

THE TRUTH ABOUT THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

BY A PROTESTANT THEOLOGIAN.
CCCLXVI.

When the Republican correspondent talks of the "endless war fostered or incited" by the Papacy, we may remark that in the warring turmoil of new forces, interests, apprehensions, races, nationalities, which distinguished the earlier Middle Ages, it would be strange if the Papacy was not more or less drawn into the whirlpool, but that its engagement in these blind conflicts was mostly a thing by the way.

In Italy the Popes, more and more neglected by their acknowledged sovereigns, the Emperors, now seated permanently in Constantinople, were driven by necessity into the defense of the City and Dukedom of Rome against the Lombards. At length, finding their own strength inadequate, they appealed to the rising power of the Franks. Setting aside the outworn Merovingians, and following alike the dictates of good policy and good sense, and national Frankish feeling, they declared that the Carolingians, exercising the royal functions, were worthy of the royal name, and through the grateful alacrity of Pepin and Charles obtained a final deliverance, which enabled them at last to breathe freely and healthily for a future which was greater than they are likely to have foreseen.

Dr. Hase gives a curious proof of polemical blindness in reproaching St. Zachary with his interference in the authentic Teutonic succession, which finally divided into the French and the German. It would be hard to find a wiser and sounder act in the history of the Popes than that which authorized the Franks to set aside a line of kings so utterly degenerate that for generations they had given up even the pretence of discharging regal duties, and to declare that that illustrious family which had already saved Christendom on the field of Tours, and which had become permanently charged with the burdens of royalty, was worthy at last to enjoy its honors.

Neander, a Protestant of the Protestantism, so far from flinging anything to blame in Zachary's conduct, adds it as the most striking exemplification of this Pope's love of justice and truth, which, remarks Neander, he seems decidedly to have set above mere interest, even the interests of the Papacy. More precisely, he did not think that the Papacy had interests of variance with justice and truth.

I have little doubt that this sentence of St. Zachary is one of those wise and just pronouncements of the Popes which Bishop Westcott of Durham mildly censures the Catholics for not using more often than they do as a proof of the Divine institution of the Papacy.

After Zachary, there were three great medieval contests of which the Popes were the leaders.

The first was the twenty-two years' war (broken by occasional pauses) between the Northern Italians, headed by Pope Alexander III., and the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa. As this struggle was for national independence, I do not suppose that even the correspondent will put it down among the "endless wars fostered or incited" by the Papacy. Mr. Ruskin has abundantly shown how honorable its justice, its perseverance, its temperateness, were to the Pope, to the Papacy, and to Italy.

The second contest was the Albigensian Crusade. This is the conflict on which Protestant zeal is wont to dilate with peculiar intensity of horror, as the crucial exhibition of Catholic ferocity. Of its cruelties there can be no question. As Gioberti says, then, and for centuries afterwards, sympathy scarcely existed between antagonists fundamentally opposed in belief. When, as late as 1611, eighty wives and children of Irish soldiers in Scotland were tossed over a bridge into the water, does this prove the inherent cruelty of Presbyterianism? Assuredly not. It simply proves that more than four hundred years after Simon Montfort, Christian men might still be found as hardhearted as savages towards those of an opposing religion.

Because, a century earlier, a company of fanatical Calvinists, headed by John Calvin, and coming into North Germany, were turned out by the Lutherans in midwinter to perish in the fields, have English Calvinists now any such thing to fear from German Lutherans? Of course not. It simply shows that once Catholics, Calvinists, and Lutherans were apt to be found equally callous against those whom they accounted heretics. Always, however, even as now, from intolerance, Catholic, Calvinist, or Albigensian, was apt to be found peculiarly intense. The first legislation against the Albigenses, at the Third Lateran, in 1179, is declared to be provoked by their "boldness and cruelty."

Setting aside then the question of relative severity, which proves nothing as to the merits of either side, for what was this war waged? Not for the maintenance of the Papacy in particular, but for the maintenance of Catholic Christianity in general, or rather, says that Protestant of the extreme Left, Paul Sabatier, for the maintenance of rational human society, which the wild and sullen fantasies of Albigensianism were in a fair way of overturning utterly.

The third contest was that which takes up most of the thirteenth century, between the Papacy and the later Hohenstaufen Emperors, ending in the utter annihilation of this most magnificent of human dynasties.

Yet even this implacable conflict, although waged immediately by the Papacy, was not waged in the interest of the Papacy alone. Milman remarks that the issue might not have been by any means so triumphant for the Popes, had Frederick the Second limited himself to attacking, however unsparingly, the papal administration. Possibly, he thinks, it might have turned out differently had the Emperor gone so far as to stir up the princes and prelates to reduce the Holy See to a primacy of honor, with a rigorously limited power of hearing appeals. I have filled in some of Milman's lines, but I think I have substantially caught his meaning.

Frederick, however, did not limit himself to attacks on the Pope, on the Popes, or even on the Papacy. He went on (whether directly or indirectly I do not now well remember) to insinuate disintegrating doubts concerning the whole sacramental ministrations of the priesthood. This was to overturn the whole fabric of religion as then existing. Therefore even Dante, intense Imperialist as he was, does not hesitate to put this great and fascinating Emperor, as an impenitent heretic, into a burning sarcophagus of the City of Dis.

Dr. David Müller, the engaging popular historian of Germany, a warm Protestant, thinks that Frederick the Second's attack on the Popes, had he even gone no further, foredoomed his line to ruin. The Papacy, he remarks, was far more widely and far more deeply an object of human faith than the Empire. The four hundred and fifth years since Charles the Great had very much vaporized the Holy Roman Empire, outside of Germany. It remained a sentiment, an august image, but hardly a practical necessity. The ban of the Empire, outside of Germany, and more or less of Italy, was little more than empty sound. The ban of the Church, everywhere, struck terror into the hearts of men, from the lowest to the highest, from the peasant to the king, nay to the Emperor himself.

Therefore, had Frederick simply attacked the Papacy, remaining in everything else perfectly orthodox, he would hardly have saved his line from overthrow. How much less when it was generally believed that he reviled the Blessed Saviour Himself as an impostor, and meditated bringing in some wild half-Manichean, half-Mohammedan scheme, upon the ruins of Catholic Christianity. The Papacy was not fighting for itself, alone against him, but, almost as much as in Provence, for Religion itself.

The details of the long conflict deserve some attention.
CHARLES C. STARBUCK.
Andover, Mass.

THE OSTENSORIUM.

ITS USE DATES FROM INSTITUTION OF FEAST OF CORPUS CHRISTI.

A Monstrance called also ostensorium and portable tabernacle is that large altar utensil in which the Blessed Sacrament is exposed to Benediction and borne in solemn procession outside of the church on certain occasions. It consists of two parts—the foot, or stem, upon which it rests, and the repository or case, in which the Host is exhibited. The stem is like that of the chalice and its upper part is so formed as to resemble the rays issuing from the radiant sun. In its centre there is a circular aperture in which lunula, or lunette, with the Blessed Sacrament enclosed is placed during exposition.

Monstrances date their origin from the institution of the Feast of Corpus Christi which was first set on foot by Robert, Bishop of Liege, in 1246, at the instigation of a holy nun named Juliana, who frequently saw in a vision a luminous moon with one dark line on its surface. The moon represented the Church and the dark line indicated a feast that was wanting among these annually celebrated and this one specially directed toward the Blessed Sacrament. This led to the institution of the Feast of the Blessed Sacrament or Corpus Christi, which Pope Urban IV, in 1264, extended to the universal Church.

In some of the churches of the Cistercian Order in France instead of the usual monstrance there is employed a small statue of the Blessed Virgin so constructed that the Sacred Host may be placed in its hand during the time of exposition. The present shape of the monstrance imitating the radiant sun recalls the divine splendor of the Lord's countenance at His transfiguration on Mount Tabor and that saying of the Psalmist, "He has placed His tabernacle in the sun." (Psalm xviii, 6)

The material for the monstrance may be of gold, silver, brass or copper gilt. The base should be wide, and it must be surmounted by a cross. In the middle of the monstrance there should be a receptacle of such size that a large Host may be easily put into it. On the front and back of this receptacle there should be a crystal allowing the Host to be seen, the one on the back opening like a door. The circumference of this receptacle should be of gold, or of other material it should be of gilt and smooth and polished.

The lunula or lunette, is made of the same material as the monstrance. If it be made of any other material than gold it must be gilded. In form it may be either of two crescents or of two crystals encased in metal. If two crystals are used it is necessary that they be so arranged that the Sacred Host does not in any way touch the glass.

In some cases the lunula is of silver or gold. The upper part of the monstrance is generally of the precious metals or at least gilt or silvered, although the lower portion is occasionally of bronze artistically wrought. In many cases it is of most costly materials and workmanship.

The monstrance is not consecrated by a Bishop but is simply blessed by a priest who uses the form of blessing a tabernacle or ostensorium.

PRAYER.

Prayer is a sovereign remedy for dejection of spirits. Is any one sad among you? Let him pray. Prayer is a source of comfort to our hearts. How can we as children approach our Heavenly Father, the Father of mercies and the God of consolation, without feeling a sense of security and confidence?

You are not obliged to have a friend to present you at court, for no one knows you better than your Creator. He who fashioned you knows the clay of which you are made.

You are not compelled to wait for an audience. Your Heavenly Father never nods or sleeps. He is never preoccupied or engaged. He is always at home and ready to receive you. The

eyes of the Lord are upon the just, and His ears are open to their prayers. You can speak to Him in church and out of church, at home and abroad, by day and by night.

And when you enter into the presence of the Most High you are not required to present your petition in choice language and well-sounding periods. Those so called eloquent prayers, of which we sometimes read in the papers, I fear do not go farther than their authors intended them to reach. They tickle the ears of men, but do not pierce the clouds. The prayer that moves our Heavenly Father is that which spontaneously flows from the heart, such as the prayer of the publican when he exclaimed: "Oh God, be merciful to me, a sinner!" or the prayer of David: "Have Mercy on me, O God, according to Thy great mercy."

FIVE-MINUTE SERMON.

Passion Sunday.

THE PRECIOUS BLOOD.
The Blood of Jesus Christ His Sanctification us from all sin. (1 Ep. 5: 7 John 1: 7)

We all know, my dear brethren, that when a man is born into the world he is born *unclean* before God. He is then so unclean that he is not fit to associate with the Sons of God and heirs of the Kingdom of Heaven. He is then so unclean that he can never be anything but an outcast from God until he is made clean.

Is there any way in which he can be made clean? Yes, for when he is baptized he is made a new creature; he is cleansed from the stain of original sin, made a child of God and heir of the Kingdom of Heaven. He is then so pure and holy that if he dies immediately he will go, to a certainty, straight to Heaven. For baptism applies the Blood of Christ to his soul, and he becomes truly clean. But suppose he does not die immediately after baptism, how is it with him then? If he keeps his baptismal innocence, so far as never to commit a mortal sin, he still has a right to go to Heaven. He can then demand of God permission to enter Heaven.

Can he, however, demand this permission to enter Heaven immediately after his death if he has committed only venial sins? That depends entirely upon his condition at the moment of death. If he is not so sorry for all his sins that his contrition is perfect, then he can't enter Heaven immediately, but must go to purgatory to be made perfectly pure, so that he can be taken into Heaven.

I have said that baptism applies the Blood of Christ to the soul and makes man pure and innocent. Now, baptism is a sacrament. It is the first one and is necessary for salvation. Without it no man can enter Heaven, nor even purgatory, for the purgatorial state is the first and lowest state of blessed and holy souls who must go to Heaven in the end. But the blood of Christ is applied to the soul of man in other ways, although baptism must come in the first place.

In what other way is the Blood of Christ applied? First, by the Sacrifice of the Mass. For by the Mass we repair our sins, get grace to keep from sin, and make our purgatory shorter in consequence. He who hears Mass daily makes the best prayer that a man can make, and he is more certain to have his prayer answered. He also helps the living and the dead, and brings down upon himself and his own special graces from God.

Secondly, the Blood of Christ is applied to our souls by the Sacrament of Penance. Men defile their souls by sin, by mortal sin after baptism. He who receives the Sacrament of Penance worthily—that is, with true sorrow for all mortal sin, with a firm determination to lead a good life and repair the wrong he has done—that man receives again the grace of God that restores his soul to eternal life.

Thirdly, in Holy Communion we receive the Body and Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ in a hidden manner, but in deed and in truth. The consecrated Host is the eternal and ever-living God Himself. You know, my dear brethren, the strength of this divine food. How it gives new energy to the soul, destroys the power of concupiscence, banishes, or at least weakens, temptation, always giving us the grace to hold our own against the world, the flesh, and the devil. And there are Catholics who refuse to make this Communion once a year!

But there is one thing that ought to be said here. A Catholic ought never to consider as useless, or as a most useless, any one of the sacraments. This too many do as regards confession. They underrate it. They think, therefore, it is no good unless they receive Communion every time they go to confession. Now this is a grave error. One is not obliged to go to Communion every time he goes to confession. Those who cannot go to Mass nor Confession on account of their business or employment or work cannot even away, even at least go to confession very often during the year. All such a one has to do is to prepare himself carefully, step into the rector's house, make his confession, and go on to work again. If he but make an arrangement with some one of the priests he can always be heard at once. Frequent confession is a wonderful help to a good life and a happy death.

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The articles of the Apostles' Creed are not dead, fossilized, antique sayings; the Catholic Church regards them as living and active—as her energizing fabric, whereby she builds up and maintains the functions of her daily life. She is, for instance, always keeping us familiar with the "Communion of Saints," not as a form of words which we repeat in our daily prayers only. She brings into prominence, through her calendar and feast days, this saint and that saint; she chooses dates on which to honor them; she indicates their special offices or privileges; she canonizes new saints; she appoints saints of by-gone times as special patrons of good works in our own day. In all these things, God the Holy Ghost guides her. One perceives immediately how fit St. Vincent de Paul is to be called the patron of all associations of charity, for instance; or St. Thomas Aquinas for schools and scholars; or St. Francis de Sales for Christian editors and writers.

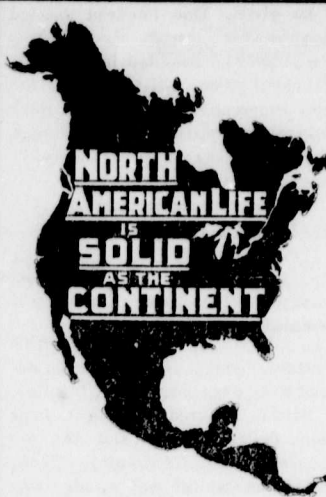
How beautiful all this is in its appropriateness; and how close the Church makes the tie that binds the Church on earth to the Church in heaven. She is not afraid to let the centuries pass, and then suddenly call even a comparatively unknown saint into special notice, just as Pope Leo XIII. appointed St. Paschal Baylon a special patron of associations in honor of the Blessed Sacrament, rather than St. Alphonsus de Liguori, who is so much more prominent and who wrote so beautifully about our Eucharistic King. So, too, many long years passed away, before the Church saw fit to bring into the immense prominence he now occupies that holy and favored St. Joseph, chosen out to be the foster-father of God's own Eternal Son, and whom now we are taught to reverence as the special Patron of the Universal Church. In his consecration of the Raccolta, or book of authorized indulgences, 1900, we shall find that of the twenty-five pages devoted to St. Joseph, not a single indulgence earlier than one of Pope Pius VII., 1804, is given. This is not because the devotion to St. Joseph was not known and practiced earlier, to some extent; one of the very prayers indulged by Pope Leo XIII., Dec. 11, 1889, is that of St. Bernard of Siena to St. Joseph. But, as we often in life have occasion to observe, God has His own times and seasons for accomplishing His own ends. In our day, when the conditions, the duties, and the rights of the laboring classes are becoming more and more a matter of serious consideration among thoughtful men, and especially as we enter this twentieth century which Cardinal Manning prophetically declared would be "for the people," it is most proper that the Church should hold up to view, with sudden and marked prominence, St. Joseph, this working man, this carpenter, this artisan, chosen by God nineteen centuries ago to be head of the household at Nazareth, and now with peculiar fitness set before us as the Patron of the Universal Church. Those who study his character and his calling on earth will find a steady illumination thrown on some of the most difficult problems of our present day.—Sacred Heart Review.

Prudence

It is the peculiar province of prudence to regulate our words and actions. It teaches us to speak with suitable circumspection, and in the manner which the circumstances of the time, place and person require. It forbids all discourse against God or our neighbor, every word which may be spoken for an unworthy purpose.—St. Vincent de Paul.

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