

FATHER LE JEUNE.

THE REMARKABLE PARTOR OF A RE-MARKABLE PARISH — AN AMERICAN PASSION PLAY.

In the December Pastors and the Reader, is an illustrated article by Harlan I. Smith on "An American Obsession: The Passion Play by American Indians." Mr. Smith says: "Father J. M. Le Jeune is unquestionably one of the most remarkable missionaries in America. A marvel among Roman Catholic priests, as well as a very brilliant son of France, . . . he works among nine different Indian tribes comprising not only people of different dialects, but languages; the speech of one tribe being as different from that of another as Spanish is from French. He has learned to speak with all these different people. He has superintended the building of a church in each village in a territory of over 10,000 square miles. He goes from one place of worship to another, obtaining his food at the home of his nearest parishioner, or having it prepared for him in the church itself, behind the altar, by some of the young Indian women of the congregation. His bed is wherever he is when night overtakes him, in one village or in another, in the mountains or in an isolated lodge. Everywhere he is welcome. He seems greatly to enjoy his work. His work is law among his Indian people; yet he himself is modest, unassuming, and quiet, always actively engaged in his business, but which he takes great interest in, or in the religious services of his church.

"The Passion Play has been produced a number of times at the Shuswap village, under the direction of Father Le Jeune. The Indians seem to take an intense interest in the drama, and always speak of it with earnestness and reverence. . . . This play course is planned after the Passion Play of the Bavarian Highlands, at Oberammergau. The poor Indians of British Columbia enact the Divine Passion in what we might call an elaborate manner, if we take into account their poverty, etc. In their acting they show great devotion. . . . are simple and devout, having but little of the conventionalism of civilization, but acting out their true feelings; with the result that the acting is a sensation to the Indians themselves. The Indians consider that the impersonation of Christ is an act of devotion and the man who is allowed to take this part in the Passion Play is chosen from among those of them who lead the most upright and respected lives. Before the play, the actors selected pray for ability and the purity which he feels must accompany the part. All of the Indians who take part bathe, fast, meditate and pray, before the play takes place. . . . When the play begins, the "sivashes" parade up and down the single street or space between the houses of the village and in front of the church. One serious thing about this march is that all the Indians who impersonate the Roman soldiers and those who were opposed to Christ seem to feel degraded in the part which they are playing. . . . The lack of accessories (theatrical supplies, etc.) is amply made up for when Christ is represented as appearing in the Garden of Gethsemani. In this part of British Columbia, trees are scarce, and hence the grove of the garden is represented by twigs set up in the ground. But there is nothing ridiculous in this, to the actors or to the audience. Indeed the settings of the English stage in the Elizabethan period were of as simple a character. White spectators who may at first be amused by the lack of dignity of the Roman soldiers, and the grotesqueness of the costumes, soon begin to be affected by the sincerity of these devout Indians, and the inclination to ridicule is replaced by respect for the earnestness and devotion of the performers.

"Father Le Jeune has a circuit to travel, about which are many churches which he must open, each in turn, that he may hold the expected services for the Indians of all these remote settlements. . . . The Indian policy of these reservations look to him largely for counsel in the execution of their duties among their own people. . . . Father Le Jeune's work among the American continent, for he accompanied Chief Louis, of the Shuswaps, and Chief Taltaxta, of the Douglas Lake Indians, on a journey which they undertook to pay their respects to their King, Edward VII, at Buckingham Palace and to receive an audience at the Vatican by the Pope, Pius X. The three afterward traveled through Italy, Belgium, France and England before returning to their Western home. The Pope made the Rev. Father Le Jeune the bearer of his blessing to the Indians, and sent to them 2,000 medals as a gift from himself."

"OBSESSIONS."

THEY MAY GENERALLY BE EXPLAINED AS DIABOLIC POSSESSIONS, SAYS FATHER SEARLE.

Is it possible for us to be possessed? Are there evil intelligences—the inhabitants of some other world—who have the power to take such complete possession of the human organism that their influence may become irresistible? This was a question asked by the New York Times of a physician, "psychics" and clergymen. It was answered from the Catholic point of view by Rev. George M. Searle, D. D., superior of the Paulists.

"I know of no reason why we should hesitate to believe in 'obsessions,' or in 'possessions,'" said Father Searle. "The Church teaches that there are spirits of two kinds, angelic and diabolic, and the grand triumph and descent which run through the whole matter of spiritual communications, however free of human fakery, they may be, certainly suggest the probability of the diabolic theory. By the term 'demonic theory' I mean that which regards the mass of spiritistic phenomena as the work of unembodied—not disembodied—spirits, and in acting all these signs and wonders, mainly or entirely, on their operation, we have the simplest

explanation of the many psychic marvels the reality of which cannot be denied, and this includes many well-attested cases of diabolical obsession and possession.

"In spiritistic practices, especially when the habit of mental passivity is generally recommended for success—has been assiduously cultivated, it is by no means uncommon for the experimenters to develop phenomena quite undistinguishable from the well-known ones of diabolical possession. It is true that they differ from the latter by the presence by the invading spirits that they are departed human souls, but in the phenomena themselves there is really no difference. In the ordinary cases of diabolic possession no such claim is made, and the reason for this is plain; the controlling intelligences see no use in concealing their true character from those who are aware of the existence of the diabolic world. When they are dealing with people who are not so aware, but who do believe in the survival of the human soul after death, they naturally desire to avoid recognition, as it would put them in a position where they are trying to injure on their guard.

"It is, or should be, plain enough to every one that in spiritism we are encountering an agency, and a very powerful one, exercised by beings outside of ourselves, and over whom we have no control. And it should also be plain enough to any one that the matter is a dangerous one to handle. In fact, the danger is one that applies both to regular mediums and to those who privately and in an amateurish way surround themselves to spirit influences. It is an extremely perilous thing to make one's self passive to an unknown influence of any kind, and the actual experience of those who have done so by experimenting in psychic matters is a pretty strong indication that the influence is—in most cases, at any rate—injurious and suggestive of demonic origin, even when it does not go so far as to resemble if not really to be diabolical possession.

"Even crystal gazing and similar performances, when nothing but the present or the past is sought for, are practices fraught with so grave danger that no one can safely or lawfully indulge in them. That is to say, if the lessons of experience are worth anything to us we are compelled to admit that no person can go very far in a bold and unrestricted experimental examination into those matters without having his fingers burned; he will see, so many spiritists have already seen, that it is playing with fire, while to these investigators as well as to those who try to adopt spiritism as a religion the dangers to morality quickly become evident.

"It is important that we should realize these facts, that we may understand that this matter of spirit communications—the most practical field of psychical research—has underlying it a very solid and extremely dangerous reality."

AMERICA THE MOST SENSUOUS NATION.

NEW YORK PRIEST DENOUNCES FLAGRA OF BAD PLEAS AND BAD BOOKS.

Rev. Dr. Joseph H. McMahon, rector of the Church of Our Lady of Lourdes, New York, in a lecture a few days ago on "A Plea for Decency in Life, Literature and Art" before the Catholic Library Association at Delmonico's, severely criticized one of the features of the opening of grand opera in that city and the writers of fiction in this country.

"America," said Rev. Dr. McMahon, "has become the most sensuous nation in the world, not in the moral sense, but in the philosophical sense. How loud is the American life, to use an expression, 'The people live much in the streets; the privacy of no man's home is left safe from publicity. There are books read by people in New York with which no man should soil his hands or flood his mind. Can it be said they are not harmful?'"

Referring to Ibsen and Shaw, he said he wondered why the police had stopped the play of one of the authors in a theatre when the book might be bought, which would do more harm than the play.

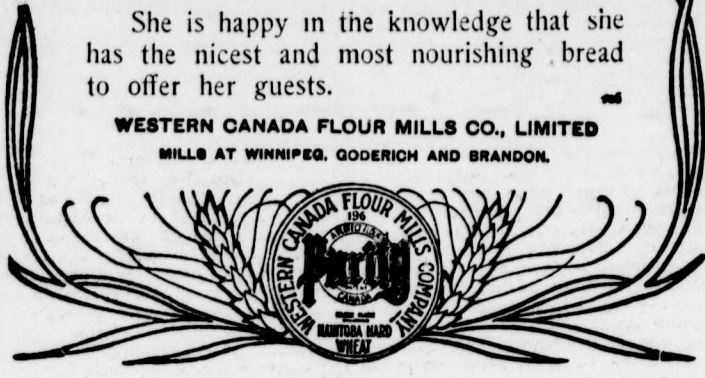
"How about the cultivated people, well dressed, mostly women," he added, "who insist on the working out of these things in the theatre or novel; have they the training for such problems? If not, they are not decent. The only motive appealed to is evil. The sensual heresy of to-day is to know evil by experience and to contrast it with the good, and it is without doubt what makes for ugliness in literature and art."

"The other night at an opera house in town there was a woman in pagan costume, with a brilliant audience there to look on. One corner in town had the courage to tell the truth about it. The audience was the usual glittering one, but it was moved by the spectacle only as presented by that woman in pagan costume."

SACERDOTAL PERVERTS.

There are nearly sixteen thousand priests in the United States, and if among the twelve apostles there was a Judas, we cannot be surprised that here and there a priest will prove a traitor to his noble calling. Duty compels us, at times, regretfully, to refer to the weakness of an erring priest not because we love him less but because we love truth more. When he blazes abroad his downfall we must defend the body of which he was once a faithful member. The sacrament of holy orders does not change the nature of the man. The priest is heir to all the failings of humanity and is additionally exposed, on account of his unique position, to greater dangers than the layman. True he receives proportionate grace to emerge unscathed from the conflict but this im-

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plies a never-ending watchfulness on his part and a complete surrender of himself to God. If he fails he falls and has himself to blame for it. We are glad to note that sacerdotal lapses and defections are very, very few and far between. Indeed numerically considered they are scarcely worth a passing mention. If they were events that commonly or even frequently occurred they would not be so loudly heralded, and of one thing we may be certain in the lives of fallen priests, granting even that their name be legion, and that one certain thing is this—the sacred vestments are never put aside through purely intellectual conviction that the Catholic Church was wrong. When a Catholic priest abandons the Catholic Church or blatantly withdraws from it, it is because he cannot brook the moral bit. Who then are gainers we may ask the Catholics or the Protestants? It is hard to be reduced to the pitiful necessity of gathering to one's arms the dirty, noxious weeds our neighbor throws across the garden wall. Compare the careers of those brilliant men who year after year throughout the world are leaving the religions of their fathers and are joining the ranks of the Catholic clergy entirely for conscience sake, with the histories of those degraded ministers whose loss the Catholic Church can easily sustain, and what do we discover? On the one side stern conviction that the claims of the Catholic Church are true, a spirit of sacrifice, sincerity, and purity of life and purpose; on the other, corruption, pride, duplicity or a motive of self interest and vindictive falsifying? Where is the small apostate who can stand beside a Newman, Manning, a Faber, a Ward, a Brown, a Benson, or a Loyd? To which side then does the balance favorably incline, the Catholic side or the Protestant side, especially when we consider that the solitary ex-priest who becomes a Protestant is invariably influenced by the love of filthy lucre or unbridled lust? A home and living always await him if he will but reform and the most eloquent tributes that can be paid to the nobility of the Catholic priesthood is the astounding fact that the number of ex-Catholic priests is relatively and absolutely insignificant. Of course there are many who call themselves "ex-priests," because they know it pays—men whose very souls are steeped in moral filth. Time and again those fiends incarnate have been ruthlessly exposed, yet just as often are they hailed as the liberators of the world from Catholicism. Merciful God what a mockery of Protestant intelligence and honesty! We are sorry that we were forced to write as we have written but before Charity comes Justice, and we wrote that Justice might, partly at least, be vindicated.—Alabama Catholic.

A ROMAN VIEW OF MISSIONARY CONGRESS.

COMMENT FROM THE ETERNAL CITY ON GREAT CATHOLIC PROGRAM OUTLINED AT CHICAGO.

The way it strikes us is this: Until to-day the Church in America has been an adolescent, preparing for the great work entrusted to it in the hidden designs of Providence. To-day, just as Pius X. has released it from the tutelage of Propaganda, it has reached man's estate and has gone forth to do a man's part in the vineyard; yesterday it was a missionary country—to-day it has become a country of missions: to missions to the negro, missions to the Indian, missions to the millions of Americans whose forefathers were Catholics and who have lost the faith through no fault of their own, missions to the abandoned multitudes of Catholics scattered here and there in small groups, without Catholic priests or schools or churches, throughout the length and breadth of the land; missions to the Catholics who have been drifting with the tide of indifference; missions to non-Catholics who only need to know the Church to love her; missions to every class of American citizens; temporary missions conducted by devoted religious and zealous secular priests, but above all permanent missions involving the building of churches and chapels and the supplying of priests and all of these missionary works organized and co-ordinated in such a way as to produce the best results that thought and foresight can assure for them. And then there is the wider missionary work of the Church Universal to be done. Such is the magnificent Catholic program of the new movement inaugurated last week in Chicago.

MORE LIGHT ON ST. PETER IN ROME.

FRAGMENTS OF ANCIENT MARBLE JUST DISCOVERED BEAR INSCRIPTION THAT MAY HOLD SIGNIFICANCE.

From the Eternal City came a high-class Catholic weekly named Rome. It reaches our office regularly and is always interesting, but the current issue is more interesting than ever. In cold type it says: Will the reader cast an eye on this sign (in isto) and then on this (Se) and see what he can make out of them when he is told that they represent two marble fragments of an inscription to be added to the walls of the Basilica of St. Peter and on the site marked in the old texts as the "Clivus cocumeri." The data, it will be observed, are very slender, but that has not deterred some worthy archeologists from building up the rest of the inscription to form something like this: IN ISTO loco PETRUS fuit . . . as every schoolboy knows means: "In this place Peter was." Having arrived at this interesting conclusion they have proceeded to base on it the deduction that this same "Clivus cocumeri" was the place where St. Peter habitually taught, baptized and consigned the pusillus grex of the first Roman Christians.

We can all remember the time, and that time not so very long since, when one of the pet arguments of the Protestant scholars against the claims of the Catholic Church was found outside the walls of Rome, never been to Rome. But the progress of archeological and historical science has relegated to the dust-heap of controversy that quaint theory which is refuted by every Protestant writer of note from Lightfoot to Harnack. Still until recent years very little satisfactory information had been forthcoming regarding the precise seat in Rome of the labors of the Prince of the Apostles, the "Sedes ubi prius sedet S. Petrus." The great De Rossi was of opinion that it was on the Via Nomentana at the catacombs of St. Agnes, and this opinion had been advocated constantly by Father Bonavenia, S. J. But Marucchi, De Rossi's greatest disciple, has latterly amassed a very convincing number of arguments to show that the primitive seat of St. Peter in Rome was in the Catacombs of Priscilla, and his conclusions have been followed by the great majority of archeologists and the inscription reproduced above will hardly be accepted by anybody as sufficient to upset Marucchi's reasoning. In any case the Cemetery of Priscilla and the "Clivus cocumeri" are quite close to each other, and afford ample evidence that St. Peter was in Rome—a fact never doubted by able historians of any faith or time.

To forgive our enemies and to refrain from unkind judgments are obligations incumbent upon every Christian. It may not be natural to do so, but it is unquestionably Christian. He who obstinately refuses to practice charity, to this extent, at least, forfeits his birthright in the Kingdom of Christ. What more frequent than the judgments of the natives of others, and yet we all know from bitter experience how unjust such shortsighted searchings generally are.—Rev. Dr. Russell.

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Was Milton a Catholic? The Catholic press of England, and a few secular journals beside, are having much to say of a statement lately made that the great poet, John Milton, died a Catholic. The statement was lately found in the Egmont Papers, in which Rev. William Binckes is quoted as stating that he had heard Milton's younger brother, Sir Christopher Milton, declare that the poet "was a Papist some years before he died, and that he died so." Binckes was a Church of England minister. In the letters of Matthew Prior, English Church laureate, there is a statement that Lord Dorset, Milton's friend, often told the Prior the same thing. The discussion is getting quite fascinating overseas.

THE AFRICAN MISSIONS OF THE WHITE FATHERS.

Dear Reader:—Since five years the "White Fathers," stationed in Quebec, have been publishing a French Monthly, Les Missions d'Afrique, in order to interest French Canadians with the White Fathers' work in Africa, and share with them their apostolic joys and trials in the evangelization of the "Dark Continent." What a greater pleasure for a true Christian than to follow the spreading of the Gospel throughout the world, especially throughout those countries still unswayed a few years ago.

Very often have we been thinking of doing the same thing for our English-speaking friends of Canada and the United States. But how could we reasonably be expected to add this new task to those numberless others with which we were already overburdened?

Still, as letters are pouring in every day more and more numerous, asking us "whether we have," or "why we have not any English papers relating the deeds of our missionaries," we now feel ourselves compelled, no matter at what cost, to take into account those zealous and friendly appeals. Ought we not to consider such an issue as our Lord's "Launch out into the deep and let down your nets"? An English translation of our missionaries' letters might perhaps be the seed of apostolic vocations among our English-speaking young people, and we are in so great a need of English-speaking students for our Uganda Mission, and our other Missions in British Africa.

This English magazine might also bring us some more material support, so necessary for the development of our work in Central Equatorial Africa. At all events new readers will mean for us new help of prayers, that most important factor in the conversion of souls. Without Me you can do nothing," has said Jesus.

So, Lord, "be it as thou wilt," at thy word I will let down the net," in the hope of a very simple but exact translation of our conferees letters. Bless our good will and our humble endeavor. P. S. The African Missions Monthly, above referred to can be obtained for the sum of 50 cents; for the United States 60 cents. Address letters to Rev. H. Gaudibert, 37 Rampeau, Quebec, Que.

DIED. McDONNELL.—On Dec. 2nd, 1900, at the residence of Peter D. McDonald Bridge End, Ont. Miss Catherine Ellen McDonald, aged sixteen years. May her soul rest in peace! BURLINGTON.—At Milton, on 16th Dec. 1900, in his eightieth year, Mr. William Boulton. Funeral was held from the Church of the Holy Family, Parkdale, on Saturday, Dec. 16. Interment was made at St. Michael's cemetery, Toronto. May the Lord have mercy upon his soul! McDONNELL.—At his late residence, 779 Simcoe St., city, on Dec. 23, 1900, Mr. Wm. McDonnell. May his soul rest in peace.

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