

OUR ROMAN LETTER.

Special Correspondence of the "True Witness."

Rome, May 28.—On Friday, the 26th of May, Rome celebrated the Feast of one of its Apostles, St. Philip Neri. For the city of Rome it is a feast of obligation. Every Church here celebrated the day with becoming solemnity, whilst in the Chiesa Nuova or New Church, where the Saint's body reposes, the ceremonies were magnificent. All day Friday the people crowded the Church and the adjoining convent, where St. Philip lived the last days of his life, and where many of his relics are still preserved and venerated. From early dawn until noon-day, a small bell was rung every ten minutes to announce the beginning of a low Mass at some altar in the spacious church. At 10.30 a.m. a Pontifical High Mass was chanted. It was celebrated by a Bishop, but formerly and until the infamous year 1870, the Pope used to assist at this Mass. It was then that Rome beheld His Holiness coming to St. Philip's Feast amidst an indescribable display of grandeur. But, alas! those days are no more and the children who saw Pius IX assist for the last time at St. Philip's Feast are now well advanced in years. However the presence of the Sovereign Pontiff could not have increased the numbers that crowded the church last Friday, especially in the afternoon, when the Saint's panegyric was delivered by a Franciscan Father. After the sermon Solemn Vespers were chanted. The singers occupied two choir galleries on either side of the main altar. Each choir had its own organ. Professor Capocci of St. John Lateran, was director and from an elevated position in one gallery his movements could be easily followed by the choir on the opposite side of the sanctuary. At times, the two choirs alternated with each other in singing the verses, then again the two organs and two choirs would join together in magnificent choruses. The rendition of Capocci's Laudate capped the climax. This piece of music composed by the late Prof. Capocci, is sung by a tenor and a choir of boys. The tenor begins by inviting the children to praise the Lord. "Praise, ye children, the Lord, praise the name of the Lord." (Ps. 112). The choir of boys, with charming melody, begin the praises: "Blessed be the name of the Lord, etc." As soon as the children hear the word praise, they continue, like little cherubins. Last Friday a thrill ran through the vast congregation when the two organs and two choirs broke in on the children's voices and repeated the Amen fully fifteen times. Such sublime and religious music has not been heard in Rome since Father Perosi played his Alleluia at the end of his oratorio "Resurrection of Christ."

St. Philip's Feast was also celebrated at St. Jerome's Church. Here the Saint lived for thirty years. From the steps of the convent adjoining this church, St. Philip, as K. E. C. says in The Boston Pilot, used to bless the English college students as they went by on the road to their University. Last Friday, many of

the students from that college said their Masses in the rooms sanctified by Philip's presence.

Philip Neri was born in Florence in 1515 and died in Rome in 1595. In the course of his long and saintly career, he was the friend of children, of the poor and the sick. St. Ignatius and St. Charles Borromeo esteemed him very highly. St. Philip founded the Fathers of the Oratory, who have given to the Church such holy and learned men as Newman Manning and Faber. Cardinal Newman pays this great tribute to his illustrious Father:

"Let the world flaunt her glories, each glittering prize, Though tempting to others, is naught in my eyes; A child of St. Philip, my master and guide, I would live as he lived, and would die as he died."

The Council of the South American Bishops was opened this morning in Rome at the South American College Chapel. There were about fifty-five Bishops present. Father Perosi conducted the music at the High Mass, which inaugurated the Council. It is presided over by a Papal Legate, Cardinal Di Pietro.

There, on the same side of the Tiber as Leo XIII., the South American Hierarchy has gathered together, almost within the shade of St. Peter's dome, to adopt measures for the greater sanctification of their distant flocks. The selection of Rome for the holding of this very important Council was a token of filial devotion to His Holiness, who had granted their Lordships permission to assemble in council wherever they would wish. The Bishops turned their eyes immediately towards the Eternal City.

Yesterday the Catholic Church in North America received a large number of young priests from the ordinations at St. John Lateran. Archbishop Stonor officiated and raised about fifty-five students to Holy Priesthood. There were also very many candidates for the other major orders. The Basilien was magnificently decorated with the red damask. The musical portions of the High Mass were rendered by the full Lateran Choir.

Among the newly ordained priests were Rev. Father Connelly, Charlotetown, P.E.I., and Rev. Father MacPherson, of Antigonish, N.S. Father Connelly said his first Mass this morning at eight o'clock in St. Aloysius' Room.

Mgr. Tornassi, Internuncio at The Hague, who withdrew from the latter city in order not to embarrass the diplomacy of the Conference of Peace, has arrived in Rome and resumed his residence, for a while, at the Canadian College. His Excellency is still in the prime of manhood. He is conversant with the English language, which knowledge, he says, was imparted to him by the Rev. Dr. McNally, of Ottawa.

—F. D. H.

LUTHER'S MORALS.

The "Ave Maria" has always some very interesting and instructive selections from current literature, and invariably, accompanies them with most appropriate comments. The following, concerning Luther, is a good sample.

"Hard things were said of Martin Luther by Protestants themselves on the occasion of the celebration of his quartocentenary. The most scholarly journal in England, we remember, spoke of him as a monster, and referred to his reformation as a myth. The Rev. Martin has not stood the test of historical investigation; and now there are many unprejudiced non-Catholics who see in the Father of Protestantism only an ex-priest, of uncommon ability, it is true, but one having all the vices common to his kind. The Rev. Charles C. Starbuck, writing in the Sacred Heart Review, in reply to Dr. Sheldon, of Boston University, says that neither purity

nor scrupulousness nor veracity was part of Luther's character: "In his conflict with Rome he deliberately emancipated himself from all obligations of morality. . . . To talk of moral strictness in any direction, but above all in what concerns the relations of the sexes, as being any part of his character, seems to be setting up an altogether fictitious Luther. . . . To talk about moral rectitude or moral obliquity, however, in connection with him, seems a good deal inquiring into the moral rectitude or obliquity of a typhoon or an earthquake."

"All this indicates an extraordinary change of opinion in regard to the great religious leader of the sixteenth century. Of course only educated and unprejudiced men like Dr. Starbuck are as yet willing to admit the an altogether fictitious Luther has been set up; but it will not be long before the whole world will know the reverend reformer as a man who sadly needed reformation himself.

CATHOLIC READING CIRCLE AND STUDY CLUB BUREAU.

Youngstown, O., June, 1899.—Executive officers of Reading Circles, Study Clubs, Literary Societies, Libraries and University Extension centres, are requested to report under the following heads a detailed account of their organization, system, and general results, so that some defensive knowledge may be had of the scope, aim, strength, character and importance of the Catholic edu-

cational movement outside of schools and colleges, etc.

Such a report, we are satisfied will reflect most favorably on the zeal, earnestness and intelligence of our Catholic people in their efforts to attain a higher status of intellectual culture. The report will also be a great satisfaction to those now engaged in the work and an inspiration

and a guide for many to affiliate with the movement.

We respectfully urge that the report be forwarded to the Catholic Reading Circle Bureau, Youngstown, Ohio and that uniform sheets of foolscap paper be used, and written on one side of the sheet only.

As great labor will be required in tabulating the reports and preparing them for publication, it is earnestly requested that every Reading Circle, Study Club, or other definite Catholic Literary Society co-operate with us, by responding in the manner and within the time indicated.

As time and means will make it impossible for us to make repeated requests for this information, we trust that this first will be sufficient.

City.
Name of Club or Circle.
Year organized.
Time of beginning season's work.
Time of closing season's work.
Meetings: Number, frequency.
Total number of papers.
Total number of readings.
Subjects of study, with number of meetings devoted to each.
Books used.
Members: Men, Women.
Average attendance: Men, Women.
Number of vols. in library: Reference, Circulating.
Fees.
Officers, (with addresses), President, Secretary, Director.
Lectures: Number. Subjects. Lecturers.
If Circle or Club is not in existence, when was it discontinued.
Remarks.
Note—Where exact information cannot be given, make an approximate statement, and place a question mark (?) after it.
Past officers and members of disbanded Circles are requested to give information under as many heads as possible, and state the year in which the Circle disbanded.

WARREN E. MOSHER,
Secretary.

THE HIGHER CRITICISM OF THE AGE.

The press of the world, in magazines, in journals, in pamphlets and in books, has of late been busy scattering information abroad regarding what has become known as "Higher Criticism." This term "higher" would at once indicate a species of criticism that surpasses, or that is more elevated than, or that is newer than the ordinary and universally recognized criticism in the domain of letters. The use of this term is almost an assumption that all other criticism is of an inferior grade. In regard to this important question—important on account of the noise it is now making, but not on account of any intrinsic worth in itself—it may be well for all Catholics to have an exact idea of what the Pope's mind is in connection therewith.

Before quoting the exact words of Leo XIII., we will cite a passage from the pen of a learned Jesuit, Father Conway. Speaking of this so-called "higher criticism," that erudite and careful writer says:

"There is higher criticism for which the Pope has the highest possible appreciation. It is the broad criticism that is based, not on gratuitous assumptions, arbitrary rules and philological subtleties, but on thorough knowledge of philosophy and dogmatic theology, on familiarity with the original languages of the Scriptures and of the cognate idioms, on history, ethnology, archaeology, and profound scientific research. To this kind of higher criticism his Holiness exhorts the scripturist and the student of the sacred sciences generally. But for the so-called "higher criticism" of the age, which is based only on grammatical subtleties, philological hair-splitting and historic surmises, the Pope has no use."

Now, here are the well-weighted words of the Holy Father, himself, in regard to this subject:

"Without reason, and to the detriment of religion, has been introduced an artifice called by the specious name of 'higher criticism,' according to which the origin, genuineness and authority of each book are wont to be decided from so-called intrinsic reasons. On the contrary, it is manifest that in questions of a historical nature, such as that of the origin and the preservation of the sacred books, the evidences of history are paramount, and are to be carefully explored and examined, that, on the other hand, those intrinsic reasons are not of such weight that they should be brought to bear on the matter, except as subsidiary evidence. Else great inconveniences are certain to follow, for the enemy shall then gain greater confidence in attacking and discrediting the authenticity of the sacred books. That which is called higher criticism will eventually lead to this, that each one will follow his own whims and prejudices in the interpretation of the Scriptures. Hence no light will be thrown on Holy Writ, no benefit will accrue to science, but that wide diversity of opinion which is the index of error will prevail, as the leaders of this novel science give ample evidence.

Moreover, since most of its advocates are imbued with the doctrine of false philosophy and rationalism, they will not shrink from eliminating from the books prophecies, miracles, and whatever else there is of a supernatural character."

This passage, alone, might serve as texts for a score of articles, or even a score of sermons. We will not comment any further upon it; but, in leaving it for the consideration of our readers, we are merely placing before them that which will constitute the basis of many future articles that we purpose writing. In fact, whenever the "True Witness" speaks or pronounces upon, refers to or "criticises" the "higher critics" of the hour, each of its arguments may be traced to the above inexhaustible source.

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PROVINCE OF QUEBEC,
DISTRICT OF MONTREAL,
No. 1007.

Dame Helen Kiseock Lloyd, wife common as to property of Horace Benjamin Lambie, of the City and District of Montreal, Plaintiff, vs. the said Horace Benjamin Lambie, of the same place, Defendant.

An action in separation of property has been instituted in this cause.

Montreal, 27th April, 1899.

J. SMITH, MARKEY & MONTGOMERY,
15 St. James Street, MONTREAL,
Attorneys for Plaintiff.

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PROVINCE OF QUEBEC,
DISTRICT OF MONTREAL,
No. 1110.

SUPERIOR COURT.

Dame Sarah Trudel, wife of Philias Monette, of the City and District of Montreal, Plaintiff, vs. the said Philias Monette, Defendant.

An action for separation of property has been instituted in this cause.

Montreal, 16th May, 1899.

BRAUDIN, CARDINAL,
LORANGER & ST. GERMAIN,
46-5 St. James Street,
Attorneys for Plaintiff.

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Montreal, 31st May, 1899. 47-5



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