

THE JESUITS.

Inherited Misunderstanding of the Spirit and History of Their Noble Order.

In the American school of anti-Catholic criticism no pupil can be considered a proficient who has not mastered the special branch of invective against the Society of Jesus. It is a pity that an enlightened country like ours, whose broad spirit generally finds place and favor for everything that professes to aim at the social and moral advancement of our people, should look askance at a body of men whose helpful labors for the good of American citizenship are coeval with the republic itself, but, unfortunately, the shadows of calumny and suspicion which have enveloped the Society of Jesus in European countries, have spread themselves through our more liberal atmosphere of thought, producing in a vast number of minds the gravest doubt and misapprehension regarding the aims of the Society in our land.

It is a singular fact, too, that the historic cloak of patriotism, which has ever masked the enmity of the opponents of the Jesuits in other nations, is likewise the garb assumed by their American adversaries. Love of the republic, resentment of so-called foreign institutions, the protection of American forms and ideas, are the apparent mainstays of hostility in the American anti-Jesuit.

In many cases, doubtless, the patriotic motive, though inimical to the society, is a sincere and honest one. There are two classes of American Jesuit haters. The first and most prominent are men and women of fanatical intellects and narrow hearts, dogmatic in assertion, ill-informed in knowledge, intense in hatred, and reckless in accusation, who convey the impression that antagonism to something, no matter what, is the sole purpose of their existence, as well as their chief hope and source of maintenance. This class, not being susceptible to reason, merits no consideration and receives none from us. The second class, however, comprises American citizens of more generous minds and feelings, of broader sympathies and more liberal opinions, whose lives, training and occupations have been so remote from the opportunity for accurate knowledge of the great forces of Catholicism, that, more by force of circumstance than by malicious intent, they oppose and decry what they in reality do not understand. This class of opponents, knowing only that the Jesuits bear through history the burden of most serious charges, that their preponderance in Europe has been regarded by their enemies as the cause of the political and moral decay of nations, naturally look upon the presence of the society in the United States as a menace to republican institutions and a peril to a high toned moral American citizenship. It is to this widespread, earnest, though unjust, prejudice against the Society of Jesus that this article addresses itself, on the principle that the good in anything is best discovered and developed in the light of the honest, even though mistaken, positions taken against it.

If it were to be stated as a first proposition in the discussion that the Society of Jesus is among the most beneficent of the institutions of the republic, our honest antagonists would at once take exception. American institutions, they would say, are those alone which spring from American soil and embody American ideas, which represent American thought, are controlled by American management, and are directed to the development of American citizenship independent of sect or class. Your Society of Jesus, they would add, even admitting its innocence of all that has been laid to its door, is a foreign institution, introduced here, but not indigenous to the soil, tolerated but not sanctioned, in the republic but not of it, limited in its operations to a certain sect, and hence out of unison with the broad development of American character as a whole.

The limitation of the idea of an American institution contained in this objection is unfair to millions of native and adopted American citizens. In the complex structure of our nationality, any association, whether of native origin or foreign introduction, should be assimilated into the body of our institutions, provided its objects are directed to the physical, intellectual, social or moral benefit of any class of American citizens, whether that class be of restricted or continental extent.

To determine the value or the detriment to the republic of the Society of Jesus along the lines designated, it will be necessary to glance at the republic itself. It is not surprising that many Americans, dazzled by the brilliant surface view of our conditions, our many-sided characteristics, our amazing successes in politics, education and finance, fail to appreciate the underlying necessities of our system or the dangers which threaten its prosperous and perpetual continuance. They are blind to the fact that, side by side with our wonderful march of progress in every material direction, are keeping pace elements of moral, social and political abuse whose preponderance at any time in our history would mean incalculable injury to our institutions if not their utter subversion. So keen an observer of our country as Mr. Bryce has this to say of us in his chapter on our social institutions:—

"Sometimes standing in the midst of a great American city, and watching the throngs of eager figures streaming hither and thither, marking the sharp contrasts of poverty and wealth, an increasing mass of wretchedness, and an increasing display of luxury, knowing that before

long a hundred millions of men will be living between ocean and ocean under this one government—a government their own hands have made—one is startled by the thought of what might befall this huge yet delicate fabric of laws and commerce and social institutions were the foundations it has rested on to crumble away."

Was it not a phase of this same thought which Bishop Keane dwelt upon in his address at Harvard college, when, in discussing the republic's present needs, and the means to be used to perpetuate our institutions, with all their blessing to posterity he dwelt upon the foundations of our stability as a nation in these words:— "The great need of America to-day is the moulding of American character and the guiding of American intellect upon the principles of Christianity, and the great danger for America in the future lies in the possibility that she may be false to the eternal principles bestowed by Christ upon mankind."

Now if the learned prelate's estimate be true, the test of the Society of Jesus as a worthy institution of America will be found in answer to the query contained in his statement, and which may be thus set forth: "Are the Jesuits contributing towards the moulding of American character and the guiding of American intellect upon the principles bestowed by Christ upon mankind?"

It is to be noted that no special plea is here made for the Catholic religion, except in so far as it is one form of Christian faith and Christian principle. In the present view of the Jesuits, limited as it is to the question of their usefulness in the republic, it is necessary to consider them only as they appear upon the broad platform of Christianity, which all other teachers and ministers of Christian truth and practice in the republic occupy.

In this respect, then, contemplate them in their various labors throughout the nation. In almost every large city is their church, in very many their college, in every State are their missionaries active, and in their universities and houses of study are pursued their individual researches and the dissemination of the knowledge acquired, to their students and parishioners.

The first phase of their activity which invites our attention is their devotion to the education of youth. To establish the value of the Jesuits as educators of our youth we have the unchallenged verdict of history as well as the republic's own experience for nearly a hundred years. The Jesuits can afford to answer the aspersions cast upon their influence over youth, by simply pointing to the hundreds of young American citizens graduating from their institutions all over the country year after year, and asking what colleges of similar grade to their own send forth into the duties and affairs of life, young men of higher mental or moral attainments, or more devoted to the best principles of our citizenship.

They have rightly been called the "greatest educators since the revival of learning." At the time of their suppression in Europe, Frederic II., the Protestant king of Prussia, recognizing their invaluable services as teachers, not only refused to carry out the Brief of suppression in his domain, but even invited the proscribed Fathers from France and Italy to provide for the instruction and training of his youth.

The republic may well feel grateful for a system of education which, while forming the mind with knowledge, fortifies the character with deep moral cultivation—a system whose first object is to make its pupils good Christians, its second to make them good scholars—a system which imparts to its subjects all the refinements of the Christian gentleman, as well as the qualities which form the good citizen.

Their second line of effort for the moulding of American character upon the principles of Christianity may be sought in the social organizations of young men attached to many of their parishes throughout the country. According to the maxim of St. Ignatius, that he who guides the youth, directs the destiny of the man, and from mankind's common experience of the potency which intercourse and example have upon the formation of character, some opinion can be formed of the power for good which such associations have upon the minds and lives of their members. United for social intercourse under the direction of men of elevated minds, such as one who knows aught of the Jesuits will deny them to be, and banded for this purpose at a time in the lives of these youths when they are peculiarly susceptible to noble impressions, and more readily imbued with high ambitions and correct principles; it may not truthfully be disputed that the associations prepared over by the Jesuits are direct means for the instilling into American young men of the purest sentiments of duty in their relations to the social and national fabric of which they form a part.

It is, however, in their special capacity as priests, as preachers of Christian faith and inculcators of Christian morality to the people in general, that we must glance for the results of the labors of the Jesuits in the republic. It is true their endeavors, while extending far beyond the limits of their own churches, are mostly centered in a special class, being exercised chiefly among the Catholics of the nation. No valid objection can, however, be raised on this account, since American Catholics are still American citizens. Who that has watched the progress of Catholicism in our country will hesitate to say that its influence is to be a per-

manent and growing one among us? It is intractably planted in those United States, as the religion of nearly 10,000,000 American citizens. It is here, Spain and every other foothold will, and is destined to, remain here to the end of the republic as part of our religious life, asserting itself, not aggressively—God forbid!—but knitting its principles, its standards of human life, and of the obligations of society, its recognition of human duty and responsibility, into the very fibre of our national character. In laboring within the fold of Catholicism, therefore, the Jesuits are contributing a quota of unequivocal assistance towards the preservation of the republic's morality and good citizenship. Reduced to its simplest elements their teaching is this, that the maxims of Christ should be the maxims of a man's every action, the guiding principle of his thought, and the rules for the dealings with his fellow men and his relations to his country. Is not an American citizen, trained by the Jesuit and whose life is a practical illustration of this teaching, a living argument in favor of the Society of Jesus, and the most powerful and most practical refutation of the calumnies against it?

If further proof is wanted of the fitness of the Jesuit as a teacher of Christianity to the people, let his long years of arduous study and pious discipline, of special evidences of vocation and ability required in him as a novice, the natural aptitude of the man—an important consideration in the society—made answer. This society has been called with truth "a vast mechanism for guiding the minds of men, and growing them by the dominion of an idea." And when this mechanism is employed promulgating and exemplifying the power and beauty of Christian faith, education and practice, is not the sacred trust which the nation reposes in all its teachers, perfectly safe, and through its organized forces will not the moral necessities of the nation as far as the influence of Jesuits goes, receive adequate provision?

The lingering objection of the society on account of the charges made against it in European countries in former times, will be swept away by a fair, impartial course of reading. The vindication of the Jesuits from every charge brought against them as a body has been pronounced, over and over again, by the lips and pens of those who have investigated the subject for themselves. Of this statement let a single instance answer the limitations of the present article. Paul Feval, the learned and witty French writer, while yet a virulent enemy of the society, was engaged to write a book against it. In pursuance of his commission he collected all sorts of historical documents in which the connection of the Jesuits with the course of events in Europe was shown, and, giving himself up to their earnest investigation, he perceived the following immortal lines to his publishers:—"I have abandoned my work and burned my manuscripts. After reading your documents I find I have undertaken to calumniate at so much a line, men, not only innocent of all crime, but who are useful citizens, benefactors of mankind, soldiers of science, peaceful conquerors, heroes, saints, whose only fault is having excelled all other bodies of men, in bringing out by the strength of their arms, their sweat, their blood itself, what is perhaps the most astonishing work of the civilization of modern times."

But there remains yet another special reason why the Society of Jesus should be honored and respected by every true American—a reason drawn from American history itself—which shines resplendent from the traditions of the past, and casts a halo upon the labors and aims of the society in the present. If we look backward through the pages of America's story for examples of a great and lofty manhood which shall serve as a stimulus upon our own lives and motives in the present we will find that the grandest deeds recorded in American history were inspired by Jesuitism and performed by Jesuits.

In the murky dawn of our country's existence, long before civilization displaced the savagery of the wilderness, and while all the horrors of barbarism prevailed over the whole continent, there is seen through the frightful glare of the Iroquois death fires, a series of magnificent accomplishments and heroic sufferings, the splendor of which countless ages of time cannot efface. An admirer of the Society of Jesus has declared that Jesuitism is only another name for charity. The sixteen years of American history describing the Jesuit missions among the Hurons, from 1630 to 1650, gloriously prove the truth of the assertion. Where, for instance, can a better example of devotion to duty be found than in the act of the Jesuit Chabanel, who, when his whole nature revolted against the barbarism, filth and hardship of his Huron surroundings, bound himself by a solemn vow to remain among the Indians to teach the salvation of the gospel until his death? Where is there recorded a greater example of heroic perseverance under the most direful suffering than in the career of the Jesuit Jogues, that magnificent figure of missionary zeal and martyrdom, who elicited the most enthusiastic admiration of the historian Parkman? Where have philanthropy and human charity ever been better illustrated than in the lives and deaths of Jesuits Daniel and Garnier, who earned a martyr's palm while administering the consolation of Christianity to dying savages?

Where, in fine, have ever been given more sublime examples of indomitable will, fortitude, and patience than in the deaths of the greatest of the early Jesuits, Breboul and Lallemand, who preached Christianity to their Finnish captors amidst the most hellish tortures ever devised by the cruel instincts of savagism?

Two centuries and a half have passed away since the Jesuits first began their labor for the welfare of America. Honest critics of the society may be assured that the spirit of the Fathers to-day is the same which inspired the grand deeds of their predecessors, their early missionaries. Their labors enter into the progress of the American nation. Impelled by the example, and inspired by the memory of their ancestors in Christ, the American Jesuits of to-day are applying to America's changed conditions and necessities the same spirit of their great founder—the spirit which actuated the heroes of the Huron missions, and which was to teach men, above all things else, "to love their country, their family, and their God"—three branches of human duty, which shall exist for America, as for all other countries, as long as Christianity has vitality and predominance and power to enforce them.

THE IRISH MEMBERS.

NATIONALISTS.  
William Abraham, North-east Cork.  
Michael Austin, West Limerick.  
Edward Blake, South Longford.  
Thomas Condon, East Tipperary.  
Thomas Sexton, North Kerry.  
Michael Davitt (2 seats), Kerry and Mayo.

John Dillon, East Mayo.  
Timothy M. Healy, North Louth.  
Maurice Healy, Cork City.  
Thomas Healy, North Wexford.  
Peter French, South Wexford.  
Alfred Webb, West Waterford.  
Patrick J. Power—East Waterford.  
James F. X. O'Brien, Cork City.  
Andrew Connors, North West Cork.  
James C. Flynn, North Cork.  
James Gilhooly, West Cork.  
Charles K. D. Tanner, Middle Cork.  
Arthur Donelan, East Cork.  
Edward Barry, South Cork.  
Justin McCarthy, North Longford.  
John Pinkerton, Galway City.  
John Roche, East Galway.  
David Sheehy, South Galway.  
William O'Malley, West Galway.  
Denis Kilbride (2 seats), Galway and Kerry.

Major Jameson, West Claire.  
John Finucane, East Limerick.  
Sir Thomas Esmond, West Kerry.  
James O'Connor, West Wicklow.  
—Englewood, South Wicklow.  
—Doogan, East Tyrone.  
James Daly, South Monaghan.  
James Gibney, North Meath.  
Daniel Gibney, North Meath.  
Daniel Ambrose, South Louth.  
Robert Ambrose, West Mayo.  
Daniel Crilly, North Mayo.  
Bernard Colleary, North Sligo.  
Patrick A. McHugh, North Leitrim.  
Jasper Tully, South Leitrim.  
George Murnaghan, Middle Tyrone.  
Edward Vesey Knox (2 seats), Derry and Cavan.

Patrick J. Kennedy, North Kildare.  
James Tuite, North Westmeath.  
Donald Sullivan, South Westmeath.  
Timothy D. Sullivan, West Donegal.  
James S. McNeill, South Donegal.  
Thomas Curran, North Donegal.  
Michael McCarran, South Mayo.  
Samuel Young, East Cavan.  
Daniel McAleese, North Monaghan.  
James Jordan, South Fermanagh.  
Jeremiah F. Mandevill, South Tipperary.

John F. Hogan, West Tipperary.  
Arthur O'Connor, East Donegal.  
Thomas P. O'Connor, Scotland Division, Liverpool.  
Patrick J. O'Brien, North Tipperary.  
John Hammond, Carlow.  
Samuel Morris, South Kilkenny.  
Sergt. Homphill, North Tyrone.  
Eugene Crean, Ossory, Queen's Co.  
M. A. McDonnell, Leix, Queen's Co.  
Joseph F. Fox, Tullamore, King's.  
Bernard C. Molloy, Birr, King's.  
Edward McHugh, South Armagh.

REDMONDITES.  
John E. Redmond, Waterford City.  
William Redmond, East Clare.  
Patrick O'Brien, Kilkenny City.  
Edmund Leamy, North Kilkenny.  
Timothy Harrington, Harbor Division, Dublin.  
James O'Kelly, North Roscommon.  
Luke P. Haxden, South Roscommon.  
William Field, St. Patrick's, Dublin.  
Joseph E. Kenny, College Green, Dublin.  
John J. Clancy, North Dublin.  
John Daly, Limerick City.  
William J. Corbett, East Wicklow.

TORIES.  
W. McCartney, South Antrim.  
R. M. Dane, North Fermanagh.  
C. C. O'Connor, North Antrim.  
Arnold Foster, West Belfast.  
William Kenny, Stephen's Green, Dublin.  
Horace Plunkett, South Dublin.  
Edward Carson, Dublin University.  
David Plunkett, Dublin University.  
I. A. Runtell, East Down.  
Lord Arthur Hill, West Down.  
Col. Waring, North Down.  
Sir Thomas Lea, South Derry.  
John Atkinson, North Derry.  
Sir E. Harland, North Belfast.  
Capt. McCalmont, East Antrim.  
R. T. O'Neill, Middle Antrim.  
G. W. Wolf, East Belfast.  
William Johnston, South Belfast.  
Col. Sanderson, North Armagh.  
The composition of the new Parliament is as follows:

Conservatives ..... 73  
Unionists ..... 38  
Liberals ..... 177

Irish Nationalists ..... 70  
Parliamentaries ..... 12  
Total ..... 670

THE VIRGIN'S RING.

It is Viewed by Cardinal Gibbons in Perugia.

While Cardinal Gibbons was in Perugia he had the privilege of viewing the espousal ring of the Blessed Virgin. The relic is in the Cathedral and is exhibited to the public gaze twice in the year. It is preserved in a safe to which there are fourteen keys which must all be brought together to the opening. These keys are held by fourteen different societies and religious brotherhoods. The Archbishop holds one, the municipality another, the merchants' guild another, and so on. Some of these keys are excellent specimens of the locksmith's art in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. All having been produced here at about 11 o'clock in the morning the shrine was opened in the presence of a notary from the municipality, who made a record of the event, a process verbal as it is termed, and of the cause for which it was opened, namely, the visit of Cardinal Gibbons. This notary remained during the ceremony until this most interesting relic was restored to its original place and closed up again.

The ring of the Madonna hangs from the top of a little temple like shrine formed of four tiny columns supporting a small cupola. Between each pair of columns a seated statue of a prophet wrought in the best style of art adds a marvelous beauty to this very artistic work. The shrine was made in the very best period of Italian renaissance art, close upon the end of the fifteenth century, and is distinguished by the reserved and tasteful application of very excellent ornament.

The ring itself is entirely formed from one piece of Oriental alabaster, and was not intended for constant wear, but was only used as a ceremonial ring. It is remarkable for the beautiful opaline tints it has, which shine from it as it is moved about in the light. The tradition of it goes back to apostolic times. As related to the Cardinal in Perugia, it was given by the Madonna to St. John the Evangelist, who preserved it until his death. After this event it passed into the hands of a Jew, from whom it was obtained by St. Mustiola, who brought it to Chiusi, where she was put to death as a martyr for the Christian faith and became the saintly patroness of the city. Here it remained until 1473, when it was taken away by a Franciscan friar named Fra Winthelus, of Mayence, who brought it to Perugia, where it has since been preserved with great honor and devotion.

In the Canonica—the residence of the cathedral canons—an inscription placed in the wall relates the bringing of this ring to Perugia by Fra Winthelus.

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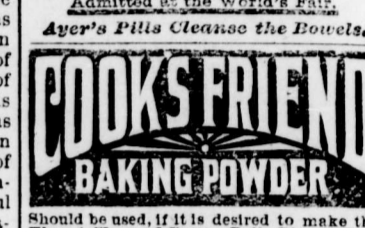


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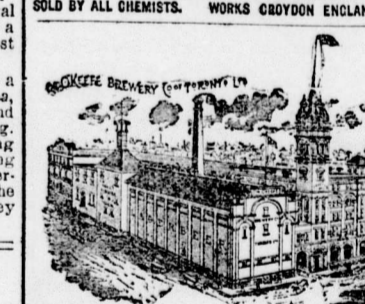
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