

THE "MONITA SECRETA."

Big Down the Old Slanders Against the Jesuits.

It has been proposed that all charges against the Catholic Church which can be shown to be very old and to have been frequently and conclusively answered and disposed of shall be hereafter "barred out," and forbidden to all persons who may in future engage in religious controversy. If this proposal should ever be adopted it is certain that one of the very first of the old charges to be outlawed and forever thrown out of court, would be the story of the "Monita Secreta" or "Secret Instructions" of the Jesuits.

In 1614 a Pole named Zahorski, (says the *Sacred Heart Review*) who had been dismissed from the Society of Jesus, wrote a book which pretended to be the secret instructions given to the Jesuits for their guidance. The so-called instructions were simply a most extraordinary mass of lies. The author must have reckoned upon the silly readiness of people to believe anything against the Church and the Jesuits, no matter how foolish; other wise he never could have hoped that any one would pay any attention to such unblushing and absurd slanders. According to this precious document the Jesuits were told to do the most wicked and unprincipled and even devilish things, and told, also, to believe and practice the doctrine that it is lawful to do evil that good may come of it.

But Zahorski, having himself been a Jesuit, and knowing that all these things were untrue, knew also that they would be strongly denied and quickly disproved. Accordingly, he provided against this by a stroke of really devilish cunning. In the course of his pretended instructions he put this injunction: "If this should fall into the hands of strangers, let it be positively denied." So if any Jesuit should say: "But this is a forgery, and a lie. The Jesuits have no secret instructions." "Oh, of course you deny it. Why, that is precisely what the instructions tell you to do." The book was proved to be a forgery almost as soon as published. Moreover the Jesuits demanded a legal inquiry, and in 1618, after a long investigation, the book was condemned. The author of the forgery repented of it before his death.

From that day to this the "Monita Secreta" keeps bobbing up, now here and now there, in the hands of zealous anti-Catholic controversialists. We say "in their hands," but in fact the document is rarely in their hands. They have heard or read about it, but singularly enough they never seem to have heard that it was disproved, solemnly branded as a forgery and utterly discredited for all honest people more than two hundred and fifty years ago.

The Jesuits are a religious order in the Catholic Church. The doctrines and practices, the teachings and principles of the Catholic Church, down to the minutest detail, are as open as the day; there is no more concealment about them or anything connected with them than there is about the Westminster Confession of the Presbyterians or the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England. For five cents, or even for a penny, any one may possess our catechism, from which our children learn their faith, and are grounded in our morality. The writings of our theologians are free to all who wish to study them, and in fact they furnish the ethical code, the great body of moral principles and practical rules of life of the Christian world of today as of former ages. Our churches are open and our teachers are audible.

And the one great, ever-present, constant, and all-pervading idea in this whole scheme of teaching is that the greatest evil in the world, or in the universe, is sin. To accuse the Catholic Church, or to say of commanding, and teaching men to commit sin, - but of winking at it or remotely encouraging it, or of ever, under any possibly conceivable circumstances allowing it, or giving the faintest permission or appearance of sanction to it, is to be guilty of an absurdity, a most silly and inexcusable error, and a most gross and cruel and heinous slander and injustice. As the Jesuits are a Catholic order, existing in the Catholic Church, and engaged in educating Catholic youth, and exercising the functions of the Catholic ministry, the same words apply to them. Their constitution is for sale here and there. It may be read and studied at any time by anybody who cares to take the trouble. There is nothing secret about their instructions. They cannot give or take permission to commit sin, any more than other Catholics.

This particular piece of slander, we maintain, has passed all reasonable limits; it is now time to "ring the bell on it." Hereafter, in view of all the facts, and of the great number of times that it has been completely answered and disproved this country and abroad, it is fair to say that hereafter when anyone shall advance the "Monita Secreta" in an argument to prove the wickedness of "Rome" and the Jesuits, the fact should be sufficient to prove him either dishonest and unprincipled in controversy, or so careless about his charges, and so negligent in looking up his authorities and sources as to merit virtually the same reproach.

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ENGLISH CATHOLIC INGRATITUDE.

The English Catholic Club That Black-balled the Liberator.

In the current number of the *Dublin Review*, Father Amherst, S. J., brings to a conclusion his interesting series of articles on the Cisalpine Club. This club was established in England toward the close of the last century and continued to exist till the year 1830, when it was voluntarily dissolved. The association embraced in its membership the leading Catholic noblemen and gentlemen of England, and its title is a sufficient indication of the flabbiness of their Catholic principles, though, it must be admitted, that the opinions of some of the members were quite as ultramontane as those of their brethren on the other side of the Irish Sea. The reason for introducing the "Cisalpinism" is to show how their conclusion on a conspicuous occasion points a moral, and enables us to understand the attitude assumed by their descendants of today toward their fellow-Catholics of the neighboring island. At a meeting of the Cisalpine Club held on the 24th of May 1829 - precisely one month after the royal assent was given to the Catholic Emancipation Act - O'Connell, who had been proposed for membership, was blackballed in the hall. Of which generous act Father Amherst writes: "A stranger, walking down St. James street that evening, but one who happened to know what was going on at the 'Thatched House Tavern,' would have supposed that the Catholic gentlemen of England were going to admit into club by acclamation the man to whom they were chiefly indebted for the passing of the great Act - the man who might have excluded them from the emancipation which he had won, and left them to fight their own battle for liberty. But they were too good to do that. They chose their Liberator from the company." I am surprised that Father Amherst does not put at least one note of exclamation after the word company.

Such was the last act of the Cisalpine Club previous to its dissolution. It was surely time it ceased to cumber the ground. In reference to his being blackballed, O'Connell wrote as follows to a friend in Dublin: "Have you heard of the conduct of the English Catholics toward me? They have been much divided among themselves and were soon all about to renounce me. I agreed to be proposed into it, when, behold, they met the day before yesterday and blackballed me! I believe there are many of them highly indignant at the conduct of the rest, and at all events I heartily forgive them all. But it was a strange thing for them to do. It was a conical testimonial of my services in emancipating them. It would be well perhaps if I could unemanicuate some of them." It certainly was a strange - a very strange thing - of Catholic gentlemen to blackball their Liberator; and it is almost equally strange to find their descendants in our own day sit, with undisturbed placidity, on English platforms, and hear the Catholic Bishops and priests of Ireland roundly and soundly abused for supporting Irish self-government - and listen, too, without a word of protest to Tory bigots denounce Home Rule as Rome Rule. How true is the saying that, "history repeats itself."

THE SYMBOL I. H. S.

Non-Catholics and even some Catholics are at a loss to explain the monograms, I. H. S. Like many other signs and characters these letters have a meaning quite different from what people commonly attribute to them. It is an interesting story to learn the reason why they are used by the Church and in particular by the Society of Jesus.

In the early ages of the Church Christians had to be very careful of the way in which they talked in public; for if they uttered a word to the effect that they were Christians, they were often seized and tortured to death. Similarly, they had frequent recourse to signs and symbols to preserve their holy things from profanation. A pagan, for example, meeting the image of a fish in the catacombs or elsewhere, carved in stone or wood, would never suspect a religious meaning. Yet it was the emblem of our Lord Himself. The letters of the Greek word meaning a fish, I-ch-th-u-s, are the initials of our Lord's title, "Iesus Christus Theus Unus Soter," in English, "Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour."

So it is natural that the holiest of names, the names of which every knee in heaven, on earth and under the earth should bend, should at the same time appear frequently and yet be preserved from profanation by the most mysterious of symbols.

Now, IHSOUS is the holy name in Greek capital letters, the H. being simply the long E of the English, and I. H. S. was simply the abbreviated form used by the early Christians. In former times it was also occasionally abbreviated, I. H. C., with a line over the top signifying that it an abbreviated form. These letters are the I, the long E or Eta, and the S or Sigma of the Greek. The Greek S of the early times was written in a variety of ways, often like the S or C of our time. The emblem traveled from Greece to Rome, and was afterwards ignorantly written in Roman letters, I. H. S. The line of abbreviation over the H was soon forgotten, unless the cross sometimes set over the H is to be considered as replacing it.

The two interpretations, I have suffered and Jesus Homini Salvator

are pious indeed but unwarranted by history. The symbol is Greek, and is simply the three first letters of the name of Jesus in that language. It is for this reason that the Jesuits, or members of the Society of Jesus, chose it for their emblem.

A Franciscan monk once playfully interpreted the letters for a Jesuit as "Iesule Habent Satis (The Jesuit have enough)." "Yes," the Jesuit answered, laughing, provided you then read the letters backwards, viz., Si Habent Iesum (If they have Jesus).

HEROINES OF THE CHURCH.

St. Catherine of Genoa - Sept. 15. Born 1447; died, 1510.

Saint Catherine of Genoa, although one of the most remarkable saints of the Church of God, was nevertheless one who has left footprints in which any pious woman can walk with ease. She wrote much on the sufferings of purgatory, which torments God was pleased to allow her bodily to experience during several years of her life. In her writings she gives us a most minute account of the anguish which those holy souls, who assure us that, endure, it is accompanied by such a perfect resignation to the holy will of God that they would submit to even greater suffering if thereby they could make satisfaction to His divine justice.

But, apart from the miraculous favors which God shed upon her, her life is one well worthy of imitation. At the age of sixteen she married, at the command of her father, a nobleman named Giuliano Adorno. He was anything but a model husband, his harsh and gloomy temper rendering her life one of continual distress. Moved by the love of that God whom she had ever most tenderly loved, Catherine endeavored to conform herself in all things to her harsh companion's will; and although his impudence reduced them both to poverty, she bore patiently with him and redoubled her prayers for his conversion.

The first five years of her married life Giuliano would not permit her any intercourse with the world, but she became so melancholy that the next five she spent in worldly pleasures. God then inspired His love so deeply upon her soul that she never after returned to these vanities. Her husband became very ill and was so impatient that Catherine despaired of his conversion. One day she left the sick room and prayed most fervently for him that our Lord would be pleased to turn his heart from things of earth and fix all his thoughts on heaven. On her return she found him so calm and patient that she knew her prayer had been heard. After Giuliano's death, she devoted herself entirely to her divine Love, and the remainder of her life was one long miracle of love and suffering.

After her death her body remained incorrupt, and many miracles were performed at her tomb.

WORDS OF THE SAINT.

"The source of all suffering is either original or actual sin."

"Oh! what peril attaches to sin wilfully committed."

"God is all mercy, and His open arms are ever extended to receive us into His glory."

If by repentance the souls in purgatory could purify themselves, a moment would suffice to cancel their whole debt, so overwhelming would be the force of the contrition produced by the clear vision they have of the magnitude of every obstacle which hinders them from God, their love and their final end."

"It is a soul retaining the slightest stain were to draw near to God in the beatific vision, it would be to her a more grievous injury and inflict more suffering than purgatory itself."

A SAN JOSE.

Chicago's First Priest.

Father St. Cyr, the first priest stationed in Chicago, arrived there, May, 1833, just sixty years ago, and found a Catholic population of about 200 souls, consisting chiefly of French Canadians, a few Americans, one German and several Irish families, says *Church Progress*. Land was donated for the first Catholic church at the corner of Lake and State streets, and the church was dedicated under the title of "St. Mary of the Lake." It was the nucleus of Chicago's diocese, a Catholic organization which today numbers over 500,000 souls.

Father St. Cyr was long a priest of the diocese of St. Louis. He was ordained in this city by Bishop Rosati in 1833. He was for a time stationed here in St. Louis, in Potot and St. Genevieve, where he lost his sight. He was afterwards chaplain to the Sisters of St. Joseph, Carondelet.

He lost his sight just as he was leaving the altar in 1832. This was a great deprivation to him, as very few were as devoted to reading as was he.

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Mrs. Wm. Stewart, Campbellville, Ont.

MOOTING A NEW CALENDAR.

In some of the German papers a change has been suggested and is being strongly urged for a curious modification of the Calendar with the object of simplifying it. To make clear the nature of the proposed change, it will be useful first to say a few words on that now employed, which is the Gregorian Calendar.

It was instituted by Pope Gregory XIII., who appointed that the 5th of October, 1582, of the calendar then in use should be called the 15th, and that the centennial years which are not multiples of 400 should not be leap years. Thus 1600 was a leap year, but 1700, 1800, 1900, were not to be reckoned as leap years; thus A. D. 2000 will be the next centennial leap-year.

The difficulty to be overcome was that the time of the earth's revolution around the sun is 365 days, 5 hours, 48 min., 49.6 sec. On this period the succession of the seasons and the length of the days and nights depend throughout the year, yet on account of the minutes and seconds which occur it was difficult to make a calendar which in the course of ages would keep the correspondence between the days of the year and the seasons; that is to say, so that the Equinoxes and the Solstices should continue to occur on the same day.

The Equinoxes are the times when the sun crosses the Equinoctial, making the days and nights equal throughout the world. The Vernal Equinox occurs usually on the 21st March, the Autumnal on the 23rd September. The summer Solstice is on 21st June, when the sun is at the highest point north of the Equinoctial, and we have in consequence the longest day and shortest night. The winter Solstice is on the 21st December when the sun is at the furthest point south of the Equinoctial, producing for the Northern Hemisphere, the shortest day and the longest night.

The Julian Calendar, which is still in use in Russia, and which Pope Gregory XIII.'s calendar corrected, made the ordinary years of 365 days each, and every fourth year, leap year, with 366 days. The average year was thus made equal to 365 days, 6 hours, being 11 minutes, 10.38 seconds too much, as compared with the period of the earth's revolution given above; and when Pope Gregory made the correction, this small annual difference had accumulated so that the Vernal Equinox happened on the 11th March instead of the 21st, as had been the case at the time of the Council of Nice, held in A. D. 325, when the manner of keeping Easter was finally decided.

The average Gregorian year differs from the actual revolution of the earth by only 22.88 seconds, so that it will take more than 3,860 years to produce a discrepancy of one day.

It was chiefly for the purpose of preserving the uniformity in the observance of Easter that the Pope made this change, as Easter is celebrated on the first Sunday after the full moon that occurs on or next after the day of the Vernal Equinox, and all the other movable feasts depend upon the day when Easter is kept.

The Gregorian calendar was a scientific triumph, and was adopted very soon by all Catholic States, owing to its solution of a palpable inconvenience, but the Protestant States of Europe were slow in adopting an improvement recommended by a Pope. The Protestant German States adopted it at various dates from 1700 to 1774. England made the change in 1752 by calling the 3rd of September the 14th, as the error then had reached 11 days. It now amounts to 12 days, which is the difference between the Russian, or Julian, calendar and ours, or the Gregorian, at the present time.

The new proposition is: 1. To make each quarter of a year, say January, February and March, etc., consist of 91 days, the months to contain 31, 30, 30 days in succession, except that one day will be added to the last month of the year, say December. This will make the year consist still of 365 days. 2. In leap-year, one day to be added to the sixth month, say June.

It is evident that except in leap-year, the quarter years would to the 13th of December be exactly like each other as regards the correspondence of days of the week with the days of the month.

3. The year, to begin on the 21st of December, as now reckoned, the day of the Winter Solstice. The effect of this would be to bring the Solstices approximately to the first day of the 1st and 7th months, say, January and July, and the Equinoxes to the first day of, say, April and October.

These proposals, especially the first and second, tend towards simplicity, and we think they would not interfere seriously with the calendar of the Church, as the immovable feasts could be readily adapted to them. It is a question whether in this utilitarian age Governments will adopt them, and it is not quite sure that the irregularities of the months now are such as to require greatly this simplification. But there are two other propositions in connection with this matter which deserve the greatest care and consideration before being adopted. These are:

4. It is proposed that the 1st day of the first month of each year, say January, shall be always called Sunday, the other days succeeding as usual. It would be made easy to do this by giving to the 31st of (say) June, in leap year, and to the 31st of (say) December each year a new name expressive of intercalation. Then every

year's calendar would be exactly the same as that of every other year, the leap-year's calendar being excepted, which would only differ therefrom by the additional day in June.

5. It is proposed to put Easter on a fixed day - 1st April - and to set the other movable feasts in accordance with this change.

Easter Sunday is especially a historical and religious monument of the greatest importance, and its date in each year depends upon the old Jewish Calendar, which in turn depends upon the movement of the moon, as well as on the earth's revolution. The historical connection of that great feast with the Jewish Pasch would be almost destroyed by this proposed change, so that we do not think this feature would be accepted, at least in its ecclesiastical computation. In this regard the benefit of the change would be more than counterbalanced by the loss.

The change as regards the Sunday would be partially open to the same objection, though not to the same extent.

An Irish "Grand Old Man."

A correspondent of the *London Daily News* draws attention to an interesting fact in connection with the recent great demonstration for Home Rule in the English capital. Among the speakers on the platform, presided over by Mr. T. D. Sullivan, he says, no one was more cordially received than the Rev. Thomas Smyth, a non-subscribing Presbyterian (Unitarian) minister from near Belfast.

The reverend clergyman, though in his eighty-fifth year, preaches every Sunday regularly. Mr. Smyth comes of a family who have paid the penalty for their devotion to Ireland. His uncle, the Rev. John Smyth, of Kilrea, was the leader of the "United Irishmen" of County Derry in '98, for which he suffered a long imprisonment in the "floating Bastilles" in Belfast Lough, graphically described by his comrade in misfortune, Dr. Dickson, in his well-known "Narrative" (Dublin, 1812), and was deprived of his "Regium Donum" by his time-serving colleagues in the Synod of Ulster at the instigation of Lord Castlereagh. For complicity in the same "rising" another uncle (William) was condemned to death by a drumhead court martial, but, thanks to a friendly enemy and a fleet horse, he escaped. A deep ravine, over which he leaped his horse, was shown in wonder for many years afterwards by the peasantry of County Derry. This Smyth lost his wife when the ship in which he was escaping to America was attacked by the English man-of-war that afterwards captured the vessel in which Wolf Tone and his companions were, off Lough Swilly. Mr. Smyth, whose two sons and a son-in-law, professional men in London, and all ardent Nationalists, took part in the London demonstration, is hale and hearty, and bids as fair to reach his century as his contemporary, the other "Grand Old Man."

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