

WHY I AM A CATHOLIC.

A MASTERLY EXPOSITION OF CHURCH TENETS.

By HON. WM. A. BYRNE, OF COVINGTON, Ky.

The following was delivered before a Protestant audience in the Unity Club lecture hall, Covington, Ky., a couple of weeks ago:—

The Rev. E. A. Coll, pastor of Unity Church, welcomed the representatives of the Catholic religion, and expressed the pleasure he felt to hear an explanation of its doctrines. He then introduced Archbishop Elder, who, after courteously thanking the members of the Unity Club for their invitation, explained how the Catholic Church is always grateful for an opportunity to make known to all men her sacred truths.

In answering the question that had been several times asked, why a layman instead of a priest had been chosen to give this lecture before a non-Catholic society, the Archbishop said the reasons were threefold. First of all, because we had one close at hand, in every way qualified to do the work; secondly, because laymen do not often have an occasion to make an address on subjects of this kind; thirdly, because a layman, moving every day in the midst of persons not Catholic, are acquainted with their thoughts, their objections, their views about religion, their questions on points that interest them most, and therefore has a special qualification to present these things in a manner to draw attention, and to satisfy inquiries. He then introduced Mr. Byrne. The lecture lasted fully two hours, and was received with marked attention.

In the beginning, Mr. Byrne stated, any Catholic child who had made its first Communion was prepared to give adequate reasons for the faith he professed. With the infidel, the lecturer said, he had nothing to do. The infidel is a poor, helpless creature who does not see, or seeing, does not understand, who does not recognize that he has a soul, but is content to be evolved from a monkey and return to earth again. If the infidel were to remain silent he might merit our sympathy, but when he speaks out his convictions the Christian nature revolts from him, he shocks their human sensibilities and their souls. The fact of the existence of God being accepted, the thought that presents itself to our minds is "What does God expect of me?" To the Catholic, the answer is to believe and practice the doctrines of the Holy Roman Catholic Church.

"I am a Catholic," said Mr. Byrne, "because the Catholic Church is the church founded by Jesus Christ. I know that God established the Catholic Church and I know that Luther and King Henry and Wesley are founders of churches which are not Catholic, but protest against the Catholic Church." There is no change in Catholic doctrine. Occasionally a doctrine or tenet is defined, but that doctrine or tenet always existed. As the Gospel was preached by Jesus Christ and His Apostles, so it is preached at the present day by the Catholic Church.

"Belief in the Real Presence, belief in Purgatory, in confession, and the power of the priest to retain or forgive sins, the resurrection of the body, are traceable to the Church in the time of the Apostles, and from then to the present day, in every hour of the day, and every day of the year, down through the centuries in an unbroken line, these doctrines existed and exist in the Holy Roman Catholic Church alone." The church founded by God must be the true church, and that church cannot err. By this it was not to be understood that Popes, Bishops and priests cannot sin. The church holds that it cannot err in matters of faith or morals.

"I am a Catholic because the Catholic Church is the only one which can interpret the word of God in the Bible with certainty. The Bible is the inspired word of God, but it is not the whole of the Catholic faith. The Catholic accepts the Bible, but it is also interpreted for the faithful. The Church is teacher in respect to it; the Catholic Church is one thing, the Bible another. Christ was preaching and so were His Apostles before the existence of the New Testa-

ment. And the Church which existed with Christ and His Apostles, before the New Testament, and continues, as I have shown, to the present, must be the only true church, and the churches which hold the Bible, and the Bible only, to be the rule of faith, cannot be true or reliable. Besides, these churches are not even consistent with their professions, for we know the Bible enjoins acts which they do not perform. I need not state that creeds which take their religion from the Bible only do not agree with each other, do not interpret alike; neither is it necessary to say that individuals that claim the right of interpretation according to their private judgment do not agree with each other.

"God sent as teachers the Apostles, who taught the truth; the Apostles were human and could not live among men forever, but God said He would be with them all days, even to the end of the world; and so we must believe Him to be with their successors, and that He still protects the Church from error as he did in the days of old. If therefore, the Church was not the infallible interpreter of the Bible the Church might err. The Church has existed unchanged through all ages. Cities and kingdoms, and nations, have passed away, and only a brief record on history's page shows that they ever were; but the Catholic Church has come down through succeeding ages, unchanged and unchanging. The Catholic finds his church the same the world over. People, condition, color, climate, language, peace, wars, do not affect it. It is the same priest, the same ceremony, the same altar, the same sacrifice, the same language, the same God, the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, the same sacraments for every Catholic in every land in every day and night, now and for the last nineteen hundred years.

"I am a Catholic," he concluded, "because I love liberty. The Catholic Church has ever been the friend of the oppressed, and has ever been the ablest champion of liberty; has ever been found to stand between arbitrary power, or tyranny, and the people. Did not the Catholic Barons wring from King John the corner-stone of constitutional government, the Magna Charta? Not only Catholic residents of their country, but Catholic foreigners, fought for our independence. Truthfully and

proudly does Cardinal Gibbons say, 'American patriots without number the Church has nursed in her bosom, a traitor never.' And further back in our history we find Catholic Maryland passing laws for the protection of her citizens against religious bigotry, and opening her gates to the persecuted of other creeds.

The Catholic Church cannot countenance error, but it is not, and never was, and never will be, intolerant to an honest conviction. No other church has so distinguished itself in the cause of human liberty, religious, political or civil, as has the Catholic Church.

"The Catholic Church is not, and cannot be, tied to, or circumscribed by any government or state or country, and she is, therefore, free to perform her grand mission on earth. She needs no particular government, but while the benign influence of free government helps the growth of all institutions, it helps, also, the Catholic growth. But the mission of the Church is not political, or merely human, but divine. Its mission is to teach the nations all truth, whatever their form of government; to bring man to God, which means rendering to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's. The Catholic religion itself binds the faithful to respect all the rights, religious and other, of their fellow-men. To be a good Catholic is tantamount with being a good citizen. When you know the Catholic Church you will love her, because she is beautiful, because she is true, because she is good."

At the close of the lecture the Archbishop congratulated Mr. Byrne most warmly, and expressed greatest satisfaction with the lucid and fine explanation of the Catholic doctrine. Mr. Byrne was formerly city collector of Covington. At present he is practicing law, and bids fair to add another and great name to old Kentucky's long list of great lawyers.—*Catholic Columbian.*

A COMEDY.

Quite a large audience assembled in St. Mary's hall, Bleury street, last evening, and for a couple of hours or more thoroughly appreciated "A Trip to Paris," a four act comedy, which was presented by the students of St. Mary's college. The several characters were well portrayed and showed a careful study on the part of each of the role with which he had been entrusted. Those who contributed to the evening's enjoyment were Messrs. A. Laramee, R. de Lorimier, V. Lefebvre, R. Masson, Jos. Archambault, E. Morel, T. Viau, L. Robert, L. Hurtubise, E. Beaulieu, E. Brail, L. Hurtubise, G. Molleur, E. Chollotte, Arthur Doray, R. Masson and G. Comte.

Why pay fancy prices for Table Waters when you can get . . .

LAURENTIAN,

which is a natural Soda Water delivered at your door for 5 cents per gallon. . . Telephone 443.

Severe Pain in Shoulder 2 Years Cured by "The D.&L." Menthol Plaster.

My wife was afflicted for two years with a severe pain under the left shoulder and through to the heart; after using many remedies without relief, she tried a "D. & L." Menthol Plaster, it did its work, and owing to this cure hundreds of these plasters have been sold by me here, giving equal satisfaction.

J. B. SUTHERLAND Druggist, River John, N.B.

Sold Everywhere, 25c. each.

HEATING STOVES,

STEEL RANGES,

GAS STOVES.

SPECIALTIES:

GURNEY'S STOVES AND RANGES,

MAGEE AND GOOD NEWS RANGES.

STOVE REPAIRS OF ALL KINDS.

PLUMBING, TINSMITHING, GAS FITTING.

F. H. BARR.

2373-75 ST. CATHERINE STREET.

Telephone 4241



A NATURAL REMEDY FOR

Epileptic Fits, Falling Sickness, Hysterics, St. Vitus Dance, Nervousness, Hypochondria, Melancholia, Inebriety, Sleeplessness, Dizziness, Brain and Spinal Weakness.

This medicine has direct action upon the nerve centers, allaying all irritabilities, and increasing the flow and power of nerve fluid. It is perfectly harmless and leaves no unpleasant effects.

FREE

A Valuable Book on Nervous Diseases and a sample bottle to any address. Four patients also get the medicine free. This remedy has been prepared by the Rev. Father Koenig, of Fort Wayne, Ind., since 1876, and is now under his direction by the

KOENIG MED. CO., Chicago, Ill.

49 S. Franklin Street.

Sold by Druggists at \$1 per Bottle, 6 for \$5. Large Size, \$1.75. 6 Bottles for \$9.

In Montreal by E. LEONARD, 113 St. Lawrence street.

JOHN MURPHY & CO'S ADVERTISEMENT.

It Don't Much Matter

Whether you name them "New Year Presents" or "New Year Gifts," "Something Nice," like the rose, is acceptable under any name.

Our Men's Furnishing Department is conspicuously to the front with "Something Nice" for gentlemen. A visit of inspection is sure to reveal "just the thing you want."

SILK MUFLERS—In light and dark colors, pretty and artistic designs. Prices all the way from 75c up.

CASHMERE MUFLERS—In all prices, colors and qualities, from 45c up.

NECK TIES—Thousands to choose from, in all the newest colors and styles. Prices from 15c up.

LINED GLOVES—Of every description from 75c per pair up.

DRESSING GOWNS—In silk and wool, all marked at wholesale prices and 10 per cent off.

OPEN LATE FOR THE HOLIDAY TRADE.

JOHN MURPHY & CO.,
2343 St. Catherine St.,
CORNER OF METCALFE STREET.
TELEPHONE No. 3833.

CURRAN, GRENIER & CURRAN
ADVOCATES,
BARRISTERS AND SOLICITORS,
99 St. James Street,
MONTREAL.

HON. J. J. CURRAN, Q.C., LL.D.,

A. W. GRENIER, Q.C.,

F. J. CURRAN, B.C.L.

Society and General Job Printing
at the True Witness Office.