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A CHURCH BURNED.

On Christmas morning the Catholic Church at Campbellford, diocese of Peterborough, was totally destroyed by fire. We have been requested to state that donations of chalices, vestments, etc., will be gratefully received by the pastor and people. We sincerely regret this great loss which has befallen Father McCloskey and his flock, and we trust the generosity of friends at a distance, as well as that of those in the diocese, will soon enable him to build a new church. This is an occasion upon which the charity disposed should act promptly and generously.

A PROTEST FROM THE POPE.

The enemies of the Catholic religion, and especially the Infidels of Europe, maintain with great persistency that the Pope should accept with equanimity the present anomalous situation in which he is placed in the Vatican palace, as a virtual prisoner.

With a strange obstinacy they assert that he ought to accept his inferior position as an accomplished fact which no circumstances can overturn. They overlook the truth which all the laws of morality lay down, that an iniquity does not become a right because it has become accomplished, and that is always the duty of the moralist to protest against facts thus accomplished against justice and Christian morality.

The injustice perpetrated against the Holy Father by the violent seizure of the States of the Church, completed twenty nine years ago, does not cease to be an injustice because so long a period of time has elapsed since its perpetration. Prescription cannot be quoted in favor of the perpetuation of this state of affairs; for it is evident that prescription cannot produce a moral right, except where good faith exists on the part of the occupier, and that he has had quiet possession. It may be that the civil laws in some instances allow the claim of prescription on the mere ground of quiet possession, but the purpose of such a provision is to create a practical certainty in the possession of property, and it does not create a right in conscience when the possessor knows that from the beginning his title was bad. But in the usurpation of the States of the Church there has been neither good faith nor quiet possession on the part of the Italian Government, inasmuch as the Pope has constantly protested against the robbery, and has kept the injustice constantly before the public view. Besides, there is no competent authority to fix the term of prescription in the present instance, against the Holy Father's constant protest.

The Holy Father on the 19th of December, published an allocution which was delivered a few days previously in the consistory of Cardinals, wherein he appointed those Cardinals who were to open the sacred door of St. Peter's Basilica at the beginning of the holy year of jubilee. In this document, he again calls attention to the injustice inflicted on the Holy See and the Catholic world by depriving the Church of her liberty, and thus preventing her from celebrating publicly the ceremonies usual on similar occasions in bygone years.

The Pope complains in his encyclical of the underhand means taken to prevent his having a part in the Peace Conference at the Hague, though there is no sovereign more worthy of invitation to such a Conference, as "it has always been the desire of the Popes to attain justice; to make peace, and to prevent conflict," an office, which by Divine appointment belongs peculiarly to the Papacy. The Holy Father, though not expressly naming Italy as the power which opposed his being invited to the Conference, plainly enough indicates that it was through Italian machinations that this occurred. He says:

"The Holy See had desired a place in that Conference but one voice had obstinately opposed itself to this desire, and

had gained the point. It was the voice of those who with the conquest of Rome had deprived the Pope of his powers."

The Holy Father continues:

"What hostility have we to fear from those who, even in the face of Europe, do not hesitate to violate the sanctity of the rights and duties which naturally flow from Apostolic powers? Yet, whatever the future may bring, we should certainly never, by God's help, be found on the side of those who are afraid."

The Holy Father gives the key note of courage, and notwithstanding the apparently hopeless condition, all faithful and loyal adherents of the supreme Pontificate should respond in the same brave tone, assured that the time will come when the rights of the Holy Pontiff will be recognized, and his independence, and even his temporal power restored.

INFANT BAPTISM.

W. J. M., Buckingham, Que., makes enquiry whether there is any instance of Infant Baptism during the time of our Lord's life on earth. Amid the press of matter in our columns the question was overlooked and thus the answer was unintentionally delayed.

The only historical passage of Holy Scripture which testifies that our Lord's baptism was administered during His life on earth is found in the Gospel of St. John, iv., 1, 2:

"The Pharisees had heard that Jesus maketh more disciples and baptizeth more than John (though Jesus Himself did not baptize, but His disciples)."

Propphetically, however, it was stated by St. John the Baptist that Jesus would baptize with a more efficient baptism than John's:

"I indeed, baptize you with water unto penance, but He who is to come after me is stronger than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to carry. He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." (St. Matt. iii. 11.)

There cometh after me one mightier than I, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and loose. I have baptized you with water; but He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost." (St. Mark i. 8.)

From these passages it is clear that Christ's baptism was administered to all who needed it, and from the absence of any distinction in the matter between infants and adults, it is reasonable to infer that it was administered to both alike.

But there is further evidence of this in St. John iii., 3, 5. Here Jesus teaches His disciple Nicodemus, a Jewish ruler, "except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God;" and when Nicodemus asks:

"How can a man be born when he is old, etc.," Jesus explains:

"Amen, amen I say to thee, unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

It is clear that here also sacramental Baptism is referred to, of which St. John speaks prophetically as the Baptism with the Holy Ghost whereby the soul is made just and sanctified before God.

Some persons have maintained that this passage which speaks of the necessity of Baptism for every "man" refers only to adults, but this is a distortion of the text. In our English versions the word is translated "a man," but the translation is correct only if we understand man in its general sense of any human being whether man, woman, or child; for the Greek original has "his any person;" and the sense is:

"Unless any person be baptized with water and the Holy Ghost he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

The commandment of Christ to "baptize all nations," therefore, refers equally to children and to adults, and this is further shown by the words of Christ, "Amen, amen I say unto you," Amen means truly, and its double repetition is to express the absolute certainty of the revelation in its fullest acceptance.

Our Lord Himself confirms this interpretation by adding: "that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit." This is the reason for which the second or spiritual birth is necessary, and its necessity is as great for children as for adults. Therefore children should receive the second birth by Baptism. St. Paul also refers to Baptism in a similar way to that in which Christ speaks of it that

"According to His mercy He saved us by the laver (Baptism or washing) of regeneration and renovation of the Holy Ghost, when He hath poured forth upon us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour." (Titus iii., 5, 6.)

From the very beginning of Christianity this has been the interpretation given to these passages of Holy Scripture, and St. Augustine makes use of the text against the Pelagians to prove that infants are to be regenerated or born again by baptism, because they are born in original sin, and cannot enter into heaven till they are cleansed from that sin by baptism. (Book i., chap. 10, on sin.)

There are other passages of the Bible which indicate that baptism was conferred upon infants and adults alike, during the time of the Apostles after Our Lord's ascension to Heaven.

Thus in St. Peter's first sermon to the people of Jerusalem (Acts ii., 38,) he exhorts his hearers:

"Do penance, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is to you and to your children."

As children are included in the promise, so the gift of the Holy Ghost is also for them for the remission of the sin with which they were infected when they came into the world, according to the words of St. Paul (Eph. ii., 3) who are, equally with adults, "by nature the children of wrath," and who by the saving grace and favor of God are quickened in Christ and raised up together "to sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus" not of themselves, but "by the gift of God." (Verses 5, 8.)

In Acts viii., 12-16, and x., 47-48; xi., 16, we read that multitudes were baptized. In Acts xvi., 15, 33 it is stated that Lydia and her household, and the keeper of the prison in which St. Paul was confined, with "all his family" were baptized, and again Stephanus and his household were baptized by St. Paul (1 Cor. i., 16). There is no reason to believe that the children of these households were excluded from the blessings thus freely given, for they had to be freed from the sin in which they were conceived and born, of which David speaks in Psalm 27, "for behold I was conceived in iniquity, and in sins did my mother conceive me." This was the original sin transmitted from our first parent Adam; for "by one man sin entered into this world, and by sin death; and so death passed upon all men, in whom all have sinned." (Rom. v. 12.)

Though we have enumerated these passages of Holy Scripture which make it indubitable that Baptism was administered to infants in the Apostolic age, it must be borne in mind that nowhere does the New Testament declare that it contains fully or clearly all that Christ taught, or that His Apostles practiced. In fact the practice and faith of the Church existed before a single line of the New Testament was written, and we may learn much of what was handed down from the Apostles through the traditions of the Church and from the practice of the Church in the early ages of Christianity.

We have already quoted the effect of St. Augustine's testimony to the fact that there was no doubt as to the general practice of the Church in the fourth century. Of the numerous testimonies which might be adduced in proof of the same practice, it will suffice to mention here the following:

Origen in the third century wrote: "The Church received from the Apostles the tradition that baptism should be given even to infants." (Rom. vi.)

Still earlier, in the second century, St. Irenaeus wrote:

"He came to save all through Himself: All, I say, who are born again to God, infants, little children and boys."

And the Council of Miletus pronounced, in the fourth century, an anathema against "all who deny that little children recently born should be baptized." These passages are sufficient to show that the practice of infant baptism comes from the earliest age of the Church, and even from Christ Himself.

THE PREVAILING INDIFFERENCE IN RELIGION.

The prayer of Christ for His Apostles, when He was preparing them for their mission to bring mankind to a knowledge of His Gospel, is recorded by St. John the Evangelist. Our Blessed Lord says to His Heavenly Father:

"I have manifested Thy name to the men whom Thou hast given Me out of the world. These they were, and to Me Thou gavest them, and they have kept Thy word."

"Holy Father keep them in Thy name whom Thou hast given me; that they may be one, as we also are. While I was with them I kept them in Thy name. Those whom Thou gavest me, I have kept, and none of them hath perished, except the son of perdition, that the Scripture may be fulfilled." (St. John xvii., 6-12.)

It is certain that the Protest of the United States cannot make this assertion in reference to the numerous and devout flocks which it once possessed, for throughout the land, from Baptists, Presbyterians, and Methodists alike the wall has been raised that everywhere these denominations are losing ground, and the difficult problem is being proposed, "How are we to bring back to our churches the congregations which are rapidly forsaking them?"

It is but a few weeks since, at the annual meeting of the Baptists of Michigan, the complaint was made that the Baptist sect is dwindling away in that state. The Presbyterians of New York recently made the same discovery in regard to their denomination in that city, and it is acknowledged that throughout the New England States Protestantism of all kinds is gradually yet rapidly disap-

pearing, an utter indifference to all forms of religion taking its place. The Churches are being abandoned: many of those which a generation or two ago had flourishing congregations have been closed, and the population generally now spend their Sundays in amusement, where formerly they were most strict adherents of some religion, chiefly Congregationalism.

Recently a prominent Presbyterian clergyman made an investigation into the religious condition of Brooklyn, and to his horror found that in that city, which but a few years ago was called "the city of Churches," and was decidedly a religious city, now only one fifth of the nominal Church population attend Church services on Sundays. Yet Brooklyn is not at all an exceptional case, for precisely the same thing is to be said of all the large cities. The congregations which years ago thronged the churches have disappeared, so that there are now only empty benches. It is evident that the clergy cannot say to God: "While I was with them, I kept them in Thy name, and none of them hath perished, except the son of perdition," for as the matter stands it is precisely of those who are accounted as Church members that it is now said that they do not attend Church services of any kind. It is easy to draw the conclusion that these neglectful Christians will soon cease even to be called Christians, and that their children will grow up without any religious instruction.

One of the religious organs has been endeavoring to discover the cause of the alarming spread of indifference in religion, and this he has attempted by writing circulars asking the clergymen of the various denominations to give their views as to the reasons therefor. The enquiry would probably have been more satisfactory in its results if the people themselves who are thus negligent had been asked their reasons; still the answers given by these clergymen give a good deal of interesting information.

Too much eagerness in worldly pursuits, and especially for the acquisition of riches, the patronizing of places of amusement, and dishonesty in business, are among the causes assigned, and a Unitarian minister gives as a prominent cause, "the revolt against dogma, and the truth of the new religious idea that Sunday is not only God's day, but the day of humanity." With this may be coupled another reason, which is also offered in explanation, that people are tired of hearing the doctrine of the everlasting punishment of the wicked in hell dwelt upon in the pulpit.

An Episcopalian minister expresses the conviction that "if we had some authority like the Roman Catholic system, whereby the person who stays from Church on Sundays is guilty of mortal sin, this state of things would not be."

We have no doubt that this is one of the most efficient causes of the universal negligence complained of. The Protestant Churches have no authority to make laws which all are bound to obey, and the people are not disposed to obey laws which do not bind their consciences.

The fact itself that the negligence exists is not disputed; but the reasons whereby it is accounted for are most varied and divergent.

It is admitted that this negligence does not exist among Catholics: for for though it is true that there are negligent Catholics who do not attend Mass on Sundays, their number is but small in comparison with the Catholic population. As a consequence, the Masses in the Catholic churches are attended practically by the whole Catholic population, and while there are Masses constantly going on from 6 o'clock a. m. to midday, the Catholic churches are filled during that whole time by successive congregations, each of which gives place to another as soon as the Mass at which they have assisted is finished.

Among the reasons given by the various ministers for the negligence of their nominal congregations we find the following. Some attribute much of it to the great diversity of creeds, and there is little doubt that this is one of its causes. Where there is so much diversity, the natural conclusion is that these creeds are but human fantasies which are set forth as divine revelations.

If the Churches could assert that they were really instituted by Christ, and that they have authority to bind the conscience, they would be obeyed, at least by a majority of their people—but it is evident that only one Church possesses such authority, as Christ said only of one Church: "Whosoever will not hear the Church let him be to

thee as the heathen and the publican." The Catholic Church alone possesses such authority, and hence the people obey her laws, and are willing to listen to the preaching of the truths she propounds, the doctrine of everlasting punishment of the wicked included, because this is a revealed truth, however disagreeable it may be.

To the causes which have operated toward creating the religious indifference which prevails, we may reasonably add the want of religious education in the public schools, which we have no doubt has been a considerable factor in bringing about the present condition of things.

FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY.

The Feast of the Epiphany, which is celebrated on Saturday, January 6th, was instituted by the Church in commemoration of Christ's manifestation to the Gentiles, and the Greek word *Epiphania* (Epiphany) signifies Manifestation.

"Immediately after the fall of our first parents a Redeemer was promised to the world, by whom, in conjunction with His Mother, the woman of Genesis iii., 15, who was to crush the head of the serpent, all mankind was to be redeemed and restored to the heavenly inheritance which had been forfeited by Adam's disobedience and sin.

Hence the blessings promised through the Christ or the Messias are not confined to any single race or nation, though from the time of Moses the Jewish people were specially chosen by Almighty God that the knowledge of the truth should be communicated to them, and that they should adore Him and honor Him by the oblation of acceptable sacrifices.

But with the coming of Christ there was to be a teaching of the Gospel in all nations, and it was foretold

"In that day there shall be an altar of the Lord in the midst of the Land of Egypt, and a monument of the Lord at the borders thereof." (Is. xix., 19.)

"They shall declare My glory to the Gentiles, and I will take of them to be priests and Levites, saith the Lord." (Is. lvi., 19.)

The prophet Balaam, who was himself of the Gentiles, was made use of by God to foretell to the king of the Moabites the signs by means of which the coming of the Messias should be made known by God, and in this prophecy he told his vision thus:

"I shall see him but not now; I shall behold him but not near. A star shall rise out of Jacob, and a sceptre shall spring up from Israel, and shall strike the chiefs of Moab, and he shall possess Idumea, etc."

From this and other prophecies which indicated the very time when the Messias might be expected to come to earth, there was a general expectation of the coming of the Messias at or about the very time when Christ appeared among men. This came from the original revelations made by God, which were not altogether lost but were partially preserved by traditions which were handed down even among pagan nations from generation to generation.

Thus, and probably also by special revelation, it was made known to the three wise men or magi from the East who on the feast of the Epiphany came to Jerusalem to seek the Messias whose star they had seen in the East and which by going before them had led them to the capital of Judea that they might find the new-born king of the Jews and Saviour of men.

They found Christ in Bethlehem, the Jewish priests at that city informed them through Herod that Christ should be born in that city, according to the prophecy of Micah: "And thou Bethlehem, the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda, for out of thee shall come forth the ruler who shall rule my people Israel."

Thus Christ was manifested to the Gentile nations, for the three magi returned to their own country and prepared the way for the preaching of the Messias by the news they brought that they had found and had adored in person Him who was to be the Saviour of mankind.

Herod, the king of Judea, was filled with jealousy when he heard of the expected birth of a new King, and when the three wise men went forward in confidence with the information they had obtained, he told them to return to inform him where should be found the Messias whom they sought, so that he also might go to adore Him. But they were warned by a vision from God not to return to Herod, but to go back by another way to their own country, because Herod had evil designs against the King whom they had found in Bethlehem.

Herod, finding that the wise men did not return, issued the cruel order that all the male children who were in Bethlehem from two years old and under should be slain, so that the new-

born King should die with them. This decree was carried out; but Jesus escaped the fate of these Holy Innocents, being taken to Egypt by Joseph and Mary, who were warned by God to do this, and who remained in that country until after the death of Herod. It was thus that Christ was manifested to the Gentile nations; and we, as the descendants of the Gentiles, owe to God our special homage for this calling of the Gentiles, our ancestors, to the knowledge of Christ.

We should profit by the knowledge of our Redeemer and His work of Redemption by making good use of the means of grace He has left on earth for our benefit, and especially of the sacraments of penance and the Holy Eucharist, whereby we may obtain from God those graces which we particularly need.

SEPARATE SCHOOL IN BELLE RIVER.

Our readers will be pleased to learn that the people of Belle River, Ont., have established a Catholic Separate school under the provisions of the Separate Schools Act. Trustees have been elected and the school goes into operation at once. The school house and site belong to the Episcopal Corporation and are rented to the trustees at a merely nominal rent. The locality is almost entirely Catholic. The school house had been rented hitherto to the Public School Board, but the lease had expired, and the school will now be conducted as a truly Catholic school.

CARDINAL SCORES BIGOTRY.

Bold Utterances of the Great English Prelate—England's Treatment of Ireland.—The Catholic Church and Dreyfus.

Correspondent of the London Times, signing himself "Verax," asserted that Catholicity is responsible for the backward condition of Ireland, Spain and Italy, and "has always been inimical to the highest civilization."

The following, taken from the Literary Digest, is the reply of Cardinal Vaughan in the November New Century Review.

Cardinal Vaughan's article has attracted wide attention, and the discussion is still simmering in England: "When I assert that the Catholic Church with a free hand is well able to promote the happiness of the people, and to raise them from the pagan to the Christian level of thought and action, my statement, I believe, is amply borne out by the history of Christian civilization. I need only appeal to such names as Milan, Hallam, Froude, Lecky, Farrar, Guizot and a host of other witnesses who are above suspicion. But when I claim for the Catholic and Roman Church now the same divine power and vitality she gave proof of in England during a thousand years of our history, I am confronted with the present state of Ireland, France and Spain. It would be almost as reasonable to say that the degraded condition of masses of the English poor, and the causes that have led to their misery, are attributable to the Catholic Church; only that it is too generally realized here that the Catholic Church lay prostrate, bleeding and dying under the harrow, for two or three centuries in England, for even the staunchest Protestant to cast the blame for the state of the English poor upon the Catholic Church.

"But we are led to look at Ireland, where the people have remained Catholic. Now, the sufferings of the Catholic Church in Ireland have been second only to those of the Church in England. Archbishop Whately, accounting for his own want of success, wrote that he 'had to fight the battle of Protestantism in Ireland' with one hand, and that his best, tied behind him."

"The Catholic Church in Ireland has had to carry out her divine mission, not with one hand tied behind her, but with both hands cut off. She was stripped of her possessions, reduced to poverty, deprived of the right to educate, the land taken from Catholics and given to Protestants, fettered and persecuted in every possible way by England for centuries. And yet, even so, she has maintained a peasantry that is singularly pure and chaste, and in ordinary times freer from crime than that of England; while, in spite of every disadvantage, she has preserved a high standard of virtue, faith and piety among her keenly intelligent and sympathetic poor. Let any one contrast the intellectual, moral and religious condition of the poor of Ireland with that of the lower classes in our great towns, and then say, if he please, that the cause of the respective conditions is to be found in the respective religions of the two countries.

"But we are referred to France as further proof against the character of the Catholic Church. Has it been forgotten that the Church in France was drowned in a sea of blood a hundred years ago; that religion, revelation and God Himself were publicly proscribed; that the Church is not free to this day in France; that her Bishops may nowhere meet in synods, that her religious orders are under a ban; and that whatever education the Church gives is under distress and disadvantage? And yet, in spite of a century of disabilities, Catholic France produces at the present day a great multitude of as noble examples of generosity and

devotedness as the world has ever seen. "Again, we are referred to Spain, but during the century Spain has been swept by the evil principles of French revolution: her religious houses have again and again suppressed, and for years her people were actually extinguished. Then in Spain has had to fight with one hand tied behind her, and look at them an inbred gentle noble bearing, a religious sentimentality, that you will search vainly in England. It is only fair to remember that the Catholic Church in Spain and in South America, other lands, has had to fulfill a divine mission in chains, weaker all sides by the state, if not enslaved by its laws."

Turning to the reproach of "that the Catholic Church was the victim of partizanship against just, Cardinal Vaughan asks if just. He continues:

"The Dreyfus case has been pieces, and all over the country divided members of the same family. The Bishops have endeavored to calm the minds of men, but it is easy to allay a panic. But his guilt has not been confined to French Catholics; ministry after ministry without a shred of Catholicism, its composition, was convinced guilt. If there has been a panic, one side, has there been no panic on the other?"

"I certain fiery organs of the Catholic press in France have fortunately carried away by panic do they stand alone in the ship in France or elsewhere? has been distracted for general political turmoil, and is honeycombed by unscrupulous secret agents pledged to despol and destroy the Catholic Church wherever they can. Can we be surprised, then, single incident, that the nation of a single case, should pro-convictions or fears on one side or the other? A single spark may kindle a conflagration, France having lived under panic for years, is not to be wondered at if it close their heads in a state of panic."

THE DUTY OF THE R

Cardinal Vaughan Discusses Question.

Cardinal Vaughan, in a preached a few Sundays ago, Carmelite Church, Kensington, dwelt at length on the duty of the rich to the poor. The Cardinal, for his text the words, "one another's burdens so that fulfill the law of Christ" (chap. xiii.), said the Christian ought to be one common brother in which the Blood of Christ virtue and vitality should pass all the members, uniting together as one family, as blood and affection. This ideal that Jesus Christ set before His world, He came to the world—that He should unite one family—into one brotherhood that all men should be His animated by His love, and spirit, and by His heavenly that they might thereby everything that might be to human nature, as well as of the world and the devil. Look around us and view the which we live, how far are we removed from this unity?

"We shall see," said the Cardinal, "how far we are removed from that which Our Lord has attained. The state in this country—we confine to our own land—and nations, and we see the that exist in society—the chasm between the rich and the poor are facts staring every one in the face, and the social question comes at last one of the burning questions of this country, and a man who is not aware of it as it is at present constituting three hundred years the Church in this country has of all her influence; she has been extinguished by two hundred years of incessant persecution. The religion of this the national religion—may have had all its own way for last three hundred years, and the Church at least had had of intervening, because she slow and subdued and extinguished. And now we are contemplating the dangers and of the great society in which we are cast, and we know that remedies men may offer, amelioration may be introduced, or by the Legislature philanthropy, we know that of themselves go to bring Christian brotherhood which ideal that Christ had laid before His world, that we know that Jesus Christ power to form the Christian that every land, every undertake to improve the man."

"Now, we are told that bear on another's burden shall the rich and the educated refined bear the burdens of the ignorant and the uncultured have no personal care with them? How shall their lives if they are so any chasm from the lives of the toilers of the world? by giving a small alms, or amount of money, bring Christian brotherhood which There must be personal action—the society must be or