

AMERICAN MESSENGER SACRED HEART. LEAGUE OF THE SACRED HEART. General Intention for March 1902. ADORATION OF THE CROSS.

The priest who celebrates the divine office, unveils the symbol of salvation portion by portion, intoning the verse: *Behold the wood of the Cross!* The assistant clergy sing aloud: *On which hung the Saviour of the world;* and choir and people kneel, responding, *Come let us adore.* After repeating this three times, the priest places the Cross on a cushion before the altar; the clergy remove their shoes to worship the Cross, each kneeling three times before kissing it. During the Adoration the choir sings *Pange lingua*, repetition after every stanza:

*Faithful Cross above all others,
One and only noble Tree,
None in foliage, none in blossom,
None in fruit thy peer may be;
Sweetest wood and sweetest iron,
Sweetest weight in human form.*

The laity follow the clergy in this solemn act of worship, and all day long the Cross rests upon the altar, the sole object of our worship, crowds flocking to the sanctuary rail to kiss it with deepest reverence. This ceremony is called the Adoration of the Cross and it has been part of the public worship of the Church since, early in the fourth century, the Empress Helena discovered the true Cross. This relic of the Passion was at first solemnly venerated in this way each year in Jerusalem only, and vast numbers of pilgrims went thither to take part in the service. Later, portions of the sacred relic were sent to various churches in other parts of the world, so that the same ceremony might be repeated, and now it is universal, even where there is no relic of the true cross, since the homage paid to the Cross is really intended for Christ, who, by lying on the Cross, has wrought our salvation.

From the very beginning of Christianity the Cross has been an object of special veneration. The Apostles esteemed it above everything in the world. "O precious Cross!" cried St. Andrew in his martyrdom, "which the members of My Lord have made so goodly, how long have I desired thee! how warmly have I loved thee! how constantly have I sought thee! . . . How wonderful art thou, O Cross! O Cross, how lovely art! O Cross, thy bright beams enlighten the darkness of the whole world." St. Paul gloried in nothing save in the Cross of Christ, and in Him crucified, deemed himself to know nothing but Christ on the Cross. Although the faithful whom they formed after Christ, did not consider it prudent to worship publicly a symbol which would excite the Jews, and even seem to justify the contempt of pagans for their faith, they cherished it in their private devotions and appealed to it as the distinctive emblem of a Christian. Long before Constantine had it graven on the *labarum*, they had represented it in forms disguised to the uninitiated, by an anchor, by the mast and yard of a vessel, or the apparently chance arrangement of the branches of a tree, by the Greek letters gamma and chi, the first in the name of Christ. Before they could paint or carve it for public veneration, they signified themselves with it "at every act, at every step," as St. Jerome remarks, and in imitation of our Lord in His Passion, according to Tertullian, they stretched out their arms in the form of a Cross. The longer they were forced to venerate it secretly, the more rapidly they multiplied its images when indulgence permitted, so much so that the worship of it soon became the dominant note of Christian piety elsewhere. "Nothing so much adorns an imperial crown," St. Chrysostom observed, "as the Cross, the most precious thing in the world. What all one time feared is now in images sought by all and it is also found everywhere, with prince and peasant, men and women, spouse and virgin, slave and freeman. They all make this sign frequently on the forehead as if stamping it on the head of the column. It shines from our altars, at the ordination of our priests, at the consecration of the body of Christ offered at the mystic supper. It is visible everywhere, in the home and in the forum, in unfrequented places, by the roadside, in the mountains, in the valley and on the hill, at sea, on our ships and on our islands, on our tables, on our clothes, and on our armor, over the marriage couch, at our banquets, on vases of gold and silver and pearl, on our walls, on our distempered animals, on the bodies of the oppressed, in war, in peace, day and night, even among our bands of dancers and troops of jugglers—so universally have all come to seek this great gift and its ineffable grace."

It was natural that men who had lived in daily expectation of martyrdom should, on witnessing the triumph of the Church over paganism, have used the chief Christian symbol as a sign of triumph. "It behooved Christ to suffer and so enter into His glory," meant for them glory among men as well as in heaven. Gradually, the more they penetrated into the mystery of the Cross and the more they came to feel the need of it as a memorial of Christ's Passion against the seductions of the world, they added to the emblem the figure of Him Who had consecrated it by His Death. Not that crucifixes were unknown among Christians before they used and venerated them publicly; on the contrary, although archeologists have as yet found no trace of them, they presume that they were used in the Catacombs, and the presumption is sustained by the discovery of a caricature of the crucifix on the walls of the palace of the Caesars dated by Dr. Rossi about the time of Severus, A. D. 197-215. The crucifix has been venerated publicly since early in the sixth century, and its worship is identified with that of the Cross.

Instinctively Christian piety endeavors to reproduce the image of Christ on the Cross, which is, to quote the words of St. Augustine, His pulpit as teacher, His altar as victim, His throne as king. "If I be lifted up from the earth, I shall draw all men after me." He is our complete model only when

mounted upon the cross. Under this image we venerate Him in our homes, schools and churches, in our wayside shrines and woodland oratories, in our cemeteries. Everywhere, in distant missions and in Catholic countries, in the public squares and buildings, Christ is represented in painting or sculpture dying on the Cross for our salvation; and everywhere, save in places in Italy and France, in which a diabolical hatred for Christianity seems to possess its enemies, the Crucifix is in honor even among those who are not of our faith. The chivalry it inspired into the hearts of the Crusaders and their services to Christendom make all generous hearts cherish it with affection; art and the masterpieces of the greatest artists, Perugino, Durer, Raphael, Angelo, recommend it to all in whom aesthetic tastes beget respect for true religious sentiment. The eloquence of masters like Chrysostom, Augustine, Leo the Great, Bossuet and Bourdaloue, fills even carnal minds with awe for this sign; ritualism and the craving of the human heart for vivid memorials of its belief and highest aspirations have restored the image of the Crucified to honor where once it was held in execration.

When we reflect upon the fascination with which the Crucifix attracts all religious souls, we are not surprised at the marvelous stories of the bending and speaking crucifixes narrated in the lives of St. John Gualbert, St. Camillus of Lellis, St. Bridget of Sweden, St. Catharine of Ricci, St. Collette and many others. When we recall the intense devotion to this sacred image of St. Francis and his first followers among the Franciscans, we do not wonder that rays darting from the wounds of the Figure thereon, should impress on him the stigmata or marks of the wounds our Lord received in His passion. St. Vincent Ferrer called it his bible; St. Thomas Aquinas, the book from which he derived all his wisdom; St. Thomas of Villanova, the inspiration of his eloquence; St. Canute cast his kingly crown at the feet of Christ crucified, faint that he and his people might together be the subjects of Him Who is the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords.

A proper spirit of veneration for the Crucifix would enable us to find in it a clue to the mysteries of our faith. From it Christ proclaims as from His pulpit the power, the wisdom, the justice, the mercy of God the Father; the weakness, the folly, the malice and the indifference of men. The true nature of sin, the false standards of this world, the only true alleviation of its miseries, the solid hope for the future, all appear in their true light as we gaze upon the figure of Christ crucified.

He is raised aloft on this altar of propitiation, the one Mediator between heaven and earth, a victim whose sacrifice is of infinite value, more than sufficient to atone for our sins, a Priest whose dignity enhances His offering and imparts merit even to our imperfect services. He reigns from the tree, as was prophesied of Him, from the tree of life, the life of hope, which He imparts to everyone who gazes on Him reverently, the life of love, by which He draws all things to Himself. His reign is one of power—power to inspire the wicked with fear, to animate the just with a holy courage.

"Dear beloved brethren," said the eloquent Pope Leo I, "when we gaze upon Christ lifted up upon the Cross, the eyes of our mind see more than that which appeared before the wicked, unto whom it was said through Moses: 'And thy life shall hang in doubt before thee, and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have none assurance of thy life.' (Deut. xxviii. 66.) They saw in the crucified Lord nothing but the work of their own wickedness, and 'feared greatly.' (Matt. xxviii. 54), not with that faith which giveth earnest of life by justification, but with that whereby the evil conscience is tortured. But our understanding is enlightened by the spirit of truth, and with pure and open hearts we see the glory of the Cross shining over heaven and earth, and discern by inward glance what the Lord meant when His passion was nigh at hand and He said: 'Now is the judgment of this world, now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all things unto Me.'"

"Oh how wonderful is the power of the Cross! Oh how unutterable is the glory of the Passion, wherein standeth the Lord's judgment seat, and the judgment of this world, and the might of the Crucified! Lord! Then hast drawn all things unto Thee! 'Thou didst spread out Thine Hands all the day unto an unbelieving and gainsaying people' (Isa. lxxv. 2), but the world hath felt and craved Thy Majesty! Lord! Thou hast drawn all things unto Thee! All the elements gave one wild cry of horror at the iniquity of the Jews; the lights of the firmament were darkened, day turned into night, earth quaked with strange tremblings, and all God's work refused to serve the guilty. Lord! Thou hast drawn all things unto Thee! The veil of the Temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom, the Holy of Holies denied itself as a sanctuary for the ministration of unworthy priests, the shadow might be changed for the substance, prophecy for realization and the Law for the Gospel.

"Lord! Thou hast drawn all things unto Thee! That which was veiled under types and shadows in the one Jewish Temple, is hailed by the love of all peoples in full and open worship. There is now a higher order of Levites, a more honorable rank of elders, a priesthood with an holier anointing. Thy Cross is a well of blessing for all, and a cause for thanksgiving for all. Thereby for them that believe in Thee, weakness is turned into strength, shame into glory, and death into life. The changing ordinance of divers carnal sacrifices is gone; the one oblation of Thy Body and Blood filleth them all. For thou art the Very Pascal Lamb, which takest away the sins of the world, and art in Thyself all offerings finished. And even as thou art the One Sacrifice, which takest the place of all sacrifices,

so may Thy Kingdom be one Kingdom established over all peoples." It is this power, this kingdom which vainly striving to destroy by banishing the Crucifix from strongholds which have been consecrated to it by the piety of ages, from the school, the asylum, the hospital and even from the cemetery. Fancy the impiety which but a few months ago prompted the civil hospital committee of Toulon, in France, to remove the Crucifixes from the sick rooms because they collected dust which might retain germs of disease! A pagan spirit is endeavoring to encroach on the domain of the Crucifix. If it cannot be buried out of sight, other models and solutions must be recommended for the misery and discontent of the poor and of those who bear the burden of labor. Poverty is a disgrace, labor an injustice, suffering a wrong and an indignity: the Cross is a superstition, a delusion, a folly; it is in the way; it has served its time; men can now live their way, their own fortunes in this life.

In contrast with this impious spirit is the spirit of reverence with which the Church summons us to worship the sign of our Redemption. What can equal the tenderness, the elevation, the exuberance, the triumph, the confidence of her tributes of veneration to the Crucifix! "Hail, O Cross! Brighter than the stars! Thy name is honorable on earth!" To the eyes of men thou art exceeding lovely! Holy thou art among all things that are earthly! Thy ransom made the one worthy balance wherein the price of the world was weighed." Confidently she asks "that by the ransom which Thou didst pay upon that tree at life we may finally unite life eternal." Triumphantly she sings:

*The Royal Banners forward go;
The Cross shines forth in mystic glow,
Where Life for sinners' death is sure,
And life by death for man procured.*

*O Tree of Beauty! Tree of Light!
O Tree with Royal Purple dight!
Erect whose triumphal breast
These holy limbs should find their rest.*

*O Crown, our only reliance, hail!
Thou holy Fastidious, avail
To give fresh merit to the Saint
And pardon to the sinner.*

KEEPING LENT IN THE RIGHT SPIRIT.

The object recommended by Pope Leo XIII. to the world-wide Apostleship of Prayer, for the month of February, in the midst of which Lent begins, is, apostolically, "The Benefits of Penance." It will encourage the weakest the better to meet the grim necessity of penance, by looking on to its results—a gain in Christian self-mastery, peace of conscience and treasure for Heaven by works of self-denial done in the grace of God.

Christ commanded penance; the Church systematized the performance of the command—knowing human frailty in otherwise evading the disagreeable—into Lent and the lesser penitential seasons. And Lent brings the distinctive mandate of fasting with exhortations to increased prayer and almsgiving. The much mitigated Lenten fast of the present day is surely not beyond the strength of the healthy adult in the leisurely classes, or in the ranks of comparatively light labor. But these privileged people are a comparatively small portion of the Church Militant in America. The greater number of men toilers and all the women toilers are included among "those whose duties are of a very laborious and exhausting character," who have a right to avail themselves of all the dispensations which the Holy See has granted in their especial interest.

But even these must fast—for fasting includes more forms of self-deprivation than diminished food. The day-laborer, the machinist, nay, in many instances the overworked professional man, the ordinary teacher, equally with the mill operative or the salesgirl all day on her feet in a vitiated atmosphere and at nerve-wearing tasks, clearly cannot diminish the quantity of their food; but they may fast from some delicacy; or take their less relished abstinence food with a good grace; or forego the theatre, more friendly visiting, novels, etc., and thus, in a very real manner, do penance.

And if they give the money saved by this abstinence to works of charity, they will be still more in conformity with the mind of the Church in Lent. That piety may be suspected which abstains from expensive pleasures in Lent, but hoards the money with a view to greater self-indulgence or some costly vanity at another time.

Again, even though our means are small, we can practice penance in conjunction with charity—and to the great enlargement of our minds and hearts besides—by giving a little of our leisure to visiting the very poor in their miserable abodes, or the sick poor in hospitals, relieving their necessities by some personal effort, or giving them the alms of kind words and sympathy in their sorrows.

Or, we can combine penance with the highest act of worship by sacrificing an hour of our sleep that we may attend daily Mass in Lent. "Fasting is good," says Holy Writ, "with prayer and alms deeds." If we leave the offices of the Church and can make time for all the extra devotions of Lent, we can hardly claim to be "doing penance" by going to them. But, if, honest with ourselves before God, we have to admit that these devotions fatigue us, and if, further, we resign what is easier and pleasanter to go to them, we need not fear for our sincerity.

It is shameful to see well-to-do Catholics at the theatre in Lent, while poor, weary working-girls crowd the churches at the special devotions. It is cowardly of these same favored children of fortune to evade the wholesome penance of personal ministrations to the afflicted by giving an extra, hardly missed money-offering. Penance implies a tangible pain, a real deprivation. Not for priests and nuns alone, but for all Christians, the words of Christ: "The Kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence and the violent bear it away."—Boston Pilot.

MEETING THE LIBERALS.

The Catholic Standard and Times tells of an excellent work this winter begun in Philadelphia by a number of Catholic ladies of that city. Every Friday evening some capable priest or layman is invited to meet the leaders of the various "liberal" societies of Philadelphia, who also come on invitation, at the residence of one priest or layman, to deliver a short address on some vital religious topic, after which he is subjected to a "quiz" on the subject discussed. So far the meetings have been addressed by Father Wm. Padow, S.J., Father Raphael O'Connell, S.J., and Father Ransom, S. J. The meetings themselves were originated by Mrs. Mary H. Elwell, of that city. Mrs. Elwell herself is a woman with a history. She is an artist and a very intellectual woman. Until quite recently she was one of the foremost leaders of the local radical movement, and could be heard upon the platform in every "free thought" society in the city. After attending some of the lectures delivered by Father Siegfried at the Catholic Historical Society last year she began to investigate into the truths of Holy Mother Church, with the results that on November 1 (All Saints' Day) she was received into the Catholic Church. Every Sunday afternoon she delivers a stereoscopic lecture to the Italian children connected with the Church of Our Lady of Good Counsel, of which Father Canino, O. S. A., is rector. Subjoined is a very condensed account of a recent meeting attended by the Standard and Times.

"Mrs. Elwell asked her hearers to approach the subject of the Catholic Church with a constructive rather than a destructive frame of mind and not to consider it always from an unfavorable attitude; to look for its good points rather than for what they consider its bad points. They must also recognize the difficulty that a clergyman or any other person may have in speaking to twenty persons of widely divergent views with any hope of making himself understood, especially when there may not be a single point of agreement existing as a basis to begin on. She spoke of such a one being in the position of a photographer taking a group picture. No shifting of the camera will bring the group into focus. He must take hold of each person and pose him until all are brought into focus; but we liberals object to being brought into focus. Our minds are as sensitized plates which have received horrible impressions regarding the Catholic Church from sermons and books, and our convictions are such that we are largely out of focus. Men often think they are opposed to the essence of a statement when they are only opposed to the wording of it.

"An ethical culturist said that the ethics of the Catholic Church and her altruism are highly commendable, but the same facts prove the truth of agnosticism. This speaker forgot that what he would be hard to find an agnostic charitable institution, and when found would be a mere selfish monument or a poor imitation of a Christian establishment. An evolutionist said that man at first was not a reasonable being, and when he became so he looked around for the cause of existence and hit upon a Creator as the solution. Then the speaker laid down the proposition that the further away we get from a cause the better we understand it. That is not exactly what he said, but he claimed that we are learning more about creation than Adam did or whoever takes Adam's place in the evolutionist's theory, perhaps a jelly-fish. He was met and overthrown.

"The agnostic of Lutheran parentage said that he could not believe in miracles. He was asked if he had not stated that the world is self-created; if so, he believed in a more stupendous miracle than any Catholic is called upon to accept. "The conversation then became informal, and groups gathered here and there. One young man, a Catholic, had cornered an agnostic who had said that we all should do what is right and was closely pressing him to the inevitable point of necessity of a standard of opinion would not do, because by it agnosticism is condemned, for mankind generally believes in a Supreme Being. The necessity of law in nature, in morals, and in society was pointed out. "One of the most intelligent of the agnostics was stating that he liked to impress his views on others and have them see things as he does, when one of the Catholics told him he was inconsistent, as he was acting under the philosophy of the Catholic Church and logically contrary to that of free thinkers.

"How is that?" he asked. "Well, you like the man who is starting an agnostic Sunday-School. You do not deny God. You merely say you do not know. Therefore you are incompetent to teach. Again, you say all men should be free to think for themselves, yet you wish to impress your views on others. Let them alone and they will be free thinkers so far as you are concerned, but as soon as you influence their thoughts they are not free. The Catholic Church, on the contrary, claims to be the authoritative teacher of mankind in faith and morals, hence she is consistent in endeavoring to impress her views on others. But you, who claim that you don't know and can't know and that all men are free to think for themselves, have, according to your own statement, neither the knowledge nor the right to instruct others.

"Well, I guess I had better let up, hadn't I?" remarked the agnostic. "This closed the evening. It can be seen at a glance that a great and necessary work is being done. It shows that Catholics are not afraid to grapple with the most dangerous foes of the age. The Telegraph submits that some such movement is vitally needed here in Cincinnati. This city is the very hotbed of liberalism and ecstercism, and no doubt, their representatives would be willing to discuss vital topics. Of Catholic priests and laymen certainly we have many capable. Here is something for our Catholic women to do," Catholic Telegraph.

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS.

Address by Bishop Byrne.

Syracuse Sun, Feb. 7.

At the Institution of a Council of the Knights of Columbus at Nashville, Tenn., recently, Bishop Byrne, delivered an address, a part of which we reproduce below: "These are the two ideals which your founder had in his mind: To form an association of gentlemen and of Catholics. And what a supreme ideal is that of a Catholic gentleman—one who respects himself, who is faithful to his fellowmen, who is loyal to his Church and God. If the State had only such citizens there would be no anarchy taught in our land and no assassin to lift hand against the representative of the might and majesty of a free people.

"This ideal of a Catholic gentleman possessed the mind of your founder, it haunted his memory, it filled his imagination. He became the knight of this dominant, this imperious ideal. It filled him with enthusiasm; it made him eloquent of speech and strong of will; he became its panegyrist and evangelist. He preached to others what he felt so deeply himself; he filled them with his own thoughts; he won them to his cause; he formed them into a body as earnest, as zealous as himself, and with them he launched this society into being, and it was borne onward and upward. All it stands to-day for is the ideal of a Catholic gentleman in the world. Its very advance, its growth, its popularity, its hold upon the best Catholics of the land are evidence of its need and of the craving it supplies. In a few years it has gathered into its fold a membership of close upon 100,000, and these the flower of the Catholic gentlemen of this republic.

But its very success is its danger. There is an arrogance in strength and numbers, and a temptation to be imperious, and self-sufficient. Just as humility is from above, so is pride from below; and as the former is our safeguard, so is the latter our rock of shipwreck. The only true expression of humility is obedience, and this will be your anchor of hope. The underlying principle of your society is obedience, prompt and unconditional, to the voice of the Church, and in this lies your future security. This should be, as I am confident it is, and will be, your most sensitive point—it is your point of honor, and the more deeply you fix it in the minds of your members the more stable, the more enduring, the more glorious will be your history and the greater your efficiency for good. There have been organizations in the Church in the past, the glory of whose achievements is written on every page of history. They yielded to the temptations of power and the seductions of wealth; they lost the spirit of their founders and rose in their pride against the Church; they were smitten with the blight of death, and those of them that survive are either a mockery of what they once were, or the malignant enemies of the mother who bore and nursed them. What has happened once may happen again, and the only guarantee against this is an humble temple and an obedient will. And no virtues better become a knight, for all brave men are humble.

"And next to obedience to the Church as a guiding principle of your society should be an unshaken fidelity and an unswerving adherence to the principles of your founder and to his memory. You should know his life and his work. He should be an abiding presence among you. His portrait should hang on your walls and look down upon your proceedings, and you should turn to those features for guidance and inspiration. Those features will tell you that there was nothing dearer to his heart than the salvation of your souls and the interests of the Church, that his soul was aflame for every good work for the honor of God's house, for the souls of innocent children for their Christian education, for Catholic schools and their proper maintenance, for the good name of Catholics, for the care of the poor and the orphan.

"Sir knights, are not these works to which you can give your heart and put your hand? And above all to our Catholic schools, which are menaced on every side. The knights of old were the protectors of the helpless and the defenders of the innocent. And who so helpless and innocent as little children, and what service can you do them so important to them or so prized of God as to teach them to know and love their Maker? Let no man talk to me about the zeal for the Church, and last of all one bearing the proud name of Catholic knight, if he has not the zeal for Christian education of little children, whether they be his own or not. They are at least Christ's, and he is a knight of Christ, who said: 'Suffer little children to come to me.' I cannot conceive that any knight would fail to send his children to Catholic schools; and if he should, he is unworthy of the name he bears. No, this should be a test of his Catholicity, and anyone failing in this test should not be honored by so glorious a title as Catholic knight is not a common Christian warrior; he is or should be the very flower of the militia of Christ.

So, sir knights, how many glorious works lie before you! It is all well enough to have dress parades and speeches and invitations and banquets, but in heaven's name let not your work stop here. Frederick Ozanam, after his conversion, was taunted by his friends with the rebuke that after all, though he was a Catholic, he was doing nothing to forward the interests of his Church or to give practical, tangible evidence of her spirit of charity. Stung by the sneer, he and a few other young men, into whom he had infused his spirit, set to work; and the result is that world-wide organization known as the conference of St. Vincent de Paul, which has brought sunshine to so many homes and dried so many eyes.

To be full of goodness, full of cheerfulness, full of sympathy, full of helpfulness, causes a man to carry blessings of which he himself is as unconscious as a lamp is of its own shining.

TWO VICIMS OF FORTUNE, TELLERS.

Lela Bragg, a young girl of respectable family in Cleveland, O., a niece of General E. S. Bragg, of Wisconsin, was induced a short time ago to have her fortune told by a gypsy. The girl said something to offend the fortune teller, who retorted with a curse: "Within ten days," she said, "you will be murdered. Your doom is sealed."

The foolish girl went home and began to brood on the prediction, of whose fulfillment she evidently had no doubt. On the third day, February 14, with her mind probably unbalanced by the haunting terror, she ended her life with a dose of carbolic acid.

About the same time, Belle Hanna, a young girl of Philadelphia, became violently insane, as the result of her visit to a fortune-teller. The latter prophesied bad luck to her client, telling her specifically that she would be poisoned. Miss Hanna is now in Cooper Hospital, Camden, N. J., among the violent cases.

Here are two recent and well-attested instances of the mischief done by clairvoyants and the like dangerous humbugs, who thrive on the superstition of weak minds. But what of the hundreds of cases of minds impaired, lives blighted and homes broken up, as a result of superstitious practices, which never come to the light of print?

It has often been noted that the decline of positive religious faith in any time or place is usually accompanied by an increase of superstitions. The truth is, that, rebel as they may against the doctrine of personal immortality and its corollaries of future rewards and punishments, men cannot stifle in their hearts the conviction expressed of old, even by the Pagan—"Not all of me shall die."

When men cast off the dogmas and discipline of religion, whose aim and end is to secure the happy immortality of the believer, they do not cast off the desire to pry into the future, to hold intercourse with those who have passed the gates of death.

And so, outside the Catholic Church, we find the slim attendance at the meeting-house balanced by the crowds at the Spiritist seance.—Boston Pilot.

TRIAL OF THE ZEITGEIST.

The spirit of the age is attracting the attention of all thoughtful people. Beyond question the hour is one of terrible unfaith. Not even ancient Arianism, disastrous and unproductive as it was, appears to have resulted in such menacing conditions as obtain at present. In a recent lecture at Philadelphia Father Owen Hill, S. J. declared: "Outside of the Catholic Church faith in the Divinity of Christ is worn to a shadow. In many quarters it is fast growing a mere matter of taste, having long since ceased to be reckoned a moral obligation. The so-called erudition of our time is against its adoption, and pulpits in what men call churches become on Sunday platforms for the advocacy of infidelity. And Jesus is jealous of His divinity. Rob Him of this prerogative, and the apple of His eye is hurt. Unsettled this stone in the edifice of religion, and the whole structure falls, to bury offenders in ruin and desolation."

"What fate is in store for the open and avowed enemies of Christ; for the demons of war, who go wrong not from frailty, but from malice? Monsters of this sort darken the fair face of God's lovely universe. "There is abroad in our land an army of unscrupulous and unprincipled abettors of evil, whose fondest dream is the destruction of God's Kingdom on earth. They are employing, with a pernicious activity, every engine of war at their disposal. The suffrage, the schools, literature, education—everything—is diverted their foul uses. Sweet charity is being turned to hellish account; organization is being perfected to drag God from His throne at the head of the Universe, and the Child Jesus, at rest in the arms of Simon, contemplates, as from a judgment-seat, the fall and destruction of His persecutors.

"Even here, at our very doors, the Child Jesus is set for the fall and resurrection of many. The decay of faith is as open a menace to religion as the growth of anarchy is a declaration of war against government. Men are dashing their lives out against the rock of unbelief, and the Child in Whom they refuse to acknowledge God is set for their fall, and as irrevocably set as He was for the Scribes and Pharisees of old Jerusalem.

God sometimes withdraws from the soul all His sweetness and consolations without depriving it of grace.

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