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CURRENT COMMENT

According to the latest statistics of the religions of the world at the end of the nineteenth century, published by Father Kroese, S.J., in the Stimmen aus Maria Laach, the Catholics number 264,595,922. Of these 177,657,291 are in Europe, 71,350,879 in America, 11,513,279 in Asia, 3,004,563 in Africa and 979,943 in Australasia. Protestants of all sects number 166,627,109; Greek Orthodox church, 109,147,272; Raskolnics (Orthodox Russians), 2,173,371; Oriental schismatics, 6,554,913. This brings the total number of Christians in the world up to 549,917,341.

The foregoing statistics show that nearly four-fifths of the Christian world believe in the Real Presence: for, to the Catholics and schismatics must be added at least forty millions of Lutherans and Anglicans who profess that belief. This is a low estimate, since a Lutheran minister wrote to one of the papers in this city some nine years ago that the Lutherans who believed in the Real Presence numbered sixty millions. We feel therefore, that we are putting the facts very modestly, when we call attention to the four hundred and twenty-two millions out of five hundred and forty-nine millions, who hold that Christ meant what he said when he declared, "This is my body."

We are glad to note that our venerable friend, Father Lawrence C. P. Fox, O.M.I., begins, in the current Donahoe's Magazine, those reminiscences of his, which we lately expressed the desire to see published. They promise to be very interesting. In this number he gives some of his earliest experiences in the missionary field in England. We quote one of these, merely reminding our readers that Father Fox, a convert from Quakerism, had been only recently ordained and was then well on the sunny side of forty.

Not long after this a very successful mission was given in Bermondsey, a part of London—on the southern side of the Thames, where there was a large congregation of the poorer Irish. For the first few days we had nothing to do in the confessionals, and the parish priest was greatly disheartened. We were four in number, and agreed to make the stations of the Cross one after the other to bring up the tardy penitents. Before the close of the first week our prayers were heard and the crowds became so overpowering that we had to ask the Bishop to send half a dozen priests to help us. On one busy afternoon when I was hearing confessions, I saw an old woman tottering to the front of my confessional. She carried two large bundles, one in front, and the other on her back. As soon as she had deciphered my name over where I was sitting, she lowered her bundles to the ground, and coming towards me, she cried out in a loud voice:—"Ah! Father Fox dear, I have found you at last. I come more than ten miles from the country, where there is no priest at all. God save us! It was you that married me in County Kilkenny sixty years ago next Michaelmas, and when I buried my poor husband there, more than twenty years ago, God be merciful to his soul! I came to this God-forsaken country. And now I've tramped all these weary miles to make my confession once more to you." The good people who were waiting patiently for their turn to come to me—though I must confess that they were nearly all of them convulsed with

laughter,—begged me to hear the poor old woman at once, and I soon sent her back to her distant home quite happy. If I had been the same Father Fox who had married her, as she believed, I must have been almost a centenarian when she tracked me to Bermondsey.

We look eagerly forward to further instalments of Father Fox's reminiscences, in which we trust he will not omit to include his recollections of distinguished converts, which his hearers found so entertaining in a lecture once delivered by him in Albert Hall, Winnipeg. His article in the November "Donahoe's" is profusely illustrated with views of scenes and persons connected with the Oblates of Mary Immaculate. The picture of the Novitiate at Tewksbury, Mass., where Father Fox now resides, is particularly good.

In our report of the celebration last Sunday at Portage la Prairie, will be found the text of a remarkable address written and read by Mr. Justice Ryan. The first part of it, which reviews one great aspect of the pontificate of Leo XIII. is evidently the work of a master mind, fully alive to the momentous movement towards unity which is noticeable all over the world. Those who know the able and learned judge will see in this luminous and fearless pronouncement one more proof of his practical and enlightened devotion to the interests of the Church which he so nobly serves.

After such an address it is no wonder that our Archbishop, whose mind and heart so readily respond to anything that honors the church of Christ, should have surpassed himself in the eloquence of his reply. He spoke with intense feeling and in ringing tones of one of his interviews with the late Pope, when Leo XIII., referring to his letter to the English people, expressed with a wide embracing gesture his longing for the union of Christendom.

Next week we will publish a 2nd letter of the Rev. Dr. Greer on the School Question as it appears to thoughtful Americans. This letter teems with passages that apply perfectly to the situation here. The public schools in this country, as well as in the United States, were originally established on a religious basis, and our effort should be to bring them back to that original plan, and thus contribute to their improvement by removing the danger of religious indifference which now besets them. The New York Sun, in which Dr. Greer's letters were first made public, admitted the force of his arguments when it said:

"Undoubtedly, Catholics now have the sympathy of individual Protestants in their principle that religion should be made the basis of public education, and that, accordingly, religious schools of the various denominations should be allowed to participate in the distribution of the school fund;" but it adds significantly "that the great majority of the people made up of infidels and those indifferent to religion or distrustful of the organized churches" are opposed to religious education in schools.

Happily, no such general opposition exists among non-Catholics in Canada. In fact we venture to say that the majority of our separated brethren would fain have a religious atmosphere in their schools, but they have not found a common ground of agreement among themselves, and they profess an unreasonable dread of the complications which any enactment in that direction would entail. This we think is the great difficulty, and

it is by no means an insurmountable one, as the example of England and Germany clearly proves.

Among so many interesting features which Dr. McGovern's "Life and Life Work of Leo XIII." presents to our subscribers, is one which appeals strongly to us Canadians. It contains portraits of all the Archbishops of Canada including not only, of course, our own metropolitan, but also the newly appointed Archbishop Orth, of whom no portrait had as yet appeared in Manitoba or in the eastern provinces.

It takes our modern up-to-date educationists a long time to rediscover what was known ages ago. For years no pupil of the New York city schools has suffered the indignity of a flogging, because teachers were told to spare the rod and spoil the child. But now lo! and behold, Solomon is being avenged, for the principals of the New York public schools, giving as their reason the deterioration of discipline and the decline of good conduct, have petitioned the board of education to remove the restriction on corporal punishment.

Our outspoken contemporary, the "Catholic Columbian," of Columbus, O., gives the following "reasons why Catholic countries are more moral than Protestant countries are: First, that in the former the Church insists on the religious education of the young; second, that the people's sense of the turpitude of sin is cultivated by means of a training in the examination of conscience; and, third, that the people go to confession."

At the blessing of the new bell last Sunday, in St. Cuthbert's church, Portage la Prairie, Father Drummond read a translation into English of the three principal prayers used in the liturgy for the blessing of a bell. These translations will be a pleasing improvement on the vague generalities to which preachers generally confine themselves on such occasions. They show—as any one will see by reading them as they are embodied in our report—how the church's offices are full of true poetry, and continually link the Old with the New Testament. It were greatly to be desired that some enterprising Catholic publisher would issue an authorized translation of all the liturgical offices connected with the erection, blessing and consecration of churches, altars, bells, crosses, and other helps to devotion.

A few days ago the Winnipeg papers were full of blood-curdling reports of a battle between the Portage la Prairie police and a horde of Italian workmen. Judging from all reports, all the blame was to be visited on the Italians. But Mr. John Costigan, one of the trustees of the Catholic church in Portage, whose real name is Giovanni Costagana, and who is a native of the country near Venice, gives quite a different color to these fights, and Mr. Costigan is a very cool and trustworthy witness, who has the immense advantage of understanding the language and thoughts of the accused. According to his account, which would be well worth verifying by the local correspondents of our Winnipeg dailies, the provocation came from their boss, who had been nagging and swearing at them all summer, bullying them, calling them the vilest names. This is, unfortunately, too common a failing with English, Irish, Scotch, or American bosses who have to handle foreign workmen. They treat their men like dogs. To Italians especially, they continually apply the contemptuous epithet of "Dago." Now an Italian is like Shylock, only in-

initely more so, since the memory of his national glories is more recent than those of the Jew; he is an Italian. Hath not an Italian "eyes, hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions?" These last especially were aroused by the coarse tyranny of men who made no effort to understand the legitimate grievances of their workmen, who finally turned upon them in self-defense. The upshot of the outbreak was that these poor Italians, who save every cent they can to send it home, had to pay out, in fines to the local government, an aggregate of about six hundred dollars.

In the first part of the Holy Father's encyclical, as it appeared in our columns last week, there occurred one sentence that must have puzzled many of our readers. Speaking of the "son of perdition," the Pope is made to say in English: "E contra, man—and this according to the same Apostle, is a special mark of Anti-christ—has with supreme temerity, put himself in the place of God." This retaining of the Latin phrase "e contra" looked rather odd; but we relied upon the otherwise excellent translation of the English "Catholic Times," which was the first to reach us, and we had not seen the Latin original. The latter is now before us, and we see no reason for retaining the Latin phrase. The sentence should therefore read: "Contrariwise, and this, according to the same Apostle is the distinguishing mark of Anti-christ, man has with supreme temerity put himself in the place of God." This shows how wise is the intention with which the Holy See has been recently credited, of preparing in Rome itself, under the supervision of the Pope, authentic translations of all such Papal documents into the most widespread languages of the world.

See this week's Starbuck article for something astounding, and yet proved with chapter and verse in the usual way by the Rev. Charles, anent St. Thomas Aquinas and Protestant appreciation of his philosophy.

Persons and Facts

Sir Humphrey de Trafford was driving at Market Harborough on Sunday October 25th, accompanied by a friend and a groom, when his trap collided with a milk-cart and was overturned, the occupants being violently pitched out. Sir Humphrey de Trafford was to have started next week on a big game shooting expedition in India.

Sir Francis Plunket, British Ambassador at Vienna, who has been the first occupant of that post to see an Austrian Emperor sit at a meal in a British Field-Marshal's uniform, has become by the death of his brother, the Hon. George, the last survivor of the six sons born to Arthur James, ninth Earl of Fingall.

The Most Rev. Dr. Sheehan, Bishop of Waterford and Lismore, speaking at the close of a mission in Clonmell on Sunday evening, October 25th, said he had read with great pain an advertisement in a Clonmell paper intimating that pony races were to be held in Clonmell on that day fortnight. He regarded such races on a Sunday in Ireland as a public scandal, and he hoped the promoters would change their intention. The races have since then postponed till Monday.

The British Educational Commission, at present visiting the United States, has amongst its members the Rev. Father Finlay, S.J.

Prof. Mommsen, the author of a great work on the Roman laws, who died on October 30th, in his 86th year, was the father of fifteen children.

Dr. Pastor, author of the "History of the Popes," had a long audience with the holy Father on October 17th and presented to his Holiness a copy of the fourth edition of the 1st volume of the work. The Pope expressed his hearty appreciation of the action of Leo XIII. in throwing open the Vatican archives and said: "The truth is not to be feared." He gave Dr. Pastor permission to dedicate to him the fourth edition of the second volume of the "History of the Popes," and said he would regard the dedication as a high honor to himself.

A priest writing to C.M.B.A. officials concerning the increase of its insurance rates, says: "You as a Catholic association, could not do otherwise than make it safe. You now have the endorsement of the Church, and if your association was not made safe for its members, it would, in case of a failure, be a reflection on the Church."—Catholic Columbian.

A monthly paper at 50 cents a year is dearer than a weekly paper at two dollars. The monthly gives twelve issues at 4 1-6 cents a copy, the weekly gives 52 issues at 3 and 11-13th cents a copy. A monthly at one dollar a year is still dearer. It costs 8 1-3 cents a copy.—Catholic Columbian.

Dr. J. K. Barrett, of this city, the newly created inspector of malt houses and breweries, the other day narrowly escaped serious injuries at St. Thomas, Ontario, in company with Mr. Thomas Alexander, the collector of Inland Revenue, London, Dr. Barrett was on an inspection of Rudolph and Begg's brewery. The inspection passed off satisfactorily, but on reaching the stock cellar, Mr. Barrett—the light being dim—or rather no light—the inspector, not finding terra firma for his umbrella, wisely stepped to one side, but Mr. Alexander, not so forewarned, stepped boldly onward over a flight of stairs leading to a lower cellar, receiving a bad shock, with a slight abrasion of the knee cap.

Winter seems near at hand. On Thursday morning, the thermometer dropped to nine degrees above zero, and there were some slight flurries of snow during the day.

Clerical News.

Rev. Father Lee, who came a few months ago from Joliette, Que., to Oakwood, North Dakota, where he assists Rev. Father Lalonde, was here on Tuesday, said Mass at St. Boniface College on Wednesday morning, and returned the same day to Oakwood.

Rev. Father Sufia, O.M.I., left on Wednesday for Regina, where he becomes pastor in the place of Rev. Father Van Heertum, O. Praem., recalled to the U. S. Father Sufia was accompanied by Father Kasper, O.M.I., and Brother Schumacher, O.M.I., who will henceforth reside in the priest's house at Regina, where they will be joined by Father Kim, O.M.I. Father Kostorz also makes his headquarters there.

His Grace the Archbishop, has received a letter from the Superior General of the Basilian Order in Galicia announcing the departure for Winnipeg, of two Basilian Fathers of the Ruthenian rite. These two Ruthenian priests will be welcomed with open arms by the Very Rev. Father Zoldak. Very Rev. Father Filas, Superior of the