine. The percentage of the congenitally deaf is nearly three times as great among those whose parents were consanguine as among those whose parents were not.

These statistics, far from representing the state of affairs worse than it is, probably minimize it somewhat, for people often refuse to admit such consanguinity, and, as is stated by Dr. Bell in his discussion of the statistics, it is probable that there are not a few of the born blind whose parents were consanguine who either are unaware of that fact or prefer not to state it in the answer to the questions as put to them.

There are now some twenty states in the union in which the marriage of first cousins is forbidden by law, so the extent that such marriages are declared null and void. An attempt was made last year to include such a restriction in a law with regard to marriage and its impediments which failed to pass the last Legislature of New York State.

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