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Some Types of Non-Catholics And Their Prejudice.

(By a Regular Contributor.)

The very discordant note in a harmonic chorus serves to accentuate the more the musical perfection that it has rudely marred. When the voices of the world are raised in unison, be it of praise or lamentation, or of both, the uttering of a grating note shocks the ear and the senses, while it serves to emphasize the more the harmony that it has disturbed. On the occasion of the death of Leo XIII. the world was unanimous in praise, in admiration and in expressions of regret. These came naturally from Catholics from the most humble to the most exalted. They came also from Protestant sources, and not a single non-Catholic who spoke or wrote on the subject, but was loud in his tributes to the memory of the wonderful man whose life had been closed at such an advanced age and in such an exalted position. It would have been strange had there not been some harsh-sounding voice; but it would seem as if that transcendent personality had silenced by his very life and death, the slightest criticism. Yet there was one. In Venice—that Venice that was to send her Patriarch to succeed the great Pontiff, that Venice so long the Queen of the Adriatic and the shrine of noble art and generous sentiment—in Venice there lurked, in the guise of a Christian clergyman, the one narrow and bigoted and miserable spirit that had the courage to assail the very character of the dead Pontiff. The fable of La Fontaine has again been illustrated; the living donkey has kicked the dead lion—for he felt that he could kick the dead with impunity. The name of this crank is Rev. Dr. Alexander Robertson—a man with two titles, a reverend without common reverence for the dead, and a doctor with the rudiments of an education.

The article appeared in the "London Christian." We cannot tell upon what ground any organ could claim the title of Christian that could sink sufficiently into the depths of hatred and misrepresentation to give publicity to such a diatribe. But unlike the irreverent doctor, the Christian was not a sole exception. The New York "Weekly Witness" reproduced the article, and did so in a form that indicated only too truly the spirit with which that organ is animated. We have no intention, in turn, not even for the purposes of refutation, to send the vile thing further on its way. But, in case we might be suspected of dealing too harshly with its author, and in order to give our readers a faint idea of the evil-mindedness that bigotry can engender, we will take two extracts from its columns. In the first passage we cite this Rev. Dr. Alexander Robertson (we repeat his name and titles so that they may not be forgotten) says:—

"The notices in the English newspapers do credit to the generosity of heart of the writers, but do little credit to their judgments and intellects. Unconsciously they distort history, and obscure great moral distinctions; in a word, they write pleasing fiction, not solid fact. Let me give a few facts about the late Pope, in the words of Italians who knew him personally, and who were eye-witnesses of his deeds."

This is the preface to a whole heap of infamous lies, put into the mouths of Italian Illuminati, or members of those very secret societies that persecuted Pius IX. and instigated the spoliation of the Church. They paint Leo XIII. as a silent aider in foul murder when he was Archbishop of Perugia; of being a miser, a tyrant, and a heartless and overhearing enemy of the House of Savoy, even in the hour when the royalty of Italy sought reconciliation. There is no need of going into the details; it is enough to say that the most bitter pen could not trace harder words to fling at a Nero, a Henry VIII. or a Cromwell. But we must give one sample of this man's baseness. We do not object to his repetition of the old, old slanders on the Church; that so self-respecting Protestant would to-day repeat, and that have been so frequently disproved, that the mere fact of advancing them again suffices to stamp with the seal of bad faith any writing or expression that contains them. But it is the fact of

knocking at the tomb of a man before whom the entire world bowed in homage, and over whose ashes tears of admiration were shed by eyes that looked with disbelief upon the church that he had so wisely governed. We take this one extract, and it will serve as a sample of the whole article, and as fair illustration of the arguments used, and the sentiments entertained by its author. He says:—

"There is no Pope in history who has done what Pope Leo XIII. has to diminish the worship of God and of Christ in favor of that of the Virgin Mary. She was his god or rather goddess; or rather, I should say, these female idols were his goddesses; as there are as many different Madonnas as there are virtues and vices—and desires. Pope Leo was called the Pope of the Rosary, because of his efforts to extend the Pagan practice of counting Leads or say the Rosary. He extended very considerably the indulgences (liberty to sin with impunity) attached to Rosary sayings. Mariolatry—the worship of Mary, of the Madonna, of Venus—has been mightily extended in the Roman Catholic Church through the exertions of Pope XIII."

One of the great glories of his reign is that the Catholic world can henceforth call Leo XIII. "the Pope of the Holy Rosary." And it is in this, his great virtue, his great and saintly practice, his great and holy devotion that the Christian and Reverend Doctor assails him. That a person called Alexander Robertson should not believe in the devotion of the Holy Rosary, is quite natural; but that he should cast the most abominable insults in the faces of two hundred and fifty million Catholics who do believe therein, is an evidence of his lack of both common sense and common Christianity. That he should heap insults upon the tomb just closed, down amongst the successors of the first Apostle, under the dome of Angelo's genius, is a sure indication of the iconoclastic spirit that animates him. But that he should profess to be a Doctor of Divinity and be at the same time so absolutely devoid of any knowledge concerning the Rosary, is a monumental proof of his consummate ignorance. We pass over the insults launched against the Mother of Christ. How delighted Our Divine Lord must be with the Christian clergyman who compares His Holy Mother to the pagan goddess that was the personification of all that womanhood could sink to in the vices of human depravity. But it is not our duty to judge the traducer of the one being whom Christ raised to the dignity of bearing Him as an infant both into the world and throughout His tender years in the world. It is quite possible that were this Rev. Dr. Robertson simply animated with blind prejudices against our faith, we might try to reason with him; but in traducing and bellying such a character as that of the dead Pontiff—Leo XIII. of all the men who have lived within the last century—he has proven that he belongs not to even the humblest category of honest-souled men, and that he is possessed of a nature that alone can furnish the rightful punishment for the deliberate sin that he has committed.

He styles the Rosary a pagan practice. Poor, unfortunate, blinded man. Upon what does he base his faith? Upon the Bible, of course. What, then, is the Rosary? Simply prayers taken from the Bible. The "Our Father" that is said on the large beads was first pronounced by Christ in the Garden of Olives. Is that a pagan prayer? Is it a pagan practice to repeat it? The "Hail Mary" that is said on the small beads, was said by the Angel Gabriel, in the house at Nazareth, when bearing a message from God to the Virgin destined to become the human mother of the Son of God. It is recorded word for word in the Bible. Is that a pagan practice to repeat it? Why use beads? Because they are more convenient for counting the set number of prayers than are one's fingers, or any other device that could be imagined. That is all there is about it. Did this real pagan—this man who displays the spirit of the heathen savage that dances on the grave of his dead enemy—ever make any inquiries before launching his miserable slanders? Decidedly not. He simply writes about that which is not within his knowledge. Even the vile and baseless accusations against the character—the personal character—of the great Pontiff, are all hearsay; he knows nothing personally about these things. He was told this, that and the other thing. He did not stop to question the motives of those who told him so. Very likely he would not care to question them fearing they might prove to be groundless and therefore not in harmony with his miserable and vengeful spirit. But we have already given this man too much notice. Still it is neither to defend the sacred memory of Leo XIII.—for that needs no defense—nor yet to disprove the slanders launched against the

Church and her devotions—for they have been disproved times out of mind—that we occupy so much space, but merely to give our readers an idea of the depths to which bigotry can sink a man, and the blackness that prejudice can fling over a human mind.

TEMPERANCE AND EXAMPLE.

It is the special mission of the priest to preach; it is also his mission to teach by example. No greater curse ever fell upon the human race than intemperance, no greater gladiators against that evil than the Catholic priests. When Father Matthew set forth "in God's name," to crush out the demon of intemperance, he used, not only his eloquence as a preacher, but also his life-example as an argument. It is, therefore, with no small degree of pleasure that we note an almost general uprising of the Catholic clergy against intemperance, and the steps they seem determined to take to preach by example as well as by precept.

We learn that after the adjournment last week of the convention of the Catholic Total Abstinence Union of America, a large number of priests assembled in the parlors of the Henry House, Pittsburg, Pa., and formed Priests' Total Abstinence Union of America. Rt. Rev. Bishop Canevin was present. The membership is to be composed of those of the Catholic clergy, who are total abstainers and who are willing to devote their energies to the promotion of total abstinence among their people.

So much for America. But at the very same time the "Irish Ecclesiastical Record" contains an address to the students of Maynooth, from Rev. P. Coffey, in which he dwells upon the work of Rev. Anthony Siebenfaercher in forming total abstinence societies of priests and seminarians in America. As a result of this address we find that three hundred students for the priesthood at Maynooth have pledged themselves to total abstinence for life. In that address, Father Coffey says:—

"Everybody acquainted with Ireland knows that in the movement for temperance reform the influence of the priest is supreme. If the Irish priesthood as a body marshalled itself and fought earnestly for a sober Ireland the fight could in all probability be fairly described as 'short, sharp and decisive.' We have often heard: 'Like priest, like people.' There is another saying: 'Like student, like priest.' It is as true as the former, and its value is realized by none more strongly than by workers in the temperance cause. Their thoughts travel often to the College of Maynooth, and their hopes for the future and final triumph of temperance in Ireland are centred in Ireland's future priests."

"In ordinary circumstances I should not take the liberty of addressing a special meeting of St. Patrick's Total Abstinence and Pioneer Association. It will serve us in many ways others as well as ourselves have been doing, and are still doing, and are likely to do in the holy cause of temperance, which all of us in common have at heart. It must be pleasing and gratifying to us to learn of the success of the work in which we are engaged. The consciousness of success is also a wonderful tonic for the weary or the wavering; and it stimulates to renewed activity and more generous effort for all earnest workers in any good cause."

What a glorious crusade this is. Father Matthew was alone in his mighty struggle, and all know of the wonderful results of his great efforts in the cause of temperance. What, then, would not be the result if instead of one we were to have thousands of Matthews—one in every parish? Imagine it.

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The Jubilee Congress Of German Catholics.

The Congress of German Catholics will be held this year at Cologne from Sunday, August 23rd, till Thursday, August 27. It will be the fiftieth of its kind. Special importance attaches, therefore, to this jubilee year of the great factor of Catholic progress in Germany. The first Congress was held at Mayence in 1848, but war and other disturbances having caused the otherwise yearly meeting to be omitted on several occasions, the golden jubilee can only be celebrated this year. Ten years ago, when the Congress last met at Cologne, a resolution was passed that the jubilee meeting should be held at Cologne, to mark the prominent position of the venerable, old, and yet beautiful modern city, which now may be justly considered the head of Catholic Germany, though, of course, a large proportion of its inhabitants do not belong to the Catholic Church.

This year's Congress derives additional lustre from the recent elections to the Reichstag. Readers know the general result of the election; the maintenance of the Centre in its leading position and the enormous increase of the Social Democrats; but they may be pardoned for not knowing that the Social Democrats won their seats, with one exception, in entirely Protestant districts. Indeed it has come to this, that Social Democrats have been returned, and almost only such, by every large town in the country, and even in one rural district. But though that party boasted it would certainly break up the power of the Centre this time as a tower of strength, especially in the Rhineland, it has done nothing of the kind; it has gained no seat there, but the Centre has increased the number of its seats in that province from 27 to 28.

Now it must be remembered that the Centre cannot, as matters stand, expect a seat in a Protestant district except through extraordinary circumstances. This being so, the Centre has reached the highest position it can expect to attain as regards the number of seats. The only increase of strength that could be obtained was in the number of votes. And such an increase it obtained, quite an unexpected increase, viz., more than 400,000 votes. Never before has the strength of the Catholic Church as a rampart against Socialism been so manifestly proved as this time. The leading organ of the Socialists confesses that a bitter disappointment mars the jubilant ring of the party in the discovery that the Socialistic weapons have been without effect against the Centre. It calls on the approaching assembly of the party at Dresden to consider what new measures ought to be adopted. Protestant organs, on the other hand, own that Catholics are properly equipped in their battle against Socialism, whereas the Protestant Church has done nothing and can do nothing.

Nor is this all. In Germany, as elsewhere, the fanaticism of a certain action of Protestantism knows of late no bounds. Before the election people of this kind went so far as to propose a combination of all political parties to crush the "Ultramontaniam" of the Centre. In a number of cases they openly avowed that the Socialists were the minor evil. This kind of warfare flourished particularly in the kingdom of Saxony. And the result? The champions of "tolerant" Protestantism in that kingdom lost every seat, with the exception of one, and in that single one they implored the handful of Catholics to help them to defeat the Socialists in a second ballot.

The overthrow of the fanatical Protestant party has certainly been another and great cause of satisfaction to Catholics at this momentous election. So much may be said of the late campaign in view of the approaching Congress, which, as is well known, does not occupy itself with purely political matters. It may be added, that the political programme of the Centre has again triumphed in mitigating the antagonism and hatred which, unfortunately, has been nourished by other political parties. The Centre being composed of men of all classes, and being elect-

ed by cities and rural districts, is better informed as to the real wants of the people than any other party and, therefore, carries even more weight by its moral strength than by its voting power. Moreover, it has maintained the glorious tradition of Windthorst—to use its power and influence according to the law of justice to all classes, and not according to the wishes of the Government or even to the advantage of its own movement.

As to the Congress itself, it will touch upon all the more prominent topics of Catholic life. It goes without saying that public matters, are considered and treated from the point of view of Catholic doctrine and morality. In this way a sound public opinion is created, adjusted, and fostered among Catholics on these matters, the Congress leaving it to others, viz., to unions, societies, the Press, or it may be to the Centre, to carry out in due course what has been resolved upon. The Congress is, then, only, as it were, the head of the organization of Catholics, its very important members being societies of all sorts, and newspapers of all kinds, without whose aid it never could have obtained its present importance and usefulness. At first, and for a number of years, the Congress was even called the General Meeting of Catholic Societies in Germany. But in the year 1871, at the assembly at Mayence, that name was for practical and juridical reasons changed into the present title, "General Assembly of the Catholics of Germany." I remember well the warm debate on this occasion which gave signs of the coming Kulturkampf. But though the name has been changed the connection between the societies and the Congress continues as before. Some of these societies hold their own meetings throughout the year, others meet along with the Congress, and others again are mentioned and recommended by the Congress to the Catholic body.

A recent review of the almost endless number of these societies divides them into six groups. First there are the pious societies, including those for propagating the Faith, counting seventeen various unions with so many branches each. Secondly, societies of charity, including those dealing with temperance and emigration, eight unions of various kinds. Thirdly, come the trade and labor societies, thirteen unions, including those for farmers, journeymen, workmen, young workmen, merchants, students, and pressmen. The students alone comprise more than one hundred branches in the various German University towns. Fourth in order are the societies for literature, science and art, five in number, including the Goerret Society and the Society of St. Charles Borromeus, which takes the place in Germany of the Catholic Truth Society. The Borromeus Society last year counted 104,000 members, with an income of about \$200,000. Fifthly, the political, and lastly, the social societies.

The most important of the political, and indeed of all these unions, is at the present time the Katholischer Volksverein, the Catholic People's Union. It was founded by Windthorst, and was indeed the last great work of that great leader. Its object is to oppose and combat the errors and revolutionary movement of Socialists and to promote the Christian order of society. This union holds meetings throughout the country wherever Catholics are attacked or the policy of the Centre party is to be defended and no local organization is as yet in existence. The number of meetings held in March alone this year was no less than 192. The headquarters of this union are at Munchen-Gladbach, Rhineland. It was justly called by the late Dr. Lieber the "permanent congress of Catholics." By the meetings and millions of leaflets and pamphlets it has done admirable work, warding off the attacks of foes and uniting Catholics wherever opposing interests, as between industrial and agricultural laborers, were threatening their harmony of action. They are a united army, bound together by Christian principles, by a sound and popular policy, and by the guidance of able leaders. They have their enemies, not the least embarrassing those Catholics of Poland and Alsace, who by their Radicalism play into the hands of their worst enemies and weaken the Centre, which will not and cannot adopt their extreme views, but which would help them to obtain justice. Catholics may also be surpassed in time by the Social Democrats in the number of deputies, as the Socialist representatives may become more numerous, whilst increase is impossible for the Catholics owing to the reason pointed out above. But as regards internal strength, what has been stated lately in "A Study" by a correspondent of the "Catholic Times"—that the Socialists were as united as they are strong—is not

correct. There are grave differences between Bebel on the one hand and Bernstein and von Vollmar on the other. And as to the Socialistic electors, there can be no doubt that very many of them have no idea of, or the least wish for, Bebel's "future state;" but they have given vent to their hatred of the Classes or their discontent of affairs in general. The "Vorwarts" newspaper itself complains of the un-Socialistic character of its new supporters and considers it to be its first and main duty to leave these new masses with the heaven of pure Socialism. That it will succeed to a certain extent amongst the Protestant and unbelieving portion of Germany may be taken for granted, but that it will find more than its march in the Catholic districts is not only the hope of Catholics, but almost the conviction of every politician. The Catholic People's Union having proved so very successful its rules have been examined by Catholics of other countries, with a view to adapt them to their needs. I have seen it stated that they have been also introduced into Ireland.

To organize the Catholic young men and to make them acquainted with political life, to keep up the tradition of the great leaders and follow in their steps an association has been founded, which rejoices in the excellent name of "Windthorstbund." These unions did very good work at the last elections, and their organization has already been imitated by the Liberal party. The most important class organizations are the Farmers' Union and the Workmen's Societies. The latter are increasing in number, as well as in strength. They are, of course, the advanced guard in the warfare against Socialism. Corresponding to Bebel's programme, which lays it down that Socialism advocates Atheism in religion, Socialism in economics, and Republicanism in politics, these Catholic workingmen's societies maintain among their members, and beyond them the profession and defence of religion, and sound political and economic views and measures, within the present order of things.

These societies are very active, and many a working man has become an excellent public debater against Socialists by following up the lectures given at the meetings held under their auspices, and attending to the different courses. Moreover many, perhaps most of the societies, have joined regular trades unions, which have been founded in union with Protestant working men on Christian principles as opposed to the so-called free trades unions of the Socialists. The number of members of these Christian trades unions amounted in the year 1902 to 823,864, and the total income to more than \$200,000. Besides this there are many local friendly and insurance societies amongst Catholic working men, one of the latest being named, in honor of the great Pontiff of workingmen, the Leo Insurance Society. It promises to be a success, having already sixty branches in the archdiocese of Cologne. I hope that some of these notes and statistics will help visitors to understand the working of the Catholic Congress, and to follow its debates and reports with interest.—Special German contributor to Liverpool Catholic Times.

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