

THE PUBLIC PRESS.

MR. SATOLLI AT THE GRIDIRON CLUB.

A MASTERLY DISSENTATION ON ITS MISSION, ITS FUNCTION AND ITS RESPONSIBILITIES.

Mgr. Satolli was a guest of the Gridiron Club, at its tenth annual dinner at the Arlington Hotel, Washington, D.C., and his address on the Press was one of the features of the occasion. Mgr. Satolli spoke as follows:—

"From Aristotle to Montesquieu, the renowned author of 'L'Esprit des Loix,' learned men have divided the functions of government into classes—the legislative, the executive or administrative, and the judicial—which are, in truth, but three activities of one and the same power which is vested in him who has the care of the people and represents them. Now, however, an adequate division of the powers of government would have to include a fourth element, and this is public opinion exercising its activity through the organism of the public press.

"It is consequently a great pleasure and honor to me to be with you this evening, feeling as I do that I am surrounded by the representatives of this fourth power in the greatest and most glorious of modern republics—a republic emulous of the glory of those of ancient times. A half century ago one of the principal periodicals of Europe, the Civita Cattolica, at the beginning of its existence said:

"It happens naturally that in those countries where journalism is in vogue it comes to be a true, perhaps even the supreme social power, it being received as an axiom that public opinion is the mistress and queen of the world. This public opinion has no other means of making itself felt nor organ for its manifestation more efficacious than journalism."

BRYCE'S WORDS.

"And Bryce, in his admirable work on 'The American Commonwealth' declares: 'In no country is public opinion so powerful as in the United States; in no country can it be so well studied. Yet opinion has really been the chief and ultimate power in nearly all times. I mean the opinion, unspoken, unconscious, but not the least real and potent, of the masses of the people, and it is the public press which has the most general and efficacious influence in constituting, moderating, keeping alive and modifying when necessity requires public opinion.'

"It is a question whether laws depend from the social dispositions of the people or whether the social dispositions depend from the laws, in my opinion the dependence is mutual, and consequently the legislative power cannot hold itself independent of nor indifferent to the popular opinion, which manifests itself throughout the press.

"In this connection it is interesting to note the teaching of the celebrated Isidore of Seville concerning the necessary characteristics of all human law. He says:

"A law will be thoroughly reasonable only when it is in conformity with religion and good order, and promotes public welfare. It must be a proper law, just, possible both naturally and considering the customs of the country; it must be befitting the circumstances of time and place; it should be needed and useful; it should be clear, too, containing nothing which may give rise to cavils on account of its obscurity; it should benefit no private interest, but should be enacted only for the common good of the people at large."

HIS REASONS PLAIN.

"The reasons why Isidore assigns these qualities for a good and valid law are plain. Human law is the guide of life in society and proceeds from the prior and higher divine and natural law. Therefore it ought to be proper, conforming to the supreme dictates of reason and to the government of Divine Providence; it should likewise conform to justice and to the capabilities of those who are to be governed by it, and should therefore be framed according to the state of civilization, according to the form of government, and should respect private rights.

"It ought moreover to be inspired by the consideration of the common

need and utility. And so we define law as an ordination of reason enacted and promulgated for the common good by those to whom the government of the people is entrusted. If we consider each one of these necessary conditions we shall be convinced that it is the special work of the public press to make them known to verify their existence.

"Man, as a social being, has three natural needs—the communication of his ideas; interest and participation in the government of the State to which he belongs; to be kept as accurately and promptly as possible informed of what goes on in the world about him. Nothing better meets these three wants than the public press. If man were left with the faculty of speech alone, none of these three needs would be satisfied. Books are, 'tis true, a useful expedient, but rather serve for general instruction than for the practical knowledge of the daily course of events, and may fittingly be called the fixed press. Periodicals answer the need better, but not sufficiently, as experience proves. They may be termed an intermittent press. The daily, or public press, a continuous press, when well organized has the advantage of being fully proportionate to the actual exigencies of the human mind.

LIFE A SYLLOGISM.

"The practical life, not only of the individual, but also of the body politic, is a syllogism, the major proposition of which, containing a general truth, may be found in the book press; the minor may be had from the periodicals; but to draw the conclusion belongs properly to the daily public press, which, day by day, describes the social life in its minutest details. And, therefore, just as the conclusion of the syllogism contains in itself all the strength of the premises and is distinct from them, so the public press contains all the force of general truths and of particular applications, describing as in its proper field that which is done in practical life, as well by the governing as by the governed.

"Society is an organized body. The government is its head, the people its members, the military its nerves and muscles, its blood the wealth which has its sistole and astole through the industry of the people; morality and religion are its heart, the press may well be termed its lungs, since it serves as the organ of public respiration.

"Or again I do not hesitate to say that, in the body politic, the public press has that office which in the individual is performed by conscience, and to define it as the organ of social conscience. In fact, what are the functions of conscience? To testify, to withhold and instigate, to accuse, to reprehend and to cause remorse.

THREEFOLD APPLICATION.

"All these things follow the application of what we know to what we do, and this application is three-fold: First, when we recognize that we have or have not done something, and in this way conscience is said to testify; next, when we judge that we ought or ought not to do something, and so conscience instigates or withholds; and finally, when we judge that what we have done was well or badly done, and conscience accuses, approves or reprehends.

"And is it not indeed the public press which makes known the deeds of society from day to day? Charles Dudley Warner declares that the purpose of the creation of the newspaper is that it should be a 'mirror of contemporary life.' Is it not the public press which at the proper time should make known to the makers of laws what should or should not be done for the common welfare? Can anyone deny to the public press the right, in matters which concern the people at large, to estimate the value of public acts? And especially does the public press act as the public conscience since the mass of the people think, speak and act under the influence of impressions received from the daily papers.

PLEASED WITH THE PRESS.

"From the day of my arrival in America down to the present moment I have had every reason to feel pleased with the press of this country, to conceive the most exalted opinion of it, to appreciate its great importance, to nourish for it feelings of sincere and imperishable gratitude. If you desire to know my mission among you, you will find it expressed in the conditions enunciated for my favorable reception here by a well meaning and misled writer in the Forum two years ago.

"It is to help, to teach the ignorant; to raise the fallen; to lead the guilty

and penitent to the invisible and divine Saviour, who alone has power to forgive sin; to console the sorrowing; to justify the believing; to promote righteousness, liberty, sympathy and the spirit of Christian brotherhood throughout the land.

"If you want to know what my mission is not, you have it in the words of this same writer, in which he explains what he thinks it is. He asserts that I am here to further the claims of the Pope to a kingdom of this world—a kingdom which embraces the whole world, 'all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them.'

"In my own name and in that of Leo XIII, who sent me, I repudiate any such purpose. And when it shall please the Pope to recall me, trusting in the kindness and rectitude of the public press, as Samuel of old, on laying down the government of Israel, appealed to the assembled people to express their satisfaction or dissatisfaction with his administration, so I shall not hesitate to present to the press of the country the record of my labors, and say, 'Judge me.'

ROMAN NEWS ITEMS.

Rt. Rev. Tobias Kirby, rector emeritus of the Irish College at Rome, is dead.

Mgr. Cairni, first Prefect of the Vatican library, died at Rome on the 26th Jan.

Archbishop Kosloffski, Metropolitan of the Roman Catholics in Russia, has just received from the Czar a cross adorned with diamonds.

Sicily is to have its Catholic congress. The movement for holding the gathering is receiving the earnest support of the Cardinal-Archbishop of Palermo.

The library of the Vatican was commenced 1,417 years ago. It contains 40,000 manuscripts, among which are some by Pliny, St. Thomas, St. Charles Borromeo, and many Hebrew, Syrian, Arabian and Armenian Bibles.

The Pope has given an audience to Mr. Joseph Heywood, who, on behalf of the United States, thanked his Holiness for the loan of the Vatican relics which were exhibited at the Chicago Fair. Mr. Heywood later called upon Cardinal Rampolla, to whom he presented a letter from Secretary Gresham.

BREVITIES.

Mary Anderson is very ill at Brighton, England.

A nun was killed on a railroad train near Paris by an insane man. Three other passengers were wounded by him.

There were 363 failures in business in the United States during the past week against 430 during the corresponding week of last year.

M. de Giers, Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, died at St. Petersburg Saturday. He was regarded as one of the foremost diplomats of the age.

The executors of Jay Gould and Russel Sage will have to retribute to the Kansas Pacific Railway \$11,000,000 of bonds converted by them to their own use.

The American Bankers' Association of Chicago has sent a circular to every paying teller in the city banks warning them that an organized gang of forgers were at work.

Senator O'Brien, of the Kansas State Legislature, introduced a bill in that body making attempted train robbery a crime punishable by not less than 20 years in the penitentiary.

The earthquake at Luchan, Persia, was more destructive than first stated. Over 1,200 persons perished and not a house was left standing. The cold was bitter and the homeless suffered intensely.

The political parties in Italy are preparing for a general election. The Socialists have selected as candidates a number of their comrades who were sentenced to imprisonment for taking part in the riots in Sicily.

English taxpayers are to be called on for more money. In the course of a speech in Hull, Home Secretary Asquith said that the country must prepare for a serious financial sacrifice in order to strengthen the navy.

Watts—"There is no use for you to keep on with argument. You can't convince me." Potts—"I am not trying to convince you, I am trying to convince myself."

RELIGIOUS NEWS ITEMS.

The Pittsburg cathedral has a debt of \$150,000 hanging to it.

A Eucharistic League is about to be formed among the clergy of the Kansas City diocese.

The Rev. Father Fidelis, C.P., whose name was the Rev. Dr. James 'Kent Stone when he was a Protestant, is visiting his native city, Boston.

Another Anglican clergyman has been converted to the Catholic Church, the Rev. Wentworth Powell, nephew of the Protestant Bishop, Basil Jones, of St. David's.

The Western Catholic Summer School is to open its first session on July 14th, at Madison, Wis. Monsignor Satolli, the Apostolic Delegate, is to pontificate at solemn High Mass on that occasion, and Archbishop Ireland is to preach.

The Redemptorist superior general, who is coming to this country to visit the American houses of his order, will have quite extensive travels to make when he gets here. The Redemptorists are one of the strongest religious orders, and the number of their establishments in America is quite large.

Vicar-General McCann has been appointed pastor of St. Mary's, Toronto, Ont., and Father Francis Ryan becomes rector of the Cathedral and chancellor of the archdiocese. These appointments, it is almost needless to say, will be received with general satisfaction. Rev. Dr. Treacy, who has been assistant at St. Mary's, also goes to St. Michael's.

The Very Rev. Michael A. Moore, assistant to the General of the Calced Carmelites, died recently after an illness of some months' duration, in the fifty-eighth year of his age, at the White Abbey Convent, Kildare. He was a native of County Kildare, and had filled several important positions, being successively Prior, Provincial, and assistant to the General.

Several years ago a Trappist monk, a member of the Community of the order stationed at the Abbey of Gethsemani, Kentucky, apostatized and married. He founded "a reformed Catholic church" in Brooklyn, N.Y. He occupied his time in ridiculing the faith he abandoned, in calumniating the monks at the Abbey. His church and a scurrilous paper he published afforded him opportunities to spread his malignant falsehoods and drew in money from fatuous bigots who delighted in their circulation. He died raging mad in a Brooklyn Hospital last week. Let his fate be a warning to others of his degraded class who seem devoted to reprobation.

It would appear from the latest Roman news that the Holy Father has abandoned, for the present at least, the idea of addressing a letter to the English clergymen of the established church on the issue of their return to Rome. His interviews with Cardinal Vaughan, who recently arrived in Rome, are thought to have led to the change in the Pope's plans. Cardinal Vaughan, according to report, does not believe that the time has yet come for any general return of the Anglicans to the Catholic Church, though he states that numbers of such conversions are constantly taking place. He looks for more returns of Ritualists, however, and there is scarcely a month that passes now wherein the conversion of some prominent Ritualist is not chronicled in England.

C. McKIERNAN, HORSESHOER.

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2-52

PUBLIC NOTICE.

NOTICE is hereby given that the "Alliance Nationale," a body politic and corporate, incorporated by virtue of the Provincial Statute of Quebec, 86 Victoria, chapter 80, will ask the Parliament of the Dominion of Canada, at its next session, for a charter incorporating the same as a Benevolent Society with power to give assistance to its sick members during their sickness and also to pay to their legal heirs, after death, a certain amount in money, and also for other purposes pertaining to the same.

Montreal, 19th December, 1894.
BEAUDIN, CARDINAL & LORANGER,
Attorneys of the Society. "L'Alliance Nationale."

23-9

Job Printing at The True Witness Office.