

## THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

The American Catholic Church has much reason to rejoice in the rapid progress of his holy religion throughout the States and Territories of our Republic. At first the progress of the American Church was slow; so many causes existed to check her onward course.

A few years since, and the Catholic Church of the United States, consisted of but one Bishopric, a few weak and scattered Catholic settlements, and a mere handful of ecclesiastical laborers to supply the pressing wants of an immense section of country; she was without revenues and destitute of resources except a firm reliance upon the protecting and fostering hand of her Divine founder. In this helpless state she became dependent upon foreign zeal and liberality, and had it not been for the apostolic spirit of the Catholic ministry of other lands; her widely extended fields had been, almost, if not entirely, without laborers..

Those who *then* had the direction of the infant American church despaired not, but hoped and laboured on, and truly not in vain, if we regard the lofty and comely edifice which has sprung from such small beginnings.

The Catholic Church, or that portion of the Church universal which lies within this province, now includes a Catholic population of, at least, 1,300,000 souls, comprised within 22 Bishoprics, and governed by a Hierarchy of 26 Bishops, including the Titular with their coadjutor Prelates. The number of her Churches is 675, and of her Priests 709. Her Ecclesiastical Seminaries already number 22, and her chartered Universities and Colleges 15. We do not here enumerate her societies of religious ladies engaged in every good and useful work, besides her numerous other institutions of charity and benevolence. Improvements, too, in all other respects, keep even pace with the vast increase of her Prelates, Clergy and Temples of worship. The additions, which the last ten years have made to this goodly summary, are peculiarly a ground of encouragement and hope for the future.

Within that period nine new dioceses have been formed, and twelve additional prelates consecrated, in accordance with the wants of the American church. The number of her Priestly laborers has been increased by 382, and 403 additional Temples of worship invite the attendance of her children.

We might extend this brief summary of the glorious progress of the Catholic cause throughout our free and happy country. Our object, however, is not so much to exult over the past as to remind

our Catholic readers of the great causes of thankfulness, to which it seems appropriate to recur at this period of entrance upon the events of the new year

That reliance upon Providence, so manifest in the hopeful endurance and patient labour of the pioneers of the present ecclesiastical body, taken in connexion with the great progress of the Church, teaches us a salutary lesson. From a zealous continuance of the same efforts and labours, new fruits will spring and the great Catholic cause advance among us with mightier and more rapid strides, by virtue of the promise, *Behold, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world.*—*N. Y. Freeman's Journal.*

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JAMES DONOHUE,  
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