

as I remarked in the beginning, because of their attitude towards infidels and unbelievers. Would they have us prefer Barabbas to Christ? Would they have us stand with the Jewish rabble and cry out, "Away with Christ, we have no king but Cæsar?" Would they have us forgive and pardon the teachings and blasphemies of Voltaire, Tom Paine and Bob Ingersoll? Would they have us compromise between truth and error, light and darkness, and the unbeliever septic and the refined and cultured? May be at times we believe through charity, but against truth and reason, that they cannot know God with their limited powers, their intellectual faculties? They are too intelligent to expect us to admit these suppositions. Oh, no, we cannot admit invincible ignorance, nor consequently good faith in any reasonable man who asserts that he cannot know God. There are men so narrow as to say that no soul

can be saved, while they say nothing of the modern Agnostic or educated unbeliever. The perfection of God, the attributes of mercy, his tenderness, justice and equity, all rise up in array against so dark a theology. There never was yet a soul born into the world that had not the light of reason and the light of conscience—that is, the light of God shining in his soul. These are the words of the late saintly and learned Cardinal Manning. The reason and the conscience, rightly exercised, can see and read the existence of God, His Glory, His Godhead in the works of His hands. The psalmist says: "He hath set His tabernacle in the sun." That is, the glory and the majesty and the love of God fill the whole world, pervade all things, and all men are encompassed by it. Every living soul, therefore, has an illumination in the order of nature by the light of conscience and by the light of reason, and by the working of the spirit of God in his head and in his heart, leading him, if he will, to believe in God and to obey Him. I would not wish to be understood to say or imply in this lecture that because of the infinite mercy of God for His creatures, it is not of importance whether one worships Him as an actual member of the true Church, or serve Him "in spirit and in truth," outside. No, I could not in justice say this. For, although there may be many byways, there is but one true and royal highway leading to heaven, the way which the Man-God trod and traced out for those who would follow Him and be saved. It is the way of the Church of Christ which is sure and safe, and guarantees the pilgrim light, support and unerring guidance, until he enters into the home of his eternal rest. It still remains true that God's mercies, unknown to us, are over all His works, and the infinite merits of the Redeemer of the world are before the mercy seat of our Heavenly Father for the salvation of all, even of those who follow the little light which, in the order of nature, they receive.

**PERE DIDON'S SERMONS.**

Thousands Unable to Hear Him—Crowds Wait for Hours.

Remarkable in many respects was the series of Lenten Conferences delivered at the Madeleine, Paris, by the inspired preacher Pere Didon. We recount in brief the scenes that occurred at his third conference on Sunday, March 20th: Crowds came for the midday Mass and kept their seats for the sermon at 5 o'clock, whilst long before that hour was reached there was not even standing room left for late comers. The vast building was packed with human beings to its utmost capacity; every side-chapel was filled with chairs, the pulpits steps were crowded, and the sanctuary itself was pressed into service, and was filled with serried ranks of male listeners even to the steps of the high altar.

But, on the whole, the congregation—which consisted of at least five thousand people—was wonderfully patient and reverent. Vespers were sung at half-past two, and on the stroke of the hour the gorgeously-uniformed *chœur* was seen emerging from the sacristy door and pushing his way slowly through the vast throng to the pulpit, followed by the white-robed monk, whose fiery eloquence has proved a magnet powerful enough to draw half Paris within church doors.

Le Pere Didon had not at first sight a very attractive face; strength and determination are its most marked characteristics, as indicated in the square forehead and dark, bushy eyebrows; but the lower part of the clean-shaven face is somewhat full and heavy, and the general expression is a little stern. After the usual moment of prayer he remained for perhaps a minute leaning over the pulpit toward the high altar in silent contemplation. Then he drew himself up and faced the throng of expectant listeners. It was not until absolute silence reigned through the whole building, not till the last cough, the last rustling movement had died away that the preacher began to speak, and without preamble, without text, took up the thread of his discourse where he had dropped it on the previous Sunday. The subject was, "The methods that have been adopted by the modern opponents of revealed religion in their warfare with the Church," a subject which allowed the Pere Didon to carry the war right into the enemy's camp, and to unmask, with ruthless sarcasm, the subtleties and misrepresentations to which they have been reduced.

"The belief in the divinity of Jesus Christ," began the preacher, "is not

only an interior conviction finding its public expression in the Catholic Church. It is also an objective fact. It is at once a fact and a dogma—a fact, inasmuch as it can be deduced from authentic documents, and demonstrated by the chain of historical events; and a dogma, inasmuch as it forms the synthesis and foundation-stone of the Church's teaching. Well, gentlemen, the doctrine which suppresses God is logically condemned to the immense task of denying the divinity of Our Lord. The opponents of Christianity have flung themselves resolutely into the task, displaying considerable talents, remarkable erudition, and all the forces of modern intellectual life. If in this task the workmen may be counted by thousands, the books may be counted by tens of thousands. Foremost in the ranks stands Germany; for eighty years she had headed a gigantic struggle against Jesus Christ. Out of all her universities there are but three where a belief in the divinity of Christ is taught. In these matters I grieve to say that France has been the servant of Germany. I admit with sorrow the inferiority of my country, and I confess that in our efforts at propagating the doctrines of negation we have but copied our neighbors."

So far the Pere Didon had spoken in clear, almost conversational tones, and yet with an enunciation so perfect that his words carried to the farthest limits of the Church. His delivery is singularly restrained and quiet for a Frenchman, and he has his voice in wonderful control, but as he warmed to his subject his gestures became more free and emphatic, and his voice, now high, now low, expressed in turn his varying moods of sarcasm and indignation. After explaining that the groundwork of atheism is criticism, but that in order that the judgments of the critics should inspire respect they must be founded on some generally accepted ethical principles, the preacher continued: "If, then, modern criticism is founded on the negation of the existence of God, I have the right to challenge it. I have the right to contend that the negation is contrary to supreme and popular reason, which emphatically and consistently demands the existence of an Infinite and Supreme Being. Therefore, I conclude that such a criticism should be condemned. You may be the first thinkers of your time; you may fascinate mankind with the charm of your eloquence; you may have the whole of literature at your service; your thoughts may be immortalized in noble verse; you may enrapture the flower of our youth; but there is one thing that you will never enslave, and that is the mass of the human race. You may win partial victories; you may triumph over us here and there; but let us never lose hope. Of what consequence is the loss of a few stray battalions in the face of an ultimate and universal victory?"

After passing in review and emphatically denouncing the various methods by which the atheistic school have attempted first to suppress, then to misinterpret the passages in the Epistles and Gospels establishing the divinity of Christ, the preacher returned to the treatment of the life of Christ—and here we come to what was perhaps the most eloquent passage in the whole sermon: "Modern criticism has branded the companions of Christ as poor foolish men and women of absolutely no account. St. Peter, St. John, whom Jesus loved, Mary Magdalene, all miserable fanatics, wretched Jews steeped in superstition, people of no education, no understanding, quite incapable of realizing the nature of evidence. In a word, they become mere tools, whose testimony is worthless. 'For my part,' continued the orator, in thrilling tones, 'I am not of that opinion. I have the greatest respect for Peter and Paul and John; I gladly venerate them; consider their testimony worthy of all consideration. Mary Magdalene, to whom we owe a great and holy penitence, I utterly reject the insults of the new critical school, and I preserve my respect for the humble companions of our Lord. 'Nothing is more curious than the methods by which modern criticism explains the birth and growth of dogma. Whenever a man is superior to his contemporaries—makes an impression upon them—there exists a natural tendency to glorify him after his death. There is a certain truth in this. We all know, when death robs us of our friends, how their faults fade from our recollection, whilst their good qualities stand out in their true light. But admitting all this, are we ever tempted to deify them? Modern criticism declares that Christ was but a man like you or I, and yet a little stronger perhaps, for the enthusiasm he excited was such that during three centuries the people built up the legend of His divinity. At first a Jew, then a martyr, He grows at length into the promised Messiah, the Saviour of humanity, absolute sanctity, perfect divinity, love without limit, wisdom without measure! Such is the explanation given. I do not exaggerate it. There is no example of such a case in the whole history of the world. It is not true of Buddha, nor of Mahomet, nor of Moses, and yet they were mighty men! What can there have been in this Man that the great majority of man adore Him? Either God made Himself man, or man made to himself a God! In that case humanity in its highest civilization is nothing short of idolatrous."

Why go limping and whining about your corns, when a 25 cent bottle of Holloway's Corn Cure will remove them? Give it a trial, and you will not regret it.

**THE CATHOLIC TRUTH SOCIETY, OTTAWA.**

**Its Aims and Objects.**

ADDRESS BY THE HON. SIR J. S. D. THOMPSON, K. C. M. G., Q. C., LL. D., PRESIDENT OF THE SOCIETY.

Having completed our organization, our society presents itself to you this evening—its first appearance before the public; and it has been allotted to me to state to you the objects of our association—its aims and its purposes. Let me tell you, first of all, what our society is. It is a branch of the "Catholic Truth Society," formed in England some years ago, the object of which can be most simply expressed by saying that its purpose is to use the press as a means of increasing the practice of the Catholic religion and extending a knowledge of what that religion really is. I have said that this, like other Catholic Truth Societies in various parts of the empire, is a branch of the Catholic Truth Society formed in England. That society has had a most successful career. It has been approved by the Holy Father, and its members receive spiritual benefits, which the members of every branch throughout the empire share by the mere fact of affiliation with the parent society in England. I have said that the main object of the society is to use the press as a means of increasing the practice of the Catholic faith and of spreading a knowledge of what the Catholic religion really is. We aim to accomplish that by attending to three subjects: Devotion, Instruction and Controversy. As regard Catholic devotion, it has been found in England that the agency of the society has been most beneficial. It would be unreasonable to expect in a city like Ottawa, a field for very much exertion of that kind. We read that in England it has been instrumental in instructing the poor and uneducated in the primary truths of their religion. We read that many have been found unable to recite even prayers which all Catholic children in communities like this are taught. A field like that may not be open to us, but there are objects connected with the increase of the devotion aimed at by the Catholic Truth Society which we can accomplish even in a place like Ottawa where instruction is open to all. For example, in connection with the spread of devotion, we have the fact that the parent society by tens of thousands has distributed an admirable prayer book, which costs but a penny each. Thousands of copies of the New Testament are placed within the reach of those who can pay six-pence for them. To others there is free distribution. In addition to this we have tens of thousands of tracts and leaflets printed for distribution at missions and on other occasions—many of these containing indulgenced prayers and other aids to devotion. Even in a community like this much may be done by placing aids to devotion within the reach of all.

The second object I have mentioned in instruction. There are in all communities many Catholics who are quite satisfied to know that they believe what the Catholic Church believes and teaches. The fact that all that the Catholic Church believes and teaches is true, is enough for them. But one of the objects of this society, blessed as I have said by the Holy Father, under the patronage in this place of His Grace the Archbishop, is to impress upon Catholics that in this age they should do more. In order to the defence of the Catholic religion, in order to put its truths before those who do not understand them, it is necessary that Catholics should not only believe what the Catholic Church believes and teaches, but should be able to give a reason for what they believe. Every one who has considered this question knows that the dogmas of our religion are set forth as clearly as the decisions of the legal tribunals of the country. The reasons on which they are founded can be as easily traced as the reasons for the decisions of a Court of Justice. When Catholics are acquainted with these reasons they are able to defend the truth whenever it is assailed. Therefore, one aim of the Catholic Truth Society, by means of the publications which I have mentioned, is to place within the reach of Catholics themselves the simple instructions which have been issued from the press, from time to time, upon public questions of the day, and especially those questions upon which the Catholic religion is assailed—to place before them the statements which are thus issued of the reasons on which Catholic teachings are founded so that each one may be able to give reasons for the faith that is in him. We proceed upon the principle for which the Catholic who is the best informed in connection with his religion is best grounded in the faith and most likely to be zealous in the practice of it.

But even a more important point in connection with instruction is to place before those who are not Catholics an accurate and simple statement of what Catholic belief is on the various points in connection with which there is much doubt and uncertainty in non-Catholic minds. What Protestants believe the Catholic Church to be is not the Catholic Church at all. What they generally dislike as Catholic belief is not Catholic belief. The great object of the Catholic Truth Society and its branches, and the object which this society endeavors to take up and promote, is to place before those who are not Catholics simple, inoffensive, plain statements of what Catholic belief really is. I must say that nothing has attracted me more in connection with the operations of the parent society in England than the

excellent taste and perfect charity in which their works are prepared. There is nothing in them to offend. They put in the minds of Catholic readers just what the actual facts are and then put before Protestants plain statements which often make an end of controversy. The field does not extend merely to points of Catholic dogma and points of history; it includes questions of science in connection with which there sometimes appears to be contradiction to Catholic belief. From time to time it is the duty of the society to watch the progress of public discussion, and whenever discussion is brought to bear upon any subject which affects the Catholic religion to see that Catholic truth is correctly stated and placed before the public eye. This is a most important mission.

There is also the duty of attending to controversy, I hope that no one who is solicited to extend patronage to our society will be at all afraid that we are going to put on the armor of war and rush to the attack of our Protestant fellow-citizens. If we did so, we would be stepping beyond the bounds of the Catholic Truth Society's work. We engage in controversy only for the purpose of defence, and for the purpose of stating what our belief is and the grounds for our belief, when we find that our belief, or the grounds on which our belief rests, are attacked or misrepresented. A great deal has been done by such societies in the way of controversy, not for the purpose of attacking any man's belief, but for the purpose of putting plainly before those who differ from us what we believe and why we believe it. That certainly can give offence to no man. While I say that the Catholic Truth Society incites upon its members great forbearance, let me not be understood to mean that we apologize for that which we believe or that which we practice. We avow and defend our faith and the practice of it knowing what we are taught will bear criticism, and deserves defence.

We shall endeavor to get the publications of the society placed in depots in Ottawa, where they will be accessible to all at little more than the cost of publication. The Society of St. Vincent de Paul will distribute these publications in the homes of poor Catholics.

We ask you to help us in this undertaking, and your presence this evening in such large numbers is gratifying. We ask such of you as approve the objects we have in view to give us your names for membership. The fee is fixed at one dollar a year. I beg you will not consider that a subscription. There are many, perhaps, who will join the society who could give us as an annual subscription many times that amount, but we want your names—your co-operation—your sympathy and patronage.

TO BE CONTINUED.

**SOME LIES AND ERRORS OF HISTORY.** Such is the title of a very useful and most interesting work just issued from the press of the *Ac. Meica* office, Notre Dame, Indiana. The author is Rev. Reuben Parsons, D. D. The following is the table of contents:

The Alleged Anti-Martin Funeral of Charles V.  
Bruno and Campanella, and the Murder of St. Cyril of Alexandria and the Murder of Hypatia.  
The Divorce of Napoleon and Josephine, Fustion and Voltaire.  
Galileo.  
The Grey Cardinal.  
"I am the State!"—Did Louis XIV. Ever Say?  
The Truth about the Inquisition.  
Louis XI.; the Travelet and the Real. Richelieu as an Ecclesiastic.  
Louis XIV. as he was.  
The Nature of Tasso's Imprisonment.  
Wicked Venice.  
The Last Word on the Massacre of St. Bartholomew's Day.  
The Middle Ages—Not a Starless Night.  
The Man with the Iron Mask.  
The Holy Wars; Their Causes and Results.  
The "Orthodox" Russian, and the Schismatic Greek Churches.

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Montreal, March 27th 1889. N. F. FAY, M. D.,  
Professor of Chemistry at Laval University.

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