

NOVEMBER 22 1913

God to send me a soldier's death in that heat of battle against my country's foes.

THE CATHOLIC TRUTH SOCIETY

MR. BELLOC ON THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD

The eleventh annual Conference of the Catholic Truth Society of Ireland was held in the Round Room of the Dublin Mansion House on Wednesday last week.

Mr. Hilaire Belloc, who was given an enthusiastic reception, then delivered the inaugural address of the Conference. He took for his subject "The Church and the Modern World," reports the Freeman's Journal, and in the course of an inquiry into what he said might be called European civilization, he distinguished the Catholic Church as "an institution on differing altogether from anything arising, or proceeding from the whole."

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habit-vague and amorphous things were naturally long-lived—but as a deliberately conceived individual, vividly possessed of all the marks which mark a person.

FUTURE OF THE CHURCH

The future of the Catholic Church in the modern world, judged upon temporal indices alone, seems to me, said Mr. Belloc, "to depend upon three factors—(a) the political factors of numbers and equality, (b) the intellectual factor of recognition, and (c) what I may call the practical factor of culture."

ANTICLERICALISM

In some countries (and besides France they had the Catholic Netherlands, now called Belgium; all Latin America, all Spain and Portugal, Italy, and to some extent the Catholic cantons of Switzerland) the Catholic Church and its atmosphere were the groundwork of the whole picture. Social memory extended to a time when an unreformed state of hierarchy, or the alliance of the hierarchy at some moment with some unpopular party in the State, was popular to all. Therefore, in such countries, where they had no inducement of patriotism, no example of what came in the absence of faith to make Catholics close their ranks, they always had—even within the Catholic body—what was called "Anticlericalism."

NATIONALITY AND FAITH

The second category is the category of those Catholic nations—some of them at some times the subject of gross oppression, others at other times treated with comparative leniency, or even left wholly alone—which have in common a technical or legal subservience, often an actual subservience, at the Catholic social subservience to a non-Catholic power. Of such a sort are those parts of the Polish nation under Russia and under Prussia; the Irish nation, in so far as it remains at home; the Bavarians since 1870; the other Catholic or partially Catholic states of the Germanies, and in some measure the Catholic cantons of Switzerland. With every Pole, and with most Irishmen, those two sentiments of nationality and of religion combine. The third category is that state of affairs peculiar to Protestant Germany, England, the United States, and the English colonies. Oddly enough, this very partial, ephemeral state of affairs, only to be found in one section of the world is often treated of in the English language—both in the New world and here—as though it included the whole problem of the Church and its future. That, of course, is nonsense. The future of Catholicism is being fought out, as every Catholic man knows, in the countries where Catholicism is really free and in the habit of perfectly open and untrammelled expression. France is especially the arena. But still this Protestant English-speaking and English-writing world is so wrapped up in itself that we who stand in the midst of it must pay a particular attention to its character. In these societies of my third category, the Catholic Church, where it is not associated with nationality (as in the case, for instance, of Irish emigrants to England or of Polish emigrants into Prussia) the attitude of Catholics is confined, timid, and, if I may use the word, "starved." It makes converts, but not upon a large scale, or throughout the people. Its converts are drawn in comparatively small numbers from the middle classes, and it is curious to note how often the families of these converts fall in their allegiance to the Church. They do things beneath the level of Catholic intelligence. I have even known some to take seriously the muddled stuff called Modernism.

COMING TRIUMPH

Summing up with regard to these three types, the lecturer said that those independent countries which survived the storm of the sixteenth century

would not only certainly see the triumph of the Church amongst them, but would see that triumph very quickly. Of these countries France was the leader and the type, and with every day that passes she under-

mining of every force opposed to the Church in France was more and more clear. Freemasonry had grown old and become ridiculous; Jewish finance, for many generations a secret enemy, had been dragged out into the open, and might remain an enemy or a friend, as it chose. Protestantism was hopelessly dead, and had left nothing but a fossil difficult of digestion, but still more incapable of propagation. In the second category, that of the subject nationalities, it seemed to him still more certain that Catholicism would prevail in the near future. As to the third category, he saw very little immediate prospect of their advance where they were not bound by a national bond.

There were, however, other considerations besides the numerical. There was the intellectual factor of recognition, and there was the practical recognition of the Catholic Church as proceeding at a very great pace amongst those whom anti-Catholic obscurantism had till recently blinded. They had only to consider those who spoke and wrote to day and compared them with those who spoke and wrote fifty years ago in Protestant countries, to know what he meant, and if they turned to the atheist or indifferent middle classes in Catholic countries, they found just the same thing. It was in the last factor, however—that of practical culture—that the heavy artillery of the Catholic position was placed.

HEIRS OF ALL THE ARTS

"We Catholics," the speaker said, "are not only the heirs of all the arts, we are also the guardians of all tradition; and it is in the very nature of things that men setting out once again to solve upon their own account problems which are as old as the race will come to regard, next to be moulded by, and, at last, to accept the old solutions which alone can determine the permanent happiness of mankind—in so far as happiness is possible to the fleshly procession of men. Of these solutions we, Catholics, are the possessors. To take two fundamental institutions upon which all men's eyes are now turned—property and marriage. It is clearly apparent that the first negotiations have come at last to disappoint the first generation of septs. Only the old men, the valiant fathers of the cause, still preach the economic salvation of mankind through the despoiling of ownership and the placing of land and machinery into the hands of professional politicians. Collectivism has burst. And while generous minds of a younger generation are hurrying here and there to find a solution for our economic troubles, the Church will persistently present the normal institution of property widely established throughout the Christian state as the natural economic habitat of mankind, and to that doctrine, by an inevitable process of exhaustion and rebellion, in revolt against that hideous, monstrous product of the sixteenth century schism, must at last return. The same thing may be observed with the institution of marriage. In practice, every act, private or public, which wounds the family, so jars the human nerve that the toleration of such acts is very brief, and, here again, men are brought back inevitably to the culture which we defend, and which happens also to be the only culture that lacks of any satisfied mankind. One may take higher instances," the lecturer said, "and show how the first perceptions of philosophy will by a natural gravitation return to the Catholic postulates of an intelligent and personal Creator of an immortal soul, of free will, and of a consequence following upon good and evil. One may descend to the lesser manifestations of truth, and show how the Catholic humor is found, at last, to be human, where the Puritan is fastidious and inhuman; and, as to fasting and fasting the same, and the Catholic fitness with mysteries and the Catholic devotion to the dead. Better still, one may rely upon that ultimate factor, the Catholic love of arms, and be certain that sooner or later the Catholic temperament must be physically victorious in the field. For myself, I find that my chief consolation. I say again, we are the heirs of all the arts; we are the guardians of all tradition. Using a purely temporal argument, that is the pull which should, or must, drag back to us the world which we made."—London Tablet.

REVILED SOUTH AMERICA

"Americans have but a vague idea of the conditions in South America," said Dr. Rosalie S. Morton, of the Polytechnic Hospital staff, New York, on her recent return from a four-months' tour of the Latin-American Republics. "I was very pleasantly surprised," she continued, "to find such excellent work being done in the hospitals of the countries I visited. Most of us have an idea that if we were in South America and needed an operation we would have to come to this country, but this is not so. I was particularly anxious to see what philanthropic work was being done for the blind, deaf and dumb, and orphans. Naturally I could not visit every city, but in Buenos Aires I found some very excellent treatment of the blind, and in Lima splendid work is being done for children. There they have nurseries such as

exist here, where mothers who work during the day may leave their babies, knowing that they will receive proper care."

The light is spreading. If such disclosures go on, the average American citizen will actually begin to believe that those benighted, papistical South Americans are occupied now and then with something besides fiestas, bull fights and revolutions. But the old Protestant tradition will die hard.—America.

WHY I AM A CATHOLIC

I cannot answer as an old-time Democrat did, and say I am one because my father and grandfather were, says W. G. Hume in the current number of Extension Magazine, for my paternal ancestors were Presbyterians and my great grandfather was a Presbyterian minister.

I am a Catholic, first, because I could not be anything else. By the process of elimination after investigating all other creeds the Catholic Church is the only existing religion that possesses the mark or attributes of the one true Church founded by Christ.

Every earnest Christian must admit: First—That Jesus Christ founded some Church. Second—That the Church of which He was, and is, the head was to last for all time and therefore must exist on earth to-day.

Now, accepting my premises, the One Church of Christ can not be divided into many branches teaching different doctrines. Many good Protestants say that if we believe in Christ and keep His commandments, it matters not with what denomination we affiliate—unless—Oh, shades of logic—we are Catholics! If Presbyterians are right, then Baptists and Lutherans are wrong, for each sect teaches different things; and Unitarians certainly cannot be included in a Church of which Baptists and Episcopalians claim to be branches.

The usual arguments of many non-Catholics is something like this: "Yes, we admit that during the seven or eight centuries after Christ there was a Church which was founded by Him and which taught truly the things He told His apostles to preach. But in the course of time errors crept in and a large part of the Church became corrupt. Then the good members of this Church withdrew and united together to continue the early Christian Church and perpetuate Christ's original commandments as laid down in the Bible."

Without admitting the accusation, I will acknowledge that if all Protestants had united together and formed one Church, and if all the members of this Church believed the same things, their positions would at least be more tenable. In this respect the Greek Church has an advantage over Protestants.

Following their argument, however, there is on earth to-day one Church, one form of divine worship founded by our Lord Jesus Christ, and only one. Which is it? If it is not the Catholic Church, which Church did He found? Which of the many creeds and "isms" is the one true branch that perpetuates the early Church which is to continue until the end of time? Unless a Protestant can answer this question positively and to his own satisfaction, he had no excuse for remaining what he is.

The Episcopalians, I believe, are the only Protestants who seriously even claim a direct succession from the apostles, but they are obliged to trace through the "Roman Catholic Church," and they themselves in so doing admit that during a certain period the Catholic Church was the true Church. The gates of hell shall not prevail against her. Once the true Church, she is bound to be so still, otherwise hell has prevailed. If Episcopalians could show true succession (which they cannot), how can they reconcile high and low church, one claiming to acknowledge the Real Presence, and the other denying it. Can Christ's Church be divided against itself?

The direct apostolic succession has always seemed to me the simplest and at the same time the most vital test of any Church's claiming divine authority. Strangely to say, most Protestants admit the claims of the Catholic Church in this regard. One thing has always impressed me. There are, of course, exceptions, but in almost every case of which I have had personal knowledge this rule will apply. Lukeward or back Catholics are the ones who leave the Church, but our converts are good, earnest Protestants who are seeking truth and their eternal salvation.

Again, "By their fruits you shall know them." Look back through the pages of history and count, if you can, the mighty names upon the roll of the Catholic Church—just to mention a few—St. Vincent de Paul, St. Francis Xavier, St. Ignatius Loyola, Thomas A Kempis, Felon, Michelangelo, Raphael, Dante, Dryden, Newman, Manning, Spaulding. Is it not a privilege to be brothers in the Faith to such as these? Is it possible for such men to have been wrong in their method of serving God? Protestants sometimes say: "I can not understand how Catholics believe this or that. Of course they cannot; otherwise, if in earnest, they would become Catholic. Right here we come to the main point: Faith is not understanding, but believing what we cannot understand. Help Thou our unbelief,

And give us grace to say like the repentant thief, "Have mercy, Lord, to day." Yes, help us to believe. And hope—to love Thee, too; Let us at last ourselves deceive, Our failing faith renew. We do not ask to see, Enough that we may know The path that leads to Thee, The way that we should go. Enough that Thou hast said: "Believe, believe in Me, And thou shalt even wade the dead, Cast mountains in the sea."

As a rule, non-Catholics do not seem to realize that if one acknowledges a Church of God through which He still speaks and teaches, that whatever His Church teaches is divine truth and, even if it certain doctrines cannot be entirely understood by men's finite minds, they must accept them, and Faith says "I believe." On the other hand, however, many of the devotions and practices of the Catholic Church help to strengthen our belief in her divine institution. I have always found that, even from a human standpoint, the more we study and investigate the Church the more we see how logical are her teachings.

What is more natural than to believe that the Mother of God was the ever Virgin Mary? The mind revolts at the non-Catholic attitude toward the Blessed Virgin. Again, how can Christians dislike the crucifix emblem of Christ's death for sinners? What a consolation to mankind is the Sign of the Cross, the pledge of our salvation. Or take the sacraments, viewed merely as temporal benefits. Like a loving mother the Church takes us in infancy, and from the day the waters of baptism are poured over us she never relaxes her watchful care. She leads us gently along the path of life, ever ready with a shield in each emergency, and a balm for every pain. Are we wounded? She offers us the sacrament of penance, in which we may be healed. Then she strengthens us with confirmation and the Holy Eucharist. When we are grown and choose our state in life, there, awaiting our coming are the holy orders or the sacrament of matrimony. And at the end, when the light begins to fade, when the weary spirit falters and we long at last for rest; then, when death approaches and the demon of discouragement strives to claim us for his own, does our mother forsake us then? Nay, she stands by our side, gives us the Bread of Life, anoints us with holy oil, and she has led us from the cradle to manhood, and from youth to old age, she now leads us to the gates of that heavenly city which she has taught us to seek. Believing, therefore, that our divine Lord established a Church which exists to-day, I must either believe in and accept her teachings, or doubt the truth of Christ's own words. So if you ask me why I am a Catholic, I answer: "Because I must be either a Catholic or an atheist."

A FATHER FABER MEMORIAL

There are two tributes—no, there are three—to Father Faber, which many of those who love him must have pigeon-holed. "Father Faber was a great loss to the whole Church but he is still doing a great work by his writings." That tribute from Pius IX, carries with it a high commendation, the love of a far older and greatest, may have lived so long that their passing cannot be considered a great loss—they have said their say, they have done their deeds, their night had already come before they descended to the tomb. Faber, dying at not much more than half the age of some of his contemporaries, might still, had he lived, had lived to great purpose. But of him it might truly be said that into a short time he crowded the emotion of the industry, the love of a far longer span of life. Hour for hour, nobody perhaps did quite so much—certainly nobody did more. For his was pre-eminently the gift of facility. If Newman said that "he never knocked anything off," Faber might have made a very different boast, and with no disparagement to the use of his amazing powers. Had he begun to erase, he would have left a blank—with him mending would have meant no ending. That the resulting want of form here, or failure of exact taste there, has not lessened the right understanding of him, that the pinch of salt which we occasionally have to take the "obiter dicta" of "Father Faber," as he once sweetly called himself, is proved by the second testimony which comes to mind for quotation. "I know no man who has done more to make the men of his day love God and aspire to a higher path of the interior life." That is the testimony of Cardinal Manning, who knew of what he spoke. Praise from him can rank to a Catholic Englishman as the most precious that could come from any of his fellows. Lastly, the very informal tribute of Mother Margaret Mary O'Halloran cries out to us with a note of human sympathy, "What a man you are, what a man you are!"

And it is as a man no less than as an author that we hold Frederick William Faber in memory. He was so great and so Catholic a man that we do almost all others. There is something almost incongruous in calling this familiar of the heavens a Yorkshirman. It was the *Civiltà Cattolica* that once noted "the ease with which he moves in the invisible world of grace, as if it were the tangible world of Nature." His Hugue-

not decent, like that of Newman, and many more of the Victorian converts, is noteworthy enough; but we cease to think of Faber as the habitant of a paragon—the son of an Anglican minister and an Anglican minister himself. He stands for something so much less local. He stands for something so much less. He stands for a largeness that has hardly any bounds. The most spacious of oratories could not contain him. Hundreds of thousands of copies of his works have sold in French, German, Russian, Italian, Spanish and Flemish translations. "None but a doctor of the Church could have written them," cried an Italian missionary, anticipating indeed. "What wisdom, what science, what elevation of mind!" It is this elevation—of heart rather than of mind—this essential spirituality which has raised the level of modern spiritual literature in England and in all the world. Nor is that influence on the wane. Manning, with a caution so little like Faber, but so characteristic of himself, conditioned his praise when he spoke of Faber as affecting "the men of his day." The men of the day after have followed their fathers to the feet of Faber; and gratuitous form of human error as prophecy has been declared to be, we are surely not too bold in picturing a great future multitude of readers for Faber's spiritual works. His hymns, whatever their defects, will be sung and said as long as that form of literature prevails, and we cannot imagine a nursery of the future in which they will not stir feelings as keen and as aspiring as those with which they were written. The political outlook of Faber, which was that of the Young England Party, has been justified by all recent legislation. Of his poems, apart from his hymns, it was interesting to note when not long ago, Sir Montagu Grant-Duff made an anthology, that Faber has a full presentation. We do not cite his place in the "Oxford Book of Victorian Verse," for the simple reason that the inclusion of utterly worthless pieces in that collection robs of any significance a position, however, important in its pages.

The fiftieth anniversary of Faber's death has just been kept, and in June next year the centenary of his birth offers an opportunity, which is to be taken, for making some visible memorial in association with his name. We do not think that to this country will be confined all those who wish to take a part in the celebration. In the United States many a man, out of his own experience, echoes the words of Father Hecker, "Not for several ages," declared the illustrious founder of the Paulists of New York, "has God given to His Church a teacher whose thoughts of love and light will fall, like Heaven's dew, on a wider extent of that field in which the Son of God Himself labored." And though the Catholic ardours of Faber took him out of an environment in which he was born, making him as much a denizen of the skies as the prophet who was charioted thither, we shall not lack the sympathy of many an outsider in any effort to honor his memory. Dogmatic Dean Stanley it was who said of him (ridiculously) that he was the only one of the Oxford converts who gained in force and character by his conversion. Even Bishop Samuel Wilberforce in a frivolous setting out to curse stayed to bless. "The greatest list that ever lived—but a perfect saint—" they who speak the language of exaltation will ever speak to incredulous ears because "clay-shutted." In the houses of Nonconformists such hymns as "O Paradise" and

Such lives as these are living prayers by which, as Tenison says, "the whole wide world is evenly where bound by gold chains around the feet of God." God sees and knows. Daily graces are showered upon the world through these hidden channels. You and I are constantly helped and strengthened by the good lives of people whom we do not know. Similarly, our lives, if we are earnestly striving to make them worthy of our Divine Master, are helping others.

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"Angels of Jesus" are daily and not vainly sung. All sorts of popular hymn books contain these and other specimens of Faber's religious muse, and the publishers who have encouraged by free permission this uncoined circulation have also tried, and with large success, to see that their text has been kept intact. Father Faber's treatises bear but imitation as ill as his hymns. He has a right to be listened to the end of his sentences—to be read with his full context. That is surely the least return we can make to an author who has taken pains never to weary us. He never fails in his union—a word on which Isaac D'Israeli twitted the "Romanists" as a preservation of their own. And it is union from on high, it is the need of the time, and the sure foe to formalism. Because Faber stands for the law, yet knows that the law kills unless the Spirit make it alive, he too lives. That is the secret of his abiding strength and his abiding charm. He lets out the secret himself when he says of the readers of that most alluring of all spiritual treatises, "All for Jesus!"—I am putting before them things which I tend to raise their fervour, and to increase their sensible sweetness in practical religion and its duties. I want to make piety bright and happy to those who need such helps as I do myself."—Tablet.

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