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THE CATHOLIC.

Hamilton, G. D.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 22.

The objections which the Protestants make to Transubstantiation, are not stronger than those made by the Socinians to the Incarnation.—The following parallel will demonstrate the truth of this remark.

The Protestants reject Transubstantiation,

1. Because the senses perceive nothing in the Host but bread.

2. Because the body cannot be at the same time in two or more places.

3. Because the same body cannot at the same time act and not act; be visible and invisible; mortal and immortal; passible and impassible.

4. Because Christ would take the form of a little Bread.

5th. Because the body of Christ would take a form opposed to human nature.

6th. Because the body of Christ would be received or eaten by the unworthy.

7th. Because the body of Christ cannot be in Heaven, and at the same time shut up in the Tabernacle.

8th. Because it seems absurd to adore Christ in the Sacrament.

Therefore the principles of Protestants lead directly towards Socinianism, and, at least necessarily to downright infidelity.—Therefore religion cannot subsist without mysteries. Therefore, one must believe without seeing; or become a blindfolded infidel.—*Melanges Religieux.*

We are sorry to observe so much malice, prepossession, and willful misrepresentation displayed by any writer affecting to be a Christian, as what we read with pity and disgust in an article of the Hamilton Gazette, on the Jubilee. How any one, knowing himself to be mortal and amenable, he knows not how soon, before God's tribunal for the damning sin of bearing false witness against his neighbour; nay, against the greatest body, (the only compactly united one) of Christians in the world; how such a one can sit down calmly, and concoct deliberately the most reckless falsehoods, seems to us a Satanic perversion of the human intellect; which, were it not so common in these latter times, among our countrymen, might seem utterly incredible; or who, one would think, could offer himself spontaneously to be the Devil's secretary, or lend himself for any hire to be the deceptive organ of the Lying Spirit? If our Hamiltonian worthy is not one of

this description, we can affirm, without any breach of truth, that he is egregiously ignorant of Catholic principles.

We are happy to learn, through a correspondent, that the Rev. T. Smith, Catholic clergyman of the Richmond mission, has succeeded in establishing among his hearers a strict toe-totalism. Nearly 400 have cheerfully embraced it.

At the same time we take the opportunity to thank him for his zealous and particularly happy exertions, in a mission so extensively scattered, to keep our Catholic afloat.

The miraculous conversation at Rome of the Jew Alphonso Ratisbonne, which we give below, is recorded in the Church of St. Andrew's, where it took place, with the following inscription:

The 20th January, 1842, Alphonso Ratisbonne from Strasbourg, entered here an obstinate Jew. The Virgin appeared to him as she is here represented. He prostrated himself before her, and rose up a Christian. Stranger! carry home with thee, the precious remembrance of God's mercy, and the influence of the Virgin Mary.

On his return to France, this same Convert agreed to build at Paris, a Church for the sisters of St. Vincent of Paul, in honour of Notre Dame des Victoires, who reclaimed him from infidelity. The first day of the month of May (May) was chosen for laying the foundation stone of this Edifice, which ceremony was performed by the Curate of Notre Dame, assisted by the Convert's Brother, the Rev. Abbe Ratisbonne.

From the True Tablet.

REMARKS ON THE MIRACULOUS CONVERSION OF ALPHONSO RATISBONNE AT ROME.

When we first received the Baron de Bussierre's printed narrative of this conversion, we looked to see where it was published. There is a very rigid censorship of the press at Rome, under the superintendence of the College of the Propaganda; and if the publication had come forth with the sanction of that authority, the fact would, of itself, have been sufficient to warrant us in receiving the baron's production with the highest degree of respect. We found that the work had been revised by two eminent ecclesiastics, that it was marked by their *'imprimatur'*, and that it was published at Rome, *'avec approbation.'*

Further: upon a cursory perusal of the narrative, we observed that the young Israelite in whose favor this alleged miracle was wrought had the honor and happiness, soon after he became a member of the Church, to be received, in the most affectionate manner, by the Holy Father. This was another circumstance of the greatest weight with us; a circumstance certainly not assuming any feature of a mandatory character, but which, at the same time, could not fail to exercise a powerful influence upon our judgment. For a more clear-headed judge—a judge more careful in examining evidence before he comes to a decision, or more vigilant in guarding from being tinged with the slightest shade of superstition the transcendent trust committed to his custody, never held the keys than his present Holiness Gregory XVI. He was perfectly aware that, by receiving the new convert in the peculiarly distinguished manner which he was pleased to exhibit on that occasion, he afforded to the world a strong presumption for believing that he was of an opinion favorable to the allegation that the conversion was miraculous.

We then proceeded to peruse, with the utmost attention, the narrative itself.—We found it drawn up in the most simple and minute form—not a syllable bearing the appearance of exaggeration—the incidents set down almost hourly as they occurred—dates carefully given—localities uniformly mentioned—the phrases of the Israelite's mind impartially described from day to day—every sentence in the composition as clear as any written language can be. Here, therefore, no ground can possibly be discovered for a charge of invention, or of any imputation of a desire upon the part of the writer to deceive or delude his readers.

Considering in the next place, the actual condition of the Church; the rapid succession of events of a most extraordinary character, by which its career has been recently signalized—its wonderful progress in the United States, in our own colonies, and within the home precincts of the empire itself—counting the numbers of men distinguished for their learning and talents, who from having been once violently opposed to the church, are become not merely its children, but able and most zealous preachers of its doctrines—witnessing, moreover, the irremediable confusion into which the Anglican and Scottish establishments have fallen and from which no power, save that of the Catholic religion, can extricate them—we felt that we were living in times fraught with events of the really miraculous character of which no doubt can be justly entertained.

Having, further, under our contemplation, the unprecedented events which have taken place, and are still going on in Ireland, exhibiting already a mass of full four millions of individuals of both sexes, voluntarily abstaining from the use of intoxicating liquors—seeing as we have seen with our own eyes the immediate results of that grand mental movement in the vast numbers who crowded to the confessionals and to the rails of the sanctuary, in order to participate of the Holy Communion, we are decidedly of opinion that this sudden transition of nearly a whole nation from the path of one of the most deadly of all the vices to the ways of all the virtues, bears about it the essential attributes which distinguish a miracle from the ordinary incidents in the history of mankind.

With these considerations before us, let us now examine the facts connected with the conversion of Alphonso Ratisbonne. Descended of a Hebrew family—born in May, 1814, and therefore on the 20th of January last, when the alleged miracle occurred, of mature age; endowed with a strong intellect: a Jew himself, and so much wedded to his original religion that he conceived the most implacable hatred against his brother, who had embraced the Catholic faith some years ago; affianced to a young lady, a Jewess, in whom all his affections seem to be centered; on the eve of becoming a member of a wealthy Jewish firm, the head of which is his uncle; connected by blood with several Jewish families at Strasbourg, and by community of sentiment with the entire Jewish nation; fully aware

that his adoption of the Christian faith would obtain for him from that nation the ignominious title of an apostate, would probably prevent his union with the person whom his heart had selected to be the partner of his existence, exclude him from his uncle's house of business, and mar all the fortunes of his life; such was his situation when the Baron de Bussierre first conceived the thought of drawing his attention to the doctrines of our Holy Church.

One of the remarkable circumstances in the history of this conversion is, that before the sacred impulse moved the Baron's mind towards Ratisbonne, they had been almost total strangers to each other. The Israelite had been intimately acquainted, indeed, with the Baron's brother, who is a protestant; but the baron had never even seen him, except upon one occasion, and then no approach to the slightest degree of mutual regard took place. The baron, however, was upon terms of the most cordial friendship with Ratisbonne's Catholic brother, and felt a strong predisposition to show the young man all the attention in his power. But every emotion in that direction was chilled by the manner in which it was received.

The narrative itself will show how the parties eventually became, from a mere accident, bound together by ties of friendship. It will inform the reader of the difficulty which the baron experienced in prevailing upon the Jew to accept what is called the "Miraculous medal," and of the "pious stratagem" to which he had recourse, in order to render the mind of Ratisbonne familiar with that simple and beautiful orison, usually attributed to St. Bernard:—

"Remember, O most holy Virgin Mary, that no one ever had recourse to your protection, implored your help, or sought your mediation, without obtaining relief. Confiding, therefore, in your goodness, behold me, a penitent sinner, sighing out my sins before you, beseeching you to adopt me for your child, and to take upon you the care of my eternal salvation.

"Despise not, O mother of Jesus, the petition of your humble client, but hear and grant my prayer.

"O Mary! refuge of sinners; grant me a mother's blessing, and a mother's care, now and at the hour of my death.—Amen."

Notwithstanding an extraordinary emotion which Ratisbonne experienced one morning in the church of Ara Caeli, near the Roman Capital—a church which he entered with his *valet de place*, merely to examine the building and its decorations—he remained utterly insensible to all the efforts of the good baron in his favour.—His resistance to those efforts was of the most obstinate character during the three days preceding that of his conversion; nay, even down to the very moment when accompanied by the baron, he went into the church where the obsequies of M. de Laferonnays were about to be performed. The baron had occasion to go into the vestry for a few minutes, leaving Ratisbonne walking up and down the nave. On his return, he could not see his friend anywhere, until passing the little chapel of St. Michael, he there, to his inexpressible astonishment, beheld him who no longer was a Jew, upon his knees, his hands joined together in the attitude of fervent supplication, his face bathed in tears. It was all over. He was from that instant a child of the Catholic Church.