

ST. DOMINIC.

Sketch of the Saintly Founder of the Order of Dominican Friars and Preachers.

The Order of Dominican Friars, which has been celebrating the feast of its founder this week, has produced some of the most eminent saints and scholars of modern history.

He was subsequently made Bishop of Languedoc, in southern France. St. Dominic had spent ten years in preaching in Languedoc, when in 1215 he founded his religious Order of Preaching Friars, the plan of which he had meditated some time before.

He had till then worn the habit of a regular canon of St. Austin and followed that rule. But he earnestly desired to revive an apostolic spirit in the ministers of the altar.

With this view he established an order of religious men not like the ancient monks of the desert who were laymen and merely contemplatives, but who with the strictest retirement and assiduous exercises of contemplation should join a close application to sacred studies and all the functions of a pastoral life, especially that of preaching.

He prescribed austere fasts, perpetual abstinence from flesh (which the reformed monasteries of this order still observe), and the most severe poverty, ordaining that his friars should receive their course subsistence from the alms of the faithful, though their houses are not forbidden, like the Franciscans, to enjoy in common small rents in money.

The principal aim of the saint by this institution was to multiply in the Church zealous preachers, whose spirit and example might be a means more easily to spread the light of faith and the fire of divine charity, and to assist the pastors in healing the wounds which the Church had received by the inundation of heresy.

St. Dominic arrived at Rome with a copy of his rules in September, 1216. He found access to His Holiness difficult for some time, but was encouraged by a vision recorded by Theodoric, and copied by Fleury.

Pope Honorius III. confirmed his order and its constitutions by two Bulls, dated Sept. 26, the same year. St. Dominic went again to Rome in 1217, and the Pope, desiring that his order should have a house in that city, gave him the Church of St. Sixtus; and whilst a convent was building there, the saint, by order of His Holiness, read lectures of theology both in the palace and in the city, and preached in St. Peter's Church with such eloquence and zeal as drew on him the attention and admiration of the whole city.

Among others, Theodoric relates that a certain gentleman named Gaudon coming one day home from hearing his sermon found her little child dead. In her grief she took him in her arms out of the cradle, and carrying him to St. Sixtus laid him at the feet of the saint. She said nothing, but her sorrows spoke words. The servant of God was moved to compassion, and after saying a fervent prayer made the sign of the cross on the child and restored him to life.

He restored to health a religious man, the procurator of his convent, whilst the brethren were reciting by his bedside the prayers appointed for one in agony.

In 1218 he took a journey from Rome through Languedoc to Spain and founded a convent at Segovia and another at Madrid. At Bologna the curate of St. Nicholas, with the Bishop's consent, bestowed his church on the saint, and he and several archdeacons, doctors and eminent professors entered themselves into his order.

In 1220 he was on Pope Honorius III. at Viterbo, and met St. Francis at Rome in the house of Cardinal Hugolin, their common friend, who, afterwards succeeding Honorius III., under the name of Gregory IX., chose out of the Order of St. Dominic thirty-three bishops, one patriarch of Antioch, and eight legates. St. Dominic had till then taken no other title but that of superior. In 1229 Honorius III. commanded him to be styled general, and the saint returning to Bologna, there held a chapter of all the superiors in this order at Whitsuntide the same year.

St. Dominic had a foresight of his happy death long before it happened. Setting out on a journey from Bologna for Milan, he said to his friends there: "You now see me well in health; but before the glorious Assumption of the Virgin Mother I shall depart hence to the Lord." He returned to Bologna in the heat of summer, and was seized with a burning fever which, from the beginning, was judged mortal. Nevertheless, according to his custom, he desired to pass a great part of the

night in the church at prayer, but after matins was obliged to retire to his chamber, though he did not lie down on a bed. During his sickness he continued always cheerful in his countenance. When he was grown very weak he assembled his religious brethren, and in a moving discourse, which he called his last testament, and the inheritance which he left them, he exhorted them to constant humility, poverty, fervor and watchfulness in particular against the enemy of purity. Seeing them weep about him, he promised never to forget them when he should be gone to God. After having received the last sacraments he continued in secret prayer till he calmly expired on August 6, 1221, being fifty-one years old.

Catholics Win Again.

The St. Louis Post Dispatch has a very poor opinion of the public educational establishments of its city. In a literary contest which it conducted recently, the first prize for the best essay was won by a Catholic girl educated in a convent. Among the winners of other prizes were two students of Catholic colleges. The editor says that the quality of the compositions submitted by pupils of the Public Schools was inferior, and a sad reflection upon the educational system maintained there.

We have kept our readers informed from time to time of the success achieved by scholars from the Parochial schools in contests with scholars from the Public Schools. Every vacant cadetship in West Point and Annapolis that was open for competition in New York in two years has been captured by Catholic young men educated in parochial schools or Catholic colleges.

A similar result is recorded in Manchester, N. H. The victory in St. Louis shows that the Catholics of the West are not behind their brethren of the East in proficiency and scholarship.

And with all these facts staring them in the face our Protestant friends continue to denounce the Catholic schools, and to demand that Catholic children be compelled to attend the inferior and Godless Public Schools.

The Girl to be Avoided.

She is the girl who takes you off in one corner and tell you things that you wouldn't repeat to your mother. She is the girl who is anxious to have you join a party, which is to be "a dead secret," and at which, because people are very free and easy, you are uncomfortable and wish you were at home.

She is the girl who tries to induce you, "just for fun," to smoke a cigarette, or to take a glass of wine, and you don't know, and possibly she doesn't, that many of the sinners of today committed their first sins "just for fun."

She is the girl that persuades you that to stay at home and care and love your own, to help mother and to have your pleasures at home and where the home people can see them, is stupid and tiresome; and that spending the afternoon walking up and down the street, looking at the windows and the people, is "just delightful."

She is the girl who persuades you that slang is witty, that a loud dress that attracts attention is "stylish," and that your own simple gowns are dowdy and undesirable. She doesn't know, nor do you, how many women have gone to destruction because of their love for fine clothes.

She is the girl that persuades you that to be on very familiar terms with three or four young men is an evidence of your charms and fascination, instead of being, as it is, an outward visible sign of your perfect folly.

She is the girl who persuades you that it is a very smart thing to be referred to as "a gay girl." She is very, very much mistaken.

And, of all others, she is the girl who, no matter how hard she may try to make you believe in her, is to be avoided. — Ruth Ashmore in the Ladies' Home Journal.

Cardinal Manning's View.

His Eminence summed up his experience of the Temperance movement since he was about fifty-seven or fifty-eight years of age, when a deputation from the United Kingdom Alliance succeeded in convincing him that, though he thoroughly understood the whole question of the drink traffic, he was only on the threshold of the study of it. Being convinced of his ignorance, the first thing he did was to buy two folio Blue Books, containing the Report of a Commission, of which Mr. Villers was the Chairman, in 1853-54. When he had finished reading these two books he could honestly say that for the first time in his life he felt that he thoroughly understood the enormous evil of the drink trade, and the conclusion he called upon those who had heard the stirring words delivered by speaker after speaker that evening to give him their help in the work of the League of the Cross. In that they had a most powerful organization, both north and south of the Thames.

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PROTESTANT TESTIMONY FOR MONKS AND NUNS.

A great change is evidently taking place in the public mind in reference to the character and influence of the religious orders at the time of the so-called Reformation. It is true that the popular, Protestant tradition in regard to their corruption still holds sway among the masses, at least to a considerable extent. The very names of monks and nuns have to many a sinister sound. So thoroughly has history been penetrated with the mendacious misrepresentations of the early historians, who took their cue from the brutal Henry VIII. and his satellites, that it will probably take a long time to do away entirely with the impression that monks and nuns were a bad lot, or at least in those days, whatever it may be in modern times.

Fortunate is being re-written; new light is being cast upon that disastrous period, and Protestant, as well as Catholic, writers are showing by incontestable evidence, derived from public documents, that there never was a more deliberate, wilful and wicked series of misrepresentations than those that were put forth by the agents of the avaricious king in justification of his seizure of the religious houses and the wealth belonging to them.

Father Gasquet's splendid work, "Henry VIII. and the English Monasteries," is a revelation to the uninitiated. It is a mine of historical wealth on that subject, derived from a careful and conscientious examination of the State papers and public records of the period. The Protestant Gardiner, too, who is called the national historian of England, especially of the period of the Reformation, and who devoted a whole year to the arrangement of the State archives of Henry VIII.'s reign, gives valuable testimony on this subject.

But we do not propose now to quote from these authors. We have before us the testimony of two conspicuous Protestants of such a striking and emphatic character that it is quite worth quoting. The testimony is all the more valuable because it comes from men who, to say the least, are far from friendly to the Catholic Church.

Mr. Henry George may with truth be said to be the leading Socialist of the age, and his writings have had a widespread influence. In more than one place, in his "Progress and Poverty," he speaks in terms of praise of the influence of the Catholic Church during middle ages. Commenting, in one place, on the fact that the property of the medieval Church was really held for public purposes, he says: "The Church lands defrayed the cost of public worship and instruction, of the care of the sick, and of the destitute, and maintained a class of men who were supposed to be, and no doubt to a great extent were, devoting their lives to purposes of public good," and he points out that the confiscations of the Reformation period were really a robbery of the people, in as much as estates which were "essentially common property devoted to a public purpose" were "diverted from that trust to enrich individuals."

But the most striking and emphatic testimony is given by Mr. M. H. Hyndman, a distinguished Socialist leader and writer in England. In his book, "The Historical Basis of Socialism," he frankly and truthfully says: "The relations of the Church, the monasteries and the clergy to the people were most important from every point of view. There is nothing more noteworthy in the history of the human mind than the manner in which that essential portion of the English society in the middle ages has been handled by the ordinary economists, chroniclers and religionists. Even sober, and in the main tolerably conscientious writers seem to lose their heads or become afraid to tell the truth on this subject."

"It is high time," he continues with emphasis, "that, without any prejudice in favor of that Church, the nonsense which has been foisted on the public by men interested in suppressing the facts, should be exposed. It is not true that the Church of our ancestors was the organized fraud which it suits fanatics to represent it; it is not true that the monasteries, priories and nunneries were mere receptacles for all unclean, dress and lewdness; it is not true that the great revenues of the celibate clergy and the celibate recluses were squandered as a rule in riotous living. As a mere question of religion Catholicism was as good as any creed which has ever found acceptance among men." He might well have said infinitely better, but we will give him credit for what he does grant.

He takes pains to show how Church property was held in the interests of the people; how the parish priest was obliged to spend only the smallest part of his legal income upon himself, two-thirds of it going to the poor and to the service of his Church. He tells how the existing account-books of the monasteries show how large a part of the revenues was spent on travelers, the poor, the sick and in other good works; and he adds that "the abbots and priests were the best landlords in England, and that so long as the Church held its lands and its power permanent pauperism was unknown." He also says: "Their monasteries were inns ever open to travelers, and infirmaries for the sick. They did all that is now done by our system of parochial relief. They were public almoners, teachers, doctors and nurses. They were also chroniclers, copyists of manuscripts, etc."

We should be glad, did our space permit, to give at length the author's testimony in regard to the character of Henry VIII., his motive in confiscating the religious houses, and the terrible

consequences which resulted to the people. He says it was his desire to "form an adulterous if not incestuous marriage in the first place, and to get possession of this vast property in order to fill his purse and bribe his favorites in the second place, which led him to the infamous plunder." "When booty is in the wind it should go hard indeed, but the king and barons between them would make any over monastery in the realm a den of iniquity." Thus he says: "The last hold of the English people in their soil was torn off for the benefit of a clique of oppressors. Thus the poor who had ever obtained ready relief from the Church, the wayfarers who could always find food and shelter in the religious houses, the children of the people who repaired to the convent for guidance and teaching were deprived of all one fell swoop of aims, shelter and schools. This great and powerful estate which naturally sided with the people against the monarch and the aristocracy, now became a means of oppression in the hands of the land-owners and the middle class. Rack-renting and usury were henceforth sanctified instead of being denounced, and the Protestant Reformation became a direct cause of the increasing misery of the mass of Englishmen." Please observe this is not a Catholic, but a Protestant, that is speaking, and to us it is an encouraging sign that the Protestant tradition in regard to the religious orders is fast passing away, we hope never to return. — N. Y. Catholic Review.

The Heroic Offering.

Knowing, as we all do, how grievous a sin drunkenness is, and how prevalent the vice is to the ruin of souls and the destruction of the peace of families, it is gratifying to learn from an official source that the Associates of the League of the Sacred Heart have undertaken a spiritual warfare against the giant evil of intemperance.

The sin is a great one; yet the power of the grace of God, moved by the joint prayers of so many thousands will be more powerful. As all sins have to be atoned for in some way, we can easily perceive the necessity for some reparation or atonement to be made to the justice of God for the grievous sin of drunkenness, known, alas, to be only too common everywhere.

In the spirit that animated the Crusaders of old, to rescue the Holy Land from those who profaned it, the members of the League have entered upon this modern crusade; and it is not a crusade of words, but one of silent, persistent prayer. Who, therefore, can doubt its success?

The work thus undertaken is aptly termed the "Heroic Offering." Its chief aim, in the words of Father Cullen, the Irish head director of the League, is "to band in holy alliance around the Heart of Jesus, self-denying souls who are prepared to combine with prayer the sacrifice of a legitimate indulgence in order to give greater glory and consolations to that Divine Heart." — Catholic Columbian.

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