

THE TRUTH ABOUT THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

BY A PROTESTANT THEOLOGIAN.
CCCLXXXVII.

We have seen that the religious wars of Germany and the Netherlands were essentially indigenous, the influence of the Papacy in stimulating them being indirect and secondary.

In the three Scandinavian kingdoms Lutheranism carried the day easily, and by royal authority. These regions, therefore, have never been troubled with religious wars. Calvin the Fourteenth's leanings to Calvinism were suppressed by his dethronement and imprisonment, and finally by the poisoned broth administered to him by direction of the King, Council, and Archbishop. The brief and futile attempt of the Catholic Sigismund of Poland to recover his Swedish throne is of little importance.

In France the intervention of the Papacy in encouragement of the religious struggle was certainly much more pronounced. Yet even here it was decidedly secondary. The French have never needed much encouragement to fight at each others' throats. The peculiar intensity of their nature has rendered them excessively intolerant from old. Guizot refuses to acknowledge any essential difference between Catholics and Protestants. The mutual butcheries under the Val de Grace, the later Bartholomew's, being Catholics, unless we accept the larger estimate of Protestant numbers, are of one temper with the Dragonnades, and these again with the Red Terror of 1793, and with the White Terror of 1814.

At present there is a lull in the mutual bloodshed, although we cannot say how long it will last. In our own time, in 1871, the victorious Government is said to have butchered 25,000 Communards, a large proportion of them with almost no evidence against them. Divide the number by three, as imperious evidence requires us to divide the 70,000 of St. Bartholomew's by five, and we will still see the fires of 1872 glowing in the Paris of 1871.

Meanwhile, now that the pike and the guillotine are having a rest, and we have a long one, the reigning party is yet as persecuting as ever, and more meanly persecuting than ever. The mousing anxiety with which the name of God is hunted out of every school-book, the pains taken to make the remotest rural postman shake in his shoes if his first cousin once removed drops a word in the street, the prompt removal of a Terrymann who rows a Dominican or Jesuit across a river, all this displays such a pettiness of malignity as we should have to look far and wide to find matched in the history of religious or irreligious persecution. Read Mr. Sanborn's account of it in the Atlantic Monthly. True, the intolerable smallness of Combes, and of his Masonic accomplices has been much at last even for the ruling powers, and has driven him out of office. His successor is at least something more of a gentleman.

Coming back to papal intervention in France, President Andrew D. White says that Pius V. violated the sanctity of treaties to rekindle the flames of civil war. Sad, if this is true, and wholly indefensible. I am surprised that neither Ranke nor Guizot has left any trace of this violation of the first two historians, and an examination of the third, should bear out Dr. White's statement, I will make it known. Confession induced by ill health, however, makes it difficult for me to open up new sources, and restrains me largely to what I know already.

Pending such a reconsideration of evidence, my eminent friend will not take it amiss of me if I think it possible, after reading Father Campbell's articles in the Messenger, that Dr. White may be suffering temporarily from a mental disease popularly known as "Pope and Jesuit on the brain." This malady, it is true, principally rages within the range of the Lunsings and the Christs and the Hersheys and the Dunns; but as small pox used to carry off kings and queens no less than peasants, so this peculiar morbid anti-papalistic et anti-jesuitic sometimes strikes up suddenly into much higher levels, and commences considerable ravages there before it can be checked. I remember that some thirty or forty years ago the Nation had an acute though brief attack. Cure in this case seems to have been expedited by the railleuries of the Independent, and other "esteemed contemporaries." I have heard of it many times, and may have it again, as I believe there is no form of vaccination which is a certain preventive.

It was not a proof of this anti-papal ratic, when President Eliot, some years ago, stated that the Plan of Study had been established for four hundred years among the Jesuits, when the Society itself was then only three hundred and sixty years old, and that it gives only a trifle of attention to physical science, when, from a small beginning, it now allots this 47 per cent. of the whole. Dr. Eliot had no ill-will in the matter. He would have been glad to give things correctly, if he had thought it worth while to look them up. He was simply using our general Protestant prerogative of stating Popish matters in any hit-and-miss fashion that may occur to us. Far be it from me to dispute this fundamental Anglo-Saxon right, for of course an Englishman or American who becomes a Catholic ceases thereby to be an Anglo-Saxon. I am hardly certain that we should not cling to this privilege even if we had to give up trial by jury. It is expressly provided for in the Act of Settlement, and imposes on every new Sovereign—a word which Mr. Roosevelt is trying to naturalize among us—a solemn obligation of trying, "to the greater glory of Martin Luther," from the very steps of the throne. Oh, no! I am by no means animadverting on this inestimable privilege of our race and religion. I may yet have occasion to use it myself, say if the Pope should refuse some deserving friend of mine a cardinal's hat.

The symptoms were somewhat more

alarming when President Eliot declared that before the French Revolution it had been uniformly taught in the church of Rome that the Divine sanction to government comes directly to rulers, and only mediately to the people, and that it always comes through the church, the fact being that Boniface VIII. himself declares that he had never doubted that the State has a mandate distinct from the church, and Pope Paul V., about 1610, having expressly approved, not as obligatory, but as sound, the declaration of the great Jesuit Suarez, that God first authorizes the nation to be governed, and that by her election a divine right redounds to her governors, monarchical or republican. This approbation I find noted as renewed by Pius VI., the opponent and victim of the French Revolution. President Eliot had not denied the approbation given by Pius IX.

The Independent made a feeble and foolish attempt (it is seldom either feeble or foolish) to explain away a part of Eliot's statements, by remarking that at least the Catholics would say that the knowledge of the Divine sanction to government always comes through the church. President Eliot is perfectly competent to be his own interpreter. If he meant this, a divine sanction through the church and the knowledge of the sanction through the church are two different things. Catholic theology teaches neither. It teaches, agreeably to St. Paul, that a heathen government, justly ruling, is as truly a Divine delegation as a Christian, and certainly the knowledge of this does not come to a heathen government through the church. St. Ignatius Loyola declares that he would obey a heathen prince as he would obey Christ himself, in everything not sinful, a thesis which the Constitutions of the order have generalized, and applied to all superiors, including the Pope.

In this talk about government Dr. Eliot does seem to be slightly touched by the anti-papal animus, not malignantly, but in what may be called its variegated form, and to have been partly misled by this into his inaccuracies. Dr. White's attack appears more nearly to approach the confluent stage. However, we will postpone this question to our next paper.

CHARLES C. STARRBUCK.
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ADESTE FIDELES.

There is no other hymn which is sung so universally and so tenderly loved as the "Adeste Fideles" about which so little has been accurately ascertained.

The Latin poem was for a time attributed to St. Bonaventure, but it is not included in any edition of his works. It has been traced by numerous searchers to a cloister, that of the Cistercians, a congregation founded in the twelfth century at Cîteaux, near Dijon, France.

Individual authorship the "Adeste Fideles" may not have had. The atmosphere of the monastic scriptorium breathes, however, through its melodious trophies. It is in many respects unique in Christian hymnology. More than any other Church song, it blends prophecy, history, prayer, exultation and praise. If it were printed side by side with the Nicene Creed, it would be found an astonishing verification of that sacred prose.

"Deum de Deo, lumen de lumine," God of God, light of light, "Genitum non factum, ex Maria Virgine," begotten, not made, born of the Virgin Mary. It is also descriptive. "Star led, the Magi adoring Christ, present gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh," Stella duce, Magi Christum adorantes, aurum thus et Myrrham dant munera.

The hymn contains also a summary of the narrative of the birth of Christ as given in the gospel of St. Luke. There is also within its lines the substance of the Gradual appointed for the third Mass on Christmas Day, from the ninety-seventh Psalm. "All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. Sing joyfully to God all the earth." The hymn also reflects the epistle of Christmas Day, the first of St. Paul to the Romans: "Aeternal parents Splendore maternum." Splendor of the Eternal Father, "Behold Him, born King of angels," "natum videte regem Angelorum."

"Now let a song of glory be sung in the courts of heaven." Cantemus in aula celestium, Gloria in Excelsis Deo.

Every line of the "Adeste" is a caress of faith and love. Upon its cadences many hours must have been spent, or the crystallization of sublime truth into crisp and dazzling syllables. "Adeste," approach; "fideles," ye faithful; "laeti," joyful; "triumphantes," victorious; "venite," come; "adoremus," let us adore; "Domine," the Lord.

The hymn was sung on the continent in the Latin form, which is so much that it is memorized almost without effort. It is found continuously in the middle of the seventeenth century. It is believed that in many centres of devotion it was made also a recitation as if in oratorio. Plays drawn from Holy Writ were in vogue during the same period, and the "Adeste Fideles" would have been a congruous incident in either a passion play, a miracle play or a Madonna play. It was used in these plays to introduce the folk melodies, which in every country have become the basis of the national music.

As these plays were gradually prohibited by the church on account of violations of strict decorum which insensibly crept in, oratorio succeeded to the vacated place and many of the melodies disappeared or were framed into new settings.

It will probably never be known how old the melody is which is indissolubly associated with the "Adeste Fideles." The melody is distinguished by certain traits which mark it as mediæval. It is fitted to the words. The words were not fitted to it. In this quality it bows to the decade of the Council of Trent, which ordained that music should be subordinated to the words and not sacred words to any music.

That the melody belonged to a cluster of folk songs may be presumed from

another of his essential traits. It flows on the natural voice. Its range is moderate, bringing it within an unstrained popular compass. To sing it requires no technical training. That it was probably a folk song is further indicated by its regularity, fluency, and spontaneity. Simplicity in the true sense is always proof of perfect art. If this melody did not proceed from the throes of worshiping hearts in union of love and aspiration it must have been written by a master of musical invention. Musical notation, however, in the forms with which we are now familiar is modern.

FIVE-MINUTE SERMON

Second Sunday after Epiphany.

THE SIN OF CURSING.

Bless them that persecute you; bless, and curse not. (Rom. xii. 14.)

These words are found in the epistle appointed for the second Sunday after Epiphany, and were read by the church long before the institution of the Feast of the Holy Name of Jesus, which is now always celebrated on this day, with their usual lesson and appropriate feast. For there is no way in which God's most holy Name, which to-day is especially set before us for our veneration, is more frequently or more grossly dishonored than by cursing. To curse is to call down God's judgment or vengeance upon our fellow-men, and its worst form is when the holy and awful name of God or our Lord is made use of. Of common, even among those who think themselves good, is the habit of cursing, even when it is realized, or perhaps, even thought of.

The habit is often acquired in childhood, frequently from the example of parents, themselves given to cursing. Like all early-acquired habits, it grows stronger and more deeply-rooted with advancing years, until at last the habit is made the excuse for the sin. It is a vain excuse. You are guilty before God of mortal sin if you have formed this habit, and you are guilty of remaining in the state of mortal sin if you make no effort to break yourself off it. It will do you no good to go to confession and accuse yourself of cursing, unless you are contrite and follow the advice which your confessor gives you, and really make an earnest resolution and serious effort to overcome this scandalous habit.

You should begin by making each morning a resolution to avoid cursing throughout the day, begging God's assistance for your efforts, if during the day you fall inadvertently into the old fault, you should impose some little penance upon yourself, such as the recitation of the "Hail Mary," or the pious ejaculation of the holy Name of Jesus, with a prayer for God's forgiveness. And then at night you should examine your conscience as to how often you may have fallen into the habit during the day, and resolve to make the next day a better one in this respect. If you faithfully persevere in this practice you will soon be the master of your tongue, and able to restrain it from cursing by a little self-will, but if you do not adopt some such practice as this, and really set to work in earnest to overcome this habit, you are guilty before God of mortal sin and your contrition at your confessions is not good for much.

I have spoken of this habit as scandalous, as this is one of its worst features. Besides the insult that is offered to God and his holy Name, an incalculable amount of harm is done to our neighbors. Children, especially, learn to curse from their elders, and the extent of this fault among young children is frightful to contemplate. These, too, who are not of our faith, when they hear Catholics cursing and swearing, are apt to set it down to some defect in our religion, and thus the true faith is brought into contempt.

But the habitual curser seldom thinks of these consequences of his sin. He rarely even attends to the meaning of the words he uses. If he could only be brought to stop and think of all that is implied in the expressions we so often hear upon our streets, he would shudder at the thought of using them. To ask Almighty God to send a soul to hell for all eternity, to utter that holy Name whereby we are saved in a prayer for the eternal damnation of a soul redeemed by the Precious Blood of Christ, is an impious so drastic that we could scarcely believe it possible did not our ears tell us the contrary.

Yet there are those who not only say these things, but mean them, at least at the moment when they are uttered. How carefully, then, should we guard ourselves against those outbursts of anger in which we are led to make such a fearful abuse of the gift of speech, the noblest of God's natural gifts to man! Above all, we should try to realize the spirit of the Gospel as expressed in the words of St. Paul, "Bless them that persecute you," remembering that no affront that can be offered to us can even justify the spirit of revenge that is implied in a curse. "Bless," therefore, "and curse not," that so you may yourselves receive the blessing of the Lord.

God has made us only a little lower than the angels. He has given us a ray of His own understanding, that we may know Him; also a rational will, that, knowing Him, we may love Him above ourselves, above all things. What return, then, ought we to make to Him for all that He has done for us? What have we done hitherto? What shall we do in the future?

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THE OUGHT TO BE'S.

[Written for The Catholic Standard and Times by Rev. J. T. Roche, author of "The Obligation of Hearing Mass," "Our Lady of Guadalupe," "Month of St. Joseph," "Belief and Unbelief," etc.]

TOO MUCH RANT.

I sometimes wonder if others find it as difficult as I do to become interested in temperance literature. To me it is a bore of the first magnitude and yet I scarcely know why it should be so. It is a subject we cannot forget, even if we would. The drunkard, like the poor is always amongst us. The evils accompanying the sale of intoxicating liquors constitute the grave problems of every community. Drunkenness, with its accompanying vices, is a fearful prevalent, despite all the legislation enacted to keep people sober. Eliminate the drink habit and the police force of this country could be cut in two. It fills our penitentiaries and our jails, and supplies our charitable and eleemosynary institutions with the majority of their inmates; and still literature bearing upon the subject is a drug on the market.

The common fault of such literature is the prevalence of rant, and the attempt to prove too much, which usually ends in proving nothing. A certain amount of this may be expected in every form of agitation, but in matters affecting the gospel of temperance it is manifestly overcome. And yet we cannot conceal the fact that the advocates of temperance have done, and are still doing a vast amount of good. It is evident at the same time to the least observant that there is still much to be done, and much in which every right thinking man and woman can have a share.

Some time ago I asked a retired Australian priest what he considered to be the chief causes of defection in the land from which he came. His answer was short and to the point. "Mixed marriages and drink!" I confess to having been somewhat surprised at the prominence given to the latter cause. The reply, however, led me to investigate, and the result of even a cursory investigation affords abundant matter for serious reflection.

A HOPELESS CASE.

Habitual drunkenness has a characteristic not found in the ordinary vices of humanity. It is practically hopeless as far as reform is concerned. Drunkenness is a disease as well as a vice, and the ministrations of the doctor must precede those of the priest.

I stood one night not long ago by the side of a police captain in the downtown saloon of a well-known Chicago politician. I had heard so much of the vice and of the unusual character of those who frequented it that I was desirous of studying them at close range. The sight which met my gaze was the saddest upon which the eye of man could rest. The saloon in question is a tramp headquarters, and is known as such throughout the whole Western country. The politician who owns it, rules by virtue of the suffrages of his vagrant retainers, and to his credit be it said that in a certain sense he is really and truly their friend. As I looked into the faces of several hundred depraved human beings, I realized more fully than I have ever done before the terrible power for evil of the liquor traffic. Upon every face vice in some form had set its mark. All the nobility of manhood stamped there by God was a paradise. And this is only one of many such places in that great city. These unfortunates were scarcely a corporal's guard of the vast army of the vicious and the criminal whose undoing could be traced to the primal sin of the world's criminals—drunkenness.

I have seen it stated somewhere that there are more than a half million habitual drunkards in this country. I do not believe it, and in any way of arriving at the correct figures in making such an estimate, but grant, for argument's sake, that there is only half that number, and the figures are still a sad commentary on the progress of religion and civilization.

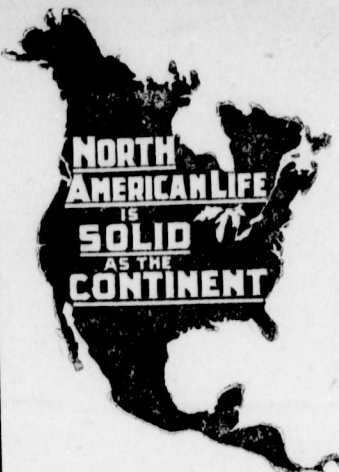
We are certainly safe in assuming that a goodly proportion of that army are Catholics by birth and early training. Their religious status is now a matter of little consequence. They are subjects for medical rather than religious care. The greater number of them will fill drunkards' graves, and, as far as society is concerned, the sooner that takes place the better. It is not with such that the genuine advocate of temperance is concerned. It is with the youth of the land, with those who are now growing to manhood; and anything which helps to save them, no matter how misdirected, is a step in the right direction.

TAKING LONG CHANCES.

Personally, I would rather stand by the grave of a Catholic young man than see him engage in the saloon business as it is conducted in America to-day. Apart from the spiritual danger arising from co-operation in another's sin, no form of casuistry can justify a business whose profits are largely dependent upon depriving defenseless women and innocent children of the means of livelihood. Add to this the necessity of co-sorting with the lowest elements of society, and the further necessity of aiding and abetting in the physical and moral destruction of so large a proportion of the young manhood of the country, and you have a few of the difficulties confronting a Catholic who is desirous of conducting a decent saloon. He may do it and save his soul, but it is an extreme hazardous undertaking.

Time and again I have heard it asserted that a majority of the saloon keepers are Catholics. This assertion we all know to be false, but we know at the same time that there are altogether too many of them in the business for their own good and for the good of the Church. It goes without saying that many of them try their best to conduct their place in conformity with the dictates of conscience, but for many and the business has been a curse and a blight.

It is difficult to treat a subject of this kind without indulging in extreme assertions. Fanaticism and wholesale denunciation are the stock-in-trade of nearly all those who assail the liquor



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traffic from pulpit and platform. As a result of those injudicious and unfair methods temperance agitators have become extremely unpopular. They proceed on the principle that all those who conduct saloons and all those who patronize them are lost souls, and that nothing is severe or harsh enough to bring them to the beginning of the world, and will be used even until the end. Politics and politicians have made the saloon what it is to-day, and are still the greatest obstacles in the path of true reform.

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