

The True Witness

And Catholic Chronicle
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MONTREAL, DECEMBER 28, 1905.

1906.

Standing on the threshold of a new year, our feeling is not entirely joyous; for as we experience sorrow at parting with an old friend, who has shared our joys, helped us to bear our sorrows, and encouraged us to surmount seemingly invincible obstacles, so, too, do we hesitate at the border line of the years and turn to catch a parting glimpse of 1905 ere it disappears forever from our view. New hopes are pointed out, new joys are promised; but all this cannot compensate for what we possessed at the beginning of 1905.

In the natural order of things, the old is rapidly replaced by the new, and no matter how tightly we clasp our dearest one to us, how we cherish fond hopes, all must pass away, the friend into the dark valley, the hopes be dispelled by the bitterest disappointment. But we will look out and beyond the horizon to which Hope is pointing, and we will see that it will be only in the strength of our might that we are going to accomplish what the future has for us to do. We can pray as well as we can work; and with the strong armor of prayer what foe can attack our stronghold, what enemy can steal upon us unawares. Therein alone will be found the secret of a happy, peaceful year; therein alone will we be able to dispel the darkness which is sure to envelop us from time to time, for the bright effulgent rays coming down in answer to our earnest supplication will illumine our way, will serve as a beacon to guide us along the path of righteousness direct to the great white throne. Good wishes and greetings are heard on every hand, the season is overflowing with cheer, and we heartily extend to our subscribers and to all those who have expressed pleasure experienced in reading our columns, our best wishes for a blessed year.

ARCHBISHOP'S PASTORAL.

Elsewhere in this issue we reproduce the Archbishop's important document relating to the crusade he is about to undertake in order to combat the evils of intemperance. His Grace emphasizes that it is not so much the sin of drunkenness carried to the extreme, in which a man publicly degrades himself, loses his reason, and finally wallows in the gutter, a despicable object before all eyes, for those spectacles present such a disgusting aspect that in themselves prove salutary lessons; but it is to liquor drinking in its insidious form, that is, when drinking is indulged in, not as a general rule, but only at stated intervals—

drinking—chronic intemperance. The crusade is to be in charge of the Franciscan Fathers, in whose hands the important work of regeneration has been placed. Our experience of their work leaves no doubt in our mind that there will be fruitful results, and we feel confident that His Grace will have much to console him for his people cannot turn a deaf ear to the paternal appeal he makes to them to save themselves. He has indeed fulfilled his duty; it remains alone for them to show how they can generously respond.

CATHOLICS IN GERMANY.

Very detailed statistics have lately been published upon the religious population of Germany. From these we gather that there are only 600,000 Jews in the whole German Empire. The Protestants number 35,231,404; and the Catholics 20,327,913. By percentage the Catholic population is 36, and the Protestant 62. The highest percentage of Catholics is found, as might be expected, in Bavaria, where they number 70 per cent. In the kingdom of Prussia our co-religionists number a little over twelve millions, or thirty-five per cent., against nearly twenty-two millions or sixty-three per cent. Protestants. In Alsace-Lorraine the Protestant population forms only about twenty-one per cent.

For the last thirty years—since the establishment of the German Empire—there has been very little change. The figures, according to hundreds, remain practically the same. So far as any change does show itself, there is a tendency in minorities to increase and for majorities to decrease. This seems true, for the three chief kingdoms of the Empire. In Prussia the Catholic minority has increased from 33 per cent. in 1867 to 35 per cent. in 1900; whilst in Bavaria, where they are in the majority, Catholics have decreased from 71 per cent. in 1871 to 70 per cent. in 1900. This supposed law by no means holds throughout Germany. In many districts the opposite is verified by experience—nor is the change of figures marked in either one direction or the other.

But whilst these relative figures show no marked change the statistics prove that Catholic marriages are much more fruitful than Protestant marriages. The most prolific provinces of Prussia are the Catholic provinces of the Rhine, Westphalia, Posen and Silesia. Protestant ministers at Berlin and Leipzig acknowledge and deplore the fact as well as their inability to cope with the evil. They further attribute the fruitfulness of Catholic marriages not to any natural difference but to the influence exercised by the practice of the confessional upon conscientious Catholics. So confirmed are the ministers in this opinion that it is one of the reasons they urge for a return to auricular confession.

Another question arises from these statistics. How is it that whilst Catholic marriages are much more fruitful than Protestant marriages the figures remain nearly stationary? There is a leakage. What is the cause? The first is mixed marriages. Experience in Germany is as disheartening as in our own country. About twelve per cent. of the marriages in Germany are mixed marriages for the years 1895-1900. Of the children of these marriages only a minority are brought up Catholics. Statistics show also that an enormous proportion of these marriages took place before the Protestant minister. Thus does apostasy begin. The spouse weakened in faith by sacrilege is not strong enough to insist upon the faith of the children. And so the canker-worm eats its way into the tree—here a branch and there showing decay when they ought to be full of life and truth and the fruit of fidelity to Mother Church.

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SUDDEN DEATH OF HON. RAYMOND PRÉFONTEAINE.

Press despatches bring news of the sudden death of the Minister of Marine and Fisheries, the Hon. Raymond Préfontaine. Deep and widespread regret have been aroused both here and abroad, where the dead statesman had numerous friends. His body will be conveyed to Halifax on the British warship "Dominion."

Statistics which have from time to time been published in England have borne testimony to widespread religious indifference. Of the multitudes of nominal Christians a large proportion stay away from Church. Apparently the state of affairs in the United States is even worse. A Protestant organization, known as the Church Federation, recently took a religious census of New York City. They found that of the total population one-third is Catholic and that more than half the Protestants, or over a million, fail to attend church, being indifferent to all dogmatic religion, even where it is not positively rejected by them. It would seem that recent works assailing the Bible have had sad effects upon many of these Protestants. The Federation reports that of the old American stock, especially, a great number have fallen away from anything like strict religious faith. Every Protestant communion is, it states, losing its hereditary families. The younger generations, being only distracted instead of guided by the Protestant rule of private judgment, have gradually been lapsing into infidelity. Nor does Protestantism afford any remedy, for what one teacher lays down is rejected and denounced by another.

The Weakness of Christianity.

To the Editor of True Witness:

Sir,—Preaching at the Anglican Cathedral of this city recently, Rev. Dr. Symonds is reported as saying: "The weakness of Christianity was the direct result of the failure of the church to carry out and truly interpret the teaching of Christianity's founder."

I fail to understand how the Rev. Doctor can reconcile this assertion with the promise which Jesus Christ made to His infant Church on the very eve of His passion and death to send her the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of Truth, who would teach her all things, bring all things to her mind whatsoever he had commanded, and would abide with her forever. If the Church has failed to understand the teaching of Christianity's founder, then the Spirit of Truth was given to her in vain, and Christ's word has also failed. St. Paul declared the Church to be without spot or wrinkle, but the very pillar and ground of truth. Yet Dr. Symonds does not hesitate to accuse her with failure to carry out the teachings of Christ. She has, according to this modern Anglican churchman, failed utterly in the mission entrusted to her, and the gates of hell, which her Divine Founder declared would not prevail against her, have indeed prevailed and made her an unworthy spouse of her holy Bridegroom. Continuing, Dr. Symonds says: "In presenting Christianity as a means to avert future punishment, it (the Church) has fostered a spirit of selfishness and deprived the gospel of much of its power." Here again is a grave accusation brought against the Spouse of Christ, who was, according to St. Paul, without blemish. What is this spirit of selfishness which the Church has fostered? Is it to be considered selfishness on her part if in the words of her Divine Founder, she declares that all who reject her teaching, who cast aside the Gospel of Christ, shall surely perish? If so, her Divine Founder stands condemned with her, for He has distinctly declared this selfsame truth when He said: "He that believeth not shall be condemned."

The Rev. Doctor seems to consider that Christianity is weakened by the fearless expounding of its great truths by the Church of God. He would softer, so to speak, these truths which at times seem repugnant to human nature. But the Church of God being the custodian of divine revelation and the mouthpiece of the Holy Ghost, must answer his objections in the words of St. Paul: "If I yet pleased men I would not be the servant of God." (Gal. I. 10.) "For I give you to understand, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man." (Gal. I. 11.) Is it self-

known in the physician to warn his patient against this or that excess and declare that unless his rules are carried out recovery is impossible? Is it to be considered selfishness in the mountain guide when he points out the rugged paths and declares it to be the only safe way for you to follow in your endeavor to reach the summit? Surely not. Neither is it selfishness on the part of the Church when she warns her children of the consequences of rejecting the teachings of her Divine Master.

Another cause of Christianity's weakness, according to Dr. Symonds, is the number of religious divisions. These divisions, he declares, are the result of a misconception of Christianity itself. This is a question which is indeed filled with grave consequences, and the Rev. Doctor has here touched a vital cord indeed. In beginning a study of this matter, he should have questioned the right of Henry VIII. in beginning this very disunion in England in the 16th century. Yes, why did Henry, the founder of the Anglican Church, tear from the trunk of Christian unity the branch which had nestled within its shady and peaceful precincts, the children of the British Isle, for so many centuries? Had not this worldly king severed with the sword of persecution the tie which bound the English people to the centre of Christendom, England might to-day be a power for good in bringing the truths of the gospel to the pagan, instead of being a cause of religious confusion. Before the Doctor complained of religious disunity he should have questioned his own religious body and asked why she was separated from the centre of the great circle of Christianity by a chasm of such vast dimensions. He complains of religious divisions and he does well, but is he not aware that the very role of faith to which he adheres so firmly, i. e., private interpretation of Scripture, is the prime cause of such divisions. There can be no federation of Protestant sects for the very foundation of Protestantism, grounded as it is on private judgment, cries out against all religious authority, without which federation is impossible.

What remains, then, for the soul which finds itself tossed about on the great sea of unbelief and constant strife, and has nowhere to lay its head—for all seems to it uncertainty here below? To such a one I would say take refuge, tired soul, in the Bark of Peter, where at last you will find peace and solace, for in the Church Catholic, which is the pillar and ground of truth, fear and uncertainty are unknown. C.

THE MASTERS AND THE OTHERS.

If you observe the masters in any of the arts, or in any of the professions, or in any business, you will find that they work without hurry, without fret, with an equal regard for all great things and small. They know proportion, indeed, but they know, too, how fine a balance exists between success and failure, and how small a trifle may mar the issue of an undertaking.

I often used to marvel at the endless pains some people would take over the small concerns of life, the hanging of a picture, the trimming of a bonnet, or the number of buttons on a coat, but I have come to see that success depends on trifles, and that the right adjustment of the smallest detail of living is quite as important as the sequence of syllables in a memorable lyric, or the proximity of colors in some splendid painting. Moreover, the pleasure of the average man in all he does may be just as keen as the artist's delight in his work. Every one of us may become an artist in the conduct of life, if he will turn his mind to it, cultivate his taste, and, above all, use patient care. And we shall come to know a satisfaction in so doing; for all things done well have this great recompense, whatever they cost in time and labor—they give us imperishable delight which can never spring from hurried or slighted tasks.

Notice the difference between men in this matter—how easily some seem to live, and with how much difficulty others go about their business. Here is one who is never hurried, never ill-natured, never anxious, accomplishing much while there is another who frets and toils and complains and never has a moment's leisure, yet accomplishes nothing. It is largely a matter of art, the art of living. The first has peace, the second has not. The first has the serene temperance and happy spirit of an artist, while his fellow has only the lousy nervousness of a dabster. The first would undertake vast affairs with a light heart, and carry them through without friction; the other would worry over the merest trifles, and spend all his energy in hesitation and timidity and indecision.—Bliss Carman, in the "Poetry of Life."

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NOTES FROM ST.

At High Mass on Christmas Eve, Father Callaghan expressed wishes as follows:

Miknight Mass was pastor, having as deacon, Glanis, and subdeacon, Hoffmann.

On Sunday afternoon Christmas, the catechism of the care of Father McRack's Hall. There was a large assembly of the Rev. Father, who briefly addressed them, and the Rev. Father, who had done, ladies who had instructed. His violin charming with the sacred tide.

I have often wished Xmas, privately and glad I am to do the same. Nothing on earth me greater pleasure. day to be happy—nay, days to all my creature, ed in the education of to all responsible for their mutual affection, young and old, rich and in health or sickness, or adversity, to every this immense gathering of the sincerest character can compare in sincerity of a parent. This is the priest. This be without a shadow of may not be what it is several respects, and it ways be what it will now. This sadness carried to excess. Being that this day is the our Divine Lord. He thanked for coming in to be our Redeemer and should be adored, in as is the incarnate Son of should be loved for he loved us and for the alone remains unchanged and will never dis should be imitated in practised. He is the happiness and heaven should be implored. He refuse it.

ST. ANN'S PA

A most successful m four weeks was closed eve at St. Ann's Church were the Rev. Father Coghlan and Mulligan, belonging to Saratoga, tendance at both mo and at the evening ser the esteem in which the aries were held, and th the different audiences word of God and th practice; this was sho number of confessions the four weeks, about On Sunday afternoon Borgmann blessed all children with the cere to the Redeemtorists vices, so that even the the benefits of the pass At three o'clock the y assembled for the final boys of the Christian Br singing hymns in proc the Church, after whi benediction, followed of the Blessed Sacram to the kneeling crowd. Fathers left for home o lighted with the succo blest efforts. They v hably return before th labor in other parishes

ST. JOSEPH'S B

There was no Christmas generous tending, no de entertainments taking might hinder its success. Donations did not co ly as last year, the c generous tending, no de directions. The followi knowledge with many P. H. Stoughton, Roel ten dollars; Miss M. A. ton, Ont., two dollars; Loneragan, Mrs. Kinne and Mr. H. Gallagher each.

Mrs. M. J. Walsh sent geese and a chicken; Mr. Crory three, and Mrs. turkeys, all dead, and oranges and candles to wafers. A number of p were brought in by the did justice to the good will attend a moving tainment given by the Windsor Hall, Mr. Little sent free tickets to tainment. The Rev. will say Mass next