

THE PRE-REFORMATION CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

Rev. D. M. Barrett, O. S. B., in American Catholic Quarterly Review.

PART I.

In a letter remarkable for the pastoral solicitude and tender charity towards "all the churches" which mark the present occupant of the Papal throne, Leo XIII. recently addressed the Hierarchy of Scotland on the subject of the re-union of Christendom, with more particular regard to "our separated brethren" in Scotland. After alluding to the seeds of Christianity sown by St. Ninian—sent from Rome 200 years before Augustine came to England—watered by St. Columba and other holy missionaries, and fostered by the saintly Queen Margaret, the Pope reminds Scotsmen of the advantages bestowed upon their land by the Catholic Church when she reigned supreme there. It is proposed in this paper to take a glance at some of these advantages, in order to show the loss which Scotland sustained, over and above the loss of the true Faith, in what Leo XIII. terms "the terrible storm which swept over the Church in the sixteenth century."

Anything like an adequate review of the thousand and more years during which Catholicity grew and flourished in Scotland would be an evident impossibility in an article such as this. It would, therefore, seem more to the point to take our stand at the period which was the apogee of its external greatness and power—the early part of the sixteenth century—and thence view in detail the benefits bestowed by the Church upon the nation at large. It was a time when the power and prestige of the Church were most conspicuous; since, although heresy had dared now and again to rear its head, it was scarcely regarded yet as an enemy to be feared.

Glancing from our standpoint down the vista of past ages, we come in sight of many a saintly figure. Faithful Ireland had sent her missionaries—Columba, Drostan, Brendan, and a host of others, to evangelize the land. Scotland herself gave birth to others—Serf, Mungo, Ternan, Blaen, Nathalan, Duthac—to carry on the holy work. The blood of national martyrs of Donnan and his companion monks, of Maclrubha and Adrian and Magnus—watered the soil; thousands more, the secret of whose sanctity is known only to Heaven, pleaded for the country, and enriched it with streams of grace. Through their prayers and merits religion has flourished, and the Church has grown up to be a mighty tree, whose branches overshadow the land.

At the period we are considering, the Catholic Church energizes through thirteen episcopal sees. Stately cathedrals, monasteries, collegiate and parish churches stud the realm. God is worshipped within them with a magnificence of ceremonial not fully realized, and scarcely appreciated in a nineteenth century, when ritual is often found to give place to practical utility. Prelates, distinguished not only for wisdom and holiness, but often by noble, and even royal blood, uphold the Church's dignity; in the primatial See alone, no less than six of royal pedigree have occupied the episcopal chair during a century. In Scotland, as everywhere and at all times, the Church has ever been at the nursing-mother of learning and science, the patron of the liberal and mechanical arts, the faithful guardian of the rights of her children, defending them against oppression, relieving their hunger with lavish charity, harboring the homeless, cherishing the sick, providing, as far as lay in her power, for all their wants, both spiritual and temporal. It is the attempt of these pages to show in detail how, through all these channels, the splendor of fabric and ritual powerful prelates, learned men, tender and sympathetic lovers of their kind—she was the truest benefactor Scotland ever possessed.

David I., whom Scots love to designate "Saint," though a less generous successor to his throne styled him "a *sacerdotis* for the crown," was the first of a series of pious and enlightened rulers sprung from St. Margaret. To this great King Scotland owed not only a host of monastic foundations—Dunfermline, Kelso, Lesmahago, for Benedictines; Melrose, Newbattle, Dundrennan, Kinross, for Cistercians; Holyrood and Jelburgh, for Austin Canons; Torphichen, for Knights Hospitaliers, and the rest—but she was also indebted to him for the introduction of method and order into the parochial system. His enthusiastic biographer, Aelred, the saintly abbot of Rievaulx, says that David found only three or four dioceses existing and left nine behind him: these further multiplied in succeeding centuries.

To attempt any adequate description of even one of the cathedrals of these dioceses, as they appeared in the sixteenth century, would be vain in so brief a review as this. The primatial See of St. Andrews boasted of a church 358 feet long, with a lofty central spire, numerous decorated pinnacles, and copper roofs blazing in the sun—its interior resplendent with polished pavements, carved images, and costly windows of painted glass. Then there was Glasgow Cathedral, enshrining in its unrivalled eastern crypt the body of St. Mungo; Aberdeen, with its granite church—the only cathedral in the world built of that material—and its exquisite wood-carving, of finer workmanship than anything of its kind in Europe. To enumerate would be tedious, but at the risk of trying the reader's patience we cannot forbear a more detailed description of Elgin Cathedral—"The Lantern of the North"—which perhaps bore the palm.

It was 282 feet long and 87 wide, and stood on a cruciform ground-plan. Its architecture was in the purest early English style, with later additions in French flamboyant. The great western doorway, under a beautifully carved and moulded arch, was divided by a central pillar to form a double entrance. It was flanked on either side by a massive square tower, each one rising to the height of more than a hundred feet. A fine central tower and spire at the junction of the transepts measured twice that height. Entering the great nave, the visitor beheld, dividing off the choir, the grand Rood screen of carved wood work, painted and gilded, with its beautiful crucifix above. Beyond were richly carved stalls for the canons. Minute and exquisite carving everywhere abounded; beautifying the pillars, the window-tracery, the numerous lateral chantries, the magnificent octagonal chapter-house. Stained glass filled the windows; that over the western entrance measured 27 feet in height, and a unique cluster of lancet lights in double tier, surmounted by a beautiful wheel window, fitted the entire wall-space at the eastern end of the choir. One of the Bishops, speaking two hundred years earlier than the sixteenth century, called it "The special ornament of the land, the glory of the realm, the delight of strangers and foreigners who came to see it, a praise and excellency of praise in foreign countries for the number of its ministers, its sumptuous decoration, its pious worship of God, its lofty bell-towers, its splendid furniture, and countless jewels." What, then, must have been the beauty of this vast building when two centuries of further benefactions had still more enriched its splendors?

But the glorious cathedrals were rivalled and often surpassed by the monastic and conventual churches scattered over the land. Some seventy abbeys and priories of monks and nuns, about a hundred houses of canons and friars, and forty collegiate establishments presented a varied and beautiful spectacle of architectural display. Dunfermline—the "Darham of the North"—sheltered under its massive arches the shrine of St. Margaret, its first foundress. Arbroath, its glorious rival, possessed a splendid church of rose-red sandstone, built in the style of Chester and Lichfield cathedrals; it stood on a wind-swept height, overlooking the sea, and its nave and choir stretched to the length of 265 feet, while its roof rose 67 feet above its pavement. Kelso had a church of thirteenth century style, with graceful lofty arches, rich arcading around its walls, and beautiful windows. Then Melrose was conspicuous for its lace-like tracery and delicate carving; Sweetheart—the memorial of David's wife, a wifely affection and of her husband's heart enshrined within it—had its noble clustered pillars and graceful wheel windows. Of all these Benedictine and Cistercian churches we will single out one for more minute description.

MATERIALISM IN MARRIAGE

We present in another column a most interesting compilation on the ever pertinent marriage question. Our long-reputed, newly-adopted cousins over sea are fond of publicly discussing what might be called whole sale family topics. A multiplicity of like individual interests speedily becomes one general interest. On the question of marrying and giving in marriage humanity is simply one great family, eager to contrive ways and means of match-making.

The redundant sentiment of the eighteenth century, a sentiment as often meretricious as wholesome, has given place to a practicality which in these closing years of the nineteenth century manifests itself in a mercenary spirit of calculation admirably adapted to the conduct of commercial matters, but totally out of place in affairs of the heart. Dan Cupid cannot very well soar high when his plummy wings are weighted by money bags and "prospects." Love's prospectus! Who can set down perfect happiness in figures of black and white? Truly, "I were but little happy if I could say how much." Call it sesterli, ducats, piastres, thalers, francs, pounds sterling, dollars decimal, scrap-iron or what you will, wealth, so our Babel-tongued wisemen of all ages have advised us, is no purchaser of happiness. Time's tested wisdom is verified in the cold, hard eye and the miserably empty heart of the money lover, in the bliss of a sanctified and contented poverty, which, though bare of larder and scant of purse, may be overflowing with the highest happiness God-given to man. Love at its best is not to be depicted by tongue or pen; its definition has escaped poet and philosopher. St. Paul does not hesitate to use a lofty figure of speech when he speaks of matrimony, likening the husband to Christ, and the wife to His Church. "This is a great sacrament, but I speak in Christ," says the Apostle, reverently. Love in marriage is a consecrated estate, its hallowed precincts invisible to profane eyes.

Materialism is common-sense run mad. The craze for evidence of worldly prosperity tends to loveless marriage or selfish isolation, to unwarranted extravagance and dishonest indebtedness. Comfort is sacrificed to an appearance of luxury, happiness is immolated on the altar of unworthy ambition. Plain, simple, cheerful living and provident frugality, though most material to present and future comfort, are despised by the progressive materialist—to whom it is forbidden to say Thou fool!

One cannot serve God and worship Mammon; one cannot at one and the same time be a Catholic and a materialist. Catholics are bound to regard marriage as a sacrament. Its prelude should be reverent. Money considerations, personal beauty, family connections, distinguished talents, have little to do with making marriage happy. The loving husband looks upon his wife as perfect, even though she be as unattractive as Dr. Johnson's idolized spouse; the devoted wife considers her husband a model of manly worth; the very faults of each are by the other condoned into endearments. Happy marriage is first of all a union of souls; its temporal affinities are secondary.

We are surfeited with Malthusianism, success worship, progressiveness and a score of cults mental and physical, the latter often insultingly disservice. The reaction is about due. We need a return of healthy, old-fashioned, unreasoning sentiment. Truly wise people still love and marry and live happily ever after in the good old way. These that remain single from worldly materialistic motives, or that marry with the same sordid views, do serve to be miserable, and usually get what they deserve.—Standard and Times.

WHERE ARE OUR YOUNG MEN.

The re-reading of that admirable life of Frederick Ozanam, founder of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, by Kathleen O'Meara, has brought home to our mind with great force the important question: Where are our Catholic young men? Ozanam was a model Catholic layman. He was no mere formalist. His religion was not a cloak to be put on or laid aside at convenience. There was in him no compromise with the world. He was a devoted, wholehearted Christian. He clung to his faith with undoubting, unyielding tenacity, and he was fired with a noble ambition and an earnest, unselfish enthusiasm to defend that faith from the attacks of infidels, to revive it in the hearts of tepid brethren and to recommend it to the world outside the Church.

Ozanam lived at a period when the Church was suffering from the disastrous effects of the French Revolution of 1830. In contending against the prevalent infidelity, St. Simonianism (which was very popular among the young men at that time) and the timidity, lethargy and ultra conservatism of Catholics, he gathered a small company of kindred spirits about him, and they commenced a determined campaign of opposition to all these adverse influences. Ozanam was only seventeen years old when he silenced the public attacks of the famous infidel Joubroy, who could not help respecting the extraordinary talent, Christian zeal, independence and devotion of his youthful antagonist.

But the general hostility continued, and Ozanam became convinced that the need was for actions, not for words. "It is all very well," said he, "talking and arguing and holding one's own against them, but why can we not do something?" The St. Simonians, who claimed to be a sort of Christians, glorifying the past history of the Church but maintaining that it had done its work and was no longer adapted to the spirit of the age in its present form, taught the young enthusiast with "Show us your works." The result was the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, whose history we need not stop to give at the present time. Suffice it that Ozanam became thoroughly convinced that what they needed as consistent Catholics, in order to revive the spirit of piety in others, to save their own souls and to recommend the Church to the outside world, was to engage in works of active, practical charity.

The originators of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul were young men. As the Society spread, it, of course, embraced all classes, but the active, energetic element of the Society in France, as well as in other countries—for it has spread throughout the whole world—is and always has been, the young men; of every station in life, indeed, but principally the more intelligent and educated class—the students, professional and business men.

But how is it with the Society in this country? We do not know how it may be with other parts of the country, but so far as our experience and observation go, in this region the young men are conspicuous by their absence. Where are they? What are they doing? Our educated, college-bred men, our professional and business men, who are constantly multiplying and occupying leading and influential positions in society, where are they? Is there any good reason why they should not engage in practical works of charity for their own souls' good and for the recommendation of Holy Church to outsiders? Why should we be less zealous and disinterested, less self-denying and devoted to our religion than the young Frenchmen? We have the same faith, the same motives, the same duties and obligations; and we have the same high ideals, the same promptings to noble and disinterested self-sacrifice that they had. Can it be possible that all this is being overlooked and forgotten by our young men; that they are so absorbed by the business and pleasures of life—the ambitions and struggles for mere worldly prosperity and distinction—that they have no time or inclination for all that appeals to the higher instincts and nobler and more spiritual aspirations of youth? Have they no sympathy with their kind, no charity for the poor, no desire to contribute by personal effort to relieve some of the untold misery by which we are surrounded and to elevate our suffering brethren in the social scale?

We may well ask, too, have they no

loyalty to the truth, no ambition to be instrumental in extending the blessings of their faith to those who are deprived of them, by setting an attractive example of the real spirit and aim of our holy religion? We all admire the zealous young companions, why should we not be ambitious to emulate their example and follow in their footsteps? If there are any special reasons why our young Catholics generally should not be members of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul we are not aware of them, and we confess we should be glad to see that glorious, beneficent society rejuvenated by a liberal infusion of young blood.—Sacred Heart Review.

IF SHE HADN'T SAID IT!

They were hurrying along the street, those two young women, and as they passed a man one of them was saying: "I'd give the world if I hadn't said it, 'or now—'" "O those quick tongues of ours! Those sharp tongues of ours that wound our own and make bitter memories for those we ought to love! When will we keep them in check? When will we make them very slow to utter unkind words?"

That girl would give the world now to have put a restraint on herself when she blurted out the remark that now she regrets; but then, in her quickness to say whatever came into her head, she let fly the cruel utterance that stung like the heart of a friend and that can never be plucked out. She is not alone in having let her tongue do mischief; nor in now regretting its evil work. There are others. There are millions of others whose speech has wrought suffering to others and brought sorrow to themselves. Blessed are they whose words are weighed in the balance of charity and used only to promote the welfare and the happiness of all concerning whom they speak!—Catholic Columbian.

LIKE CHILDREN.

Sir Brasili, a brave knight, was very tired on one occasion, having hunted the entire day. The falcon that rested on his wrist was tired too; and so the knight, when he sat down to rest, released the bird. There was a crystal stream of water issuing from a rock near by, and Sir Brasili, making a cup of the bugle he wore, filled it from the spring and would have carried it to his lips, but the falcon, with sudden dexterity, dashed it from his hand. Again he filled the cup, and again the falcon prevented him from drinking. Enraged at this, he cried: "I will wring thy neck if thou dost that again!" Then he filled the cup a third time, and a third time the falcon threw it to the ground. At that Sir Brasili struck his feathered friend, and he fell dead. Then, looking up, the knight saw that a large serpent was dropping venom from its fangs into the spring. "The falcon saved my life," said the knight, sadly "and I have deprived him of his."

We often rebel when some cup is withheld from our lips, not knowing that it is kept from us out of the purest love; like children, unaware of what is good for us; or like Sir Brasili, enraged with him who would instruct and save us.—Ave Maria.

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