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London, Saturday, January 1, 1898.

ORIGIN OF PRESENTS.

The good custom of making presents at Christmas, which prevails at the present day, is derived from the fact that the three wise men or magi who when led by a miraculous star came from the East to adore the infant Jesus their new born King, brought to Him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh in acknowledgment of His divinity, royalty, and humanity. For the same reason the children of the family are made the special recipients of these favors. Santa Claus is represented as distributing his gifts, in memory of the kind Bishop St. Nicholas who endowed three young sisters, who had become impoverished, with marriage portions suitable to their condition, in order to enable them to be suitably married when they reached the proper age. He supplied these dowries by throwing a bag of money in at their window, as each one reached the proper age for marriage. Thus the three dowries were thrown in successively for the three girls, while the good Bishop did not reveal to them who was their benefactor.

CHARITABLE DONATION REFUSED.

A New York minister, the Rev. J. W. Putnam, pastor of Trinity Church, 58th street, has refused a donation of fifty dollars sent by the Tammany Hall organization for the poor of his Church. On behalf of Tammany, Mr. V. J. Dowling, the secretary of the organization, expressed regret that the amount was not larger, owing to the fact that there are so many channels of distribution, but he added: "I have done the best I could." Mr. Putnam in his reply declares that donations for the poor are much needed, but as regards a gift from Tammany, he says: "I dare not touch it with so much as the tips of my fingers. . . . It would seem to be little less than a crime to take your ill gotten gains even for such a deserving object." In conclusion he quotes for Tammany's benefit Acts xiii and viii: "O full of all subtlety and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord? Thy money perish with thee." If Tammany were so surely steeped in evil as its enemies represent, the reply would be a deserved rebuke, but there is no sure evidence that it is so bad an organization as is represented by Republicans. It was made a means of corruption by Tweed and other politicians, but since their peculations were discovered, it is asserted on good authority that it is not now really corrupt, though it wields great political power. The Rev. Mr. Putnam seems to have been influenced in the matter by his Republican preferences.

THE POPE'S ENCYCLICAL ON THE MANITOBA SCHOOL QUESTION.

A despatch from Rome announces that the long expected encyclical of the Pope in regard to the Manitoba School Question has been published. The despatch is as follows:

Rome, Dec. 24.—The Pope's encyclical on the Manitoba school question is published here this evening. After recalling the religious history of Canada and enjoining its scholastic institutions, His Holiness expresses regret at the decisions taken seven years ago, in Manitoba, relative to the Catholic schools, and points out the rights of Catholics, according to the Federal agreement. Continuing, the Pope condemns a school system based on religious neutrality, praises the zeal the bishops have displayed on the question, regrets that the Catholics are not equally united, owing to political passions, and admits that the authorities have done something to diminish the inconveniences of Manitoba school legislation, but His Holiness declares that to be inadequate, and exhorts Catholics to persist in claiming all their rights, though they must not refuse any partial reparations obtainable, with the view to reduce the perils of the education of youth. In conclusion, the Pope, in the encyclical, says that in the event of these being undiminished, Catholics should provide their own schools, and adopt, under the guidance of their Bishops, a programme of study, reconciling it with their religious and all literary and scientific progress.

There is every appearance of authenticity about this report, and we

have no doubt of its accuracy, as it is in accord with sentiments expressed both by the present and former Popes on the school question. It will be seen that the Holy Father insists upon the importance of religious education, and commends the zeal of the Canadian Bishops who have used every effort to supply such an education for the Catholic children.

In regard to the trouble in Manitoba, the Holy Father exhorts Catholics to aim by all lawful means to obtain for the Catholics of that province their full rights, and in the meantime to be ready to accept such partial reparation as may be attainable.

We never expected that the Pope's advice would be anything different from that he has given. He urges all Catholics to unite in aiding their fellow-Catholics in Manitoba, but there is no urging to employ any other means than such are within our rights under the Canadian constitution, to obtain redress.

The Pope is not satisfied, nor does he recommend Catholics to be satisfied, with anything less than truly Catholic schools, and until these are obtained for Manitoba, in accordance with the original compact agreed upon when the territory became a province, the Catholics of the Dominion will not be content. We defer further remarks upon the encyclical until the full text be made known to us on this side of the Atlantic.

The London Times, commenting on the encyclical, admits that the Holy Father's words are conciliatory, and calls it "a message of peace."

CLOSE COMMUNION AND THE BAPTISTS.

The Baptists at their recent annual Congress held in Chicago two weeks ago manifested quite an important change of sentiment in regard to the doctrine which is the very foundation-stone on which the sect is founded, and a firm belief in the truth of which is the only justification for their existence as a distinct sect.

There are a large number of sects among the Baptists, including Seventh Day Baptists, who hold the seventh day of the week, or Saturday, that is the Jewish Sabbath, to be the day of rest appointed by God to be kept by Christians for all time, instead of the first or the Lord's day, which nearly all Christians observe. There are also Particular and General Baptists, who follow respectively the contradictory Calvinistic and Arminian beliefs in regard to the universal or limited application of man's redemption through the death of Christ, and the foreordained election or reprobation of men. But the chief and distinctive doctrine which is held by the great body of Baptists regards the necessity of baptism by immersion as an obligatory ordinance of God. This doctrine in turn gives occasion to another division in the sect, between Open and Close Communion Baptists. The Open Communions admit to their communion, and to membership in their Church, those who give baptism by the pouring on of water, but the Close Communions, who form the great bulk of the Baptists, will not admit to this privilege any but such as have been baptized after their fashion by immersion, on the plea that such only as have been thus baptized are truly Christians. They, moreover, maintain that this immersion or baptism can be administered only to adults, and therefore exclude from membership those who have been baptized in infancy, unless they are willing to be rebaptized after what they consider to be the orthodox fashion.

The total number of Baptists of all kinds in the world is said to be about 2,000,000, of whom 1,100,000 are in the United States and England; but on this point of actual membership there is no means of attaining absolute accuracy. About three-fourths of these are Close Communions, whatever may be the particular sub sect to which they belong. Thus it is seen that a sect of about a million and a half adherents, and which began to exist only about three hundred years ago, presumes to de-Christianize the whole Christian world, not only of the present day, but of all ages since the days of the Apostles. What adds to the absurdity of this contention is that the Baptists, while maintaining that there is no baptism except what is administered by immersion, contend also that only those who have been thus properly baptized can administer baptism to others. If, for the sake of argument, we admit all this, it follows that Roger Williams, who established the sect in America, and the original Baptists of England during the reigns of

Henry VIII. and Elizabeth, were themselves never baptized, since there was no one living capable of administering to them baptism by immersion, as there was no one who had been thus baptized. The Christian Church must, therefore, have been entirely extinct on earth, and there could be no one capable of resuscitating it, notwithstanding that St. Paul describes the Church as being "the pillar and ground of truth," and that Christ built it upon a rock, against which and against the Church itself the gates of hell should never prevail.

The Chicago Congress seems to have opened its eyes to the absurdity of the belief which Baptists have hitherto held, for the close communion theory has been shown to be absolutely rejected now by the great bulk of ministers of the denomination.

The subject was brought up by two of the most eminent ministers of the sect, Drs. O. P. Gifford, of Buffalo, and R. H. Conwell, of Philadelphia.

Dr. Gifford said: "The essence of the Lord's Supper is in the power to discern the Lord's Body. Immersed men who fail to discern the Lord's Body do not observe the Lord's Supper. Unimmersed men who do discern the Lord's body do observe the Lord's Supper."

Dr. Conwell took a similar view. He said: "Not only is baptism not a prerequisite to the Lord's Supper, but, on the contrary, it is an ordinance peculiarly adapted to the needs of the erring and imperfect."

The Rev. M. Banta, of Brooklyn, said he had been a Baptist for forty years, and a Close Communionist for sixteen years. He had studied the question carefully and had read all the Close Communion tracts of the American Baptist Publication Society, and had come to the conclusion that Close Communionism is wrong. Others spoke to the same effect. In fact the Congress appeared to be almost unanimous on this point, and only one voice, that of Rev. Dr. Lofton of Nashville, Tenn., was raised in favor of the old doctrine.

As it has always been noticed that the Baptists have adhered very closely to the Close Communion practice, the revelation that it is now practically to be abolished, together with the doctrine allied to it, has caused great surprise to the press of the United States generally. It is evidently a very easy matter for a sect to make a complete somersault in doctrine.

CHURCH UNITY AND THE LAMBETH CONFERENCE.

The Daily Columbian of New Westminster, B. C., gives an account of the opening of the Anglican Synod in that city on the 17th ult., the principal feature of which was a remarkable address delivered by Bishop Dart of that diocese, the most notable part of the address being his reference to the Lambeth Pan Anglican Conference which took place last summer. He said that through this Conference "the sense of unity of our world-wide communion was impressed upon the mind most forcibly," and that the encyclical letter issued by the Bishops of the Conference will be found to be a storehouse of sound principle, as the secular press have widely acknowledged.

As a matter of fact it has been generally said by the secular papers, the Times, the Daily Chronicle and others, that the results of the Council were meagre and unsatisfactory, for the reason that the Council had no authority whatsoever to enforce either unity of doctrine or of discipline, and even the newspaper organs of the Church itself have expressed their disappointment at the results. Bishop Dart even admits immediately after making the above statement that "disappointment has been expressed at the alleged lack of authoritative utterance on certain subjects." And how does he attempt to remove the disappointment? By asserting that it possessed real authority, or that it settled any of the disputes which are raging within the Church on the most vital issues? Not at all. On the contrary, he admits that it was without even the authority of a diocesan synod. He says:

"It must be remembered that the assembly was a voluntary conference, not a synod. That is to say none of the sixty-three points which the Bishops agreed to put forward in their encyclical are of obligation on the Church; and in fact, aware as they were that their decisions would be of no avail, they did not attempt to settle a single point on which there is at present a violent conflict raging within the bosom of the Church. They confined themselves merely to platitudes on sociological questions."

We had the other day an example of this diversity, when forty clergymen and twenty laymen went to a London church to protest against a desecration

of the church itself, and of the clerical office, by the celebration of the marriage of a divorced man, and though the marriage did not take place in that church, another clergyman was found to celebrate it without qualms of conscience.

Why did not the Bishops come to some decision on a matter which affects so vitally the very foundation of Christian society, a matter on which Christ has pronounced so definitely that "what God hath joined together, let no man put asunder?"

The assembly of the apostles at Jerusalem, recorded in the fifteenth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, when it was maintained by some new converts that circumcision should be practiced under the Christian law, was a type of the authority of the pastors of the true Church when assembled in council, and they could say definitely of their decisions: "It hath seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us to lay no further burden upon you than these necessary things." As the Bishops of the Lambeth conference were aware that they could not make laws after the example of the apostles, they did wisely not to attempt it, but they acknowledged thereby that they are not the successors of the apostles, and that their Church, of which they boast that it is "world-wide," has none of the authority with which Christ invested His Church.

We might say the same thing of an occurrence which has taken place still more recently than the marriage which was interrupted at St. Mary Abbot's church. A cable despatch of last week informs us that Bishop Earle of Marlborough, England, arranged to have "Father" Ignatius, the famous monk and superior of Llanthony Abbey, deliver a series of sermons or lectures in the Church at Bishopsgate, but the congregation protested against the arrangement, threatening the church for the purpose of openly expressing their disapproval when the first lecture was attempted to be given.

It is well known that the so styled monk of Llanthony has very High Church doctrinal opinions. He maintains the sacerdotal character of the Anglican ministry, the Real Presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper, the necessity of paying due reverence to God's saints, and especially to the Mother of God, and other doctrines distasteful to those of Low Church views. The protests of the congregation were directed against these doctrines, and when the Bishop overruled the objections raised his remarks were met with a storm of hisses and cries of dissent.

Such scenes as this are now a matter of course in the Anglican churches. The disputes on these matters were well known to the Bishops who assembled at Lambeth, and why did they not take some action to prevent their recurrence? The answer to this is that they had no authority. But if they represented the teaching body of the Church of Christ, they would have had this authority.

Bishop Dart admits that some central and efficient authority is now needed over the whole Anglican Church. He says: "It seems not unreasonable, however, to hold that the Church would be strengthened by the development of the Conference into a Synod, which would take cognizance of and authoritatively decide upon important questions. But any approach to this was made impossible by the fear of giving undue power and prominence to the See of Canterbury. I cannot but think this fear to be groundless, for the circumstances of our times are widely different from those which fostered the growth of the Papacy. A centralized despotism could hardly be created now, as in the Middle Ages, at least in the Anglican communion. It is now universally felt that the independence and autonomy of national churches, and, I may add, of the churches of growing nations, should be carefully preserved, in accordance with ancient and Catholic precedent. * * *

It is well, no doubt, to be cautious about making changes. *Festina lente* (proceed slowly) is a good motto. But we may hope that before the next Conference it will be universally seen that the independence and autonomy of national churches are entirely compatible with the due recognition of the Archbishop of Canterbury as *primus inter pares* (the first among equals), and also with some means by which each church, in emergencies, can profit by the wisdom and experience of the most capable men in the entire communion."

Here is a complete admission that Anglicanism has destroyed one of the essential qualities of the Church of Christ—unity. Christ did not build His Churches but His Church upon the rock, Peter. He did not command that we should hear the Churches, but the one Church which He established. It was not said of the Churches, but of the Church of the living God, that it is "the pillar and the

ground of truth." But the Bishop of New Westminster admits that the modern Church of England is made up of a number of independent churches, while throwing out the hope that at some future time it will become reunited under one head. In the meantime it lacks the essential mark of unity, without which the Church of Christ cannot exist, and without which there can be no Catholic Church in which we profess our belief when we recite the Apostles Creed.

The Bishop expresses the hope that the See of Canterbury may yet be recognized as the primatial See of the entire Anglican communion. That is to say, the Archbishop of Canterbury will become at some time the Pope of Anglicanism. He gives as his reason for this belief that "American Bishops would not go to New York, nor African Bishops to Capetown, nor Indian Bishops to Calcutta, nor Australian Bishops to Sydney with such alacrity as they will, one and all, flock to Lambeth as to their common centre in their Christian motherland of richest historical associations."

But we do not find any scriptural authority for recognizing the successor of Mathew Parker as head of the Universal Church. We do find that Christ committed to St. Peter the care of His whole flock, His lambs and His sheep, but we do not find that this commission was ever given to Queen Elizabeth, from whom alone Matthew Parker's authority was derived. If, then, a head of the whole Church is to be looked for, why not look for such a head in St. Peter's successor, who cannot be any one but the true Pope. A fictitious authority can never fulfil his office as head of the Church of Christ, and even Anglicans will see the absurdity of setting up an anti-Pope to take the place of the occupant of St. Peter's Chair.

May we not take it as a sign of a quick return to Catholic truth when we find Anglican Bishops at the close of the nineteenth century admitting that a central authority is necessary for the universal Church? But another step, and they will acknowledge that St. Peter's successor is the only head of the Church who can be recognized as having the authority of Scripture and tradition to sustain his right to universal jurisdiction.

LEAGUE OF THE SACRED HEART.

General Intention for January.

(Named by the Cardinal Protector and blessed by the Pope for all Associates.
VOCATIONS TO THE PRIESTHOOD.

Messenger of the Sacred Heart.
Our Divine Saviour more than once compares His Church to a vast fold wherein there are sheep and shepherds, and where the shepherds tend and watch the sheep. So long as there are vigilant shepherds, there is little danger of any of the flock being lost; for a good shepherd will always go in search of the lost sheep. He will leave the ninety-nine in the mountains and go to seek that which is astray. But if there is no shepherd, there is danger that the strayed one may be caught in the shrubbery and perish. Christ himself was the great Good Shepherd. Those who take His place here on earth are His priests and pastors, and are modelled after the great Prototype. They continue His work near the little ones; and it is a part of the Divine economy that His flocks should never be without their guiding voice.

But, sad to say, there is a dearth of shepherds. There is a want of priests to carry on God's work among His people. The Church is asking for priests. "There is no knowledge of God in the land." (Os. iv. 1-4.) Millions of souls are clamoring for the bread of life, and there is no one to break it to them. "We are confounded because we have heard the reproach. Shame hath covered our faces, because strangers are come upon the sanctuaries." (Jer. ii. 51.) Priests are needed to preserve in the fold and lead to heaven's door the two hundred and eighty millions of souls who are enjoying the privilege of membership in the true Church of Christ, but who may be lost. "He that thinketh himself to stand, let him take heed lest he fall." (1 Cor. x. 12.) Priests are needed to bring back to the fold the hundred and fifty millions of Christians still outside the true Church. "O her sheep I have that are not of this fold: there also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd." Priests are needed to bring into the Church the unnumbered millions who never heard mention made of the name of Christ the Saviour. "If our Gospel be also hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of unbelievers, that the light of the Gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should not shine unto them." (3 Cor. iv. 3-4.)

Can we wonder, then, that the Holy Father should ask us to pray for the recruitment of the clergy? And what better way have we to work for the extension of the Kingdom of God on earth than by offering our little sacri-

fices and supplications for an increase in the number of the shepherds?

The grace of a call to the sublime dignity of the priesthood is one that God alone can give. "You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you, and appointed you that you should go and should bring forth fruit: and your fruit shall remain." (John xv. 16.) It is true that the Spirit of God breathes where it will, but it is also true that the germ of a vocation to the priesthood is something that may be cultivated: it grows under the influence of good words and good examples; and God's service and glory require that we all should do our share, by word and example, to supply the Church with worthy priests.

Some people would lay the blame on God when they see the ranks of the priesthood thinning, and they assert that if God seeks the extension of His kingdom in this world, He should provide the agents. But is this fair? Are there not in every parish a few souls chosen by God for the ministry of His altars? Who has not met the boy of ten or twelve, with the innocent, sweet, joyful face; the peace of God shining on the open, frank countenance; studious at school; but anxious to be near the altar, and never so much at home as when he is in the church or chapel, where the Sacramental Presence keeps his reverent and prayerful; the child who avoids sin and practices virtue by instinct. These are youths that have the mark of predestination on their brows, and in nine cases out of ten, carry the germ of vocation in their hearts. They are numerous enough, but how is it that so few reach the goal of the priesthood? Is it dread of dishonor that holds youth back? Or is it the life of self-denial and sacrifice that the priest's life entails? Or is it the want of encouragement that the child receives from parents and pastors?

Sometimes it is all these combined. But there is one reason that cannot be too strongly insisted on as a source of failure of many vocations. Parents do not sufficiently realize what a tremendous work for God's Church they must begin to do in the family circle. It is the mother who must prepare the soul of the child for the grace of vocation, when she begins to teach him to distinguish between good and evil, and when she inspires him with the spirit of piety. It is the true mother who prepares the soil for the germ of vocation, and for that purpose pours forth her ardent prayers to God. But it is not sufficient to prepare the ground. The germ must be cultivated, and the earlier this is done in the springtime of life, the stronger will the stalk be, and the more fruit it will be able to bear. To cultivate the seed of vocation is to take charge of the child when his reason is budding, and by word and example to inspire a great respect for the sublime dignity of the priesthood. This is done when the child learns that the priest has a power that angels do not possess; that no matter how lowly he may appear, he is in dignity above kings and potentates; that he is a fellow citizen of the saints; one of a chosen generation. On earth, the priest is the vicegerent of God, the dispenser of God's sacraments, the consoler of God's afflicted, who follows the Great Master's example, going around doing good. It is in this character mainly that the priest presents himself to the mind of a child, and it is in this character that he should remain impressed there. If, on the contrary, the little child is obliged to hear criticism after criticism of God's ministers, and of what he has been taught to venerate in them, it will be impossible to expect from him a reverence for them, much less an ambition to be one of them. The child's mind is essentially assimilative, and we need not be surprised if, as the result of such criticisms, he imbibes false impressions that may influence his whole after life.

When parents hand their child over to outside teachers, they expect a corresponding care to be taken of his soul. After the parent, it is the teacher, or the pastor, who is the instrument that God uses to prepare the royal priesthood which is to extend His kingdom here on earth. And if it is meritorious to instruct youth, to make them good citizens, loyal subjects, and worthy members of society, how much more precious is it in the sight of God to form the mind and the heart of those who are to instruct others and lead them to heaven. "They that are learned shall shine as the brightness of the firmament: and they that instruct others to justice as the stars to all eternity." (Dan. xii. 5.)

For these reasons let all concerned in the instruction of youth, cultivate by judicious direction, reading, teaching, exhortation, by prayer, and by the other means of grace, the souls of the children in whom they detect the germ of vocation. Christ desires to save souls, and it depends a great deal on the co-operation of these agents whether they be saved or not. Let them guide the child safely through the years of the strong passions; and the victory is half won. Let them talk to him of the splendours of the Catholic Church; of the struggle of the Catholic faith for supremacy; of the victories it has already gained. Let them not fail to speak of the millions of souls perishing for want of some one to carry the Word of Life to them. And, above all, let them not fail to pray. God's grace will do the rest.

Of course, it does not follow that when parents, and teachers, and pastors, have done all these things, and the child has responded, that he is called to the priesthood. The designs of God are so secret and impenetrable that we need not be surprised when we find that He has other ends in view for

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