

THE TRUTH ABOUT THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

BY A PROTESTANT THEOLOGIAN. CCCLV.

Principal Fairbairn informs us that in France, about 1500, a Protestant computation was published, making out that 200,000 Huguenots, within the century, had been burned or massacred by the Catholics.

Dr. Fairbairn admits that these numbers may be exaggerated, but contends that it is not so very difficult to receive them, for any one who had examined the registers of the Protestant congregations, and noted the rows on rows of names of those who had been hurried off to the stake or the sword.

However, before accepting such a portentous estimate, or one approaching it, Principal Fairbairn would do well to note some points of significance.

We should understand that the statistics of the sixteenth century, about all sorts of things, are in great measure utterly valueless. They seem to have been largely nothing but vague guesses, and we know how easily imagination magnifies these beyond all relation to fact.

For instance, high official authority of that time put the number of parishes in England at 40 or 50,000. In reality it was about 10,000. Applying this proportion to the French Protestant estimate, we bring down the number of slaughtered Huguenots to 50,000. One would think that this was large enough to content even an A. P. A.

Las Casas was thoroughly familiar with Hispaniola, from end to end. Now he assures us that it is larger than Spain. In fact it is about one-sixth as large. Applying this proportion to France, we should bring down the number of murdered Protestants to about 24,000. This would be quite enough to betray the imagination, in a rapid examination of parish records, into a multiplication by four or five or six.

An examination of authenticated numbers brings us to very much the same conclusions. To begin with the massacre of St. Bartholomew's, the contemporary Huguenot statistics set the number of victims at 14,000. This computation has the double advantage of resting on intimate knowledge and of having no temptation to reduce the slaughter. Yet we know how soon popular imagination, Protestant and Catholic alike, ran up the number to 20,000, and before long to 70,000.

Finally, honest Archbishop Peresce, of the next century, in his horror at the ancestral fanaticism, presents us with a holocaust of 100,000. Here, we see, vague rumor has multiplied the real fact more than sixfold.

There were various other smaller massacres of Huguenots. Of these Guizot, the great Protestant layman of our time, gives us a careful account, noting the date, the place, the occasion of each, and the number of victims. The aggregate is some 13,000. Adding this to St. Bartholomew's, we have some 27,000. Then there were the 3,000 Waldenses murdered by order of Henry II, making in all 30,000.

Now as popular rumor magnified 15,000 into 100,000, it easily ran up 30,000 into 200,000. It has observed a curious proportionateness even in its extravagance.

Of course there were a good many Protestants burned by Francis I. and Henry II. However, judging by the accounts of Merle d'Aubigne, Guizot, Ranke, Lady Jackson, and other authorities, all Protestants, I should say that these in all amounted only to some hundreds. Taking them in round numbers, at a thousand, we have in all, from the first appearance of Lutheranism and Calvinism in France to the Edict of Nantes, some 31,000 Huguenots put to death.

How many Catholics were massacred by the Huguenots? Guizot makes out the number about 5,000. However, the Cardinal of Lorraine, at the Council of Trent, declared that within a few years, 3,000 monks and priests had been butchered by the Protestants, under slow tortures. As this statement was made in the face of Europe, and seems to have received no denial, we may doubtless accept it as true. Indeed, it is in perfect agreement with the latest Protestant account of the behavior of Coligny's armies, and with the conduct of the Dutch Calvinists at the taking of Brill, a few months before the St. Bartholomew, of which it was doubtless one of the inciting causes.

Combining the accounts of Guizot and the Cardinal of Lorraine, we are safe in saying that at least 6,000 Catholics were massacred by the Huguenots, 3,000 of them being not only butchered but slowly tortured to death.

How large a proportion of the French from 1500 to 1590 were Protestants?

Some say, one-fourth. This again looks like a popular exaggeration, in view of the fact that the peasantry, the body of the nation, were as Ranke remarks, immovably Catholic. Then Paris was mainly Catholic, with Toulouse and doubtless many other cities. Besides, the nobility, which I have seen estimated at 200,000 although largely, perhaps predominantly, Protestant, was also largely Catholic. These considerations seem to make the estimate of one-fourth for the Huguenots extravagant. It would need very precise and cogent proofs to rebut the presumption against it.

On the other hand, the latest estimate of the Huguenots, given by Dean Hodges, as only one-fifteenth, seems decidedly too low. After a century of steady defections from the Reformed confession, the Protestants were still one-twelfth of the people. We shall hardly go far astray if we reckon that in 1500, one-seventh, that is, one-sixth as numerous as the Catholics. This would make the 6,000 Catholic massacred by them equivalent, relatively to 30,000 Protestant murdered by the Catholics. I have shown this before, but in view of Dr. Fairbairn's charge, made in the new Cambridge histories, it seems well to repeat it.

This shows the Huguenots, not as less but as more bloodthirsty than the Catholics, even after we have thrown St. Bartholomew's into the scale. No

wonder, therefore, that Guizot, although strongly and immovably Protestant, will not hear talk of the French Catholics as having been more ferocious than those of his own religion. He puts them on an equal level of ruthlessness. The Protestants, he says, when once their fear or anger was aroused, were quite as relentless as their adversaries. Nor will he give attention to the plea that at least the Catholics opened the game of slaughter. In one part, he says, the Catholics opened it, and in another the Protestants. Each part was about equally ready, on any slender pretext, to try to destroy the other. The intense intolerance of the French nature, which to this day, as Mr. Bodley says, finds it almost impossible to understand any other definition of liberty than the liberty of others to agree with itself, was quite as apparent in the Calvinists as in the Catholics. It was not a characteristic of the religion, but of the nation.

No wonder, therefore that Dr. Barton, the historian of Scotland, indignantly resents the comparison of his Presbyterian countrymen with "the sanguinary Huguenots." The Scots were rude, mutinous, and on occasion ferocious, but, compared with their co-religionists of France, they were clemency and kindness itself, as respects the religious quarrel.

Professor William James, dilating on the exquisite tortures inflicted on the Waldenses, in one of the persecutions against them, gives this as a reason why we should set our faces implacably against any dangerous increase of the Catholic Church in this country, although he does not explain precisely how we are to prevent it. He says nothing about the exquisite tortures inflicted by the Huguenots on the Catholic clergy. Perhaps he has never heard of them. I myself had never heard of them a few years ago.

I may remark that in looking over a former paper I note that I have inadvertently written "Dr. Salmon" for "Dr. Salmon." Dr. Salmon is the name of a Scotch Presbyterian, Dr. Salmon of an Irish Anglican professor.

CHARLES C. STARNUCK. Andover, Mass.

"HIS MERCY IS ABOVE ALL HIS WORKS."

How comforting to poor, weak, wayward humanity is the thought that God is a God of love and mercy! He pities man and bears with his infirmities. Holy Writ tells us that the bruised reed He will not break, and the smoking flax He will not quench. And yet God chastiseth the sinner, but He does so more out of love than out of wrath. He even sends humiliations and trials to the just that He may purify them and render them more pleasing in His sight. But in all that He sends us, whether for our punishment or purification, God sends for our good, for He is ever our Father, the God of love and mercy. His mercy surpasses His justice. His mercy is above all His works.

"How good and sweet is Thy spirit, O Lord, in all things," says the Book of Wisdom, and continuing it addresses Him and says: "Thou chastisest them that err, little by little; and admonishest them and speakest of them concerning the things wherein they offend—that leaving their wickedness they may believe in thee, O Lord." In other words, God is kind and merciful to the erring one and tries to draw him back to the right path by little trials which He sends him and which sometimes are the consequences of his sins. He covers the sinner with confusion, and in the bitterness of the remorse that he feels he is often led to give up his evil ways. God shows loving patience and almost incalculable mercy towards those offending Him, for He wishes not the death of the sinner, but rather that he be converted and live.

How often do we see this exemplified: a man will keep on sinning year after year, and God is patient and strives in divers ways to draw him from his sinfulness, now by heaping favors on him and again by sending him trials; now by sending him across his path some good influence, again by showing to him in the fate of another what he himself may expect unless he change from his course. It may be the influence of a good wife or the innocence of a loving child that God uses to try to lead the sinful man to repentance and reform. Sometimes it is through the prayers and tears of a holy mother, as was the case in the conversion of St. Augustine, that the sinner is brought to bewail his sins and begin to amend his life. It is, perchance, when thrown on a bed of sickness, sometimes the result of his excesses, that the violator of God's commandments takes the opportunity to look into his life and by correspondence with the grace he is then receiving is brought to the practice of virtue.

Our Lord exemplifies in the parable of the prodigal son, God's readiness to forgive and receive back the repentant sinner. A certain man, says He, had two sons. The younger wished to become his own master and asked his father to give him whatever would fall to his share. He went off into a distant country and soon squandered his portion in libertinism and debauchery. To save himself from starving he was forced to take the position of a swineherd, and had only husks, in common with them, for his food. His very wretchedness set him to thinking, and, with cries, he exclaimed, "How many servants there are in my father's house, while I am here perishing with hunger. I will arise and go to my father, and I will acknowledge to him my sinfulness and I shall say: 'Father, forgive me my sins. I am not worthy to be called thy son, but take me among thy hired servants.' And so he arose and went back to his father, who, seeing him coming, ran out to meet him and clasped him to his bosom. And the father said to his servants: 'Bring forth quickly the first robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and shoes on his feet; and bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it, and let us eat and be merry—because this my son was dead

and is come to life again, was lost and is found." And thus are the words of the Book of Wisdom (Chap. xv.) verified, as we see from the text: "Thou, our God, are gracious and true, patient and ordering all things in mercy, for if we sin, we are thine, knowing Thy greatness; and if we sin not, we know that we are counted with Thee; for to know thee is perfect justice, and to know Thy justice and Thy power is the root of immortality." Thus God strives to draw men to Himself if they are separated from Him, or to hold them if already united to Him. If they are in sin He goes to them and strives to quicken conscience; if they are walking in the paths of virtue He makes them taste more and more the delights of serving Him.

To recognize God is life's first duty, and to love and serve Him nature's first law. Faithful to both we will gain for ourselves happiness here and eternal joy hereafter. But, alas! the siren voice of sin sets men asleep and the world's giddy whirl dizzies their minds and makes them forget their origin and their destiny. They are blinded by the world's glare, and do not see the onrushing of eternity. And the words of the psalmist are fulfilled to be all too true: "With desolation is the world made desolate because no one thinketh in his heart."

But what profiteth all this rush for wealth, all this striving for position and place, all this hungering for pleasure? Will any or all these things bring peace or happiness to us? No, a thousand times no! Happiness is not to be found in riches, as men confess who have it, but in the love of God. Happiness is not to be found in this world's high places and honors—for those who have them are still unhappy. Nor is happiness, real, genuine, self-satisfying happiness, to be found in pleasures, for they bring only bitterness and remorse. Be virtuous and you will be happy, is an old and true saying, and there can be no real happiness without the practice of virtue. God is infinite joy, peace and happiness, and none of these things can be found outside of Him. Therefore, to keep His law is to find happiness, for He said: "Take My yoke upon you, for My yoke is sweet, and My burden is light." So the just man knows happiness even amidst the miseries of this world, for he possesses peace, and he helps to make others happy by sharing it with them. "The peace of God be to you" was an old Christian salutation, and the same is still uttered in spirit to the whole world by every God-fearing Christian heart.

How heavy and galling is Satan's yoke, and what veritable slaves are they who wear it? How sad the lot of those who sip this world's pleasures, how bitter the dregs of her poisoned cup and her foolish votaries! How debased and degraded is the state of those who yield to the low cravings of fallen nature! Truly "the way of the transgressor is hard." The just, God-fearing man knows nothing of these miseries, but finds delight and peace and happiness in loving God and keeping His commandments. "Vanity of vanity and all is vanity, and vexation of spirit," exclaimed Solomon, "unless to serve God and Him alone abide."

And so, to return to our first thought, let us remember God's mercy is infinite and if one finds that he has grievously sinned against Him and must confess that he is not worthy to be called His child, still let him go humbly before Him, and confessing and repenting his sin, and promising with His grace amendment, he will be graciously forgiven, and God will lift him up in His mercy, and shall say: "Say, thy sins are forgiven thee, go thy way and sin no more!"—Bishop Colton in Catholic Union and Times.

FIVE-MINUTE SERMON

Feast of Pentecost, or Whit-Sunday.

THE HOLY GHOST IN THE CHURCH.

"The Holy Ghost, Whom the Father will send in My name He will teach you all things, and bring all things to your mind, whatsoever I shall have said to you."—Gospel of the Day.

On the day which we now commemorate, my brethren, the Holy Ghost came down, as you know, on the little church, the Christian, assembled in the upper room at Jerusalem, to prepare them for the great combat in which they were about to engage against the devil for the conquest of the world. He came down upon them to make of them the Church of God; to establish them in the truth, and to bring to their remembrance, as our Lord has promised, the faith which they had received from the King of England, during his recent visit to Paris, attended Church on Sunday, a circumstance which surprised the statesmen of that city, as a correspondent thus remarks:

"Naturally enough, some of the French papers have curious and, indeed, entertaining accounts of the King of England there with M. Rouvier (Prime Minister) and M. Deleasse, there will be something in France."

Changes even more surprising have taken place within brief periods in that country.—N. Y. Freeman's Journal.

When a friend offends you be as good as the lawyers and give him the advantage of a technicality or two.

THE KING AT CHURCH.

THE HEALTHY CHILD IS A HAPPY CHILD.

THEY CLEANSE THE SYSTEM THOROUGHLY.

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Bishops throughout the world also teach the faith by His help and guidance; and this help is also given to the clergy who assist them. Nor does the work of the Holy Ghost stop here; He is also with the body of the faithful, enabling them also to recognize the truth when they hear it, and to distinguish it from error.

"You have the unction from the Holy One, and know all things," says St. John; "I have not written to you as to them that know not the truth, but as to them that know it."

Yes, the Holy Ghost is throughout the Church; He is her life, and is not only in her head, but also in her members. Were He not in the members, though the Pope indeed should remain to teach the truth, the faithful would not have remained faithful or attentive to the truth which He would teach.

What a blessing, then, my brethren, is this light of the Holy Ghost, which is given in its measure to each one of us; which keeps us in the one fold, and which makes us, out of many, one body in Christ; which brings His words al ways to our minds, and which preserves us from the ever-changing doubt and confusion which is the lot of those who are separated from the one true Church in which He dwells! Let us, then, preserve this unspokeable gift; let us not quench the Spirit of God within us. And how is it quenched? How do we lose the light of faith which He gives?

By sin, and never except by sin. Though instruction be indeed good and salutary, it is not the simple and the unlearned who lose the faith, but such as give ear to their passions, especially those of pride and impurity. All the heresies, which have torn multitude from the Church of Christ have had their roots not so much in ignorance as in sin. "Keep yourselves," then, my brethren, as St. John warns you, "from idols;" this is the only sure way to keep in yourselves the light of God.

THE EDUCATED MIND. The Christian religion entered the world opposed by all the "culture" and "enlightenment" of the time. Christ sought the pillars of His Church among the fishermen of Galilee—not among the dialecticians of the West or the East. For centuries this antagonism continued. The philosophers, the critics, the satirists and the Gnostics sneered at the uncultured champions of the Church. Time decided the great debate; the academicians, the keen dialecticians, the astute leaders of cultured Paganism are gone forever and the system of the fishermen has overspread the world.

History thus gives us a very pointed instance that would indicate among other things that the opposition of the world's intellect and culture does not always militate against the final success of a religion, nor does it preclude the truthfulness of that religion from being subsequently universally confessed to in the very world of this culture and intellect.

So, that, even if we choose to admit, that the "educated mind of to-day" is opposed to dogmatic religion that does not prove that "dogmas are becoming a thing of the past." They may be spreading among fishermen.

That the English and American "educated mind" especially has no faith in dogmas should not conclude anything against Catholicity. This geographical division of the "educated mind" is positively ignorant of what dogmas are. As Cardinal Newman has said it knows no more about Catholicism than it does about the religion of the inhabitants of the moon. What weight can the judgment of a mind so conditioned upon the question have with me, or with you or with any other earnest seeker after truth?—Catholic Citizen.

If men were as ready to commend what they approve as to condemn what they disapprove, the world would be a much pleasanter place.

HAPPY DAYS FOR BABY. The healthy child is a happy child. All its little troubles vanish when it is digesting its food well and is free from childish ailments. The greater part of these ailments arise from stomach and bowel troubles, feverishness, teething and worms. Baby's Own Tablets act like magic in these cases and when children are restless at night they always give sound, refreshing sleep. Mrs. A. LePage, St. Florence, Que., says: "Baby's Own Tablets had marvellous results in the case of my two months old baby. He was nervous, troubled with colic and body constipated, but after giving the Tablets he began to improve at once and is now in good health. I also gave the Tablets to my three year old boy who was troubled with worms and they cured him as well. Both children are now the picture of health and I am always praising the Tablets to my friends." You can get Baby's Own Tablets from any drug-gist or direct by mail at 25 cents a box by writing the Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., Brockville, Ont.

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