



Senate Reading Room

"AD MAJOREM DEI GLORIAM."

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THE PROHIBITION PLEBISCITE.

Church Record.

The end of this month will see the great question decided as to whether Prohibition is to be enforced by Law throughout the Dominion.

There is much to be said against Prohibition. 1. It is interfering with a person's liberty: but it may be fairly answered that that liberty has been so abused by many that they deserve to have it interfered with. Those who are in the habit of using it aright will willingly suffer some inconvenience and curtailment of what is to them an innocent indulgence, for the sake of the community.

2. It may be urged that a man is the more moral man and stronger by resisting temptation and getting the better of it, than he is by having the temptation removed altogether; but we reply that we have no right deliberately to place temptation in any man's way, and we hold that this is exactly what is done by multiplying saloons and drinking places; nor do we think that the moralists who advocate as above sufficiently take into account the power of heredity.

3. It is urged that Prohibition has been a failure in most places. It rather depends upon what is meant by failure. Where the law has not been properly administered it has of course failed. Few laws work perfectly and many are evaded to a greater or less degree, and we must be prepared for a certain amount of failure, and probably a considerable amount of deceit and guile and drinking on the sly, and all sorts of clever evasions.

But can anything be worse than the present state? The brokenhearted wives of habitual drunkards, the ruined homes, the misery and degradation, all cry out for an end to the present system. The lads tempted into the saloons, tempted to drink at the bars by their elders, and so led to have a taste and desire for strong drinks. The fiery spirit ever increasing the thirst, the selling of liquor to those already inebriate, the custom of standing "drinks for the crowd," and the multitude of evils which we can easily think of in connection with the present system, make one desire most intensely that this state of things shall end!

Prohibition is not to our mind the ideal state of things. We look upon alcoholic drinks as not evil in themselves, and when properly used conducive of good.

A properly regulated system in the ideal: possibly the system which holds in Sweden, the Gothenburg System, is the best in practice.

But if we cannot have the ideal, the best, let us have what is certainly infinitely better than what exists at present. Prohibition seems the best attainable

just now. We do not think it will prevail for very long, but it will sweep away the present system, and make it possible to introduce afterwards something after the manner of the Gothenburg System. We hope indeed that Prohibition will carry at the polls on Sept. 29th.

PROTESTANT CONTROVERSY.

Sacred Heart Review (Boston.)

Sir Walter Scott is sometimes said to have been, in Great Britain, and even beyond it, the father of the reaction towards Anglo-Catholicism, and indirect towards Roman Catholicism. No such results, assuredly were in his thoughts. It was not a religious, but a purely antiquarian and romantic instinct, that has made his pages alive, as with kings and knights, so with bishops and abbots. Of the inner soul of religion he knew little, and therefore little of the soul of Catholic Christianity. Lord Tennyson's single short poem of "Sir Galadad" has, in my judgment, more of the inner soul of Catholic Christianity in it than the whole of Sir Walter taken together. Tennyson was not only a greater scholar and a deeper poet, he was also a deeper philosopher and a far more deeply religious man. Scott's temper was that of cheerful, healthy secularism. He has, indeed, created one nobly religious character, Jeanie Deans. Yet this shows rather outward appreciation and vivid national sympathy. So also, in "Old Mortality," by virtue of the same national consciousness, he has thrown out into strong relief the spiritual heroism underlying the grotesqueness and violence of the Covenanters. Yet—which is the surest token of an unspiritual temper—in his own time a divergence from the conventionally accepted forms of religion was apt to be found intolerable to him. He accepted Presbyterianism, as the established religion of Scotland; Episcopalianism, as being the church of the aristocracy; Roman Catholicism, as having the right of prior occupancy, and being intertwined with so much of the earlier history of Scotland, and as being the church of various high nobles and chieftains. On the other hand, when he discovered that a builder whose intelligence and superiority in his art he greatly admired was a Baptist lay-preacher, he never spoke of him again. Had he lived eleven years longer, he would probably have been deeply disgusted and repelled by the spiritual grandeur of that Free Church secession which so profoundly delighted Cardinal Newman, and made him augur that Christ had great things in mind for His cause and people in western Europe, when those whose apprehensions of truth were in his view so deeply defective, could yet be moved to such heroic self-sacrifice for Christ's supremacy and crown.

This same unspirituality Scott shows in his incapacity to apprehend a true monastic vocation. A monk is to him either a jolly voluptuary, like Abbot Boniface and the prior of Jorvaulx, or a mere zealot for the aggrandizement of his order, and of the Church as the amplification of his order. Abbot Eustace seems hardly to rise above this point. It will not do to say that monasticism was antiquated at the date of "The Monastery," for Loyola, Xavier, and Francis Borgia, Philip Neri, Las Casas and Zumarraga, Brebeuf and his brethren, St. Theresa and St. Vincent de Paul were yet to come. He neither understands a Bernard, an Anselm, a Francis and a Catherine of Siena in the past, nor the great names that were yet to come after Melrose and Dryburgh were overthrown.

Worse yet occurs in "Rob Roy." There Francis Osbaldistone, evidently expressing the author's own mind, asks his cousin Rashleigh, who had been intended for the priesthood, but who had an offer from his uncle of business advancement, how any sane man could hesitate to prefer the latter. In 1715, the assumed date of "Rob Roy," English Roman Catholicism was deeply depressed. An English priest could only look forward to a life of obscurity and straitness, even if he should escape positive persecution. To Scott it seemed incredible that a man of education and talents, unless he were of unsound mind, could think of embracing such a lot, except from pure necessity. The notion of a vocation, although an elementary Christian truth, seems to have been hardly more intelligible to him than to the Rev. Sydney Smith. Rashleigh Osbaldistone, it is true, expresses only ambitious and wordly aims, even for the priesthood; yet it is not this worldliness for which his cousin remonstrates with him. It is only for what he esteems its fantastical direction.

In this contemptuous declaration in "Bob Roy," Scott's inveterate secularism of temper reaches its lowest point. I remember nothing so offensive in any other of the Waverley novels. Of course this does not spring out of any specific prepossession against Catholicism. Scott would have been equally contemptuous, or even more contemptuous, of a man of parts who had chosen to become an Independent or Baptist minister, having a good opening in business, or an invitation to take a good living in the Establishment. His motives of opposition were entirely different from those which animated the expression of various Protestant organs some years ago, when it was known that one of General Sherman's sons was bent on entering the priesthood, and it was rumored that this purpose was distasteful to his father. We were then exhorted to express our abhorrence of such a contempt of pa-

rental right. Had the young man been minded to become a Methodist or Presbyterian minister, we should have been called to admire his heroism of self-consecration under unfriendly circumstances. He would have been viewed as a second Daniel in the lion's den. Had he been opposing the will of two Catholic parents, his determination would have been praised as sublime. Had he had a mother of his own persuasion, encouraging him in his purpose, these editors would have become suddenly alive to the indisputable truth, insisted on by Catholic writers, that in matters of religion the mother has equal rights with the father over the education of her children, and where she is an active Christian and the father indifferent, superior rights. Yet, so soon as it was a Catholic youth, wishing to enter the Christian ministry in his own Church, he suddenly became a rebel against his father, and his sympathetic mother a rebel against her husband.

Which of these two forms of opposition to an intention of entering the priesthood is the more reprehensible? Intrinsically, doubtless, Scott's. Mere secularism is far more ignoble than zeal, even inequitable and distorted. Yet we can not be too sharply and perseveringly held to the obligation of "weighing things with one measure." Ought not a Christian to wish to serve the kingdom of God? Assuredly. Is not the ministry the best accredited form of doing this? Assuredly. Can a Christian man wish to enter the ministry otherwise than in the form which to him is valid? Certainly not. Would not Protestants be highly indignant with Catholics who should deny that the ultimate motive of a Protestant Christian in entering the Protestant ministry is the same as that of a Catholic Christian in entering the Catholic ministry? Of course they would, and would have a right to be. Assume on either side invalidity of orders, and does this restrain the blessing of God on a holy purpose, actuated in the form supposed to be agreeable to His will? Certainly not. Apply this now to the young Sherman and his mother, and does it not imply a condemnation of their Protestant censors? Assuredly. Yet I have asked a Protestant minister these questions, or their equivalents, and when I came to the last, my answer was a positive and peremptory: "No!" Neither equity nor logic held where they would benefit Papists. We shall next be putting up prayers for a repeal of the law of gravitation, where it works for their advantage.

CHARLES C. STARBUCK.

Andover, Mass.

Bump—The year 1900 will be a bad year.

Hump—why?

Bump—Oh, it is so naughty.

AN AGNOSTIC CONVERTED.

Col. Lew A. Clark was received into the Catholic Church a few day ago in San Antonio, Tex. Col. Clarke is well known in the United States, both because of his career as a journalist and on account of having been one of the most violent champions of the Know-Nothings. His conversion at the age of 73 is due in great part, as he says, to the charity and the examples of a holy life that he has seen in the daughters of St. Ursula.—Ex.

HOLDS AN ARTERY FOR THREE HOURS UNDER FIRE.

Medical Record.

During the recent campaign on the Indian frontier, one of the line officers, Lieutenant Ford, was dangerously wounded in the shoulder and was bleeding to death from the bullet having cut the main artery, when Surgeon-Lieutenant Hugo came to his aid. The fire was too hot to permit lights to be used to examine the wound, and there was no cover; nevertheless, the surgeon struck a match and examined the wound. The match went out amid a splutter of bullets, which kicked up the dust all round, but by its uncertain light he saw the nature of the injury, and seized the bleeding artery, and, as no ligature was available, he remained for three hours under fire holding the vessel between his finger and thumb. When at length it seemed that the enemy had broken into camp, he picked up the officer, who was unconscious from loss of blood, and bore him into a place of safety without relaxing his hold of the artery. For this magnificent act of heroism the surgeon received the decoration of the Distinguished Service Order, which the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL says "in these days is showered about after a campaign almost as liberally as a mention in dispatches." After reciting the story, our contemporary is moved to add: "Now, we say it with all deliberation, none of the many deeds of valor done by our soldiers in the Indian campaign equals that of this young medical officer, either in courage or in devotion to duty. Fighting men have the fierce joy of combat, and the excitement engendered by 'the pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war,' to stimulate and support them. Non-combatants have none of these adventitious aids to heroism. They must be obscurely brave without the cheers of comrades, and they must be content to fall without glory. Theirs is the very highest and truest courage, and it is deplorable that military etiquette or official pedantry should be allowed to stand in the way of its being properly rewarded. If ever any one deserved the Victoria Cross it is the man who did the splendid deed above recorded."