

FEBRUARY 3, 1900.

TALES FROM THE MISSIONS.

Graphic Reports of the Non-Catholic Propaganda.

The current issue of the Missionary contains the usual instalment of interesting reports from the priests who are conducting the missions to non-Catholics. In every case the reports show progress and success. A number of incidents are cited which show perhaps more graphically than any statistics could, how hungry many non-Catholic people are for the truth.

From the state of Connecticut Rev. Edward Flannery and Rev. Peter McClean report that they were convinced "we are struggling with infidelity rather than with sectarian Christianity."

"This was borne in upon us," continue the missionaries, "at Broad Brook, where our first non-Catholic mission was given. One of the Fathers had conducted a Catholic mission, after which the pastor, Rev. Thomas Danne, kindly consented to send some invitations to the non-Catholics of the town to attend our series of lectures. The postmaster of the place, upon being asked to write a list of prominent non-Catholics, begged the pastor to desist from his purpose and not humiliate the Catholics of his charge, for 'not one of the bigoted towns-people,' he said, 'will deign to notice the call.' Much to his surprise and to the wonderment of all the Catholics, on the opening night the church was crowded to the doors, and it seemed as if every non-Catholic neighbor was in attendance.

OUT OF THE MOUTH OF BABES

"An incident, not devoid of pathetic coloring, deserves a mention in connection with the Broad Brook mission. A woman of the parish, pleading poverty as an excuse, fell away from the church in order to obtain employment offered by non-Catholic circles. The priest expostulated with the parent, but all to no advantage, for she was determined to sacrifice herself and family for the worldly benefits that might accrue. The oldest of her children was a little girl eight years of age, who had never entered the portals of the Catholic church. She was forced by her mother to attend services in a sectarian temple, and the child knew nothing of the faith which her mother abandoned. One day, during the non-Catholic mission, the girl returned from school, and stamping her tiny foot upon the floor to give emphasis to her assertion, vowed that never more would she be prevailed upon to sit in a non-Catholic chapel. 'I am a Catholic, mamma, and so are you; everybody is talking about that church now, and we ought to go there every Sunday.' The poor child listened to the conversations occasioned by the lectures, and when her Catholic schoolmates chided her for desiring the Church which she vowed to do away with the source of reproach and succeeded in reverting her mother.

"After leaving Broad Brook the fathers returned for a non-Catholic mission to New Milford, where a Catholic mission had been given earlier in the season. Episcopalianism dominates this section of the state, and its votaries appear to be thoughtful and earnest believers. Through personal friendship for Rev. Thomas Kelley, pastor of New Milford, the

MINISTERS LENT THEIR EFFORTS

to make the mission a success, so far as numbers render a mission successful. The Baptist preacher announced the series of non-Catholic lectures from his pulpit, advising his parishioners to attend and be rid of many false notions concerning Catholic doctrines and practices. He assisted at one lecture, and extended to pastor and preacher felicitations at the good results they were attaining. One of the Episcopal ministers acknowledged the invitation to be present with a note, anguring good wishes to our endeavors, while the other clergymen of that persuasion came three evenings, and congratulated Father Kelly, thanking him as well for the instruction and pleasure derived from listening to the speakers.

"While this mission went merrily on in New Milford the out-station, Brookfield, was the scene of a similar revival. A mere handful of villagers, yet in this retired spot we were witness to the liveliest kind of religious excitement called up by the unnumbered terrors of Catholic priests considered all to enlighten men who considered all other religions as blighted children of paganism. There is one section of New England where Puritanism still thrives, where priests are abhorred, where our doctrines are satanic tenets, where the confessional is a money making scheme, where we are still offspring of the scarlet woman. And even here the very revilers of the creed were so won over by the candid presentation of our doctrines that many were visibly affected in bidding us farewell, and begged us to return soon, that they might hear more of what was so illy understood before. One old fellow, who attended nightly, was heard to mutter on the closing evening: 'Wish to God I was an Irishman; then I'd be a Catholic.' Of course he needs a large dose of instruction, but the frank though ignorant avowal was an indication of how his thoughts were changed."

Rev. W. Gaston Payne, in his report for the state of Virginia, tells the following

INTERESTING STORY OF A CONVERT

at Pine Grove, alias "Dablin," in Highland county:

"His conversion was the fruit of former missions. His baptism was attended with unusual and edifying circumstances. It came to pass in this

way: A month or so before this young man had been stricken down with a serious sickness which proved to be his last illness. During his sickness a minister called to offer him spiritual comfort. He asked him if he wouldn't like to join the Church before he died. 'Yes, sir, I have made up my mind to join the Church and I hope to God I will live long enough for that.' 'Why not let me baptise you now, then, and take you into the Church to day?' 'The Church I have decided to join is the Catholic Church, for I believe in that Church, and I am waiting for the priest to come and baptise me.' God spared his life till the missionary arrived. Simple and touching was his profession of faith. 'Father, I am awfully glad to see you; I want you to baptise me, because I believe in your Church.' 'How long,' I asked, 'have you believed in the Catholic Church?' 'Since the time you gave your first mission out here, three years ago, I believe in what you preached, though I could not read any of those books you gave us. I am convinced that the Catholic Church is God's Church.'

"After questioning him upon the essential truths for salvation, I found he believed sufficient for baptism, which I administered that afternoon. Ill as the poor fellow was, the following day—Sunday—he edified the whole neighborhood by bundling himself up and going down a mile or more to attend the lectures at the school-house. He was a case of a son returning to the faith of his fathers, for Catholic blood ran in his veins on his paternal side. His grandfather was a Catholic from old Erin. Several weeks afterwards he was called to his reward. May he now intercede with God for the conversion of numbers of the country districts of Virginia and West Virginia!"

Father Payne quotes the following communication which he received FROM A BAPTIST PROFESSOR AT LYNCHBURG:

"Rev. Father Payne—Dear Sir: I have been invited to speak before the Woman's Missionary Union of Virginia, Oct. 17, on the 'Advance of Catholicism in Virginia.' I am sure that your penetration will tell you that in the assignment of the subject there may have been some thought of a discussion of the means of checking Catholicism in Virginia. I wish to assure you that I shall not discuss it from that standpoint, but from a perfectly fair and courteous one. I need some information which Miss Roberts of this city thinks you would be so kind as to furnish me. I wish to know, first of all, what has been the growth in numbers among the Virginia Catholics in the last ten years? I would like to know roughly how many new churches have been consecrated within that time. I am anxious to get at the work of the women of your church as minutely as possible. I wish also to know as much as possible of your educational work. Would you be willing to tell me to what agency you ascribe the most important influence in furthering the work of the Church? Can you let me have some of the printed reports of your various organizations? I wish to repeat that no unkind or unfair use will be made of anything you give me. I shall write largely in your spirit, 'Go thou and do likewise.' I intend to try to create a sympathy with your work rather than an antipathy to it, and to plead for a broader charity among the sects and greater union of Christians in our warfare against sin and our work for the Master. Will you not help me by sending such literature as may be available? I shall be very grateful. Very truly, (Miss) C. S. Parrish, Randolph Macon Woman's College, Lynchburg, Va."

"With the kind assistance of the erudite pastor of Staunton, Va., who interests himself deeply in the missionary work, all the information available was collected and forwarded to the professor."

"This candid avowal, coming as it does from a sect which is notably the most intolerant in Virginia, is a sign of the times, a propitious augury of the era of good will which is dawning upon us. May He, at whose birth the angels sang 'Peace to men of good will,' hasten His kingdom into all sincere hearts, bringing them into the fold under the one Shepherd, 'Is the Christmas greeting to his brother missionaries everywhere in this fair land of ours.'"

IN THE OIL TERRITORY.

Missions in the Cleveland diocese were conducted by Rev. William S. Kress, Rev. John P. Michells and Rev. John P. Brennan. They write: "The Bowling Green lectures were given at the urgent request of a non-Catholic, Edward Loring, editor of the Bowling Green Daily Tribune. He agreed to engage the fine town hall and to induce the Methodists, who were having their services in it, pending the completion of their new church, to vacate it for our use. He promised to give a full report of the lectures every day and let us preach a Catholic mission to every reader of his paper. Two days before the opening of the mission, unfortunately, Mr. Loring died; still, he obtained the grace of dying a Catholic, and during the mission he was buried from the Catholic church. In a Protestant memorial service held in the Baptist church on the previous Sunday, the minister told his people that Mr. Loring had a leaning toward the Catholic Church because one of his grandparents was Irish. However, in detailing his first conversation with the deceased, he proved that there was something more than mere national prejudice back of the conversion. In that conversation Mr. Loring maintained that the Catholic Church is the true Church, because she is apostolic in her origin. He said that the Cath-

olic Church is like a piper line—a comparison easily understood in that oil region—that gathered its doctrine at the source and has brought it down, pure and incorrupt, to the present time. Both of the daily papers gave extended reports of the week's lectures, but the lectures themselves were poorly attended. The pretty Green is Protestant to the core, and its prejudice is both intensive and extensive. It was only a few years ago that some of its citizens

TRIED TO LYNCH A PRIEST because he deprecated war with Spain. The present pastor, Rev. M. J. Regan, was not discouraged by the light attendance, but at once took steps to have another mission in March next, to extend several weeks. He is determined that his non-Catholic neighbors shall know more about Catholicity than they know now.

"Prairie Depot also lies in the oil territory of Ohio. The town of one thousand inhabitants has only seven Catholic families, and there have made the Depot only a temporary abiding place. The A. P. A.'s monopolized the query box; not one question was asked for information, each and every one containing an attack on the Church and her ministers. They overshoot the mark, as usual, and the better class of citizens showed their disgust at their rude assaults. The few Catholics were strengthened in their faith; the A. P. A.'s were discredited; some honest souls were brought a step nearer to the Church.

"The apostolate is having a fair number of converts at their home church. While the parish records for previous years show an average of only two or three converts per year sixteen have been received within the last ten months, and thirteen more are taking instructions at present. Several of these are the fruit of former non-Catholic missions. The prospect in Cleveland is full of promise."

A NUMBER OF INTERESTING INCIDENTS

are reported by Rev. Thomas F. Price, who preached in North Carolina. He writes: "Among the converts present at the opening of the apostolate was an old gentleman who walked six miles in the early morning to be present on the occasion. He is familiarly known around Raleigh as 'Squire Barbee,' and is a respected justice of the peace and a notary public. His conversion to the faith, as he related it, is a little peculiar and very interesting.

"Before becoming a Catholic," said he, "I was reared in the Methodist Church, and had risen to be a colporteur and exhorter, and was well on the way to become a licensed preacher. And how I loved the work and how I did exhort at the big meetings! I remember once, when we had a big camp-meeting, I was called on to exhort, and didn't I roll it out! I was in my prime then, and had a powerful, deep-sounding, round voice, and I worked it for all it was worth. Exhausted with my efforts, I was shortly after walking slowly through the grounds, where all were engaged in that delightful picnic part of the meeting, eating the social dinner, enjoying themselves in talking about their neighbors and discussing everything in general and the preachers in particular. As I passed near one group I heard a lanky, long-haired countryman pipe out in a loud, nasal twang: 'I tell you what, that was one of the roughest sermons that ever I've heard; if Bre'er Barbee ain't the all-fredest, powerfulest preacher in this here country you may take the last chaw of rosum and the last dip of snuff I've got.' 'Go way, man,' was the reply of his companion, in the deepest contempt: 'why, you don't know nothing.' Why, the fact truth is Bre'er Barbee ain't no preacher at all."

"But I'll tell you one thing," he continued concedingly, "he is the hell of a resorter!" And how I laughed!

IT WAS AS COLPORTEUR THAT THE

work began. I had been reared, of course, to look upon Catholics as the devil's own imps, and I was in the supremest ignorance of the Catholic Church. One day, however, in looking over one of my colporteur works, I was surprised to see that while the author spoke bitterly and contentedly against the Catholic Church, he admitted that it was much older than the Methodist Church, and was in fact the original Church—a thing to which I had never before given any thought. This admission lay long upon my mind, and troubled me grievously. I reasoned about it, but could find nothing to satisfy me.

"After a long time I resolved to see a priest and tell my thoughts and how I felt. So I did. The priest, however, received me coldly, and when I had finished my tale to him, he said, 'Is that all?' and immediately he turned his back on me and went out the side door, leaving me to find the front door as best I could. Strange to say, this treatment had a good effect on me. I came again, ill pleased but desirous to become a Catholic. The priest put me off, and it was nearly two years before he would receive me into the Church; but in the meantime he instructed and baptized all my children, and finally allowed me to enter. I grew to love this priest when I became better acquainted with him, and his treatment had a good effect on my whole life, though at the time I failed to see it.

"When I was obliged to go to the war my wife was still a Protestant, but I got her to promise me that she would teach the children their prayers and catechism, and say the rosary during my absence. Now let me tell you one thing," continued the squire; "that rosary is a dangerous thing. Nobody that doesn't want to become a Catholic need fool with a rosary. My wife had

been a long time holding 'out, but when she began saying that rosary she couldn't any more keep from entering the Catholic Church than a hungry possum could keep from a November persimmon tree. And so we are all here to-day blessing God, and praying Him to extend the Catholic faith throughout old North Carolina."

A SANCTIFIED WOMAN'S STORY.

"Another incident which may illustrate a very general condition here in regard to the Church—a condition of fear.

"In giving a mission at Hub a short time ago the little town seemed much interested in the Church. Among those who visited me was a 'sanctified' woman. She came to Mass one morning and requested an interview after Mass, much to the disgust of my generous hostess, whose Irish blood could not brook the idea of the priest being compelled to wait his breakfast.

"I ain't committed nary sin," began my interviewer, "for nigh onto four years, when I took the Lord for my portion. When my husband abuses me for things about the house I just smiles and prays for him. 'You ought to be canonized,' said I. 'What is that?' she asked. I then tried to explain to her the true idea of sanctity, and how God is pleased with our trying to serve Him perfectly; and, suggesting to her to examine her conscience more carefully, told her how to do it. She did not seem over pleased, but asked a number of questions and appeared really interested. I had some reason to believe this woman sincere, but soon found that, however much she would like to investigate the Catholic Church and how much she might desire to enter the Church, she was afraid to do so."

A JOINT DEBATE.

Rev. P. F. Brannan, the Texas missionary, writes as follows: "I began my missionary work towards the latter part of last September, it being too warm in this climate to do anything before that time. My first mission was at Dal Rio, a town of three thousand inhabitants on the Rio Grande river, which divides Texas from Mexico. I had the commodious court house at this place, and the papers stated that we had the largest audiences that had ever before assembled in it. The most interesting incident of my fall missions occurred at this place. I had just finished my lecture, of about one and three fourths hours, on the Real Presence, when a gentleman approached me on the rostrum as I was gathering up my books preparatory to leaving the court house. He extended his hand and said he was the Methodist preacher at that place. I told him where I was staying, and invited him over to see me. He said: 'I would like to have an opportunity of answering your lecture of to night, with your permission.' I told him he should have the desired opportunity at any time that suited his pleasure. I asked him how much time he wished, and he said he only wanted twenty minutes. It was an appalling thought to be standing in the majestic presence of a phenomenal genius who required only twenty minutes to demolish a doctrine which had been taught for nearly twenty centuries, and, of course, to incidentally annihilate a little man like me.

"However, I mustered up sufficient courage to say that he might have the twenty minutes and as much more time as he wanted. The following night was the time selected by him, after I was through with the lecture for that evening. The large court house was literally packed with people. Protestants predominating three to one. He talked incoherently for about forty minutes. He was somewhat insulting, and subdued murmurs could be heard among the Catholics. His then stated that any one who accepted the doctrine in the sense in which it was believed by Catholics was

FIT ONLY FOR A LUNATIC ASYLUM. This thrust did not evoke any sympathy even from Protestants, so far, at least, as external circumstances would indicate. One Catholic gentleman was so overcome by his sense of indignation that he got up and tried to tell the preacher what he thought of him. Then I had to arise, and allay the confusion by telling the Catholics to keep still and let him go on and say what he pleased; that I hoped to be able to answer him completely and successfully on the following evening. The absorbing topic for the next day was the exciting incidents of that night. The whole town was thoroughly aroused. The next night, on which I was to answer the concatenated nonsense of this man, the court house was filled as it never was before.

"Just here I would be glad to relinquish this pencil, and let another finish the story. It is safe, I think, to say that, figuratively speaking, not only the epidemics but the *cutis vera* was likewise removed, and 'laid on the fence.' This process, divested of all euphemistic and ornate phraseology, is denominated, in the expressive and robust vernacular of Texas as 'taking off the hide.' The most insatiable desire for just revenge was gratified. The severity of the castigation was such that after its administration the speaker said that he forgave him and hoped that all the Catholics in the house would do likewise. When I finished he asked if he could say a few words. I replied: 'Certainly, say all that you wish.'

"He began by denying that he had said that any one who believed the Catholic doctrine of the Real Presence was fit only for the lunatic asylum. The moment he had said this the vast audience, as though by preconcerted arrangements, arose as one man, the

PROTESTANTS BEING THE FIRST to set the example, and left the court-house. It was painful to see the expression depicted upon his countenance. His own Methodist congregation was there in a body and their backs were turned upon him, moving out of the court house going to their homes. I felt sorry for him, but could shed no tears, as he brought it all upon himself. In a very short time after this most unusual and extraordinary occurrence, he and his family quit the town forever.

"Three persons were received into the Church at this place, and others doubtless will be a little later on. A number of 'prodigal sons' and daughters returned to long neglected duties."

THE PERFECTION OF LIFE

The true, the useful, the fair, and the right are intertwined and circle about man like a noble sisterhood, to waken him to life, and to urge him toward God, the Supreme Good, Whose Being is power, wisdom, love without limit. The degree of goodness in all things is measured by their approach to this absolute Being. Hence the greater our strength, wisdom, and love, the greater our good, the richer and more perfect our life.

There is no soul which does not bow with delight and reverence before beauty and power; and when we come to true insight, we perceive that holiness is beauty and goodness power. Genuine spiritual power is from God, and compels the whole mechanic world to acknowledge its absoluteness.

The truths of religion and morality are of the essence of our life; they cannot be learned from another, but must be wrought into self-consciousness by our own thinking and doing, by habitual meditation, and constant obedience to conscience. Virtue, knowledge, goodness, and greatness are their own reward; they are primarily and essentially ends, and only incidental means.

Hence those who strive for perfection with the view thereby to gain recognition, money, or place, do not really strive for perfection at all. They are also unwise for virtue, knowledge, goodness, and greatness are not the surest means to such ends, and they can be acquired only with infinite pains. The highest human qualities cease to be the highest when they are made subordinate to the externalities of office and wealth. The one aim of a mind smitten with the love of excellence is to live consciously and lovingly with whatever is true or good or fair. And such a one cannot be disturbed whether by their praise or blame. The standpoint of the soul is: What thou art, not what others think thee. If thou art at one with thy true self, God and the eternal laws bear thee up and onward.

The moral and religious life interpenetrate each other. To under-temperate each other. To weaken faith is to undermine character; to fail in conduct is to deprive faith of inspiration and vigor. Learn to live thy religion, and thou shalt have little need or desire to argue and dispute about it. Truth is mightier than its witnesses, religion greater than its saints and martyrs.—Bishop Spalding

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SCOTT'S EMULSION

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