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London, Saturday, Nov. 2, 1895.

THE SIGN OF THE CROSS.

Our attention has been called to a lecture recently delivered at St. Stephen, N. B., by the Rev. Canon O'Connor, of Belfast, the subject of which was "The Image of the Cross."

The Canon appears to have been invited to deliver this lecture for the purpose of turning the tide of Ritualism which is daily gaining strength in the Church of England, in spite of all the efforts of so-called Evangelicals to stem it.

From the character of the deliverance, it does not surprise us that the lecturer took care in beginning it to declare that he is alone responsible for the sentiments it contains, for its tone throughout in regard to the use of the cross as a symbol of Christian faith is quite alien to the practice prevailing in his own Church, not only among High Churchmen, but even in his own ecclesiastical party.

Yet, in spite of this practice, there are many in the Church of England, as in other sects, who, in their unreasoning hatred of everything which has the sanction of the use of the Christian Church during all ages, are pleased to hear these usages attacked because Catholics use them, and this is why the lecture was so well received by the audience, and loudly applauded, particularly where the speaker denounced as "superstitious" the use of the sign or image of the cross in popular devotions.

This word "superstitious" is a very convenient one for those who have no logical argument to offer, or who are unable to give a solid reason for their opinions, and it would appear that this was the case with Canon O'Connor, for certainly the reasons he advances to sustain his attack upon the use of the cross are so feeble as scarcely to require serious refutation.

In what respect is the use of the cross superstitious? The lecturer does not tell us. He leaves us to accept his word for it, and if we are satisfied that he is a better judge of what is calculated to inspire real devotion than are the saints of all ages, and even the Apostolic authors of the New Testament, we may accept his conclusions.

It is not necessary that a religious emblem be actually set forth in the New Testament as a fit symbol, before it can be lawfully used by Christians. The New Testament gives only very general directions as to the devotional usages which Christians may adopt, though St. Paul declares (1 Cor. xiv, 40) that all "should be done decently and according to order." Elsewhere he asserts his authority to establish such order as may seem becoming.

This is an assertion of the authority of the Church to adopt such liturgical practices as she may deem useful for the attainment of the end for which the Christian religion was established—the salvation of souls through raising them toward God by devotional influences.

The Holy Scripture does speak of the cross as the emblem of our Redemption, and this is sufficient to justify and even to suggest its use as the distinctive symbol of Christianity, of which the Redemption of man is the principal mystery. Among the passages of Holy Scripture which thus refer to the cross it will suffice to specify two. In Colossians i, 20, we are told that Christ "reconciles all things unto Himself, making peace through the blood of His cross, both as to the things that are on the earth, and the things that are in heaven." In Gal. vi, 14, St. Paul says: "God forbid that I should glory but in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."

It is perfectly clear that in these as well as other passages, the Apostle regards the cross as the symbol of Redemption, and Canon O'Connor misrepresents Scripture when he makes the assertion: "If anybody wants authority for speaking of it as the symbol of Redemption, it cannot be found within the covers of the New Testament."

He continues: "If the image of the cross is to have a place on or at the (Eucharistic) table, as symbol of the Atonement, why not also the Symbol of the Incarnation, which is the Virgin and Child? Once you begin, where are you to stop?"

He then quotes the infidel Gibbon as an authority to prove that symbolic worship was introduced into the Church through the veneration of the cross, and infers "the wisdom of the Reformers in the total destruction of all crosses in churches three hundred years ago." But he then gives the curious information that "within the last sixty years" in the Church of England there has been a revival of the ancient "superstition" in every Anglican parish, "by the introduction of the image of the cross—the sign and initial of Tammuz substituted for the sign and initial of Christ in Christ's own temples."

It appears, then, from the Canon's theory, that the Church of England, his own Church, is now utterly given over to superstitious practice. Is this the upshot of three hundred years' pretended Reformation of the Church of Christ? What then is the utility of such an organization, if it lead souls to a false instead of a true worship of God; for this is what superstition means? We leave it to admirers of the Belfast divine to tell what sort of a bird it is which thus fouls its own nest.

But what should we say to the lecturer's assertion here that the sign of the cross is a symbol in honor of the obscene Syrian god Tammuz? We do not deny that the initial letter of the name Tammuz was written by a cross both in Phœnician and Hebrew, but does it follow from this that its Christian use is intended to do honor to Tammuz? It is a fact which Canon O'Connor mentions, that the Greek initial of the name of Christ is also a cross, usually formed obliquely, but frequently written in the form of a Latin cross by the ancients, and it is found in this form in the Catacombs of Sts. Callixtus and Agnes as part of the monogram of Christ, which consisted of the union of the first two letters of His name, CH R, which in Greek are XP. If the early Christians thought proper to use the combination of these two letters as a symbol to remind them of Christ, there could be no evil in the practice, and it is surely a proof of a distorted mind to represent the usage as a tribute of idolatrous respect to the god Tammuz. This is undoubtedly the consequence of Canon O'Connor's reasoning, though at the same time he inconsistently admits that in this form the cross was used by Christians of the earliest times as a means of keeping Christ in their minds.

There is no evidence that the cross was ever used as an emblem of Tammuz, though a certain indecent emblem, which some modern Infidels pretend to identify with the cross, was employed in the orgies with which that god was honored. If it had really been the case that the cross was used it would be a curious coincidence, but it would not justify the assertion or insinuation, which is unworthy of a Christian, that the emblem which Christians of nearly all denominations recognize as the emblem of Christ, is in reality a concealed homage rendered to a Pagan god.

The use of the sign of the cross, however, does not appear to have originated from the Greek letter X, but rather directly from the cross which was the instrument of our Lord's death. Possibly it was adopted the more readily because it combined a reference both to the name of Christ and to the instrument whereby He gave Redemption to mankind. At all events, it is certain that it was used by Christians from a very early period, as Tertullian attests that it was usual for Christians in his day to "Make the sign of the cross on their foreheads, at every journey, on entering or leaving their houses, on clothing, or bathing themselves, at table, when making a light, when lying down or sitting, and whenever they entered into company (conversatio)." This was written about the year 200; and as it refers to a general custom, it must have existed for a long time previous.

Canon O'Connor admits that Tertullian, and Justin Martyr, who was of still earlier date, report that some Christians "made the cross on masks and yards of vessels." He adds: "All which may be granted, and yet we know not but even this superstitious usage was the sign of cross letter X, signifying Christ's name; nor in any case can such sign making be quoted as sanction for the erection of graven or molten images in the worst place of a house of prayer."

One more we have that terribly sounding word "superstition." All is superstition which does not accord with Canon O'Connor's crude notions on religion—the usages of the Christian Church for eighteen centuries are superstitious. But more, the Anglicans and Presbyterians at the present day erect the cross in the "worst place of the house of prayer," the latter at least on the outside, and the former inside as well. All must be equally superstitious. The Church of England commands the use of the sign of the cross in the order for the administration of baptism; and we entertain no doubt that Canon O'Connor has frequently obeyed this command. He dare not administer baptism without so doing. Yet he pronounces all who have ever made use of this sacred symbol superstitious reverencers of Tammuz. To avoid superstition, we must adopt the Canon's infallible judgment in preference to the belief and practice of nearly all Christendom. Certainly, if self-esteem and obstinacy in one's fancies are evidences of truth, the Canon's opinions must be true indeed; but we prefer to adhere to the constant teaching of the Church, the guardian of the faith, the pillar and ground of truth, which has the promise from our Blessed Lord that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

It is not necessary to prove that the form of the cross used in devotion is precisely the same as that which was used in the days of Tertullian and Justin Martyr. It is an emblem of ecclesiastical usage, and the lapse of thousands of years may make slight changes in its form, but such changes in no way affect the principle that practices of this kind which aid devotion are lawful and useful. It is not Canon O'Connor who has authority to decide exactly what these forms shall be, but the Church of God, whose business it is to put all things in order as regards the liturgical usages which may or may not be adopted. We may remark here, however, that the cross in the form in which we use it was of frequent use at a very early age, as is proved by its use in the two Catacombs already referred to; but as the Canon belongs to a Church which pretends now to be identical with the ancient Church of England, it will be apropos to cite one instance of the early use of the sign of the cross in England. It is found in the Bishop's office book of Egbert, brother of Eadbert, king of Northumberland. Egbert was Archbishop of York in 732, and in the office book it is prescribed to make the sign of the cross, exactly as it is made today (the figure being given) in the order for the dedication of a cross.

IN THE AGONIES OF DESPAIR. Demoralized and enraged by the many rebuffs it has met with on every side, the A. P. A. has determined to make one more effort for political supremacy in the United States. At a convention of the society, held a few days ago in St. Louis, it was decided to enter on a Presidential and Federal election campaign similar to that which the society has hitherto conducted in reference to State and Municipal elections. It does not appear that the organization intends to put forward a Presidential candidate of its own, but it declares its intention to examine how far the principles of the candidates proposed by other parties for election will accord with those of the A. P. A., and to unite the A. P. A. votes on those candidates for office who will be found most in accord with the known principles of the order.

There is nothing very alarming in all this, nor does it portend that the A. P. A. will at all control the next Presidential election. The policy the organization intends to pursue is very like that which was pursued in the Ontario Provincial elections in 1894, with the result in this province that the party with which the similar society here allied itself was literally wiped out of existence.

We do not anticipate that there will be any such result as this in the United States in the elections of 1896, for the reason that neither of the great parties of the Republic will in any way identify itself with the intolerant faction, though there has been cause for suspecting that the Republicans were more or less committed to A. P. A. principles.

In a few States, such as Kansas and Minnesota, the Republican caucuses and conventions were captured by the A. P. A. at their last meetings, but this fact is not to be taken as an indication that they have captured the country, or even one of the parties which are contending for the control of the union.

There has been sufficient manipulation of Republican caucuses by the A. P. A. to give rise to the suspicion that the paramount influence in the Republican ranks is in the A. P. A.

lodges, but it does not appear that this is the case. The A. P. A. have merely for the present time attached themselves to the Republican party, as the old man of the sea attached himself to Sinbad the Sailor—in spite of its protestations—for in all the most important States the leaders of the Republican and Democratic parties have rivalled each other in repudiating connection with the association.

This has been the case in New Jersey, New York, Illinois, Indiana and other important States, and now Massachusetts, the cradle of American Puritanism, has fallen into line. The Massachusetts Democrats never would countenance the Apapists, and their candidate for the Governorship of the State denounced their intolerance without stint or reserve. But Massachusetts was supposed to be a hotbed for Apapism. It was there that, before the United States became a nation, there was a regular ecclesiastical court for the trial of Quakers and other heretics, who were subjected to banishment, or to the worse penalty of having their noses slit open, or ears cut off. It was there that witches, or rather poor women who had the misfortune to be old and decrepit, and were therefore suspected of practicing witchcraft, were condemned to be burned at the stake. There, where there was so enlightened a community, was just the soil in which a proscription society might be expected to flourish, and indeed, half a century ago Know-nothingism was rampant there, and among its bravest achievements may be reckoned the burning of a convent school in cultured Boston, at midnight, while the lady teachers and the little girl pupils were turned precipitately into the street after enduring all the terror and abuse which fanaticism dared to inflict on them.

Apapism, too, flourished in Massachusetts for a while, or at least its votaries so asserted; but, as we recorded last week, they were not able even to capture the convention of a party by getting their nominee made the Republican candidate for the Governorship. We told already in our columns how Governor Greenhalge has become the special object of A. P. A. spite because of his denunciation of that organization, and of his openly manifested friendship for Catholics. The A. P. A. made every effort to prevent his renomination by the Republican Convention as the candidate of their party, and at the convention a full A. P. A. ticket for the nominations to office was placed on the field, but it was able to muster its support only 22 per cent. of the 1754 delegates, and thus the fanatics have not had one of their candidates endorsed by the Republican party. They have just had the opportunity to exhibit their actual strength and the extent of their influence, if that is any consolation to them. They are as weak as a political power in Massachusetts as in Ontario, and they can only succeed in demoralizing and defeating any party which might commit the folly of making an alliance with it.

Massachusetts does honor to itself by the present attitude of both its political parties, and the action which these parties have taken will go far toward atoning for the criminal and senseless fanaticism of which that State was the centre half a century ago. Apapism is now driven back to the far West, and Kansas appears to be for the United States what the county of Lambton is for Ontario, the sole refuge of the cause of impotent bigotry. The St. Louis resolutions are evidently an offer of the votes of the A. P. A. to the political party which will make the highest bid for their support, but we are loath to believe that either of them will take the bait, though it is possible that local Republican organizations may endeavor to secure the Association's support, by throwing sops to this politico-religious Cerberus.

M. PASTEUR. The late M. Pasteur showed conclusively that profound scientific attainments are not incompatible with sincere and humble faith. His Catholicity was never a barrier to his progress into the regions of speculation, but was a help and a guide. How striking is the comparison between him and the ordinary skeptic! His life was characterized by fidelity that would brook no objection or insult to his religion, and when his labors were over he went forth to meet his God with the names of Jesus and Mary on his lips. When he was initiated a member of the Academy he delivered a speech memorable not only for its beauty of diction but for its condemnation of Ernest Renan, who but a short

time before had denied in the same place the existence of a God:—"Beyond this starry vault what is there? Other starlit heavens. Be it so. And beyond these? The human mind, urged by an invincible force, will never cease to ask: And what is there beyond? He who proclaims the existence of the Infinite—and nobody can escape from doing it—accumulates in this affirmation more of the supernatural than is to be found in all the miracles of all religions; for the notion of the Infinite has the double character of forcing itself on the convictions and yet being incomprehensible. The idea of God is a form of the idea of the Infinite, and so long as this mystery of the Infinite shall weigh upon human thought so long will temples be raised for the worship of the Infinite, and on the floor of these temples you will see men prostrated, engulfed by the thought of the Infinite."

Noble, manly words of a man who was too great to be a skeptic!

JUDGE CURRAN'S APPOINTMENT. We made reference in our last issue to the unseemly action of Bishop Bond, the Anglican Bishop of Montreal, backed by some other Montrealers, in making an effort to prevent the appointment of the Hon. J. J. Curran to the bench, to fill the vacancy thereon which has existed since the death of Sir Francis Johnson.

The plea which these gentlemen set forward was that as the late Sir Francis was an English-speaking Protestant, his successor should be the same, that the Protestant influence may not be diminished in the Province of Quebec. We do not by any means desire to see the proper influence of Protestants in any Province of the Dominion reduced below what they are entitled to in justice, and there is not the least danger that anything of the kind will happen. We must expect that, as in the Dominion Protestants preponderate, they will have a larger share than Catholics in the offices at the disposal of the Government, and we do not propose to contend that Catholics should have any larger share of them than is justified by their ratio to the whole population. But it is notorious, and it has been frequently shown by official statistics, that in every Province, even in Catholic Quebec, the number of Protestant appointments is far in excess of the proportion of Protestants to the whole population. This is the case, not only as regards those appointments which are made by the Federal Government, but also in those of the Local Governments, Quebec being no exception to the general rule. When the value of the appointments is taken into account, in the sense of the amount of salary attached to them, the discrepancy existing becomes still more palpable, as the proportion of Protestants is much larger than that of Catholics in the higher and most desirable positions.

It ought not to be the case that, in the filling of vacancies, the question of the religion of the nominee should be taken into consideration in a community so mixed as we have in Canada, yet there is no doubt that it has been taken into consideration, with the result that Catholics have not been recognized to the extent to which by their numbers they ought to have been; Quebec being the only Province where the minority has received more than its share of Government patronage. Returns from the Province of Quebec show a very large proportion of offices under both Dominion and Provincial Governments which are held by Protestants, who number only one-seventh of the population, while in Ontario, where Catholics are one sixth, the number and value of the offices held by Catholics fall far short of this proportion. This was proved by an official report issued by the Provincial Government before the last local elections, in refutation of P. P. A. statements, to the effect that Catholics were unduly favored by the Provincial Government.

In view of the fact that the Quebec Government has shown such liberality to Protestants, it was with an extremely ill grace that Bishop Bond's delegation raised the question of religion at all. Since Judge Curran's appointment there has been a good deal said in some of the papers about a slight having been shown to the English element in Montreal. The truth of the matter is that English speaking Catholics have lost three judgeships since Confederation, two having been given to French-Canadians, and one to an English-speaking Protestant. Looking at the matter from a religious point of view, therefore, the appointment of Judge Curran merely restores the equilibrium, though, inasmuch as the relative proportion of Protestants is

smaller now than it has been at any time previous, they would not be entitled by their numbers to so large a proportionate representation as they had at the time of Confederation; yet there are at the present moment no fewer than eight Protestants on the bench in Quebec. It follows that if the matters of religion and nationality should be allowed to enter into consideration at all, it was right that an English-speaking Catholic should have been appointed. Yet we are gravely informed by the papers that many English Protestants are so chagrined that, Conservatives as they have been, they intend to revenge themselves on the Government for making the appointment by becoming Liberals. We have no objection to their choosing whichever side in politics they think proper, but if they have no better reason for their change than that they have put forward, or are said to have put forward, they show no small degree of aggressiveness and malignity, to put the matter mildly.

These gentlemen are repeating the role of the Orangemen of Kingston, who were so adverse to the appointment of a Catholic to the bench, that they made threats also to withdraw their support from Sir John Macdonald if he carried out his promise to appoint Mr. James O'Reilly, an eminent counsellor to the bench. Sir John then surrendered to the intolerant demand, though there was not at the time one Catholic judge in the Province. The Catholics of Quebec have shown a very different spirit from the intolerance which has so often prevailed in Ontario, but such petulance as the Montreal imitators of the Kingston Orangemen are exhibiting is well calculated to make the Quebec Catholics reflect whether they have not been too yielding already in granting the minority far more than they are entitled to. If we are to judge from the recent delegation to Ottawa, kind treatment produces in them a grasping avarice for more, rather than a gracious acknowledgment of benefits received.

There is no doubt about Judge Curran's fitness for the position he now occupies, the only objection offered against him being his religion. It is pitiful that there are in the Dominion persons from whom better things should be expected, but who are nevertheless animated by such a spirit of intolerance.

LITERARY CELEBRITIES OF CANADA. Some time ago we read an article from the versatile pen of Dr. O'Hagan, on the literary celebrities of Canada, and we were well pleased with its kindly tone and scholarly discrimination. But we think that the writer, in omitting the names of those who in the Maritime Provinces have bent every energy to the upbuilding of a national literature, but half achieved his task.

The writer did not, we are well aware, purport to review within the limits of a magazine article the careers of all our literary workers, but surely no sketch ament our intellectual glories can be complete without the name of the Most Rev. Dr. O'Brien, the Archbishop of Halifax.

He is a churchman of recognized ability, intent upon the improvement of his diocese, as bear witness the educational and charitable institutions erected during his incumbency, and, like some other distinguished and busy men, he has found time to give us prose and poetic productions of no mean order.

Dr. Stewart of Quebec has styled him the Canadian Browning. His prize sonnet on St. Cecilia remains still one of the very best that we can call our own.

We shall in the near future refer to this subject again. Our remarks on this omission of Dr. O'Hagan are not occasioned by any desire to pose as a defender of the Provincialists, because they have shown and will show in the near future that they can take care of themselves, but simply to correct the impression that the article in question is a comprehensive review.

THE SOCIAL PURITY CONGRESS. The Social Purity Congress has closed its sessions, and without presuming to estimate the work done by such assemblies, we may unhesitatingly commend the laudable efforts of the men and women who banded themselves together for the purifying of the social fabric.

That it needs a cleansing is very evident. Newspapers give very sickening details of every deed of human iniquity, and the stage panders

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