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Current Comment

A writer in a recent number (May 20) of the "Etudes," the well informed and ably edited fortnightly review published by the French Jesuits, focusses the light of historical criticism upon various histories of early Catholic missions in Japan. A "History of Japan during the century of early European intercourse" by James Murdoch and Isoh Yamagata, (Kobe, 1903), is decidedly hostile to Christian preaching. Mr. Hans Haas' "Geschichte des Christentums in Japan" (History of Christianity in Japan), published in Tokyo in 1905, though written by a non-Catholic, is respectful towards the labors of the Catholic missionaries. H. Nagakawa's "Histoire des relations du Japon avec l'Europe au 16e et 17e siecles," Paris, 1905, is a curious effort on the part of an attaché of the Japanese legation in Paris to hold a middle course between the brutal hostility of most Japanese historians and the contemporary narratives of the Jesuit missionaries. But the effort is not a serious one; the missionaries are always in the wrong, "the very head and front of their offending" is that they preached the gospel. Besides, the book is full of blunders and anachronisms. Quite other is M. A. Steichen's "Les Daimyo Chretiens, ou un siecle de l'histoire religieuse et politique du Japon, 1549-1650" (The Christian Daimios, or a century of the religious and political history of Japan), Paris, 1904. Founded upon the histories and letters written by the early Jesuits, who are still the most trustworthy annalists of that heroic period, Mr. Steichen's book sets forth more clearly than these first accounts did the sequence of political changes, the responsibilities of important actors in the long tragedy and many other points that needed explanation or more precise definition.

One of these points is the number of the converts and martyrs. Some writers, Catholics but not Jesuits, have spoken of two million martyrs. From a careful comparison of contemporary records it now appears certain that at no time were there much more than three hundred thousand Catholic converts in Japan during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and that hardly more than two thousand of these were true confessors of the faith. In this relatively small total are not, however, included those who were banished from Japan, those who died in Prison, or the 37,000 Catholics massacred at Hara when the revolt of an entire province against the intolerable tyranny of the emperor was repressed by Dutch imperial troops who, assisted by Dutch Calvinists, wreaked indiscriminate slaughter on heathen and Christian alike.

The story of the Christian daimios is a sad and shameful one. As feudal or military chiefs in a then imperfectly unified empire, they clung tenaciously to their hereditary privileges, their wealth and local prestige, and when the test of persecution and consequent poverty came, they ignominiously failed to meet it as Christian men, thus once more justifying Our Lord's sorrowful glance upon the rich young man who would not give up all to follow Him. Out of some forty Christian daimios not one dared to face the fury of the executioners. Several of them apostatized and became the worst persecutors of their brethren. Others avoided apostasy and death by withdrawing from public life. Many of their families have become extinct. The others still bear the titles of viscount, earl or marquis. But in that very Japan where in 1865, after two hundred years of priestless hidden life, thirty thousand Japanese Catholics, almost one-tenth of the former total Church membership in its palmiest days, were found faithful and true, there is not a single Catholic descendant of the forty once sincerely converted daimios.

Contrast with that pitiful cowardice of the local rulers the heroism of the humble. The history of Christian martyrdom in all ages presents no parallel

to certain episodes of the Japanese persecutions. The Catholic poor, the working people, the merchants, the petty lords or samurai, went to the stake with an eagerness, an interior joy, a simple serenity, the recital of which still dims the eye with tears, and the sight of which filled with amazement and stupor even the Dutch witnesses of the deaths which they themselves, by their lying tales of pretended Catholic plots against the crown, had cruelly brought about.

Fear, under some form or another, is one of the most fruitful of human motives. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. It is only perfect Divine love that casts out fear. Among that vast multitude everywhere who have no personal convictions it is fear of public exposure that keeps men and women honest and outwardly respectable. How many there are who go to church simply because they are afraid of what their relatives or friends would say, or merely think, if they did not. On this subject which admits of almost endless development, our judicious contemporary, "The Casket," says:

"Keep fear out that the child may grow up to the end of the first ten years' period, and not learn what physical fear is," says Luther Burbank. That is all right. Children should be taught not to dread the dark; they should never be allowed to listen to ghost stories; the servant maid who tells them that "the goblins 'll get you, if you don't watch out," should be dismissed from the house. But moral fear is a very different matter. They should be taught to fear sin and eternal punishment due to sin just as they fear falling over a precipice. When Mr. Burbank puts the fear of hell under the same ban with physical fear, he classes himself with the silly women who at a Mothers' Congress held in Chicago resolved that it was perfectly shocking that children should be taught the prayer "Now I lay me down to sleep." They were sure that the very thought "If I should die before I wake" must make the soul of every sensitive child quiver with anguish. With so many neurotic women in the world to-day, it may very well be that some children are already victims of neurasthenia at ten years old. No other class of children, however, has ever found that simple and beautiful little prayer other than soothing and comforting as the touch of a cool hand upon their foreheads. Mr. Burbank and the Chicago women think themselves psychologists, but theirs is psychology gone mad.

Luther Burbank, "the California wizard" knows the secret of thornless roses and stoneless plums, but his recent article in the "Century" magazine, referred to as "exceedingly beautiful and suggestive" by the editor of the women's department of the "Montreal Daily Star," shows him profoundly ignorant of the processes of moral growth in a child. "Do not terrify them in early life with the fear of the after world. Never was a child made more noble or more good by the fear of hell," says Mr. Burbank. The man who can talk like that displays superlative contempt for the experience of the human race. For nineteen centuries the noblest men and women that the world has seen were taught from their cradles that their grievous temptations against the law of God made them liable to be punished in hell for all eternity. The Burbanks of to-day are producing children who fear nothing but the policeman. The result in mature life of this atrophy of the moral sense is already alarming the thoughtful men of the United States,—no standards of morality in business or public life; "graft" reigning over all, from the "ward heeler" that buys individual votes to the president of a corporation that buys legislatures; the foul tide of divorce rising higher and higher every year.

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THE LATE MRS. JOHN EGAN.

The sudden death of Hannah Elizabeth, dearly beloved wife of Mr. J. J. Egan, of 218 Smith street, was briefly chronicled in our last week's issue. She had been so dangerously ill of late that death would have come in a month, and a critical operation was accepted as a possible prolongation of life. Mrs. Egan had received Holy Communion the previous Sunday, but in view of the ever present danger of such operations, she made a general confession before submitting to the surgeon's merciful treatment. Her condition was found to be worse than was expected. Rev. Father O'Dwyer, O.M.I., who was at hand, seeing that the patient was about to expire on the operating table in St. Boniface Hospital, administered the sacrament of Extreme Unction, and Mrs. Egan passed away at the age of 47 on the 5th inst. Admirably prepared as she was for the great journey, her friends



HANNAH ELIZABETH EGAN

feel that, by calling her away in the midst of an anaesthetic sleep, God in his loving mercy, spared her sweet soul the bitter parting from the husband and son to whom she was so fondly attached.

The news of her death came as a personal loss to most of the parishioners of St. Mary's and when the funeral took place in St. Mary's church on the morning of Friday, the 8th inst., the sacred edifice was thronged with sympathetic mourners, many of whom followed the beloved remains to St. Mary's cemetery, Fort Rouge. The chief mourners were: the bereaved husband, Mr. J. J. Egan; the only son, Mr. Peter Egan; the mother, Mrs. Mulligan, of Pembroke, Ont.; sister, Mrs. L. A. Downs, of Chicago; brothers, Dr. W. Mulligan and Mr. Jas. Mulligan, of Sudbury, and the members of the Egan family. Two brothers, Messrs. George and Dave Mulligan, proprietors of the Russell House, Ottawa, could not be here on account of the death of the latter's wife, who also passed away on the 5th inst. At the church which was heavily draped in mourning, solemn requiem High Mass was celebrated by the parish priest, Rev. Father Cahill, O.M.I., assisted by Rev. Fathers, Guillet, O.M.I., and O'Dwyer, O.M.I. The effective and touching music of the Mass was most impressively given by the choir of the church and two beautiful solos were rendered by Miss Rose Braniff and Miss I. Chevrier. The pallbearers were: Messrs. T. D. Deegan, F. W. Russell, D. Smith, E. Cass, D. E. McKenty, and F. W. Rimer.

The late Mrs. Egan was one of the best known and most devoted members of St. Mary's church. She was president of the League of the Sacred Heart, and a member of several other pious and charitable societies. She spent her time doing works of charity and religion, and she will be greatly missed by the clergy and people of St. Mary's, to whom her unexpected removal has been a great shock, and who all feel they have thereby suffered a personal loss and the church and parish a most devoted member.

The surviving relatives have the sincere sympathy of a large circle of friends, and as evidence of this spiritual bouquets and flowers were laid on the coffin as follows: Spiritual bouquets: St.

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Persons and Facts

Mrs. Thomas Bennett, who took the westward train on Wednesday morning, stops at Brandon to be nursed for a serious trouble which her journey from Regina here to attend the Woman's Press Convention aggravated. She begs us to thank her many friends who were so kind to her during her visit here and to express to them her regret that the precarious state of her health did not allow of her accepting their pressing invitations nor of returning their very welcome visits.

The closing exercises of St. Boniface College will take place on Thursday next, the 21st inst. at 8 o'clock in the evening. Those of St. Mary's Academy will take place at the same hour the following evening, the 22nd.

Harry O'Connor, who for the past twenty-five years has been attached to the C.P.R. service in western Canada, severed his connection with the company on Saturday. Mr. O'Connor takes a new position under the Manitoba government, having been appointed as one of the provincial fire inspectors, new offices which are provided for under the insurance act passed at the recent session of the legislature. It is understood that Mr. O'Connor begins his new duties this week.

There is no better known figure in the railway circles of Western Canada than Harry O'Connor. He came to Winnipeg in the early eighties from Quebec city, where he was engaged as a freight broker, lumber merchant and insurance agent. His first connection with the C.P.R. was as supply agent for the western division construction staff. He was later employed in the bridge and building department as inspector and was then promoted to the office of fire inspector of the western division, a position which he filled with great credit to himself and the company. Several years ago he was again transferred to the fire inspection department and has occupied a responsible office up to the time of his resignation on Saturday. Mr. O'Connor has many friends who will congratulate him on receiving appointment as government fire inspector.

A large delegation from the newly established Winnipeg Council of the Knights of Columbus will participate in the installation of Leo Council, of Port Arthur and Fort William, on Monday of next week. The local Knights will spend Sunday in the Twin Cities and on Monday will assist at the installation ceremonies, which will be held in Fort William. Delegations will also come from Ottawa, North Bay, Superior and Duluth. The Winnipeg Knights will arrive home on Tuesday.

Father Wm. Fraser, laboring in Tche Kiang, China, in an interesting letter to his father, Mr. W. Fraser, of Toronto, states scores of children could be saved with a trifle of money; parents will spare a child which would otherwise have been put to death, if they are paid \$2 a year for the board. The Chinese, he relates, have wonderful memories, some being able to recite the Catechism from beginning to end without a mistake. The elder brother, Father J. M. Fraser, is a missionary in Ning Po.

The dedication of St. Casimir's Catholic church, for a Lithuanian parish, in Philadelphia, last week, was a notable event. Besides priests of American birth, there were present priests of Irish, German, Italian, Slovak, Polish and Lithuanian nativity. There sat in the front pews about 15 trustees of the Wharton Street Methodist Church, which formerly occupied the building. The structure cost about \$60,000 and is a striking evidence of the success attending the Catholic parishes among the foreign element in the large American cities.

An Irish-American priest, in a temperance paper lately, stated that Ireland spends \$70,000,000 yearly for intoxi-

cants, yet Scotland's bill is larger, and England's larger still.

On Tuesday evening the pupils of the Sacred Heart school gave a very pleasing entertainment on the occasion of the anniversary of the ordination of Rev. Father Portelance. In answering to the address which was presented to him, Father Portelance invited the children to a picnic, which took place on Wednesday at St. Charles, the children being conveyed by a special car.

Referring to a Montreal despatch recently published by the Free Press, stating that the "Rev. C. A. Fournier, who for upwards of ten years was a Roman Catholic priest in Saskatchewan and North Dakota, had left the Church of Rome and was baptized and received into the fellowship of the Baptist Church at Grande Ligne," The Northwest Review publishes a letter from Bishop Shanley, of Fargo, which reads in part: "The telegram from Montreal stating that Rev. C. A. Fournier has become a Baptist minister is no surprise to me. Because of his intemperate habits and his failure to pay his debts I was obliged to dismiss him from this diocese last August."—Free Press Evening News Bulletin, June 13.

At their great national convention in New Haven, Conn., last week the Knights of Columbus voted \$100,000 for San Francisco relief work. Their contribution to the Paulist Fathers' fund for non-Catholic missions will probably be \$180,000.

On Thursday, the 14th inst., the Free Press announced that there were 400 people in McPhee's circus tent at Regina when it was blown away by a storm the previous night; the summary of news on the same page made the figures 7,400. The Telegram said there were about one thousand. How easy it is to verify facts in newspapers!

In an article published in the New York "Sun" of May 27 it was remarked that if the "Society for the Propagation of the Faith" has the full confidence of the faithful, it is due to the fact that it makes its affairs public, issuing annually accounts of the sums expended giving in detail the list of contributors, expenses and receipts. The June number of the "Annals," which is just out, contains the report of receipts in 1905, and shows that the sums contributed to the work of the society from 645 dioceses in all parts of the world amounted last year to \$1,299,539.40.

The ten dioceses contributing most to the general fund come in the following order: Lyons, France \$82,384.66; New York, United States, \$43,897.76; Boston, United States, \$41,239.47; Metz, Germany, \$39,573.08; Cambrai, France, \$37,387.05; St. Brieuc, France, \$34,440.17; Strasbourg, Germany, \$33,690.15; Nantes, France, \$30,538.86; Quimper, France \$28,849.89; Paris, France, \$27,284.50.

Mgr. Molloy, in a recent lecture in University College Dublin, on "Electrical Induction," proved that the induction coil was invented by Rev. Dr. Callan, professor of physics in Maynooth College in the years 1836 and 1837.

Mme. Curie, widow of the famous Catholic discoverer of radium, has been appointed to the chair in the University of Paris which her late husband had occupied. This is the first time a woman has been so honored.

An investigation shows that while there are more than 20 institutions in San Francisco for the care of homeless children, only one life was lost in them during the earthquake and fire. That was an infant two weeks old.

The American Government has made provision to segregate the lepers in the Philippine Islands at Culion, 250 miles (Continued on page 8)