

London, Sat., Feb. 8, 1890.

ON ANTICHRIST

One of the most nonsensical commentaries it has been our lot to read upon the subject of Revision of the Westminster Confession appears in a late number of the Christian Instructor under the title "Is the Pope an anti-Christ?" It is copied from Mid-Continent and is intended as a protest against eliminating from the Westminster standards of the Presbyterian Church the statement that the Pope is anti-Christ. The writer of the article calls himself "Westminster."

The Christian Instructor is a Presbyterian organ, with a large circulation in many localities, and from this article the public can form a pretty accurate judgment on the nature of the stuff on which Presbyterian "babes of grace" are fed in order to transform them into "elect" children of God after the Presbyterian pattern.

The writer of the article under consideration quotes Turretin as saying that "the doctrine that the Pope of Rome, or the Papacy, is anti-Christ is the general belief of Protestants and the chief ground of the Reformation."

Francis Turretin was Professor of Theology in Geneva, and he is acknowledged to have been one of the best expositors of the true character of Calvinism or Presbyterianism. Whether he is authorized to declare what is the doctrine of Protestantism is, however, quite another question. Protestantism takes so many shapes that no single writer can dub himself an exponent of Protestantism. Turretin may therefore dub himself an exponent of what Calvinism is, or what Presbyterianism is, since it is the peculiar boast of Presbyterianism that they are thoroughgoing Calvinists; but when he pretends to speak for Protestantism he is a fraud of the first class.

The Westminster Confession in its 25th chapter says: "The Pope of Rome is that anti-Christ, that man of sin, and son of perdition that exalteth himself in the Church against Christ, and all that is called God."

It is hard to say whether the absurdity, the impety, or the Pharisaical assumptions of this statement is most conspicuous.

Of all Christian denominations, the only one which has obeyed the command of Christ to carry the knowledge of Him to all nations is the Catholic Church. By her were the nations converted to Christianity, by her they were taught to know God, and to acknowledge Christ. It is in the height of absurdity to say that the head of the Church which does all this "exalteth himself against Christ and all that is called God." The absurdity is so apparent that this very clause is one of the absurdities that the present Revision movement is designed by these Presbyterians who have a share of common sense to eliminate from the Westminster Confession. Dr. Philip Schaff, who will certainly not be suspected of leaning towards Catholicism, is one of the most earnest advocates for its removal. He declares in effect that the space taken up by this declaration would be much better filled by a declaration that Christ's love extended to all mankind, and that He died for all—truth which is not only excluded from, but is expressly repudiated in the Confession as it stands.

Let Westminster and the Christian Instructor grumble as they may, the Presbyterianism of to-day is fully bent upon removing from the pages of its standards this absurdity at least. Hitherto the Presbyterian teaching body have been obliged to swear to this doctrine. They will very soon be virtually absolved from that oath, and told, practically, that they have been obliged by their Church to swear to a falsehood. It is there not more of the spirit of anti-Christ in imposing such an oath than in anything which the Pope has done.

We have said, that besides being absurd, the statement of the Confession is impious. It is impious because history and the tradition of the Christian Church attests that the first head of the Church, St. Peter, who was appointed by Christ to feed His lambs and His sheep (St. John, xxi, 15, 17) fixed his See in Rome, and was, therefore, to use the words of the Confession of the Presbyterians, "the first Pope of Rome." Since the Confession makes it an article of divine faith that the Pope of Rome is "anti-Christ, the man of sin, and the son of perdition," these words should be constantly and immutably true, and these bad names must have been applicable to St. Peter, equally with Leo XIII. They must also have been applicable to St. Clement, the fourth Pope, of whom Holy Scripture says: "His name is in the book of life." (Paul, iv, 3)

The term "Pharisaical sanctimoniousness," which we have applied to this doctrine of the Confession, will be acknowledged to be appropriate when it is borne in mind that the hypocritical Pharisee specially named in the gospel as the type of his class "hacked God that he was not as other men." (St. Luke, xxi, 11)

It is one of the characteristics of anti-Christ that he will persecute the Church

of Christ. Now the writer in Mid-Continent acknowledges that the Catholic Church is the "largest Church in Christendom," and we have a view of Presbyterianism in operation in the following law enacted in Scotland by the professedly Christian party which was then in power in 1567, a sound Presbyterian being the chief magistrate. It is aimed chiefly against "the largest Church of Christendom."

"That professed Jesuits and simoniacal priests, found in any part of the realm, shall be apprehended, pursued, and inured the pain of death and confiscation of moveables; that whoever willingly and wittingly receives and supplies any of them for the space of three days and three nights together, or severally at three times, shall suffer the third of their life's estate, and all their goods and hearers of Mass, all who refuse to report to the preaching of God's word, and who shall, by reasoning, or dispersing of books or letters, endeavor to persuade any of His Majesty's subjects to decline from the profession of the true religion, shall incur the third of their moveables and of their life's estate." (Lord Kene's abridgment of Statute Law.)

It will be remarked that the final clause of this piece of tyranny over men's consciences are directed against all Protestants who refuse to admit the Westminster Confession, equally as against Catholics. The true religion is elsewhere defined to be contained in that Confession only.

All this is perfectly in accord with those clauses in the Confession and the Larger Catechism which make it the duty of the civil magistrate to remove "all false worship."

There is something refreshingly amusing in Westminster's effort to bring Pope Gregory and St. Jerome forward as witnesses to prove that the Pope is the anti-Christ of the Bible. St. Gregory would thus be proving himself to be the anti-Christ. The writer quoted in the Christian Instructor says: "Gregory had fore-announced that the man who should claim to be universal pastor of God's flock on earth is the forerunner of anti-Christ." It is scarcely necessary to say that the quotation is quite false. St. Gregory's real words were not a fore-announcement at all. He styles John, Patriarch of Constantinople, a "forerunner of anti-Christ" (I. 4 Ep. 38 to John of Constantinople), because he had announced to himself the title "Universal Bishop." But the fore-runner of anti-Christ is not the anti-Christ any more than St. John the Baptist was Christ because he was Christ's forerunner.

John of Constantinople, through pride, usurped a title which did not belong to him, and Pope Gregory rebuked him in these strong terms, because pride and usurpation will be characteristic of the anti-Christ, as they were also of John.

As to the teaching of St. Jerome regarding the position of the Pope in the Church, we will here quote him in confirmation of what we have said above, that the Westminster Confession impiously and absurdly applies the title of anti-Christ to St. Peter, St. Jerome says:

"The Apostle Peter, the first high priest of the Christians, when he had first founded the Church at Antioch, proceeded to Rome, where, preaching the Gospel, he continued for twenty-five years bishop of that city."

We may here add that both St. Innocent and St. Optatus in the years 170 and 368, respectively, mention both Peter and Clement in their lists of the Popes down to their days, thus fully showing that at the time when even Presbyterians acknowledge that the Church was in her purity, the Pope, far from being believed to be anti-Christ, was recognized throughout the world as the lawful head of Christ's Church on earth.

Want of space prevents us from adding now much which we would like to say upon this favorite theme of Presbyterian controversialists.

FRENCH IN PARLIAMENT.

The London Free Press of Monday characterizes the French language as "pathe" in its eagerness to find an argument for its abolition from Canada. The Free Press managers and editors may be ignorant of the noble language of France, but such ignorance is not any more to their credit than that of the Chinese who characterized as "barbaric" all who were not natives of the "Celestial Empire." The Free Press seems to be blissfully ignorant of the fact that France has a literature in the French language which England might well envy in spite of her greatness, which we have no wish to impugn. Is the Free Press ignorant of the fact that the great epic Telemachus is the work of a Frenchman, and was written in French, and by a Catholic Bishop too? Is it aware that masterpieces of eloquence and learning have been written by such scholars as Bossuet, Chateaubriand, Fenelon, L'abbé de Lamour, Montesquieu, Dupleix; yes, even in their way by such erratic geniuses as Voltaire and Jean Jacques Rousseau?

But, of course, the Free Press directs its hostility especially against the use of the French language in Canada. In Canada will be as harmless as it is arrogant and tyrannous. It has not yet learned that the French-Canadians are as much or more citizens of this country than are their assailants. It says of the French language:

"We (the Free Press managers and

editors) want none of it. The age wants none of it. (!!!) The large majority of the people of Canada do not desire it, etc."

If we English-speaking people do not want any French to be spoken in Canada we should at least remember that the French-speaking people of the country were fully guaranteed the liberty of doing British subjects in their own way when the country was ceded to Great Britain. It is under this guarantee that the ancestors of the French-Canadians accepted British rule, and they must be regarded as our equals in every respect. It is therefore the height of folly to talk of forcing upon them any language except that which they themselves choose to speak. But, in spite of all the bluster of the Free Press and its allies, Mr. Dalton McGowan and the Mail, and the Huron Diocesan Standard, we can safely tell them that the people of Quebec will keep both their language and their religion until they themselves, of their own free will, shall give them up.

The Free Press says that if the French-Canadians speak in French on Mr. McCarthy's motion to abolish French in the North West they will speak to empty benches. Why is this? If it is really the case it is because the Ontario members of Parliament, generally, know only one language. But the French-Canadian members know at least two. It is an old saying: "He who knows seven languages is seven times a man." It would appear from the statement of the Free Press, then, that every French-Canadian in Parliament is worth two Ontarians. We do not go quite so far as to assert this, but we do say that Quebec shall not be forced to adopt English as its language until it shall do so of its own accord.

It is very true, as the Free Press says, that English is the prevailing language of the continent; but it is not by forcing it that it has become so. If Quebec chose, at some future time to make English its language, let it be so. But no more foolish measure could be proposed than to attempt to force English upon our French-speaking Province before it is prepared to accept it. The Free Press is as impotent in this matter as it is irrelevant. It is merely contributing to the Mail's policy of bringing on an annexation by exciting internal discord in the country.

DEAN CASSIDY AND FATHER DUFFY HONORED.

Oulgan, Jan. 24th, 1890.

To the Editor of the Catholic Record:

DEAR SIR—O, the eve of the departure of Rev. Dean Cassidy and Father D. Duffy for Burie and St. Ignace respectively the following addresses and presentations were incidentally at their leaving tables.

DEAR FATHER DUFFY—We, the parishioners of St. James, Antioch, wish to testify to you our feelings of deep regret on the eve of your departure from amongst us. We knew it must have cost you many a pang of absence sorrow to be obliged to surrender the ties that link you so strongly to Antioch, where you have spent the early years of your priesthood. We can well understand that a connection so tender and sacred, and our anticipations and hopes in you have been so long realized, for your education as a priest would reflect honor on any parish. Since your advent amongst us you have been largely—in fact at times solely—instrumental in the erection of that enduring monument, which befits the place of honor for your successor and recalls the place of our former church. Truly we very Rev. Dean Cassidy add that you far more pleasantly doing the will of others than your own.

It is unnecessary here to advert to your many good qualities of head and heart; it might look like flattery on our part, yet we earnestly hope that you will in the future, as in the past, report to those confided to your care the knowledge with which God has blessed you.

In conclusion, we ask you to accept the accompanying gift as a souvenir of the esteem and affection in which you are held.

To Rev. Dean Cassidy:—The announcement of your removal, though not altogether unexpected, has produced a widespread feeling of sorrow throughout our parish. During the two years and three months of Antioch and Telemachus a feeling of affection towards you has been constantly growing stronger in the hearts of the people—an affection prompted by the knowledge that you have ever evinced a true fatherly care for the spiritual and temporal welfare of every individual in the parish. The magnificent church and its surroundings which you have brought to completion will stand as a monument of your zeal and piety for many years after the people of to-day have vanished from the scene. In working so faithfully for the best interests of the parish we are well aware that you have done nothing for your own material interests, but we beg your acceptance of this token of appreciation and esteem. The time has been too short for a general appeal to the people. It is the offering therefore of only a portion of those who would have gladly contributed had an opportunity been offered. In bidding you a sorrowful farewell we ask a remembrance in your prayers and in the Holy Sacraments of the altar and beg Almighty God to grant you many years of life to labor in His vineyard.

On behalf of your parishioners: C. M. Kenna, M. D., Geo. P. Hughes, Thos. Q. M. Gray, Geo. C. Morrow, J. C. Morrow, B. Kough, F. J. Hamill, P. J. Cassidy, J. Kade, J. Kelly, P. Ryan and W. Elard.

New York Catholic Review. FIVE-MINUTE SERMONS FOR EARLY MASSES.

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THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

"I say unto you that many shall come from the East and the West, and shall sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of Heaven; but the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness."—Gospel of the day.

Our Blessed Lord uttered these prophetic words long before announcing in teaching all nations. When the time came for the actual fulfillment of His plans, our beloved patron, St. Paul, was chosen as the Apostle of the Gentiles, and a preacher of the truth in the whole world. In an extraordinary manner St. Paul received the revelation of God's designs for the salvation of the human race. To do the work assigned to him he had to proclaim the great truth of human equality in the sight of God. He was obliged to condemn sternly those among his Jewish brethren who considered that God's mercy could be circumscribed by natural boundaries or social conditions.

At an early period of the world's history the work of God had been faithfully performed by Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. To them and their descendants was given the honor of being the chosen people; and as duty was likewise imposed upon them of preparing to celebrate with fitting grandeur the wonderful union of the Son of God with human nature effected by the Incarnation. They were appointed to send forth the glad tidings of this royal banquet, which was never intended to be of their exclusive benefit. A large number of them became absorbed in the pursuit of wealth, and in delusive projects for increasing the national glory of their race. Though many were called, but few were found worthy to be chosen for the work which had been set apart for them.

Again, after the Messiah had returned to Heaven triumphant, God sent other servants to call them that were invited to partake of His divine banquet. But they who neglected this sacred admonition, some receiving the new with indifference, while others became enraged and laid violent hands on the king's servants, and put them to death. When informed of this act of base ingratitude, the king was angry, and, sending his armies, destroyed the murderers and burnt their city.

St. Chrysostom declares that this was accomplished when the pagan Romans were permitted to destroy Jerusalem about forty years after the Apostles began to preach Christ crucified. The dominant party among the reprobate Jews had mercilessly put to death many of God's servants. They stoned St. Stephen, attempted to kill St. Paul, cast St. Peter into prison, and pursued with relentless fury those among their own relatives who professed the Christian religion. Meanwhile God remained patient, allowing them every opportunity for repentance, until they were delivered into the hands of their enemies.

From the sad fate of the perfidious Jews we can learn a lesson of warning, namely, that it is a dangerous policy for nations as well as individuals to treat God's invitations with contempt, and to abuse His faithful servants. Though we may have means to cultivate, and merchandise to make profitable, we have also a supreme duty of allegiance to God which we can never neglect. We see around us in this modern world a prevailing desire to obtain riches and power at any cost from the rich and powerful, and to treat with a spirit of apathy in seeking these things which are most valuable in the sight of God. My brethren, it is our privilege to suffer at times temporal loss, and to be deprived of honors to which we are justly entitled because of our cooperation in the spirit of our world.

We should gladly accept of such trials, trusting in the firm conviction that the friendship of our heavenly Father is worth more to us than anything else. Like St. Paul, let us strive to overcome evil by good, "providing good things, not only in the sight of God, but also in the sight of all men."

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