

## THE TRUE WITNESS

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## HIGH SCHOOL HISTORY.

In continuing our examination of the text books which Catholic children must read, if they frequent undenominational public schools, we find ourselves at that eventful period from 1558 to 1603, during which the notorious Queen Elizabeth held the sceptre of England. To quote at any length from the works we are examining would require far more space than we can afford; but it would never do to pass over that very much misrepresented and exceedingly eventful epoch.

Take chapter XV, beginning at page 134; it opens with the remark of Elizabeth on receiving the news of her succession to the throne: "It is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes." A most hypocritical remark and a poor parody upon the sublime response of the Most Holy Virgin when she declared herself the "handmaid of the Lord." In giving her character the author treats the students to the following piece of nonsense: "As a woman Elizabeth had many and great faults; (which are glossed over as skilfully as possible); as a queen we can scarcely admire her too much. She could truly say at the end of her reign, 'I have ever used to set the last judgment day before mine eyes and so to rule as I shall have to answer before a higher judge, to whose judgment seat I do appeal that never thought was cherished in my heart that tended not to my people's good.'" After speaking of her love of popularity and fondness for gaiety, dress and coquetry, we are told that "Elizabeth was not a mere vain coquette. She had a deep sense of her duty as a queen, and the wisdom to choose good councillors; while she often saw more clearly what was for her people's good than they did themselves." Then comes an account of the religious struggles on the continent (page 135), in which all the odium is cast on the shoulders of the Catholic Church and all the sufferings and glory become the share of her enemies. "Henry II. of France was struggling to put down his Protestant subjects, the Huguenots, and Philip was burning heretics in Spain. \* \* \* Now the Netherlands had become staunch Protestants, and were already beginning to grow restless under the rule of Philip II. and the Inquisition."

"Elizabeth was careful not to press the lower clergy too hard, (page 136). No notice was taken of those who neglected to come and take the oath of supremacy, and in many places the parish priest went on holding Mass in his house for the Roman Catholics, while he used the English service in the church. Mathew Parker, a learned and prudent man, was made Archbishop of Canterbury, and for a time Elizabeth avoided religious disputes such as were going on abroad." Everyone who knows aught of Catholicity is aware that what is here related about the priest "holding Mass" in his own house and reading heretical prayers in public, is a lie pure and simple. It requires but a very elementary knowledge of the Catholic religion to show the ut-

ter nonsense of these so called facts. Speaking of Scotland, on the same page, we find the following—without comment or explanation:—"Stern and earnest by nature, the Scotch went farther than the English, and became followers of the great teacher, John Calvin, of Geneva;" and again,—"Many of the monasteries had become corrupt, and the nobles were jealous of the wealth and power of the Church." Throughout the whole history we find that minor key of "corrupt monasteries," "immoral monks," "murderous priests," and "wicked nuns," played upon by the avowedly impartial author. What effect these unjustifiable and unqualified statements must have upon young pupils can be readily imagined.

Let us go to page 142. "But still the Roman Catholics were restless," and so would any other body of individuals be under the laws enacted against them and with the sword of Democles constantly suspended above their heads: "and the next year, 1570, Pope Pius V. excommunicated (and properly so) Elizabeth, and absolved her subjects from their allegiance. Parliament, in return, made more stringent laws against Roman Catholics, and the Pope, angry that his 'Bull of Excommunication' had so little effect, made use of a banker named Redolfi, to revive the plan of Mary's marriage with Norfolk, and to plot with Spain, to dethrone Elizabeth." This is certainly bad and silly enough, coming from an evidently sane man and pretended historian. But he adds the villainess of baseless insinuation when he hints at the Pope's favoring assassination. "A man was found in Madrid who agreed to assassinate the Queen."

From this we are requested to jump right into an account of the famous massacre of St. Bartholomew. Here the Catholic party receives no quarter. There is not perhaps in the history of the world an event that has been more fearfully misstated and on account of which more baseless accusations have been hurled at the adherents of a faith, than that of the 24th August, 1572. Of course this is not the time nor place to expose the vile manner in which facts have been distorted in order to cast the odium of that sad event upon the heads of innocent people; but it furnished the Protestants a grand "peg whereon to hang an argument," and they have used it "for all it was worth." Here is how the High School History tells of the massacre: "The French King's mother, Catharine de Medici, and the Roman Catholic dukes, the Guises, fearing that the Huguenots were growing too strong, excited the mob in Paris against them." After this partly exact and principally inexact statement, we are told that a hundred thousand Huguenots were killed. Yet we will show, in the near future, in a special article upon this subject, that scarcely eight thousand victims could be counted in all France. "This terrible triumph of the Roman Catholics" is given as the cause of Elizabeth's determination to side with the Protestants against the Catholics. In the first place, it was no more a Catholic triumph than would the massacre of Catholic missionaries, by a band of savages, be a Protestant triumph; and in the second place, long before that event occurred, Elizabeth had so sided with the Protestants and had so persecuted the Catholics that her excommunication was already stale.

Let us just reverse the medal for a moment. How does the historian explain and justify the murderers of Catholic priests during the twenty years following 1576? Truly in all that period of time were the wolves and the priests equally hunted down and slaughtered. Yet the children are told of

these facts in a mild way and with the following explanations, excuses and justifications. We quote from page 144, sec. 10. "For some time past a number of young English Roman Catholics had been in training at Douai, in France, on purpose to be sent as missionaries to England. These men firmly believed that the salvation of the country depended on bringing the people back under the Pope's authority. (We don't see the awful crime in entertaining such a reasonable belief.) In 1576 they began to travel secretly over the land, holding services and distributing tracts against the Queen, inciting men to rebellion. The Government became seriously alarmed; the priests were taken prisoners wherever they were found, and during the next twenty years a large number were put to death. (Of course this is explained to the children as quite justifiable on account of their supposed rebellious conduct.) But their work bore its fruit. In 1583 a plot was discovered, headed by a Roman Catholic, Francis Throgmorton, to murder Elizabeth and put Mary on the throne, and it was clear that the Spanish ambassador knew of it. Throgmorton was executed, and the leading men of England, now thoroughly afraid of harm to their Queen, formed an association, in which they pledged themselves, with the consent of Parliament, 'to pursue to the death any one plotting against the Queen, as well as any person in whose behalf they plotted.'"

How very innocent all this seems! The italics are in the text. What a nice excuse for the organization of a regular band of murderers, protected by the law in their unlimited right to persecute Catholics. We can well imagine how a good Protestant teacher would comment upon these perverted statements, and the influence such teaching would have upon the young Catholic student. But we must close this article, as it is growing somewhat lengthy, but before bidding farewell to "Good Queen Bess," we must not omit her exclamation (page 146) on hearing of the defeat of the Spanish Armada. The historian tells us that the pious (?) Queen exclaimed, "Afflavit Deus, et dissipati sunt," "God breathed and they were scattered." The old hypocrite seems to have had a weakness for Scriptural texts, especially when she could by any twisting apply them to herself or her actions.

We have said sufficient to give an idea of the prejudice against the Catholic faith that is observable in these text-books. However, we have not yet done with them. In another issue we will refer to the History of Canada as taught in the High Schools. In order not to lose sight of the object in view, we will repeat that one of the greatest objections Catholics have to undenominational schools is in the fact that their children are trained in an atmosphere that is dangerous to their faith. It is alive with germs of anti-Catholic prejudices, and the young and easily impressed and affected minds absorb these poisonous seeds; the result is simply a deadly moral plague that is not only contagious but mortal. Although a child is never asked to join in Protestant prayers, nor in the expounding of the Scriptures, nor yet in the religious instructions given, still the confidence, respect, and love for the Faith are wiped out by slow degrees, and indifference, irreligion, and final anti-Catholic prejudices are the result. We propose to prove that these public schools are a public menace to the rising generation.

It is a very significant fact that 99 per cent. of delegates to the Catholic Congress bore Irish names. It was the most distictively Irish body that ever sat outside of College Green. Irishmen are moving—Home Rule is coming.

## EVIL RESORTS.

Our readers are all aware of the immense amount of good that has been done by the Catholic Sailors' Club, the splendid concerts given, the amusements, literature, and other accommodations furnished for the benefit of the sea-farers. Nothing more praiseworthy, nothing more deserving of encouragement. But while the members of the Club are doing their utmost to draw the sailors away from low and vile resorts, there are two of these dens of wickedness right under the windows of the club room, and the crimps attached to these so-called hotels are using every means in their power to entice the "jolly tars" into the meshes of their employers. Leaving aside any question of doubtful morality, there is an atmosphere of crime and bad whiskey about these places that is sufficient to bring a plague upon a whole country.

To be more precise we refer to the gin-shop, dancing-room style of houses to be found in the vicinity of the docks. It may, or may not, be true, but we are informed that steps had been taken to close up these hot beds of iniquity; but the people of the west end thought that their existence would keep the worst class of sailors from going up town for recreation. If this be the reason why these places are allowed to continue as they are, and their inmates—male and female—to ply their traffic, we say that it is a miserable subterfuge and unworthy of any Christian community. Only the other day a poor victim was kicked senseless on the open street, in front of one of these houses, and publicly robbed. The hour was noon, and not a guardian of the peace was to be found within ten minutes walk of the locality. A member of the Catholic Club was badly beaten there not long since; but as the sailors have a respect for the Club and its members, the miscreant who did the deed had to leave the city to escape punishment at the hands of the angry seamen.

Here is the general method of procedure in such houses. One of the hangers-on goes up to a sailor and asks him to change a five dollar bill. The bill has been given for this purpose to the fellow. The sailor generally pulls out his money, and if he has a sufficiently large roll he is treated, brought into the long-room and finally comes out minus his money. Once his hard-earned wages are transferred to the yawning coffers of the rendezvous, he is beaten, kicked out on the street and sent adrift without any redress. This is of weekly occurrence, and yet the authorities are aware of it, and the police manage to keep religiously away from the scene. At about seven in the evening the long-room—half theatre, half beer garden—with its little tables and its miserable stage, is flung open. The sailors flock in and the waiters are kept busy bringing in the liquor. A paid employee makes a certain amount of discord upon a badly beaten piano; a sailor gets up and sings a song; another dauces a jig; loud applause from the tables; more drinks called for. All this time the man with the most money is spotted. About eleven o'clock that man is drunker than anyone else around him. The fun goes on; the room is suffocating from tobacco smoke, and blue with oaths and obscene language; a virago moves about with arms akimbo and a face like the harvest moon; a signal is given; a fight begins; the lights all go out; the man with the most money comes out with empty pockets and a battered head. When all is over the police turn up and they order the lights to be re-lit; no arrests are made; it was too dark to see anyone. For fifteen years, and almost every night, during navigation season, this has been going on. We ask the authorities if they are ignorant of all this, or, if aware of it, why there is no stop put to such open violation of the laws?