

THE CATHOLIC RECORD.

ILLITERACY OF CATHOLIC COUNTRIES.

Worthy of their high reputation as are these two celebrated universities (Oxford and Cambridge) the number of students now attracted to their halls from other nations is comparatively small. In Catholic days great numbers flocked thither from all parts of Europe. As to their former numbers, we are told that there were in Oxford in the year 1209, 3,000 students; in 1231, 30,000; in 1263, 15,000; in 1350, between 3,000 and 4,000; and in 1360, 6,000. They were able to hold their own pretty well with their rivals on the continent, among which were Bologna in the thirteenth century, with its 10,000 scholars, and Paris with 40,000.

One more remarkable fact deserves to be noted. It was not until the very recent date of 1826 that rich and powerful England felt the need of, or was inspired by its Protestantism to create, more universities than Catholics had left to it ready made. And what sort of new universities did she create? London University, like the Royal University of Ireland, is only an examining board for some colleges. Victoria University is the title of several associated colleges; and Durham, the third one, is a university founded as late as 1832, reported in 1890 as having only 215 students, with one college in England, one in Barbadoes and one in Sierra Leone.

There is another test of general intelligence which may be applied, and a very critical one, too. In what countries do we find to day the highest percentage of university students compared with the population? Mulhall replies: The number of university students compared with population is much greater in Spain and Belgium than in other European countries. The United States Education Commissioners' Report for 1889 places the numbers of pupils in the English universities at 8,802, and those in Spain at the same date, 15,787—the population of the two countries then being 28,000,000 and 17,000,000 respectively. Belgium reports 4,252 strictly university students, besides 30,749 students at the schools of fine arts, a total of 35,000 out of a population of 6,000,000, of whom only 10,000 are Protestants. Catholic Italy, with 28,000,000 population, has 21 universities and 16,992 students, whilst Protestant Prussia with 29,000,000 people, has only 11 universities, and only 13,483 students. Yet Spain and Italy were selected by Dr. Madison C. Peters and Dr. Josiah Strong as countries whose peoples were sunk in besotted ignorance.

One more European comparison—Catholic Europe has 71 universities with 78,251 students, while Protestant Europe has 36 universities with 44,885 students.

The number of universities in South America is 18, while Brazil and the other South American States are reported as having colleges, schools of law and medicine.

Time will not allow me to speak of the vast collections of literature which are to be found in these Catholic countries of besotted ignorance, or of the thousands upon thousands of precious volumes which were ruthlessly destroyed at the Reformation by the enlightened leaders of Protestantism. In England they carried on their work of destruction under authority of acts of parliament and by royal order. The great libraries of Oxford and Cambridge were destroyed by the King's visitors. The present great Bodleian library of Oxford contains only three of the four thousand volumes, the pride and glory of that once renowned Catholic university. A writer in the Letters of Eminent Persons from the Bodleian says: "Whole libraries were destroyed or made waste-paper of, or consumed for the vilest uses. The splendid Abbey of Malmesbury, which possessed some of the finest MSS. in the kingdom, was ransacked, and its treasures either burnt or sold to serve the commonest purposes of life. An antiquary who travelled through that town, many years after the dissolution, related that he saw broken windows patched up with remains of the most valuable manuscripts on vellum, and that the bakers had not then consumed the stores they had accumulated, in heating their ovens.

These are some of the evidences of the spirit of early Protestantism, and of its methods to bring about the emancipation of the human intellect.

Talk of Romish illiteracy! How does it compare with the following shocking description of ignorance in the great Protestant Republic to the south of us? I quote from so good a Protestant paper as the *Evangelical Churchman*, published in Toronto:

"A college president recently gave the readers of the *New York Independent* the results of an experiment he made this autumn. To ascertain what the men—some 34 in number—who had recently entered his college, knew of the Bible, he gave them a paper containing twenty-two extracts from Tennyson, each containing an allusion to some scriptural scene or truth, and asked for an explanation of these allusions. They were not difficult or recondite, as may be judged from these samples. 'As manna on my wilderness'—'Like Hezekiah's backward runs the shadow of my days'; 'Joshua's moon in Ajalon'; 'A heart as rough as Esau's hand'; 'Gnash thyself, priest, and honor thy brute Baal'; 'Ruth amid the fields of corn'; 'Pharaoh's darkness'; 'A Jonah's gourd, up in one night and due to sudden sun'; 'Stiff as Lot's wife'; 'Arimathæan Joseph'; 'For I have hung thee pearls

and find thee swine'; 'And mark me even as Cain'; 'A whole Peter's sheet'; 'A Jacob's ladder falls'; 'Till you find the deathless angel seated in the tomb.'"

These were average young men—34 of them—belonging to different Protestant Churches, there being but one Roman Catholic among them. And what was the result? To quote the report: Eleven failed to comprehend the manna in the wilderness. Thirty-two had never heard of the shadow turning back on the dial. Twenty-six were ignorant of Joshua's moon. Nineteen failed to indicate the peculiar condition of Esau's hand. Twenty-two were unable to explain the allusion to Baal. Nine had apparently never read the idyl of Ruth and Booz. Eighteen failed to indicate the meaning of the rainbow's darkness. Twenty-eight were laid low by the question about Jonah's gourd. Lot's wife fared better, as all but nine were able to explain the allusion; but there were 23 who could not tell who Arimathæan Joseph was. Twenty-two failed to explain the pearls and the swine. Eleven knew nothing of Cain's mark. Twenty-seven were paralyzed by the allusion to Peter's sheet. Eleven knew nothing of Jacob's ladder. Eighteen failed to explain the angel in the tomb. Surely, the Independent remarks, such an exhibition is lamentable. It is appalling. Such were the results in a quarter where we might have expected the highest attainments—the most intelligent youth of Protestant families. What, then, about the masses of the people?"

Of all countries under the sun where we should expect to find education, enlightenment and civilization, it ought surely to be in England—Protestant England—the secret of whose greatness lies in her open Bible. England is now more than three hundred years under Protestant rule; there surely can be no ignorance there. Mr. Joseph Kay, in his work, *The Social Condition and Education of the English People*, disclosed such a fearful state of affairs among the lower classes that the Statistical Society of London determined to sift the matter. They appointed a committee, who found all that Kay had said fully true, and plenty more untold. These are the committee's comments at the close of what they called "a voluminous calendar of horror:

"Your committee have thus given a picture in detail of human wretchedness, filth and brutal degradation, the chief features of which are a disgrace to a civilized country and which your committee have reason to fear, from letters which have appeared in the public journals, is but a type of the miserable condition of masses of the community, whether located in the small, ill-ventilated rooms of the manufacturing towns or in many of the cottages of the agricultural peasantry. In these wretched dwellings all ages and all sexes—fathers and daughters, mothers and sons, grown-up brothers and sisters, stranger adult males and females, and swarms of children—the sick, the dying, and the dead, all herded together." etc.—(*Journal of the Statist. Soc. London*, vol. vi., p. 17.)

Occasionally, not often, we have read reports of the inhumanities to which the children employed in the English coal mines are subjected. Speaking of a report laid before the Imperial House of Commons, a London newspaper said:

"The infernal cruelties practised upon boys and girls in the coal mines—those graves of both comfort and virtue—have never in any age been outdone. We have sometimes read, with shuddering disgust, of the outrages committed upon helpless childhood by man when existing in a state of naked savagery. We aver our belief, that, in cold-blooded atrocity, they do not equal what is going on from day to day in some of our coal mines. Young creatures, both male and female, six, seven, eight, nine years old, stark naked in some cases, chained like brutes to coal carriages, and dragging them on coalpoles through sludge six and seven inches deep, in total darkness, for ten, twelve, and in some special instances thirty hours successively, without any other cessation, even to get meals, than is casually afforded by the unreadiness of the miners. Here is a pretty picture of British civilization!

One cannot read through the evidence taken by the commission referred to, without being strongly tempted to ascribe the very name of Englishman."

And here are some examples of the Christian education of these children:

Elizabeth Day, aged seventeen: "I don't go to any Sunday school. I can't read. Jesus Christ was Adam's son. They nailed Him to a tree; but I don't rightly understand these things."

Wm. Beaver, aged sixteen: "The Lord made the world. He sent Adam and Eve on earth to save sinners. I have heard of a Saviour; He was a good man, but He didn't die here."

Ann Eggle, aged eighteen: "I have heard of Christ performing miracles, but I don't know what sort of things they were. He died by their pouring fire and brimstone down His throat. Three times ten makes twenty. There are fourteen months in the year, but I don't know how many weeks."

Bessy Bailey, aged fifteen: "Jesus Christ died for His son to be saved. I don't know who the Apostles were. I don't know what Ireland is."

Elizabeth Eggle, aged sixteen: "I can't read. Don't know my letters. Don't know who Jesus Christ was. Never heard of Adam either. Never heard about them at all."

Such deplorable ignorance could not possibly exist in Italy or Spain, or Dr. Peters or Dr. Strong would have found it out and told us all about it.

The Rev. T. Hugo, a Church of England minister, writing to the *Church Times* of October 15, 1876, says:

"The masses in Lancashire and of London were as heathen as those of whom St. Paul drew a picture in immortal though dreadful colors. He knew the mobs of London and Lancashire well, and he gave his word of honor as a Christian priest that there was no difference between them and the people whom St. Paul portrayed."

The Protestant Bishop of Rochester said:

"I lament that dense and coarse and almost brutish ignorance in which the brutal masses of the people who have outgrown the Church's grasp are permitted to live and die, of all that touches their salvation and explains their destiny. To hundreds of thousands of our fellow-countrymen Almighty God is practically an unknown being, except as the substance of a hideous oath; Jesus Christ, in His redeeming love and human sympathy, as distant as a fixed star."

How does Protestant ignorance compare with "Popish" illiteracy?

We hear nothing of this appalling state of affairs from Dr. Madison C. Peters or Dr. Josiah Strong. It is true that two blacks do not make a white, but I have fully as much right to attribute the ignorance and semi-barbarism which I have shown you exist in England and the United States to Protestantism, as Dr. Peters and Dr. Strong have to hold the Catholic Church responsible for the circumstance that a large per centage of the Spaniards and Italians are unable to write their names.

I stated in the early part of this paper that illiterates form a small portion of the inmates of prisons, and that it is not to the lack of the ability to read and write that criminal acts are to be attributed. Here is my authority for that statement. Mulhall's Dictionary of Statistics says:

Criminals in England and Wales.—Able to read, 68.6 per cent.; unable to read—31.4 per cent. In Ireland: criminals able to read, 70 per cent.; unable to read, 30 per cent.

Let us take a look at the evidence furnished by a few prison reports:—

In Sing Sing Prison, in 1890 of 1553 convicts, 1420 were educated and 133 illiterate; 1403 had attended the Public schools, 17 went to other schools.

In Auburn Prison, in 1890, of 1151 convicts, 1025 were educated, and 126 illiterate; 545 had attended the Public schools, 450 went to other schools.

In Clinton Prison, in 1890, of 801 convicts, 637 had attended the Public schools, and 164 went to other schools.

Take the Philadelphia State Penitentiary. In 1890, of 527 convicts, 462 were educated, and 65 illiterate; 382 had attended the Public schools, and 13 went to Catholic schools only. In 1891, of 416 convicts, 403 were educated, and 13 illiterate; 339 had attended the Public schools, and 12 went to Catholic schools only. In 1892, of 454 convicts, 418 were educated, and 136 were illiterate; 361 had attended the Public schools, and 14 went to Catholic schools only. There were 87 convicts of twenty-one years of age and under; 62 had attended the Public schools, 18 went to other schools, and 7 went to Catholic schools.

In the Pennsylvania State Penitentiary between 1829 and 1893, there were 17,224 convicts received. Of these, 13,919 had been convicted of crimes against property; 2,250 of them were illiterate, 922 could read and write, 10,767 could neither read nor write. Those convicted of crimes against the person numbered 3,305; 474 of them were illiterate, 216 could read only, while 2,830 could both read and write.

I trust that none of my remarks have been offensive to Protestants; they have not been made with that intention. I know that while very many good Protestants hold disordered views upon the Catholic Church, so wild, indeed, that even the "old flag" and Victoria's crown, in their opinion, are endangered by the bold suggestion that a sick "Papist" be admitted to a Protestant hospital. There are others who freely accept us as brethren and fellow-citizens and accord us the rights to which we are entitled. But even these, who are our friends, can scarcely appreciate how Catholics feel when they hear all they hold sacred being traduced by escaped nuns and ex-priests, and how it mortifies Catholics to see intelligent Protestants chasing after such reptiles, and listening to their lying and filthy harangues.

If I seem to have drawn highly colored pictures of Protestant ignorance it has not been with the desire to wound Protestant sensibilities. These pictures are true to the life. All my artists are Protestants, standing at the top of the ladder in their professions. The scenes may not have been pleasing to my Protestant friends; still they have been afforded an opportunity, that seldom comes their way, of appreciating how it feels to have the hose turned on them occasionally.

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HOLY FACE OF JESUS.

It Withdraws Souls From Sin and Calms the Most Violent Passions.

Jesus is not only love and charity; He is also holy and sanctity itself, and it is He who sanctifies all things. He is a consuming fire; He has come upon this earth to kindle in the hearts of men the beautiful fire with which the Seraphim burn, provided they put no obstacles in the way of His divine operations: "I am come to cast fire on the earth." (Luke xii., 49.) He has also come to communicate His sanctity. We read that many, looking upon the countenance of Jesus and His Holy Mother whilst they were still living here below, felt in their hearts an ardent desire of practising virtue and a great horror of the sin of impurity, and that sinners were sensibly touched with grief for their crimes.

I will say, moreover, that whatever belongs to Jesus Christ is holy, and that He imparts thus a certain virtue of sanctifying. His pictures, His statues, are they not holy, although they are not miraculous, nor have they any of the venerable image of Veronica in Rome? They have all some attractions of holiness, especially for those who consider them devoutly, so as to make reparation to Jesus Christ for the affronts and injuries which He suffered in His divine face.

St. Gregory writes that a disorderly woman, casting her eyes upon the image of the chaste Polemon, which was placed at the entrance of her house, felt confused and abashed at her wicked life and that she took the resolution on the spot to do penance for her sins. If so admirable a change in a woman of bad life, what passion will not be distinguished by the devout consideration of the Holy Face of Jesus!

ST. ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY.

This saint, daughter of Andrew, King of Hungary, wife of the Landgrave of Thuringia, having descended from her chateau to the church on a great feast day, surrounded by a great retinue, superbly adorned, with a golden crown upon her head, the first object that met her gaze was the image of the crucifix and she was so much affected by the sight, that she was thrown into a faint, and, dissolving into tears, she said to herself: "Behold my Redeemer abandoned on the cross, who suffers for my love a shameful death, and I am clothed in purple and covered with precious stones!" On another occasion the same princess cries out: "A crown of thorns pierces His head, and a crown of gold adorns mine; the Jews load Him with outrages and ignominies, and I am honored with a great company of new lords. His whole visage is covered with blood and confusion, and mine is polished and rosy." She uttered these words with so great a warmth of feeling that she fell in a swoon. Her attendants brought her to life, but her heart was entirely changed. She resolved to wear for the future only plain garments; she even wore haircloth under her dress; despoiling during the rest of her life the vanities of the world, and gave herself to rigorous penance, and she died every day by her holy life.

THE HOLY FACE OF JESUS.

If the mercy of God attaches graces so powerful to the mere spirit of holy images, what blessings does He not reserve for those who have dedicated themselves to the veneration of His august and sorrowful face and to the devout reparation for His affronts and ignominies! Without doubt He will not allow them to be overcome by temptations of pride, of avarice nor of the other vices which the enemy of man will suggest to them. Will the demon dare attack a devout soul armed with the frequent and loving thought of the divine face, which enlighten it, scatter the illusions of the devil and put him to flight. As wax is melted at the moment in which it comes near the fire, those spirits of darkness fly at the presence of our Saviour, who is with the pious soul which honors His sufferings in contemplating His Holy Face.

"As smoke vanishes, so let them vanish away; as wax melteth at the fire, so let the devil melt at the presence of God." (Ps. lxxvii., 3.) Just souls rejoice in the victory which their devotion will enable them to gain over their passions and over the temptations of the evil spirits. "And let the just feast and rejoice before God and be delighted with gladness." (Ps. as above, 4th verse.)

NEWS FROM VARIOUS CENTRES.

Saint Hilaire, France.—The cure writes: "It is not in vain that we involve the Holy Face. I come to-day to thank publicly our Saviour and the holy man of Tours, whom also I invoked. The two favors asked have been granted at once; we have heard successfully. Glory and thanks to the adorable Face of our Lord Jesus Christ!"

Pescia, Italy. Here the general desire is that the Holy Face of Jesus should be everywhere blessed and praised; that the holy man of Tours be soon placed upon our altars, because, say they, our prayers have been heard by the intercession of Mr. Dupont. In thanksgiving an offering is hereby sent for his cause.

Namur, Belgium.—A pastor relates to us the cure of a tumor, obtained by some anointing of oil, and a religious of the Good Shepherd attributes the cure of the Rev. Mother to the prayers said in the oratory of Tours. The worship of the Holy Face continues to be spread in a consoling manner in all parts of the world.

Baltimore, Md.—In the chapel of the Carmelites the monthly reunions are more and more numerous. This

chapel will be very soon too small to accommodate all those who wish to come, and last month, at the December meeting, seven hundred and forty-four were reported as new associates.

EARNEST WORDS.

PURITY.

In the first sermon on the mount, our Saviour opened His holy lips and said, (Matt. 58), "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God." He who is more pure than even the Virgins of the Jewish Temple gives a promise to the beloved that if they remain pure they shall see God. This is the highest aspiration of the soul, to see God, an insatiable desire, a divine yearning for the possession of the true and the beautiful. Virginal purity when once lost, is lost forever. The sin may be forgiven, but the original unstained innocence can never be restored. There is a mystery in this unstained purity, which must remain a marvel to us, until we see in heaven those hundred and forty-four thousand singing a new song, before the throne and following the Lamb whosoever He goeth. (Rev. 14., 2-4.) Purity gives a mysterious power to one who is otherwise holy: the prayer of such a person avails much.

MATRIMONIAL PURITY.

Matrimonial purity although of a less refined type than virginal purity is of a rare quality, and envelopes the married state with such sanctity that our Saviour likened it to the relation between Himself and the Church. Under such holy conditions how beautiful is the married life; twice blessed by the benison of God, by the father at the espousal of Adam and Eve in Paradise, and by His glorious Son at the marriage feast at Cana. Upon matrimonial purity depends public honor and social virtue and all domestic felicity.

WE MUST GUARD THE EYES.

We read (Matt. 5, 28) that we may lose the purity of innocence by even a look, and Holy Job says (31, 1), "I have made a covenant with mine eyes." The holy Abbott Felix cautioned those who went out to "cast the eyes upon the earth, but lift the heart to God."

BEAUTY OF MODESTY.

There is an unspeakable beauty in modesty that even the wicked admire. The blush that crimson the brow of the innocent, mysteriously comes as a mantle to shield the pure soul from even an impure breath, or a wanton glance. The lily is the Scriptural emblem of the modestly pure. How pure and beautiful is the lily above all the blossoms of the valley, fairest of fair flowers! How wondrously beautiful is modesty in woman! How she wins all hearts until she is looked upon with a feeling akin to reverence! She seems an angel upon earth. Modesty is becoming in all. The eye of God is turning upon the modestly pure with a divine pleasure. The angels throng about them jubilant as children. God loves them, and the angels love them because purity is a wonderful grace. It is a pearl of great price. At the resurrection the pure will shine with a light surpassing all others. Their lives here sanctify the places wherein they move or dwell, and dangers are averted and blessings come, because God's place is turned towards their abiding places. Solomon once wrote: "How beautiful is the chaste generation." It is possible to be pure if we love God above all things." St. Paul says: "Our God is a consuming fire." His love burns away the dross of every unworthy affection. To be pure we must love Infinite Purity. If you love Him you will soon to love anything else. Strive with your whole might to be pure. "Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God."—Philip O'Neill in Catholic Mirror.

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