

THE TRUTH ABOUT THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

BY A PROTESTANT THEOLOGIAN.

CLXXXII.

Professor Foster assumes that the doctrine of the Church is essentially visible, being, as he maintains, not original, is a perversion that grew up in the early time of the post-apostolic Christians, and has gone on aggravating its rigid inflexibility ever since.

How the doctrine can possibly be more impossibly narrow now than he makes it out to be as taught by Boniface the Eighth, I can not understand. Yet he declares that it is "the result of a long and gradual growth."

Now in reality we find almost the exact reverse of this. From the time of the apostles down to the Reformation, and in the Catholic Church down to the present, we find two positions distinctly marked.

First: The Church is essentially visible. Any approximation to her that is not distinctly recognizable is only embryonic, preparatory, related to the Church proper very much as related to organization, or nebulous matter as related to a perfect star.

Second: The Church must declare to those who understand her nature and claims, but who take shelter under the subterfuge that people can be saved out of her, that such an assumption is an abuse of the Gospel, and that continuing in such a frame of mind, they will fall short of heaven.

Church rather than the milder; her exclusive claims rather than her indulgence for those who did not see the way open to acknowledge these. I have shown how this came about in antiquity, through the constant struggle with so many forms of heresy.

In the Middle Ages, down, say, to 1350, almost all the sects overspreading Europe were utterly opposed to the Gospel, both in doctrine and spirit, were, excepting the Waldenses, mere usurpers of the Christian name.

Unquestionably, however, since about 1650, Catholic theology, commencing with the Jesuits, but extending to all the schools, has given itself up to the consideration of God's workings in the world of extra-ecclesiastical grace with a fulness and variety, a consideration of all possibilities and probabilities, a development of the doctrine of implicit faith and implicit desire, compared with which all that Schoolmen and Fathers have said in this sense appears to be scant.

How is this? Dr. Foster tells us that it is because of the pressure of controversy brought to bear upon the Catholics by the Protestants. He views it as a mere concession under constraint, revoked whenever Catholic belief is left free to spring back to its true position.

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Now, as Dr. Schaf says, this second principle, which is the necessary corrective of the first, has never allowed itself to be forgotten in the Church. There have been Protestant bodies which have sharply denied it, but the Catholic Church will hardly be held responsible for them.

See, then, my brethren, the reward of the love which is in true sorrow for sin; it is given a singular kind of prominence; it is selected above that of innocence and placed on guard at the post of honor to receive the first public greeting from the Immortal King of Glory, triumphant over sin forever.

I say again that sinners need encouragement. In truth, there is no shame so deadly as that which conscious guilt brings to the human soul.

It is a singular thing that not only the first recorded words of our Lord after His resurrection were addressed to His favorite child, the great penitent woman of the Gospel, but that the first interview He had with His disciples was begun by the institution of the Sacrament of Penance, the open door of that city of refuge—our Lord's Sacred Heart.

In reading some of the holy admonitions of Pope Pius IX, we come across the following, which has a special meaning for American Catholics: "Jesus Christ, our Divine Saviour, has said: 'What doth it profit a man if he gain the whole world and suffer the loss of his own soul?'"

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MARCH

OUR BOY

It was the son of the Episcopal Bishop gathered a score for this party itself not on the but on their own bearing the would presume you among the felt within things of a satisfy with the tontant service.

On the subject of "And I preached to draw a long dream, and the field of exciting luxurated noses.

After a long shipwrecked into his "Mamma, there for there are Gospel preached Mrs. Lutz settled here but under the'er's eloquence like a distance true is it to possess reason children, little are unbiassed, they unskillful envisions. F. John's faith was dead.

Montis p. Easter Sunday when bird brook all seen Julius. Little attended choir singing during choir music, self with tunes with a fairer flower.

On the way passed a C. congregation, too, was a girl, but the plainly and As one who found little John crying emotion, this for so, she preached to through the were the curacies were they a child who light, the full and bright Layton's st

Yielding Laylor on door, the fit by those who aroma of the perfume of flowers which glow with place seen

"Oh, ma the child, to the into light. The same these sacre-tion of F. entering the of making noticed by gave them turning to finished his kneeling to fingered, the mind's approach to "Father desire in her and as you waiting "Not ex-plied. " added, ear "Follow Father Co the sacris The res followed little John the Catho came again shipwreck with Many and Layton H and friend with cheer ally with In her tom had another o to possess given rise circled. Hearing oleicium, ally: "W got into next char this last "It is his cous presly ter him mine-tinued: you tote the smell Ugh!"