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The Montreal Witness

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BISHOP POTTER ON THE BIBLE.

FROM AN OCCASIONAL CONTRIBUTOR.

Last week, at the opening of the annual Protestant Episcopal Diocesan Convention, held in the Church of the Incarnation, in New York city, Bishop Potter delivered a characteristic charge to his clergy, treating principally of the "infallibility of the Bible"—but omitting the infallibility of its interpretation. Amongst other things, the Bishop said:—

"If the Reformation had accomplished nothing else, she would have done her greatest work in giving back to men the Bible.

If we are not laboring under a great mistake Bishop Potter has frequently made use of this same sentence, also did Spurgeon use it many years ago, likewise did Henry Ward Beecher make use of it about the same time as the London preacher; and above all the notorious Fulton has harped upon it more than once. Consequently, the phrase is quite familiar to us. Moreover, J. Kent Stone once repeated the same words; but when he became Father Fidelis he very quickly refuted them, and he did so after the following manner:—

After treating in an exhaustive manner of the Inspiration of Scripture, the Sufficiency of Scripture, and the Interpretation of Scripture, the learned writer says:—

"O Protestant! you who parade your unmeaning boast of being a Bible Christian, you who dare blindly to charge the Church of God with dishonoring and making void the Word of which she is the sole guardian and witness, will you never rouse yourself to see towards what a gulf of unbelief your Protestantism is leading? Do you not know how it is destroying the faith of men in the very Scripture which it cunningly professes to magnify? Protestants began three centuries ago with a belief in the Inspiration of Holy Writ. Where did they get that faith? From the Catholic Church. It was a Divine

with the Irish cause, declare, that in their judgment, the United Irish League is worthy of the support of men of Irish blood, and hereby pledge to the Irish representatives and the United Irish League their heartiest support and assistance.

Resolved, That to that end a branch of the United Irish League, to be known as the Boston Central Branch, be and is hereby established.

This is a practical way to go to work, and should be followed,—not only in this city,—but in every other centre where there is honest sympathy for the men in the National ranks in Ireland, and the cause for which they are contending.

CATHOLIC INDUSTRIAL PROGRESS.—Under this title the "Michigan Catholic" says: "Take the Catholic communities in this country as examples. Iowa is pretty thoroughly peopled with Catholic farmers. They are almost uniformly prosperous. The Irish Catholic colonies which were planted in Minnesota twenty years ago are marvels of agricultural progress and prosperity. The German Catholic agricultural settlements in Indiana and Wisconsin are similar examples. Even in our own state there is a distinctly Catholic colony on the Beaver Islands in Lake Michigan, and their industrial and moral progress is shown by the fact that they are all prosperous and that the building which was made for a jail and stood unused for years in that capacity, was turned into a schoolhouse and put in charge of the Dominican Sisters."

RELIGION AND POLITICS.—The Pittsburg "Observer" thus summarizes how our separated brethren treat this matter:—"Our Protestant friends say that religion ought to be kept out of politics, but they take good care to have our presidents Protestant, all our governors Protestant, all our judges Protestant, all our members of the Legislature Protestant, and as many as possible of our public school-teachers Protestant. They keep the Catholic religion out of politics, sure enough."

FOR THE PEOPLE.—The "Sacred Heart Review" says:—"The late Cardinal Manning predicted that the twentieth century would be 'for the people.' In connection with this prediction it is interesting to learn that the present Sacred College of Cardinals has been recruited largely from the masses. It is stated that never before was there a cardinal who had not been a member of the nobility. The larger proportion of the members have relative prominent in the business or political or educational life of Italy, while Cardinal Gott's father was a dock laborer of Genoa."

PUNISHED FOR THEIR RELIGION.—A story comes from Washington, says the "Catholic Columbian," that through the influence of Mrs. John Sherman, the millions of the feeble ex-Senator, he went to his adopted daughter, Mrs. Mary S. McCallum, and to his Protestant niece, Mrs. General Nelson A. Miles and Mrs. ex-Senator Don Cameron. Because of the same black influence, it is said, none of the old statesman's wealth is to go to the children of Gen. William T. Sherman, because they are Catholics. One of these is the Jesuit priest, Rev. Thos. E. Sherman, and the three daughters are Mrs. Minnie Thacker, wife of the U. S. Consul at Havre; Mrs. Rachel Sherman Thorndike and Miss Lizzie Sherman.

ALLEGED BOGUS PRIESTS.—That the clerical garb is frequently the guise of much that is criminal has been quite forcibly demonstrated very recently in Des Moines, Iowa, says the "New Century." Two very smooth individuals recently succeeded in collecting from the Catholic people of that city a large sum of money under the pretence that they were soliciting means for the erection of a much needed orphan asylum in Northern Ireland. It is possible that they may really be what they claimed to be, priests from Ireland across the sea, but their many suspicious actions do not tend to inculcate such a belief. On the contrary, so open to doubt were their movements and methods that a detective was sent to work upon the case, but the supposed priests escaped before a trail could be started upon them. One of the representations made by these individuals was that a list which they exhibited was furnished by the parish priest, Father Flavin, of St. Ambrose's Church, Des Moines. This is absolutely false, according to Father Flavin, and this and other suspicious claims urged Father Flavin to expose them. It is supposed that they have left the city, for nothing has been heard from them for many days.

SECRET SOCIETIES.—On this subject the "Freeman's Journal," of New York, says:—"The Rev. W. J. Coleman, pastor of the Allegheny, Pa., Reformed Presbyterian Church, recently preached, on the question: 'Should the Church Receive Members of Secret Societies?'"

He said that "the law of the church (Reformed Presbyterian) is that those who are members of associations, either sworn or pledged to secrecy in regard to the nature and doings of such associations, may be admitted to ecclesiastical fellowship."

So far as we are aware, the Reformed Presbyterians are the first of the sectarians to take the Catholic position in regard to secret, oath-bound societies. Among other things, the Rev. Mr. Coleman said:—"Lodge influences are unfavorable to spiritual life. There are more lodges than churches in this city. There are many more men than women in the lodges, and many more women than men in the churches. The presence of many men in the lodge may help to account for their absence from the church. The men who cultivate the lodge do not generally cultivate the prayer meeting. Secret societies are rivals to the church, offering a way of salvation that is not based on the merits of Christ and a life of godliness. They are substitution in that while they

GOLDEN JUBILEE OF REV. SISTER RACHEL CURRAN.

On the 26th April, 1848, Miss Rachel Curran (now Sister Mary of the Immaculate Conception) entered the novitiate of the Grey Sisters at Montreal for the Bytown mission, where she immediately proceeded. The mission had been opened only three years previously, 1845. On the 2nd October, 1850, she made her solemn profession, and on Tuesday last feasted her golden jubilee. The occasion was one of general rejoicing in the community. On Monday evening the Sisters offered their congratulations, and the members of the family of the venerable nun were permitted to take part in the celebration. Amongst them was the Rev. Sister Mary Curran, of the same Order, who celebrated her golden jubilee two years ago, after having spent the greater part of her life in the Canadian Northwest amongst the Indians and half-breeds of that region. Hon. Mr. Justice Curran, of the Superior Court, P. Q., her brother, and Mrs. Curran, Mr. J. P. Curran, her nephew. A pleasant evening was spent, the younger nuns giving selections of vocal and instrumental music. Beautiful addresses were read in English and French, and at the request of Sister Curran were feelingly replied to on her behalf by her brother, the Judge. On Tuesday morning, Mass was celebrated by His Grace, Archbishop Duhamel. The Rev. Jubilarians supported by her two sisters, Sister M. Curran, of Montreal, Sister E. Curran, secretary-general of the Order at Ottawa, received her vows, and received Holy Communion. The three Sisters at that moment presented an edifying spectacle. In the afternoon the young ladies of Rideau street convent gave an entertainment in honor of the jubilarian, which was attended by many of the most distinguished citizens of Ottawa. The literary and musical programme was of a very high order. During the day the good Sister was the recipient of scores of messages of congratulation from all parts of Canada, and the United States. His Excellency, Mgr. Falcois, Apostolic delegate, was graciously pleased to send a note of felicitation. The history of the progress of the Grey Sisterhood at Ottawa has already been written, but the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the profession of the first Sister who pronounced her vows at the present mother house make it interesting to review briefly the labors in which she has participated during the last fifty years. To that illustrious prelate Bishop Phelan, of Kingston, was due the opening of the first mission at Ottawa (then Bytown) in 1845. The capital of the Dominion was then in its earliest infancy. The first house of the sisterhood on St. Patrick street was a little wooden shanty. This was enlarged in 1847 when the typhus fever broke out amongst the Irish immigrants, and those of them who were cared for by the Sisters until every member of the young community had been stricken by the disease, including the Rev. Mother Superior Bruyere. The Grey Sisters for many years were the only Order of religious ladies in the district, and upon them fell the work, not only of attending to the sick, the founding, the aged and the suffering generally, but the labor of organizing schools as well. In 1854 the works of the jubilarian had developed in such a marvellous degree and in so

THE CHINESE SITUATION.

The latest development, as far as China is concerned, seems to be a nearing some understanding between all the parties interested. The Emperor of China has sent a long letter to the Emperor of Germany, in which the former offers to make sacrifices upon the altars of his gods on account of the murder of the German representative at Peking. This does not appear to tickle the German Emperor's fancy at all. We give the letter of the Chinese Ruler and there from the Emperor of Germany, which are as follows:—

THE CHINESE EMPEROR'S LETTER.

"Greeting.—That Your Majesty's minister has fallen a victim to the rising which suddenly broke out in China without our officials being able to prevent it, whereby our friendly relations were disturbed, is deeply deplored and regretted. By decree, we order that sacrifice be made on the altar for the deceased and chief secretary Kun-Yang has been instructed to pour libations on the altar. The commercial superintendents of the northern and southern ports have been ordered to take the necessary measures concerning the conveyance of the coffin of the deceased. When it reaches Germany a second offering shall be made on an altar."

"Germany has always maintained the friendliest relations with China. We therefore entertain the hope that Your Majesty will renounce all resentment so that peace may be arranged as soon as possible, and that universal harmony be rendered possible for all time. This is our most anxious hope, and our most ardent wish."

EMPEROR WILLIAM'S REPLY.

Emperor William replied September 30, as follows:—"To the Emperor of China:—"I, the German Emperor, have received the telegram of Your Majesty the Emperor of China. I have observed with satisfaction that Your Majesty is anxious to expiate according to the custom and precept of your religion, the shameful murder of my minister, which set at naught all civilization. "Yet, as the German Emperor and a Christian, I cannot regard that abominable crime as atoned for by a libation. Besides my murdered minister, there have gone before the Throne of God a large number of our brethren of the Christian faith, bishops and missionaries, women and children, who, for the sake of their faith, which is also mine, have died the violent death of martyrs and are accusers of Your Majesty. Do the libations commanded by Your Majesty suffice for all these innocent ones?" "I do not make Your Majesty personally responsible for the outrage against the legations, which are held inviolable among all nations, nor for the grievous wrongs done so many nations and faiths, and to the subjects of Your Majesty by my Christian belief. But the advisers of Your Majesty's throne and the officials on whose heads rests the bloodguilt of a crime which fills all Christian nations with horror must explain themselves. I do not make Your Majesty personally responsible for the outrage against the legations, which are held inviolable among all nations, nor for the grievous wrongs done so many nations and faiths, and to the subjects of Your Majesty by my Christian belief. But the advisers of Your Majesty's throne and the officials on whose heads rests the bloodguilt of a crime which fills all Christian nations with horror must explain themselves."

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