

gathered together under the fold of the Church of England. A change of clergy then, often involved a doctrinal change for that district.

It dawned upon the seeker after truth that his church placed too much importance in the individual man. He swayed, modified or expelled views as he would, yet had ample precedent in the Church, of which he was an official member. The difficulty for an Anglican to know what he believes became obvious, while the Roman system was clear, regardless of individual vagaries.

Every Roman knew just what to believe and what he must do, even if his spiritual leader should be lax or negligent. While ponderous tomes had been written to support the claims of the Anglican Church, yet it did not work in practice, while the Romans, on the other hand, were practically freed from obscurity in doctrine. They had clear directions at every cross roads, while too much liberty to wander and be lost was offered to the puzzled Angli-

can monastery of St. Hugh, his heart heavy and his mind numb, rested at a Catholic church in a small village, talked with an unknown man, who was an admirer of the Catholic Church though apparently not a member, returned to his home, and, with the knowledge of his mother, wrote to a priest, who recommended Father Reginald Buckley, O. P.

The priest was contemplating joining the Dominicans at the time a few days later Mr. Benson received a note that he was expected at the priory. "And on Monday, September 7, in lay clothes, I set out on my journey. My mother said good-by to me at the station."

The few difficulties which remained were so small as to disappear; in fact had gone. He was not baptized again, and in this place was received into the Church as her son. A storm of letters came to him, with angry protests against his treachery to the Church of England, and, with the courtesy to which he is heir, he answered them all. One telegram came from the priest, of whose conversion he had sorrowed so much years before in Damascus.

STERLING CHRISTIANITY

Did you ever stop to think how many persons look upon the Catholic Church from a purely ethical standpoint? They admire the Scriptures as they do the works of Homer, the dramas of Shakespeare. They consider the work of the Church a noble undertaking worthy to rank with the greatest philanthropic enterprises of the ages. Their practical adherence to the tenets of that Church they profess to love, however, is but too often confined to a "Lord, Lord," of the man in the Gospel.

Christianity is nothing if not practical. What avails it to pile up learned works on doctrines, and theories, and philosophies, and esthetics, if the children of God are being deprived of the blessings of God? What boots it to scatter Bibles broadcast, when the souls of men are hungering for spiritual pabulum? For a nourishment that never can be drawn from a mere book, unless the grace of God accompany it?

Along with our systems of learning we have the practical works that bring us into close touch with the children of God. There are certain traits about our dear Lord in His intercourse with men that speak as loudly as did the words of wisdom that flowed from His sacred lips. His ineffable tenderness towards the suffering and towards abandoned sinners seems to have been the distinctively practical mark in His relations with men.

On the other hand, there is perhaps nothing that society shuns more sedulously and more scrupulously than contact with the fallen. The Magdalens of a great city constitute the social scum that often evokes a perfect tirade from the fair ones of the exclusive set. Picture certain social leaders as with averted eyes and sweeping skirts they scorn to breathe the same mephitic atmosphere as the unfortunate child of sin who has dared to cross their path. The sins of the fallen among the lower class are indeed great; but can they equal the depravity that often exists and thrives higher up—a depravity all the more appalling in that it has no real grounds on which to build the fabric of excuses that ever are in evidence to extenuate wickedness of any kind?

Some there are, nevertheless, who through examples of virtue of the rarest and noblest quality—nay, because of that—do not disdain to enroll in a loving embrace those who have fallen by the wayside in climbing the hills of God.

The House of the Good Shepherd is one of the noblest and most convincing proofs of the strength of sterling Christianity that we have in our midst to-day. Platitudes have no place there; sterile maxims and trite flippancies cannot there exist. But the child of God, after having fallen perhaps to the very lowest depths, is there received with a truly divine benignity. Noble-minded women of the most exalted virtue and sound, common sense make the poor derelict feel that she has indeed returned to her Father's house. All is calm, charity, and encouragement. What cares the unfortunate if some whitened sepulcher, with scornful gaze, tilts the nose with supercilious air? What matters it if some social Jezebel casts upon her the withering glance of virtuous horror! Not all the hypocritical indignation possible to a selfish mind can alter for a single moment the sweetness or the strength of those words: "Go, my child, and sin no more."

During your mad rush for pleasure, preferment, or wealth, pause from time to time and give a thought to those works that truly deserve a word of sympathy or a material assistance. Do not be afraid to contribute now and then your mite

towards these grand works. Do not allow the opportunity to slip by of taking a hand in some way towards assisting in the good cause. After all, the only things that will prove of lasting benefit are the works of charity and of faith, not necessarily charity in the strictest sense of the term, but that wide, unbounded, all-embracing charity that knows no distinction of race, creed, or moral condition. Above all things, do not scoff at the fallen and unfortunate, even the Magdalens. Pity them. It was the love and sympathy of Christ, not His mighty power that won over the first Magdalen to a life of virtue and penance. Pity the unfortunate, contribute to their welfare, and pray the good God to send them His grace, the grace of final penitence and true contrition.—Catholic Bulletin.

THE SEAL OF CONFESSION

A CENTURY AGO NEW YORK COURT SUSTAINED THE OBLIGATION OF SECRECY LAID UPON THE CONFESSOR. A FAMOUS DECISION

June 14 was the one hundredth anniversary of the dedication of the decision in the Kohlmann case, which judicially determined the secrecy of auricular confession in the State of New York. The case and its ending make one of the milestones on the pathway of religious liberty in America, writes J. G. Coyle in the Catholic News.

The Rev. Anthony Kohlmann was a Jesuit priest. In 1813 he was rector of St. Peter's church and Vicar General of the young diocese of New York, then less than five years old. Through a commonplace theft the question of the secrecy of the confessional came before the Court of General Sessions and resulted in a memorable decision and a distinct advance in the position of Catholics before the law.

James Keating, a Catholic merchant, had been robbed. After one Phillips and his wife had been arrested for receiving stolen goods, Keating received his property and declined to inform the police as to the manner of the return. Under threats of commitment to jail and the exercise of the full limit of police and judicial power to enforce disclosure from him, Keating revealed that his goods had been restored to him by his pastor, the Rev. Father Kohlmann. The priest was summoned to the police bureau, but declined politely but resolutely to give information as to the identity of the person or persons from whom he had received the stolen property. When the grand jury considered the evidence of theft against certain accused persons, Father Kohlmann, summoned to appear before that body, again refused respectfully to give information. On testimony from other witnesses Charles Bradley and Benjamin Brinkerhoff, both negroes, were indicted for theft and Phillips and his wife for receiving stolen goods.

The trial began on March 5, 1813. Mayor De Witt Clinton, who ordinarily would have presided was absent at Albany. He was Lieutenant Governor of the State as well as mayor of the city, a fact which seems strikingly strange to us to-day. The Hon. Pierre Vanwyck, with Alderman Morse and Vanderbilt, constituted the court. Father Kohlmann, summoned as a witness, again declined to testify anything as to identity, description or material facts that would give any clue to the person or persons who had made restitution through him, of the stolen property. The question then centered upon the judicial power to compel Father Kohlmann to testify. The attorney for the defendants objected to any attempt to force disclosure by Father Kohlmann. William Sampson, a famous Irish Protestant lawyer and former United Irishman, spoke as a "friend of the court" and declared that not even in Ireland, where the Catholic religion had been prescribed, had he ever heard of an instance where a clergyman had been called upon to reveal the secrets of the confessional. With the consent of District Attorney Riker, a juror was withdrawn and the trial adjourned that argument might be offered.

In the interval between March and June District Attorney Riker, convinced of the justice of Father Kohlmann's position, had allowed the matter to slumber. The new District Attorney, Mr. Gardiner, was willing to enter a plea of nolle prosequi against the accused persons, which would have permitted the issue as to the compulsion of Father Kohlmann to testify to disappear with the abandonment of the prosecution of the accused. But the trustees of St. Peter's church deemed the question of too much importance to be left unsettled. They, therefore, petitioned the district attorney to bring the case of Phillips and his wife to trial "to the end that a judicial determination may be had which shall insure to all Catholics, in common with the rest of mankind, and according to the words of the Constitution, the free exercise and enjoyment of their religious profession and worship." This petition was signed by Dennis McCarthy, secretary of the trustees, on April 19, 1813. The request was complied with.

It was June 7 before the case came on. The court was composed of De Witt Clinton, mayor; Josiah Ogden recorder; Isaac S. Douglass and Richard Cunningham, sitting Aldermen. The former district attorney, Mr. Riker, was convinced of the justice of Father Kohlmann's position,

and was among the counsel prepared to argue the case. The new district attorney, M. Gardiner, examined Father Kohlmann. The priest requested permission to state his reasons for declining to answer the questions which would disclose a secret of the confessional. Receiving such permission he stated in brief: Were he summoned as a private individual to testify from ordinary sources of information he would not hesitate and would deem it his duty to declare whatever knowledge he had. He had previously been a witness in his ordinary capacity in another case. The Catholic religion taught and commanded respect and obedience to the civil powers in such matters. But in his capacity as a minister of a sacrament, in which God had enjoined upon him perpetual and inviolable secrecy, he declared he could not and must not answer any question that had any bearing upon the restitution; and that it was his duty to prefer instantaneous death or any temporal misfortune rather than disclose the name of the penitent. Were he to act otherwise he would become a betrayer of the church, to his sacred ministry and to God.

On June 14, 1813, De Witt Clinton pronounced the decision of the court. From it these sentences are taken, not in consecutive order, but illustrating the gist of the decision: "It is a general rule that a witness when legally called upon to testify as a witness must relate all he knows. But to this rule there are several exceptions. Whether a witness is bound to answer a question which may disgrace or degrade him is a question about which there is a variety of doctrine and a collision of adjudication. We are of the opinion that such a witness ought not to be compelled to answer at all. There can be no doubt but that the witness (Father Kohlmann) does consider that his answering on this occasion would be such a high-handed offense against religion that it would expose him to punishment in a future state, and it must be conceded by all that it would subject him to privations and disgrace in this world. The only course is for the court to declare that he shall not testify or act at all. And as court prescribing a different course must be governed by feelings and views very different from those which enter into the composition of a just and enlightened tribunal.

"Religion is an affair between God and man, and not between man and man. The laws which regulate it must emanate from the Supreme Being, not from human institutions. The declaration of religious freedom (in the State Constitution) is a wonderful monument to the wisdom, liberality and philanthropy of its authors. It is essential to the free exercise of a religion that its ordinances should be administered—that its ceremonies as well as its essentials should be protected. Secrecy is the essence of penance. To decide that the minister shall promulgate what he receives in confession is to declare that there shall be no penance; and this important branch of the Roman Catholic religion would thus be annihilated.

Until men under pretense of religion act counter to the fundamental principles of morality and endanger the well being of the state they are apt to be protected in the free exercise of their religion. "Although we differ from the witness and his brethren, in our religious creed, yet we have no reason to question the purity of their motives or to impeach their good conduct as citizens. They are protected by the laws and constitution of this country in the full and free exercise of their religion, and this court can never countenance or authorize the application of insult to their faith or torture to their consciences."

Thus Father Kohlmann was exempted from the obligation to testify and the secrecy of the confessional was legally established in New York by that court composed of Protestants. In 1828 De Witt Clinton was governor. He died on Feb. 11, but his spirit of tolerance, justice and broad Americanism had dominated the State during the two years of his uncompleted term. In December, 1828, the legislature passed the act, a model upon the subject of the secrecy of the confessional, which expressly declared that no minister of the Gospel or priest of any denomination whatsoever shall be allowed to disclose any confession made to him in his professional character or by the rules or practices of such denomination.

NAPOLEON ON EDUCATION

We Americans are continually and properly quoting Washington's utterances about the necessity of religion and morality in any nation that hopes to be permanent. Napoleon Bonaparte was very much unlike Washington, but he knew a great deal about the essential elements of political stability, and we find similar pronouncements of his on that always interesting topic. These pronouncements were made to his Ministers in the "Conseil d'Etat." Fortunately, some one stenographed them at the time, and they are being published in the *Autorite*. Among other things he said:

"So far I have seen good teaching only in ecclesiastical establishments, and I prefer to put a country boy in the hands of a man who knows only the catechism, the principles of which I am acquainted with, than in the hands of a half-baked savant who has no basis and no fixed idea of morality. Religion is the vaccine

of the imagination. It renders it immune against absurd and dangerous beliefs."

He often declared that the destruction of religious dogma was no help to free thought or rationalism, but to superstition. "Take away religion from the people," he used to say, "and you will have your highways infested with footpads." He did not foresee the most recent development of modern training, the auto-handit.—America.

IF IT WERE NOW LOST

Were the Bible lost (says the Rev. Dr. Barry in his *Tradition of Scripture*) it has been declared with no more energy than truth, we might recover its texts from the writings of our Catholic Fathers and mediaeval Schoolmen. Their works, which fill great libraries, are made up to a large extent of commentaries on Scripture, and are everywhere steeped in its language and ideas. Beginning with St. Clement of Rome, St. Justin, St. Irenaeus, Tertullian, and Clement of Alexandria—from about 95 A. O. to the first decade of the third century—we find the Old Testament quoted in all parts of the Church, and the New gradually acknowledged. The African Church if it did not produce, yet received from an early date (before 200 A. D.) the Old Latin version celebrated by Tertullian, used by Saint Cyprian and St. Augustine. In the Eastern Church, the Septuagint was familiar to all divisions from the days of the apostles.

For the Middle Ages, St. Gregory the Great, St. Bernard, St. Thomas Aquinas, and St. Bonaventure are representative men, says Dr. Barry. But the undying merit of those thousand years consists in the fact that by devout monks and nuns the very words of Scripture were preserved to us in beautiful manuscripts, such as, towards their close and on the eve of the Renaissance, Thomas Kempis left for our use and admiration. Catholic doctrine stayed itself on the Bible; preachers went back to it; Missal and Breviary, Pontifical Rites, Papal documents and Canon Law were efforts on a grand scale to digest its teachings and apply them. Catholic art drew its favorite subjects from Holy Writ, the literature, proverbs and daily conversation of all classes, during this long period, show that Christians were familiar with its narratives in a striking degree.

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New Camera Takes Finished Pictures in Two Minutes

Mr. Edmond F. Stratton, of New York City, has invented a camera that takes and completes pictures ready to see in two minutes. It does away with the expense of buying films or plates and the trouble, expense and delay of having them developed and pictures printed by a photographer.

This camera, which is called the Gordon Camera, is being manufactured by the Gordon Camera Corporation, of New York. As they are desirous of making it known in every locality, they are making a special offer to our readers. For a limited time they will sell models H at \$5.00 and Model B at \$7.00. The regular price of Model H, which takes pictures 3x4 inches, is \$9.00 and the regular price of Model B, which takes pictures 3 1/2 x 5 inches, is \$10.00. Whichever one you order, enclose 90 cents additional to cover express charges, sensitized cards and developing powders.

The sensitized cards are wrapped for daylight loading, and the powders make the developing solution to be put into the developing tank, which is inside the camera. Model H is 5 1/2 x 9 1/2 inches in size and weighs 3 pounds 7 ounces. Model B is 6 1/2 x 9 1/2 inches, and weighs 4 pounds.

The cost of taking pictures with the Gordon camera is almost nothing in comparison to all other cameras. Extra sensitized cards for Model H can be bought for 2 cents each (cards for Model B, 3 cents each) and 10 cents worth of developer will develop over 40 pictures. The Gordon Corporation sells flash light lamps for \$1.00 which will enable you to take pictures at night in your own parlor, or out of doors.

The operation of this new camera, is so simple that any person of ordinary intelligence can easily take pictures with it after reading the directions sent with each one. There is no custom duty to be paid as the Gordon Corporation will ship to you from their Canadian branch which is near Toronto. All orders and letters, however, must be sent to their office, which is at 692A Stuyvesant Building, New York, N. Y. When ordering a camera under this special offer be sure to mention that you are a reader of the *London Weekly CATHOLIC RECORD*.

From the paintings which are still extant in Roman Catacombs, to the mosaic of St. Mark's, Venice, or the Cappella Palatina in Palermo, from the primitive religious schools of Siena, Florence, Cologne, Holland, as well as from every phase of ecclesiastical architecture down to the "Bible of Amiens" and the frescoes of the Sistine, it is evident that eyes, mind and heart could take their fill of that inspired story. Learning and sanctity welded pen, pencil, chisel, brush, every instrument that conveys thought or evokes beauty in order that God's written word should be known and loved. The Middle Ages had their Bible in stone, on illuminated parchment, in stained glass, it was delivered from the lips of popular preachers, reflected in the poetry of the *Holland*, of Dante, of Fra Jacopo, expanded on the walls, gates and pavements of innumerable churches. It was recited in monasteries by day and night, quoted in parliaments, rhymed and sung by minstrels, so that never, perhaps, was it more universally known.

Dr. Barry takes us through the earliest periods when the Bible flourished in particular version (e. g. 311), to those which were produced in 1520. All this vast literature, he says, was founded on the Latin Vulgate, though in the second half of the thirteen century an attempt was made by some English scholars to translate from the original Hebrew. Between 1456 and 1500, ninety-eight complete versions were printed under Catholic authorization. The Reformation, says the doctor, which traced its pedigree from Waldensians, Wycliffe and the Hussites, brought in fresh dangers to the unlearned and made use of scripture that it might overthrow the Church. A new discipline, as regarded the study of the Bible, was set up by the Council of Trent (session 4 and 5), which did not, however, forbid the reading of translation of scripture in the vulgar tongue. Several Popes restricted the freedom of teachers, certainly, such as Paul IV, but subsequent Popes repealed their predecessors' rescripts when they proved extreme in their ruling.

These historical observations will suffice to prove that Holy Church has always kept the written Word in her hands while meditating on its divine sense.—Intermountain Catholic.

A PROTESTANT AND THE CROSS

WHY DO PROTESTANTS SHRINK FROM THE USE OF THE CROSS?

A Protestant writer in the *Trenton Sunday Advertiser* puts on record a thought which has often found lodgment in the Catholic heart: "Why do so many Protestants shrink almost in abhorrence from the use of the cross? What can it suggest to the Christian but the mystery of Calvary?"

"A Protestant" says: "I am one of the innumerable throng of Protestants who fail to do their full religious duties during the Lenten season. A visitor to many of our Protestant churches to-day will find empty pews during the Lenten season. A little storm or a feeling of lassitude, perhaps, keeps the people away. Not so with the Catholics of Trenton at least. In early morning hours, mid hail, rain, or snow, one will see men, women and children wending their way to church there to commune with God and by their presence commemorate the suffering and trials of the Blessed Saviour. Truly I say as a Protestant, is not their example well worthy of emulation? Who can say nay?"

Just one word more. All Christians will agree that the shedding of Jesus' blood upon Calvary's cross made possible the redemption of mankind. We ask absolution from our sins at the Cross of Calvary. Why, then, should we be ashamed of the Cross? Every Catholic and Episcopal church is known by a cross. A number of Protestant churches, too, I am happy to say, have a cross to adorn their edifice. The Catholic clergy and Episcopal rectors wear a cross upon their per-

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son in full view. The sweet Sisters of Charity by my mind look more angelic when the cross that adorns their sombre garb appears in view. The sight of the cross makes a man have better thoughts. When worn on the person it is indicative of reverence and awe for the Saviour of mankind. The cross on the church spire makes it appear more holy, more divine in its character. "How comforting it must be to a person stricken on the public street to have a priest or other servant of God kneel by his prostrate form and press to his lips the cross and offer a petition to the Omnipotent on High for forgiveness of sins. Nothing in my mind can better beautify our homes, our business places, our workshops than the cross and pictures of the Blessed Jesus. It brings us to a realization that it is not all of life to live nor all of life to die, that our stay on earth is only transient, that our lives are but as a breath, a dream. It makes a man stop and realize that he has a soul to save and of a never-ending eternity. To-day in this era of white slavery, vice and crime the only salvation of our girls and boys is the church of the everliving God. Within the folds of Christ and the Church our loved ones will be safely sheltered and ultimately saved."

A bad reputation is a hard thing to lose. Flippancy is the enemy of the future. Snow once soiled makes the blackest mud. Those who belittle love have first befouled it. Money builds the churches, but faith makes them the temples of God. To think kindly of each other is well, to speak kindly of each other is better, but to act kindly towards each other is best of all.

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