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TORONTO, NOVEMBER 30, 1906.

AN ANSWER.

An untimely article and ill-conceived, appeared in *La Verite* of Quebec, some time ago. It is untimely because these are the days when union should characterize all Catholics whatever may be their race or language. It is ill-conceived because it makes a covert attack upon the Irish which they do not deserve, and attributes motives which have no warrant. Its title is: "Un Argument,—" An Argument. The argument is a plea to maintain the French language in both the family circle and the Church. No one can find fault with such a laudable desire. But when it is claimed that "the Irish combat this with bitterness," that "Protestants without allowing themselves very favorable, are however, more tolerant than certain Catholics," we resent the insinuation. If the people of French origin set so much store upon their language they are quite welcome. It is most praiseworthy. We do not see that in this generation language and faith are so united that the loss of the one means loss of the other, at least accessarily so. That things were different in Ireland when the battle for faith was raging we understand. That many, who leave home where a language is spoken and who go to another country where another language prevails and a different religion is practised, may lose their faith is quite likely. It is, alas! a sad fact to which experience testifies. The error consists in attributing this defection to language. In such cases social conditions are not the same and bear much more directly upon the character in their influence for good or evil than language. Language is the expression of thought. The thought is prior to its expression. That phase of character implied in the act or state of loss of faith must have preceded the expression of it. But is the English language so proselytizing that the faith of French-Canadians cannot stand against it? Is their language the only safeguard for their faith? We should be sorry to see them give up their language; we admire their persistency in maintaining it; but we consider it a weak argument when it is claimed that language is the guardian of faith.

In order to support his plea the writer explained the large number of losses to the Church amongst the Irish in America by their having lost their language. "It is," says the writer, "an incontestable fact that the Catholic religion has lost several millions of its children because several millions have spoken and known only the English language." This proposition is subtle enough to contain a double meaning which thus renders it hard to attack. That many, too many, of our people lost the faith is as sad as it is true. The cause was not, however, that they spoke the English language. They spoke that language in the days of the Old Land, where their faith, like their age, was fresh and vigorous. The English language is accountable for a good deal, but not for their defection from the faith. They spoke it when they listened their prayers, when they learned their catechism, when they were warned to guard their religion above all other treasures and against all persecution. They brought the Catholic faith in their heart and the English language on their lips, to the free shores of America. There was one friend they did not bring. They left him behind—he could not be spared and he could not be multiplied—the priest, the Soggarth Aroon. Persecution in Ireland and revolution in France had brought about a deplorable state of affairs in the supply of priests. Still farther did persecution do. When thousands of poor Irish were sent to this country they were sent without priests. Thus was the preparation made for proselytism. But it was not the loss of language, it was the want of priests. French missionaries, however zealous they might have been, were too few and scattered to break the bread of life. The means of communication were difficult, and the social conditions, the life of a pioneer, and the hardships he had to undergo, told severely upon those higher aspirations which

in the Island of Saints had been fostered by all the memories of his fathers and the encouragement of his surroundings. But in spite of everything the wonder is that the Irish held so well to the faith. We do not wish to taunt others. We reject with pride their taunt; for if ever a people under adverse circumstances clung to the faith and spread the Church in this country, it was the Irish. How often and how long were they satisfied with priests whose broken English they could hardly understand! If they could only have Mass they were content; they would try and make the best of the sermon. This is the early chapter of religious history in Canada and the United States—before there was proper organization. Then when factories were built in the Eastern States, when some of the fast increasing families of Lower Canadians had to leave home they sought and found occupation in these busy towns. Then came the cry for French churches—the French-Canadians were losing the faith; they must have churches for themselves and priests of their own people. No one has any fault to find for it. Let them not throw it at our race that we wish to dominate. No race has shown in Church matters less desire of lordship it over others than the Irish. From the centre of Rome to the most distant point in the circumference of the Church the Irish people have been easier to handle, more loyal to authority, more amenable to the hierarchy, and more faithful than any other race under the sun. When temporal advantage was in the scale against faith, the Irish faith was preferred. When education, or more strictly speaking, persecution, robbed them of language, it did not rob them of faith. When circumstances gave them a French or Italian missionary, they murmured not—they walked miles afoot to hear his Mass, and they rejoiced in his word and blessing as if he had been of their own blood. As the years advanced and things improved the Irish sent their sons to college in the hope and prayer that some of them might be called to the holy priesthood. And so they were. A generation of priests grew up, and the old order changed. In that change there was no ingratitude for the zealous missionary who had ministered to the settlers, nor was there a desire to dominate or lord it over others. And so we come round the circle of our thought—that to accuse the Irish of being intolerant towards their French brethren or of having been careless in the preservation of the faith or of a wish to exercise superiority over them is both untimely and uncalled for by experience of the past.

CHURCH UNION.

If the matter were not so serious the attempts at church union would be a fit subject for ridicule and caricature. If the desire is real the attempt is awkward; they do not try in the right way. The latest endeavor was the least serious and the most unreal. Ministers representing some of the sects met and formulated what they considered a model central doctrine, enunciating that "Jesus Christ was our Lord and Redeemer." What these gentlemen wanted was numbers. But gain in numbers meant loss in definiteness. There were two bodies, Roman Catholics and Unitarians—who represented the extreme poles of the magnet. It was very desirable that these should both join the federation. How attain the result? To assert the divinity of Christ was to exclude the Unitarians. To say nothing about it, to leave it an open question or to imply its denial was, if nothing else were wanting, to exclude Roman Catholics. After further consideration they formulated positively that Christ was the divine Redeemer. They thus excluded the Unitarians, without winning the Catholics. If these men know anything, and if they are sincere, they must know that there is only one way of holding communication with the Catholic Church. That way is by the open door and teaching authority of the Church. Faith is one, error is many, but federation is nonsense. If there is any sincerity the desire for union cannot go without reward. The want will become more apparent according as the weakness of disunion is felt more keenly. To bring back to the fold of truth the sheep who have strayed away, to graft again the broken branches of the living vine, is not the work of man. It is the fruit of prayer and the task of saints, the reward of humility and faith not to be found with the general advocates of Church federation.

THE HOLY FATHER AND THE SCHOOLS OF ENGLAND.

A short time ago the Holy Father wrote a letter to the Archbishop of Westminster concerning the Catholic Schools in England. His Holiness praises "the great earnestness with which during the last five-and-thirty years the faithful in England have most strenuously defended their Catholic Schools, asserting above all things the necessity that the education of the young should be of a religious character."

In another paragraph the Supreme Pontiff writes: "We earnestly exhort the Catholics of England to strive for this most praiseworthy object; and to those most of all do we address this exhortation who give their distinguished aid as writ-

ers in books and in the public press. They will do a most useful and most meritorious work if, following the guidance of their Bishops, and putting aside all matters of private interest, or what might cause hurtful dissension, they not only persevere, but make daily progress, in the defence which has begun.

The lesson contained herein should extend not only merely to the Catholics of England, but to those beyond the sea. The authority writing, the clear tone of his utterances, the cause he pleads, and the fervent exhortation, call for the same loyalty and respect in similar circumstances from Catholics in our own country. When Catholic education is the question before Parliament or at the polls, there should be no hesitation, no trimming, no compromise. It is a question not of party, but of principle, to which every Catholic, be he member of Parliament or not, must be true. Nor can he, in case of dereliction, expect consideration from his co-religionists or respect from outsiders.

THE IRISH LANGUAGE.

A very earnest endeavor is made both at home and in this country to revive the study of the Irish language. Nor is the endeavor without a marked success. A chair of Celtic language has been established in the Catholic University of Washington; and several higher educational institutions in Ireland have the study upon their curriculum. A short time ago the Bishops of Ireland when petitioned upon the subject, expressed the idea that the introduction of it in the primary schools was not practical, and that therefore they could not sanction it. Naturally the study must come from the colleges and universities—as teachers have to be trained in it and time allowed for it. In Ireland as in Canada, the programme of the elementary schools is crowded and will not admit of any new subject. But from the energy and efforts of the Gaelic League the language of our fathers has a good footing in the secondary education of Ireland. If anything can help it to spread and again cover the land this League is the best guarantee of future success. To the scholar it opens up a field rich in treasures which are not to be found elsewhere. To the Irish Catholic it should be the object of affectionate and reverential regard. The old Celtic tongue was the language when Ireland was the "Island of Saints and Doctors," and when Ireland's sainted sons were the apostles of religion and the ministers of Christian civilization. In later generations it hedged the people round, and was their sure means of communication and protection when the English tongue would have betrayed them.

EDITORIAL NOTES

The following opinion of the effect of bad plays comes from the learned Bishop of Limerick. Toronto for several years has been getting an overdose of bad plays, which seldom touch the consciences or the stomachs of the newspaper critics:

"No man or woman who acknowledges responsibility to God," says the Bishop, "can be present at such plays without sin, for even if they can hope to escape the contamination of them personally, they must know that by their presence they are giving a sanction to what is nothing less than a scandal in the true sense of the word. That is the stumbling block to those to whom such representations are a grievous temptation, and moreover, are helping to impair the safeguards of public morality amongst a hitherto good and religious people. I am told that women, young and old, sit out these plays, and not irreligious women, but women who go to Mass regularly, and frequent the Sacraments, and generally are supposed to be devout and pious Catholics. If it is so, it is a great shame; it is an outrage on religion for any woman who approaches the altar-trails to go within a few days to a theatre to gloat over scenes in which impurity is only hidden by a thin veil from being open and illegal indecency. One of two things we must have—Christian morals and the Christian religion, or paganism, belief and act, but we cannot have both. We cannot have Christ our Lord in our hearts on Sunday and revel in filth and immorality on the other days of the week. Above all it is shocking to every sense of propriety to hear of young girls being present at such plays. Self-respect, the very externals of modesty, which any girl who is not utterly abandoned will for them to look on at scenes which it would be regarded as an insult for any man to describe to them in words."

Judge Gaynor, of New York, has given an intelligent interpretation of divorce law, which will give little comfort to the divorced, but cannot fail to meet the general approval of Christian people. The Judge said:

"So far as concerns any religious or sacramental or Church bond existing between these people we have nothing whatever to do with it. If these people are bound by any sacrament or any religious or Church bond you and I are not seeking to sever that obligation. When we are through with this case that obligation is left untouched. We do nothing whatever to it. If there is a bond of matrimony between these people which, according to Church law, cannot be severed until death severs it, we leave that bond scrupulously alone."

"They are just as much bound by it after we get through with them as they were before. We do not sever it, we do not break it, and that is something that it seems to me is very generally misunderstood." The speaker added that even great

prelates who are supposed to know something about marriages and divorce often lead people to understand that they think that the law can dissolve the sacramental or Church tie of marriage.

"We never do," says Justice Gaynor. "We do not interfere with it at all. If such a bond exists, we leave it alone. Church and State in this country are absolutely separated. Whatever Church obligations exist the civil law leaves severely alone."

The Trials in the Reform of Church Music

(From the New York Freeman's Journal.)

Rome, Nov. 8.—It is two years since Pius X. issued his now celebrated *Motu Proprio* on the reform of Church music—and it is only this week that the Vatican Printing Press has issued the first instalment of the official edition in Plain Chant which is henceforth to be used throughout the whole Church. Now that the edition is well under way, *Vox Urbis* may safely say something about the difficulties which almost wrecked one of the great enterprises with which the Pontificate of Pius X. is destined to go down to history.

When the *Motu Proprio* appeared, some wiseacres in and out of Rome ascribed the real authorship of it to the Maestro Perosi, or Father De Santis, S.J., or Dom Pothier. In fact Perosi's life was threatened by enemies of the Reform in Rome, so that he had to be protected for months by detectives.

As a matter of fact, the document was composed, more than ten years before its publication, by Cardinal Sarto, who had just entered Venice as its Patriarch, and while Perosi was a little boy learning Latin from the Benedictines of Monte Cassino. Even as far back as that, the need for reform had been so strongly felt that the Sacred Congregation of Rites had requested some of the leading authorities in Italy to send their views on the subject. Cardinal Sarto was one of those who complied with the request, and on becoming Pope he sent to the offices of the Congregation for his long forgotten document, and that was soon done—because with Pius X. to decide and act are usually almost simultaneous.

When the document was issued it was followed immediately by a chorus of thanksgiving; but this soon gave place to a long series of criticisms in the public press. Writers lamented that the Pope had banished all modern music from the churches, and there were even some priests who ventured to assert that the reform would be the means of emptying the churches of high mass.

What the Papal document really did should be plain to all by this time, and there is no harm in repeating it here. The system of Plain Chant in general use throughout the Church up to two years ago was based on a corrupt and vitiated version compiled at a time when Sacred Music was at a low ebb. Pius X. decided that this version should go, and be replaced by a version based on the old texts contained in manuscripts dating from the VIII. to the XIV. centuries. Then again, the other music sung in the churches was very largely cheap, meretricious, and theatrical. Instead of adding devotion, it merely tickled the ear and afforded composers and choir-singers an opportunity for showing off their bravura.

The Pope determined to banish all kinds of figured and modern music from the liturgical services. Instead he ordained that Bishops in their respective dioceses should keep a vigilant ear for music executed in their churches, and a diocesan commission for the purpose of examining the modern music destined for sacred purposes. In short, Pius X. inaugurated a very drastic reform, but applied it in a very broad-minded spirit.

In some parts of the world his instructions were carefully carried out from the beginning; in others they were discussed in highly academic manner, and in others still they were quietly allowed to become a dead letter. Even Bishops cannot be supposed to know everything about everything, and many Bishops apparently failed to realise the importance of the great reform of the earnestness of the Holy Father in permitting it. Apparently they put the *Motu Proprio* carefully away in their desks, and thought no more about it.

It is quite clear from the document that Pius X. recognized the great value of the *Solennes Edition* of Plain Chant, studied out and prepared by the Benedictines of Solesmes—who have since been driven out of their monastery in France, and obliged to take refuge in the Isle of Wight in England. In fact he openly encouraged and recommended its use everywhere, and insisted on it for the college seminaries and religious institutions here in Rome. Put in order that the reform in the Plain Chant should be thoroughly scientific and official, he established a Pontifical Commission, composed of the most distinguished experts on the subject, to prepare an edition, which should be published by the Vatican Press, and liberty was to be given to musical publishers throughout the world to reproduce the edition—provided they offered guarantees as to their competence to do so in a worthy manner. Nothing could be fairer than this.

Then a most unfortunate condition was introduced—publishers wishing to reproduce the Vatican Edition were required to purchase a certain number of copies (1,000 I believe) of this edition, which were to be sold to them at the bare cost of production. The condition was unfortunate because it puzzled the publishers; because it tended to create a monopoly in favor of those who complied with this condition—although the Holy Father had expressly said he would not tolerate any publishers' monopoly for the reproduction of the Plain Chant, and finally because the expenses the Vatican Edition might have easily been recouped by the free sale of the copies at a fair price. However, this is a mere detail which concerns directly only the musical publishers.

The real trouble lay in another direction. The Holy Father took great pains in selecting the Pontifical

Commission. At the head of it was a learned Benedictine, Dom Pothier—and nobody could have a better title, for he was the main author of the *Solennes Edition* which has rendered the reforms of Plain Chant possible to-day. Dom Pothier has grown gray in the cause of Plain Chant, and it may be that he has grown a little obstinate in clinging to the ideas of twenty years ago, and just a little obsolete in studies of Plain Chant, which have been prosecuted almost passionately by the Benedictine Community of Solesmes. But there were others in the Commission fully competent to make up for any deficiencies that might be found in Dom Pothier. Then the unfortunate thing happened. After the first few meetings of the Commission it became apparent that the members were hopelessly divided on points of detail, and the oftener they met the more their differences grew. They do not seem to have considered sufficiently that the Holy Father himself and the whole Catholic world were eagerly waiting for the Vatican Edition which was to have furnished the official text of Plain Chant for the Catholic Church, and to have effected a reform that was urgent. Only two courses remained open for the Pope—one was to abandon the hope of publishing the official text for the next half a century, and the other to entrust the entire business into the hands of one competent man. His Holiness, of course, chose the latter alternative, and Dom Pothier was his choice.

The Holy Father will hold a consistory in the middle of December, at which five Cardinals will be created. Four of them are already known; the Archbishop of Seville in Spain, the Archbishop of Rio Janeiro in Brazil (who will be the first South American Cardinal), the Archbishop of Eyalau in Hungary, and Mgr. Cagiano da Azevedo, who has for the last six years been Major Dome to Leo XIII. and Pius X. The name of the fifth Cardinal has not yet been divulged, but there is a report that it will be Mgr. Rinaldini, at present Apostolic Nuncio in Spain.

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