

A SOUTHERN TRIBUTE TO A PITTSBURG HERO-PRIEST.

In the columns of the Morning Herald of Lexington, Ky., date of January 26, appeared a splendid and beautiful tribute to the young Pittsburg priest whose sad death from smallpox, contracted in the performance of his duty, was chronicled in this paper last week. The article is from the pen of Col. W. C. P. Breckenridge, son of Robert J. Breckenridge, so eminent in the Presbyterian church, and demonstrates the fact that heroism, however humble and unheralded, finds an echo in every heroic heart. Col. Breckenridge wrote as follows:—

We hear much of this being the material age of the world—that the idol of this generation is the almighty dollar and for it alone will men strive and starve, and, if need be, die; that selfishness rules and heroism is sneered at as obsolete. There never was a grosser and more gratuitous falsehood. The world has never known a more heroic, unselfish and courageous age than this in which we have the unspeakable good fortune to live and act. The heroism of this day is so universal, so common and so often exhibited that it really makes no impression upon us as we read of it in the daily papers or see of it in our daily lives. It may seem an exaggeration to say that to-day every one is in nature and possibility a hero; and yet it would not be far wrong. There is not a day in which numerous acts of daring heroism are not performed. Who ever hears of a cowardly engineer, fireman, brakeman or conductor on a railroad train? Where has a pilot or officer of a steamship failed to risk his life? When volunteer physicians, nurses or helpers are called, was there lately ever a failure to fill the call? We speak not of soldiers and officers—for these are trained to face death—but in the plainest, commonest walks of life every man meets unexpected danger with coolness, courage and unquestioning duty. Firemen, policemen, nurses—men and women of humble means and meager wages accept their employment with the tacit stipulation that they are to die well if death confronts them in their line of duty.

As we were half-doing over the columns of the Pittsburg Times our eyes somewhat lazily fell upon a mere local statement that Father Martin had died of smallpox; we had never heard of Father Martin and cared nothing for him or his life or death, but reading somewhat photographically—as we have the habit of doing—the statement was further that he was a young, eloquent, beloved Catholic priest, among whose parishioners virulent smallpox suddenly appeared; these needed his personal, his priestly, his spiritual ministrations. Warned of his danger, remonstrated with by those who loved him, he still went straight forward in the line of duty—leaving to his Master the result. From house to house this young and vigorous priest—to whom life promised so much and for whom the future held so much—went and at the bedside held the cross of the Master; soothed the pathway to the grave, opened the doors to supernal glories and gave to the perturbed and anxious soul divine peace. And then laid himself down to die and without a murmur accepted the cross which his duty earned.

It was a simple story simply told; a mere local item in the local column of a daily paper, casually read the day of publication in the crowded street cars, in the busy counting rooms, around the comfortable hearthstones of the well-to-do and happy; and who was stirred by the recital of this splendid and divine heroism? If he had played the coward and sneal every one would have read the item telling of his cowardice and read with interest. But duty and heroism are so common, so universal, that if any mental comment was made it was most probably, "Why of course; all priests would thus act," and thus unconsciously the noblest tribute be paid to our divine humanity and our supernal courage. Short service was vouchsafed to this young priest; brief life here allotted to this eloquent preacher; soon was he summoned from earthly toil and the ambition and hopes of a noble calling and superb endowment, and cut off in

the very dawn of his day. His name will soon be forgotten; the record of his sacrifice will be covered with undisturbed dust; but the world is richer, man is nobler and the very heavens diviner that such a life was thus ended—and such immortality thus commenced.

CHRISTIAN DEMOCRACY.

Text of the Pope's Recent Address. The following is the full text of the address recently delivered to the cardinals by the Holy Father on the subject of Christian Democracy.

Christian Democracy has become to-day, as you fully understand, a fact of no slight importance. To this action, so entirely consonant to the spirit of our time and to the needs which called it forth, we gave sanction and impulse, defining clearly and distinctively its scope, its method, and its limitations; so that, if in this regard any one make a mistake, he can not allege as an excuse that our authoritative guidance was wanting. But speaking in general of those who have become engaged in this work, Italians as well as others, it is undeniable that they labor therein with excellent zeal and notable results; nor may we allow to pass unnoticed the active part that hundreds of noble-hearted young men have taken in it. We have encouraged the clergy also to enter this same field of action; for, in truth, there is no enterprise of sincere charity, judicious and beneficial, which is foreign to the vocation of the Catholic priesthood. And is not this true and most opportune charity to apply oneself with care and disinterestedness to the betterment of the spiritual condition as well as the material circumstances of the multitude? The maternal love of the Church for mankind is wide as the paternity of God; but, nevertheless, faithful to her origin, and mindful of the Divine example, she has been always accustomed to devote herself by predilection, to the lowly, to the afflicted, to the disinherited of fortune. When it is sincerely and constantly animated by the spirit of this universal mother of peoples, Christian Democracy need have no fear of failing in its scope; nor need any one have fear of the name when he knows that the thing is good. Understood as the Church understands it, the democratic concept, not only accords marvellously with the dictates of revelation and religious belief, but has even been born of Christianity and educated by it, and it is by the preaching of the Gospel that the nations have received it. Athens and Rome knew it not, before they heard the Divine Voice which said to men, "You are all brothers, and of one Father who is in heaven."

Outside of this democracy, which is called and which is Christian, there is a seditious and Godless democracy, which pursues other ideals and walks by other ways; and bitter are the days which it is preparing for the states which hatch it in their bosoms and caress it. But our popular Christian movement, extending itself to the same objects, is an antagonistic force which bars the way of success for the other, and is frequently able to anticipate its work. If our Christian movement does nothing more than contest the field with socialistic democracy, and circumscribe the pernicious influences of this latter, it will have rendered a service, by no means unimportant, to social order and Christian polity.

THE BIBLE SOCIETIES.

Why the Catholic Church Opposes Them.

Why is it that the Catholic Church is so hostile to the efforts of the Bible societies? Is it dislike for God's Holy Word? Every Catholic knows that such is not, such cannot be the case. The Catholic Church has too much love and veneration for all that comes from its Creator and Redeemer. The Catholic Church loves God's Holy Word too much to expose it to the nameless horror and frightful indignities to which it has been subjected by the action of the societies in distributing millions of copies throughout the world.

Of the results of this action I will give a few examples. Archdeacon Grant in his Bampton Lectures, c.

3, p. 93, tells us: "The cause of the eagerness which has sometimes been evinced to obtain the sacred volume cannot be traced to a thirst for the Word of Life, but to secular purposes, the unhallowed uses to which the Holy Word of God, left in their hands, has been turned, and which are absolutely shocking to any Christian feeling." "They have been seen," says Dr. Wells Williams, "on the counters of shops in Macao, cut in two for wrapping up medicines and fruits, which the shopman would not do with the worst of his own books." "They are employed," said Bishop Courraze, "to roll round tobacco and bacon." Whole cases of them were sold by auction and purchased, says another eye-witness, at the price of old paper, chiefly by the shoemakers, grocers and druggists. Mr. Tomlin admits that the Chinese often stole them at night to apply them to domestic purposes, and that some of the missionaries appeared to consider this theft an encouraging proof of their zeal for Divine things. Marchini tells us from actual observation that they are sold by the weight to shoemakers to make Chinese slippers, and then goes on to express his astonishment, because "the English who display so much discernment and accuracy of judgment in other matters," should allow themselves to be the dupes of salaried spectators or visionary enthusiasts.

"How degrading is the idea," says a Protestant writer in the Asiatic Journal (vol. ix. p. 343), "to put into the hands of every Chinese bargeman or illiterate porter a package of tracts, to sell or give away on his journey as he pleases."

So rapid is the consumption of Bibles in the various branches of the retail trade in Hindostan that of the millions circulated it is difficult, except in the capitals, to find so much as the trace of a single copy. This we are told by Captain J. B. Seely in The Wonders of Elora, c. 19, p. 524, second edition. "Many of them have probably gone to the pawnbrokers," said Sir Charles Oakeley, Governor of Madras. In Ceylon they were used for much the same purposes as in India and China.

In New Zealand the Maories, according to Mr. Fox, tore up the Bibles to make wadding for their guns, and even went so far, as Miss Tucker indignantly informs us, as to convert them into New Zealand cartridges. In Africa, on the West Coast at Gaboon, after a grand distribution of Bibles by the missionaries among the negroes, as the sacred book had fallen into the hands of the children, M. Besseux saw the leaves of the Bible converted into pretty kites (Annals of Propagation of Faith, vol. viii., p. 75). Colonel Napier's tale is that the Kaffirs converted lately, to our cost, the missionary Bibles into ball cartridges or wadding. In Tettuan they were thrown into the flames. In Abyssinia, we are told by Mr. Parkyns that "the use to which the many Bibles given away in this country are commonly applied is the wrapping up of snuff and such like undignified purposes." Throughout the Levant, Syria and Armenia, millions of Bibles have been distributed. Many of them have been diligently collected and committed to the flames. An agent of the Biblical society resentfully records that the ecclesiastical authorities "have always strenuously opposed the distribution of the Bible in modern Greek." The Greek Patriarch, too, worried by the aggressions of the missionaries, published an Encyclical Letter in which he not only warned his people against the emissaries of the Bible society, but described them as "satannical heresiarchs from the caverns of hell and the abyss of the Northern Sea, whose object was to proselytize and to foment division and harness their Church and fill it with heresy." He went on to forbid the purchase or use of any translation of the Scriptures made by the missionaries, whether in the Turkish, Servian, Arabian, Bulgarian, Slavonian or other languages. If such an Encyclical had appeared from the Roman Pontiff, how the pulpits of Protestant England would have resounded with declamations against the tyranny of the Papacy!

In Persia the Bibles were torn up in the presence of the missionary

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and trampled in the dirt. At Bas-sora, where Mr. Samuel, the missionary, was nearly torn to pieces the Mahometans, more reverently than the missionary, anxious, as they said themselves, "that a book which they as well as Christians consider sacred might not be trodden under foot, resolved that the volumes should all be thrown into the river, and this order was accordingly executed." Instances of usage such as this might be multiplied ad infinitum. They have cost innumerable sums, says Mr. Marshall, have awakened only the contempt of the few Pagans who read them, have been polluted by the foulest and most degrading uses, and finally consumed as waste paper.—Rome and the Bible, by the Rev. T. Donnelly, S.J.

END OF COERCION IN ERIN.

The land war in Ireland is about drawing to a close and the prisoners serving coercion sentences will soon be liberated. Among them are six members of parliament, viz. William H. K. Redmond, Michael Reddy, Wm. Duffy, John Roche, J. P. Farrell and John O'Donnell, who are expected to take their seats at Westminster on Feb. 17 when parliament will be opened by King Edward if his health permits. The Irish representatives now in prison have been guilty of no crime under British law, and if they had received trial by jury they would not be convicted. Even the judges who sentenced them to terms of imprisonment intimated that they had violated no law, and had they promised to abstain from speaking at public meetings they would have been discharged from custody. But they claimed the right of free speech in their native land and would not abandon that right to escape imprisonment.

During the past year Ireland has been absolutely free from crime. Judges have been the recipients of white gloves in almost every county, and the only charge brought against the best men of the country was that they were creating discontent among the peasantry and keeping the landlords out of their rents. The County of Roscommon, where the United Irish League has made its influence felt, is entirely free from crime. Two weeks ago at the opening of the quarter sessions at Boyle, in that county, Judge O'Connor Morris addressed the grand jury as follows:

"I am happy to tell you that there is no necessity that you should be sworn. There is no business whatever to go before you. I have had the great pleasure of getting a pair of white gloves from the sheriff. I intended to address you at some length, as I wished to address you; but I can only say that, with the exception of the unfortunate De Freyne and Murphy quarrel, of which I spoke at length before, and which I shall not repeat, I think the state of the County Roscommon is very satisfactory. So, good day, gentlemen."

No wonder the Tory government has got tired of coercion in crimeless Ireland and has announced that the ordinary law will be restored and the political prisoners will be set at liberty. On the 1st of February Mr. Redmond was ordered to be released from Tullamore jail, though his sentence would not expire till March. The other members of parliament will soon be released, and in all probability no more of them will ever be incarcerated under a coercion act. A new land bill will be introduced at the coming session which is expected to prove satisfactory to both landlords and tenants. If the government rises to the occasion it has in its power to restore the land to the cultivators thereof. The leading landlords are willing to sell out to the tenants. At a recent conference in Dublin representatives of both landlords and tenants agreed upon certain terms as a basis of settlement which will end the land question for ever is the terms so agreed on by both parties are embodied in the bill. It has been stated that the King favors the passage of a bill that will solve the land problem in Ireland and that he sent Sir Antony Macdonnell to Dublin to prepare it for presentation to parliament. It will soon be known whether the Tory party will settle the land question and enable the Irish people to live happily in their own country. It is better for England as well as Ireland that the question be finally disposed of at the next session of parliament. England has misgoverned Ireland for centuries, and it is high time that she should cease her despotism and turn over a new leaf.—Irish Standard.