

Brothers.

Four little feet on the fender. On a stormy winter's night. Four little feet on the fender, hard snow, In the cold gray, dawning light, Straying together through summer woods, Out in the storm's memory, Oh, dear and deep were the foot-prints That never will come again!

THE DECAY OF PROTESTANTISM.

By Bishop McQuaid.

CONCLUDED.

But some may say, our numerously attended Sunday schools in cities and towns disprove the theory that Protestantism is decaying through the want of children in the families of church members. Statistics with regard to the New England States demonstrate this theory of few children among church members as an undeniable fact. "Besides the strictly native New Englanders," says Dr. Allen, in the Popular Science Monthly, "there is only one other people or race, where there has been such a natural decrease in numbers—that is, the Sandwich Islanders." This assertion finds its strongest sustenance in the testimony of Mr. J. W. C. Leveridge, for forty years prominent in Sunday-school work, and now Secretary of the Sunday-school Association of New York County. He thus unburdened his mind to a reporter of the New York Times: "They (the churches) never report so many scholars for the church, and so many for camps and missions, but so many in the Sunday-school. The reason for this is plain English, that they are ashamed of themselves. There are lots of these big churches on Broadway and Fifth Avenue, with from eight hundred to fifteen hundred members, who cannot show one hundred Sunday-school scholars. Why is this? you ask. Well I guess rich people have about quit having children. And even middle-class Christians don't seem to do much better. When I was a younger man than I am now, our Sunday-schools were largely made up of the children of church members. Now the children of Christian parents are awfully few and far between."

The Sunshine of Kindness.

All of us need encouragement to do good. We may love God, and love Him with all our hearts, and yet be continually before us. Yet who has not felt how the absence of sympathy tried him, and how all things began to look like insubstantial bubbles because no one encouraged him in his work? Alas, how many noble hearts have broken under this ignoble weariness. How many plans for God's glory have fallen to the ground, which a bright look or a kind eye would have propped up. Either because we were busy with our own work, or because we were jealous and spoke critically, we have not come with this facile succor to the rescue, not so much of our brother, as of our dearest Lord Himself. How many institutions for the comfort of the poor, or the saving of souls, have languished more for want of approbation than of money; and though sympathy is so cheap, the lone priest has struggled on till his solitude and his weariness have almost given way beneath the burden, and the wolves have rushed in upon that little flock of his Master's sheepfold, which he had so lovingly marked off as his own peculiar work. I think I can better face my sins at the last day, than any unkindness, with its miserable fertility of evil consequences. But, if we have no notion of the far-reaching mischief which unkindness does, so neither can we rightly estimate the good which kindness may do. Very often a heart is drooping. It is bending over itself lower and lower. The cloud of sadness thickens. Temptations lie all round, and are multiplying in strength and number every moment. Everything forebodes approaching ruin. That coming sin may be the soul's first step to an irretrievable ruin. Not so much as a kind action, not so much as a kind word, but the mere tone of voice, the mere fixing of the eye, has conveyed sympathy to the poor suffering heart. And all is right again in an instant. The downcast soul has revived under that mere peep of human sunshine, and is now encouraged to do bravely the very thing which in despondency it had almost resolved to leave undone.—Faber.

Fear Not.

All kidney and urinary complaints, especially Bright's Disease, Diabetes and Liver troubles, Hop Bitters will surely and lastingly cure. Cases exactly like your own have been cured in your own neighborhood, and you can find reliable proof at home of what Hop Bitters has and can do. Charles T. Casselman, Druggist of Chesterville, writes to the Proprietors of that Sovereign Tonic, Burdock Blood Bitters, "Your Burdock Blood Bitters give universal satisfaction. All your medicines sell well, and many of my customers will take no other."

of science. The theories of the scientific school have more weight than Bible, church creeds, or theological teachings. The belief loaned to a congregation one Sunday may be taken back the next. Science, in many of its false assumptions, doubts, negations, have led multitudes into the ranks of cultured Agnostics and polished Atheists.

Of late years secret societies, with ministers or chaplains for high-priests, have engulfed many who find in the lodge a substitute for the church. The attractions for men, wanting in the latter, are found in the former; the restrictions are less; there is no troublesome creed; the coveted exclusiveness is obtained. Churches are left for women.

Much more might be said. Let this suffice. It may be asked, Do Catholics rejoice at the evident decline of Protestant sects? If Protestants drew nearer to the one true fold as they forsake their own pastures, Catholics would indeed be glad, and, with happy hearts, give thanks to God, through whom alone such a mercy can come, and welcome them to peace of mind and refreshment of soul. But as the decay of Protestantism is a transition from church organizations that hold some of the great truths of salvation and administer baptism, to the ranks of indifferentism and infidelity, Catholics grieve. The late Rev. Dr. Spring, of the Old Brick Church of New York City, publicly announced his preference for the infidelity of Voltaire over the teaching of Catholicity. His co-religionists are heirs of his preference with a vengeance.

Yet Americans are not infidels of the stamp of the continental European infidels. These glory in their infidelity, and have no shame in blaspheming God, whom they seem to hate. When Americans doubt and deny, they do so with regret. Our "Isob Ingersolls" are not numerous, while the crowd of those willing to pay to hear his revivings of sacred truths is great. Most commendable indeed is the earnestness, the zeal, and the large generosity of many non-Catholic church people in the United States. Catholics believe that their religion, for charity, and the religious education of the wealthy members of their churches. Catholics appreciate the many good words spoken in the past by able non-Catholics, in favor of the inspiration of the Scriptures, of a belief in God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost; in the Incarnation and Redemption, in eternal rewards and punishments, and in other truths. They sincerely regret that, in the impending struggle between Infidelity and Catholicity, their aid shall be wanting; and regret yet more that so many who were once members of Evangelical church organizations shall be seen in the ranks, not of indifferentism, but of open and avowed Atheism.

It is not intended to present in this article a comparison with Catholicity. Whatever falling-off in numbers there may be among members of the Catholic Church in some countries, is accounted for by their neglect to listen to the Church when she condemns secret societies, by the influence of political State oppression, and by the sinking of religious truths when conflicting with national questions. For these losses there are compensating gains in other quarters. In her creed, government, and ministry, she is as strong to-day as ever in the past, though the helping hand of ruling power is greatly weakened, or altogether withdrawn.

SISTERS OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD.

Origin and Object.

CONTINUED FROM LAST WEEK.

Who can read without emotion, this simple narrative of the mercuries of the Saviour to those whom the world despises and rejects? It is but a repetition of the Gospel story; the world represented by the cruel Pharisee despises the poor Magdalen whom His Jesus receives with joy and places near His Virgin, Spotless Mother, for beneath His cross on Calvary, stood Mary His Mother and His Beloved Disciple St. John, both emblems of purity and innocence, but there stood also, the once sinful Mary Magdalen, now so dear to the Heart of Jesus, representing the myriads of sinful souls who were to be rescued by the Precious Blood of Her Divine Master. Philanthropists and well meaning men anxious for the preservation of public morals, in their attempts to blot out that terrible stain on society—the social evil—always imagine when not guided by the true light of the Gospel, that repressive measures, laws, and strict enforcement of laws by the police can put a stop to crime.

From time to time these men, zealous for public morality, convene meetings to take action on this subject, speeches are made, the police are blamed for being lax in their duty, and some one or other is censured, then there is a sudden outburst of zeal in enforcing the law, the dwellings of those unfortunate creatures are invaded, the inmates are scattered, or are brought before the magistrates and sentenced to several months imprisonment. A little while and all that zeal which was like flaming tow, has burned itself out. These wretched creatures return again to their haunts of vice and lead the same lives as before. Why was there no good result, at least no result of any consequence, from this severe action of the authorities? Why? Because the evil was not attacked with the proper weapons. Undoubtedly, but it cannot do all—it can only help. The evil is a moral one, it is the heart that is at fault, and the Holy Scripture tells us "In the hand of God is the heart of man." It is God then, it is religion alone that can reach the heart and heal it; the heart once healed, vice is at an end. We do not try to stop physical evils by moral remedies. When the Mississippi overflows its bank no one ever dreams of using moral suasion to persuade the river to return to its ordinary bed. Why then expect that physical remedies, such as brute force, can put a stop to a moral evil. It may no doubt now and then prevent such a crime but it cannot reach the source and cure the evil at the fountain head, the corrupt heart. Repressive legal measures are certainly most useful, but they must be not only vindictive but medicinal; in other words, while they punish those who thus offend against public morals, the punishment should be such as may lead to the complete reformation of the offender. How can this be done? By enabling these poor unfortunate creatures, many of whom would gladly give up a life, of which they are tired and which they never loved, to find a shelter, a home, where by honest work they may support themselves and not be the objects of hatred to God and of scorn to men which they are at present. Too often, alas! in many monasteries, have the Sisters of the Good Shepherd been obliged to let poor penitents go back into the world, where a thousand dangers awaited their weak hearts, because the funds of the houses being insufficient, there was no means of keeping them in the Asylum. Ought not those whom Divine Providence has called to aid in the government of States—ought they not consider before God, and ask themselves, how can they best prevent crime; how can they put a stop to the fearful deluge of immorality which floods the world at the present day? Were some of those large sums of money now set apart for costly female prisons, and for high salaries to a host of prison officials, devoted to the providing of asylums for these poor creatures, where they might retire when the time of their punishment would be over, or when under certain circumstances they might have the option of going instead of being sent to prison; would not the result be highly beneficial to the nation at large? At least it is an experiment well worth trying, and since private charity, although so restricted, can do so much good, how much more could be done if State aid were to supply what private charity is unequal to.

What a difference there is to those poor fallen women, between the cold walls of a prison cell, which only increases their pain and make them hate the unfeeling world that sent them there, and the plain white-washed walls of the Asylum which speak to their heart, for therein they behold the Crucifix that reminds them of Christ whom they have offended, the image of that Mother in heaven who prays for them though all their relatives on earth have rejected them; the pictures of the Saints who were once sinners as they are, and yet gained heaven by severe penance, as they should strive to do. Even that colored print representing a sheep in the wilderness caught by its wool in some brambles, which pierce and hurt it, while the charitable Good Shepherd who has just found His lost and loved sheep gently disengages it, goes straight to their hearts, those hearts which have passed through so much sorrow, passion, agony and guilt. How it says to them more plainly than words could say, "Come to me all ye who are burdened and heavily laden and I will refresh you."

What a difference, too, between the stern harsh voice of a nation's ruler, No. 25 to be punished severely for some breach of prison discipline and the kind remembrance of the Sister reminding her dear "child," of Jesus Christ who died for her, asking her not to offend Him anew by disobedience? Which of the two will the sooner reach the heart of that poor outcast, for after all the most obstinate person has a heart and there is a way to reach it?

In the Home provided for them, these penitents are never allowed to be idle. There are stated hours in the day for recreation, at other times they work in silence. Occupation of every useful kind is afforded them. Many are engaged in the laundry, drying and ironing rooms, and some in the fields and garden. Others, who have a taste for it are taught plain and fancy sewing; some make gloves; others, artificial flowers; in the Monastery at Ottawa is a printing press; where books

relating to the community are printed; in a word, the number of branches taught depends on the number and talents of the inmates.

Besides the industrial occupations, they have catechetical instructions, spiritual reading in common, from some book suited to their condition; morning and night prayer, the hearing of Holy Mass and the reception of the Sacraments of Penance and the Blessed Eucharist at different times, according to the dispositions of each one. When sick, they receive the utmost care and attention from the Nuns themselves in the infirmary of the Asylum, everything is done to health as speedily as possible. Should there be no prospect of recovery, then the most motherly care is lavished upon them, to make their declining hours happy and to prepare them to meet the Judge of the living and the dead, Jesus Christ whom they offended in years past, but whom they love for a long while loved and served most faithfully. No wonder that their last moments are filled with consolation and heavenly joy, feeling that the time of suffering and trial is over and that the reward is near at hand.

Since the foundation of the Monastery of Ottawa, April 3rd, 1866, four hundred and fifty-five penitents, and two hundred and seventy destitute children in danger of sin, have been received into the Asylum. Nearly all these penitents and children had to be prepared for their First Communion and Confirmation, while twenty-five of these penitents became Magdalen, thirty were respectively married and of the others by far the greater number are doing well. During these years, five Magdalens, eight Penitents and four destitute children were called to their heavenly reward.

Who will say that the Community of the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity has not been called by God to do a noble work of devotedness and has not been singularly blessed in doing it? Who will not pray fervently to God for the poor lost slaves so dear to Him! Where is the heart so hard, as not to be moved to generosity, at the sight of the devotedness of these Nuns of the Good Shepherd and the thought of the many sins prevented by their exertions, aided by the grace of God? Where is the Christian who does not feel, if he give of his worldly goods to help an undertaking so great, so noble, so pleasing to Jesus Christ and His Blessed Mother, that when his last hour comes He will hear the voice of our sweet Saviour in His heart, saying "Come, blessed of my Father, possess the Kingdom prepared for you—for I was hungry, and you gave me to eat; I was thirsty and you gave me to drink; I was homeless and you sheltered me."

"But Lord!"—will that Christian say, "when did I see These hungry and fed thee; thirsty and gave Thee to drink? Or when did I see These homeless and sheltered Thee?"

How sweet! How consoling the answer: "Am I not to you, so long as you did it to one of these my least brethren, you did it unto me." St. Matt. XXV. 34-40.

THE END.

"FORTY BABIES"

HOW THE CHILDREN FROM THE NEW YORK FOUNDLING ASYLUM ARE PLACED IN CATHOLIC HOMES.

From the Detroit Free Press.

At 9 o'clock Tuesday morning the waiting room at the Third street depot was crowded with men and women, who were evidently not going to travel and the depot attendants wondered as to the cause of the event. There were men and women, all seemingly acquainted, yet all looking askance at each other as though suspecting that their several separate errands were to be interfered with by some one in the crowd, though whom was the particular opponent it was hard to tell.

Meanwhile Depot Master Clark had received a telegram as follows: "We have forty children, six from Monroe, six Michigan Central Railroad, and twenty-eight from Detroit."

Then the mystery was greater. The baggage men, gate keepers and all employees came to read the dispatch, and one old man wondered: "What the Michigan Central Railroad wants of six children?"

"One thing is certain," said Depot Master Clark, "the Canada Southern train is too late at St. Thomas, and there are forty children aboard."

The remark was overheard by a benevolent-faced old lady who was "sure the little ones 'll be fearful hungry when they get to Detroit," and in this way it leaked out that those who were waiting at the depot were there to meet children from the New York Foundling and Orphan Asylum, whom they were to adopt.

It was not until noon that the train—three hours late—pulled into the depot, and gate-keepers were helpless. There was no keeping the crowd back, and in less than five minutes a hundred or more men and women were crowded along by the side of a passenger coach, through the windows of which could be seen dozens of bright young faces either comfortably surrounded by tiny blue hoods or looking out from under new felt hats. Presently a rosy-faced, ruddy and decidedly jolly man stepped upon the platform of the car, with a small note-book in his hand, and began calling names.

So far all had been excitement and curiosity. A change began immediately with the calling of the names. Inside were the forty and more children, some busy with their dolls, others hugging a picture-book, yet others with an apple or an orange, trying to eat. They were a bright, merry, yet tired lot. The first epoch in their lives had arrived. Two or three of the boys were perhaps 8 years old, but the others ranged from 3 to 5 years of age. They had been together from birth and were now to separate for life. Knowing no parents and no home, family, they were now to meet strange men and women who were to be fathers and mothers to them; they were to go to homes new to them, and entirely different from any they had ever known; they were to bid each other good-by forever. Did the babies realize their situations?

Answers to such a question were plentiful. The older boys looked around on the smaller ones in a pitying sort of way, and quietly walked through the cars, kissing a baby here and there, yet without speaking words of advice to them; ones practiced good-byes to each other, exchanged dollies, kissed one another, and in many babyish ways proved conclusively that they knew the meaning, young as they were, of the occasion.

Meanwhile the man on the platform, who proved to be Hugh Hughes, agent of the New York Foundling and Orphan Asylum, had gone through with the names in his book, and found that while two or three of the persons who had asked to be given, and promised to adopt, an orphan, were not present, there were on hand others who had not before applied, and who wished a boy or a girl. Mr. Hughes explained that he would call the name of the person who was to adopt with the name of the child to be adopted, and asked that there be no unnecessary excitement and haste.

Then the distribution began, and for over an hour there were scenes enacted of the most touching. Each orphan had a bit of white cotton cloth sewed on his or her outer garment underneath the collar and between the shoulders. On this bit of cloth was written in indelible ink the asylum number—for each child in such institutions is numbered—his name, age, nationality and any other necessary matters of record. It was both curious and sad to see the look of expectancy on the faces of the little ones as some new foster mother or father would enter the car, and as Mr. Hughes' assistants began looking under the collars for the child assigned.

They seemed to be mentally considering the disposition of those who were to take them, and as the distribution went on—the final separations becoming realities—many a curly head settled into the cushioned corner of a car seat, while an occasional sob told the sad story; then the little one last chosen accepted the caresses of its new friend silently, sometimes wondering, and more frequently with a repose and confidence entirely at variance with its age.

It was a study, too, to see the efforts of those who took the children. There was the demonstrative woman who began at once to kiss, fondle and use baby-talk; there was the man who wanted to be tender and make a good first impression, but who couldn't say anything but the plainest kind and many things; there was the careful mother who at once wrapped her charge in shawls and cloaks and things; and of the others, men and women who had every kind of notion as to the care of children, and with various ideas as to the best way in which to win the affections of the little ones at once.

Among others was a lady dressed in the deepest mourning, and her selection was a rosy-faced little girl whose hair fell in a shower of gold over the pretty little blue cape. Whether the choice was because of a resemblance to a baby lost does not matter. The recognition between the baby and her new mother was instantaneous and mutual. Both mother and child cried. The mother took her to her bosom as though afraid death or some other evil agency would steal the treasure, and the baby nestled there as contentedly and contented as though she held the place by the right of birth.

"Now that will be a happy choice," said Mr. Hughes to the representative of the Free Press, who was present, "because they took to each other naturally."

"It seems hard, though, this breaking up of infant associations," said Mr. Hughes, "but it does at first glance, and especially to those that have given the subject no thought."

"Well, isn't it paid?"

"In a measure, yes. But if you will study the subject in all of its phases, I think you will agree it is a noble work and the best system possible."

"How do you make your selections of foster parents?"

"An agent visited Detroit and gave notice that a certain number of orphans for adoption would be brought here. Then that agent received the names of those persons wishing to adopt children. The next step was a careful personal investigation by the agent of all who expressed a wish to adopt children. Their homes, their religious, social and business habits were investigated, and, finally, recommendations are required. Generally these recommendations are from the priests to whose parishes the applicants belong."

"How do you know whether these investigations and recommendations—carefully and honestly made—always result well for the orphans?"

"Bless you, we don't lose sight of a child! Not a child ever leaves our care until it has reached manhood or womanhood. The children are distributed, as you have seen, and we keep a record, a complete accurate record of everything. The parish priests and other persons among the laity keep watch and guard over them. Each orphan has a sub-guardian, so to speak, who assumes the duty of watching its growth."

"But supposing you should find an orphan who has been placed where no proper social or religious influences exist, or where for some other reason the child is not happy?"

"We invariably recall it and care for it until we can find a desirable home for it. We are very seldom called upon to do this, but when we find it necessary we do not hesitate or fail in correcting the evil."

"Hoods, scarfs, ribbons and any fancy articles can be made any color wanted with the Diamond Dyes. All the popular colors."

"ROUGH ON RATS" clears out rats, mice, flies, roaches, bed-bugs, ants, vermin, chipmunks, 15c.

An Important Office.—One of the most important functions of the animal Economy is the depurative action of the Kidneys, if they are obstructed in their work great suffering and dangerous disease ensues, such as Dropsy, Diabetes, Bright's Disease and many other painful affections. Do not suffer from Lame Back and inactive Kidneys, when Burdock Blood Bitters act so promptly upon the Kidneys, Liver, Bowels and all the secretions, and speedily restores health to the afflicted.

HALF HOURS WITH THE SAINTS.

Saint Anastasius.

ONE'S LIFE SHOULD BE CONFORMABLE WITH ONE'S FATHER.—A Persian, named Magunda, of illustrious birth, was serving in the army of Chosroes when this prince took possession of the town of Jerusalem. This event having afforded Magunda an opportunity of becoming acquainted with the Christian religion, he quitted the army forthwith, joined the Christians, and received the sacrament of baptism, taking the name of Anastasius.

After having passed seven years in the monastery at Jerusalem, he thought himself bound to carry to his countrymen the light of the gospel, even at the risk of dying the victim of his zeal. This actually came to pass, for he was seized and taken before the emperor, who, being unable to induce him to apostatize, sentenced him to be strangled. His head having been afterwards struck from the body, the precious relic was brought to Constantinople, thence to Palestine, and finally to Rome, where it actually remains. The martyrdom occurred in the year 628.

MORAL REFLECTION.—How many Christians labour under the deplorable error that faith without works is sufficient for salvation, or who take but small pains to shape their works according to their belief! And yet their very faith condemns them. "Thou believest," says the apostle St. James, "thou dost well; the devils also believe and tremble."—(Jas. 19.)

St. Timothy.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION.—Timothy, the child of a father who was attached to the superstitions of paganism, had the happiness to possess a mother who was a devout Jewess, named Eunice; whose mother again, Loyda, was in like manner a no less pious follower of the same religion; and who both trained him to virtue from his early years. The apostle St. Paul having become acquainted with him while journeying through the towns of Asia Minor, grew attached to him, styling him ever his faithful and well-beloved son. Among the epistles which St. Paul addressed to him, the two which have been preserved breathe throughout the tenderest friendship. St. Paul conferred upon him episcopal ordination, and thought he could not act better by the Church of Ephesus than by intrusting it to the solicitude of a pastor so pious, wise, and zealous. Timothy perished as a martyr while bent on accomplishing a work of benevolence. Wishing to snatch from torments certain unfortunate victims whom the idolaters were about to sacrifice to their false gods, he was himself seized by them, dragged through the streets, and stoned to death, in the year 97.

MORAL REFLECTION.—There is nothing more urgent than to form man to good from his very youth; the whole life very often depends upon the early principles instilled. It is written: "A young man according to his way, even when he is old, will not depart from it."—(Prov. xxii. 8.)

Conversion of St. Paul.

CORRESPONDENCE WITH GRACE.—Saul, accompanied by numerous satellites, was betaking himself to Damascus, there to receive orders to persecute the Christians. A sudden light encompassed him, blinding him and casting him to earth, and a voice from Heaven was heard, "Saul, Saul, wherefore persecutest thou me?" He, answering, said, "Who art thou, Lord?" "I," said the voice, "am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest." "Lord," answered Saul, "what wouldst thou that I do?" "Get thee to Damascus, to a disciple named Ananias, and there learn what thou hast to do." He was led thither by the hand, for Saul had become blind. Ananias, imposing hands upon him, restored him to sight; instructed him in the Christian religion, changing his name to that of Paul, which he was afterwards to render so illustrious. St. Paul forthwith began to preach the Christian religion; being ready to encounter a thousand deaths for the Love of Him whom he had so much persecuted. He encountered death indeed a thousand times, and at length ended his life triumphantly.

MORAL REFLECTION.—May we ever be able to bear a like testimony with the great Apostle. "When God called me, I condescended not to flesh and blood."—(Gal. i. 17.)

The Best Society.

The choice of books rests with ourselves. If we don't desire to be educated from the best society, we must shun bad books—the merely sensational novel, the sentimental rhyme, and the tales of fiction in which there is nothing either wholesome or natural.

In these days there is an increasing growth of this light literature, and worst of all it falls into the hands of the young, who are both quick to receive and apt to retain. This literature spoils the taste and relish for the best kind, and indeed unites those who absorb it for entering into the best society of human beings, so there is also an artificial society of books, in which there is neither nature nor art in the highest sense. The reading of them destroys the faculty of memory, they are so light, yes, light as blistledown that is lifted on the wings of the vine and scattered everywhere, producing thistles everywhere.

The best society of books opens out to us the entire kingdom of thought, and such companionship awakens reverence for the great mind, living and dead, and gives to gleams of blessedness which herald that felicity that never dies.—Emily Faithful.

"In a Decline."

Dr. R. V. PIERCE: Dear Sir—Last fall my daughter was in a decline and everybody thought she was going into the consumption. I got her a bottle of your "Favorite Prescription," and it cured her.

MRS. MARY HINSON.

Montrose, Kan.

The cheapest medicine in use is Dr. Thomas' Electric Oil, because so very little of it is required to effect a cure. For croup, diphtheria, and diseases of the lungs and throat, whether used for bathing the chest or throat, for taking internally, or inhaling, it is a matchless compound.