Sacred Heart Review.

THE TRUTH ABOUT THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

BY A PROTESTANT THEOLOGIAN.

CCCXCI.

The correspondent of the Springfield Republican, as we have seen, charges "a few persons at Rome," in pursuance of their own selfish interests, which he represents as of the most vulgar and degrading kind — think of such things said of Paul IV, and Pius V. !—with having repeatedly "promoted war."

I have already considered, somewhat at length, the relative amount of justice and of injustice in this accusation as applying to the medieval Popes. I will not repeat here what I have said of the large honor due to various Popes for having encouraged the Romans, the Italians, or the Europeans generally to necessary measures of self-defense against invasion. Of these Popes, from Benedict VIII, to Pius II. this writer chooses to know nothing.

I think, however, that we can hardly repeat too often what is said by that great Protestant prelate and historian, Bishop Stubbs of Oxford, namely, that the Roman arbitrations of those times, in the interests of peace, were commonly wise and just. And certainly we ought not to forget what is said by another great Protestant prelate and scholar, Bishop Westcott of Durham, namely, that the international and intranational papal arbitraments of that time, whether rendered by the more or less worthy Popes, are in large measure so extraordinary wise and right as to lead us to wonder why Roman Catholics have not emphasized them more strongly in arguing for the divine institution of the Papacy.

Of these two attestations, both explicit, and one so emphatic, of two authors whose personal and whose official weight of authority is so great, our writer does not consent to know anything. Read his letter, on which I have been so long commenting, and see if it would not be perfectly just to put this language into his mouth. "I rejoice in iniquity, whatever objection an Apostle may make to this, so long as it is the iniquity of Catholics. On the other hand, like a far more illustrious man than myself, Charles Dickens, I count it almost a sin to rejoice in the truth, if that truth redounds to the advantage of the Catholic religion."

Pius V. is hardly a medieval Pope, yet, as we have seen, he completed the work of the Middle Ages, by destroying the naval power of the Turks. His extraordinary moral and spiritual preeminence added such weight to his high office, that for once he overcame international jealousies, and brought the Catholic navies together. He then precluded intrigues for the chief command by pointing out with decisive finger, as the man sent from God, that young hero, Don John of Austria, unauthentic yet genuine son of the great Emperor. At Lepanto, under the youthful prince's high generalship, the Moslem fleet was nearly annihilated.

It is usually said that the selfishness of the lay sovereigns rendered almost futile this triumph of Don John and Pius V. Stanley Lane Poole, however, takes a juster view of the fact. Of course he acknowledges that the Turkish fleet was soon restored, and that the Turks remained a formidable and dangerous power for another century. In 1684, they had almost seized Vienna. Yet, as Lane-Poole rightly puts it, the conquest of Islam in Europe really began with Lepanto, in 1571. After that the Turks sometimes won and sometimes lost battles, but the spell of coward terror which for centuries they had cast over Christian Europe was broken for ever. They had been conquered, and they might be conquered again. Navarino, in the nineteenth century, is but the sequel of Lepanto, in the sixteenth. The liberation of Greece, which I am always pleased to remember as taking place in 1827, the year of my birth, and which, in later times, has been followed by that of Roumania, of Servia, of Bosnia, of Bulgaria, of Samos, of Crete, and is doubtless about to be followed by that of Macedonia, all this is but the continuation of the work begun by the canonized Pope and the worthily glorified young Hapsburg hero, to which it is pleasing to add the memory of immortal Cervantes, who lost the use of a hand in the fight.

To come back now to the relations of the Popes to the religious wars of the sixteenth and the seventeenth century. I am not yet prepared to state the fact as to President White's declaration, that Pius V. violated the sanctity of treaties, in order to rekindle civil war in France. Yet Dr. White can hardly expect us to take his statements at first hand after having extolled as veracious a writer whom Ranke barely abstains from calling a liar, whose credit he shows to be largely owing to his use of authorities which no one was permitted to see but himself, and which, after he had consulted them, disappeared (I do not know whether by chance or of set purpose), whom he shows up as a blunderer, and whom he distinctly charges with settled hostility of purpose towards the Popes. Yet Ranke is not only a thorough first hand historian, but a pronounced Protestant.

However, the fact is doubtless as the eminent ambassador has stated it, that Pius V. protested against a treaty concluded between the Huguenots and the French Catholics, and succeeded in breaking it. Yet this does not warrant the charge that he violated the sanctity of treaties. No man can be charged with perfidy in breaking a treaty, who, on his own avowed and settled principles, has never admitted the force of it. Pius the Fifth assuredly could not any more admit the Divine right of Protestantism to exist than Pius the Tenth can acknowledge it now, or than a Trinitarian church, of any persuasion, can admit the Divine right of a Unitarian church to exist. Nor could Pius V., in 1570, acknowledge, as Pius X., in 1906 may, that Protestantism, having now maintained itself for nearly four centuries, and having become a settled element of Christendom, has gained a human right to exist, and may lawfully be made a party to conventions concluded with Catholic powers, or with the Pope himself, Gregory XVI., for instance, protected the worship and the property rights of the foreign Protestants at Rome. All this would have been impossible to Pius V., for in his time Protestantism was as yet inchoate undetermined, uncertain of its own power to maintain itself against the advance of the Catholic nations.

An illustration may serve. I understand that until past the middle of the seventeenth century insurgents were not acknowledged as having the right to send a flag of truce. Now had General Grant, in our war, shot the bearer of a white flag from General Lee, he would of course have been guilty of an execrable breach of public faith. Whereas, assuming this statement as to the seventeenth century to be true, had Charles I. shot the bearer of a flag of truce from Cromwell, he would have acted most imprudently, and therefore, very censurably, but he would have been guilty of no sacrilege or perfidy. Even so Urban VIII., in the next century after St. Pius V., expressed his belief that this great Pope did not sufficiently apprehend that a new order was setting in, and therefore used methods which were becoming anachronistic, and which therefore leave an unhappy impression on the mind of posterity. Yet it never occurred to Urban to accuse his canonized predecessor of having procured the breach of a treaty the force of which he himself had previously acknowledged. Of this I do not suppose that Dr. White himself accuses Pius. Yet only this would warrant a charge of having violated the sanctity of treaties.

I am glad to see that the eminent Catholic writer, Mr. W. S. Lilly, has finally receded from his assertion, that Pius V. planned the assassination of Elizabeth. He was rather obstinate in maintaining it. Said he: Do not the Bollandist Fathers say: *Sanctus Pius V. volebat Elizabeth e medio tollere.* "St. Pius V. wished to remove Elizabeth from the midst?" What can this mean, he urges, but her assassination? At last the Bishop of Limerick confronted him with the Bollandist statement that Elizabeth herself, on her cousin Mary's return to Scotland, *volebat eam emedio tollere*: "wished to remove her from the midst." Yet no one dreams that Elizabeth, at that early date, had a thought of murdering her cousin. She simply wished to remove her from administration, if not from the throne, and Pius V., in turn, wished to remove Elizabeth from administration by removing her from the throne. Elizabeth was not plotting the murder of Mary, and Pius was not plotting the murder of Elizabeth. The Bollandists use the same phrase of both, in the same sense.

It may be said that had Pius V. succeeded in deposing Elizabeth, he would have favored trying and executing her as a usurper and heretic. Very possibly, though by no means certainly, as the execution of an heretical sovereign had never been customary. It was thought best to spare the royal dignity the formal infliction. Even the burning of Patrick Hamilton, who was of the blood royal, astounded men. However, a trial and execution, according to settled principles of ancient law, is of course not an assassination.

While we are about it we may as well, in our next, deal with the charge which some Catholics have brought against Pius IV., and his nephew St. Charles Borromeo, that they favored the striking down of Protestants at sight.

CHARLES C. STARBUCK.

Andover, Mass.

LIKE A STORY.

A news item comes from New York that is as sweet as a story.

It is told that Mary Noonan was employed for many years as a seamstress by Mrs. William Astor. She witnessed many brilliant functions in the millionaire's mansion on Fifth avenue, but she had no share in them except as a worker. As time passed and years of faithful service endeared her to the family, in her heart there grew up a craving to enjoy the luxuries and to take part in the festivities that she saw, even if for only a very brief period. She mentioned her longing to a few persons, casually, not expecting of course that they would mention it again or that it would ever be realized. It was her dream.

She retired a few years ago, when she was past sixty-five, to the home of her sister in Red Bank, N. J., having enough money saved to meet her few wants and to provide for her funeral expenses.

Recently Mrs. Astor learned of Miss Noonan's passionate desire to participate in the gaieties of high society, and determined to gratify it. Accordingly she sent her a pressing invitation to spend a week with her as her guest. Imagine the surprise and delight of the gentle needle-woman! With a marvelous return of strength and spirits she accepted the invitation. The Astor carriage met her at the ferry, a cordial welcome awaited her at the house, and a beautiful room was set apart for her use. A week of rapture followed. There were luncheons at which the ex-seamstress was the guest of honor; there were visits to the theater; there were automobile drives in the park. Every attention possible was shown her, with real affection and respect, as well as with a design to please her.

At the end of the week, with many expressions of gratitude for the lovely hospitality that had been shown her, the dear old soul returns to New Jersey. Ever since she has never tired telling her acquaintances about her wonderful experience. She was ready to die now, she said.

And death came for her, too, as a friend. A few mornings ago she was found in her bed, with a smile on her aged face, but her soul, we may hope, with the angels.—Catholic Columbian.

How are your good resolutions? If you would keep them unbroken renew them daily.

FIVE-MINUTE SERMONS.

Sexagesima Sunday:

GOOD SEED BUT NO HARVEST.

The Gospel of to day, my brethren, is the parable of the sower who went out to sow his seed. Our Lord Himself explains the parable, and tells us that the seed is the word of God; and the real Sower of this word, of course is God from Whom it comes, and from Whom it has all its life and power.

The ground in which this seed is sown is the mind and heart of man; or, to put the matter in a practical shape, it is your heart and mine. There are many people in this world to whom very little of it has come, at least compared with what we have had; but we cannot complain that we have not had our share. The Word of God spoken by the mouth of man, in sermons, instructions, counsels, and warnings, from the altar and in the confessional, and not only from the priests but also from others who have been the ministers of God and the channels of his grace to us—it is certainly no strange or new sound in our ears. And not only in this way have we continually heard God's voice, but often, perhaps even more frequently, have we heard it coming immediately from Him, and speaking in our own souls.

Plenty of this seed has, then, been sown in us; but where is the fruit, the harvest that should have come from it? Seed is not put in the ground merely to be kept there. No, it cannot be kept there; if it is not destroyed or carried away it must grow and multiply.

The seed of God's word should, therefore, have grown in us. It should have been the beginning and the increase in us of the spiritual life, which should have grown stronger in us day by day from the time when we first came to the use of reason until the present moment.

Now, how is it in fact? As we look back on our lives, do we find that this has actually been fulfilled in them? Are we better, more perfect, nearer to God now than we were last year, or even ten years ago? Is it not rather to be feared that we have fallen back? that we are more careless, perhaps, even about mortal sin, than we were in times past; or, to say the least, that habits of venial sin have gained on us, instead of being overcome; that our prayers are least fervent, our reception of the sacraments less frequent, our love of God weaker than in the years which have gone by?

Holy Scripture tells us that the "path of the just, as a shining light, goeth forwards and increaseth even to perfect day." "The just" — that is, those who are habitually in God's grace, who have and keep the life of God in their souls. The Christian virtues, the needs of which were put in our souls at baptism, should have been growing during all our lives; they should have become strong trees now, deeply rooted and spreading far and wide. Even if they were killed at any time by the frost of mortal sin, they should have been speedily brought to life and renewed their growth before they had decayed and rotted away.

Brethren, I need not ask you if this has been so with you. With some, no doubt, it has. They may not feel that they have drawn nearer to God, but really they have. Temptation does not find the material in them to work on that it did; to avoid evil and to do good is every day easier and easier; they have still cause to fear, it is true, but still more and more ground to hope.

But, alas! how many there are in whom there is no sign of this growth which should have come from the seed which has been sown in them! Their light has not increased; no, it is almost always extinguished; when it does seem to shine it is but to flicker for a moment, and to disappear. The seed is no sooner sown in them than it is trampled under foot or carried away by the birds of the air.

Brethren, if the life of grace is not growing in our souls; if we are not falling less frequently, and rising more easily from our falls, than before, our path is not that of the just, and the seed of the word of God has not yet taken that root which will make it bring forth a hundredfold.

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TALKS ON RELIGION.

THE VIRTUE OF CHARITY.

Charity has various significations. Some people restrict the word to almsgiving; others apply it to kindness in word and in action. We use the word here in its first signification and as such it deals with love—the love of God above all things, and the love of our neighbor as ourselves. In this scope Charity embodies the precepts: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, with thy whole soul, with all thy strength and with all thy mind. —And thy neighbor as thyself."

We cannot truly love God and fail to love our neighbors, because both loves are necessarily connected, and branches, as it were, of the same virtue. "If any man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar." (1 St. John iv. 20)

The love of our neighbor which is not based on the love of God may be philanthropy, but it is not a Christian virtue at all, and cannot, properly speaking, be called charity.

We know very well from St. Paul, in (1 Cor. xiii, 7,) that there may be philanthropy and a distribution of goods to feed the poor by those who have not charity in its proper signification. We think it well to quote the remarkable passage referred to from the great Apostle of the Gentiles:

"If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal: and if I should have prophecy and know all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I should have all faith so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing: and if I should distribute all my goods to feed the poor, and if I should deliver my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing."

We may be unprofitable servants even after we have done much. If the true motive—charity—be lacking in our service, we labor in vain as far as supernatural reward goes. We may help to build churches and to support asylums and give much service in the cause of religion, and yet not lay up much treasure in heaven, if we do not give to God the love He requires from His children. St. John said to the Jews: "Think not to say within yourselves, we have Abraham for our father. For I tell you that God is able of these stones to raise up children to Abraham." (St. Matt. iii. 9.) "Son, give Me thy heart" is not only a plea but a command. Unless this be done, nothing else will avail. This is the stamp or seal that gives to our labor, our money and our service true value. "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema."

We talk of saints, and we talk of holiness, but there would be no saints and there would be no holiness if the true love of God found not a place in the heart. The man or woman who loves God the most is the greatest saint, no matter what his or her station be. God is no respecter of persons. "Lovest thou Me?" is the test for the keys of the kingdom of heaven. This is the short and simple way to perfection, and to holiness.

Charity enhances values; by it little things became great. The cup of cold water given to the little ones in charity will receive a supernatural reward. That virtue gave more value to the widow's mite than the combined offerings of all in the temple. "Charity covereth a multitude of sins." Why? Because it is incompatible with sin. A hot fire separates the dross from the pure gold. If we were to fill our hearts full of a great love of God, bad habits would soon disappear, for "The crooked would be made straight and the rough ways plain."

Charity places the love of God before all things. We must give to Him the love of preference. "He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me." (St. Matt. x. 27.) We should also seek to give to God the love of benevolence, to long and thirst for His glory; and the love of tenderness and warmth which belongs to earthly affection.

The true test of love is obedience and service. "For this is the charity of God, if we keep His commandments." (1 John v. 3)

Love does not consist so much in feeling as it does in fidelity. The keeping of the commandments is the infallible test of real love, of true charity. Real love of God cannot be hidden. It will manifest itself in personal holiness and in the performance of good works. Since "where thy treasure is, there also thy heart is," we cannot love God, if we do not think frequently of Him. Here is a test of the reality of our charity.

We cannot love God and be indifferent about His interests. If people are indifferent about the interests and the progress of the church at home and abroad, true charity has not found a home in their hearts. Since the fight against infidelity and irreligion is on, no true Christian can be an indifferent onlooker at the battle.

Since "out of the fulness of the heart the mouth speaketh," we are sure to have something to say about the things of God, if we really love God. Those whose hearts are full of the things of this world, of business, etc., talk almost continually of their affairs. Why should not we of religion?

Then sacrifice is the true test of love. What are we willing to do for God—and for His greater honor and glory? Then a real love of God must necessarily include a real hatred of sin. "No man can serve two masters."

We should ever pray for an increase of the virtue of charity. "The charity of God is poured forth in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, Who is given to us." (Rom. v. 5) Nothing should separate us from the love of God.—Catholic Universe.

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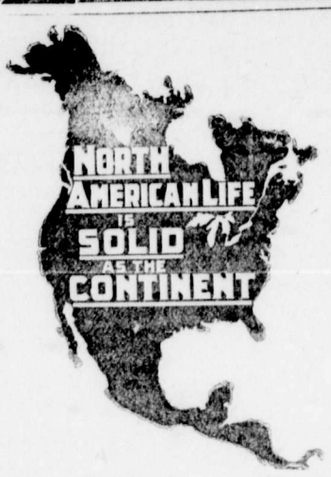

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