

GOLDWIN SMITH

On the Progress of Religious Thought.

In the last two issues of the "True Witness" I attempted to cram into a short space an appreciation of a few of the most striking points in Professor Goldwin Smith's article upon "the Progress of Religious Thought in the Nineteenth Century." I touched upon his elaborate introduction two weeks ago; last week I selected a few passages from the body of his contribution; this week I would like to comment briefly upon the concluding portion of that extraordinary and characteristic production. Despite the errors, historical, theological and otherwise into which the professor has fallen, one would very reasonably expect that some practical lessons would be given at the end, as a result of his elaborate study of every imaginable section of Christianity, but I am forced to conclude that the eminent writer is as far astray at the end as he was in the beginning, and that he must have taken the pains to build up this Babel monument of confused ideas merely for the purpose of displaying his extensive reading, rather than with an aim to ameliorating the situation by some practical suggestion.

Before closing, he undertakes to present the story of the Russian Church and to institute comparisons between it and the Latin, or Catholic Church. That he has read a goodly number of magazine articles upon the subject of Russia and her religion, I can have no doubt; but I seriously question if he knows any more about the Russian Church than about the Catholic one. In the case of the latter he has furnished sufficient proof already, that he knows very little about the theology of Catholicity, much less about the claims of the Church, and decidedly nothing about the spirit of that institution. I will take up a few of his concluding passages and see what can be made of them. He writes—

"In our survey of the religious world we are apt to leave out of sight a fourth part or more of Christendom. When the Anglican bishops some years ago were challenged to say whether they were or were not in communion with the Eastern Church, that is with the Church of Russia, their answer was in effect that the Eastern Church was so remote that they could not tell."

Does he mean "remote" in its origin, or is the term taken in the sense employed by Goldwin Smith's "Traveller,"

"Remote, unfriended, melancholy, slow?"

How could the Anglican bishops, from a theological standpoint, be in communion with the Oriental Christians? They have nothing in common. Politically there might be some connection between the two churches. Both are state churches; both are governed by the mutable laws enacted by kings, or dictated by rulers. The Russian Church draws its inspiration from the autocrat of all the Russias; the Anglican Church is created by act of Parliament and maintained by the same power. The close family relationship between the Czarina and Edward VII., might constitute a binding link between the two. But otherwise I cannot see what hyphen could possibly bridge the abyss that separates these two churches. Mr. Smith says:

"It differs theologically from the Roman Catholic and the Anglican churches on the article in the Creed respecting the procession of the Holy Ghost. But its more practical grounds of difference probably are its abhorrence of images and of instrumental music and its practice of baptism by immersion."

Does he consider that the dogma regarding the Holy Ghost is not more practical—that is important—than the question of images, music, and the form of baptism? What has become of the Professor's theological erudition? The article of the Creed concerning the Holy Ghost is the assertion of one of the fundamental dogma of Christianity; the other subjects affect the discipline of the Christian Church; the former is a "sine qua non," or is an essential; the latter may or may not be absolutely so. At all events they are of minor importance, and not, as the Professor loosely puts it "more practical grounds." He says—

"It is more sacramental than the Roman Catholic Church, administering the Eucharist as well as baptism to infants. While it abhors images, it adores pictures, provided they are archaic and not works of art, having an instinctive perception of the tendency of art to open the door for humanity."

"Less sacramental" he means; for, if degrees be admitted in the sacramental character of churches, that which is most sacramental is the one

theism on the same level, calls upon the "liegemen of reason" (Tom Paines, Voltaires, Volneys, "et hoc genus omne.") to review the evidences in either case and to reject whatever they cannot understand, and thus lay "new and sounder foundations" than those laid by Christ in the beginning. Here is infidelity of the rank; infidelity presupposes an infidel, and such on his own reasons must be Professor Goldwin Smith.

REV. FATHER SEELOS, C.S.S.R.

Merits for Beatification Considered at Baltimore.

News has reached New Orleans of the sitting in Baltimore of an ecclesiastical court, in whose decision New Orleans Catholics will take considerable interest.

The court has been organized to consider the merits of the Rev. Francis Xavier Seelos, C.S.S.R., for beatification, the first step in the process of canonization. The name of Father Seelos is well known in the Redemptorists parish of New Orleans, where there are families who claim his miraculous cure of some of their immediate ancestors. Father Seelos spent only one year of his life here, where he died in the yellow fever epidemic of 1867. His remains lie in St. Mary's Assumption Church (German), over which devout Catholics bend in prayer. That part of the sanctuary has become a shrine in fact, and lighted candles attest the faith which worshippers have in the intercessory powers with the great Jehovah.

A voluminous sketch of Father Seelos was published in 1887 by Father Zimmer, C.S.S.R., and from its pages were gathered yesterday some of the most important events in the life of the candidate for beatification. Only a very few of the Redemptorists in New Orleans now were associated with Father Seelos, transferring, as they do, from one part of the country to another so frequently. Brother Hermann, who will celebrate his golden jubilee as a Redemptorist, was here during Father Seelos' brief stay. Father DeJann, now passed away, was another who knew him well. The parishioners, however, remember him with the deepest affection, and among them he is still spoken of as "Blessed Father Seelos."

Father Seelos was born in Fuesen, Bavaria, Jan. 11, 1819. His parents were devout Catholics, and from his early boyhood he planned for himself a life in the priesthood. He was educated with the greatest care, in the best schools available; first at a village school, then at the University of Munich. With the completion of his college education he made his plans to study for the priesthood. Inclined toward the Redemptorists' Order, he was admitted to the novitiate for admission. He was required to think over the matter further before pressing his application, and while biding his time entered the ecclesiastical seminary of Fuesen, Bavaria, Nov. 3, 1842. He was admitted after a rigorous examination, and during his short stay there won the golden encomiums of the faculty and their predictions that he was to be a great light in the Catholic Church.

While in the seminary, the letter came, granting him permission to enter the Redemptorists' Order, and March 17, 1843, in company with two of his members, he started on his journey to America. He arrived in the city of New York, Easter Monday, April 17, and there he was welcomed by the superior. Up to the time of the coming of Father Seelos, there had been no American novitiate for Redemptorists, so that Father Seelos was the first of the school that has since prepared hundreds of missionaries for the New World. He was invested with the habit, May 6, 1843, at the St. James House, Baltimore; professed, May 16, 1844; ordained December 22, 1844, by the Archbishop of Baltimore, and said his first Mass Christmas Day.

His first work as a priest was done in Baltimore. He was very shortly transferred to Pittsburgh, where Father Newman, afterwards Bishop Newman, was the rector of the house. His extraordinary qualifications for the priesthood, which developed rapidly, brought him to the attention of his superiors, and his first promotion came in 1847, when he was made master of novices at Pittsburgh. While occupying this position, he had under him, Father John Duffy, afterwards superior of the house in New Orleans, and who died in this city, in 1874. Father Seelos was made superior of the Pittsburgh house, in 1851. He died this post until 1854, when he was appointed to the rectorship of St. Alphonsus' Church, Baltimore, where he remained until 1857. He was then transferred to Annapolis, as superior and master of novices, and after one month, was sent as prefect of studies to Cumberland, Md. It was while he was in the house at Cumberland, in 1860, that he was proposed for bishop to the Holy See, by the bishop of Pittsburgh, who, resigning on account of ill health, desired him as his successor. Fearful of such responsibility Father Seelos pleaded with the superior general in Rome, to use his influence at the Vatican, to cancel his name from the list of candidates. His petition was heeded and Father Seelos remained in his convent. In 1862, Father Seelos was transferred with his students to Annapolis, away from the scenes of the war between the States. From 1863 until 1866, he

was superior of the Redemptorists' missions, and in that office visited a number of the larger cities of the North.

He was transferred to New Orleans in 1866, and reached this city September 28, where he was welcomed by the superior of the New Orleans house, Father John Duffy, his former novice. Father Seelos is quoted as voicing these prophetic words shortly after his arrival: "Here is my home, and here will I die." He was appointed prefect of St. Mary's Assumption Church and school prefect of the lay brothers, spiritual director for the Archconfraternity of the Holy Family, and spiritual director and confessor for the Notre Dame Sisterhood, offices filled now by Rev. Father Muehlstein, C.S.S.R. Father Seelos made his way at once into the hearts of the people of his parish and of the city, and it is not surprising that he was recognized that he was a man of extraordinary piety. He was especially popular as a confessor, and as a worker in the schoolroom he had no peer at that time. He gained a reputation for miraculous healing power, and there are people living to-day who claim to have witnessed some of his cures. Father Seelos will be remembered by some of the other Catholics of Natchez, as having conducted the spiritual retreat for the priests of that diocese, during February 1867, and his name is on the list of the priests of recognized ability.

Father Seelos on July 17, 1867, blessed the statue of the Mater Dolorosa, which is standing in St. Mary's Church to-day, and he voiced the wish on that occasion that he should be buried at its feet. He wished, too, that he might die on Friday or Saturday, the days on which the Saviour and the Virgin Mary had expired, and both of these wishes were granted to him. He died on the evening of Friday, Oct. 4, 1867, of a violent fever. During his illness prayers were offered in all the churches for his recovery, people wept outside of the convent walls, and the three papers of New Orleans published daily reports of his condition. The physician who attended him during his illness, Dr. Dowler, discovered that one of his lungs had been completely destroyed by consumption, and declared it as wonderful that he could have kept at his work under the physical suffering he had been silently enduring. Among the last words of Father Seelos was an expression of happiness at dying a Redemptorist. He breathed his last in the habit of the order, surrounded by his brother priests chanting a hymn to the Virgin Mary. He died at the age of forty-eight years and nine months, and was buried in the choir of St. Mary's Church. He was so highly regarded by the members of the order here that when Father DeJann came to die he asked to have placed in his hands the crucifix which had rested on Father Seelos' living heart of Father Seelos.

The ecclesiastical commission which has begun its investigation into the life of Father Seelos will come to New Orleans in the course of its work, and it is probable that the remains of Father Seelos will be moved to the city of Baltimore, however, until the fall, as in such important matters every move is made very slowly.

CATHOLIC EDITORS ON MANY THEMES.

The "Catholic University" of Cleveland says:—

Rev. C. W. Carroll, a Protestant minister, stated in his sermon last Sunday that "Married men live longer than bachelors." He said that "statistics show that the mortality rate among Protestant ministers is 35 per cent., while among Catholic priests it is 112 per cent."

"We can believe that, as a rule, 'married men live longer than bachelors,' because they are more regular in their habits and more sober in their conduct. Many of 'the men around town' are given to too much indulgence, and are unrestrained in their lives.

The statement regarding ministers and priests is unfair, and we think untrue. We challenge the proof. The life of a priest is far different from that of a minister. The priest has at least three times as much work to do. He not only has the care of the spiritual affairs, but also of the temporalities of the parish. He is the superintendent of his school and the man of affairs in the congregation. He spends hours in the confessional and says Mass fasting. On Sundays, as a rule, he does not break his fast until afternoon, and preaches at least twice on an empty stomach. He visits the sick, and no contagion keeps him from the sick room, where Protestant ministers, by their own admissions, declare that they have no place.

There is a drain on the physical strength of the Catholic priest of which a Protestant minister does not dream.

We would like to see the mathematical process by which Rev. Mr. Carroll or his statistician demonstrates that the mortality rate among the Catholic priests is 112 per cent.

RELAPSED CONVERTS.—Under this caption the "New Century," Washington, remarks:—

A convert who enters the Church with the expectation that he will meet hearty human sympathy from his co-religionist, will surely be disappointed. If his name has appeared in the newspaper he will be treated as a celebrity—and probably asked to teach ethics or history—until the novelty wears off, or his importance is shadowed by the coming in of a greater newspaper celebrity. This setting him to teach before he has learned the rudiments of the Catholic point of view is, as a rule, a misfortune for him and those whom he teaches. But that does not count. He goes on teaching, general-

ly with the old virus in his blood, until his vanity gets a great shock, and then his heart grows bitter. If he is not a celebrity he is left alone to stumble along as best he can. He finds his Catholic acquaintances wearing their religion perfunctorily. It is vital, no doubt, but it does not influence their manners. As to their morals, that is a different thing, but he sees that they go as far as they can without committing grave sin. Their code is not "keep the commandments," but break them as far as you can without falling into mortal sin. He finds that while the morals of the people are neglected, and that the ideals of the sweetness, the sincerity, and zeal of Catholic life do not, as far as he sees, generally exist.

He has come into the Church for peace, but he has brought the same old emotional, yearning heart with him. His mind has been touched only superficially. He finds coldness and indifference everywhere—and he leaves the sacred portal, wretched, unfriended, to go back to his huss. Shall we call him rude names, or learn to save him by reforming ourselves?

DESERTED IN OLD AGE.—The following is taken from the Michigan "Catholic":—

"Please pray for the repose of the soul of John Schultz, aged 40 years, who died at the Asylum Monday last. His family were notified, but would not bury him. The Kent County officials also refused. The body would have been sent to Ann Arbor for dissection, had not it been claimed by the clergy. This is another case of desertion of relatives and friends. How little can man count on friends in hours of need."

The above clipping which we reproduce from our e. e., the Kalamazoo Augustinian, speaks for itself. There are too many such cases, and they give us a faint idea of the selfishness that is around us. Helpless creatures, who, in earlier years may have been good providers and good citizens, are left by unnatural children and relatives to die by the roadside unless rescued by the good Samaritan. It is a sad tale and one which is retold every day in our asylums.

THE HOMES OF THE POOR IN ENGLAND.

The twelfth annual meeting of the Sheffield Association for the improvement in sanitary conditions and the better housing of the poor was held recently in the Temperance Hall.

The Very Rev. Bernard Vaughan, S.J., in supporting the adoption of the annual report, said that the fact that the new century was just commencing caused them to contrast the present with the past, and look forward to the future. At the beginning of the last century, they had struggles for political, social, and religious freedom, and were just recovering from the horrors of the French Revolution. In the early years of the century the banner of political freedom was unfurled, and the people fought so well that the Reform Bill was passed in 1832. Then the middle and upper classes ground the workers down again in the Lancashire mills and other places, making in some instances 500 per cent. profit. Then the political banner was unfurled, and the franchise Bill was passed in 1867. This measure being passed, there was now no political slavery to keep them back from obtaining housing reforms, which they should strive for, not merely as men, but as citizens in an empire which prides herself on political freedom. It would be a disgrace for political freedom to be used, and how many were using their political freedom as men, as citizens, and as members of the first empire of the world, and not merely with parochial and local interests, but with an interest extending to the extent of the empire. Besides political freedom—freedom from some of the worst forms of disease and sickness. At the beginning of the last century 3,000 persons in every million died of smallpox. People thought very little of sanitation, and they objected particularly to light in their homes because of the existence of a window tax. The old clothes which ought to have gone to the "uncle," went into the window to stop the holes (laughter). "Then there was no idea of sanitation. If persons were sick they had to get well again. There were no such things as district nurses, and the doctors might be fairly good carpenters, but they knew little of the human frame, and what went on inside it. Surgeons there were of a class, the tortures they put the patients to were most awful."

All this had been altered. How was it, then, that when volunteers were needed for South Africa, last year, out of 11,000 who volunteered only 8,000 were accepted as fit, and only 2,200 were of moderate build? It was because the conditions of the people were such as to prevent the building up of race.

He would not say anything about the condition of the homes of the people in Sheffield, because he wished to continue his life a little longer (laughter). In the city of London there were a million of people housed as they should not be, and 140,000 houses were condemned by the sanitary inspectors as unfit for human habitation. There was a striking contrast between the conditions in the East and West of London. Taking the East, and excluding the West, one person in every three died outside his own home—in a workhouse, infirmary, hospital, or some such institution. If the average was taken, including the inhabitants of the West-End, one in every five persons died outside his or her home. In the East-End the people were huddled together in a shameful manner. He had known of four, six,

eight twelve, and even sixteen all living in one room, and this is the first city of the empire, with "Freedom and Liberty" written across her brow. If such conditions existed in London, what would be the condition in such cities as Liverpool, Manchester, and Sheffield? If they knew as much as he did of the conditions in which the poor lived in Manchester, they would agree with him that the least said about them the better, except to try and alter them. There was an appalling state of affairs in all the large cities. He said what he did, not as a priest merely, but as a Christian merely, and as a man (applause). He would ask why were their stables better than some of the homes of the people, for in many cases they were so. Many a man was more particular in the selection of an animal he wanted to buy at the market than he was in the selection of a wife. Such men thought of the deal about breed with regard to the animals. Men ought to remember that they were marrying not merely for their own gratification. What was bred in the bone would come out in the blood.

If they wanted their children to grow up to respect them they must give the children some reason for that respect. How could husband and wife respect each other, and the children respect the parents when they were huddled together in a room in one room, perhaps with other besides those of one family? If they had such homes there could be no reverence and respect. Where there was no respect for one another there could be no respect for oneself. If there was no such respect for the dirt, lay in dirt, kept warm in dirt, and if they came out it was the worse for the community. Was that social or political freedom? The man might come out with a vote, but what use was that if there was no health in the home, if the man did not keep their own homes in order, how were they going to keep their district in order, their city in order the empire in order? Out of such nests of filth and vice were created ruffians and anarchists. It seemed hard to take the vote from the heads of the people, but such demagogues as now existed would have to be torn down to get rid of the filth, vice and degradation which, instead of humanizing the man, brutalized him. Their aim must be to start at the body first, and then to humanize first, and show a man how to be a man and not a brute. Once humanized, they could then civilize and Christianize a man, and leave God to canonize him (applause).

As a man, as a citizen of this empire, and as a Christian, he wished the better housing of his poorer brethren. They must get the men out of their present homes, and start them again in places fit to live in, and not leave them in places not fit for swine. He trusted that the work would be carried on in Sheffield so that every man would have a home, and bring his children up in such a way that they, when they left that home, would say they intended to have a home like their father had (loud applause).

PAPER COFFINS.—One of the latest things to be made of paper is coffins. It has been demonstrated that paper coffins are waterproof, fireproof and acid proof, practically as indestructible as their cheapest form they are 50 per cent. cheaper than plain pine boxes, and again they may be made as handsome as a reewood casket.

Montreal City and District Savings Bank.

The Annual General Meeting of the Stockholders of this Bank will be held at its Head Office, 176 St. James Street, TUESDAY, 7th May next, at 1 o'clock p.m. The agenda of the meeting will be the reading of the Report and Statements, and the election of Directors.

By order of the Board,
H. Y. BARBEAU,
Manager.
Montreal, 30th March, 1901.



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QUALITY is the essential element in the make up of SURPRISE Soap. QUALITY is the secret of the great success of SURPRISE Soap. QUALITY means pure hand soap with remarkable and peculiar qualities for washing clothes.

"But if the self-righteous community, the quent the best clubs who do all the churches do to absent their theatres which offend the cold shudder who write them, as they other person who do to behave himself"

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