

"IS CHRISTIANITY PLAYED OUT?"

MADAME BELLOC'S ANSWER.

One of the latest literary sensations in London was that caused by the publication of a series of letters under the caption "Is Christianity Played Out?" Madame Belloc, one of the foremost English writers, a convert to the Church, was prominent in the controversy. The correspondence continued for a month, and called forth sermons at the Abbey, St. Paul's and many churches and chapels. Madame Belloc, writing in the *London Daily Chronicle*, under date of January 28, 1893, answered the question as follows:

"In common with innumerable readers, I have watched the battle waged round these words, and I have wondered that nobody, unless it be Mr. Bramwell Booth, has tried to call attention to what Christianity is actually doing, and even he has understated the case in an extraordinary degree. When 100 years ago the Frenchmen of science quarrelled vigorously as to whether a fish floating in the water weighed less than a fish on dry land, it was a long time before anybody thought of weighing the creatures under either condition. This has become a stook jest, yet nobody has seriously thought of weighing the body politic with and without Christianity.

"I am myself a Roman Catholic, and therefore I will begin with Protestant work. Did Mr. Buchanan or Mr. Le Gallienne ever hear of Clewer? Passing over Howard and Mrs. Fry as gone beyond modern ken, can anybody who either knew Catharine Booth or read about her, or saw the omnibuses on the day of her funeral driving up to the Bank with black flags, doubt that the force which moved her is not "played out"? Suppose if you like that Mrs. Booth was a delusion, and that her daughter-in-law, Mrs. Bramwell Booth, is also a delusion, and throw in Miss Rye, and the Girls' Friendly Society, and Dr. Bernardo, and Lord Shaftesbury, who to my personal knowledge slaved year in and year out like a negro slave, and take Miss Davison of Friedenheim and Mrs. Meredith of a dozen works, and the Baroness Burdett Coutts, who watches the police cases (as I know), and Canon and Mrs. Butler (the one dead the other surviving), and the noble mission men and women of various denominations, fretting to pieces lives which might otherwise have been full of æsthetic calm and delight—take, I say, all these various people from every shade of Protestantism and call them humbugs and delusions—what a huge delusion is that which set them all going, and how very far it is from being "played out!"

"Next, let me speak of the Roman Catholic world. Perhaps people think of that as an extinct delusion. The scholastic philosophy, whatever it was, is popularly supposed to be dead. Thomas Aquinas has quailed before Francis Bacon. Theology has gone to rejoin miracles. But there is one thing which has survived, and which nothing can kill. Tear it up by the roots in one part of the world and it puts forth leaves in another; how it got there baffles the onlooker—it is Catholic charity. What a preposterous delusion! Stamp on it, dance the Carmagnole over it—it is quite useless. Catholic charity, says the philosophic observer, is really driven of a devil. It is a Juggernaut, absorbing the lives of men and women. Only listen. The last computation of the white-bonneted Sisters of St. Vincent de Paul was 17,000. When earlier in the century the cholera fastened on Naples, the General of the Jesuits flung the Sisters at it as an officer flings regiments. They died and others took their place. What the rector of Eyam did in Derbyshire 200 years ago (a story of the plague) Monsignor de

Beizunos did in Marseilles. Poor deluded clergymen, both of them!

"In modern days look at the Irish Sisters of Mercy and Charity; two separate Orders founded within the century. Those of mercy are literally all over the place. For one thing, they have a house in Great Ormond street, where they have fifty beds, and while they have a corner to spare they will take in not only passing ailments but cancer and consumption, and nurse them to the end. For another example, they have a refuge in Crispin street, just beyond the Great Eastern Railway, where they have been putting shoulders to the wheel for nearly forty years. They have been driven by that remorseless dignitary, Monsignor Gilbert; I have had the honor of his friendship for nearly that space of time, and can bear witness that something has never ceased to drive his reverence and the clergy under him. And, lastly, it may interest Liberal politicians to be told that I hear from California that the most noted Sister of mercy in the Golden West is Mother Russell, the sister of the Attorney-General. When this Order kept its jubilee, in 1880, it had 212 houses in all parts of the world. And the Irish Sisters of Charity, whose founders, Mrs. Aikenhead, only died in 1859, are spreading in the same way. Schools, hospitals, girls societies, there really are no end to them. Why, the Hospice for the Dying in Dublin alone has 108 beds. If you want to die in peace and quietness, and under loving care, go there—and then make room for somebody else!

"It seems to me that to write about Christianity being played out is as wide of the mark as to write of the extinction of potatoes or roses. Looked at merely as a natural or supernatural phenomenon, the modern world might as well try to get rid of Niagara or the oil wells.

Irish Minstrelsy.

The minstrels of Ireland are not all gone from the highways and byways of Erin. The mournful harp and plaintive pipe may have given way to the breezy banjo and crooning violin, but the songs which these accompany are the songs of Ireland still. Down by the rotten claddagh wharves of old Galway town I recently came upon a rapt audience enthralled by the dulcet notes of Tim Brennan, the "wandering minstrel of Tipperary"—one of the sweetest singers I ever heard, and one who would have been great were it not for his love of "the cinder in it," as they aptly term the west of Ireland mountain dew.

I had seen Tim many, many times before in Ireland. Our trappings had brought us into the same relations of artist and responsive auditor so many times that, as he tipped me a comforting wink of recognition, and I noticed that his violin had been replaced by the temporary though ample makeshift of a banjo wrought from the head of an ancient Irish churn, in the pause following his ballad, I felt emboldened to toss him back his wink with the query:

"And, Tim, why didn't you bring the churn with its head?"

"Faith, yer honor," he replied in a flash and with a winsome smile, holding the churn-head banjo aloft so all could see, "faith, I never argue wid a lady—an', yer honor, a bould Irish woman stud at its other ind!"

I had got a taste of his sprightly and never vicious wit, and he as quickly got my shilling for that same; more power to the quick hinges of the nimble tongue of the wandering minstrel of Tipperary.—*Edgar L. Wake-man.*

"For a long time I suffered with stomach and liver troubles, and could find no relief until I began to use Ayer's Pills. I took them regularly for a few months and my health was completely restored."—D. W. Esino, New Bern, N. C.

Religious Persecution.

At the Roman Catholic foundling asylum, in Sixty-eight street, near Third avenue, says the *New York Times* of Sunday, March 6, are a quiet, good-looking young Polish woman and her 6 weeks-old babe. The woman tells a curious story of persecution by her father because she gave up Judaism, married a Roman Catholic and refused to return to her home and her father's religion.

Josephine Kikola is her name. She said yesterday that she was born at Stara Vis, in Poland, near Warsaw, where her father, Shimake Feserman, owns a large dairy farm, having 300 cows. The butter and cheese made on this farm are sent to the Warsaw market.

Josephine is about 18 years of age. When she was somewhat over 15 she became converted to Catholicism through the efforts of the village priest. Knowing that her father would soon find out that she had changed her religious views she went to a nunnery in Warsaw. Her native village is also the home of Countess Krajenska, who, taking a great interest in the young convert, invited her to stop at her house. About a mile from the countess' house there lived a worthy young glazier, Yosef Kikola, who belonged to the Catholic church. Kikola and Josephine fell in love with each other, and the young glazier proposed marriage. The wedding was celebrated in the countess' house. Josephine continued to live with the countess, as she was afraid that her father might send people to injure her during her husband's absence.

One day the countess sent Josephine to Warsaw. In a store there she was seized by several men and carried to the cellar. Her father appeared and begged her to return home. He told her that he would secure a divorce for her, and would get her a much handsomer and a very rich bridegroom, and would settle a large amount of money upon her if she would only renounce Christianity and return home. Josephine refused, and her father ordered the men to take her away. They forced her into a carriage and took her to Graef, near the Prussian frontier. They kept her there eight days trying to persuade her to return to Judaism. Her father could not follow her to Graef because he had his hair trimmed according to the orthodox Jewish style, which was unpopular at Graef.

Her maternal grandfather, however, called on her, and made a final appeal to her to return to her home and old religion, but she still refused. Then he said to the men: "Take her away anywhere, I cannot do anything with her." He gave them \$150.

Josephine was smuggled across the border and taken to Hamburg by three men, one of whom was a pedler, Mordke Zelko.

At Hamburg she was put on board a steamer bound for New York, and Zelko accompanied her. On their arrival in New York Zelko took her to 120 Division street and put her in charge of Mrs. Mirka Mint. Here she did some embroidery work and managed to write her husband a letter. Some time later she received a letter from her father saying that he had intercepted her letter to her husband. "Yosef," he said, "has been drinking his own blood and eating his own flesh with anxiety about you, and now he is trying to drink my blood and eat my flesh since he found out that I took you away from him."

In the house in Division street lived a Catholic Polish woman, Mrs. Karelava, and one day Josephine asked her where the Polish Catholic church was.

"You are a Jewish girl," replied Mrs. Karelava, "what do you want of the Catholic church?"

"I'll tell you my secret, if I can safely do so," replied Josephine.

Mrs. Karelava became greatly interested, hurried out, and returned with several sturdy Poles. They took her to 186 East Thirtieth street, where lived another Polish woman named Mrs. Geneskovaka. Here she staid six weeks, and then Mrs. Genesheveka took her to the Catholic Mothers' Home in Eighty sixth street, where she gave birth to a little girl.

She sent her husband a registered letter, advising him to come over to America, because if she returned to Poland her father would give her no rest.

After leaving the hospital, one of her Polish friends took her to General O'Boirne, assistant commissioner of immigration, to whom she told her story. She then went to the sisters in Sixty-eighth street, where she will remain until her husband can come or send for her.

St. Anthony's Shrine at Butler, N.J.

At a call recently made at the Franciscan Fathers' little convent, after inquiring how St. Anthony was getting along on his "begging journey for stones" for his new shrine, was told that, though the "holy beggar" did not succeed in getting a stone at every door he knocked, it could nevertheless be stated that a universal interest throughout the States was taken in the erection of his shrine. To comply with the request of the many thousands of the Saint's clients, the writer of these lines intends to inform the public from time to time how things are progressing. As one may judge from the list of benefactors, it is not only the laity that seeks the Saint's intercession by sending their mite for the erection of his shrine, but the clergy seem to be no less in favor of the enterprise, since nearly 200 names out of the Rt. Rev. and Rev. clergy are already enrolled as benefactors, which no doubt will make a good impression upon the people, who, in such things, as is well known, are greatly inclined to follow the example of their shepherds. For every one of the various intentions of the benefactors who ask a favor through the Saint's intercession, the miraculous Responsorium, "if you ask for miracles," is recited for 9 days before the altar of the Saint, and if desired, copies of the Responsorium are sent gratis to any address. As there are still some who inquire how letters should be addressed, be it hereby again be made known, that the address is simply: Franciscan Fathers, Butler, N.J.

Great preparations are already being made for the first public pilgrimage to take place on June 13, when several bishops will participate in the festivities. Meanwhile may St. Anthony find yet many generous friends who will send him a "stone" for building up the walls of his church. E. CLEARY.

Poultry.

Rev. T. S. Brooke, pastor Central Presbyterian Church, Clarksburg, W. Va., U. S. A., says: "I saturated a piece of yeast bread, the size of the end of your thumb, with St. Jacobs Oil, and forced it down the throat of a chicken that was in the last stages of the disease. I repeated the dose immediately, and in half an hour it was eating heartily. The next day I repeated the dose and again on the fourth day. In less than a week it was as well as ever. Finding that all my chickens were affected, I shut them in the henhouse, giving them nothing to eat until 2 p. m. I then mixed up some corn meal dough, and poured into it enough St. Jacobs Oil to make it smell strongly, and giving them nothing but plenty of fresh water, they soon ate it all. I then turned them out. This I repeated every alternate day for a week. I saw no traces of the cholera afterwards, but my flock was in a healthier and generally better condition than it had ever been." All raisers of poultry use it.

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