

An Exhibition Of Prejudice.

(By Very Rev. D. I. McDermott.)

We were surprised, and not a little shocked, to read in the newspapers of October 11th, the following: "The Rev. George M. Colville, pastor of the most prominent Presbyterian church in Racine, Wis., interrupted the singing of the 'Ave Maria,' by a soloist in church last Sunday. He told the congregation that he did not consider that famous solo a fit song for any Protestant church, because it is virtually a prayer to the Virgin Mary."

"Ave Maria" is the Latin name, as you know, of a prayer which Catholics address to the Blessed Virgin. The English version of the "Ave Maria" runs as follows: "Hail, Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee, blessed art thou among women; and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus." The first part of this prayer is taken from the salutation the Angel Gabriel addressed to Mary, the second part is taken from the salutation St. Elizabeth addressed to Mary. In this prayer, Jesus is praised as the source of Mary's blessedness. Blessed art thou among women because thou art the mother of Jesus. "Blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus," or transposed, it is: "Blessed be Jesus, the fruit of thy womb."

As this prayer is composed of the words of Holy Scripture, it is hard to see how a Christian minister could object to the singing of it any more than he could object to any other selection from the Gospel. The words "Ave Maria" are taken from the 28th and 42nd verses of the first chapter of the Gospel according to St. Luke. The interjection of the word "Mary" between "Hail" and "Full of Grace," does no violence to the meaning of the context; for St. Luke tells us these words were addressed to "a Virgin, whose name was Mary."

Let us, then, see what reasons Catholics have for the singing of the "Ave Maria," and what reasons, if any, Protestants, especially Presbyterians, can urge against the singing of this hymn in any church dedicated to Christ.

From the fact that the "Ave Maria" is commonly called the Angelical Salutation, people may thoughtlessly attribute its composition to the Angel Gabriel and conclude that it contains nothing more than his opinion of Mary's virtues and dignity, and that it offers to Mary the honor which an Archangel thought due to her. If this were the whole truth about the "Ave Maria," we might well feel justified in thinking what an Archangel said to Mary; we might well feel justified in thinking as highly of Mary's sanctity as profoundly as the Angel Gabriel did; we might, at least, feel certain that no follower of Christ, above all that no minister of Christ, would rebuke us for addressing to Mary the eulogy which an Archangel had pronounced upon her. If, then, we had no higher authorities than the Angel Gabriel, and St. Elizabeth for the language of this prayer, we might feel, in a Christian temple, secure from interruption while singing "Ave Maria."

Great and sufficient as is the Archangel's authority, it is neither nor sole authority, nor is it our highest for singing "Ave Maria." While it is true on earth to address these words to Mary, nevertheless, we must remember that these words of the "Hail Mary" were not first pronounced on earth but in heaven, that they came first, not from the lips of an Angel, but from the mouth of God Himself. When Gabriel said to Mary: "Hail, full of grace; the Lord is with thee, blessed art thou among women," he spoke neither his own sentiments nor in his own name. He spoke it in true sentiments which he entertained of Mary, but which did not originate with him any more than they do with us when we say: "Hail, Mary, full of grace," etc. The Gospel distinctly says: "The Angel Gabriel was sent from God" . . . to a virgin whose name was Mary. . . . He was, then, sent to Mary with a message—from whom? From God! He made known the sentiments God had entertained concerning Mary, Gabriel, therefore, in saluting Mary, spoke in the name of the Lord, made known

the thoughts of God, just as the Angel did when he spoke to Moses, saying: "I am thy Lord and thy God!"

How far, then, removed from Gabriel, from Mary, and from God Himself, must that religion be which proscribes, as unfit to be sung in its churches, the eulogy which the Most High God passed on Mary!

We have, moreover, the example of Jesus Christ Himself as an additional incentive for saying the "Holy Mary," from singing "Ave Maria." During the thirty years of His hidden life, in that long period of which the Gospel says nothing more than that Christ went down to Nazareth with Mary and Joseph and was subject to them, we may well believe that Jesus consecrated with His sacred lips the words of the "Ave Maria," which, a Presbyterian minister, forbade to be sung because it is "virtually a prayer to the Virgin Mary."

During the thirty years Jesus was subject to Mary, how else could He salute her except by saying: "Hail, Mother Mary?" How often, when He observed her good works and virtues, her supereminence sanctity, did He salute her, saying: "Hail, Mother, full of grace?" How often, when He observed her obedience to the law of God, her perfect accord with the Divine will, did He say to her: "Mother, the Lord is with thee?" How often, as He contemplated her exceptional privilege of being the Mother of God, of being of voluntary agent of the Father in giving a Saviour to a sinful world, how often did He exclaim: "Mother Mary, thou art blessed among women?"

Blessed more than and before all the daughters of Eve, for Mary had no predecessor and was to have no successor in her Divine maternity.

Jesus was the God-man. From this, we know that every pure, noble impulse of human nature was developed, just so much higher in him than it is in us than the heavens are above the earth. One of the impulses of our nature is to say: "God bless you!" to every one who aids or edifies us. Jesus was man as well as God. He was, therefore, impelled to bless Mary and to declare her blessed for all she had been to Him in the order of nature.

The desire which rises above all others in every priest's heart is to impart to his mother his first blessing; while his hands are still redolent with the sacred unction, it is his supreme desire not only to wish from the bottom of a grateful heart, but also to exhaust all the powers of his ministry in bringing down the choicest benedictions of Heaven upon the head of her who bore him. Let those, then, who would have us believe that Jesus was indifferent to His mother; that He forgot all the offices she had performed for Him, that He neglected her, let those remember that Jesus was our great High Priest, holy, undefiled, higher than the heavens and purer than the sun; let them, above all, remember that He was segregated from sinners, that He had nothing in common with the greatest of all human monstrosities—the son who is an affliction, through either indifference or ingratitude, to his mother.

Think you, then, that our High Priest, failed to express the sentiments of a grateful heart to Mary? That he failed to lay His holy hands in benediction on His mother's head? That He neglected to exert the powers of His priesthood to their utmost? In order to open to her all the treasures of heaven and to bring the choicest blessings upon her?

When we remember that according to the Scripture, the Lord was with Mary, that she was full of grace, before she became blessed among women by consenting to be the mother of the Messiah; when we remember, then, that Mary had conceived the Son of God in her heart before she conceived Him in her chaste womb; when we see her from association with Jesus like Him growing in age, in wisdom, in grace before God and men; when we see Jesus flying to her arms and Mary pressing Him to her bosom; when we contemplate the union which enabled Mary to feel the throbbings of the Sacred Heart and Jesus feel her immaculate heart beating responsive to His own; when we behold Mary blessing those Divine lips from which flowed all knowledge; when we consider all these things we feel not only justified in singing "Ave Maria," but we feel it impossible to refrain from repeating what the Father said through the Angel Gabriel, what the Holy Ghost said through St. Elizabeth, what Jesus Himself substantially said times without number: "Hail, Mary, full of grace; the Lord is with thee, blessed art thou among women; and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus."

When the Rev. George M. Colville interrupted the singing of the "Ave Maria" in his church, when he declared that it was not a fit hymn to

be sung in a Protestant church, he not only placed himself, but Protestantism itself, so far as he can be supposed to represent it, in opposition to the Angel Gabriel, who said to Mary: "Hail, full of grace; the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women," he placed himself in opposition to St. Elizabeth who "filled with the Holy Ghost" said: "Blessed is the fruit of thy womb," he placed himself in opposition to Mary who prophesied: "Behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed;" he placed himself in opposition to the Holy Ghost who through St. Elizabeth said: "Blessed art thou among women;" he placed himself in opposition to Jesus Christ, who as the Second Person of the Trinity could not but call her blessed whom the Father and the Holy Ghost had pronounced blessed and declared would be called blessed, who as the Son of Mary could not without becoming an unnatural child, refrain from calling Mary blessed because she was blessed in her virtues, in her dignity of Mother of God, and because Jesus had heaped blessings on her head; he placed himself in opposition to the Eternal Father who sent Gabriel, the highest minister of His court to salute Mary, saying in His name: "Hail, full of grace; the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women."

From all this it is evident that the Rev. George M. Colville, of Racine, Wis., could not have done greater violence to the teachings of the Gospel in forbidding the singing of the "Our Father," than he did in interrupting the singing of the "Ave Maria;" for while the former is addressed to God as the sole giver of good gifts, the latter is addressed to Mary as our intercessor with Jesus who is our advocate with the Father; besides, the language of the one prayer is as Scriptural as the other. The "Ave Maria" simply says:—"Blessed be Jesus; blessed be Mary because she is the Mother of Jesus." To be in opposition to the "Ave Maria" is nothing less than to be in opposition to Christianity.—Holy Family.

Notes From Scotland.

UNITY IN PARADES.—There is more than one lesson in the following paragraph, especially to pastors and laity in large cities where there were many parishes. It reads thus: The annual parade of the League of the Cross took place in Glasgow on Sunday the 11th of Oct., and was a very creditable turn out for that body. The various societies in the eastern part of the city assembled in the Sacred Heart Schools, and from there marched in procession to the Sacred Heart Church, Dalmarnock Road, where they assisted at Rosary and Benediction, the preacher being Very Rev. Canon O'Reilly. The members of the Northern, North Western, and Western districts assembled in the Jesuit Church, Garnethill, where the preacher was Father Gartlan, S.J., whilst those attached to the branches on the South side of the river paraded in Our Lady and St. Margaret's Church, Kinning Park, where the Rev. Ellis P. Rogan, of Parkhead, delivered the annual sermon. The turn out at all three churches was a very creditable one, reflecting great credit on the body as a whole, and proves that the League is as strong, if not stronger, in Glasgow than ever it was.

CHILDREN'S DAY.—Sunday was a great day for the children in St. Mungo's, Glasgow. In the morning an immense number made their First Communion, and it was truly a devotional sight to see the little ones, the girls in their pure white, symbolical of their souls, and the boys with their sashes, as they walked reverentially to and from the altars. In the afternoon His Grace Archbishop Maguire, who was attended by Canon Ritchie (the diocesan secretary), and the fathers of the mission, administered the Sacrament of Confirmation to about 300 children and adults. Mr. James Brogan, who has been a parishioner in St. Mungo's ever since it was a parish, acted as sponsor for the boys, whilst Miss Meighan performed a like office for the girls. In the evening there was a grand Rosary procession in which those confirmed, previously took part. First came the cross-bearer and acolytes, followed by girls in white, five of their number carrying white banners, each one depicting one of the joyful mysteries. Then came the boys, amongst them being distributed five purple banners, each one showing a sorrowful mystery. Then came the elder girls, carrying the golden banners of the glorious mysteries, and then following a banner depicting our Blessed Lady came Fathers Allwyn and Bonaventure, C.

P., the latter in cope. Having traversed the Church, the processionists made their way to the side chapel—all except the banner-bearers entering the sanctuary, formed in semi-circle around it, making a pretty and devotional scene. The Benediction service, and the recital of the Rosary was then proceeded with.

Previous to the procession Father Paulinus, C.P., preached an interesting expository sermon on the Rosary. To an outsider the Rosary was as meaningless as the horse shoe nailed upon some of their doors, and to many a Catholic it was but something they carried about with them to ward off evil. To the good Catholic who practised it, it meant a great deal more, for it brought him in close touch with the principal scenes of Our Lord's incarnation, passion, and triumphs, and thus into closer touch with our Lord Himself. In our days both Leo XIII. and Pius IX. set great store on the proper recital of the Rosary, and so it had been through the past ages to the days of St. Dominic himself. It was essentially a devotion for these days, when the very ramparts of truth were being assailed. If that devotion was practised as it ought to be in the family, they would have happy homes modelled on that of the home at Nazareth.

THE CATHOLIC LITERARY.—The second meeting of the West of Scotland Catholic Literary Society took place in the City Hall Reception Room recently, Mr. A. M. Boyle presiding. The lecturer was Mrs. Cross Lynch, the eminent novelist, her subject being "Literature; Its Influence and Its Charm." At the close of her address Mrs. Lynch was awarded a hearty vote of thanks.

A LAYMAN HONORED.—At the St. Vincent de Paul's concert, held on Oct. 7, an interesting ceremony took place—the investiture of Mr. James Brand, with the ribbon and insignia of a Knight of the Order of St. Gregory. The appointment of Mr. Brand as a Knight of St. Gregory was among one of the last official acts in the life of the late Pontiff, Leo XIII. Mr. Brand, who is a convert, has worked for many years in the interests of the faith, and was the first chairman, and still is one of the most influential members, of the Glasgow Parish Council. He is also an active member of the St. Vincent de Paul Society. In returning thanks, Mr. Brand spoke of the eminent services rendered by the late Mr. P. Bogan to Catholicity and charity in Glasgow, and said that his pioneer efforts in the furtherance of Catholicity, was at first directed by that gentleman.

Domestic Service Problem Again.

Determined to solve the servant problem at all hazards, and with the avowed intention of giving \$50,000 in prizes to the servants who came up to expectations, the Women's Domestic Guild has been formed with some of the best-known society women in New York city at its head. Mrs. Russell Sage, Mrs. Clarence Burns, Mrs. Charles E. Sprague, and Mrs. Joseph Healey of No. 143 Madison Avenue, are some of those who are doing the preliminary work. They declare that by trying to solve the servant problem they are really working for the home, for if conditions are not changed people will be less and less inclined to keep house.

To show that the guild is not trying to solve the problem without having studied conditions, it is declared that two well known young society girls went to an employment agency and obtained positions as waitresses, the employers in both cases being equally well known among the rich. When one of the girls arrived at her new home she was told that for the time being she would have to put a mattress in the bathtub and sleep there, while the other was obliged to camp out on an ironing board. It is needless to say that they both left the next day.

In addition to the other interesting plans, it is proposed to have a headquarters both for the members of the guild and the servants, and it is intended that all women who get servants through the guild and agree to give them certain days off shall live up to that agreement. It is also said that at the big meeting that is to be held in December at the Waldorf, Mrs. Theodore Roosevelt and Mrs. Grover Cleveland will be invited to appear and contribute as home women their views on this question.

What Is The Index?

Rev. M. I. Stritch, S.J., in the New York Voice.

What is the Index of Prohibited Books?

This question is discussed by theologians and canonists who wish to make clear the scope and purpose of ecclesiastical authorities in sanctioning the publication of a list of forbidden books. It is asked by well-meaning non-Catholics who desire to obtain information for merely speculative ends. It is asked by conscientious Catholics because they seek the guidance of the Church in what is now a matter of the greatest importance—the matter of reading. It is asked by bigoted and flippant declaimers in order to have a suitable occasion to show the obscurantism, the timidity or the narrow-minded intolerance of the Church. The Index, they think, is one of the pitiable devices of Pope and Cardinals to hold the allegiance of Catholics by keeping them ignorant of the enlightening teachings of modern times. Or again, these writers, deeming it not worth while to waste their virtuous indignation on the Church, take an apparently different talk. They grow merry over the utility and ineptitude of such means and instruments as the Index. They point out the fact that in this list comparatively few books are contained, while hundreds of thousands go unlisted. And the unlisted are incomparably more dangerous to Rome and Roman pretensions than many of the practically harmless books on the Index. Evidently the Pope and Cardinals are a little too timid or too lazy to pursue, capture and put into their pillory the great faith destroying criminals who are going about at large. For all these classes of inquirers a very interesting article appeared recently in the "Civiltà Cattolica." This magazine is a bi-weekly, edited by learned Jesuit Fathers in Rome, under the immediate supervision of the Holy Father. The gist of the article is as follows:—

The Index is not the whole, but only a small part of the legislation of the Church regarding the reading of books dangerous to faith and morals. No upright man would think himself permitted to do every deed in his power, speak every word or think every thought or entertain every wish. Because such a course is clearly forbidden by the law of nature, revealed in the reason and conscience of man. A vast multitude of books are so openly coarse, obscene, immoral, irreligious, blasphemous that no other law is needed to declare authoritatively that they are not to be read. The Church teaches that this natural law is the will of God, binding on the conscience not merely of Catholics, but of every man and woman whose mental condition is such as to leave them responsible for their actions. The natural law is unchangeable. Books of the above description have always been, are now and always will be prohibited to all. They need no further listing or indexing.

Second. Many books not clearly forbidden by the natural law because not openly heretical or immoral or atheistic or obscene are still full of danger to unsuspecting readers. We know on good authority that the devil has a way of taking the role of an angel of light. In olden days he displayed this angelic disposition through the instrumentality of the serpent. In modern times his favorite instruments are certain classes of authors.

To prevent this cunning deception, especially since the time of the Reformation the Church has issued general decrees prohibiting not individual books, but large classes and divers kinds of writings which either manifestly or insidiously labor to undermine the faith and morals of their readers. The zeal of the reformers in propagating their doctrine was largely frustrated by the loyalty of the Catholic peoples to ecclesiastical authorities. It was then that the wily "angel of light" process began to be extensively used. It was then, too, that the great Catholic invention of printing was made a means of spreading heresy and immorality, everywhere endeavoring to lead men away from their allegiance to the Church. Ever since this propaganda of, first, Protestantism, then rationalism, and afterward paganism, has gone vigorously forward. The printing press in multiplying books encouraged and facilitated education. Books and read-

ers grew together. The need of special action on the part of the Church to save her people from false teaching and immoral influence became urgent at once and has lasted to our own day. Our critics of the Index are guilty of an ignorant elench. They take the Index as identical with the complete and general legislation of the Church on this matter of reading. The fact is, the Index is not, strictly speaking, in the nature of legislation at all, but rather in that of a series of court judgments. The natural law and the general decrees of the Church did not make known by name what books were prohibited. Thousands of books—to-day—we might better say hundreds—were clearly to be placed in the categories of the books forbidden by either the natural law or the general decrees of the Church. Thousands, too, were just as clearly free from any taint that would bring them under either ban. In between these two classes there would naturally be many doubtful and controverted cases. When doubts occurred or controversies arose as to whether a book was prohibited or not, inquiries were made of the proper authorities. The book thus brought up for trial was examined and condemned or acquitted, according to its merits. In order to make the saving legislation of the Church more effective, Bishops, priests, educated laymen and especially officers of Catholic schools and universities were encouraged or required to present doubtful books for examination. Again, it happened that careless and wayward Catholics might read books about which there really was no doubt on the part of conscientious and intelligent men. The latter knew that such books came under the general prohibition, while the former persisted in reading until an examination took place and an explicit decision was rendered. In other words, until the book was put on the Index.

Out of cases of this character grew the list of prohibited books now known as the Index. Hence: First, not all prohibited books are contained in this small number. Second, they are not by any means the worst books that are found in the Index, since real and bona fide doubts existed as to whether they were forbidden or not until a decision was obtained and the books listed. Third, some grossly bad books are indexed either because it was found that disobedient Catholics would otherwise read them or for some other particular reason.

Our conclusion from these facts and explanations should be that the Church is not tyrannical or intolerant, but laudably vigilant in safeguarding the souls entrusted to her keeping; that the character of the works on the Index and the smallness of their number do not show any carelessness or incompetency on the part of the Church in selecting the books worthy of condemnation, but rather demonstrate the ignorance and conceit of the critics; that Catholics ought to have a sincere respect and reverence for the natural law, the ecclesiastical decrees and the special decisions as shown in the Index relating to this matter of prohibited reading.

THE ROSARY OF YEARS.

Some reckon their age by years, Some reckon their lives by art, But some tell their day by the flow of their tears And their life by the moans of their heart.

The dials of the earth may show The length, not the depth, of years; Few or many they come, few or many they go, But our time is best measured by tears.

Ah, not by the silver gray That creeps through the sunny hair, And not by the scenes that we pass on our way, And not by the furrows the finger of care.

On the forehead and face have made; Not so do we count our years; Not by the sun of the earth, but the shade

Of our souls, and the fall of our tears. For the young are sometimes old, Though their brow be bright and fair; While their blood beats warm, their hearts lie cold— O'er them the springtime—but winter is there.

And the old are oftimes young When the hair is thin and white, And they sing in age as in youth they sung, And they laugh, for their cross is light.

A thousand joys may foam On the billows of all the years, But never the foam brings the brave bark home; It reaches the haven through tears. —Father Ryan.