

# The True and Only Catholic Witness

ESTABLISHED IN 1847

CATHOLIC CHRONICLE.

VOL. XLI., NO. 6.

MONTREAL, WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 1890.

PRICE, 5 CENTS.

## PERSECUTION IN ROME.

### The New Prefect's Misdeeds.

#### The Persecution of the Religious Orders and Confiscation of their Property.

The new Prefect of Rome has a curious and instructive history, with a moral to it, which makes it all the more interesting in view of the work he is called on to do at the present moment for his master, Premier Crispi. His first duty will be to drive the brothers and nuns from the hospitals, orphan asylums and other charitable institutions in the city, and then to aid in the confiscation of the revenues which support these places. This task will be very agreeable to the Prefect in view of his antecedents, and the peculiar training of his youth. It is said that he was born and bred an infidel, with a particular, intelligent and progressive hatred of Christianity, and that for his last quality he has been selected to do the delicate and profitable work so much relished by his kind. There are in Rome about one hundred and sixty institutions of all kinds for the care of the unfortunate, and their annual revenue is about one and a half millions of dollars. Premier Crispi has confiscated these revenues because he discovered—the good man can discover anything he likes—that the better part of them were spent in worshipping God to too great a cost, while the poor got what was left. The aims of these charities are various and show what glorious charity once prevailed in Italy.

**THE CARE OF THE SICK.**  
of the pilgrim, of the orphan, of the old, of abandoned children, of penitent women; the instruction of children, the assisting of clever and earnest students, of poor persons with proper advocates in court, of miserable prisoners condemned to long imprisonment, of young women who need a dowry to get married, of poor gentlemen who have lost all of widows, of the blind, and the deaf-mutes; these are some of the aims of these lay and clerical societies. They were founded by pious souls, who left their money to them that the good work might be continued; and now they are to be swept away in a night, their money turned into the bankrupt treasury of Rome, and the charity so needed by the thousands of poor suddenly withdrawn from them. The bad which will be made for Premier Crispi by the agony and tears of widows and helpless orphans and old people, and the distressed generally can hardly be a pleasant one. His conscience is a grand steal, he does not hide the fact although he does not state it, and while he assures the poor of his intention to look after them everyone knows that the confiscated revenues go to Rome, while the poor may as well be dead. It is the task of the new Prefect Signor Finocchiaro-Aprile to depopulate the Roman poor while pretending to assist them, in plain words to execute his master's wishes. Reared as he has been in the purest anti-clericalism he must be delighted with his new office and its opening duties. In one city he will have the pleasure of tearing down

**THE STRUCTURE OF CHARITY**  
so laboriously erected by the hated Church. Altruistic charity will be substituted, the dreams of his youth will receive partial fulfillment, and the glow of patriotism will heat his blood, and so on. Alas! the dreams of the Prefect can after all be only the dreams of Satan! He was not born and reared an atheist. Here is his history. He is of Palermo, and his parents and relatives were as Catholics that they educated him in sentiments of deep piety. From his earliest youth he was an active member of a society which the Oratorian Fathers, of Palermo, had founded to keep their young men in the way of virtue. He was then a young man of more than ordinary piety. He went to confession and communion weekly, prayed daily twice in the chapel, frequented the society of his fellow members only, and finally made such progress as to go to Communion daily, remaining on his knees so long and praying with such devotion that the old men took him for a seeraph. Losing his parents before he could do well for himself the Oratorians looked after him affectionately, and heaped him with favors. They had hopes he would prove a valiant Catholic in spite of the temptations of the time. He continued in this way until he was twenty, an age memorable in the life of Crispi, who at that time wrote poetry in honor of the Blessed Sacrament and the Virgin Mother. At twenty the young man expressed his envy of the soldiers who had died for the Pope; declared himself a Catholic with the Pope and for the Pope, and carried a big bronze crucifix on his breast. Just at this time, however, something began to be wrong with him. An acquaintance scouted him of hypocrisy. Little by little he ceased intercourse with the Oratory, dropped his devotion and finally at the first convenient moment appeared as a Freemason, an atheist and a follower of Crispi. The explanation of this metamorphosis is his ambition and his lack of mental ability. Many times he tried in Palermo to become a lawyer, but could never pass a successful examination. He then paid court to Crispi, became his creature, and without any addition to his brains became a great man, in new royal Prefect of Rome.

This is his story, and curious one it is; it has one bright spot in it, that he has won some kind of a success. So many throw away virtue, honesty, principle, faith, and get neither gold nor fame.—*Catholic Review*.

### Water of Lourdes Used Upon Gen. Grant.

Mrs. Richard Crowley mentions this interesting fact:  
"The wife of Gen. Grant once told me just before her husband's death that she thought Protestantism could not resist genuine prayer with a bottle of the waters Our Lady's Spring at Lourdes, and when the General had

one of his most death-like spells of weakness, and they feared he might never breathe again she poured the sacred contents of this vial upon his head and invoked Heaven's mercy on this great and good man, that he might be spared yet a little longer to his country. She said she did not claim the honor for her husband, as that might be too selfish and personal, but that his country might a little longer keep the leader that had saved it. His prayer was granted, and he lived to finish the story of his life, so dear to the people of America, and such blessing to his fondly loved wife and children. The world may think that it was the remedies given so skillfully by his patient and learned physician, but who shall say it was not the Virgin Mary's answer to a woman's prayer? Who shall say that the Saviour, who caused the dark eyes of Jairus's daughter to awaken, did not speak once more in mercy, though to mortal eyes and ears he was unseen and unheard."—*N. Y. Tablet*.

## THE MALTESE DIFFICULTY.

### Journalists Excommunicated—His Holiness Addresses a Letter to the Bishop.

Mgr. Pace, Bishop of Malta, has taken a grave decision concerning certain journals in his diocese. These journals have been obstinately assailing ecclesiastical authority, even attacking the Pope in regard to the results of the negotiations between the Holy See and the Government of Great Britain. The Bishop has fulminated the major excommunication against those who take any part whatever in the publishing and the circulation of the *Malta*, the *Maltese*, and the *Malta* *Malti*, which Mgr. Pace denounces as "injurious to the Holy See, seditious, irreligious, rebels to episcopal authority."

Pope Leo XIII. has written a letter to Bishop Pace upholding him in his course. He speaks highly of the ancient faith of the Maltese, who were evangelized by the great Apostle, and then proceeds to make some statements which are significant in view of certain declarations made in the British Parliament, even by Mr. Gladstone. He says that the agitators, in order to gain their evil end, "have falsified the truth of facts and turned and tortured to evil by a false interpretation designs full of straightforwardness." He then says:

"This calumny and this agitation of the enemy of which we complain would clearly appear to all eyes if they would, in an unprejudiced spirit, consider the habit of acting of the Roman Pontiffs and examine what has recently been decided, touching the affairs of Malta, between us and the Royal Government of England. History shows that the Holy See, every time it prepared and concluded conventions with the civil power, has always had the interests and the rights of the people so much at heart, that it has been in fact the object of attacks, hatreds, perils, and anger from the Powers. Now, every time that it has beset itself concerning the religion of which it, under God, is the guardian in all things, and upon which it exercises its jurisdiction, it has done so with a spirit unobscured by any solicitude for human affairs; what it considers singly is the advancement of the glory of God and the salvation of souls, that which conduces most to the public good, to the peace and tranquillity of nations."

He goes on to state that the convention with the British Government relates solely to ecclesiastical affairs, and that so far from the rights and dignity of the Church suffering in any way, they have rather been advanced and confirmed. What he chiefly had at heart was to elevate the standards of education at the Seminary of Malta, so that the Maltese clergy may enjoy a higher culture of the sciences and a wider range of knowledge. The teaching of English in the Seminary is not introduced for the purpose of destroying the Maltese language as was charged by lying men who, simulating religion and love of country, labor in all the interests of the sectarian enemies of the Church, in order "to destroy the unity which guards the lines of discipline and obedience." The Pope concludes by sending his Apostolic Benediction to the Bishop, clergy, and the faithful of Malta.

## FIVE-MINUTE SERMONS

By the Paulist Fathers.

"And they that are Christ's have crucified their flesh with the vices and concupiscences."

However these words may have sounded in the ears of the Galatians, to whom they were first written, I am afraid that to some among us they have a strangely, perhaps unwelcome sound.

And were we to ask such people their opinion in the matter they would without doubt reply that these words of the Apostle were just a little bit trivial, good enough it might be for his time, but hardly practicable nowadays.

Yet, brethren, hard as these words may seem, they are as true now as when they were first written. They were intended by the Apostle not simply to express a reprimand, but also to be as a sign whereby the true followers of Christ should be known. And they are still the sign of the followers of Christ. For the true Christian of to-day, as of old, are they that have crucified their flesh.

Now what does the Apostle mean by these words? Does he mean that they are only true Christians, who forsake the world and fast continually and scourge themselves? Is that what he means by crucifying the flesh? No, not necessarily. He tells us what he means. For just a few verses before in this Epistle, he gives a long list of sins and among them he places immediately and conspicuously and quarrels and drunkenness. These he calls the works of the flesh, and when he says that true Christians crucify their flesh he means that they keep themselves free from these sins.

So, brethren, the true Christian is the one

who keeps himself away from contention and quarrels and drunkenness and such like things.

After all, that is not so very hard. It does not differ from what we have learned elsewhere to be a Christian's duty. But what the Apostle wants to do is to remove the doubt of the hypocrisy of those who profess to be Christians in words but do not want to do the works of Christ or live his life. In his bold, forcible words he shows us that there cannot be any doubt or uncertainty in the matter. Either we are of Christ or we are of the world. We must be on one side or the other, and if we are of Christ we must be known as such, for they that are of Christ have crucified their flesh.

Brethren, how is it with us? We bear the name of Christ, we call ourselves Christians, but is it only in name? Are we deceiving ourselves and thinking that because we have the name of Christ we can do as we please?

I am afraid that this is often the case with so-called Christians. They seem to think that as long as they bear the name they are all right. In their lives they differ little if any from the men and women of the world. They want to have the things of the world, its pleasures, not simply those that are allowable, but those that are sinful as well. They are in fact trying to do what our Lord in to-day's gospel has made impossible—they are trying to serve two masters. They want to be in with the world and have a good time, and at the same time they expect to make all right hereafter because they bear the name of Christ. These are they who live in sin and yet come to church and listen to sermons, and offer what they call prayers to God, but make no effort to get out of their sin. These are they who are a source of scandal to the church, of whom it is often said, such a one goes to church, yet he is just so bad as his neighbor. Brethren, such persons are not of Christ, though they may call themselves by his name. For they only Christ's now who have crucified the flesh, who keep themselves free from contentions quarrelling and such things.

And unless we do that, we can not be Christ's hereafter. For our Lord himself tells us that on the last day many shall say, Lord, I have called upon Thy name, I have made use of Thy name, and He will reply, I know you not. Showing that the name alone will not save us, unless we be Christians indeed, unless we have crucified flesh with the vices and concupiscences.

## The Church in Ireland.

There is a wonderful proof that the Church founded in Ireland by St. Patrick was one with the Church of Rome, and one with the Church of our own day. In the existence of a ritual, referred by the best authorities to the founder of the monastery of Lora, St. Ruanhan, who died in 554. The Mass, as given in this ritual, begins with the *Itanites* of the saint, with an antiphon which expresses the same sentiments as our *Confiteor*. Then the *Gloria in excelsis Deo*, with a prayer or collect, and a lesson from the First Epistle to the Corinthians (seventh chapter) relating to the Holy Eucharist. The Gospel is from the sixth chapter of St. John, and the creed is given. And when we come to the most solemn part of the Mass or Canon, we have not only the very same words of the Consecration, but all the prayers which follow it, even to the memento for the dead. The priests of the sixteenth century in Ireland used the very same prayer which we find to-day in our missals—"Humbly we beseech Thee, O Almighty God, command this offering to be carried by the hand of Thy holy angels unto Thy heavenly altar, in the presence of Thy Divine Majesty, that all of us who receive, through the participation of this altar, the Most Holy Body and Blood of Thy Son, may be filled with every heavenly blessing and grace, through the same Christ our Lord." In addition to the ordinary day Mass, this ritual gives us a Mass for the Apostles, a Mass for the Martyrs, a Mass for Saints and Virgins, and a Mass for the Dead. A Communion hymn is preserved in an ancient book of antiphons, beginning with the words, *Sancit, Venit, Christi Corpus*, the very words which Patrick and his dear disciple Sechnall heard the angels singing; so that from the time of Patrick to our own, the blessed words have been sung; and in Erin they were accustomed to tag them when the people received the Body of Christ in the Holy Communion.—*Catholic Times*.

## A Strange Affair.

New York, Sept. 6th.—A despatch to the *World* from Cork says: The severe measures adopted by the War Office in a case that has for some time attracted general attention have created genuine sensation. Among the members of the Welsh regiment stationed here is a Lieut. Jervais, who has always enjoyed wide popularity among the men but has been ignored, boycotted and persecuted by his fellow-officers and subjected to them to petty annoyances of all kinds. This persecution culminated about three months ago when the lieutenant's room was broken into at night, and he was dragged from his bed, taken outside to a secluded spot, and tarred and feathered. A few days later Lieut. Jervais refused to salute his superior officer when on parade, knowing that that officer was one of those guilty of the indignity heaped upon him previously, and he had no other means of showing his resentment. Following this he absented himself from the regiment and proceeded to England to visit his relatives. When he had been absent four days he was arrested as a deserter, brought back here and subjected to eight weeks confinement in this quarter. His relative lodged a complaint with the Government for this and an inquiry was ordered. It was made and the decision announced on Wednesday last was to the effect that two officers are deprived of their commissions and four others placed at the bottom of the promotion list with option of resignation. The decision has caused a sensation here but it is universally accepted as a just one.

A painful impression has been created in Rome by the fact that the officers of the *Minerva* man-of-war "Minerva" sought an audience with the Pope before officially calling upon the ministry.

## A GOOD MOTHER.

### The Church's Relation to Science

#### The Protestant Fables as to the Enmity of the Catholic Church for Science.

The Church cannot afford to leap to conclusions of a question of mere science. There have been some seventeen different theories of our system since Joshua commanded the sun to stand still, and the Church under the old or the new law was committed to none of them. A prominent reason for delay is the fact that at that time the system was not sufficiently demonstrated. Viewing the matter in the light of later discoveries, every tyro in astronomy knows that Galileo's reasonings were all wrong. He took up an old theory, which, although a correct one, was unable to prove scientifically. The celebrated Delambre said, "that until the velocity of light was ascertained by Foucault, and the aberration of light was calculated by Bradley, and the laws of gravitation were established by Newton, the Copernican system was reduced to mere probabilities." Macaulay tells us that Bacon rejected the theories of Galileo, and so did Descartes. According to Galileo the sun is without any local movement whatever, whereas the contrary is now established.

The Copernican system was wrong in giving the planets a circular instead of an elliptical orbit. It was founded on false geometry. Tycho Brahe, though he rejected the system of Ptolemy, confessed that he was not prepared to accept that of Copernicus. Galileo spoke warmly against the system as the first. It is said that even at the present the Copernican system fails to explain certain phenomena. Cardinal Bellarmine, in answer to a letter from the Pope, was founded on false geometry. Tycho Brahe, though he rejected the system of Ptolemy, confessed that he was not prepared to accept that of Copernicus. Galileo spoke warmly against the system as the first. It is said that even at the present the Copernican system fails to explain certain phenomena. Cardinal Bellarmine, in answer to a letter from the Pope, was founded on false geometry. Tycho Brahe, though he rejected the system of Ptolemy, confessed that he was not prepared to accept that of Copernicus. 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