



"THE TRUE WITNESS."

Forty-three years ago, last August, THE TRUE WITNESS was established, as a Catholic journal, under the able management of the late lamented George E. Clarke; since his time it has passed into many hands and has known various editors. At times it was most successful—especially when it adhered to its mission—at other times it met with severe shocks, financial and otherwise. During some years, of late, it came upon shoals and clouds collected along the horizon, especially rolling up from the past and casting shadows more or less dense upon the future. Toward the beginning of 1892 the present editor took control of its columns and his first move was to bring THE TRUE WITNESS back into the path it was originally intended to follow: in other words to cause it to rise into the atmosphere of purely Catholic journalism. How far the effort was successful subsequent events most forcibly told. The change of form, the new spirit that animated that form, and the universal approval of both the hierarchy of the Church and the Catholic lay element, all point to a success that is beyond all question.

Unfortunately, however, those clouds just mentioned did not entirely disappear, but rather rolled thicker out of the past, until they almost completely shut out the hopeful rays that flashed upon the prospects of the good old organ. Finally the crisis came and THE TRUE WITNESS seemed to be doomed. Up to Wednesday it was feared that no issue could be given our readers this week. But happily the mists eventually are absorbed by the beams of light, and not only is there hope of a continuation of the good work commenced, but even that THE TRUE WITNESS will take a new departure such as it has not enjoyed since the days of its founder. Phoenix-like it will arise from the ashes that have encumbered it so long and soar into the elements high above the clouds that have often menaced its existence. We feel confident that in our next issue we shall be enabled to sound a note that will be pleasant for all our friends to hear and that will give the key of future harmony and prosperity. Meanwhile in consideration of the past difficulties and future prospects, we trust that the lateness of this week's issue will be excused, and as to the size of the paper amends will handsomely be made for any present lack when the new era of prosperity dawns.

THE MASS.

There are six parts in the Mass. The first comprises the preparation, which is made at the foot of the Altar; the second from the Introit to the Offertory; the third from the Offertory to the Canon; the fourth from the Canon to the *Pater*; the fifth from the *Pater* to the Communion; and the sixth from the Communion to the end of the Mass.

The word "Mass" itself means *sent away*. It was so called, because in the first ages the Deacon *sent away* the cate-

chumens at the Offertory, and the faithful at the end of the Mass. To the former he said, "Catechumens, go away!" and to the latter, "Go away; the time for separating has arrived!"

We will examine the first part of the Mass in this article, leaving the remainder of the Sacrifice for succeeding numbers. Before commencing the Mass, the priest stands at the foot of the Altar, there to acknowledge, as it were, his unworthiness, as a man and sinner, to approach that altar whereon the dread Sacrifice is going to be offered. Standing at the foot of the steps, he invites with himself the faithful who are represented in the acolyte that serves the Mass, and all bow down confessing their faults, and, like the publican of old, striking their breasts, thereby rendering themselves, through humility, more worthy to approach the Holy of Holies. The priest makes the sign of the Cross, repeats the Psalm, says the Confiteor and other prayers. Let us commence with that first action, the sign of the Cross. It is repeated a number of times and in many forms throughout the Mass. It is the especial mark of the Christian and Catholic. There are some who do not believe in that sign, although they profess to depend for their salvation in the belief that Christ died on the Cross. There are many amongst Catholics who are ashamed to be seen making that sign; most likely it is because the generality of their neighbors do not believe in it and strive to ridicule it. But even in olden times, long before the Reformation was dreamed of, in the first ages of Christianity, there were those who blushed to make the sign of the Cross, and we read that the Fathers of the Church were often obliged to rebuke them. St. Cyril says in one of his sermons, "Let us not be ashamed to confess Him who was crucified; let the *sphragis* (the sign of the Cross) be confidently made upon the forehead with the finger." It was a custom amongst the early Christians to make the sign of the Cross before and after every important action, and [during the Mass the priest, whether in commencing or terminating any part thereof, whether blessing the people or himself; whether consecrating the Host or the wine, whether making use of the patina and chalice, the book, the censor, or the cruets, invariably makes, either upon himself or over these objects, that sign of the Cross. In opening the works of Tertullian we read the following paragraph: "We sign ourselves with the sign of the Cross on the forehead whenever we go from home or return, when we put on our clothes or our shoes, when we go to the bath or sit down to meat, when we light our candles, when we lie down, and when we sit."

So much for the first action of the priest. In all these prayers the priest confesses his unworthiness and accuses himself of his faults, the people imitate him, for it is by repentance that we must prepare for the Sacrifice. St. Augustine writes: "Our Merciful God

wills us to confess our faults in this world that we may not be confounded in the next." St. Gregory says: "Mingle your supplications with those of the priest, and humble yourself before the Altar." Lactantius tells us: "Strike thy breast, bend thy head, while acknowledging thy fault and God will make thee worthy to approach His sanctuary." Thus it is that the priest, having proclaimed that he is about to "go unto the Altar of God," bends his head and striking his breast repeats aloud the *Confiteor*; and the boy who serves Mass, in the name of the congregation, follows the priest in the Psalm and says the *Confiteor* also. For the first time, the priest raising his hands to Heaven, says to the faithful *Dominus vobiscum* ("The Lord be with you"); eight times during the Mass does he repeat the same invocation or rather blessing, and the congregation, answering, proclaim their wish that the Lord be with his spirit, that is to say: that the Saviour may accompany him, step by step, throughout the whole Sacrifice. Sometimes when the priest comes to an important part of the Mass—for example, *The Gospel*—he draws the attention of the faithful to the fact by that exclamation, *The Lord be with you!* Also three times during the Mass he turns to the congregation, and, from the Altar, summons them to a deeper devotion by the expression of the same wish—that the Lord be with them.

Having thus prepared himself by an act of humility, and having called upon the faithful to join with him in that spirit, the priest takes the first step towards the Altar. In so doing, he raises his hands aloft in imitation of that form and posture adopted by the ancients, the first Christians, and the Jewish leaders and priests in prayer, and calls upon the faithful to unite their prayers with his by saying: *Oremus* (Let us pray)! It was thus that Moses of old held aloft his hands as he prayed upon the mountain top, while the Children of Israel fought and conquered the infidels in the valley below.

When the priest reaches the Altar he bends down and kisses it through respect for that spot whereon the sacrifice of love is about to be offered. He asks God in the name of the saints, whose relics repose beneath the Altar-stone, to forgive him his sins. In High Masses, the next ceremony is that of incensing; this is an action prescribed by the Almighty Himself of Moses. Incense signifies charity, prayer, and the order of virtue, which we should bring with us into the Temple. It was considered amongst the ancients one of the highest honors that could be paid to a person to offer incense to him; therefore, as the priest represents Christ Himself after the incense is offered to God, the servant offers it to the priest, and generally the priest turns to the faithful, or at least the deacon does so for him, and offers the incense to them. It is a mark of respect to the children of the Church and the soldiers of the Church Militant.

Thus ends the first part of the Mass. While we have been thus proceeding, if it is a High Mass, the choir has been singing the *Introit* and the *Kyrie Eleison*. In the next article we will reflect upon the second part of the Mass; meanwhile, we leave our readers to reflect upon the foregoing, trusting that some benefit may result to all of us.

PROTESTANTISM A FAILURE.

The author of the "Invitation Heeded" asks a few pertinent and suggestive questions. "Where are the supernatural credentials of this modern Christianity called Protestantism? Where is the shining of the Divine Presence in the midst of it? Where is the seal of God upon its brow? Is it to be wondered at that men, beholding the contradictions, the shiftings, the animosities, the countless extravagances of modern sectarianism, should say: 'If this be the Kingdom of God upon earth, established and perpetually governed by the Almighty Himself,—then it is high time the monstrous delusion were exposed; let it obstruct the march of the human mind no longer; away with such a fiction from the face of the earth!' Truly if it be the Kingdom of God on earth it is doomed, for Christ foretold that a Kingdom divided against 'itself shall not stand.' And yet the same Christ built His Church upon a Rock and promised that it should remain united and perpetually immutable despite the powers of hell. How then can divided Protestantism be that Church of Christ? The Church of Christ cannot possibly be a failure, for He has said that He would be with His Church until the end of time. And yet that great movement of rebellion against religious authority called the Reformation has been a gigantic failure.

Man is a creature that loves liberty, frets under restraint and is ever anxious for change; he loves the new, the startling, the wonderful; he is also fond of experiments. The Reformation came to him like a mighty change; a great wave that would sweep him out into unexplored seas, a something that resembled freedom in the unbridled license that it promised, in the casting aside of all restraint, in the doing away with great and severe obligations. Naturally the first rush in the direction of revolt was sudden and wide-spread. Immense possibilities of unshackled religious license dazzled those men who were only too anxious for an excuse to give full swing to their passions. No more authority, no more confessional, no more obligation to respect sacred vows, no more restriction in the sacrament of marriage, no more purgatory, soon no more hell, finally no more Heaven, and eventually no more God. This violent movement spent all its vigor in the first half century. Protestantism has made no conquests, has not taken one step in advance since the sixteenth century.

The great outburst soon commenced to re-act, and immediately the huge and overwhelming breaker became shattered into fragments: division after division.