

I shall give you at a future time some of Dr. Rainy's statements as to the progress of theology, which is only another way of saying that "creeds grow."

A LOVER OF TRUTH.

SUSTENTATION FUND.

MR. EDITOR,—Are the laity of the Presbyterian Church aware of what they are doing in allowing Presbyteries to report in favour of a sustentation fund, and that the ministers' object, in some cases at least, is an entirely and purely selfish one in advocating the adoption of such a fund. In the Barrie Presbytery, last week, the matter was under discussion. I fancy there were twelve or fifteen members present, all ministers but two. I heard one minister give as his reason for desiring a sustentation fund, that ministers under the present system are too much at the mercy of their congregations. Now, it strikes me, ministers have already the advantage over their congregations; they can leave a congregation when they like, and with or without reason; but a congregation have no way of getting a minister to leave, however much they may desire it or have reason to desire it. It seems a farce having representative elders at all; they do not seem to take any interest in the affairs of the Church, not even enough to attend an occasional meeting of Presbytery, and it is very little wonder ministers should legislate entirely to please themselves and for their own interests. If the highest aim in getting sustentation inaugurated is to add to the ministers' security and independence—and it seems entirely such to me from what I have read and heard on the matter—then most assuredly I shall not be a contributor to that fund, and I hope it is not yet too late for the elders, should they agree with me in any sense, to go in such numbers as they are entitled to, both to Synods and Assembly, and let themselves both be heard and felt on the subject. We have ourselves to blame if we allow ourselves to be saddled with another scheme, and one which will be made the principal one of the Church, and will be wrought at the expense of the others; and I can see no need for it if the ministers are conscientious and faithful. So far as my experience goes, they have no need to dread trusting to the liberality of their congregations, and if they are merely, or even principally, preaching for the money, the sooner they are starved out the better for all concerned.

A REPRESENTATIVE ELDER.

RENUNCIATION OF ROMANISM BY A PRIEST.

To the Right Rev. the Archbishop of Cincinnati.

MY LORD,—You know that I was born at Colvello in Italy, and that I was ordained a priest of Rome at Diano, Province of Solerno, by Bishop D. Fanelli. After five years of priesthood, I had seen so many scandals and such a want of religion in the secular clergy, that I thought there was no other way to be saved except by becoming a monk, and I entered the order of the Franciscans; but I found that through the whole kingdom of Italy the Franciscans were as corrupted and devoid of religious faith as the rest of the priests. Their vow of celibacy was only a mask to conceal the most unspeakable corruption, and their vow of poverty was only to become the richest men of Italy. I left them in 1875, to come to America.

But here, I have seen again that the same immorality, corruption, drunkenness, ignorance and infidelity are reigning supremely, everywhere, among the high and low clergy, under the gilded mask of the bastard Christianity of Rome.

In a word, I have seen with my own eyes, that the Christianity of Rome, both in Europe and America, is a deception, a fraud. The millions of dollars which yourself, the Bishop of St. Louis, and many other bishops on this continent, have extorted from your poor dupes, and ingulfed, to build your princely palaces, buy your costly French or Italian wines and brandies, have perfectly shewn to me that the Church of Rome is only a caricature of the religion of the humble Jesus of Nazareth. I then went in search of that divine religion which the Son of God has brought to save this perishing world. I have, by the mercy of God, found it among those humble and devoted men called Protestant ministers, whom I had been taught to despise as heretics.

As it would be too long to name them all, I will tell you that when I have compared the words and the deeds of the Revs. John Reid and D. Fiaks of Colo-

rado, Dr. Joyce of Cincinnati, and Father Chiniquy of Ste. Anne, Illinois, with the words and deeds of the priests and bishops of Rome, I have felt and understood that my only chance of salvation was in uniting myself *corde et animo* to those humble and devoted disciples of the Gospel, to serve my God in spirit and in truth, through Jesus Christ, with them.

It is particularly during the happy days of prayer, meditation and study I have spent in the "Converted Priests' Home," where Father Chiniquy is giving me such a Christian hospitality, that I have seen that your transubstantiation, immaculate conception, purgatory, infallibility of the Pope, auricular confession, indulgences, worship of Mary, are blasphemous and idolatrous doctrines.

May God grant that your lordship, with all the priests of Rome, receive the light which my merciful God has given me; and that you may have the grace to give up the errors of popery, as I am just doing today, in order to put your hope of salvation *only* in Christ, and Him crucified. For there is only one name—the name of Jesus—through which men can be saved; there is only one sacrifice—the sacrifice of Calvary—which has been offered, once for all, to redeem the world; there is only one stone, one rock, to serve as the corner stone, the foundation of the Church; that stone or rock is not Peter, but Christ.

F. E. DECOLVELLO.

Ste. Anne, Kankakee Co., Illinois, March, 1881.

P.S.—I respectfully ask the Christian papers of the United States to reproduce this letter, in order that the disciples of Jesus everywhere may pray for me.

MR. EDITOR,—Let your Christian readers help me to praise the Lord for His mercies towards the Rev. Mr. Colvello, whose eyes have just been opened to the errors of the Church of Rome. Nothing is more difficult than the conversion of a priest of Rome. It is as great a miracle as the raising of a dead man from the grave—God alone can perform that miracle.

The dark night which surrounds the intelligence of a priest is as profound as the darkness which covered the land of Egypt in the days of Moses. The snares and delusions which surround him baffle any description; they are simply incredible to any one who has not been a priest. Satan has built a wall of fire around him, that he may be unable to come out from his sinful and idolatrous ways. The chains which bind the priest to the feet of his idols seem to be made with a mysterious steel, the secret of which is in hell.

The awful anathemas hurled by Rome against the priest who has the superhuman courage and the divine grace to break his fetters may be turned into ridicule by an enlightened Protestant, but they fall with an irresistible power on the devoted head of the converted priest. Had he been an angel of purity and honesty when at the feet of the Pope, he is immediately branded as one of the vilest debauchees. Had he been raised by his eloquence and learning, his private and public virtues, to the highest positions of honour and confidence in the Church of Rome, he is, at once, stigmatized as the vilest among the vile. Often, prostitutes are paid to publish false and infamous stories against him, and thousands of men are ready to swear anything their bishops will ask, against the doomed apostate! Cursed by his best former friends and neighbours; cursed by the other priests and their two hundred millions of slaves; cursed not only by his brothers and sisters, but, often, by a father and mother, whom he loves more than himself; an outcast everywhere he turns his steps; where will he go to conceal his shame? Where will he find a shelter against the hurricane of fulminations, insults, denunciations, blowing against him from every corner of the sky? Surely, he cannot go to any Roman Catholic. Will he go to the Protestants? But, before he knocks at their door, the thousand whistling, lying voices of calumny have filled the very atmosphere they breathe with tales of the most ignominious deeds, which chill the hearts and shut the doors.

After I had lectured about ten days in Ballarat, Australia, two years ago, a friend wrote me: "The Rev. Mr. —, a very respectable Roman Catholic priest, has attended, in disguise, all your lectures; he is convinced of the correctness of what you say against his Church, and he is going to meet you at Melbourne."

But that unfortunate priest, a week later, was found drowned on the shore of the Pacific Ocean. When on his way to meet me, he had been so overpowered

by the shame, the curses, the persecutions, calumnies, insults, and by fear of the daggers and bullets of the assassins, in store for him, that he had thrown himself into the roaring waves, which had dashed his mangled body on the rocks!

Not long ago, I received a letter from a very able Roman Catholic priest, who has been brave enough to give up the errors of popery. He wrote me: "Seven priests, among whom are very able men, have told me, this winter, that they were disgusted with the idolatry, mummeries and corruption of their Church, they had given it up to join the Protestants. But after some time of experience, they have gone back and made their submissions to the bishops, saying that they prefer the *fiery hell* of Romanism to the *icy hell* of Protestantism."

The cold receptions, the half-concealed airs of want of confidence, the crooked eyes, the haughty manners, with which they had been received in many places, at the very threshold of the Protestant houses they had entered, had hurled them back into the bottomless abyss of idolatry and sins, from which they had, once, hoped to save themselves.

After considering those things with many prayers and tears, before my God, I have thought that it was my duty to do all in my power to help the priests who hear the voice of God calling them out of Babylon.

When in Ireland, in 1865 and 1874, I saw that the noble hearted Rev. Thomas Scott, Episcopal minister of Barmeen, Rathmines, Dublin, had founded an asylum for the priests of Ireland who wanted to give up their errors and follow Christ. That admirable Christian, who is one of the most faithful soldiers and ministers of Christian Great Britain, has been blessed by God and men in his efforts. His appeals to the "Good Master" and His disciples have been heard, and he has been nobly supported. The result is, that fifty priests and ecclesiastics of Rome have given up their errors in Ireland, and are now preaching Christ and Him crucified.

Can we not try the same Christian work on this continent? Oh yes, we can! we must try it. The God of the Gospel will bless our efforts and sacrifices in America as He has blessed the sacrifices and noble efforts of my venerable friend and benefactor, Thomas Scott, in Dublin.

From the very hour of my conversion, I have not spent a single day without praying my dear Saviour to grant me to help the poor, blind, perishing priests of Rome, in finding the truth, and I know He has heard the humble prayers and seen the tears of His unprofitable servant, for He has already granted me to extend a helping hand to not less than sixteen priests and ecclesiastics, who have publicly given up popery. If, by the mercy of God, such a work has been done by the poor missionary of Ste. Anne, what could we not expect, if all the disciples of Christ on this continent would unite their prayers, their means and their efforts towards that end?

With the money raised, these last two years, with my lectures, my books, and the kind gifts of a few friends, I have been enabled to raise here a decent "Converted Priests' Home," where several priests have already found the "pearl of great price."

But such a work is above the power and the means of a poor missionary. I want the prayers of all those who take an interest in the conversion of the priests, I want the help of those to whom the God of our salvation has given the means and the will, to do something for that great Gospel work.

I do not beg—No! Begging of man is too hard and humiliating a thing; it is too often answered by a cold rebuke. But, I beg of my dear Saviour, Jesus Christ, that He may speak Himself to His own children, and they will hear His voice, and the help will come in the hour of need.

I promise to send one of my little books "From Chicago to Australia," or the more considerable volume, "The Priest, the Woman and the Confessional," to every one of my Christian sisters or brethren who will address me anything, even the crumbs of their tables, to help me to feed, clothe, lodge and protect those new Sauls, who cry to the Lord: "What can we do?" and who hear the answer, "Go to the city . . . and they will tell you what to do."

C. CHINIQUY.

Ste. Anne, Kankakee Co., Illinois, March 15th, 1881.

At the social tea-meeting of Widder street Presbyterian Church, St. Mary's, the handsome sum of \$200 was realized.