

THE CATHOLIC RECORD

THE TRUTH ABOUT THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

BY A PROTESTANT THEOLOGIAN.

CLV.

John Swinton's school history has been submitted to my examination by the editors of the Review, as complaint has been made of it by Catholics. I do not know what the author, as he is, is sure that the author, as he is, is profoundly reverent to Christianity, means to be thoroughly respectful to every form of Christianity. The note concerning indulgences, which was inadvertently objectionable, is in this edition (1874) unexceptionable. It says: "Indulgences have always been approved and authorized by the highest councils of the Catholic Church; but at this period the exercise of this privilege was attended by many irregularities and scandals, which were afterward severely condemned and energetically 'prohibited' by the Council of Trent as a most plentiful cause of abuses flowing from Christian nations." Both sides of this statement are beyond dispute.

The difficulty with school histories describing the Reformation is, that, let us be as respectful as we may, our underlying sympathies will always be either for or against it. The emphasis laid on particular facts or characters will always be different on the two sides. I have heard of school histories which, to avoid the difficulty, leave out the Reformation altogether. Of course this is ridiculous. We cannot omit it, and we cannot help showing our attitude towards it. This is a powerful argument for making account of profound oppositions of religion, and not insisting on a school policy which was perfectly right in New England a hundred years ago, but may be found thoroughly unjust now.

I will mention a few points in which Swinton, with an excellent purpose, is inexact and thereby unjust to the Catholic side.

He describes the Edict of Spire, passed in 1529, as an attempt to check the Reformation, against which, therefore, the reformers are said to have protested. Now Melancthon bears emphatic witness that the Edict was not mainly meant to check the Reformation, but to check Lutheran persecution of the Catholics. He calls, not the Edict, but the Protest, "a terrible deed."

On page 323 Swinton says: "The triumph of the Emperor seemed now to be complete. Encouraged by this, Charles V. became thoroughly tyrannical." This is the view of the great Emperor almost universally prevalent among Protestants. Yet these two pronounced Protestants, Ranke and Froude, are far from confirming it. Froude, I read of beholding him, invested him, in extensive domains, and made him the founder of the Ernestine line, which now sits on the throne of the British Empire.

On page 323 Swinton says that Charles' "ambition was selfish, looking mainly to the aggrandizement of the House of Austria." Now Ranke says that no man perhaps ever lived more thoroughly devoted than Charles to the great, though now, it proved, impracticable, ideal of a Catholic unity of Europe, under one Pope and one Emperor. He was the Emperor, but by no unworthy intrigues of his own.

On page 329 Swinton (who, however, has no love for Henry VIII.) gives weight to Froude's position, that Henry was moved to the separation from Catherine by the wish to have an undisputed heir by a new marriage. Very well, but he should have added that the King, in marrying, undispensed, a woman whose sister he had misled, and who therefore could not have canonically become his wife had he been single, showed that, however, he may have begun, he ended with a motive of brutal personal passion, deliberately throwing the succession into a double confusion.

On page 330, after touching on Froude's excuses for Henry, it would have been well to add that the more Henry's conduct is examined, the more odious a man he appears, both publicly and privately, as Professor James Gardner shows.

Swinton is quite right on page 335, in describing the atrocities in France as mutual. Yet he does justice to neither side in saying that there were "few" who cared for religion. There were a great many.

The author should not have made 55,000 the number that fell in the St. Bartholomew, when the latest Protestant inquiry reduces it to 22,000.

Here, we see, are points enough to please popular Protestantism, and to displease even well advised Catholicism. I do not see how we can think we provide adequately for impartiality by shutting out opposing catechisms, when we can not shut out opposing views of Christian history. The exclusion of religion is itself an offence, and we can no more banish our own species of religion that we can banish the vital air.

Let us revert now to Professor Foster. On page 37 he says, speaking of the long train of those who have left the Anglican for the Roman Church, "Except a man have within him the witness of the Spirit, and know in whom he has believed, he is likely to fall a prey to the Roman claims. Now does Dr. Foster mean to imply that John Henry Newman, Frederick William Faber, Edward Henry Manning, and multitudes of other faithful pastors and devoted Christians who have in

England and America gone into the Catholic Church have been shown, by that fact, to be unconverted persons, not having the witness of the Spirit in themselves? Such a sentence, on such men and women, does him little honor. See the view of both Newman and Manning taken by a much greater Congregationalist than himself, a much profounder analyst of character, and a man much better acquainted with facts and persons, Principal Fairbairn. If, on the other hand, Foster does not mean this, why does he say what sounds so much like it?

Neither Newman nor Manning doubted that the converting Spirit of God works largely within Protestant bounds. They have both expressed this emphatically. Yet certainly it did not imply that they were not converted men if they thought that within Catholic borders they would find a greater fullness and a more assured efficacy of the means of grace, and a more certain guidance as to a great many questions of Divine truth. It is open to us to regard their hopes as more or less illusory, but surely it is unworthy to insinuate that if they had been certainly converted men and women they would not have had become Roman Catholics. As Dr. Green of the American Board said once, in public, of an English missionary in Japan who became a Roman Catholic: "He was a deeply good man." What was true of him has been true of hundreds of others. Questions of personal Christian experience are not those at issue between the two religions. A religious change, therefore, ought not to be treated as bearing on this point.

Dr. Foster's reasoning from Irenaeus and Cyprian respecting the primacy, pages 55-56, mostly agrees with my own opinion. Yet it would have been well to cite that thoroughgoing Protestant, and hater of Rome, Richard Rothe, who says that as the original parity of the presbyters in each congregation found its completeness in the individual bishop, so the collective episcopate, varying in degree, pointed forward to an individual pastor of the whole Church. Professor Ramsay also is by no means a Roman Catholic, yet he seems well warranted in saying that the early Christians, and Paul among them, viewed it as natural that there should be an administrative centre of the Church. This was first at Jerusalem, but very naturally went in the end to Rome. We may, and as Protestants do, hold very different views of the primacy from Rome, yet it would have been well if this Presbyterian work had acknowledged it to be a profound truth, which runs around the inner frieze of the prehistory of St. Peter's Cathedral, Magisterium Fidei, Centrum Unitatis. ("This is the Chair of Peter, the School of Faith, the Centre of Unity.") However, perhaps the Presbyterian would not like to see that side of the matter presented.

In Chapter III, Professor Foster declares it to be the true doctrine of Rome that no one can possibly be saved unless he is in her visible communion. It is certainly a doctrine of Rome, taught as of faith, the contradiction of which would incur excommunication, that Christ has established a visible Catholic Church, in communion with the Pope, within which alone are the assured means of salvation. She teaches, moreover, that mere ignorance of this will save no man, since we are not saved by ignorance, but by knowledge. Therefore, carelessness and indifference as to the visible means of salvation is held to be inconsistent with being in a state of grace, as of course Professor Foster would allow. She holds, moreover, that her claims to obedience are so well grounded as to impeach defection from her of mortal sin. And as the character of a body must be presumed to continue in its successors, she holds that officially all members of such bodies must be treated as being presumptuously out of a state of grace.

Had Dr. Foster contented himself with such a statement, no one could have disputed it. However, he goes much farther, and declares that no one teaches true Roman Catholic doctrine unless he teaches that every human being, knowing good and evil, who dies outside the visible communion of Rome is certainly lost.

We will examine this next week.

CHARLES C. STARRBUCK.

Andover, Mass.

FIVE MINUTES' SERMON.

Sixteenth Sunday After Pentecost.

THE ROOT OF ALL SIN.

"He that exalteth himself shall be humbled, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." (St. Luke xiv. 11.)

There is a place in the Atlantic Ocean which sailors call the "Devil's Hole." Contrary currents hurl their torrents upon each other there, causing such commotion in the waters that navigation is always difficult. If you ever passed over it when the weather was good, you wondered why the sea was so rough and the ship rocked so much. If you asked one of the seamen for an explanation of this strange phenomenon, he answered you: "This is the Devil's Hole; the currents meet here."

In the voyage of life, my dear brethren, there is a "Devil's Hole" in our track. It is the abyss of pride. Like the whirlpool, it is very much hidden; the appearances are all fair, and this makes the danger all the greater. You are, when swayed by pride, unconscious of the condition of your soul. You feel disturbed and blinded as to its cause. Envy and hatred rise up in your heart, but you do not see their

hideousness because, forsooth, your self-conceit or self-will has been offended by those who are wiser and better than you, and this galls you. You can't have your own way, and you are sad. You want to rule, and because you cannot you fancy yourself wronged. The whole difficulty is simply this: You have too good an opinion of yourself. Now, when you come to look seriously into your own heart, are you not forced to acknowledge this? Is not this the root of the whole evil? When you begin to understand and realize this, and try to conquer self-esteem, you become tranquil and find peace. Your passion subsides.

St. Bernard says that in order to cure pride we should reflect upon three questions: "First, what was I before I was created? Absolute nothingness. And in what state did I come into the world? It was as a poor, helpless infant that would have perished but for the love of others. 'I was conceived in iniquity,' and have I not committed countless actual sins?" What consideration can teach humility better than this? Ah, yes! If we would escape from the "Devil's Hole," the abyss of pride, we must constantly be mindful of our own nothingness.

Secondly, St. Bernard asks again: "What am I now? I am only a subject to a thousand ills. My soul inhabits a tenement of clay which may be dissolved in a moment. I am surrounded by temptations on every side. I am in danger of losing God's grace at any time. What reason have I for trusting in myself? What cause for self-exaltation? There is, indeed, reason for constant fear and trembling. I am such a weak vessel that only Divine Omnipotence can prevent me from sailing to my destruction."

Thirdly, "What shall I be" continues St. Bernard. "I shall be, perhaps, before I am aware of it, in eternity. The earth will soon claim my body, which was formed from its slime. And my soul, whither will it go? Before the Divine Judge, Who will demand an account of every idle word." These three considerations, What was I? What am I? Where shall I be? most clearly teach us the necessity of humility.

But we have, besides these reflections on our own misery, the example of our Divine Saviour to teach us humility. He came down upon the earth to cure men of pride. The world was filled with it. Greatness, men had come to believe, was in the palace of the Caesars; but the stable of Bethlehem proves the contrary. The form of a servant was what the God-Man took—not that of the ruler. Instead of honor He had ignominy, and with the most humiliating of all the punishments which the world could inflict—crucifixion. He suffered death to remove that curse of pride.

The saints have made it the chief object of their lives to imitate and share in the humiliations of Jesus Christ. His Blessed Mother stood at the foot of the cross and suffered crucifixion of soul. St. John, who understood better than the other Apostles the divinity of Jesus, witnessed with sorrow, faith, and love His humiliating death. There is a tradition that St. Peter once started to leave Rome but not far from the city's gate he met our Lord going towards the city. The Apostle asked the Lord where He was going. "I am going to Rome to be crucified again," said Jesus. St. Peter cried out, "No, you shall not," and went back to die himself for his Master. To-day in Rome one sees a sanctuary which has been erected to mark the place of this apparition, and you have only to look from this spot to the dome of St. Peter's Church to understand the fruit of the humility of the Prince of the Apostles. The lives of all the faithful in the Church point to this virtue as a straight way to Heaven.

Life's but a Day.

We hear it often said that life is but a day. It is said to express the shortness of our stay upon earth. It is said, for the most part, sorrowfully. Let us reverse it and say, with much striking truth that each day is a life, fresh with rekindled power, setting out on its allotted labor and limited path. Its morning resembles a whole youth. Its eventide is sobering into age. It is rounded at either end by a sleep—unconsciousness at the outset and oblivion at the close. We are born anew every time that the sun rises and lights up the world for man to do his part in it. One thing at least may be shown of each day, as it dawns and darkens: It is that everyone, short as it may be, embodies the fullness of the past and indicates what is long afterwards to come.

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OUR BOYS AND GIRLS.

HOW ROB RAN AWAY.

It is probably a low estimate when one says nine boys out of ten make up their minds at some time during their careers to run away from home.

There are various causes that contribute to the forming of such resolutions, but whatever the cause, the boy is always firm in the belief that he is not being used right, and that the only way to better his condition is to gather up such personal property as he can conveniently carry and get out into the world, where he can make a name for himself by killing Indians or pirates, or by becoming a great detective.

Sometimes the boy resolves to become a pirate, or highwayman, and is not always the most vicious when form such a determination. To the mind of the average boy there seems great deal of romance in such a career. For many weeks Rob Norton has been planning to leave the paternal roof tree, and it must be confessed that of a most improbable and irresponsible pirate yarn had brought about this reckless determination.

Rob had made up his mind to become a pirate! Many a night he dreamed of treating the quarter deck and roaring of his orders to his gallant crew. Many a rich prize had he captured—in his mind. He had fancied himself performing all manner of desperate and daring deeds, and had even decided would be known as "Red Bob, Rover of the Deep." He thrilled over whenever he contemplated the magnificence of the title.

Working on a farm was "de slow"—if I may be allowed to quote Rob's own definition of it. Hoeing potatoes and chasing cows his mind revolted against.

By shrewd dickering he had been able to get hold of a cheap revolver, and this he concealed under the eaves in the open chamber, where likewise he stored the pirate yarn that had so incited and bewitched him.

If Rob's father had known he possessed the revolver there would have been trouble, and the weapon would have been confiscated.

It was some time after he obtained possession of the revolver before he really settled on the time of his departure. For two or three days he shirked about his work, and the result was he got a good "dressing down" and was told he would get another if he did not complete a certain amount of work the following day.

"I'll never do it as long as I live," declared Rob.

But he took good care not to utter the words aloud. That night, when all the house still, he gathered up a few things tied them in a small bundle, and the revolver and the wild pirate yarn were brought from their place of concealment.

A window of his chamber opened on the sloping roof of a shed, holding his shoes in his hand, the crept silently forth. The night was dark, as he had not yet risen, but Rob knew of the vicinity. He crept to the lower edge of the roof and slid down board he had leaned in a slant position for that purpose.

"I'll never come back here again," he muttered.

Somewhat, the thought did not him feel as hilariously happy might. He remembered he was wing away from his mother, hard lung formed in his throat, quickly choked it down.

It was beneath the dignity pirate to feel any regret! He slipped over the fence in cornfield, where he hesitated moment.

A light breeze was stirring, about him the long leaves whispering, mysteriously.

The sound made him shiver, almost wished that he was back comfortable bed.

After a little time he put shoes and started down between rows of corn. The shadows deep about him, but he saw of silvery light appearing eastern horizon, and he knew moon would be up within half an hour.

He had almost reached the cornfield when, of a sudden, heart gave a great thump, for form seemed to rise before him few steps away.

It was a human figure—there doubt about that—and Rob felt self motionless—was it? Could it be the bold Rover of it was scared?

He did not make a sound as to the ground keeping his eyes tall, figure looming up before him. He remembered hearing his reading in the weekly news about a desperate wretch who nearly murdered a man in a ring town, and it was said the rator of the deed was still at large.

Had Rob suddenly come upon a desperado?

He began to tremble for a faint cold, despite the fact that was warm and pleasant. He ground, and longed to see known move away.

But the stranger stood perfectly motionless, as if he were listening with tentacles. Rob wondered if had seen him, and decided he would wait.

The minutes dragged slowly. The boy on the ground, heart thumping vigorously. Still the dark figure motionless.

Rob thought of creeping. He believed the man was waiting him to make such a move.