

[From the Catholic Observer.]

THE CATHOLIC RITES AND CEREMONIES EXPLAINED.

CONFIRMATION.

Of this Sacrament a Bishop is the only ordinary Minister, whose Consecration imparts to him the plenitude of the Priesthood, that is, all the pastoral powers given by Jesus Christ to his Apostles, without any other reserve than that necessary for the good government of the Church, that of local, or respectively subordinate jurisdiction.

We see in the Acts of the Apostles, that though Philip had converted and baptised the Samaritans, it was deemed necessary to send Peter and John from Jerusalem to confirm them. "Now when the Apostles who were in Jerusalem, had heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John, who, when they were come, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost. for he was not yet come upon any of them, but they were only baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus, (that is in the Saviour's Baptism.) Then they laid their hands upon them, and they received the Holy Ghost."—Acts 8, 14, &c.

Prayer then, or the invocation of the Holy Ghost, and the laying on of hands by the Bishop on those to be confirmed, are the ceremonies mentioned in this text, to have been used by the Apostles in the administration of this Sacrament, and these are the ceremonies still observed in administering it by the Bishops in the Catholic Church. The laying on of hands, denotes that the individuals to be confirmed, are specially chosen and accepted by Almighty God; to be sanctified and fortified by his Divine Spirit, whom the Saviour promised to send from his Holy Heaven, to comfort and confirm them, and guide them into all truth, to the end of the world.

The Bishop then, vested in his pontificals, to show that he acts in the character of Christ's apostolic minister, after washing his hands, thereby indicating how pure these hands ought to be which are consecrated and destined to consecrate whatever or whomsoever they touch or bless, turns round towards those whom he is going to confirm, and who are kneeling before him, and begins his invocation of the Holy Ghost in these words:

"May the Holy Ghost come upon you. And the virtue of the Most High guard you from all sins. Ans. Amen."

Then signing himself with the sign of the cross, he says: "Our help is in the name of the Lord. Ans.—"Who made Heaven and Earth." "O Lord hear my prayer. Ans. And let my cry come unto thee." "The Lord be with you. Ans. And with thy spirit." Let us pray.

"O Almighty and Eternal God, who hast deigned to regenerate these, thy servants, of water and the Holy Ghost, and who hast given them the remission of all their sins, send forth upon them: from heaven thy seven-fold spirit, the Paraclete. Ans. Amen."

The Spirit of wisdom and of understanding. Amen.

The Spirit of counsel and of fortitude. Amen.

The Spirit of knowledge and of piety. Amen.

Fill them with the spirit of thy fear, and sign them with the sign of the cross of Christ, propitiations unto life everlasting. Ans. Amen.

The Bishop then standing with his Mitre on, signs them with the sign of the cross, anointing them on the forehead with the chrism, and saying: "I sign thee with the sign of the cross; I confirm thee with the chrism of salvation, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Ans. Amen." After which he gives each a slight tap on the cheek, saying, peace be with thee.

The chrism is oil mixed with balm, blessed by a Bishop; the oil represents the grace, and the sweet smelling balm mixed with it, the odor of sanctity, proceeding from the grace of the Holy Ghost. This is the ointment of the Priesthood, and of Royalty, for, as the Apostle testifies of the courageous followers of Christ, they are a "chosen generation; a kingly Priesthood."—1 Pet. 2, 9.

This Sacrament with its holy unction and effects, is that alluded to by St. Paul; "now, he that confirmeth us with you in Christ, and that hath anointed us is God, who hath also sealed us, and given the pledge of the spirit in our hearts"—2 Cor. 1, 21, 22.

The tap given on the cheek by the Bishop, with these words—*peace be with thee*, indicates the Christian patience with which we are bound to sustain in our spiritual warfare, (for the con-

firmed are the enrolled soldiers of Jesus Christ,) the trials sent us by God, and the injuries and insults offered to us by our fellow creatures, in so much that, as the Lord exhorts us, (and he himself set us the example of such heroic fortitude at his passion,) should our enemy even smite us on the one cheek, we should patiently turn to him the other also. Luke 6, 29. For the Christian is sure to conquer by forbearance and patience, and to preserve that peace of the Saviour, "which surpasses all understanding."—Philip 4, 9

While the Bishop washes his hands, the attendants sing or rehearse the words of the Psalmist—"Confirm O God, what thou hast wrought in us from thy holy temple of Jerusalem"—ps. 67-29. "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost,—as it was in the beginning, is now, and overmore shall be, world without end. Amen." "Confirm, O God," is repeated, after which, the Bishop putting off his Mitre, when about to address the Deity, with his face towards the altar, prays thus—

Shew unto us, O Lord, thy mercy!

Ans. And grant unto us thy salvation!

O Lord, hear my prayer!

Ans. And let my cry come unto thee!

Then he says "Let us pray." (With these words, every prayer, or series of prayers in the Catholic Church, is ushered in, inviting thus all present to join in the supplication addressed to the common Father of all.)

"O God, who hast given by holy spirit to thy Apostles, and wert pleased that through them and their successors, he should be given to the rest of the faithful, look down propitious on the service of our lowliness, and grant that the same holy spirit descending upon the hearts of those, whose foreheads we have anointed with the sacred chrism and signed with the sign of the holy cross, may, by deigning to dwell in them, perfect and make them the temple of his glory, who with the Father and the same holy spirit, livest and reignest God, for all eternity." Ans. Amen.

He continues thus—

"Behold, thus shall every man be blessed, who feareth the Lord"

Then turning toward the newly confirmed, and making over them the sign of the cross, he blesses them in these words:

"May the Lord from Zion bless you, that you may see the good things of Jerusalem all the days of your life, and may have life everlasting." Ans. Amen.

FAILURE OF PROTESTANT MISSIONS.

"These Editors assert that Protestants have converted nations. Assertion, however, is not fact. Where are these nations? What are their names? What their language? When did they exist? What has become of them? O, St. Paul converted nations.—So he did. And did not St. Peter also, and St. James, and other Apostles? They converted nations to Christianity in various portions of the world. Now after their conversion what did they believe? From the unanimous belief of the members of their nation we may confidently presume what was the belief of their teachers. Well, we cast our eyes about the world and behold a multitude of nations professing the christian religion. But the remotest documents in existence, state that all these nations, were, as far back as documents can be found, Catholic. In this they all agreed, though they differed widely in everything else,—in language, manners, and complexion. No matter how widely separated, geographically, physiologically or intellectually, yet all were Catholics. This marvellous unanimity can only be accounted for upon the supposition that all had one common religious training—that their teachers all agreed, and agreed in teaching Catholic doctrine. But their teachers were Apostles, and their companions and successors.—Therefore the Apostles, their companions and successor, were Catholics.

"We do assert, though the Tribunal Editors say that it is a palpable falsehood and that we know it to be so, we do assert that all Protestant Missionaries never converted one heathen to the faith of the Gospel. It is impossible for men that have not themselves the faith of the Gospel, to convert others to the faith of the Gospel. Now Protestants have no faith—they cannot possibly make an act of faith. They cannot say I believe. They can only say I think, I guess. For by their starting principle of private judgement they avow their own fallibility and liability to be mistaken. They acknowledge that they may be wrong—their religion may be false. They cannot make

an act of faith, therefore they cannot convert a single heathen to the faith which they have not themselves, and cannot have and remain Protestants.—*Boston Catholic Observer.*

REPROOF TO BIGOTS!

THE WALTHAM CHURCH.—Noble Conduct of the Unitarians.—Our readers are already aware of the burning of the Waltham church. In our last we spoke of the good feeling manifested towards the bereaved Catholics by the Selectmen and the Citizens at large. We have now to record another incident which is highly honorable to the Unitarians of Waltham.—The Minister of their congregation, the day after the fire, called upon the Rev. Mr. Flood, and not finding him at home, left the subjoined note, which was not intended for publication; but it manifests such a good spirit, and will moreover be a source of gratification to so many of our Catholic brethren, that we have thought Mr. Hill would not object to our giving it to the Catholic public.

TUESDAY, June 6, 1848.

REV. PATRICK FLOOD.

Dear Sir,—Dr. Mulliken, of the Parish Committee in the society to which I minister at Waltham, and myself, have called upon you this afternoon, both from the impulse of our own feelings, and in behalf also of the society by whose vote the duty was enjoined upon us, to offer you, and through you the Roman Catholic congregation at Waltham, our deepest sympathy in the sorrow which the loss of your house of worship there has brought upon you. The Society also voted that we offer our services in accommodating you with a place of worship but the prompt action of the town, in voting you the Hall, has deprived us of that opportunity to do you any kindness."

"Regretting that your absence has prevented my meeting you, and hoping that we shall at some time make each other's acquaintance, I am, sir, yours very respectfully,

THOMAS HILL."

In the name of Rev. Mr. Flood and of his parishioners, and in our name also, and in the name of all our Catholic brethren, we return our sincere thanks to the Unitarian Society at Waltham, to Mr. Hill, their minister, and to Dr. Mulliken, for the kind expressions of their sympathy and their generous offer.—*Idem.*

FATHER R. J. DESMET, the philanthropic and devoted Jesuit Missionary to the Seneca, Flat-Head, and Black-Foot Indians beyond the Rocky Mountains, is on a visit to Albany, N. Y. This good man who, some ten years ago, went along thousands of miles beyond the frontier of civilisation, has since supplied the wildest and most savage tribes of Indians with seeds, farming implements, cows, sheep, oxen, &c. He has taught them to sow, plant, and harvest. He has induced them to erect school houses and chapels, and turned thousands from their wanderings and wars to agricultural and peaceful habits.—*National Intel.*

ST. AUGUSTINE'S NEW CHURCH.—This beautiful edifice is now nearly completed, and will be opened for Divine Service on Sunday morning, June 11th, at half past 10 o'clock. We believe it is much the largest of our Catholic Churches, and when Mr. Monachese, who is adorning the ceiling in his usual beautiful style, has completed his task, it will, unquestionably, be the most beautiful Church in the City. It measures 154 feet in length inside, and contains two hundred and ninety-two pews—two hundred and twenty-two on the lower floor, and seventy on the galleries; so that a large congregation can be accommodated with seats.

Many were the difficulties which the Clergy had to encounter in their efforts to rebuild this Church, but all have been overcome, and now their labors have been crowned with success—they have built a magnificent Temple. We understand it is to be solemnly consecrated on Sunday within the Octave of All Saints, the 5th of November next.—*Phil. Cath. Herald.*

[The old Church of St. Augustine was burned down by the disgraceful riots of 1844.]—Ed. Cross.

DIOCESE OF HARTFORD.—On Thursday the 8th inst., the Rt. Rev. D. Tyler, Bishop of Hartford, held an ordination in the Cathedral of SS. Peter and Paul, Providence, R. I., on which occasion the Rev. Messrs. James Gibson and Luke Daly (Deacons), were promoted to the dignity of the Priesthood, the former gentleman being a convert to the Catholic Church.

PROTESTANTISM IN FRANCE.

It appears that the Revolution in France has rendered still more hopeless the already declining condition of Protestantism in France. The Paris correspondent of the *Presbyterian* gives the following account of its effect upon the various Protestant associations.

"The situation of several of them, and precisely the most important, has become very precarious. You are aware, from my preceding communications, that even before the Revolution, their finances were considerably embarrassed, especially those of the *Evangelical Society*, and of the *Missionary Society*. Their executive committees were liable for sums to a very considerable amount. It was not the first time this had happened, but the receipts for covering these advances, were rendered more uncertain than in times past, by the general difficulty of people's circumstances for the two past years; and now, it seems to have become almost impossible by the commercial crisis come upon us since the 24th of February, and by the extreme scarcity of money. The Missionary Society has shut up the house which it maintained at Paris for the preparation of Missionaries; and it is a doubtful question, if it will be able to continue, at least, to support the Mission which it has established in South Africa. As for new undertakings, they are, for the present, out of the question. The Evangelical Society, on its part, has closed its school for female teachers, and dismissed the non paying pupils of its school for male teachers, which perhaps it will be constrained likewise to shut. At the same time, it has given up several churches and schools which it had established at various points in France, and it cannot be foreseen where these retrenchments ought to stop."

DEDICATION OF ST. MICHAEL'S CHURCH, CINCINNATI.—Everything connected with the dedication of this beautiful church, by the Bishop of the diocese, last Sunday, (June 4,) was both delightful and edifying. The early matin rain had lain the dust, and the order and regularity with which the various religious societies marched, with banners fanned by the cool breezes, along the banks of the Ohio, were pleasant to look upon. Two fine bells—one 930 lbs the other 480—greeted their approach, from the steeple of new church, and hallowed the air around. The Rev. Messrs. Ferneding, Hammer, Heugehold, Pachowski, Luers, and Jarr, assisted the Bishop in the Holy Sacrifice; and there were discourses from the church gate, the pulpit and altar, in the languages of the vast assemblage.—*Cath. Tel.*

SECTS.—A modern writer says—"Out of nearly one hundred sects which were flourishing in the days of Charles I., and whose names are recorded in the page of history, but two or three are now in existence, and these so altered that they could not at present be recognized by their own founders." So also Edwards states "at there were eleven different religions in one parish in London, and he mentions a family consisting of four persons, every one of whom professed a distinct form of belief."—*Edwards' Gang., Part II.*

Births.

JULY 3—Mrs Murray, of a daughter.
" 4—Mrs Rogers, of a daughter.
" 5—Mrs Bedow, of a daughter.
" 6—Mrs Wade, of a daughter.
" 7—Mrs Smith, of a son.

Married.

JUNE 27—Mr Michael Rino, to Miss Catherine Farrei.
" 27—Mr Andrew Keefe, to Miss Mary Larrissy.
" 27—Mr John Dolan, to Miss Joanna Kearns.

Died.

JULY 3—David, eldest son of Mr David Condon, aged 19 years.
" 3—Peter Brim, Private of the 38th regt., native of Ireland, aged 29 years.
" 3—Michael Kidney, native of Cove, County Cork, Ireland, aged 30 years.
" 4—Patrick Leahy, native of Lismore, County Waterford, aged 27 years.