

## World of Missions.

### Romanism as Seen in Rome.

Miss M. E. Vickery of the Methodist Episcopal Young Ladies' College, Rome, Italy, writes as follows to "Missionary Review of the World":

I have to do with children and young people, but I find that all that they have ever known of religious life has been a mumbling of beads and bowing low before shrines and images. What, though these statues of marble and painted plaster be called, The Virgin Mary, The Child Jesus, or by the name of some saint! The people are ignorant of Bible history, know nothing of the life and doctrine of Christ, and would pray with as much ardor to any idol put before them. In fact, the great miracle-working Madonna of Rome, worshipped in the Church of St. Augustina, is only a pagan statue of the wicked Agrippina with her infant Nero in her arms. Covered with jewels and votive offerings, her foot encased in gold, because the constant kissing has worn away the stone, this haughty and evil-minded Roman matron bears no possible resemblance to the pure Virgin Mary; yet crowds are always at her foot worshipping her. The celebrated bronze statue of St. Peter, which is adored in the great Church of St. Peter and whose foot is entirely kissed away by the lips of devotees, is but an antique statue of Jupiter, an idol of paganism; all that was necessary to make the pagan god a Christian saint, was to turn the thunderbolt in his uplifted right hand to two keys, and put a gilded halo around his head. Yet, on any church holiday, you will see thousands passing solemnly before this image (arrayed in gorgeous robes, with the pope's miter on its head) and after bowing before it, rise on their toes and repeatedly kiss its foot.

How can there be any spiritual life in a religion that consists only in hearing mass in a language not understood by the common people, in repeating prayers learned by rote, as children, and attending confessional, where the priest's questions are only a prying into private life? The Bible has ever been a forbidden book, and a good Roman Catholic dare not even think for himself on religious questions, he must accept what the priest says as the final and only truth. He dare not approach God directly, but only through saints, and he thinks of God as an angry judge, that only Mary can command to be clement and merciful to weak men.

How often, after talking with some of the women, have I despaired of ever making them understand spiritual things! They think the saints, the Blessed Virgin, and even the infant Christ (they are taught that the Virgin ascended to heaven with the infant

Jesus in her arms), like the pagan Gods, can be deceived by outward devotion or their favor bought by some sacrifice.

In one of the three hundred and eighty-five Roman churches is an image of St. Anthony, the great saint of Padua. On one side of the statue is an iron box for offerings in money, and on the other side is a letter-box. Last Easter eve I saw the monks empty the money-box, and it required three of them to drag away the heavy sack of coin. There are always many young women to be seen before this image, for St. Anthony is the patron of marriages, and many a timid confession of love is dropped into the letter-box, and it often happens that a marriage is arranged as a result. The superstitious maiden believes that her letter goes directly to the saint in his heavenly mansion, and she has no suspicion that it is read by the parish priest.

Yesterday I watched the *Sacro Bambino* (holy baby) being carried in a pompous procession to its carriage, and then hastily driven to the bedside of some ignorant Roman woman—no, to the bedside of a prince of the church, one of its boasted intellectual lights, Cardinal Jacobini, the cardinal vicar of Rome, only second to the pope in spiritual authority. Does it seem possible that such things could occur in Rome in this the last year of the nineteenth century?

It is claimed that the *bambino*, the wooden doll, was carved and painted by the angles in the exact image of the infant Jesus, and that its mere presence in a sick room will heal the most desperate cases. A large sum of money, however, must be given to the monks before it is allowed to leave its iron safe to visit a dying person, and guards go with it for fear that it might be robbed of the earthly treasures the diamonds, rubies, necklaces, rings and bracelets with which it is completely covered. When taken into the sick room, if its face glows, it is a sign that the patient will get well, if turns pale, it means that God does not will the person to live. It turned pale for the cardinal, so to-day we hear of his death. When the highest spiritual authority puts all his faith in a gaudily painted doll, what can we expect from the ignorant people who get all their light from him?

A dense cloud of paganism and immorality cuts off the vision of the Sun of Righteousness from the Italian people. One must begin with tearing down and destroying superstitions and base ideals of divinity, before he can hope to reach the hearts of these people, and lead them into the true light.

The so-called "holy year" has brought crowds of these ignorant, superstitious pilgrims to Rome. One has only to look into their faces full of worry fear and superstition, to see what the Roman Church does for the masses—not a gleam of hope or intelligence in their eyes. They crowd into the churches to see pagan ceremonies, they kneel before the priest, and are touched with a rod, thus having their petty sins forgiven. They crowd into St. Peter to see the pope and his gorgeous court, devoutly kneeling as the procession passes. They crawl up the holy stairs on their knees (the same stairs that Martin Luther was ascending when the Spirit told him "The just shall live by faith"), but nothing brings a ray of joy or smile of peace to their troubled faces. Patiently they go through the allotted duties of this jubilee year, repeat the prayers over and over, and confess every day—all for the vague hope of shortening by several thousand years, the long, long time they must pass in purgatory.

Will you not join us in the prayer that the Holy Spirit will use all the various branches of our work in Italy, to let in light into these darkened souls, that the pure light of the Gospel may indeed make them free.

Intelligence has been received of the death of Rev. George Hunter, of the China Inland Mission, at Ichang, China. Mr. Hunter was a native of Glasgow, and previous to his departure for the mission field in 1889 was minister of Ivy Place Church, Stranraer.

### The Difference.

Some murmur when the sky is clear  
And wholly bright to view,  
If one small speck of dark appear  
In their great heaven of blue.

And some with thankful love are filled  
If but one streak of light,  
One ray of God's good mercy, gild  
The darkness of their night.

## Dreaded Meal Time.

### THE STORY OF A DYSPEPTIC WHO HAS FOUND A CURE.

There is an Intimate Connection Between Good Health, Happiness and Good Digestion—Dr. Williams' Pink Pills Bring About These Conditions.

From the Tribune, Deseronto.

Without good digestion there can be neither good health nor happiness. More depends upon the perfect working of the digestive organs than more people imagine and even slight functional disturbances of the stomach leaves the victim irritable, melancholy and apathetic. In such cases most people resort to laxative medicines, but these only further aggravate the trouble. What is needed is a tonic; something that will build up the system, instead of weakening it as purgative medicines do. For this purpose there is no medicine equal to Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. They enrich the blood and strengthen and stimulate the digestive tract from first dose to last. In proof of this assertion the case of Mr. Thomas A. Stewart, the well known and genial proprietor of the Oriental Hotel, Deseronto, may be quoted. To a reporter of the Tribune who mentioned the fact that he was suffering from dyspepsia, Mr. Stewart said:—"Why don't you take Dr. Williams' Pink Pills?" Asked why he gave this advice Mr. Stewart continued, "Simply because it are the best medicine for that complaint I know of. For years I was a great sufferer from indigestion, and during that time I think I tried a score of medicines. In some cases I got temporary relief, but not a cure. I fairly dreaded meal times and the and the food that I ate gave me but little nourishment. On recommendation of a friend I began using Dr. Williams' Pink Pills a little over a year ago. I soon experienced relief and no longer dreaded meal time, but as I was determined that the cure should be permanent if possible, I continued taking the pills in light doses for several months. The result is every vestige of the trouble left me and I have as good an appetite now as any boarder in the house, and my digestive organs work like a charm. I may also add that my general health was greatly improved as a result of using the pills.

"Do you object to my publishing this in the Tribune?" asked the reporter.

"Well, I have no desire for publicity," said Mr. Stewart, "but if you think it will help anyone who suffers as I did, you may publish the facts."

Dr. Williams' Pink Pills cure by going to the root of the disease. They renew and build up the blood, and strengthen the nerves thus driving disease from the system. If your dealer does not keep them, they will be sent postpaid at 50 cents a box, or six boxes for \$2.50, by addressing the Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., Brockville, Ont.

Another effort may be made to induce Dr. John Watson to undertake the pastorate of the proposed new church for the Finchley Road, London.

### To the Deaf

A rich lady, cured of her Deafness and Noises in the head by Dr. Nicholson's Artificial Ear Drums, gave \$10,000 to his Institute, so that deaf people unable to procure the Ear Drums may have them free, Address No. 9926, The Nicholson Institute, 790 Eighth Avenue, New York

# EPILEPTIC

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