

not the minister, that gives the grace; and it is Christ, not the minister, who gives the sacrament the power to produce the grace. Imagination alone can detect a "monopoly" here. Nor does the Church deny that grace is given directly in response to prayer.

Mr. Best deems it wrong to consider Christ as "hooped around with ecclesiastical forms and ceremonies." His complaint, then, is with human nature. Made of body and soul, man cannot be satisfied with a religion which appeals to only half of him. Just as a cult of mere external worship snubbing the spirit, would fail to equal his requirements, so would a religion of the spirit which totally ignored his body. His composition is not angelic. And so long as he is what he is, his worship must be in accord with his nature. Christ could only have respected human nature and treated man as man. Mr. Best might advantageously ponder a little on the "ecclesiastical forms and ceremonies" of the Catholic Church, which have satisfied the cravings of her children's bodies for religious expression and devotion, reaped on the favor of their souls, and helped to keep them a solid unit, "one fold and one shepherd." But a great tendency outside of Catholicism has undeniably been to separate the soul and body in religion, and to give the former to God and the latter to Mammon, with the result that neither gift has been acceptable to either. Modern men have experienced the evangelical lesson that they cannot serve two masters, and the explains why so many, whose spirit was originally of Christ and whom a few "ecclesiastical forms and ceremonies" might have kept clasped to the Saviour's heart, have gone over wholly to the world.

In conclusion, the impression which one derives from Mr. Best's editorial is that the heaven of Socialistic thought is busy working through Protestant theology. He seems to picture Christ as impatient of rulers and desirous of cutting down His Church to a dead level, without spires or gables. Would it be extreme to infer that Protestantism, no longer actively interested in dogma, but absorbed in questions of ecclesiastical unity and equality, is largely drifting from theology to sociology? May the movement which began with Luther end with Marx?—Edmund E. Sinclair, in America.

PURGATORY

THE BELIEF IN PURGATORY IS AS OLD AS RELIGION AND SUPPORTED BY SCRIPTURE

In defense of our belief in Purgatory, that is of a middle state of souls who are in a position to be prayed for after death, and are therefore not yet in their place of rest though on their passage to it, we cite the fact that it was admitted in the Old Law, and that the practice of praying for the dead was not censured nor forbidden by our Blessed Lord. I. We have a very precise passage which tells us of the Jewish custom in 2 Machabees, where it is recorded that after a middle state of souls after death, Judas Machabees, sent 12,000 drachms of silver to Jerusalem for sacrifice to be offered for the sins of the dead, thinking well and religiously concerning the resurrection. . . . It is therefore a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead that they may be loosed from sins (2 Mach. xii, 43, 46). The Catholic Church which has always maintained the inspiration of the two Books of Machabees, points to this text as quite decisive upon the existence of a middle state of souls after death, and upon the propriety and duty of praying for the dead. The Protestant church does not admit their inspiration; and this very fact establishes the necessity of a principle upon which we are always insisting, that there ought to be some tribunal to decide so important a question as the admission or rejection of an inspired book. But see how satisfactory is the Catholic principle: "The Church, which is infallible, is the judge in such a matter. She declares that these books are inspired; therefore we accept their inspiration as a certainty beyond all doubt, and as an article of Faith. And how unsatisfactory is the solution afforded by the Protestant church, which, going on the principle of taking the Scripture as the only rule of Faith, cannot possibly disprove the inspiration of these books. But even apart from their inspiration, they are universally recognized as historical books of the highest authority. And they tell us what was the custom in the Jewish Church before Christ, and that the Jews did pray for the dead. And what they did then, they do even now; for the Jews do pray for the dead, and have never lost their tradition of doing so. The thirty-nine Articles also (Art. vi) enumerate these books of Machabees among books which may be read "for example of life and instruction of manners," and therefore sanctions their use. Consequently, from this text we are authorized to argue as follows: A book which the Catholic Church maintains to be inspired, which is a faithful record of Jewish customs, and which is admitted by the Protestant church to be edifying and instructive, recommends praying for the dead as holy and wholesome. Therefore this practice has a high sanction, and is not lightly to be censured, nor rashly to be condemned as a modern superstition.

2. That sins may be pardoned after death, and therefore that mercy

may be supplicated in behalf of the dead, follows from a clear declaration made by our Blessed Lord. Speaking upon the forgiveness of sins, He says: Whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of Man it shall be forgiven him, but he that shall speak against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world nor in the world to come (Matt. xii, 32). Without discussing what these sins are against the Holy Ghost most probably an obstinate rejection of His lights, and a wilful perseverance in impenitence, there is here an assertion that sins may be forgiven in the next world, inasmuch as these sins are excluded from such forgiveness. And whatever forced interpretation may be urged to do away with such a clear admission, these words appeared decretorial and decisive to the great St. Augustine, who maintained that these words would have no meaning, unless some sins were forgiven in the next world. If so, where? Not in heaven, where there is no repentance in hell, where there is no redemption. Therefore there is another state in the next world, and this is what we call Purgatory.

3. There is a passage in the first Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians, which, with quite sufficient clearness in itself, and with overwhelming evidence when interpreted by the very highest authorities, asserts the doctrine of a middle purifying state in the next world. The Apostle, there speaking about the future judgment which is to be passed upon our works, likens these works to gold, silver, and precious stones, if good and meritorious in God's sight, but to wood, hay, and stubble if worthless and unacceptable. Every man's work shall be manifest, he continues, for the day of the Lord shall declare it, because it shall be revealed in fire, and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide. . . he shall receive a reward. If any man's work burn, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved yet so as by fire (1 Cor. iii, 12, 15). What else is the meaning of a man being saved, yet so as by fire to which he is to be subjected after that judgment which he has to undergo after his death, if it be not a punishment and purifying process to be undergone in the next world? Certainly these words of the Apostle so clearly express the exact doctrine of the Catholic Church upon Purgatory, that the Council of Florence, relying upon the authority of the Fathers, has declared that this is the meaning of St. Paul. Amongst the Fathers who have so interpreted, I need only cite St. Augustine, who again upon this passage as upon the one which I cited from our Blessed Lord's words, about sins being forgiven in the next world, upholds the doctrine of Purgatory. And for himself, he prays that God will rather send upon him trials and afflictions in this world, but will spare him from that fire of which it is said that he shall be saved yet so as by fire (Aug. in ps. xxxvii).

How repugnant to the Word of God, and how contradictory to the very attributes of God—His Justice, His Mercy, His Holiness, and His Truth, is the teaching of those who deny this doctrine? For they either admit into heaven, upon their principles, souls which are defiled with sin unrepented of, or they cast into the place of eternal reprobation those that are stained with lesser offences, which have not utterly destroyed the grace of God within them. The idea of heaven which the Holy Catholic Church presents to us, is that of a place into which nothing defiled can enter, as St. John declares. And she tells us, too, how pure must be the soul which is admitted in the Beatific Vision to see the Face of the God of all Holiness; and therefore, that if it leaves this life unfitted by any, even the slightest defilement, for such a privilege, it would seek for purification, and be even glad to be washed yet more utterly in the stain, before it could venture to see the God of Gods in the heavenly Jerusalem.—Our Sunday Visitor.

NON-CATHOLIC PAYS VISIT TO CATHOLIC CONVENT

Blewen, who lived in a rural community with but one church and that Methodist, took a trip to Philadelphia recently and, calling on a former resident at the crossroads, placed himself under his guidance to see the sights, writes J. P. in Catholic Standard and Times. Fairmount Park, Independence and Carpenter's Halls, the League Island Navy Yard, the public buildings and other points of interest were visited. The way to the host's home took him past a Little Sisters of the Poor's Home for the Aged, and when he first spied it his eye was caught by the cross. Here it might be said that the genial host is a Protestant in the general sense of the term without any apparent denominational ties, and, to use a law term, "without prejudice."

"Isn't that a Catholic institution over there?" asked Blewen as they approached the home.

"Yes," said his host.

"They tell some queer stories about those places," said Blewen.

"Who are they?" asked the guide.

"Why, everybody," said the visitor.

"No, not everybody. I don't," said the host.

"Have you ever been in one?" said the city man.

"Of course not," said the other.

"Well, you don't expect them to come out and pull you in do you?"

Let us go in and see what it's like." "But we can't. They don't let Protestants see the inside of those places."

"Well, let us try, anyhow."

The guide led the way and, getting the ear of the aged porter and then one of the Sisters, told them he had a visitor to town who wanted to see the institution. The Sister at the door put him in charge of another Sister and the building was soon well covered—dormitories, recreation room, men's smoking room and the chapel. Here Blewen was much attracted by an artistic statue of Our Saviour and examined it closely, even to the nail prints in the hands and feet, and when in another part of the building insisted on going back and looking at it again.

It was getting close to supper time and as they approached the refectory the guide suggested that they take supper there, telling the visitor that it would not be like the Bellevue-Stratford, but he would be treated as a guest. Blewen was very good for a charitable institution for those who had no home of their own. The visitor hesitated, but the guide, nothing daunted, asked the good Sister, if she could furnish supper for two more "old men" who were just visitors, and being told "yes," he sat down at a table and motioned his "townie" to do the same.

They had a fairly good and substantial meal, but no more than the other men around him. As they were about to depart Blewen put his hand in his pocket and handed the Sister a \$2 bill, saying: "I have a little more money than I will spend on this trip, and though I am a Methodist, it looks as if you can put it to better use than I would."

Once outside he astonished his guide by the warmth of his commendation of one of the places "they tell queer things about."

Some time ago another "townie" visited the genial host who asked for Blewen and how he enjoyed the trip.

"He is well and enjoyed the trip immensely, and although he talks about all the sights generally considered big in Philadelphia, it is a place for old men and women run by Catholic Sisters that he talks most about, and he has lots to say about its chapel and a statue of the Saviour he saw there; and say, what do you think? Nearly every Sunday he runs up to town to the Catholic Church there."—Providence Visitor.

THE RED CROSS

The French novelist, Max Nordau, is writing some very clever stories of the war. His latest is a plea for a Red Cross society for prisoners. We gather from his writing that the condition of the Jews carried as captives to the River of Babylon may not have been more terrible than that of hundreds of thousands of prisoners of war forced now to labor for the benefit of their enemies. He suggests the remedy: To this humane idea there is no exception. We are forced to contradict his statement that the Red Cross society owes its origin to a Swiss engineer who observed on the battle fields of Italy in 1859 the failure to employ any means for conserving the life or relieving the sufferings of the wounded. That splendid organization of mercy which is now known as the Red Cross society is the outcome of Catholic charity.

During the Crimean War the English soldiers suffered in the military hospitals for want of proper nursing. Stories were sent to England, complaining of the difference between the treatment of the English and French wounded. Miss Florence Nightingale, a woman of wealth in this world's goods and in Christian charity, learned that the difference was explained by the fact that the French wounded were cared for by Catholic Sisters while the English were in the hands of hirelings. She went to France and studied the work of the Sisters. On her return home she obtained from the Government permission to take to Crimea five French nursing Sisters. Arriving at the English hospitals she saw the frightful conditions. She begged for help from England. After considerable red tape, fourteen Irish Sisters of Mercy were sent to the front to nurse the soldiers. This was the beginning of the Red Cross society.

The story of these Irish Sisters in the Crimean War reads like an account of the lives of the early martyrs. On their arrival at the front they were met with bigotry from high sources. Their unvarying and Christian kindness and devotion to those in their care soon swept away all prejudices. When the nuns knelt beside a dying Catholic to whisper a prayer, the men in the wards, the great majority of whom were Protestants, would maintain a silence that was thrilling. Through their heroism and fortitude many conversions were made, though as Baron Napier, a Scotch nobleman, remarked in speaking of their zeal and devotion to the sick, "while religion was the motive of all their actions they never attempted to make a single convert." The Baron concludes, "They made one convert; they converted me, not to believe in the Catholic faith, but in the Sisters of Mercy."

The companionship of many of the other nurses was not agreeable. It was not what these women of

refinement and culture could have wished. While numbers of those with whom they associated were members of good families and earnest in their desire to help the sick, the great majority of the nurses hired by the authorities were from the roughest classes and included some of the vilest creatures that England could procure. The Sisters were compelled to do not only the nursing but the manual labor, for the rough women refused to do the household work, saying they came out to nurse soldiers, not to sweep and wash. They were a terrible trial to Miss Nightingale. She urged, with great truth, that these nurses could be left alone in the wards. The difficulty was eliminated by attaching one or more of these nurses to the staff of each Sister.

The superiority of the Sisters of Mercy is attested by the author of "Eastern Hospitals and English Nurses," who declares that they were superior to all other classes of nurses engaged in the East. When Miss Nightingale returned to England the military hospitals were left in charge of the Mother Superior of the Sisters of Mercy, under whose administration they became "the admiration of all who visited them, the pride of the ladies and nurses who worked in them and the model hospitals of the East."

After the fall of Sebastopol the Sisters took charge of the General Hospital at Balaklava. The soldiers had been receiving some attention but the sick civilians had to look after themselves. Without neglecting the soldiers, the Sisters cared for these poor strangers in a strange land, for which they won undying gratitude. When one of their number died a content arose between soldiers and medical staff as to which would have the honor of erecting a cross above her grave. Long after the Sisters had gone back to their convent a chaplain visited the graves of the nuns who died "in active service" found them bedecked with flowers planted by their soldier friends.

Never before in the world's history did a small band of women perform such heroic work as these Angels of Mercy on the Crimean battlefield. Never before or since have a few women, banded together by a common faith, earned so much love and gratitude.—Catholic Sun.

MAKES CONVERTS

Every intelligent man, be he Catholic or Protestant, is ready to admit that the Catholic Church is the most powerfully uplifting agency in the world. The slurs and lies to which many vile sheets resort in order to smirch her really accentuate her grandeur in the eyes of decent men. The Guardian thus quotes Edward F. Bigelow, A. M., Ph. D., an Episcopalian:

"One word about the Menace and others of that ilk. They have so far overshoot the mark that the reaction in here. I know personally an atheist of a legal turn of mind who has been pretty nearly or wholly converted to the Roman Catholic Church by the Menace. He told me that the strongest evidence he had ever heard for the truth of the Catholic Church is to have an editor stoop to such cowardice, to the use of such self-evident calumnies. His argument is that the editor has no truth at his disposal that can injure the Church, but to accomplish his purpose he resorts to innuendo, lies, libel and obscenity. No clean-minded person has any respect for The Menace."

The day has arrived when sensible men do not accept assertions unless backed up by facts. As these outrageously un-American sheets abound in vilifications of the Church without attempting to give the slightest proof, they have come to be classed as joke sheets for the diversion of the feeble-minded, and, possibly, supply a present-day demand.—The Pilot.

FLESH VS. SPIRIT AN OLD STORY

A friend, formerly resident on the Atlantic seaboard, tells of a scene which he once witnessed on Wall Street. He happened along one day just at the time when the curb brokers were doing their rushing business. All was hurry and struggle and excitement when into the crowded thoroughfare came two begging Sisters with baskets upon their arms. Of a sudden the voices were hushed as the seething mass of humanity parted to make way for the humble black-clad figures.

Curb brokers and begging Sisters; Nero's house of luxury and Christians in the catacombs; a barbaric horde sweeping down upon the Eternal City and a Pope and his clergy stemming the tide of invasion; England extending her empire by land and sea and Irish priests saying Mass on a wild mountain-side with the stary heaven for a roof over their heads; these are all of a piece. Chronologically they may belong, some to one, some to another century, but essentially they are the same in their testimony to God's truth.

Eventually that truth prevails: Sooner or later Mammon is beaten. Sooner or later the flesh stands abashed and respectful in the presence of the spirit—falls back, as did the curb brokers on Wall Street, to make a pathway in the midst for those who come in the name of the Lord.—New World.

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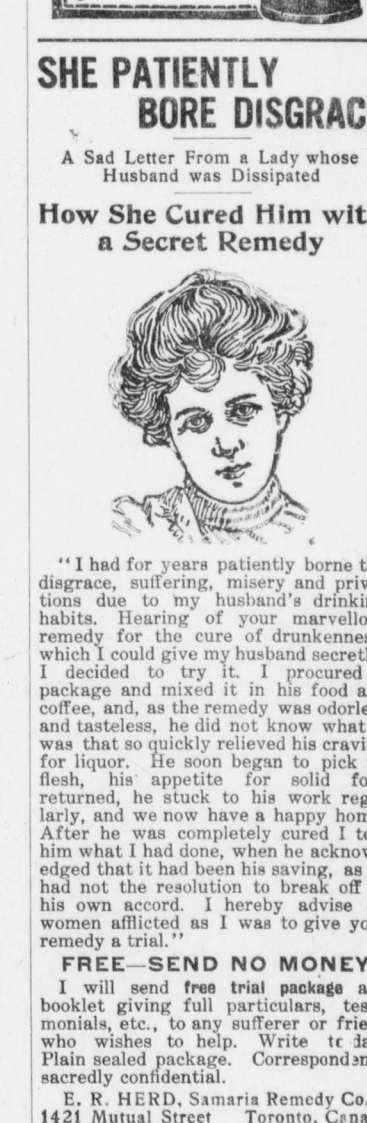
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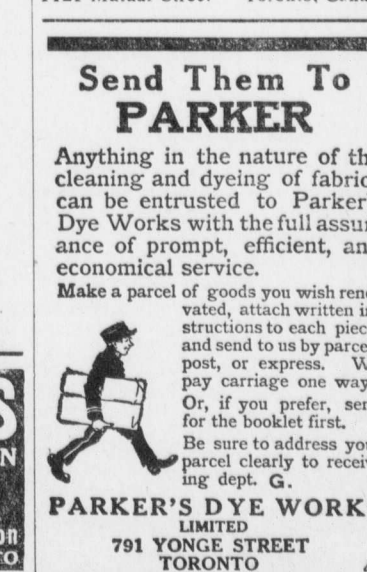
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