

THE CATHOLIC RECORD.

THE TRUTH ABOUT THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

BY A PROTESTANT THEOLOGIAN.

OCCLXXVII.

We have seen, in answer to the Republican correspondent's charge against the medieval Popes, of having, from time to time, "promoted war," that while this accusation is certainly not without a considerable warrant of fact, it is not lawful, in a polemical essay, to advance it while completely omitting all reference to the many wars promoted by these earlier Popes in encouragement of absolute necessities of self-defense, Roman, Italian, or European.

Still less is it warrantable to take no account of the large encouragement given by the Popes to international peace by adjudications of singular uprightiness and wisdom.

In this utter omission of the faintest reference to the brighter side of the medieval Papacy in its encouragement of the cause of peace, this writer has made himself guilty of a distinct and flagrant contrivance of immorality.

What moral right, moreover, have men who stand no higher as historians than he or I, to use so confident a tone of condemnation towards the Catholic church—say from Hildebrand down—without taking account of Frederic Harrison's magnificent description of the Middle Ages, a man who is even farther from Christianity than the correspondent himself, since he refuses even to acknowledge the existence of God? It is true he has transferred to his Positivist deity, Humanity, a wealth of religious feeling, of which our present writer betrays no sign.

How, again, can this writer excuse himself for describing the Catholic church and the Papacy as destitute of very nearly every feature of goodness in view of that is said by Professor James Bryce—a true and most unpassioned historian, and a Presbyterian, that no temptation of the wild Middle Ages could ever persuade the Catholic church to lower the purity of her moral standard?

Of course Bryce does not mean that the medieval, or the modern, Popes, or bishops, or priests, have commonly reached the height of their own ideal. No priesthood does that, and no laity. He means that, into whatever deflection from their standard the functionaries of the Catholic church may have been more or less betrayed by passion or interest, the Catholic priesthood remained the unflinching exponent of the doctrine of Christian faith, purity, benevolence and righteousness.

As some one says, the Papacy retained the reverence of men, after the great Council reforms, because it was seen that the office constrained the man, and that the man had very little power to constrain the office away from its high place as the chief champion and very often a shining illustration of the imperial authority, are points which Gardner was content to leave to another generation. Certainly the burden of these events rests but lightly on the head of Rome.

France, England and Scotland, deserve some special attention.

As to the present church, no one will dispute that Joseph McCabe is a man of more than common parts, and as he has abandoned the church and Christianity, and has become an atheist of Haeckel's school, he certainly has no motive of interest to praise the system which he has deserted. Yet he describes the Catholic church as the great spring of Christian forces in the world. It is true, he betrays half a hope that she may yet be defeated by Atheism, or by Free Love, or by something else odious to all Christians. However, like Roman, although more respectfully, he acknowledges that, perhaps the victory may redound to his former Church after all.

I do not remember that he thinks it necessary to take any account of Protestantism. Within his old church he seems to put the Jesuits the highest, although he mildly complains that they are rather hard to work with.

Among men who firmly believe in God, and who firmly maintain the perfection of Christ, it would be hard to find a less ecclesiastical writer than Mr. William D. Howells. Indeed, I believe he does not even go to church. Moreover, he has expressed very explicitly his distaste for Catholic worship, which, agreeing with the Breviary of Paul the Fourth's time, he seems to think much in need of simplification. He also complains that the Cardinals do not win to their high dignity until they begin to be shrivelled by age, and so fall short of that nobility of appearance which Professor Edwards A. Park has noted as characteristic of the Catholic Episcopate. Yet Howells describes the Catholic church as the greatest association for doing good in the world. He plainly does not know the Roman See as that synagog of Satan which this correspondent supposes, which in view of his thorough knowledge of Italy, personal and historical, seems to make the correspondent show a good deal like a fool, except, indeed, as the mendaciousness of passionate malice is, in one point of view, somewhat above the level of mere fatuity.

Coming down again from the elder to the modern Catholic church, which we may view as dating from the great Catholic Reformation, and place the transition not far from 1550, we have remarked that the Popes did undoubtedly encourage the Catholics to make war on Protestantism, and that they were quite in their right in doing so, inasmuch as Protestantism was fully bent on exterminating the Catholic religion, having done so by the strong hand throughout the North, and throughout the greater part of Germany, and doing its best to carry out its aim in France by massacre, arson and outrage (outrage on female honor in the name of a purer gospel) and hoping to carry the day by the contagion of proselytism where it had not yet the strength for the use of the sword. What conception would

the Popes have shown of their office if they had not encouraged Catholic Europe, especially in the Latin lands, to self defense against this tremendously disintegrating force?

Nevertheless, as we have remarked, the immediate interference of the Popes in the fearful struggle between the two religions seems to have done little to aggravate it. Could some hostile force have kept the cardinals apart from a conclave and so held the supreme See vacant, say for fifty years, the struggle between the two systems, in various lands, would doubtless have gone on all the same. As we have seen, Elizabeth and her buccaneers would unquestionably have compelled Philip, especially after the execution of Mary, to attempt her overthrow, above all now that she had taken, with that characteristic perfidiousness which Froide is quite as distinct in setting forth as any one else, to reprehending the Dutch insurgents and assisting them at the same time. For that struggle whose calamitous issue determined the ruin of Spain, the gloomy King needed little encouragement, and received less assistance, from Rome. Sixtus V. was a wise man, and many more to have had an instinct that the conquest of Great Britain from abroad was then beyond the range of possibility.

We have spoken of the long conflict in the Netherlands, with which Rome had very little to do. Motley turns our attention continually to Madrid, but I cannot remember that he has much to say about Italy. The Papacy granted the bulls requested by Philip for the new bishoprics, and the new form of the Holy Office, but does not seem to have been much of a moving force in the struggle. For Alva's atrocities it is Philip who is responsible, as for the equal atrocities of the English lieutenants in Ireland it is Elizabeth who is responsible. Her Archbishop seems neither to have impelled her nor to have withheld her.

As to the intermitting struggles, from 1520 to 1548, which finally cost Germany more than half her population, and Bohemia almost three-fourths of hers, they were mainly indigenous. True, towards the climax, the Jesuits had a powerful influence, but the Protestants would have said that here it was the Black Pope, not the White, who gave the impulse to resist the steady southward aggressions of the Protestant confessions upon the possessions and the worship of the Catholic Church.

After having read Ranke, Schiller, Trench, Gardiner and Jaussen (the latter twice over) I need not be ashamed to own that I am hopelessly confused as to the cause and character of each vicissitude of the German struggle, for Professor Gardiner himself declares that we have a legend of the Thirty Years' War, but as yet no history. How much religion had to do with it, how much ambition, how much greed, how much anarchical resistance of the princes to the imperial authority, are points which Gardner was content to leave to another generation. Certainly the burden of these events rests but lightly on the head of Rome.

France, England and Scotland, deserve some special attention.

BLESSED VIRGIN'S INFLUENCE ON DOMESTIC LIFE.

Of the sentiments which in all ages have distinguished the gentlemen from the churl, the first is that of reverence for womanhood, which, even through all the cruelties of the middle ages, developed itself with increasing power until the thirteenth century, and became consummated in the imagination of the Madonna, which ruled over all the highest arts and purest thoughts of that age.

To the common non Catholic mind the dignities ascribed to the Madonna have always been a violent offence. They are one of the parts of the Catholic faith open to reasonable dispute and least comprehensive by the average realist and materialist temper of the Reformation.

But after the most careful examination, neither as adversary nor as friend of the influences of Catholicity for good and evil, I am persuaded that the honor paid to the Madonna has been one of its noblest and most vital graces, and has never been otherwise than productive of true holiness of life and purity of character. I do not enter into any question as to the truth or the falsity of the idea. I no more wish to defend the historical or theological position of the Madonna than that of Michael or St. Christopher; but I am certain that to the habit of reverent belief in, and contemplation of the character ascribed to the heavenly hierarchies we must ascribe the highest results yet achieved in human nature.

LACK OF MORAL COURAGE.

There is no denying that our surroundings exert a great influence upon our lives. In early years this influence is most noticeable, but all through life our actions, and even our views, are modified by those with whom we associate. "Evil communications corrupt good manners," is a truth that has fastened upon its point since it was first enunciated.

We see it exemplified every day in the lives of Catholics in non Catholic communities. There are sturdy Catholics who are never ashamed or afraid to do what is right, no matter what others may say or think. But, unfortunately, there are also the weak, spineless Catholics, who fear to offend

the susceptibilities of their non Catholic friends, and fall in a duty rather than be thought odd. They are the ones who are continually giving bad example to their non-Catholic neighbors. They yield to customs and practices that are anything but Catholic because they obtain them among non-Catholics. They adapt themselves to their environment by giving up all that their Catholic ancestors suffered for. Did they but know it their non Catholic friends would despise them for their lack of moral courage. There is nothing so despicable as cowardice, and the Catholic who fears to profess his religion and live up to its requirements is rightly regarded by all as a coward.

It is sometimes charitably supposed that ignorance is responsible for that most pitiable creature, the non-practical Catholic. Undoubtedly ignorance is often an excuse that may be pleaded. But not always. Lack of moral courage is responsible for much of the bad example that Catholics give in disregarding the laws of the Church. The courageous person is always admired, though we may not always hold the same opinion, but the coward who fails in his duty out of human respect is looked down upon by all.—Omaha True Voice.

FIVE-MINUTES SERMON.

First Sunday after Epiphany.

JESUS TEACHING IN THE TEMPLE.

And not finding Him, they returned into Jerusalem, seeking Him.

The Gospel of to-day tells us, my brethren, how our Blessed Lady and St. Joseph lost Jesus on their way home from Jerusalem, where they had gone with Him to keep the feast of the pasch, and how in great distress they returned to the city in search of Him. What fears and anxieties must have filled their minds as they thought of the many enemies which He had among the rulers of the people, jealous of His promised kingdom, and of the harm which they would try to do Him if they recognized Him for the child whom Herod had sought to destroy! And how perplexed Mary and Joseph must have been that He who had hitherto saved himself by their protection should at this tender age abandon them and remove himself from their care! Had they not shown enough love and care for Him? Had they proved themselves unworthy of Him? Surely it could not be His purpose so young to begin His great work. Would He not at least have told them if such had been His plan?

No, our Lord did not propose to begin His mission then, for, though He was indeed God, He was also born a child, and that mission was not a child's, but He did wish to show them that His great work even then filled His heart and soul, that the fire of love for us, which brought Him to the cross, was consuming Him even in childhood.

"Did you not know," He said to them when they found Him, "that I must about My Father's business?" "How is it that you sought Me?" "You might have known," He seems to say, "that, if I were not with you, you must be in the temple speaking to My people of their God."

He also wished to give them an opportunity of merit by showing the love of God which filled their souls too. For their grief was not the common grief of parents who have lost a child, great as that trouble is. It was the loss of the Divine Presence which affected them beyond measure. God had been with them for all those years as never with anyone else, and now he had left them; they could not tell why or for how long. They would not have spared Him for an hour, even to their kinsfolk and friends, with whom they thought He was, except for charity; and now He had left them, perhaps for the rest of their lives, which were worth nothing without Him.

Would that we loved God, my brethren, as they loved Him; that He were the light and consolation of our lives, as He was of theirs! Let us think of this as we reflect on that search for and anguish in that temple search for and visible presence of Him whose grace was after all, always in their souls. How is it with us? Would we care for this presence which they so bitterly missed? Would it not, perhaps, even be a painful restraint? Do we care, as it is, to be near Jesus? Is His presence in the Blessed Sacrament of the altar a consolation to us? We reverse that real Presence of our Lord, but do we love it? If so, why do we not seek it more?

Do we even care for His presence by grace in our souls, which they always had in its fullness, and never dimmed by the shadow of sin? To lose that, had it been possible, would have been a thousand deaths to them; what is it to us? How easily do we lose that grace; how little do we care to regain it!

O! let us at least imitate our Blessed Mother and her Holy Spouse as far as this. If we do not love to be with Jesus as they did, let us at least seek to have Him with us by His grace. If we have lost Him, let us seek Him, and not be weary till we find Him; let us not rest till He comes again to our souls, never to leave them again.

Men, it would seem, are holding strange revelry with Justice these times. It is a central sentiment in almost every public utterance, yet it is the man who endeavors to be just who receives the severest condemnation.

LIQUOR AND TOBACCO HABITS

A. McTAGGART, M.D., C.M., 70 YONGE STREET, Toronto. References as to Dr. McTaggart's professional standing and personal integrity permitted by: Sir W. R. Meredith, Chief Justice. Hon. G. W. Ross, ex-Premier of Ontario. Rev. John Fouts, D.D., Victoria College. Rev. Father Jesty, President of St. Michael's College, Toronto. Right Rev. A. Sweetman, Bishop of Toronto. Hon. Thomas Coffey, Senator, CATHOLIC RECORD, London.

THE HOLY NAME.

On Sunday, January 14, will be celebrated in all the churches of the world the Feast of the Holy Name of Jesus. At that name, the Scripture tells us, earth, and in hell. And history will prove that by the omnipotent name of Jesus the Heavenly Father is glorified unto the uttermost parts of the universe.

Long before the appearance of man upon the earth, the power of the name of Jesus had been tested in heaven. Spiritual angels, brilliant in intellect, and mighty in invisible strength, had rebelled and refused to submit to the majesty of the Holy Name of Jesus. The heavens trembled with the battle of conflicting spirits until, at the will of the Almighty, the rebel host were banished forever from the halls of paradise. And the name of Jesus was glorified in heaven before the Cherubim and Seraphim.

It was the name of Jesus, also, that induced the Blessed Virgin to become the mother of God, and the co-redemptrix of the world. Without her consent the redemption of man would not have been possible, nor could the Almighty have sufficed to wash away the sins of man had not Mary consented to be the mother of Jesus. At the mention of that name, however, when the angel Gabriel had assured her that it was by the power of the Holy Ghost that she should conceive and bring forth Him who was to be called Emmanuel, Mary bowed her head and said: "Be it done unto me according to thy word."

It was the name of Jesus, also, that wrought the prodigies in the Holy Land and the streets of Jerusalem to the hidden recesses of Galilee. By the power of that name the infirm were restored to health, sight was showered upon the blind, hearing restored to the deaf, soundness to the lame, and the dead were given back to life again. "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all things to Myself." So on the day of the crucifixion all Jerusalem was attracted to Calvary. The Roman Governor, the chief priests, the Scribes and Pharisees, the Jewish populace, the stranger in the Holy City, were witnesses that Christ was to be lifted up in order to draw all things to Himself. And first were drawn the powers of physical nature. The sun obscured its light to signify that with His death Jesus had taken away the light of the world. The earth trembled to make manifest that the Creator and Conservator had removed the order and harmony from the universe. The rocks were rent and the devils were let loose upon the earth to prove that virtue and justice had departed with the dying God. The dead appeared so many to assure them that happiness had been snatched from heaven and buried in the tomb with the crucified Jesus. And on Easter morning even before the rise of the sun the stone was rolled away from the sepulchre and Jesus appeared radiant in the fullness of His divinity to bring back to earth and heaven the peace and glory that had disappeared with Him.

It was the name of Jesus that converted the twelve poor fishermen into Apostles ready to lay down their lives for the spread of His doctrine. East and West and North and South they made their way and overturned the huts of the poor and the palaces of kings. The name of Jesus appeared to Constantine and great empires were won away from their ancestral traditions and converted and made strong in Christianity. New kingdoms arose upon the ruins of barbarism; and to every one on the name of Jesus gave power and civilization. And the streets and hills over which Jesus was dragged and put to death have in the succeeding centuries been worn away by the knees of the millions of pilgrims who have made the ground fertile with their kisses.

To day, as it is in that sacred name of Jesus that the world lives and has its being, and in which the hopes for the perpetuity of civilization and righteousness are made confident. Grave errors are spread over the earth; the evil spirits are abroad in the darkness, men are crying out in anguish at the signs of the times. Perhaps a great storm is gathering to break forth upon the human race. The thunders, certainly, have been heard very near; and the lightning flashes have already destroyed much that was holy and noble. But there is no fear for the church. She is the Ark of the Firmament, built by the Carpenter's Son, and against every wind and the waves shall not prevail. The name of Jesus is the powerful magnet that is drawing and keeping men in the church, and the societies instituted and called by that name are a most potent factor for the safety and preservation of Faith. Thus while darkness settles the light of the Holy Name of Jesus is still shining and guiding His church, and is honored everywhere, in heaven, on earth, and in hell.—Providence Visitor.

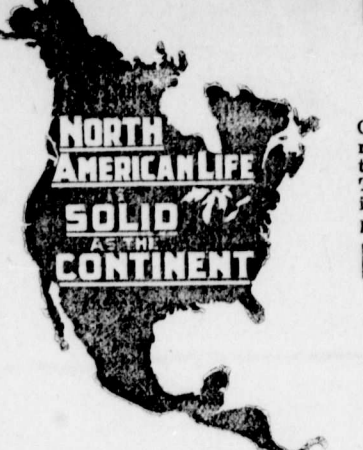
TO PREACH TO PROTESTANTS.

At the lectures given in the Apostolic Mission House which the Paulists have founded near the Catholic University in Washington, D. C., to train priests for non Catholic mission work twenty-six students, already ordained, are now in attendance.

"It will not take many years," says Father Doyle, "before we shall have two or three hundred of these well-trained missionaries sent among the non Catholic people of this country, telling them what the Catholic church teaches and persuading them that their highest spiritual interests are dependent on her saving grace."

But what can even 300 missionaries accomplish towards the conversion of 60,000,000 people? Will not multitudes of these die before they have the true gospel preached to them? Does it not lie on us all to take part in this crusade of grace by means of prayer, good example, of contribution to the expenses of the missions, of some pious books scattered far and wide, and of personal interest in the conversion of some of our neighbors?—Catholic Union and Times.

Friends are rare, for the good reason that men are not common.—Abbe Roux



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