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INFLUENCE OF CATHOLICITY ON THE FEMALE CHARACTER.

(From the Shepherd of the Valley.)

The subjoined acknowledgment of the happy influence of Catholicity on the female character, in those institutions of the Church which are but too often unapprehended, when they are not positively calumniated, is taken from the *Westminster Review* of last July, where it occurs in a notice of a work by a French writer—“*Legouve's Histoire Morale des Femmes.*” The writer and the reviewer appear to favor the absurd aspirations of women for the active duties of political life—an absurdity, however, which is a necessary consequence of the erroneous principle, that political rights are founded in nature, and not derived from the laws of society. The French writer and his English reviewer show very forcibly that many branches of honorable occupation for the sex have been engrossed by men—one of the many evil consequences of the exaggerated civilisation of our day—that is, civilisation without religion.

In the chapter on “*Les Femmes dans les carrieres professionnelles,*” we have some interesting anecdotes of some of the earliest efforts made in France in the case of female education. From the “*Chronicle of the Ursulines*” is taken the account of one of their patronesses, Martha the Worker, otherwise Mademoiselle de Sainte Bevue, the first founder of the Ursulines of France. With a view to educate young girls to fill the office of instructresses to their own sex, she bought, in the Faubourg St. Jacques, a house in which she established the sisters with their two hundred day scholars, and close to it a lodging for herself, with a door opening into the garden, and a window looking on it, whence she could follow with her eyes the movements of these “the beloved children of her heart.” She would have among her community no more days devoted wholly to prayer—no more excessive rigors of penance—no more extatic idleness. She rejoiced in the title of “The Mother of the Bees,”—a title which was written on her portrait. This, the first establishment of the kind, was formed in or about the year 1594; in 1698, France counted 310—most of which arose amidst the most vehement and cruel opposition.

“At Clermont, three poor girls in service, who must, one would have supposed, have been entirely occupied with the cares of their poverty, felt themselves animated by the desire of aiding the cause of female education. There was one obstacle in their design: they themselves knew not how to read and write, but they did not allow this to be a hindrance. They learned the first elements from two little school-boys of twelve years old; and eighteen months afterwards their united savings paid the expenses of the first foundation of the Ursulines at Clermont. At Dijon, the foundress was a Mademoiselle Francoise de Saintonge, the daughter of a lawyer; and the details of her suffering would almost fill a volume. At first her father would not consent to her project till he had assured himself by a consultation of four doctors, that to instruct women was not to be regarded as the work of the devil; and then, soon afterwards, he again withdrew it—terrified at seeing the whole town rise up against his daughter, and the very children in the street pursuing her with cries and stones. But Francoise with 50 livres—her whole possession—took a house and retired to it with five young girls, who had joined her at midnight on Christmas day. “It is here,” she said, addressing them, “we will found the first house of Ursulines at Dijon; but as I have spent all I possessed to pay the rent for a year, we have yet no beds, and we must pass this night in prayer.” There was, in fact, during the first four-and-twenty hours, neither bed, nor food, nor fire; but the next evening M. Saintonge took pity on them and sent them a meal.—Twelve years afterwards the town of Dijon was resounding with joy and festival; the bells were ringing, the streets garlanded with flowers, while from a small house of very humble appearance there issued forth in procession a hundred young girls, clothed in white, with wax tapers in their hands, and led by one magnificently attired in a mantle glittering with jewels, and by the counsellors of the parliament and other officers in their robes of state. The small house, of very humble appearance, was the first asylum of Mademoiselle Francoise de Saintonge—the hundred girls were her pupils—the procession was advancing towards a magnificent mansion bought by the Ursulines from the town, and the young girl so splendidly adorned was the symbol of the words of the Apostle, “those who teach shall shine as the stars.”

The foundation of the Ursuline establishments may be considered as the first step taken towards female education in France; the instruction bestowed in them consisted, it is true, in little else than catechisms and litanies, but the principal was established that woman should be taught, and should be employed as teachers.

It is remarkable that whilst convents have been regarded, not always without reason! as institutions for the promotion of mental and personal slavery, they have in many cases opened to women a freer and nobler sphere of action than their position in the world, in any country, has ever done. A most important chapter of the history of women, is to be found in that of the great religious foundations. We find them there not only acting as the spiritual directors of their communities, and making laws for the regulation of their lives, but administering estates, carrying on law-suits, drawing up memorials, exercising a vast variety of social and even political functions.

“The Abbey of Fontevraud shows us, so to speak, a whole series of eminent women in its list of abbesses. The monks of the order stood in relations of subordination, even of obedience to them. The abbesses chose the confessors for the various houses; they decreed the punishments, civil and ecclesiastical. These alone bore the title of General of the order; all powers were concentrated in the hands of female rulers. And did this injure the prosperity of the order? By no means. None was ever more prosperous or more illustrious. They had, nevertheless, no lack of enemies; for during six hundred years, and under thirty-two abbesses, there was scarcely one of their privileges that was not attacked by the pride and violence of men, and maintained by the energy of women. It was the first abbess, Petronilla, who being engaged in a dispute with the powerful Bishop of Angers, cited him to appear before the Council of Chateauroux, and there pleaded the cause of her order, and gained it. In 1349, the abbess Theophigenia, in the same way vindicated, from the Seneschal of Breton, the right of jurisdiction over her nuns; in 1500, Maria de Bretagne, assisted by the Pope's delegates, drew up, with a firm and skilful hand, a new code of statutes for the order. I have spoken of the Abbey of Fontevraud, but there are hundreds of other instances that might just as well have been cited, for I am not pointing to isolated cases nor to superior women.—Throughout all the religious orders, there are to be found thousands who have displayed the same capabilities.

So many evidences are to be found in these annals, not only of the most active charity and the strongest sense of duty, but of practical good sense and talents for business displayed by a vast number of women, during a succession of ages, in the only social career open to them, that they may be thought decisive of the question asked at the beginning of this chapter.”

COLLEGE OF THE PROPAGANDA AT ROME.

(From the Illustrated London News.)

This celebrated educational establishment is situated at the southern extremity of the Piazza di Spagna, in the centre of the most fashionable quarter of Rome.

There are two principal entrances—one in the Via di Propaganda, the other in the Piazza di Spagna; and over this latter the title of the College is inscribed in large characters, thus—*Collegio de Propaganda Fide.* The edifice is the joint production of architects Bernini and Borromini, and was begun about the year 1622, in the Pontificate of Gregory XV., and was completed in the reign of Urban VIII.

The College of the Propagation of the Faith is the Grand Missionary head-quarters of the Roman Catholic Church, and its system of education is one of the most comprehensive that was ever devised in any age or country, for any purpose whatever. It was aptly compared by a witty Frenchman, the Abbe Raynal, to a sword, the handle of which remained in Rome, while the point reached every where. Its object is to educate students of every country, complexion and language, on the habitable globe, for the service of the altar, in their own countries respectively, and for the propagation of the Roman Catholic faith, by preaching and teaching its dogmas and doctrines as missionaries amongst their own countrymen. In its classes Abyssinians, natives of Pegu, of Siam, and other remote parts of Asia and Africa, inhabitants of the different countries of South America, of the United States, and of Europe; and while these youths cultivate a perfect knowledge of their own native tongues and their idioms, together with the Latin and Italian—the language of the class-room—their education comprises also the various branches of learning which constitute the literary training of the Roman Catholic priesthood, viz., the learned languages, logic, physical and moral science, history, metaphysics, theology, and the Scriptures.

The occasion when the polyglot character of the College can be best observed and understood is furnished by the annual Epiphany examination of the students, when one from each of the counties represented at the College is selected to display his pro-

iciency in the public Examination Hall, in presence of a numerous assemblage of Cardinals, Professors, dignitaries, and any respectable visitors, foreign or native, who may choose to go and witness the extraordinary spectacle of forty different languages being spoken successively by youths of as many different nations, dressed for the occasion in their native costume, and exhibiting every hue and variety of the human countenance.

Amongst the languages to be perpetually heard within the walls of the Propaganda are the Hebrew, the Chaldean, (ancient and modern) the Armenian, (ancient and modern) the Samaritan, the Syriac, the Arabic, the Persian, the Turkish, the Kourdish, (ancient and modern) Greek, Latin, Italian, Maltese, Coptic, Ethiopian, Chinese, (several dialects;) various other dialects of India, Asia, and Africa, such as the Hindustani, the Pegu, the Siamese, the Sanscrit, the Georgian, &c.; the tongues of Europe, viz: English, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Polish, Bulgarian, Russ, the Irish and other branches of the ancient Celtic, &c.

The College dress of the students is a long black gown, like the *soutane* of the Roman Catholic priesthood, distinguished, however, from the *soutane* by two strips of scarlet down the front—a remnant of ancient costume, recalling the *latus clavus* of the patricians and the noble youth of pagan Rome.

AMERICAN HISTORY—INTERESTING DISCOVERY.

(From the Buffalo Commercial Advertiser.)

New discoveries are occasionally made of valuable documents, throwing light upon the early history of the country. Some manuscripts have recently been brought to light in Quebec, which are of high historical interest. We derive the information from the addenda to a French translation, recently published at Montreal, of Dr. O'Callaghan's Memoir on the Jesuit Relations, in which he gave a catalogue of the volumes, a bibliographic account of their contents, and a list of the public and private libraries in this country in which they can be found. For the purpose of completing the researches of Dr. O'Callaghan, the French editor—the Rev. Father Martin, Superior of the Jesuits in Canada—instituted inquiries in the proper quarter to ascertain if, after 1672, the year in which the last volume was published, the Relations had been continued and preserved. From a catalogue of manuscripts relating to Canada, preserved in the archives of the Jesuits at Rome, it was ascertained that the *Relation du Canada* for the years 1676 and 1677 are among them, but whether in a complete state of preservation is not known. Other manuscripts are found in the same depository, but they are disconnected fragments, and can only serve as material for a general Relation. Two complete Relations were found in Canada, which will soon be published. One is for the years 1672-3. The other comprises a period of six years, from 1673 to 1679. They happily escaped the pillage of the Jesuit's College at Quebec. Father Casot, the last of the old race of Jesuits, and who died at Quebec in 1800, had confided them, with other manuscripts, to the pious care of the Nuns of the Hotel Dieu in that city, by whom they were preserved a long time as a sacred trust, and restored to the Jesuits when they returned to Canada in 1842. What increases the value of these historical monuments is, they are cotemporary with the facts which they contain. There are numerous corrections, notes, and even entire pages, in the hand-writing of Father Dablon, then Superior of the Missions in Canada, who, without doubt, prepared them for publication. The Relation for 1672-3 is anonymous, and is entitled “Relations of the most remarkable events which occurred among the Missions of the Fathers of the Company of Jesus in New France, during the years 1672 and 1673.” 22, 23, and 87 pages.—It contains three parts. The first treats of the Huron Mission near Quebec. The second of the Iroquois Missions in the present State of New York, and the third of the different Missions west of the great lakes. In the last part, comprising eighty-seven pages, the 39th and 40th pages are missing from the manuscript.

The Relation for 1673-9 is also anonymous, and has no general title, but there is found on the last page, in the hand-writing of Father Dablon, an endorsement which establishes its authenticity. The writer announces, on the first page, that the volume embraces a period of six years. It is divided into eight chapters, each of which is subdivided into paragraphs. The second chapter is devoted to a recital of the last labors and death of Father Marquette on the lonely shore of lake Illinois—now Michigan. All the western Missions are reviewed in the volume, and long details are given concerning the Missions among the Iroquois, the Montagnais, the Gaspariens, those of the Sault St. Louis and Lorette. It is comprised in 147 pages, but unfortunately one entire

sheet, embracing nine pages, is missing. This last Relation should properly have included the other travels of Father Marquette, and particularly his discovery of the Mississippi in 1673, but another manuscript of the same epoch, and which bears the same impress of authenticity, explains the omission. Under the title of “Voyage and death of Father Marquette,” it comprises, in 60 pages, an account of the labors which have immortalized that celebrated Missionary. It is this curious manuscript which furnished Thevenot with the material for his publication in 1687, under the title of “Voyage and discovery of several countries and nations of North America, by Father Marquette and the Sieur Joliet,” and which has become so exceedingly rare, that only one or two copies exist in the United States. What adds still greater value to the above manuscript is, that it is much more comprehensive than Thevenot's publication. The reasons and preparations for the expedition are narrated, and the Missionary can be traced in his various travels, even to his last moments in 1675. Two or three documents of still greater interest have also been discovered. The autograph journal of Marquette's last voyage, from the 25th of October, 1674, to the 6th of April, 1675, about a month before his death, and his autograph map of the Mississippi. The latter extends no farther south than the Arkansas, which was the termination of his voyage in that direction. The map published by Thevenot, and recently re-produced by Rich, Bancroft and others, is incorrect in many particulars.

In addition to the above-mentioned Relations, and Father Marquette's manuscripts, fragments of the Relations for the years 1674, 1676, 1678, and of the succeeding years, have been found, but in an incomplete condition. We hope that those portions at least which relate to the general history of the country, will soon be published under the auspices of the Quebec Historical Society. The friends of American history are much indebted to Father Martin, for the literary discovery above referred to.

INFLUENCE OF THE UNITED STATES.

(From the Catholic Telegraph.)

The debates in the English Parliament on the “Papal aggression,” as it is falsely styled, very clearly indicate the moral power exercised by the United States over the minds of foreign statesmen. Reference was constantly made in the speeches of the liberal speakers, to the practice prevailing in this country, of permitting the Church and various denominations to manage their ecclesiastical affairs as they thought proper, so long as the laws were not violated by their proceedings. This policy they contend is the only just and prudent course to be pursued, and many influential minds in England would very cheerfully abandon the corrupt and imbecile Establishment, for this wiser, less expensive and more consistent legislation. The time is rapidly approaching, when the overshadowing power of the Republic will not only suggest, but by its example dictate to the proud English the necessity of relinquishing all religious persecution. If it was in the power of Lord John Russell to recall his foolish letter to the Bishop of Durham, he would gratefully commit it to oblivion, but the present Pope appears to be wonderfully fortunate in accelerating the development of events, before their authors had matured their scheme of evil. The English Premier and his father-in-law, Earl Minto, and their advisers, are now bitterly conscious of the consequences which always follow an attack, dictated by rage and bigotry, on the Rock of Peter. Blinded by their animosity, they struck at the Apostolic See, and their own favorite establishment is far more likely to suffer than the Pontiff of Jesus Christ.

In all these events which have crowded on one another with such heart-stirring rapidity, how clearly manifested is the divine power. A Pope one time in exile, and the nation the least suspected of all others, hastens to his restoration. A Pope, despised by the worldly mind of England, because of his physical inability to contend with anarchists, by a stroke of his pen agitating the proudest empire on earth; and when her prime minister is preparing to strike, power drops from his hands, and he retires to meditate on his folly. How blind are they who read and see these events, and yet cannot trace in all of them the hand of the Most High. The name of Rome is forced on the attention of the world; she fulfils her magnificent destiny, and men, however cordially they may hate, cannot account for the mystery of her preservation and triumph. Penal laws are useless to restrain her, because she prospers where they are most stringent. To let her alone, as is the policy in the United States, is the wisest plan, since it is impossible to counteract the movements of a power impelled to such activity by the Most High.