



INVOCATION OF THE SAINTS.

CARDINAL GIBBONS' LEARNED LECTURE.

The Baltimore "Mirror" says that Cardinal Gibbons delivered a lecture on the above subject.

His Eminence read the Gospel of the day, which he took for the text of an instructive sermon on "The Invocation of the Saints." Jesus Christ was tempted by the devil; the son of God was tempted by a fallen angel. This fact we cannot deny. "I have loved and yet been unfaithful to my brethren in the flesh; if they have one desire more than another, it is that we might share in their bliss. If you sister cross the Atlantic, the instinct of faith and piety will prompt her to pray for you in her absence, and if she crosses the narrow sea of death and enters the shore of eternity, why should she not pray for you there? For what is death but the separation of the soul from the body? The soul has not ceased to think, to remember and to love. The earthly dress of sin has been consumed in the salutary fires of contrition, and nothing remains but the gold of pure charity. He love for you is intensified and elevated.

A WISE OPINION.

The Relations of the State to Religion.

Nobody suspects the Popular Science Monthly of having any theological bias whatsoever, says the Pilot, and certainly not of entertaining the smallest partiality towards the Catholic faith, and this is its editorial comment on religious teaching in the public schools. Far be it from us to argue against religious teaching in schools under private control, or to assert or imply that the religious element is not a most important one in education generally. That was not the question before the conference, nor is it one with which we should think it right to concern ourselves. The question is: Can the State teach religion? Dr. Butler thinks it can, because there has never been any divorce between the State and Christianity. The reason is glaringly insufficient. A "divorce" means tearing asunder; there has been no divorce between the State and Christianity, for the excellent reason that there never was a union of a formal or legal kind to sever. A majority of the population, it may be assumed, are professed adherents of Christianity, but it does not follow from that that they have authorized the Government to give effect in any practical shape to such convictions as they may have on the subject. Before the Government can act, it must have a very clear mandate; and manifestly the people could not give the Government a mandate on this subject without stating clearly what they understood by Christianity, and with what degree of detail they wished its doctrines to be made matter of instruction in the schools. The idea of a Government deciding such questions for itself is simply ridiculous. In certain cases, where technical knowledge is required, the State can call experts to its aid—architects, engineers, chemists, electricians; but imagine for a moment the Government calling for expert assistance in a question of theology. But to come down to facts, the people do not want the State to undertake any theological or religious business on their behalf. They know, they deeply feel, its utter incompetency in that sphere. They know that it is as much as they themselves can do in their several churches to avoid causes of dispute and separation; and they have not the most remote idea of inviting the politicians whom they have elected to office to make amateur theologians of themselves for any purpose whatsoever. The very idea is so incongruous with the spirit of the time that it is hardly worth while to insist on the fact that the Christian community is itself divided by the most serious differences of opinion upon various theological questions—so much so that, in the eyes of certain Christians, others who claim the name have no title to it whatever. The differences of opinion, for example, between Trinitarians and Unitarians, and between Universalists, who look forward to the salvation of all, and those, as the Scotch woman said, who "hope for better things," or between Roman Catholics and those who think that Roman Catholicism is "the best" of the Book of Revelation and the Papacy the "scarlet woman," are fundamental, and any religious teaching that was meant to gain equal approval from these and all other sections of the Christian community would have to be very vague and non-committal indeed. The whole merit and force of a religious system consists in its teaching authoritatively that which would not otherwise be conveyed to the mind at all; while the essential character of any religious instruction which the State could give would be found in its vagueness and conventional opinion. Has any Protestant anything to answer.

The Pope's 80th Birthday.

ROME, March 2.—The Pope is to-day receiving congratulations on the occasion of the 80th anniversary of his birthday. He was born March 2, 1810, and was elected to the Papacy upon the death of Pope Pius IX., being crowned Pope Leo XIII. Upon receiving the visit of the sacred college of cardinals his Holiness compared the position and difficulties of the church in the present time with the position of the church in the days of Pope Gregory. The Pope said that he was gratified at the progress of the faith in England. He also said, if God spared him until his episcopal jubilee, he would devote part of the offering he might receive to the suppression of slavery.

AN ITALIAN TRIO

OF THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY.

A Sketch of the Careers of Dante, Petrarch and St. Catherine of Siena.

Of all those who in the fourteenth century had at heart the true interests of Italy, none stand forth so prominently on the pages of history as Dante, Petrarch, and St. Catherine of Siena. By the energy of their initiatives, and their long and patient endeavors, they devoted themselves more than any others to the task of delivering their fair country from the disastrous condition to which it had been reduced by cupidity, ambition, and party hatred. The means employed by one were not, and could not be, identical with those used by the others; still, on more than one point the irascible Alighieri, the sweet singer of Laura, and the angelical Catherine were united in the harmony of a common judgment and assayed to reach a common end. All three viewed in the same light the exile of the Papacy at Avignon; all three saw in the Pope's return to Rome the principle of Italy's salvation and of an increasing respect and honor paid to the Holy See by the nations of Christendom.

Dante Alighieri, a Guelph in his own country, a model citizen during the brief triumphs of liberty in Florence, was no sooner driven from the land of his birth than he became, through resentment, a Ghibelline. At that period, especially, ardent passions were raging in Italian hearts. When he experienced "how bitter is the bread of the stranger, and how hard a road it is to ascend the staircase of another," Dante became a changed man. Exile embittered the divine poet's soul, without, however, diminishing his respect for religion. Always great, but no longer blameless, the banished Florentine began to flagellate with bitter criticism all his adversaries, Guelph and Ghibelline indiscriminately. Anger was Dante's chief sin, and that anger was turned with terrible power of expression against the Guelphs, the Kings of France, and the Popes; against these last, perhaps, his most cruel darts were launched. In all this warfare, however, he attacked merely the man whom he believed in fault; his spleen was never vented on the Vicar of Christ. On the contrary, he always kept alive in his soul a burning love for the Christian religion, and a sovereign veneration for the power of the Keys. Even while Boniface VIII., Clement V., and John XXII., were the objects of

HIS INCESSANT ASSAULTS,

his want of respect for these supreme pastors was never accompanied with contempt of their authority. Still more, the vindictive Ghibelline, with that singular intuition which never failed him, recognized the advantage that would accrue to Italy from the return of the Popes to Rome; and from the depths of his exile he actively worked to bring about this result—a work that was assuredly not peculiarly Ghibelline.

When Clement V. died Dante thought the hour had arrived for the reinstatement at Rome of the Sovereign Pontiff. He forwarded to six cardinals—the only Italians in the conclave—vehement exhortations. "Peter and Paul," he said, "took possession of Rome in their blood; they made it their seat. Elect, then, a Pope who will restore to Rome the seat of the Apostles." He continues: "If I have opened my lips, it is you who have constrained me to do so. . . . Blush to receive from so humble a source counsels that you should hear from heaven. . . . Place before your eyes the image of Rome sitting in solitude, widowed of her two luminaries, the Pope and the Emperor. It is you that the matter principally concerns; you have spent your early years on the sacred banks of the Tiber. All the capital of the Latin race has a right to the love of all Italians, how much more should she be venerated by you who owe to her all that you are? And since her present misery is for us a sorrow and a humiliation, it is possible that you do not suffer, do not blush—you who are the cause of the absence of her sun?"

Less remarkable than Alighieri, Francesco Petrarch was not less devoted to the church and to Italy; it would be to miskenow him sadly to judge him solely by his mellancholic sonnets. Petrarch participated with Dante in many glories and more than one error; but he was superior to the poet of the "Divina Commedia" in his more exalted idea of ancient and of modern Rome. If he sometimes suffered himself to be led away by the theories of the Ghibellines and their sympathies, he was ever a stranger to their rancors and their animosities. Respectful towards the popes, he consecrated

HIS LOFTY ELOQUENCE

to the preparation of their return to Rome. It is true that in his attacks upon the court of Avignon, and on the French generally, he often indulges in poetic exaggeration; but it will not do to accord him merely the praise of possessing a vivid imagination since the greatest intellects of his age, and the Popes themselves, looked on him as a man of rare intelligence and of much varied knowledge. Having lived for years at Avignon, he felt the high esteem which he professed for the city of the Casars and the Pontiffs growing stronger within him; and it was at Rome that he wished, in preference, to receive the laureate of the poets which had been offered to him at Paris.

Rome was his first and principal love. He appreciated so fully the ancient and the modern glories of the Eternal City that in his mind they were never separated. "What think you should I feel,"

he wrote to Jacobo Colonna—"I, an Italian,—in the city of Rome, where Sicily was born, where he was brought up, where he triumphed with equal glory as vanquisher and prisoner; where have lined so many illustrious men whose renown shall never pass away?—in this city, which has no rival, which will never know an equal, and which even its enemies proclaim queen among cities? And though all this should leave me indifferent, how soothing it is for a Christian to visit the city, earth's symbol of heaven, which preserves the bodies of the martyrs, which was bathed in the blood of the witnesses to the truth! How sweet to venerate the image of the Saviour at the Lateran, and the adorable imprint of His feet at the *Domine, que vadis*; to wander, preoccupied with the desire of a better life, amidst the dwellings of the saints and their tombs!"

It is not surprising that Petrarch, so fond an admirer of Christian Rome, should have exerted himself to restore to her her greatest glory, the Papacy. What he effected in this design is incredible, but he was physically unequal to such a task; and he died shortly before the return of Gregory, without seeing the realization of his hopes. More effective was the action of an humble virgin who lived in the charity of Jesus Christ, and left in His hands the success of the most difficult undertakings. Catherine of Siena never ceased to

FOSTER IN HER SOUL

the hope of the Holy See's re-establishment at Rome. She had been led to cherish this desire by the deplorable state of the Eternal City, by the wishes of the Italians, and especially by the sublime idea she entertained of the duties of the pastoral ministry closely bound to the Roman See. From the first letter which she wrote to Pope Gregory until the close of her earthly career she worked for this end unceasingly and with uniform energy. Careless of the monuments of antiquity, her heart viewed Rome through the veil of divine love, and saw only the holy city regenerated and ennobled by Christ. As a consequence, her design of enhancing the Christian glory of Rome by re-establishing therein the pontifical throne was more lofty, constant and persevering than that of either Dante or Petrarch, both of whom, blending in one picture pagan and Christian Rome, forgot not the Emperor while desiring the Pope.

We do not blame Alighieri and the singer of Laura for their love of ancient Rome; in this they only followed the example of many illustrious men, and in particular of St. Augustine. In the midst of a multiplicity of errors, there were in the old pagan civilization, in Rome especially, vestiges of religious traditions of marvellous fecundity. Both, however, were manifestly at fault in wishing to resuscitate things dead, and dead for all time. "Alighieri," says Balbo, "allowed himself to be enamored of the great names and glorious memories of Rome; certainly these are things which we should respect, but which we should take good care not to wish to introduce. To attempt it in any way whatever would be a dangerous folly." Petrarch evinced similar zeal in the service of this same chimera. And not satisfied with their efforts to evoke from its tomb the universal empire of ancient Rome, they both endeavored to give to their dream the appearance of a doctrine. In the scheme of Dante, however, as in that of Petrarch, the universal dominion of the Emperor did not exclude the sovereignty at Rome of the Pope. In their eyes the Papacy was the sun, the Empire the moon of Rome. But because they associated Peter with Cesar, they did not attain to that clear and certain conception of the destinies of the Papacy which the virgin of Siena, free from all party spirit, had found in looking at the question from the purely

CHRISTIAN POINT OF VIEW.

Alighieri, Petrarch, and St. Catherine were, then, in some respects, one on the subject of the Roman Pontificate. All three knew where lay the source of life not only to religion, but to civilization, the daughter of Rome; and finding no longer in the deserted Vatican the seat of the Apostle, they cried as from a single breast a cry of infinite sorrow. But Catherine's idea, as we have said, was the holiest, the most noble. Where Dante and Petrarch had in view, in the development of their systems, either the city or the Empire, St. Catherine figured to herself Christian humanity gathered to the bosom of the Chair, and tending toward a supernatural and heavenly end, beneath the standard of the Roman Pontiff.

Who can doubt that the Papacy is the subject of a special providence of God? Let us look back eighteen hundred and ninety years. There stands Rome—Rome, the mighty Rome, the queen of all nations; Rome, to whom all peoples bow in subjection or enforced alliance. How many monarchs have entered that imperial city with the pomp and the parade of long triumphal processions. With them were the laurel branches, the golden eagles, the shouting legions, and notes of martial music; with them came royal captives, and before them were carried the trophies of battle and the richest spoils of conquest. But all soon vanished from the scene of time; their marble palaces and porticoes are now crumbled to decay, and their memory has died away like a sound. How different the destiny of St. Peter and his successors! One day, in the forty-second year of the reign of the haughty Claudius, there entered Rome, by the Ostian Gate, a poor traveller, carrying a staff in his hand; alone and afoot, covered with dust and wayworn, he soon mingled with the scolding crowd, one of the least apparently of the subjects of the Emperor. He passed along unrecognized, unhonored; but he came to dethrone the devil from

the hearts of men, and plant the cross above the diadem of Cesar. He was mightier than Cesar; for from being a simple fisherman of Galilee he became the Prince of the Apostles, and here in his lowly person the vicarship of Christ and the power of those God-given Keys which can bind and loose whatsoever both in heaven and on earth: He took possession of Rome and made it the seat of a spiritual kingdom, whose limits are to-day the bounds of the earth, whose duration is eternity.—*The Mirror.*

Beatifications.

Amongst the causes of saints which have been advanced a step at Rome, so that their fortunate issue may be anticipated at the Episcopal jubilee of the Pope in 1898, when sundry solemn beatifications will take place, may be cited those of the Barnabite, Bianchi, the Jesuit Baldinucci, the Redemptorist Mailli, the Oratorian Grassi, and the Capuchins Martinengo and Diego of Cudiz. The Decree has been signed for the introduction of the cause of the servant of God, Martin Moye, founder of the Sisters of Divine Providence, an institution which celebrates its centenary in the current year. The last plenary sitting of the Sacred Congregation of Rites was occupied with the consideration of the heroism of the venerable servant of God, Nunzio Sulprizio, an artisan, who died at Naples at twenty-one years of age, in the odour of sanctity, after having left the pattern of a life of virtue, patience, and mortification in his humble state. He was badly treated by his employers, and even by his relatives, but was not turned from his edifying conduct. The rapidity of the process of his beatification justifies the hope that the Church will not delay to accord him the honor of altars, proving anew that Christian heroism is compatible with any social condition.—*Unitarian.*

The Pope and Ireland.

The Most Rev. Dr. Logue, Archbishop of Armagh, in the course of his Lenten pastoral, says:—I have lately had the happiness of being able to lay at the feet of Christ's Vicar the testimony of your undying attachment to his sacred person and the See of Peter, rendering to him at the same time an account of the state of religion among the large flock committed to my care. The account which I have been able to render of the state of religion among you was such as could not fail to bring consolation to the paternal heart of the Sovereign Pontiff. I have no doubt that, like those consolations with which Divine Providence from time to time favours him, it tended to lighten the burden of sufferings which press so heavily upon the heart of the Holy Father. To you, my brethren, it should not be an incentive to pride or self-satisfaction, but to fresh efforts for your sanctification. You will be glad to learn that, notwithstanding the weight of years, the infirmities which they naturally bring in their train, and the trials to which he is so frequently subjected, the health of the Holy Father is such as to inspire the fond hope that he may be spared for several years to direct the faithful by his wisdom and defend the interests of the Church with his wonted fortitude. His intellect is clear, active and vigorous. His memory grasps the details of questions affecting every part of the Church with marvellous distinctness. I need not say that our country receives a large share of his paternal solicitude. He knows her wants intimately, sympathizes in her sorrows, is deeply interested in her aspirations, and yields not even to her own sons in an earnest wish for the removal of every obstacle which would impede either her spiritual or material development. Let men say what they please to the contrary, whoever else may desert or betray her, she shall ever find a staunch friend in Leo XIII.

The Bishop of Raphoe, Most Rev. Dr. O'Donnell, referring to his recent visit to the Vatican in the course of his Lenten pastoral, says: When I presented His Holiness the Peter's Pence from this diocese he poured forth a magnificent eulogy on the charity and generosity of the Irish people, and their steadfast devotion to Peter's successor. He said that in every quarter of the globe they were most faithful to him, and that he did not believe a word of anything that might be said to the contrary. His Holiness added, moreover, that he himself loved in turn the Irish race most intensely, and that our people were ever present to his thoughts.

A Famous See.

The title held by Cardinal Lavigne, to which in some of his recent addresses on the subject of slavery he proudly referred, is one of the most venerable and distinguished in the Catholic hierarchy. The first bishop of Carthage, Agrippinus, is assigned a date in the later years of the second century. Opinions, whose name occurs frequently in the controversies of the time, flourished in the beginning of the third century. The still more famous Boniface, a study in the seventh century there is a break which lasted till the era of the Crusades. We then find the names of two bishops, nominated probably more in hope of the recovery of North Africa from the Moslem than as indicating any actual possession. There is then a long interval, during which no attempt or pretence was made of holding jurisdiction in the ancient Punic domain. Nevertheless, twelve bishops of Carthage are assigned to the period between 1141 and 1664. It was not, however, till France had, in the nineteenth century, carried out the projects, by the prosecution of which King Louis the Ninth met his early death in the thirteenth, that the famous See became once more a reality in Christendom, and furnished a title to a but unworthy successor of the great Boniface. It would be a strange development in ecclesiastical and political history if the Archbishop of Carthage (Rome's once formidable rival) should become bishop of Rome and sit in the chair of St. Peter.

THE TEST ACT.

Mgr. Gadd on Catholic Disabilities.

Preaching at the Catholic chapel, Horwich, Monsignor Gadd said: Speaking of bigotry I cannot help but refer to the miserable exhibition of it during the last week by the present government. A bill was introduced into the House of Commons by the leader of the Opposition to remove certain disabilities which Catholics lie under, and to throw open to them the offices of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland and Lord Chancellor of England. At this period of the nineteenth century this remnant of religious intolerance handed down to us from an age of religious persecution ought to have been torn to shreds, and all traces of it swept away from the statute-book. Indeed, we should not have been surprised had the responsible Minister of the Crown publicly announced from his place in the House that he wished to make the *amende honorable* to his Catholic fellow-countrymen, and to apologise to them for the bigotry and injustice under which they had labored for the last 300 years. We did not ask it. We asked nothing. It was the leader of the Opposition who simply appealed to the common sense and fair-mindedness of Parliament to do us justice; and we certainly did expect that the Government would use its best endeavors to have justice done and to see that the Bill passed into law. Instead of that, what did we behold? No sooner was notice of the Bill given than bigotry was on the war path. The tocsin sounded. Fanaticism, infatuation, narrow-mindedness, and ignorance—in other words, bigotry of every shape and size, of every hue and dye, rallied to the call. We smiled at first. We were under the impression that this irrational prejudice against Catholics would be laughed at in the House of Commons, and relegated by an overwhelming majority to the days and dreams of the dark ages. Imagine, then, our astonishment and disgust at the Government's cowardice, weakness, prejudice and bias. Anti-Catholic traditions and wrongly-written history of the Catholic religion in this country during the last 300 years culminated and manifested themselves in one single act, in one single vote, which was a piece of miserable bigotry, as contemptible as it was unexpected, and as unwarranted as it was unjust. Whilst giving your instance of bigotry on the part of the Government—and I would remind you that this is supposed to be an enlightened Government, an English Government acting in the full blaze of the intellectual light of the nineteenth century—I think I shall be justified in further giving you the impressions produced upon me and the conclusions forced on my mind. In the first place, some persons, and especially some priests, take little part in politics, on account of the divided views of their parishioners. Still, many of them voted at the last election on the Conservative side, relying upon the Conservative promise that something would be done for Voluntary schools and Christian education. Seeing now that nothing has been done, and that nothing has been done, and I am almost afraid to admit that notwithstanding the promises held out to us, that nothing will be done, or is intended to be done, unless pressure be brought to bear upon this party; and seeing, too, that on the only occasion when the Government could have behaved graciously to us it has gone out of its way to insult us and to keep alive the bigoted traditions of the days of persecution, I think these priests—if they feel as I do—will be justified in seriously reconsidering their vote at the next election, and in using their influence with their people to turn the scale of political power in another direction. In the second place, as we Catholics are to be the only ones debased and disqualified from holding those positions of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland and Lord Chancellor of England, which are to be open, however, to every other religious denomination and to every sect, no matter how extravagant its tenets, it follows that a broader line of demarcation is for the future to be drawn round the Catholic Church in England—that truth will therefore stand further separated from error—faith further removed from heresy and unbelief, and the rock of Christ, that rock on which the Church is built, and "against which the gates of hell shall never prevail," by its very isolation, will become more conspicuous than ever it has been before, and the Divine light which shines in it and which "cannot be hid" will burn more brightly, so that weary travellers journeying over the deserts and wilds of uncertainty and religious doubt will be guided more safely and more surely to the home they seek, that "house of many mansions," the Holy Catholic Church.

A Hint From London.

The managers of the London theatres are protesting against the bill now drafted, which confers upon the London County Council full powers to govern, supervise and control all places of public amusement within its jurisdiction. Should this bill pass it would virtually abolish the supervision of the Lord Chamberlain. Messrs. Irving, Harris, Pinero, Charles Windham, Henry Pottis and others, have denounced the proposal to intrust to such an inartistic body the duties of licensing theatres and the censorship of plays.

A Solemn Event.

A picture of the Triumph of the Saint over Temptation in the Church of St. Vincent de Paul, Montreal, which will be blessed by Archbishop Fabre next Sunday.

WITH THE CREATOR?

We would dishonor God indeed and be guilty of blasphemy were we to consult the saints independently of God. But we would abuse such a practice. God is the giver of all good gifts. He is the source of all blessings, the fountain of all goodness, and whatever influence or power or virtue the saints possess is all derived from the blood of Jesus Christ; and as the moon borrows her light from the sun,