

CHRISTIANITY IN JAPAN.

THE FIRST CONVERSION IN THE LAND OF THE ISLAND EMPIRE—CHRISTIANS WHO PRESERVE THE FAITH AFTER CENTURIES OF PERSECUTION.

The story of the Catholic Church in Japan reads like a romance, writes Father Walsh of the Propagation of the Faith. As a result of the labors of St. Francis Xavier and his successors, more than a million Japanese (according to some authorities, including a native historian, nearly two million) were converted to the Catholic faith. People from every rank in life embraced the newly-taught doctrine, and hundreds of churches and chapels dotted the islands. All this was accomplished within fifty years, in the latter half of the sixteenth century.

The jealousy of potentates was aroused by these successes, and the fear of foreign invasion, excited to some extent, doubtless, by the boasts of the European traders, brought about a series of persecutions in which more than 1,000 missionaries and 200,000 native Christians were martyred.

From the days of the apostles no more sublime examples of heroism have been offered to the world. Mr. Adachi Kinunike, a Japanese and a non-Catholic, writing on this subject in the Cosmopolitan for February, 1905, says: "In 1507, had you been in Nagasaki, you would have witnessed a scene such as those for which the days of Nero were notorious. You would have seen six Franciscan priests, the Jesuits, and a number of Christian converts. They were not, like their great Master on Calvary, nailed to crosses, they were thrown into the light of funeral pyres built at the foot of the crosses, the people read the reign of the law of the land."

"Some of the native converts were sealed in rice-sacks made of straw and flung into the fire; others were marched to the edge of a precipice from which they were hurled to the chasm below, down many hundred feet; others were thrown into a furnace to be burned alive; others were forced to starve to death in an iron cage in front of a richly laden tray of tempting food. More sinister forms of torture even than these were served to the Christian converts of the seventeenth century. Without a murmur and with perfect composure, these converts went to meet death; and they commanded respect of the samurai. Thousands of prisoners were taken to a rock in Nagasaki Harbor—the rock which is called Pappenberg—and hurled into the waters of the harbor."

This is the testimony of a native Japanese, who, though he does not profess Christianity, has impartially searched the records of his country and has not hesitated to make known the cruelties of the past.

For more than two hundred years notice-boards stood beside highways, ferries and mountain passes, containing among other prohibitions the following: "So long as the sun shall warm the earth let no Christian be so bold as to come to Japan; and let all know that the King of Spain himself, or the Christians' God, or the Great God of all, if He violate this commandment, shall pay for it with his head."

During this period not only was Christianity seemingly exterminated, but all intercourse with foreign traders was broken off, except to a small degree with the Chinese and the Dutch.

It is well known that to the United States belongs the credit of opening up Japan, through a treaty negotiated by Commodore Perry and ratified in 1854. This led the way to treaties with various European nations, and in 1858 religious liberty was allowed to foreigners, but not yet to natives. Catholic missionaries were sent from the Paris Seminary for Foreign Missions to Yokohama, Nagasaki and Hakodate; and in 1865 a church built by Europeans was dedicated.

"On March 17, 1865," writes Father Pettigrew, "about 12:30 some fifteen persons were standing at the church door. I went out and opened it. I had scarce time to say a 'Psalm' when three women, between fifty and sixty years of age, knelt down beside me and said in a low voice: 'The hearts of all of us here do not differ from yours.' 'Indeed,' I exclaimed, 'where do you come from?' 'They mentioned their village, adding: 'At home everybody is the same as we are.' 'Scarcely had these Japanese opened their hearts to us than they displayed an amount of trustfulness which contrasted strangely with the behaviour of their pagan brethren. I was obliged to answer all their questions, and to talk to them of O Deus Sana, O Yaso Sama, and Santa Maria Sama, by which names they designate God, Jesus Christ, and the Blessed Virgin. The view of the statue of the Madonna and Child recalled Christmas to them, which they said they had celebrated in the eleventh month. They asked me if we were not at the seventeenth day of the Time of Sadness (Lent); nor was St. Joseph unknown to them; they call him O Yaso Samana you fu, 'the adoptive father of our Lord.' In the midst of this volley of questions footsteps were heard; immediately all dispersed. But as soon as the newcomers were recognized all returned, laughing at their fright. 'They are people of our village,' they said. 'They have the same hearts as we have.' 'However, we had to separate for fear of awakening the suspicions of the officials whose visit I feared. On Maundy Thursday and Good Friday, April 13 and 14, 1,500 people visited the Church of Nagasaki. The presbytery was invaded; the faithful took the opportunity to satisfy their devotion before the crucifix and the statues of Our Lady. During the early days of May the missionaries learnt of the existence of 2,500 Christians scattered in the neighborhood of the city. On May 15th there arrived delegates from an island not very far from here. After a short interview we dismissed them, retaining only the catechist and the leader of the pilgrimage. The catechist, named Peter, gave us the most valuable information. Let me first say that his formula for baptism does not

differ at all from ours, and that he pronounced it very distinctly. He declares that there are many Christians left up and down all over Japan. He cited in particular one place where there are over 1,000 Christian families. He then asked us about the Great Chief of the Kingdom at Komo, whose name he desired to know. When I told him that the Vicar of Christ, Pope Pius IX., would be very happy to learn the consoling news given us by himself and his fellow countrymen, he gave full expression to his joy. Nevertheless before leaving he wished to make quite sure that we were the true successors of the ancient missionaries. 'Have you no children?' he asked timidly. 'You and all your brethren, Christian and heathen, of Japan, are all the children whom God has given us. Our children we cannot have. The priest must, like your first apostles, remain all his life unmarried.' 'At this reply Peter and his companion bent their heads down to the ground and cried out. 'They are celibate, thank God.' 'Next day an entire Christian village invited a visit from the missionaries. Two days later six hundred more Christians sent a deputation to Nagasaki. By June 8 the missionaries had learned the existence of twenty-five Christian communities and within a few months more than ten thousand were found who without priest or altar had kept the Catholic faith through generations, covering a period of nearly two hundred years. This is one of the most remarkable examples of fidelity to be found in the annals of the Christian apostles.

"The secret soon leaked out. Christianity was still a proscribed religion, forbidden under pain of death. In 1868 a fresh edict was issued and displayed on the public boards, declaring that: 'The evil sect called Christianity is strictly prohibited. Suspicious persons should be reported to the proper authorities, and rewards will be given.' Fresh edicts against Christians were published and between October, 1869, and January, 1870, 4,500 Christians were deported from Urakami and the Goto Islands, the chief centers of Catholicity."

"The next few years are set down in the annual mission reports as a time of mingled persecution and liberty, yet in spite of the expiring efforts of hostility and repression, the growth of Catholicity and the expansion of Catholic works went on very rapidly. It was not until 1873 that all religious persecution ceased and it is calculated that between 1868 and 1873 from 6,000 to 8,000 Christians were born from their families, deported, and subjected to cruel tortures, nearly 2,000 dying in prison.

During the last quarter of a century the Catholic Church has made steady progress, and counts upon its roll of missionaries about 140 European and 35 native priests, under the jurisdiction of four Bishops, including the Archbishop of Tokio and one Prefect Apostolic. Most of the native priests are from the diocese of Nagasaki, and are the descendants of the early Christians. There are also many native nuns, trained by the Sisters of St. Paul of Chartres, France, who were the first religious women to enter Japan (in 1872). The first native nun was Agatha Kataoka, in religion Sister Margaret. She was the sister and daughter of martyrs and died young from ill usage, which she had met as a child in prison where she saw her father perish under the blows of the executioner.

Schools, asylums for infants and orphans, dispensaries and hospitals, including two leper houses, stand to-day as witnesses of great struggles which have been made with scanty means, by self-denying men and women. The latest statistics based on the Missions Catholiques of Rome and the Compté-Rendu of the Paris Seminary, gives a Catholic population of 61,500.

CATHOLIC LAYMEN.

FORGOTTEN SOCIAL DUTIES WHICH SHOULD HAVE ATTENTION.

Indifferentism, writes Dr. Barry, in a Catholic Truth paper, entitled "The Layman in the Church," is the religious disease of our age. Other men have invented other names for it, such as Positivism, Agnosticism, Secularism.

In the recent encyclical, Pope Pius pointed out that many dangers accrued to the Church from the attitude of the average Catholic layman towards the faith and its teaching whether he was professor, literary man or simply private individual.

When the layman has done with school, says Dr. Barry, he too frequently has done with religion. Even if he still pursue the duties of religion, he is satisfied to think he has done all that is required of him, when he has received the sacraments and made certain contributions to the pastor.

As for an active Catholic life, in which he should endeavor to make his Catholicity a living force in the social world and propagate its truths, this conception of his religious duties never enters into his mind. Yet by our baptism, we are soldiers of the Catholic Church, apostles to those who do not believe, and citizens of the gospel kingdom. We have all rights within the Church; but we have all obligations, as much to others as to the Church and ourselves. It is undeniable says Dr. Barry, that our average Catholic abstains from active social Catholicity. Our young Catholics have not that sense ingrained and insistent, of duties to be undertaken during their spare hours, which has created in England and in America the immense network of non-Catholic voluntary associations, so distinguished for their encouragement of the higher life and their attempt towards social amelioration.

Most of our associations, if not all, are lamentably undermined. Considering the large percentage of young lay Catholics who might be drawn upon, the quota engaged in active social Catholicity is far from satisfactory.

The question is, however, how can we increase their numbers? One must begin at the beginning, and the beginning is to recognize frankly that the lay Apostolate is lamentably wanting in our midst.

It is not enough to hear Mass and

receive the sacraments. Men must be taught—and the lesson cannot be begun too soon in life—that there is a Catholic social creed.

The difficulty lies mainly in retaining, after their school-days, youths of both sexes who have already received the lesson, more diligently than ever, since the whole machinery of public Christian law which might avail has long since been swept away in modern countries. Nothing is left but voluntary effort.

The great hindrance to the fulfilment of one's duties, says the doctor, in effect, is drink, the continual indulgence in uncharitable selfishness and the disorder which this habit carries with it. Every association, therefore, which promotes sobriety, is a branch of the Lay Apostolate. Temperance is, in fact, a commendable name for the blameless Christian life, as it bears on our combat against the social evil in all its forms.

In this it is the layman who can strike the boldest stroke. He can take over the boy as he leaves school, and induce him to enter a social brotherhood. In gaining a youth to the cause of temperance, he is practically assuring him his spiritual and material welfare in the world. The Catholic boy should be taught to consider his duties as a citizen; he must learn that his fellow in religion may need his services as a municipal officer, as a magistrate, or in some other public capacities.

Let every Catholic ask himself, says Dr. Barry, if he has helped any social Catholic enterprise, and what help has been given in accordance with his power and his ability. The effort at heroism can be the only solution, in these days of religious anarchy and indifference. The victory over indifferentism, secularism and the worship of money, can be assured not by the clergy, who live out of the world, but by the laymen who live in it.

The Mutton-head Catholic.

Says the Dublin Leader: "The ordinary man, when he talks of putting his country above his religion, is not, we believe, a heretic, but merely a mutton-head. It seems mere A B C to us that, so long as a man professes, to be a Catholic, his religion is above all. He may profess to be a Catholic, and not act like one, in which case he is a sinner; or he may call himself a Catholic, and say that his country is above his religion, in which case he is probably only a mutton-head, and does not rightly understand what he says, or else he has ceased to be a Catholic."

ST. LOUIS GIRL, A CRIPPLE, CURED AT SHRINE OF ST. ANN.

LAME TEN YEARS, SHE LEADS PROCESSION AT CLOSE OF NOVENA.

From St. Louis, Mo., comes an apparently well authenticated account of the miraculous cure of the crippled child of a widow of that city at the close of a public novena at St. Ann's shrine in St. Joseph's Church, Chicago.

While kneeling before a shrine in her home, where candles had burned constantly for more than a week, Mrs. Anna Guttfleisch, 928 North Sixty-sixth street, St. Louis, heard the glad news that her daughter, Miss Emma Guttfleisch, afflicted for ten years, had regained the use of her limbs.

Word of the remarkable recovery of the girl, who had fasted and prayed before the shrine of St. Ann in Chicago for six days, was carried to St. Louis in a despatch.

Two Chicagoans also claim to have been made whole through their faith. They are Annie Marie Morrison, 2 years old, 239 East Twenty-second street, whom her parents insist, has been paralyzed from her waist down, touched the splinter of the bones of St. Ann and is declared to have been healed. C. F. McDermott, 38 years old, said to have been all but sightless and now able to read the finest print.

Ten years ago Miss Guttfleisch, then a girl 10 years old, resided with her mother and brothers at High Street and Cass avenue, St. Louis. While walking near her home an affray between two men took place, and she was shot in the right thigh. The bullet tore the ligaments and, despite the treatment of physicians, the limb shrank and grew several inches shorter than the other.

Months ago the girl read of the remarkable cures which had taken place at the shrine of St. Ann, in Chicago, and expressed faith that if she went there she would be cured. She had little encouragement from any one with the exception of Rev. Emil J. Lempeks of St. Barbara's parish, of which she was a member. With his aid she was able to make the journey to the shrine.

"If it is true that she has been cured it is surely the grace of God," said Father Lempeks when he was told of the news, "for the girl was terribly crippled. But she had the faith that would move mountains," he continued with a smile.

The throng that filled St. Joseph's Church, at Chicago, first saw Miss Guttfleisch at the opening of the novena, when she limped painfully down the aisle to the shrine.

After having prayed for six days at the shrine, the young girl noticed that her leg was longer than before. The next day the braces which she wore gave her pain, and on the following night she could no longer walk with the braces which she had worn for ten years and

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which doctors had said she would wear to the end of her life. The last day both limbs were of the same length and she could walk perfectly well. She now uses both limbs with equal freedom.

In the evening when the procession in honor of the saint was made around the block in which the church is located Miss Guttfleisch led the line of march.

"It was my faith in the great powers of the saint," said Miss Guttfleisch. "My leg that was 31 inches short, has lengthened out. It is stronger even than the other. When I left St. Louis the physician laughed at me. But I had my faith. Now I can go back home and help to support my poor widowed mother."

IS IT IGNORANCE OR MALICE?

Our esteemed contemporary, the Baptist Watchman of Boston, has been making important discoveries. It finds that St. Liguori, one of the distinguished moral theologians of the Church, teaches that deception, lying, and even perjury, were practiced by Catholics, and, worse than all, that the Popes have sanctioned every one of these teachings. Since making his alarming discovery the Watchman has been very much perturbed and exclaims: "How can we deal with Catholics who believe such things allowable!" All this learning and knowledge

"Amaze th' unlearn'd and make the learned smile." Almost thirty years ago, Dr. Little-dale of London published in book form all this worthless trash, and the performance called forth such a protest from scholars that, in the second and third editions of his work, Little-dale made so many corrections that the final edition was not nearly so alarming as the first. Finally, Father Ryder of the Oratory published a work dealing scathingly with all of Little-dale's charges with such effect that no responsible person, since that time, has been so reckless as to repeat the slanders. Yet, in spite of all these facts, it is left to the Watchman in the very Athens of America apparently ignorant to attempt to rehabilitate the antiquated and discredited original charges. Poor Boston—Sacred Heart Review.

A PROTESTANT IMPRESSION OF POPE PIUS X.

What shall I say of my impression of the present Pope? It would seem almost an impertinence to describe him whose features are now so universally known. But this I can and do say that he looked grave and almost sad, "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief," and indeed one who has at all followed the history of the Church since his accession will not be surprised at hearing this. To believe in the Pope one must be a Catholic: to love Pius X. one has only to have seen him. What can be more moving than this lonely figure, simple and so much magnificent, with the burdens of the universal Church on his devoted shoulders, a prisoner for life in the Vatican, when all the affections of his ardent nature strive ever after freedom and his beloved people—a man of one policy and one only, to spread the blessings of concord, religion and peace throughout the world. Let us ever think of him as engaged in the sublime task he has conscientiously set before himself as the work of his Pontificate, "instaurare omnia in Christo," to reestablish all things in Christ—his own words taken from his first encyclical.—A. W. Perceval in the Beaumont (Eng.) Review.

The Bad Catholic.

"The Catholic who conforms to the bare letter, and not to the spirit of the obligations laid upon him by the Church is a poor specimen of a member of the household of the faith," says the Brooklyn Tablet. "Sometimes the conduct of his Klany life is not at all affected by his frequentation of the sacraments; and this shows that his confessions are 'bad' for the proof of a good confession is the amendment of conduct. There are so-called Catholics who go regularly to Mass on Sundays and approach the sacraments of penance and of the Eucharist, and who, nevertheless, continue to lie, to cheat, to pilfer in their dealings with their fellow-men, who devote six days of the week to toiling and schem-

WESTERN FAIR, LONDON.

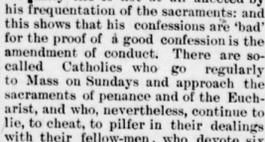
London, Ont., Sept. 11-19. NEW DEPARTURE IN PRIZE LIST. The management of the Western Fair has this year endeavored to so arrange the prize list that everyone may have an opportunity to exhibit something. In the past the ordinary farmer has thought he had no chance to compete with the professional man and therefore would not show at all. With the object in view of inducing all to show there has been placed this year in the prize list an amateur class in apples also one in pears and one in flowers. A large number of people throughout the country have stock, fruit or grain and the ladies have plenty of their work that would make a very creditable exhibit, but in the past they have withheld from exhibiting for reasons as given above. Let all those having worthy animals or articles bring them this year and the Western Fair of 1908 will go on record as the best ever.

Especially should this be true in the Ladies' Department as the prize list has been thoughtfully revised and made up-to-date, all the latest kinds of goods have been placed upon it and good prize giving, glass cases have been provided to protect the work from dust and the display this year in this part of the Main Building should certainly be attractive to those who take an interest in ladies' work. The Secretary will be pleased to mail a Prize List and entry form to any address or you may get one by calling at the office.

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