

THE A. P. A.

Bishop Spalding's Telling Arraignment.

The Right Rev. John Lancaster Spalding, D.D., Bishop of Peoria, Ill., appeared in the September number of the North-American Review in a study of the A.P.A. conspiracy, which seeks not its branches, but its roots; considering it in its most dangerous manifestations—its appeal to the average man. Bishop Spalding calls this study "Catholicism and Apaism," and in a judicial spirit questions whether the Catholic Church in America, or the American adherents of the Church, have given any legitimate excuse for the suspicion and hatred which underlie the A.P.A. conspiracy. He finds none in the Church herself. The Church, as such, takes no cognizance of the politics of her adherents, and has no responsibility for their party affiliations. Resting the case of the Church, the Bishop looks to Catholics as neighbors and citizens. This, at least, he fearlessly claims for them. They are free from the spirit of proscription and persecution.

Says the Bishop:—
"Our life is undisguised, our churches are open to all, our books may be had by every one, in our schools thousands of Protestants are thrown hourly into most intimate contact with our teachers; as servants and partners, as friends and relations, we are intermingled with the whole people. Whoever desires information about us has not far to seek. What, then, is the cause of the abuse which is heaped upon us, of the distrust of which we seem to be the objects.

"What are the causes which have led so many Americans who have no sympathy with Orangeism to form an alliance with the bigots of this sect for the purpose of persecuting Catholics?"

The rapid and vigorous growth of the Church, thinks the Bishop, may have "excited apprehensions of danger among those in whose minds its influence is associated with ignorance, superstition and corruption;" and Catholic success as due largely to immigration "may have aroused jealousy as well as fear." Continues the Bishop: "I am the more willing to believe this as I observe, on many sides, that the envious rivalry of Protestant denominations among themselves is a chief cause of their weakness."

Of corrupt Catholic politicians Bishop Spalding says:—

"Catholics, though generally Catholic, only in name, have been and are busy, often too busy, with politics, especially with municipal politics; but this is a common right of all American citizens, and in centres where there are a great number of Catholics, some of them inevitably will be found among the political schemers, and consequently will be more or less implicated in the hypocrisy, trickery, and fraud by which our whole political life is tainted. A bad Catholic is no better than any other bad man. He is not a Catholic in truth, but since the Catholic Church, whatever those who do not know her spirit may think, is patient, broad, and tolerant, she is slow to expel any one from the fold, loth to pluck up the cockle, lest the wheat also be uprooted."

The Bishop blames the boasting, indulged here and there by Catholics, and unjustified, in his opinion, while "as yet, leaving aside our accessions from Europe, our losses are greater than our gains." Then he severely arraigns recent internal dissensions on race questions, and ecclesiastical polity regarding the school question.

"It happened," he says, "as it nearly always does happen when the controversial spirit is let loose, that the real issue came to be not truth and justice but victory. In the heat of conflict wild words were spoken and overbearing deeds were done. The reporters, who scent a scandal as vultures a carcass, rushed in and the country was filled with sound and fury."

Touching on the developments in religious history, following on these dissensions, the Bishop speaks chiefly of the institutions of the permanent Apostolic Delegation in the United States.

Waiving opinion as to the expediency or inexpediency of its establishment, since it is established, and permanently; waiving also the question of its effect on the workings of the Church in America.

—Bishop Spalding says:—
"The fact that his (the Apostolic

Delegate's) authority is ecclesiastical merely, and concerns Catholics, not as citizens, but as members of the Church, is lost sight of by the multitudes who are persuaded that the Papacy is a political power eager to extend its control wherever opportunity may offer. This feeling, which has existed among us from the beginning, led our first Bishop Carroll of Baltimore, who was beyond doubt a devoted churchman and a true patriot, to make an official declaration in 1797, on Washington's Birthday, wherein he affirmed that the obedience we owed the Pope is 'in things purely spiritual.' And such has been our uniform belief and teaching, as whoever takes the trouble to read what those who have the best right to speak for us have written on this subject will see."

Leaving for the moment the religious aspect of the question, we see with Bishop Spalding, where men who care nothing about religion utilize religious antagonisms for political or personal ends. This portion of his article should appeal to the working classes irrespective of religious divisions. We quote:—

"When the Orange spirit began to become more active, it naturally occurred to the managers of railways and other enter prizes in which large numbers of men are employed, that religious fanaticism might be made use of to divide the laborers and undermine their unions. For this purpose, then, and not from any hatred of the Catholic religion, for corporations being soulless must be indifferent to religion, the Apaisists were encouraged and gained much influence in some of our large carrying and manufacturing concerns. It happened also that the greater number of these fanatics were Republicans, and they became a source of embarrassment to the party. It was impossible to ignore them, and, at first thought, the simplest thing to do was to connive at them. Very soon, however, they became so strong that connivance ceased to have a meaning, and then, not having the courage of the will to expel them, the party which freed the negro began to encourage the bigots who have gotten up a religious persecution and are striving to deprive Catholics of the rights of freedom. Many Democrats, too, whose hatred of the Church is stronger than love of liberty and fair play, have gone over to the Apaisists."

Bishop Spalding is confident, as are all clear-headed American Catholics that A. P. Aism will pass away; justly grounding his faith on the very genius of Americanism, fair play and goodwill. He protests against overprotesting of loyalty on the part of American Catholics. He says:—

"Our record for patriotism is without blot or stain, and it is not necessary for us to hold the flag in our hands when we walk the streets, to wave it when we speak, to fan ourselves with it when we are warm, to wrap it about us when we are cold."

Bishop Spalding's article is instructive reading for Catholics and Protestants alike.—*Irish American.*

A BOY'S VISIT TO THE POPE.

A plucky American youth has succeeded in obtaining an audience with the Pope. The name of the enterprising boy is Ralph Yoerg, of New York City, and he is fourteen years old. When the summer vacation period arrived young Ralph made a trip to Europe with a party of friends.

It was his first visit to Europe, and he was especially anxious to see the Holy City. He was going to see and speak to Pope Leo XIII. or "die in the attempt." Young Yoerg has just returned, and the story of his audience, first briefly told in a letter home, he narrated in detail to Father Spillane, the prefect of studies at St. Francis Xavier's College, New York, and Father O'Connor, the professor of rhetoric. Ralph said little or nothing to his party about his intention—he was afraid his friends and guardians might laugh at him. He boldly presented himself at the Vatican and inquired for one of the secretaries of the household.

A venerable monsignor presented himself and told the youth that what he desired was utterly impossible. He was firmly but courteously refused the favor. He redoubled his efforts. One of the attendants of the Pope told the New York boy that the Holy Father had heard of his wish and would gratify it. The youth presented himself one morning in August in the vestibule of the palace, and upon showing his letter was passed from one guard or attendant to

another till at last he found himself in the audience chamber. For a moment he didn't know what to say or do, and before he was aware of it Pope Leo had come forward, and taking the boy's face in his hands, stooped down and kissed him. "Where do you come from, my child?" asked the Holy Father.

"From New York, Holy Father," replied the young fellow.

"Oh, indeed; and what school do you attend?" inquired the Pontiff, regarding him with interest.

"The Jesuit College, St. Francis Xavier's," answered the New Yorker.

"Ah, my son, I am glad to see you. I love the Jesuit Fathers," said the Pope.

Then the Holy Father, in kindly tones, told the boy that he himself was once a Jesuit student. He asked many questions about the institution, and his manner was so fatherly and engaging that Ralph became more at ease. The Pope proceeded to question him about the college, asking him who the professors were, how many students there were, and manifesting much interest. The youth had attired himself in the cadet uniform of the college, and the Pope, looking at the cap, noticed the letters, "S. F. X. C." and asked what they signified. Ralph said they stood for St. Francois Xavier's College.

The manly bearing and intelligence of the young student from New York were commented on by the Holy Father, and he grew merry over the boy's determination to secure an audience.

But this was not all. There were several ladies in the party who also wanted to see the Pope. Their case would have been hopeless were it not for the American pluck of Ralph, who pleaded for them, and finally they were introduced. The Pope brought the audience to a close by giving his blessing to Ralph and to his party.

A GRAND LECTURE.

WHAT THE WORLD OWES GREGORY.

The Boston Transcript gives the following short but very interesting report of a notable address.

The largest audience which met during the session of the School of Applied Ethics at Plymouth this summer gathered to hear the lecture on "Gregory the Great," by Rev. Thomas Shahan, D.D., of the Catholic University at Washington. The lecture was a royal tribute from the center of Catholic learning in America to one of the ablest of Popes. To appreciate the work accomplished by Gregory it is necessary to understand the condition of the world at the time he lived, and Doctor Shahan graphically sketched this condition, showing the conflicting influences of the Roman and the barbarian customs and modes of thought.

Former Popes had been essentially Roman in feeling; Gregory, although by birth a Roman noble, seemed to comprehend the significance of the barbarian movement. He realized that they had obtained the mastery and would keep it, and so he turned his attention to the work of Christianizing the barbarians. The influence which he was able to exert upon the rough Northern tribes is one of the two most important aspects of his work. His brief, noble, courteous, earnest language, his great tact and prudence and his indomitable will admirably fitted him for the role he essayed. He was able, by his influence with the barbarians, to soften the harsher elements of their character, to make them more amenable to civilization and to instruct them in the elements of the culture they had overthrown.

Had it not been for his work in thus making possible the preservation of what was best in Roman civilization, that civilization might have been irretrievably lost. This influence is especially seen in the case of the Angles and Saxons. No act of his career has had such momentous consequence as the conversion of these tribes. He himself considered it his greatest work.

Quicker than any other tribes these rude Saxons caught the spirit of Rome, and their devotion to the world-wide Church is the most romantic page in her history. This devotion continued as long as they held control of England. At this day, when the English-speaking nations are in the van of progress, it behooves them to remember with gratitude the noble character who gave them their first impetus on the path of religion and refinement.

The other aspect of his work which

stands with this influence over the barbarians as most important is his attitude toward the economic social problems of the time. He regarded most sympathetically the oppressed condition of the poor, and he did all in his power, while respecting acquired and legal rights, to help to his feet again the oppressed peasant. He heard personally every complaint that was sent in. This Vicar of Christ reminded, one day, of his duties, the Emperor of Constantinople and the Frankish king; the next, he wrote letter after letter to help obtain justice for some poor or oppressed subject. He also aided with money whenever he thought it expedient. His object was to secure justice, and he dealt with abuses in the Church in the same way as with abuses outside of it.

Not only as a Pope and administrator of the succession of Peter did Saint Gregory rank among the greatest men in the history of the Catholic Church, and also as a writer. No other Pope has ever exercised so much influence by his writings. As far as practical ethics and the discipline of life were concerned, the Middle Ages were largely formed on them. His book of Pastoral Rule fashioned the episcopate. By the loftiness of his purpose, by his zeal, and by his ability, he deserved to rank with the foremost of the benefactors of humanity.

TOUCHSTONE OF CATHOLICITY.

There are certain novels such as Thackeray's "Henry Esmonde" and certain other books like Matthew Arnold's "Culture and Anarchy" which are termed "touchstones of culture," says the Catholic Citizen. This means that to appreciate and enjoy such books, denotes culture in the reader.

Is there a touchstone of Catholicity? Undoubtedly there is. To take an interest in the topics discussed in the Catholic papers is the best recognizable touchstone of Catholicity. It is probably better than prayers or almsgiving as a test of intelligent religion. It is better than pew holding or graduation medals of service as G. W. M. in Catholic societies—good as all these things are in themselves.

The Catholic family which prefers the flash story paper; the adult man who finds everything insipid except the politics, the criminal column or the sporting news of the daily; or the more pretentious Catholic homes, in which the delicately prepared worldliness of Life and Vogue finds favor with the young people and with whom the Catholic paper and its topics are dull and tame;—all these do not stand the test of Catholicity. The touchstone of Catholicity is applied and they are found wanting.

The most ancient universities in Europe are those of Bologna, Oxford, Cambridge, Paris and Salamanca.

Too Tame.—Manager—"Going out, sir? What's the trouble? Don't you like our 'Wild Wes' show?"

Brooklyn man—"No! I expected to see thrilling scenes of danger and hair-breadth escapes, but they're nothing to what I go through every day on Fulton street, since the trolley cars have been running!"—*Puck.*



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