

A "LIGHT" THAT FAILED.

Another "Ex-Priest" Exposed—
Real Priest to the Rescue.

The unusual spectacle of an alleged "ex-priest" opening a meeting, and a real priest closing it, amid the enthusiasm and plaudits of all present, is, we believe, something unusual in these days; but such an incident occurred last week at the little village of Wren, Ohio, ten miles from Decatur, Indiana. It is just the style of village where such "lecturers" ply their trade. There is only one Catholic in the place, but he was wide awake, and when he saw the flamboyant announcements in dodger form, of "Father Egbert Stephen, a convert from the Catholic Church," and noted the subjects of his lectures, our Catholic friend notified the Decatur Knights of Columbus, who at once took the matter in hand, and called upon their pastor, Rev. H. Theodore Wilken, for advice. Father Wilken consulted Rev. Valentine Lehnard, C. P., of Cincinnati, who was conducting a retreat for the Sisters of St. Mary's school, and who at once signified his desire to meet the alleged ex-priest and answer his charges.

With this end in view, Father Wilken, Father Valentine and Father Eberle of Mishawaka, accompanied by about forty Decatur Catholics, drove over to Wren on Thursday evening, July 14. The lecture took place in the U. B. church, and a large crowd awaited Mr. Stephen's startling disclosures. His subjects were announced in large type as:

"Why I Left the Priesthood and What I Saw Therein."

"A Priest, a Woman, a Confession."

"The Pope in American Politics."

"An Evening Behind High Walls and Barred Doors."

"Hear the Experiences of His Life While in the Monasteries of Rome."

He told the same old story that after many years in the priesthood a Protestant lady gave him a present of a Bible, and he had never read one before, and he became converted. He claimed that John Wilkes Booth, the murderer of Lincoln, was a Catholic and that the murderer of McKinley had been to confession two weeks before he committed the deed, and maintained that the priest in the confessional had incited him to the murderous act.

The fact that three Catholic priests sat just in front of him somewhat disconcerted the "reverend" speaker, and it was thought inspired him to modify some of his statements. When he had concluded, Father Valentine arose and asked permission of the pastor of the church to reply to the statements just made, which permission was very courteously accorded him. He spoke eloquently and at some length, refuting every accusation against the church made by the alleged "Father Egbert," placing the truth in such a plain and effective light that he aroused the warmest enthusiasm among those present. His words, weighted with earnestness and the simple truth, carried conviction to the hearts of his hearers. As the Decatur Daily Democrat expressed it: "He took him up in pieces and so completely answered every accusation that it ended in a Valentine reception, more than anything else. . . . It was a complete vindication of the fact that the fellow is a dishonest rogue and has no moral right to appear on this side of earth championing any cause that on its face appears just. The many Decatur people present enjoyed the one-sided drama and say that Father Valentine fully, fairly and completely put the fellow out of business. Many of those present rushed to the front and shook the hand of the young priest and congratulated him upon the dignified and just tribute he paid to the Christian cause he represented as well as to the manner in which he flayed the pretender who got up the meeting. The pastor of the U. B. church was also quite indignant and expressed himself in no uncertain tones about the deception that had been imposed upon them and caused them to open the doors of their church

to such an impostor. The meeting closed with the benediction by Father Valentine, who by long odds carried away all the honors and was the hero of the hour."

The pastor of the church at once cancelled all future dates with the alleged lecturer, and the unfortunate man was so excited at the exposure that he hurriedly left the church without asking for the money he was to have received for his talk.

It was only another case where the exposer was himself exposed, and where what promised to be an occasion of scandal and obloquy to the Church, was turned to her justification and glorification. So shall the unjust be confounded!

Father Valentine is to be congratulated, also the Knights of Columbus for the sensible manner in which they took the matter in hand.—Catholic Columbian.

FROM OTHER JOURNALS.

It is not generally known that the Jesuits have a college at Oxford, Campion House, named for the young priest of that order, Edward Campion, who suffered martyrdom for the faith under Queen Elizabeth.

A Jesuit scholastic of Campion College was the winner of the prizes for Greek and Latin verse at Oxford, and another Catholic Wilfred Greene won, for the second time the Hertford scholarship.

A pupil of Loyola College of the Jesuits at Baltimore was the winner of a Rhodes scholarship.—Catholic Northwest, (Seattle).

Matthew Arnold, the apostle of a "culture" which differed little from free-thought, had a Catholic brother, Thomas. His cousin, the late Sir Edwin Arnold, a Japanese in morals and religion, had a Catholic brother George Matthew Arnold, the lawyer. Cardinal Newman's brothers, Francis and Charles Robert, became infidels. Thus does the gospel sunder households, as it was predicted.—The Casket.

Scarcely was Judge Parker nominated the other day when, in a sketch of his every-day life, it was stated that on Sundays, when himself and family attend the Episcopalian church, he sees to it that his servants, all of whom are Catholics, are driven to the local Catholic church in a carriage. This goes a long way towards showing the passing of intolerance. Some years ago no politician would let the fact be known that he had Catholic servants.—New World.

The words of admonition to his people by a Roman priest would not be out of place on Protestant pulpits. "I implore you, mothers," he said, "that you exercise constant vigilance as to the resorts which your children frequent for recreation, and as to the companionship they form in these summer months. While we indulge the body and mind in needed recreation, care should be taken that there be no relaxation in morals. Bear in mind that your children have souls to save in this season of pleasure as well as during the rest of the year, and that the dangers to their salvation are greater at this period than at any other. Therefore, I warn you to exercise continued vigilance." — The Lutheran.

A daily newspaper reports that a woman in New York city, who is about to be tried for the murder of a man who is said to have been her paramour, announces that when she is liberated she will turn Catholic and become a nun.

"After all," she is alleged to have said, "the narrow path is the safest. When I am freed I shall devote my time to doing good to those who are in trouble. I shall probably become a nun."

It takes two to make a bargain. Our convent sisterhoods do not admit "soiled doves" among their members. The ex-actress might, if she escapes conviction and shows a willingness to reform, be received as a Magdalen among the proteges of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd. But no one with her record would be taken in as a nun.—Catholic Columbian.

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The Sunday newspaper has taken the place of church attendance with thousands of our separated brethren. It should be held responsible for many empty pews.—Pittsburg Catholic.

When the Archbishop of St. Louis invoked a blessing on the national Democratic convention on Thursday last, he simply recited the "Our Father," blessing himself before and after.—Western Watchman.

A correspondent of the Monitor asks, deprecatingly, what is the use of the Catholic press forever pitching into Protestants? "This is not a new query, by any means," says our esteemed contemporary, "though it is always a very mistaken one. The Catholic press does not 'pitch into' Protestants. There would certainly be no use doing so, even if Christian charity and good manners did not forbid it. What the Catholic press does 'pitch into' is the errors of Protestantism, and Protestant calumination of Catholic teachings and practices. There are enough of these to keep the Catholic press busy twenty-four hours a day every day in the year without going into futile personalities. Our correspondent, like a good many others, confounds criticism of a system with abuse of its adherents. They are two widely different things."

Says the New Zealand Tablet: "The human world keeps moving on, although its pace is slow in spots. It is progression or retrogression; but there is no standing still. At the Reformation a group of Teutonic peoples broke away from the centre of Christian unity. For over three hundred years they have been moving in a little orbit of their own. But they are all veering back, some slowly, some rapidly, towards Catholic practices or principles. The marked increase of a mild sort of ritualism among the Presbyterians, and the recent introduction of surpliced choirs into some American Congregational churches, go to show that there are little Oxford Movements outside the one that rent the Anglican fold."

"The employment of women as composers," notes the Ave Maria, "is not, as many persons suppose, a modern innovation. Within half a century after the invention of printing, nuns were busy setting type at the Ripoli Monastery Press, in Florence."

Says the Michigan Catholic: "The ex-priest 'Ruthven,' has been sent to jail by the Presbyterians of Scotland for embezzlement. This mountebank gulled many Americans out of their money, but he met his Waterloo in the 'canny' Scot."

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