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NEW YEAR'S DAY.

The festival of the Circumcision of our Lord which takes place on New Year's Day was instituted by the Church to commemorate the ceremony of Circumcision to which He was subjected in accordance with the prescription of the Old Law which ordered that male children should be circumcised on the eighth day after birth to signify that they were consecrated to God.

Circumcision was a figure of the sacrament of baptism, which was established by Christ under the New Law as the door by which all persons are to become members of the Church of God. Since the establishment of Christianity baptism has become obligatory and Circumcision has been abolished.

The ceremony of Circumcision was a painful one, as it was performed by a shedding of blood. It was endured by our Lord to teach us subjection to the laws both of the Church and of civil society, though by the terms of the law itself His miraculous birth by a Virgin did not render him subject to it.

The feast of the Circumcision was not established so early as many other feasts, though the mystery thereof was always regarded as important, as it was the first positive suffering endured for us by our Lord in His work of redeeming mankind. It appears that as the Pagans celebrated licentious feasts on or about the beginning of January, the Church justly feared that the holding of a religious festival at the same time would be to some extent an encouragement to Pagan licentiousness, but after the passing away of Pagan observances this reason no longer existed, and the Christian festival began to be observed in the fourth, or at latest, in the fifth century.

On the feast of the Circumcision a new year begins, and the day is celebrated with special rejoicings as "New Year's Day."

Christians should resolve on this beginning of a New Year to lay aside the sinful pleasures in which they may have indulged in the past, and to begin a truly New Year in the service of God. It is only by the hearty service of God that we can deserve the peace which Christ brings to the world by His birth on Christmas day—peace to men of good-will, and secure what we earnestly wish to all our readers and patrons, with many returns.

A HAPPY NEW YEAR.

REV. DR. LANGTRY AND IMAGE WORSHIP.

The controversy between the Rev. Dr. Langtry and a "Catholic Layman" on "image-worship" is still being continued in the columns of the Mail and Empire. It is Dr. Langtry's contention, and he pretends to make the assertion on the authority of St. Thomas, that Catholics "worship images."

It is scarcely needful to say that the rev. doctor is altogether astray in his contention, but by asserting the same thing over and over again he hopes to make ignorant readers believe him, and to this end makes profuse profession of the great learning of himself and his brother ministers.

In the Mail and Empire of the 19th ult. he thus reiterates his false accusation:

A writer signing himself "A. B." writes:

"Is Dr. Langtry so ignorant as to believe at this hour of his life that the worship of images is a doctrine taught or a practice encouraged by the Church of Rome? In answer to this challenge I said that I believed it on the authority of Thomas of Aquinas who says: 'The same reverence should be displayed towards an image of Christ as towards Christ Himself, and seeing that Christ is adored with the adoration of latria it follows that His image is to be adored with the adoration of latria.'"

The rev. doctor is very much at sea respecting this whole matter. He must be aware that this old accusation which he now brings out the grave is a mere calumny, and St. Thomas does not bear him out in it.

The Rev. Father Tracy of Toronto cathedral and "Catholic Layman" have already exposed Dr. Langtry's effort to make the public believe he was quoting St. Thomas from the original, whereas he was only quoting an epitome of no repute, and his quotations were not to be found in St. Thomas' own work. But we pass over this consideration here. The doctrine of the Catholic Church is well-known in regard to images. In the words of the Council of Trent:

"The images of Christ, of the Virgin Mother of God and of the other saints are to be had and retained particularly in churches, and that due honor and veneration are to be given them, not that any divinity or virtue is believed to be in them on account of which they are to be worshipped, or that anything is to be asked of them, or that trust is to be reposed in images, as was of old done by the Gentiles who placed their hopes in idols; but because the honor which is shown is referred to the originals which those images represent, so that through the images which we kiss and adore, we adore Christ, and we venerate the saints whose similitude they bear."

Nothing can be more clear than this. The images remind us of their originals, and we venerate the image by some outward sign, while we adore Christ, or reverence the saint whom the image represents. This is precisely what Protestants do before the image or statue of the Queen, or of some great statesman or general, the only difference being that in the latter case, as the images are of those in civil position, the relative honor paid to them is of civil or secular character, while in the case of the honor paid to the images of Christ and His saints it necessarily partakes of a religious character, because it is directed toward God, or the saints who have been God's special friends and faithful servants. The reverence shown to sacred images is similar to that shown by members of Parliament to the mace, a senseless object, but which is understood to be the emblem of royal authority; hence whenever they pass the table on which it is placed, they are expected to bow reverently toward it.

Is this idolatry? Surely Dr. Langtry will not say that the British laws which made his Church what it is, have obliged all the legislators of the Empire to be idolaters, ever since the "glorious" Reformation of the sixteenth century was accomplished, whereby the people were delivered from the idolatry of Rome of which he complains.

But what are we to say of the words of the great St. Thomas who asserts that latria is the worship shown to the images of Christ? Simply this: St. Thomas was a theologian of very high repute, and in his great Summa he gives his theological views. He is a theologian of the Church, but he is not the infallible authority of the Church itself, and if on any occasion he makes a statement which is contrary to the definitions of the Church, to the Church we must adhere in preference. Nevertheless, we must not say lightly that St. Thomas has made a mistake. He is not in the habit of making mistakes in his theology, and if the passage in question be carefully examined, it will be found that his teaching does not contradict in any way the teaching of the Church as expressed by the Council of Trent in the passage we have already quoted.

St. Thomas says in 2: 2: question 94:

"Neither in the tabernacle of the old law, nor in the temple, nor even now in the Church are images set up, that the worship of latria should be shown to them, but as a kind of reminder (or token—quandam significationem) that through these images faith in the excellence of angels and saints may be impressed and strengthened in the minds of men."

Hence, it is not to the material image that reverence is shown at all, but to the saint or personage represented by it. St. Thomas for this reason makes a distinction between the reverence paid to the image of a saint and to that of Christ. A saint is honored as a creature, and only the honor due to creatures is offered to the saints, but to Christ we give supreme adoration, and therefore this saint and doctor maintains that as it is Christ only whom we honor through His image, we pay the supreme adoration of latria to Him while honoring His image, and therefore that "as Christ is to be adored with the adoration of latria, His image is adored with the same adoration." The meaning is that not the material image is thus adored but Christ Himself of whom the image is a reminder or token. This is explained by St. Thomas himself: "No reverence is due to the image of

Christ as matter, as carved or painted wood; for reverence is due only to rational being." (3: question 25.)

To make this explanation complete, we must add that though this view of the Angelic Doctor is accepted by many, there are some theologians who do not adopt it.

The learned Bossuet said concerning this passage:

"St. Thomas attributes to the cross the worship of latria, which is the highest worship, but he explains himself by saying that it is a relative latria which is the highest only because it is referred to Jesus Christ. Who can blame this sense? Certainly no one; if the expression displeases, it may be set aside, as Father Petau has done without hesitation."

But whether the explanation of St. Thomas be accepted or not, no Catholic has any other thought than to adore Christ alone when kneeling before the representation of His crucifixion.

Another element used by Dr. Langtry for the purpose of creating confusion in the minds of the public is the use of the words adore and worship.

These words have not always meant the honor which is due to God alone, even if we could say that they are now confined to that meaning, which cannot strictly be said. We have in evidence of this the use of the term "Your Worship" in addressing a mayor or a judge, or the rite of solemnization of matrimony in the Church of England wherein the bridegroom is directed to say to the bride: "With this ring I thee wed, and with my body I thee worship."

Is it really the case that Anglican husbands are obliged to worship their wives? Surely not, in the sense of giving them divine honor. Neither do Catholics worship the saints or images of saints, if we are to understand thereby giving them the honor due to God. But we reverence and honor the saints as friends of God and workers of good, in accordance with the word of God which says: "Glory and honor and peace to every one that worketh good." The images of the saints are honored only because they remind us of the saints and their virtues, and no reasoning of Dr. Langtry will convince the world that Catholics worship them, in the sense in which the word worship is commonly, though not always, used.

The image of Christ crucified has been banished indeed from churches and oratories by many Protestant sects, but there are others that retain their use, and Rev. Mr. Langtry's denomination is one of these, as may be seen in many Anglican churches and notably in St. Paul's, London (Eng.), where a recent effort on the part of some of the congregation to drive it out was unsuccessful.

For what purpose was it placed there? Was it that it might be dishonored, or that it should be revered as reminding us of the death of Christ. We presume it was with the latter intention, and that is precisely the purpose for which Catholics use the same emblem. It reminds us of Christ's agony, and teaches us the lesson of resignation to God's will, and of gratitude for the work of our Redemption through the shedding of His blood upon the cross. It matters not so much in which way Catholic theologians explain in what manner we reverence the cross, the fact remains that it is to Christ the reverence is offered which is suggested to us, and made more lively by the vivid teaching of the image of Him who was crucified for us.

DR. TEMPLE AS A RITUALIST.

There is a great commotion among Low Churchmen of England in connection with the appointment of Dr. Temple, the new Archbishop of Canterbury, who is accused of being in the habit of hearing confessions and giving priestly absolution. The troubled Low Churchmen might desire some consolation from the Pope's Bull declaring Anglican orders invalid, for they may thereby rest assured that the Primate's absolutions will be of no avail, as the right and authority to pronounce absolution depend primarily upon the validity of priestly orders such as are to be found in the Catholic Church. The Pope's Bull should be pleasing to Low Churchmen, as it pronounces what they themselves are so fond of asserting, that the Anglican clergy are not Catholic priests with the power of offering sacrifice and giving absolution for sin.

It is only of recent years that Dr. Temple has inclined to High-Churchism, as in former days he was even regarded as Latitudinarian, inasmuch as he contributed one of the articles to the celebrated book "Essays and Reviews" which was issued in order to

propagate Latitudinarianism among the people of England.

Dr. Temple is not the first Anglican Bishop who from being in the first place of Low or Broad Church convictions, has afterward gone into High-Churchism. It would appear that the occupancy of the Episcopal office has a tendency to give the occupant a greater opinion of the office, and thus the Bishops become affected with High-Churchism or Ritualistic beliefs.

The celebrated "Reredos case" will be fresh in the memory of many of our readers, in which Low Church members of Bishop Temple's London congregation attempted to have removed from St. Paul's church a crucifix and a statue of the Blessed Virgin which the Bishop had caused to be erected therein, but the Bishop triumphed by obtaining a decision of the Court in his favor. It appears, therefore, that the Ritualists are not to be easily thwarted in their effort to reintroduce into the Church of England practices which were decidedly rejected by the Reformers of the sixteenth century.

A generation has made a great change in Anglicanism, and there are now more than seven thousand clergymen in England who maintain High Church views, so that in thousands of churches services are conducted which would astonish such thorough-paced Reformers as Cranmer and Jewel, and even Archbishop Laud, who though he was regarded as higher in his ecclesiastical views than most of the clergy of his time, would be wonder stricken to observe that Anglicanism has made so much progress towards the re-adoption of Catholic practices and doctrines within a short time.

Dr. Temple has not as yet had time to announce his intentions regarding the manner in which the Pan Anglican Council is to be conducted in 1897, but we may be sure he will not fall short of the claims made by his predecessor, that he is the successor of the first Archbishop of Canterbury who baptized King Lucius, and that therefore it is peculiarly appropriate that the eighteen hundredth anniversary of the baptism should be celebrated in his cathedral in 1897. But as Fagan was a missionary sent by a Pope, St. Eleutherius, it would be difficult for one who talks of Papal usurpations to sustain the claim. Nevertheless the celebration is to be held. As King Lucius lived and reigned so long ago it is not hard to lay claim to the continuity of the modern Church of England from that date, and some people will be satisfied that the claim is correct, though it is no easy matter to maintain it, in view of the fact that there is plenty of authentic testimony to disprove it.

PRACTICAL RELIGION.

We by no means accuse Protestants of being generally lax in the performance of good works, or corporal works of mercy, which consist in relieving the necessities of the poor and distressed.

There is a natural feeling of sympathy for our neighbors which leads every human being to relieve distress when he meets it; and Protestants, and even infidels, possess this feeling, and act upon it by doing works of mercy. Hence we have houses of industry, hospitals, refuges for orphans and asylums for those who have not their right mind, and Protestants contribute liberally to their maintenance. But it is to be feared that it is often more through merely human motives and sentiment that these good works are done, which should be founded upon the love of God in order to be deserving of a reward in the next life. It must be remarked that the precept of love for our neighbor is subordinated by our Lord to the first great precept of the law, which is "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength." St. Paul also puts us on our guard against imagining that we have done all our duty when we have given our goods to the poor, for he says: "If I should distribute all my goods to feed the poor, and if I should deliver my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing."

This charity which is necessary is the pure and sincere love for God which leads us to the fulfillment of His will in all things. In no other way can we explain why the Apostle tells us that charity is the highest of the virtues which have God for their direct object: "And now there remain Faith, Hope, Charity, these three, but the greater of these is Charity."

On Sunday, the 20th inst., Dr. Talmage, formerly of New York, but now

of Washington, preached on the subject of "Practical Religion," and insisted very strongly on the duty of good works, making a powerful appeal to put religion into practice. There are too many who imagine that all they have to do for God is to go to church on Sunday, whereas during the week they are wholly occupied with the endeavor to make themselves millionaires by any means—swindling, usury, neglect of the poor and distressed, with a total forgetfulness that God should be the end of all our actions. Others give themselves to uncharitable gossip and even hatred of enemies, envy even of those whom they should specially love, tripping and other vices. They imagine that they can settle the matter with God by going to church on Sunday, by subscribing to public collections, or perhaps even by building a church or a hospital, or a school house, or a university, and they delude themselves with the idea that this will lead the Lord to overlook their swindling of the weak, or their other evil habits.

Religion must be practical in order to please God. God must be in view in all our actions, and they must be done for Him, and in obedience to His law.

Dr. Talmage insists strongly on the necessity for good works. He says: "The Roman Catholic Church has been charged with putting too much stress upon good works and not enough upon faith. I charge Protestantism with putting not enough stress upon good works as connected with salvation. Good works will never save a man, but if a man have not good works, he has no real faith and no genuine religion."

It is one of the most curious features of Protestantism that it made war upon good works from its beginning, and belittled them by declaring that they are not at all necessary for salvation; in fact Luther maintained that they are an obstacle. The force of the passage in the Epistle of St. James, part of which Dr. Talmage quoted as his text, was evaded by Luther by his pronouncing the whole epistle to be an "epistle of straw." The passage is: "But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? For as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead."

Individual Protestants were better than their religion, for there was not a Protestant sect which did not adopt the doctrine of Luther concerning good works. Individuals, however, acted upon the Catholic doctrine which requires faith, but also tells us that good works are necessary for salvation. It is to those who do good works that Christ will say on the last day:

"Come ye blessed of my Father, possess the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry, and you gave me to eat; I was thirsty and you gave me to drink; I was a stranger and you took me in."

Our Lord tells us that when we do these things for the poor, we do them to Him. This doing of good, and the avoidance of evil comprise the obligation of practical religion, without which religious professions are but a pretence, and these good works should arise out of a desire to love and serve God by doing His will, and not be performed merely through a natural abhorrence which is felt when we witness the sufferings of others.

HYPNOTISM.

It seems to be an authenticated fact that the hypnotic influence is a reality, and many strange occurrences are the result. It has been asserted that evil-minded hypnotizers have even caused those whom they brought under control to commit murder and other fearful crimes. A curious occurrence in connection with hypnotism has just taken place in New York, if the account given can be relied upon. A hypnotizer, Burton M. Main, of Illinois, compelled a Miss Whitman to marry him a few days ago in Jamestown, N. Y., while she was under hypnotic influence. The young woman, it is said, has no recollection of the marriage, and can hardly believe that it took place, though the evidence is complete regarding the fact. The man is very objectionable to the bride, who was previously engaged to another young man whom it was fully her intention to marry. She is now seeking a divorce from the alleged hypnotizer.

There is a large amount of evidence that hypnotism has been put to much evil use; and young people, especially those are apt to be easily influenced by strong-willed persons, should be on their guard against hypnotizers, and all who endeavor to

put them under hypnotic influence, which is all the more dangerous as the secret of its exercise is still a mystery to the general public.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

D.—The crozier is the pastoral staff used by Bishops in the exercise of solemn Episcopal functions, as the celebration of High Mass and other functions. Abbots are the superiors of religious communities. To some Abbots the right of wearing the mitre, crozier, etc., is given by the Pope, though they are not generally Bishops. These are called Mitred Abbots, their designation being in Canon Law "Abbate de mitra." From this it may be seen that Crosiered Abbots are not a religious order, but the Mitred Abbots using the crozier have sometimes been popularly called "Crosiered Abbots" from the fact that they use the crozier.

SUBSCRIBER.—"Is a man justified in going to whatever church he belongs to, according to his conscience?" There is no doubt that in instituting one Church Christ intended that all should become members of it, for He commands us to "hear the Church." Hence the catechism tells us that all are obliged to belong to the true (Catholic) Church, and none can be saved out of it. Nevertheless it is admitted that those who are in invincible ignorance of the true Church are not guilty of disobedience to the law by not becoming outwardly members of the Catholic Church. Those who by examining the claims of the Catholic Church would be in the way of finding out the truth are not in invincible ignorance and they are not excused for their neglect of the necessary examination. From this it will be seen that some of those who have an erroneous conscience, believing in a false system of religion, are excused from sin on this account because they are in invincible ignorance; but those who are in an ignorance which can be removed by taking the necessary trouble to do so, are not excusable for their neglect.

Here it may be asked how are we to reconcile this with the statement of the Catechism, that out of the true Church there is no salvation. To this we answer that Catholics regard those who are in invincible ignorance, and who really desire to know the truth, and who are willing to embrace it when known, as members of the Catholic Church, if, besides, they are sincerely endeavoring to obey the laws of God. They belong to the soul of the Church, though outwardly they appear to be outside the one fold.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

The Canadian Messenger, the organ of the League of the Sacred Heart, Apostleship of Prayer, has always been a welcome monthly visitor to our sanctum; and we were delighted to note the apparent evidences of its prosperity in the enlarged and otherwise very much improved appearance of its initial number for 1897. Success to The Messenger!

WHILE so much clamor is being raised whenever the least defect of management is discovered in any Catholic school, it is interesting to observe that the Protestant schools are not so free of defect that they may fairly claim to be a model for all the schools of the Dominion. The Protestant School Board of Montreal have found it necessary to administer a public reprimand to one of its teachers who had invented a novel mode of punishing pupils in kind for the faults they committed against discipline. A boy who was found with tobacco in his possession in the school room was compelled to drink water in which some of the tobacco had been steeped, and was sickened by the potion. The punishment by public rebuke was certainly not over severe.

It is very confidently expressed by the partisan and anti-Catholic press that the Manitoba school question is once for all removed from the arena of Federal politics, and the recent election of Mr. Snetsinger, the Liberal candidate for Cornwall and Stormont, over Mr. Leitch, is approvingly spoken of as an evidence that this Catholic constituency is in favor of Mr. Laurier's settlement. Experience should show that Catholics will not be satisfied with a system which only allows a few schools to be established, which shall be nominally under Catholic control, where an average of twenty-five Catholic children can be maintained, which will be in localities where there are at least fifty Catholic children. What the Catholics of Manitoba want is schools