

The Catholic Record.

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London, Saturday, June 25, 1908

A STRANGE IMPOSTURE.

A curious fraud has been attempted by a lady who is publishing in Rome a journal which she calls the Petit Moniteur of Rome. The Moniteur was formerly the official organ of the Pope, but it was suppressed four years ago by the Italian Government, and lately it has been announced that there is some intention to republish it. The lady who issues the Petit Moniteur is the Countess Carolina de Saint-Arnaud, and the main purpose of this journal is to endeavor to make the Catholic world believe that Leo XIII. who was duly elected Pope by the College of Cardinals, is not the real occupant of the Papal throne.

The story told by the Countess is that Leo XIII. was put into prison ten years ago because of his liberality toward the Italian Government, the Cardinals who are antagonistic to Italy having deposed him, and put in his place a monk who bears a great resemblance to the real Pope Leo.

By giving to her paper the name Petit Moniteur, this lady was enabled to pass her journal upon many people as the Pope's official paper, and it is said that, wild and absurd as her story is, she had persuaded many persons to believe that it is the truth, and she was able to collect a considerable sum of money under the pretence that it would be employed for the purpose of liberating the imprisoned Pontiff.

The Countess who is propagating this fraud is the daughter of the late Duke of Modena, who was the sovereign prince of Modena before that Duchy was seized by Victor Emmanuel, the father of the present king of Italy, and incorporated into the present kingdom. The Countess having a taste for extravagance found it difficult to bear her changed condition when her father was deposed. The Duke died almost in penury, and as the Countess was left portionless she endeavored by various devices to live by her wits. She founded a sort of convent which never had the approval of the Church, for the reason that it was irregularly instituted, and conducted in defiance of the canon laws by which such institutions are governed. Pope Leo XIII. found it necessary to excommunicate all who had anything to do with this pretended religious order, and it was then that the Countess of St. Arnaud invented the story that the real Pope Leo had been imprisoned, and that the present incumbent of the Papal throne is an impostor. The wonder is that she found any who were credulous enough to believe her wild story. Several of those who did believe it at first, and who gave liberal contributions to the Countess repented their credulity, and had her arrested for obtaining money on false pretences. She was convicted together with an accomplice who passed by the name of the Duke of Bustello, but who was in reality a convict from Honduras. The two have been released, their term of imprisonment being ended, and the Countess has revived her ridiculous story about the Pope. It is not likely, however, that she will find as many dupes now as she found before to give money to her, as her story has been thoroughly exploded, nevertheless it is asserted that the fact that she has assumed the name of the Petit Moniteur for her newspaper has caused a good deal of annoyance at the Vatican, as some thoughtless persons may imagine that her paper with that title is the official Vatican organ.

THE RESULTS OF GODLESS EDUCATION.

Statistics recently issued by the United States School Union state that in the whole country there are 20,865,377 children between the ages of five and eighteen, of whom 1,600,000 are Catholics. The Catholic children must be really about 2,000,000, which would leave 18,865,377 non-Catholics of the age indicated.

The total number of children attending the Protestant Sunday schools is 10,890,992, of whom 12 per cent. are over eighteen or under five. This gives us 9,983,409 between these ages who attend Sunday school, some very regularly, others only from time to time. But the alarming feature about these figures is that there are about 8,881,908 non-Catholic children who do not attend Sunday School at all.

As the Catholic children, for the most part attend the Catholic parochial schools, and the Sunday schools in addition, their religious education is well provided for, but there is no such provision for the teaching of religion and morals to the non-Catholic children, as religion is totally excluded from the school-room curriculum. Hence the 8,881,908 children who never attend Sunday school are entirely without religious instruction, unless it be imparted to them in their homes, which is certainly not the case. Those parents who do not send their children to the Sunday schools certainly do not undertake the task of teaching their children, but let them grow up without any knowledge of Christianity. It is no wonder, under such circumstances, that over one half the non-Catholics become practical or professed infidels, not belonging to any Christian denomination.

But this does not give the whole extent of the evil. It must be admitted that between irregular attendance of the children at Sunday school, the lack frequently of competent teachers, and the neglect of study on the part of the children, a large number even of those who do sometimes attend Sunday school are very poorly instructed. With the very best attendance, and well-trained catechists, a good deal may be done in the way of instructing a certain percentage of the children attending, but the great majority even of these, receiving only one hour's instruction each week, must be sadly wanting in religious training.

The responsibility for this sad state of affairs rests with those who deliberately advocated the establishment of a purely secular school system throughout the country, and the ministers were among the most zealous advocates of this. They are now reaping the fruit of their former hostility to Catholic education, for it is well known that it was to prevent Catholics from enjoying the privilege of having their Christian schools recognized under the laws that they advocated purely secular schools.

The Catholics would not fall into the trap, but maintained their own schools, though at the great sacrifice of having to pay a double tax, as they voluntarily maintained their own schools at their own expense, while they were paying the State levy for the education of their neighbors' children. The ministers thought they were doing a very clever thing by imposing this burden on Catholics, but the consequences have fallen upon themselves, as they have thus by degrees succeeded only by leaving hundreds of their churches throughout the country without congregations to attend them, and even where they have congregations the complaint is universal that the great bulk of the non-Catholics throughout the country do not attend any church on Sundays, but spend the day either at work or in various kinds of amusement. Thus a New York preacher complained a few weeks ago that not more than between one fifth and one fourth of the non-Catholics of that city attend any church service, and those newspapers which have sent special reporters from time to time to the churches in various cities, to ascertain the number of churchgoers, have uniformly reported the existence of a similar state of affairs. It cannot be doubted that this is traceable directly to the absence of religious teaching in the schools.

THE JEWISH PERSECUTIONS IN RUSSIA.

Mr. Pobiedonostzeff, the Procurator of the Russian Holy Synod, and the Head of the Greek Church in Russia, has recently given a very curious reason for the persecution of Jews in that country, of which he was himself the main cause.

A committee of the Jewish Colonization Society waited on the Procurator to secure his co-operation in their work, which was inaugurated by Baron Hirsch. Mr. Pobiedonostzeff said:

"No one really believes that the Jews are a bad lot. On the contrary, they are very able people. In school the Jewish pupil is diligent; the Russian, on the other hand, is lazy, inattentive, and irregular. In general life we find the same state of affairs as in the school. In service, in business, everywhere, the Jew is capable, energetic, and industrious, while the Russian is somewhat frivolous. The Russian loves drink, whereas the Jew is always sober. It is for these reasons that we

fear them. If we were to let them progress without putting obstacles in the way they would push us out of everything and become our masters. You must admit that from our Russian standpoint we can not permit anything of the kind. Hence have originated all our measures against the Jews. We persecute no one; we only defend ourselves, and we must be careful to protect our interests while there is still time."

This confession, becoming known to the Russian Government, the press censor was directed to prohibit the publication thereof in Russia, and the sending of it to the press of foreign countries; nevertheless some smart correspondent managed to transmit it. The American Hebrew papers publish it in double-headed print. The American Hebrew remarks regarding it:

"It is clear that, while other countries believe it a good principle to raise the general educational status of their people, Russia thinks it good policy to keep them on a low plane of intelligence. Hence the Jew must go; no relief can be expected at any rate while Pobiedonostzeff stands so close to the Czar."

Another journal remarks that this is a reproduction of old Pharaoh's methods of thirty-five centuries ago. One hundred and twenty (modern) Egyptians are quaking lest four or five millions of Israelites shall rule them if they are granted life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. This journal, the Jewish Messenger of New York, continues:

"Evidently the only hope for the Jew in Russia is to become as drunk and frivolous as the Russian. But the Russian will improve in time, and with his full emancipation there will be civil and religious liberty in Russia for all creeds."

It would be interesting next to discover why Mr. Pobiedonostzeff has persecuted both Catholics and Protestants, but it may be presumed that the press censor would, if possible, prevent any testimony on this point from leaking out into a civilized atmosphere.

REACTIONARY RELIGION.

The question of divorce is just now occupying the attention of the Episcopal clergy of the United States. The evil of the law principles which are put into operation under the present divorce laws is felt to be very great, endangering the peace of families and the very foundation on which society rests.

Six years ago a joint commission was appointed by the General Convention of the Church to revise its canons, and it is now stated that the commission has almost completed its labors and will be ready to report at the next meeting of the convention, which will be held in a few months. The divorce question has especially been a subject of consideration by the commission, and it is announced that it will report a canon to the effect that "No minister of the Church shall solemnize the marriage of either party to a divorce during the life time of the other party."

This solution of the matter is said not to be pleasing to Bishop Potter of New York and some other New York divines, but Bishop Doane of Albany upholds the decision, together with many other Bishops and probably a majority of the clergy.

It is gratifying to observe, both in regard to this and other doctrines, that there is a decided tendency on the part of Protestant sects to return toward Catholicity, and Anglicanism in both its English and American forms is tending in this direction more and more every day. This cannot but help make thinking people reflect that the truth is to be sought in the Catholic Church itself, and not in the sects which are thus wavering, being "carried about by every wind of doctrine." It is known to all that it was this very question of divorce which led Henry VIII. to establish Anglicanism as a new religion, and he was able to induce his crown-dependent Bishops to authorize his divorce from Queen Catherine, and his marriage to Anne Boleyn. Once this was done it was an easy matter to obtain their approval of his divorces as often as he might desire it. It was, therefore, on the question of laxity in the granting of divorces that the Church of England was instituted, though now the opinion prevails in the same Church that they should not be allowed on any consideration. Those who reflect upon the matter will see that the Catholic Church alone has constantly held to the true Christian doctrine, that what God hath joined together no man may put asunder. The result must be that many will return to the true faith from which their forefathers wandered.

There will undoubtedly be considerable opposition to the report of the commission when the General Convention will assemble in October. This is evident from a discussion which recently took place at a meeting of Episcopalians in Boston at which Bishops Doane of Albany, Lawrence of Boston and Hall of Vermont were present. Divorce being discussed, Bishop Doane said that the argument of those

who understood Christ as allowing divorce and remarriage, was founded on the 8th and 9th verses of the 19th chapter of St. Matthew's gospel, which he thinks to be of doubtful authenticity.

The passage is surely authentic, and it is recognized as such even by the Revisers, who exercised with a good deal of freedom their supposed privilege of sitting in judgment on the authenticity of alleged doubtful passages. For the Catholic, the decree of the Council of Trent proclaiming the authenticity of the Vulgate is sufficient proof of authenticity. But it does not follow from this passage that the party who has been put away for adultery may marry again.

Christ here answers two questions which had been at least implicitly asked of Him by the Pharisees: One, whether for every cause it is lawful to put away one's wife; the other, whether it was lawful to marry her that was so put away. To the first, He makes answer that under His law it is not lawful to put away one's wife, except for adultery, and the answer to the next is that it is not lawful to marry her that is so put away.

Bishop Hall was of the same sentiment as Bishop Doane, but other speakers took a variety of views, showing the great diversity of opinion which exists in Anglicanism on this most vital subject. One thing is clear, however, that there is no authority in the Episcopal Church to settle the question whether or not there is a divine law which is to be followed. Nothing more will be done, even if the proposed canon be adopted, than to decide what is to be done in practice when the occasion will present itself, and it is extremely doubtful that any canon which may be adopted will be obeyed as binding on the conscience of ministers.

If the so-called Reformation in England had been less thorough, Anglicanism to-day would not have found the reaction so difficult and violent.

THE SUPPORT OF THE CHURCH AND CHURCH WORKS.

Fifth Commandment of the Church.—To contribute to the support of our pastor.—The Catechism.

There is scarcely a Catholic parish in which there are not some chronic grumblers who have the notion that the demands made upon them for contributions for various purposes in which the Church takes an interest are excessive. This grumbling is often contagious, and the society of grumblers is frequently thus made to comprise a considerable proportion of the congregation.

A little reflection on the part of these people, and those who might be tempted to join them, would generally show how unfounded are these complaints. The necessities of the Church are numerous, as there is a large expense in properly conducting the divine worship and in meeting the needs of religion, both in the parish and in the diocese.

Among parish works, the pastor is worthy of decent support. He is a man who has spent his life in studying to fulfil his office properly, and it takes many years of laborious application before he can fit himself to direct souls in the way of salvation, to make known to his flock the antidotes against sin and temptation, to comfort it in distress, and to preach the word of God in a suitable manner, that he may instruct, and at the same time persuade his people to follow the divine law.

Under the old law it was obligatory on the people of God to give the tenth part of all the increase to the Levites and to God. The Levites had no other share in the possessions of the nation, so that the people might be made to understand the necessity of doing their duty. So large a share is not insisted on now, but the support of the priest and of the Church is no less a duty now than it was then.

In the secular professions and callings, the fees paid for services rendered are proportioned to the labor, time, and expense applied in learning to do the work expected.

The priest does not measure his services by the same standard. He is willing to share the poverty of his people, but where the people are not poor they should be willing and anxious to give him a generous support.

As we have already explained, he made generous sacrifices to fit himself for his duties, and he now devotes himself entirely to his people, for their spiritual and even temporal welfare. Justice, gratitude, and even a laudable pride unite in demanding this from a congregation which is not absolutely poverty-stricken. In most dioceses there is an episcopal regulation which requires those

who are earning for themselves a support, to contribute a certain sum, proportioned to the means of each parishioner. This, at least, should be cheerfully paid, and, besides, a special contribution should be given for all the general needs of the church, for building or repairing the church itself, for maintaining the church service in a manner suitable to God's majesty, and the ability of the people, as for music, for keeping the church warm, comfortable, and clean, for the decoration of the altar, for vestments suited to the various feasts, for the erection of stations of the Cross, which will stimulate piety, etc.

Besides all these things, schools are to be erected and kept up and in the large towns and cities, hospitals, orphan asylums, houses of refuge, and the like institutions are to be maintained for the use of the whole diocese. Every parish should deem it a privilege and an honor to aid in keeping these institutions in a state of efficiency, and there are, besides, sometimes good works in which the Holy Father desires the whole Catholic Church to participate.

These special collections are not numerous, but when they do occur, all should contribute generously, according to their means, and without the grumbling to which we have taken exception, for "God loves the cheerful giver." All should remember that it is to God, and for the sanctification of His name, and the spread of His Kingdom on earth that these contributions are asked. The chronic grumbler would make those who listen to him believe that he is the main prop of the Church, and that the demands are especially heavy upon him. This is not the case. The grumblers are usually, perhaps always, the smallest contributors for church purposes. They may fairly be compared to the rusty axle of a wagon from which all the noise comes when the wagon is in motion on the road. One would suppose that this rusty axle with its wheel were doing all the work, whereas the truth is that it is precisely this wheel and axle that is an obstacle to the progress of the wagon.

Catholics are not frequently called upon, in comparison with Protestants, for special contributions such as those to which we have alluded. We have seen recently in one of our Presbyterian contemporaries a list of the general schemes of the Presbyterian Church towards which all the congregations of that denomination are called upon to contribute. They include Knox, Queen's, Montreal, and Manitoba Colleges, Home and Foreign Missions, Augmentation (to supplement the salaries of ministers in poor localities), Widows' and Orphans', Infirm Ministers', and General Assembly Funds, French Evangelization, and Pointe aux Trembles school. To these are to be added Mission Stations, and a recent voluntary movement to send missionaries to the Klondike.

The Ontario Catholics are by no means called on for so many purposes, and they ought to be generous toward the necessary works to which they are asked to give their mite.

PRIVATE JUDGMENT AND CHURCH AUTHORITY.

It is known that there are at least two hundred and fifty different sects of Protestants in the United States and about the same number in England and Scotland, but as far as we are aware there are no reliable statistics showing accurately to what extent the setting up of the individual judgment as the supreme arbiter of faith has produced a Babel of creeds.

It is an axiom of logic which is taken for granted also in mathematics that a principle which leads to contradictory conclusions must be itself false and absurd, and as these sects hold most contradictory tenets it is a necessary consequence that the principle of private interpretation of the Bible is also erroneous. It is, besides, condemned in the Bible itself, which constantly upholds the authority of the Church as the last tribunal to which appeal should be made in all matters of faith. Thus St. Paul declares the Church of God to be "the pillar and the ground of truth."

Its hierarchy was instituted by Christ expressly to preserve us from being exposed to fall into dangerous doctrinal errors, for the same Apostle, enumerating various grades of teachers in the Church, tells us that they were instituted to preserve the faithful from being "carried about by every wind of doctrine." (Eph. iv: 11, 14)

Christ also commands that we hear the Church under penalty of being "as the heathen and the publican." (St. Matt. xviii, 17.)

The Church spoken of in all these passages is not an agglomeration of a multitude of sects such as modern Protestants would have us believe, but the teaching body of the one fold which Christ instituted, and to which these remarkable words were spoken by Him: "He that heareth you, heareth me, and he that despiseth you, despiseth me, and he that despiseth me despiseth Him that sent me." (St. Luke x, 16.)

Hence one, and not a multitude of churches, is constantly spoken of by Christ and the Apostles, and it is to this one Church to which obedience is to be given. This one Church spoke definitively when the Apostles assembled at Jerusalem to pronounce upon a question which had caused dissensions even among the first believers in the Gospel. This was whether or not the practice of circumcision, commanded under the old law, should be observed among Christians. The Jewish converts were disposed to insist upon it, whereas those who came from heathenism had great repugnance to be subjected to that ceremony. The decision reached by the assembled Apostles was that no such burden should be imposed, but they did impose a law as expressed thus:

"It hath seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us to impose no further burden on you than these necessary things: that you abstain from things offered to idols and from blood, etc." (Acts xv.)

The efforts which have been made during late years to effect a union of certain sects which do not greatly differ in their tenets is an evidence that these truths are being felt more and more strongly by Protestants, on account of which they are endeavoring to minimize the existing tendency to divergence; but even if, in some instances such unions be effected, it will still remain true that the fundamental principle of private judgment, which is maintained by all the sects as being the only justification for their existence, is a principle of disintegration which will continue daily to bring new sects into existence, even though a few of the old ones manage to patch up some kind of a compact of union.

It has been hitherto a practice among Protestants to represent the number of existing sects to be as small as possible, so that the absurdity of so many contradictions may not be observed by the general public, but notwithstanding all such efforts to the contrary, from time to time its extent is brought prominently into view. This was the case a few days ago in the American Congress when a Bill was brought forward to grant permission for the erection of a building for religious worship by any denomination on the West Point Military Reservation.

There is already an Episcopalian chapel on the Reservation, and the immediate reason for the introduction of the bill was that Catholics have already taken steps for the erection of a Catholic chapel there at their own expense. The bill, though unanimously approved of by the Military Committee of the House of Representatives, was opposed in the House by several members, who argued that all other denominations might demand that they should have the same privilege, if Catholics were to be allowed to carry out their purpose. During the discussion which ensued one member said: "I understand there are fifteen, twenty or thirty different denominations." This is, of course, a ridiculous minimized estimate of the number of existing sects. Another member, Mr. Bartholdi of Missouri, asserted that there are supposed to be 600 different sects in the country, and so there might be 600 different demands to erect chapels if the Bill were passed.

We presume that Mr. Bartholdi's estimate is considerably exaggerated, but it shows, at all events, the inextricable confusion which has arisen out of the rejection of Church authority by Protestantism, and there is no doubt that the evil will become greater as the population increases. So strongly is it felt that this state of things is a necessary consequence of the Protestant theory that the ministers have been at great trouble to find a reasonable excuse for it, and the favorite theory now is that a variety of denominations is not an evil at all, but a necessary and desirable consequence of the spread of Christianity.

It is not necessary to refute further such a theory, which is sufficiently refuted by what we have already stated to be Christ's intention in establishing a Church, namely, that there should be one Church whose authority should be acknowledged by all His disciples.

The sacrament of penance is the only revealed channel of the pardon of Jesus Christ to those who fall from baptismal grace.

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