

The True Witness

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ECCLESIASTICAL CALENDAR.

NOVEMBER—1871.
Friday, 24—St. John of the Cross.
Saturday, 25—St. Catherine, V. M.
Sunday, 26—Twenty-sixth after Pentecost
Monday, 27—Of the Ferial.
Tuesday, 28—SS. Irenus and Comp., MM
Wednesday, 29—Vigil of St. Andrew.
Thursday, 30—St. Andrew, Ap.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

The re-organization of the French army is making rapid progress. By the end of the year the strongest strategic positions on the eastern frontier will be occupied by completely reconstructed and thoroughly equipped corps d'armee. The trial by court-martial of the parties accused of the assassination of Generals Thomas and Lecomte has ended. Nineteen of the prisoners were pronounced guilty. Verdagner and seven others were sentenced to suffer death, one to imprisonment for life at hard labor, and ten to various terms of imprisonment. The Constitutionnel says the Duc d'Harcourt, French Ambassador to the Papal Court, has sent a telegram to the Count d'Remusat, stating that the Pope has expressed his intention of leaving Rome when a bill is passed concerning the Italian Parliament in that city.—Count de Chambord, chief of the elder branch of the Bourbons, contradicts a report that he intends to surrender his hereditary right to the throne of France.

At Madrid the Committee of the Cortes on the Budget have agreed to report in favor of a tax on interest on Spanish bonds held at home and in foreign countries. Movements of the Radical members of the Cortes have resulted in the defeat of the Ministry upon a test question, and a Cabinet crisis has occurred. The debates at Friday's sittings were intensely exciting.—During the discussion a proposition to censure the Government, was brought forward by the adherents of Zorilla. A counter motion was submitted by Ochoa, providing for granting entire liberty to religious societies throughout Spain, and the suppression of the decrees of the Provisional Government, of which Zorilla was a member, relative thereto. Pending this, a motion was made to declare the sitting of the Cortes permanent. A spirited discussion followed. The Government eventually demanded its rejection as a Cabinet question, but their opponents had the majority, for upon a division of the House, the motion was found to be adopted by 173 to 118. Admiral Malcampo, President of the Council of State and head of the Ministry, at once mounted the tribune and read a Royal Decree, proroguing the sitting of the Cortes without delay. The King held a council, after which the Ministry resigned in a body, but the belief is expressed in high quarters that, with some modifications, they will continue in office.

There are great complaints of disorganization in the public departments at Constantinople. The Sultan's orders requiring economy in the administration of public affairs is misinterpreted, and not satisfactorily carried out. Harmony does not prevail in the cabinet, and a crisis is looked for.

A despatch received in London from the State Department at Washington thanks the Consuls of the United States in England and on the Continent for their efforts in behalf of the inhabitants of Chicago. It says that the American Government is gratified to see, in the liberal response to the appeal of its representatives abroad, evidence of international sympathy. Dr. McLeod states officially that he has attended the Queen for over thirteen years, and declares that all reports to the effect that Her Majesty has shown symptoms of weakness are unqualifiedly false. The Standard announces that negotiations between the British and French Governments for a modification of the Commercial Treaty have been broken off; no cause for the interruption is assigned. A large Radi-

cal meeting attended by 4,000 persons, was held in the City of Bristol on Saturday. Sir Charles W. Dilke, M.P., addressed the assemblage. There was much uproar and fighting during, the progress of the meeting, and a band was prevented playing the National Anthem—"God save the Queen."

Mexico is engaged in a civil war. Many States are pronouncing for the revolutionists, and a change in the Government is anticipated before long. Large armies are being collected, and moved through the country. General alarm prevails everywhere.

The Russian Grand Duke has at length arrived at New York, the vessels comprising the squadron having experienced headwinds and heavy weather throughout the voyage. Small pox is spreading in New York and creating much alarm among the population of the city. Thirty-three new cases were reported during the last two days.

Dr. Dollinger, in recognition of his services to the cause of Protestantism, has received, by a large majority of voices, from the University of Oxford, the honorary degree of D.C.L. It is true that with amusing inconsistency Dr. Dollinger professes still to hold all the doctrines of the Catholic Church, with the exception of that defined by the General Council of the Vatican; doctrines which, as the Times, commenting upon this marvellous inconsistency, truthfully observes "are scarcely less antagonistic to intellectual liberty than the Vatican dogma. He, and his chief allies, still profess to believe in the existence of an infallible authority somewhere;" though where, and how it obtains utterance, and what its organs are, as the Times adds, "points left conveniently indefinite."

And herein lies the absurdity of the position assumed by Dr. Dollinger and his allies. They see that they must, if they would not renounce all supernaturalism, all belief in anything beyond the grasp of reason, and their senses, admit the existence somewhere of an infallible and supernatural authority. No man by the exercise of his natural reason can convince himself of the truth of the doctrine of the Incarnation. It is, to say the very least, a doctrine as much repugnant to natural reason, to believe that a Virgin could have conceived and borne a son, as it is to believe that, on certain matters, the Pope is, by the Grace of God, supernaturally preserved from error; as to the truth of the statements made in the works commonly called the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Luke. Dr. Dollinger & Co. have no, and in the nature of things can have no, personal cognisance. Tested by human reason, and the physiological laws supposed to govern the world the thing is impossible—and therefore incredible; and if any believe the story on which the entire Christian system is based, they must do so in reliance upon the infallibility of the authority on which it is propounded to them. Now this is the actual position of the Dollingerites, and of all Protestants who still retain some taint of Christianity. To them there must be, somewhere, some infallible authority, or there would be no assignable reason for their believing anything in the supernatural order, not cognisable by reason and the senses; and yet where is this infallible authority to be found? Dr. Dollinger as yet, has not attempted to answer this question; and as the Times remarks his position is therefore logically untenable.

The position of the Catholic is logical, and therefore tenable. If he assert the existence of an infallible authority, he will also, tell you where it is to be found, how it gives utterance to its decisions. To him the Catholic Church, speaking by the organ of a General Council whose decrees are sanctioned by the Pope, or speaking by the Pope *ex cathedra* on a question of faith and morals and addressing the Universal Church, is to the Catholic the one infallible authority by Christ Himself appointed for all time, to which all are bound reverently to submit themselves. The Catholic position is at least consistent, and logical. So also in a certain sense is that of the sceptic who, denying the existence or possible existence at any time, or at any place, of an infallible authority, denies also the possibility of attaining to certainty in matters above the natural order and which do not fall within the ken of the senses. He also is logically consistent, and his position is intellectually respectable in comparison with that of the Dollingerites, who, till they proclaim themselves out and out Protestants recognizing as the sole supreme judge in all questions of faith and morals the individual conscience, do but make themselves by their inconsistency ridiculous and contemptible in the eyes of the intelligent public. Their present position is untenable, and must soon be exchanged for that of unqualified Protestantism. This the Oxford University sees, and therefore it confers its honors upon their chief. This too the London Times perceives; for in the editorial article from which we have already quoted it says:—

"If Dr. Dollinger and the Bavarian Catholics are prepared to dispute the Dogma on independent grounds, they have started a Protestant movement;

they have declared that there is an authority superior to Councils, Popes, Bishops, and Priests; and that this is the purely spiritual authority which abides in each individual conscience."

Of course they have; but unless this spiritual authority be infallible it is not worth the lowest copper coin, the "red cent," in circulation on this Continent; and cannot therefore determine the somewhat important questions in dispute, amongst Protestants; whether for instance the Person known in history as Jesus, were the son of the carpenter Joseph, or of the Holy Ghost? Reason alone would to this question suggest the answer that He was the son of Joseph; and we cannot conceive how the individual spiritual authority resident in every individual conscience can suffice to overthrow, and set aside the conclusions of reason, fortified by all physiological experience since the world began.

We publish a letter that appeared in the London Times under the signature of J. A. Wylie, and is interesting, as showing how the Dollinger—or so-called "Old Catholic"—movement now progressing in Germany presents itself to the eyes of an intelligent Protestant:—

To the Editor of the Times.
Sir,—I have just returned from a six weeks' tour in Germany. One object of my journey was to look a little into the Alt-Catholic movement on the spot, and to hear what the leading Protestants in those countries which are more immediately the seat of this movement have to say about it. Your own columns, so far as I have had opportunity of seeing them in foreign towns, have during these past weeks borne ample evidence to the interest with which this movement is regarded by the people of Great Britain, and, although as a nation we are not in communion with Rome, the influence of that ecclesiastical body is far too powerful both in our own country and in the world to permit us to be indifferent to the changes it is undergoing. In these circumstances it may be of some consequence to know how the Alt-Catholic movement is regarded by those who have nearer opportunities of studying it.

I have seen some of the representative men of German Protestantism, and in their eyes the movement, I must confess, does not bulk quite so largely as it does in ours. Professor von Ranke, the author of *The History of the Popes*, whom I saw in Berlin, expects very little from it. He feels that the position of its leaders—neither in the Roman Church nor out of it, excommunicated by Rome, and yet refusing to adopt the Protestant creed—is an equivocal and weak one; and such too is the opinion of Dr. Hoffman, the General Superintendent, or Primate, of the Protestant Church of Prussia. The Munich meeting of Old Catholics had not then been held, but in the anticipation of that meeting it was Dr. Hoffman's opinion that if they should take up Tridentine ground matters would be worse rather than better as respects the hope of the movement issuing in a reformation of the Church of Rome. The Munich Council has since met; the ground it has taken up is very decidedly that of Trent, and so ends the hope, in Dr. Hoffman's opinion, of the movement becoming a reforming one. I travelled with Professor Vogel, of Vienna, from Dresden to Prague, and had a full interchange of sentiments with him both as regards this particular movement and as regards the whole attitude of Rome to the age. His opinion regarding the Alt-Catholic movement—for I will not trouble you with the other questions—was, in brief, that it will have no future. All these men very clearly see, what you have already pointed out, that the position taken up by the Old Catholics has not breadth enough for a popular movement. It may influence intellectual and speculative men, but it will fail with the masses. Those Protestant ministers who have lately visited Austria all agree in saying that the Catholic populations of that empire are not prepared to follow their leaders.

Agreeing in the main with the opinions of the distinguished men to whom I have referred, I expect a little more from the movement than they do. I have no idea that it will grow into a Reformation. It starts from a different point, and tends to another goal than the movement of Luther. It is based, not upon the Bible, but upon the Church, or, as Dr. Dollinger terms it, upon "History." He wishes to reform the edicts of Councils and Popes, and he takes the edicts of Councils and Popes to do this. This agency may read or destroy the Church, but it will never reform it. He must have a power outside Councils. This Dr. Dollinger does not see. For his learning, his character, and the singleness of his aims I have a very high respect, and in passing through Munich waited upon him to express my sympathy in the movement he had inaugurated. I expressed my opinion, delicately but plainly, that the movement, to succeed, must be based upon the Bible and the exemption of the conscience from all other authority. But Dr. Dollinger protested, as he had declared in public, that his standing was on History—that is, on the historical development of an infallible rule of faith in a living and organized body, the "Church" to wit. But here is the weak point of Dr. Dollinger's position. Why does he arrest that historical development at the 16th century? He accepts the dogmas of Councils and the teaching of the Church down to the close of the Council of Trent. But why does he stop there? Why does not the infallible guidance of the Spirit, conveyed through the Church, run down to our own times? If ever dogma was historically developed it is the infallibility of the Pope. It has been the teaching of the Church these two centuries. It is held by Liguori, and by Professor Perrone, of the Collegio Romano at Rome, that when the Pope speaks *ex cathedra* on matters of faith and morals he speaks infallibly. And last of all this dogma has been declared to be true by a Council possessing all the elements of ecumenicity, and in a higher degree than any other Council in the whole history of the Church. Dr. Dollinger's position just comes back to the old controversy, "Where is the seat of the Infallibility?" and there is not breadth enough here for a great popular movement. The Catholic nations, accepting the Infallibility, concern themselves but little about where it resides. Besides, the movement has had birth in a sceptical age. The times in the 16th century were very different indeed.

But I don't think the movement will die. If not as a reforming, it will live as a destructive power. Rome, by her excommunication of Dr. Dollinger and his compatriots, has secured this. Rome cannot revoke her sentence, and the Alt-Catholics cannot bow to it, and so they must go on to form a Church of their own, and are in fact doing so already. To support themselves, and make way against their great opponent, they must agitate and discuss, and, above all, enlighten the people. Every day their views will enlarge, and their sympathies widen, and this alone will be no slight emancipation from a system where there is but one principle—authority, and but one virtue—obedience. In short, in this movement we see another agency added to the many already existing, both political and intellectual, which are slowly breaking up the iron unity of a body which has weighed so heavily upon the liberty and civilization of the world.

I am, &c.,
J. A. WYLIE.
London Oct. 12.

Yet, though intelligent as Protestants go, Mr. Wylie must have appeared very silly to Dr. Dollinger, when he asked the latter why, instead of taking his stand on History, he did not take it on the Bible? But how was Dr. Dollinger, if he gave up his stand-point of History to get the Bible? how ascertain of what writings it, the Book, *par excellence*, was made up. True History alone can not give this; nothing but a living infallible authority can tell us what is the Bible, or compel respect for it as the inspired Word of God; but Mr. Wylie's proposition about making the Bible the basis of a movement calling itself "Old Catholic" must have struck the schismatic professor as silly indeed.

CIVIL AND RELIGIOUS LIBERTY.—SECTARIES AND LIBERAL CATHOLICS.—In the warfare that has been waged from time immemorial by sectaries against the Church, the words, civil and religious liberty, have been used by them in a style that would imply the existence of a belief in the proposition, that the Church was opposed to both. Perhaps at no time in the history of the Church since its foundation by our Divine Lord, have these terms been used to a greater extent than at present, and perhaps at no time in the history of Christianity, has there existed a body of men holding such a contradictory set of principles as the individuals who term themselves liberal Catholics. Between both parties however, the sectaries and the liberals, the Church holds on her independent course, looking neither to the right nor to the left, but leaves herself entirely in the care of her Divine Pilot, her Creator, her Perfector. Although the Church needs not the help of our feeble pen in her defence, still we may be permitted to examine the proposition of her enemies that she is opposed to liberty. In this examination which we propose to make, we deny flatly the premises of anti-Catholics, and non-Catholics. Our position is this. The Church has ever been favorable to sound liberty while she has been the antagonist of license. But license is the worst feature of despotism, therefore she has been true to liberty and opposed to despotism. What is liberty? It means an exemption of some kind from external restraint; but there is no fixed standard of such exemption, and while it varies in different states, so it may materially differ in its effect at different times. The mere notion of government implies restraint. This restraint when complete we would term slavery; where no restraint exists savagery triumphs, and such non-restraint can never obtain in any civilized community. In speaking therefore of Civil Liberty and the attitude of the Church thereto it behooves our opponents to state distinctly what they mean by this phrase which has become a conventional one on their part. It devolves upon them to shew clearly the principle of liberty, true, sound, orderly liberty to which the Church is opposed and we shall be grateful also, if when they cite—if they can—a case in point they will tell us by what standard or authority they judge the case, and when, where, or by whom such a standard or such an authority was accepted as binding by the civilized community. In our opinion as government expresses in its very existence, a compact between the governed and the governors, involving upon all some amount of sacrifice of person for the general good, so the amount of this sacrifice must be determined by the character and surroundings of the people; such amount to be equal to the first duty of a well-organized civil community, namely, the protection of the possession and enjoyment of life and property. The enlightened in different countries differ in opinion as to the best form of government. Our neighbors to the South of us never tire of proclaiming their form to be *par excellence*, the best and most useful and liberal in the world. The Englishman justly proud of his Constitution and the general system of his government which are in truth the foundation-stones of the system which was inaugurated by Washington and his confederates, and which remained comparatively pure until the Radicals swept away the rights of States and the safe-guards of American freedom is equally positive that no system under the sun equals his, and so on with the list of peoples. However

"For forms of government let fools contest
That which is best administered is best"
is our opinion. That system, not of universal but of local application which gives the greatest good to the greatest number within the governed locality or country ought to prevail in the locality or country. We deny that a system of Government whether monarchial or democratic which works well in a particular place should because it so works be applied, or sought to be applied, by the people of that particular locality to the nations at large, and hence we join issue distinctly with those who assert that the Catholic Church, the Church of God, is opposed to liberty, because she had not sided with this or that theory of government. The fourth of July orator, heaping abuse upon

Protestant Great Britain for its tyranny, flings his puny sayings against the Church. The Englishman forgetting his treatment of Ireland, when welcoming some Garibaldi or Mazzini or other dastardly blasphemer and revolutionist throws his small venom against the system which gave him Magna Charta. Then follow the new lights; the persons who teach themselves liberal Catholics, persons for most part of small minds who finding that truth is not always palatable seek to cover it and sugar it and suppress it; who in fact fear to confess Christ and who are running the risk of a refusal of confession from Him. All these anti-Catholics and non-Catholics, that is the liberal Catholics are arrayed against us. It is well that we know our friends and our opponents; we have been troubled with snakes in the grass for some time but the attitude of Pius has killed the reptiles. Rome has looked through her garden and thrown the weeds which were growing over the wall. The Catholic Church was founded by God Himself. In the foundation her mission was clearly defined; to teach the nations the truth as it is in God, and by the propagation of Christian principles to elevate the condition of man, by making all men good, by making one to love another. Thus although Christ did not come to found a Church which was to interfere with or to decide upon the complications of human governments yet the tendency of the doctrines which He embodied and which the Church conserved was to equalize the social condition of mankind, to solace the poor, to make humble the powerful, and to make all orderly and religious by telling us to "Render unto Cesar the things that are Cesar's and unto God the things that are God's." But as the Church is a Kingdom not of this world; as its mission is spiritual and therefore holier and higher than the things of earth, so she should only be judged in this matter by her external influence, her external action upon civil society. During the first three centuries of her existence her influence could not be extensively felt owing to the persecutions and sorrows she endured at the hands of the Pagan Emperors. But behold her action when she emerged from the gloom of the Catacombs. When without distinction of the guilty or the innocent Theodosius massacred his people in Thessalonica, the great Ambrose at Milan refused him communion and enjoined upon him a public penance. During the Middle Ages, when the world was but recovering from the tremendous raids of the Northmen, the Church sought first the conversion and then the alleviation and elevation of the people. In 1845 an American Protestant writer said—"Though seemingly enslaved, the Church was in reality the life of Europe. She was the refuge of the distressed, the friend of the slave, the helper of the injured, the only hope of learning. . . . The ruler learned from her some rude justice; the ruled learned faith and obedience. Let us not cling to the superstition which teaches that the Church has always upheld the cause of the tyrants.—Through the middle ages she was the only friend and advocate of the people and of the rights of man." In England, in Spain, in Germany and Italy the influence of the Catholic Church was ever on the side of the people. In Spain her influence was such that Mr. Hallam admits—"The civil rights of rich and poor in (Spanish) courts of justice were as equal as in England." In England on the famous plain of Runnymede, the Catholic barons headed by Catholic bishops obtained Magna Charta. The Free Cities of Germany and of Italy owe their origin to the influence of Catholicity while it is a fact notorious to all, that in the sixteenth century, when Protestantism obtained, liberty declined in Europe. In England tyranny of the darkest dye resulted from the rebellion of her monarch against Rome and it is a well known truth that while the Catholics of Maryland proclaimed liberty of conscience their fellow colonists of the North were burning witches and whipping Quakers. The Evangelicals to the South of us who tolerate Catholicism "from low and unworldly motives" ought to be the last to reproach Catholicity with intolerance. In the Plymouth Code to play on a Sunday subjected the plover guilty of "recreations" to be publicly whipt, and in Gov. Eaton's Code we read: "No priest shall abide in this dominion; he shall be banished, and suffer death on his return." In Connecticut it was decreed that "no food or lodging shall be afforded to a Quaker, Adamite or other heretic," and these people and their children in despite of well attested historical facts which go to prove that the influence of Catholicity and the Church has ever been towards the people and liberty and that Protestantism with all its train, liberal Catholicism into the bargain, has always been productive of tyranny prate about Catholic intolerance and Protestant liberality. It is almost useless to argue this point with those whose non-acquaintance with history proves their ignorance and their flippancy, and while our space forbids us to enter at large into a full and proper discussion of the question, yet we