

THE TRUTH ABOUT THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

BY A PROTESTANT THEOLOGIAN.

CLIL.

The Presbyterian Church has published a little work of about three hundred and sixty pages, entitled "Fundamental Ideas of the Roman Catholic Church." The author is Professor Frank Hugh Foster, of the Congregational seminary at Oakland, California. I purpose making some remarks on it, but only on such points as appear to me in a light sufficiently different to make it worth while to speak. There may be only a few such points, or there may be more than I now suppose. Foster's competency to write such a work, of course from our Protestant point of view, yet endeavoring after objective accuracy, is beyond dispute. He is more than ordinarily acquainted with German theology, and with that of our language. He has given much attention to Mohler, Perrone, and others. In the little cyclopaedia put out by the Christian Literature Company, the Catholic articles are by Foster, and I at least have not been able to discover even slight inaccuracies in them. Dr. Foster's temper is thoroughly that of a scholar, and this latest work will be far more creditable to the Presbyterian Church than such a passionate, ignorant and blundering book as "Almost a Nun," which has once disgraced herself by publishing.

However, Professor Foster's affirmation, and that of the independent nation, that his purpose and effort are purely objective, must not be taken too precisely. A great Protestant denomination does not publish a book on the Roman Catholic Church for the mere sake of propagating scientific information, like a cyclopaedia. A polemical intention is involved in the very fact. Yet it is much to its credit when it seeks to carry out its polemical intentions only through the channel of so well advised a scholarship.

There is one advantage which can not be given so well by study as by early and long familiarity with Roman Catholics, extended by a more various, though it may be less voluminous, reading in the same direction than, for instance, this gentleman has followed out. This advantage lies in a certain interior sense of Catholic matters, which perhaps I can make a qualified boast of enjoying in a somewhat larger measure than most other Protestants.

It seems a pity that Professor Foster should treat so slightly, almost contemptuously, the belief that Peter lived, taught and died at Rome. How long he was there is of course a question of inferior importance. Foster does not deny that Peter was in Rome, but he treats it as so obscure a fact, if a fact at all, that nothing can be built on it. Now the consent of modern Protestant historical scholarship is decidedly for it. The evidence is indirect, indeed, but it is of cumulative force.

As the great Protestant cyclopaedias of Herzog and Liebenberg show, there is very great force in the single fact that no other ancient Church ever claimed to be the scene of Peter or Paul's closing life, martyrdom and burial. Yet a reasonable pride in being able to point out the grave of an apostle, or apostolic man, above all, of a great apostle, was one of the deepest instincts of human nature, and is abundantly illustrated in the primitive Church. Jerusalem boasted the graves of the two Jameses; Alexandria, that of Mark; Ephesus of the great apostle John; Hierapolis of Philip. Thomas and Bartholomew died beyond the limits of the empire, and tradition marked the fact.

Now, by the 21st of St. John's gospel, which even the critical school at present will not allow to be later, and allows to be probably earlier, than A. D. 110, we perceive that the Church already knew the circumstances, and therefore, the place, of Peter's martyrdom. Now had any other Church than Rome been able to show the great apostle's grave, assuredly she would never have suffered this honor to be taken from her. Yet no Church except that of Rome has ever claimed the tomb of either Peter or Paul. Eminent Protestant scholars, therefore, are well warranted in treating this fact as of itself conclusive that Peter lies buried at Rome.

effigies of Peter and Paul. Many put these in the second century, but Herzog is inclined to assign them to the first. The great archaeologist Kraus remarks that they are executed in that high style of Greek art which flourished under the three Flavian emperors, and then rapidly declined. The presumption therefore is that the princess Flavia Domitilla, or her household, about the year 90, commissioned eminent Greek artists of Rome to cast the effigies of the two apostles, according to the remembrances of still surviving friends of theirs. The portraits are evidently ideal, not strict likenesses, as appears from the fact that the artists have discharged every-thing Jewish from either countenance. Yet they are evidently meant to recall the originals, for Peter's face is of that sturdy plebeian cast which agrees with his origin, while Paul's is of that lofty, philosophic character which is consonant with his writings, and which also agrees with the contemporary description embedded in "Paul and Thecla."

This medallion therefore shows us the affectionate honor in which Peter and Paul were held from the first at Rome as being the two specifically Roman apostles. It was early believed that Paul was acquainted with the philosopher Marcus Annaeus Seneca. It seems improbable, however, that they ever corresponded directly. Yet, as Dr. Peabody remarks in the Andover Review, Seneca is known to have been in the habit of talking with his slaves about religion. We know, from Paul's own testimony, that the gospel spread from his praetorian prison into Nero's palace, from which it naturally spread into the household of Nero's tutor. This easily explains various Pauline phrases of Seneca, which hardly spring out of his Stoical system. We now at length have interesting positive testimony. A freedman of the philosopher's family, at his emancipation has kept the *praenomen* and *nomen* of his patron, but has taken as his own *cognomen* the name of the great apostle who probably brought him to the faith, and calls himself M. Annaeus Paulus. He has a son who dies before his father, and whom he has called M. Annaeus Paulus Petrus. The epitaph, lately dug up in the ancient Christian cemetery at Ostia, runs thus:

M. Annaeus Paulus To the Glorified Spirit Of his Beloved Son M. Annaeus Paulus Petrus.

Here again we see the special honor in which the two Roman apostles were early held at Rome, Peter especially. Indeed, so marked was this, as Christianity spread at Rome, that the pagans themselves soon got in the way of calling their sons Petrus. The distinguished archaeologist, Professor Ramsay, of Aberdeen, informs me that, not having seen the stone, he can not positively assign it a date. It may possibly, he says, be as late as 170, but not improbably be as early as A. D. 100. The earlier date, I should say, seems the more probable, on account of the intimate connection still seen as subsisting between members of the Annaean household and the memories of the two great Roman apostles, a connection which would naturally not very long remain so marked.

These facts alone, in their combined effect, seem enough to give a moral certainty that Peter, no less than Paul, lived, taught, suffered, and is buried at Rome. However, there are other evidences still, which we will consider next week. CHARLES C. STARBUCK, Andover, Mass.

IMITATION OF CHRIST.

Familiar Friendship With Jesus.

Without a friend thou canst not well live; and if Jesus be not thy friend above all, thou wilt be exceedingly sad and desolate. Thou artest, then, foolishly, if thou puttest thy trust or rejoicing in any other. We ought rather to choose to have the whole world against us than to offend Jesus. Of all therefore that are dear to thee let Jesus always be thy special beloved. Let all things be loved for Jesus sake, but Jesus for His own sake. Jesus Christ alone is singularly to be loved, Whom alone is found good and faithful above all friends. For Him and in Him let both friends and enemies be dear to thee; and for all these must thou pray to Him, that I may know and love Him. Neither desire to be singularly praised or beloved; for this belongs to God alone, who hath none like to Him self.

EXTERIOR PRACTICES OF PIETY.

The following is taken from Fr. Grunnewald's Translation of the Spiritual Letters of the Ven. Libermann: It should be our care and occupation to establish the reign of God in our souls and to approach Him with all the love and tenderness and fervor of our hearts. The most efficacious means is certainly the practice of meditation and of interior self denial. We should make it our constant occupation to give up the natural desires and affections of our heart as well as our own will. We should endeavor, just as earnestly, to relinquish all the movements of self love and to acquire true Christian humility. This is the great object that we ought to aim at in all our religious practices, either interior or exterior. The former are always the better. Outward practices are of some value, only so far as make us perfect in our exterior

and lead us to God. We must, therefore, pay particular attention to our interior. If we become aware, later on, that we have no taste for exterior works we need not worry about it.

FIVE-MINUTE SERMON.

Thirteenth Sunday After Pentecost. FORGETTING GOD'S GOODNESS.

"Were not too made clean? Where are the stains?" (St. Luke xvii, 12.)

If our Lord, dear brethren, stood in our midst to day He would not have to confine this rebuke to the nine, but might with justice ask: Where are the ninety-nine; where are all those whom I have made clean; where are those whose sins I have washed away, where are those whose sufferings I have lightened where are they, for there is no one to return thanks?

Good Christians, is there need to remind you to return thanks—you who are now living in His peace and friendship? Alas! that the truth might be told, we are as a whole ungrateful. Not that we mean to be such—God forbid! but we are so taken up with the cares and troubles of this life, so worried about our present needs, so anxious about our future wants, that we forget for the most part to look back, forget to reflect upon all that has been done for us. The little time we do devote to God's service is not spent in thanksgiving, but rather in asking for more than our past ingratitude would warrant us in hoping for.

Assuredly, Christians living in the grace of God, that many of the doubts and difficulties and most of the dryness of soul from which at times we suffer, would utterly vanish if we dealt less niggardly with God, and spent more time in generously thanking Him for all His favors.

But, brethren, there is worse ingratitude than this, and you yourselves are witnesses of it. Remember the times of God's special and extraordinary graces; for example, the time of a mission, when His graces and favors were bestowed most lavishly on the sinners as well as the virtuous. Recall how generously He dealt with many souls of your own acquaintance, even perhaps with some of yourselves; recollect how many were cleansed from this foul leprosy of sin by His holy word and saving sacraments; but where are they all now? Some perhaps have already gone to answer at the judgment seat for their ingratitude; others are still left among us as a parable of the extraordinary patience and long-suffering of a loving God. They are sick, and He still feeds them; they are in trouble, and He still comforts them. Yes, they are even in mortal sin, and from time to time He cleanses them. But, oh! ungrateful Christian, how long is this to last? how long is God to be tempted? It stands to reason, it cannot but have an end. Put it to yourselves, is there any sin or vice you have less patience with than that of ingratitude, of forgetfulness for favors and kindnesses received? No, brethren, there is no vice that so incenses us, no sin find so hard to condone, because it is an abuse of that which is highest and noblest in us our love.

Indeed, brethren, if all of God's creatures owe Him a debt of gratitude, if everything created should praise the Lord, oh! how much more does this obligation fall on you, for we who are children of the faith are His debtors indeed! When our souls are sick even unto death with sin, He is ready to heal them as He did the lepers in to day's Gospel; when weary with the cares of life, He is ready to refresh us; when tempted beyond our strength, He is faithful to us and what does He ask in return? Listen, to day, to His lament and harden not your hearts: "There is no one to return thanks." Be generous, then, henceforth in your thanks to God, for He loves and will reward those who are grateful for all He has done for them.

WHOM WILL THE NEW LAW FIRST STRIKE?

For a certainty the Jesuits will be among the first struck, they and the Assumptionists having been especially aimed at. Every Jesuit community will be disbanded. The Paris one of the Rue de Sevres, with its pretty church will cease, for the moment at any rate, to be an active religious centre. There the Rev. Pere Leroy will no longer give his conferences, upholding in simple and sublime language the hidden meaning of the gospel. There the Rev. Pere Coube will no longer receive visitors in his modest parlor and thence give impetus to different religious movements. But the urs of the Society of Jesus will not, it is believed, all leave France. Some will probably remain scattered and hidden for a time. There is nothing to prevent one here and there from being, for preaching purposes, incorporated in a body of parochial clergy. Though Jesuits are to the front in the present persecution of the Orders and Congregations, obstacles, Marists, and others are under no delusion as to what may await them any minute. The Rev. Pere Thiriet,

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