

The Catholic Record.

"Christianus mihi nomen est, Catholicus vero Cognomen."—(Christian is my Name, but Catholic my Surname).—St. Pacian, 4th Century.

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LEO'S PROPOSAL.

Mr. Stead has in the current issue of the Review of Reviews a very laudatory article on the Czar. He looks upon him as a very sincere young man—a prophet in fact who sees the time approaching when nations will forswear war forever.

He forgot to mention, however, that the Peace scheme came originally from the Vatican and not from St. Petersburg.

A LITTLE BOOK.

We have a little book written in the olden time. It has passed through many hands, but its solid binding has preserved it from the fate of more pretentious tomes. It was put together at Amsterdam—with many a tracing and quaint device in its thick brown covers, and fashioned lovingly and skillfully by some Dutch artisan into a worthy receptacle for goodly thoughts. When we place it aside the books of modern publishers it looks as would a seignior beside a parvenu. And the book has a soul; and as we turn its pages we can hear it speaking. Its words are sweetest music in the ears of those who can understand them. It has much to say of the little things of life, of the sunlight, the bracing air, the ocean, of all the things which veil the beauty of the Creator and which even a beggar can own. It speaks, too, of simple lives which did men's work sometimes under the corselet of the Knight, and again under the coarse vesture of the peasant. The little book, however, has one measure for all—that of Truth and Purity. And when we are weary with sham and meanness, and spent with struggling, we take it down from the shelf and listen to its talking, and feel all the better for it.

REPORTS FROM CUBA.

The missionaries who contemplate the conversion of the "priest ridden Cuban" should remember that charity begins at home. The Hon. H. Ostwood, missionary of the A. M. E. Church, to Cuba, says that profanity and intemperance are the greatest evils that our civilization is teaching in Cuba, and that Cuban boys and girls are being contaminated by the fearful conduct of some of the soldiers.

It seems from this that there are others besides the Cubans who are in need of the good tidings.

The reports from Cuba indicate that the liberty so loudly proclaimed by our cousins is of a peculiar brand. Even those high in command imagine they are commissioned to play the part of Reformers—to be 19th century Lutherans, with Table Talk supplied by the soldiers. There should be a spirited protest from every Catholic in the United States against the unseemly behavior of officers and soldiers in Cuba.

If the Cubans were assisted because they were struggling for liberty why should they not be allowed to enjoy it?

Why should they be molested by every strolling preacher and subjected to the terrorism of military rule?

The reason may be known to the sagacious politicians, but it is hidden from the gaze of the every day mortal.

AN INSTANCE.

An instance of Orange toleration was given recently at Portadown, Ulster. The gentlemen who sport the "yellow color" are so fond of "free thought and liberty" and toleration have given us an object lesson on it. They assembled in solemn convocation and decided after due deliberation to support Orange candidates only at the forthcoming elections. We chronicle this to show that civilization has not yet uprooted from the minds of Orangemen the bigotry and hatred of things Catholic that have stained their past history. Catholic Irishmen have never yet employed the weapons of intolerance against their countrymen, however they might in interests and opinions be separated from them. They even when in power, and the maddening frenzy of taunts and reprisals, chose peace instead of war, and friendship instead of hatred. In our own days they have never, when in majority, debarred a Protestant from aspiring to a political position. But

we do not wonder at the attitude of the Orangemen! They are Irishmen in name only: they have none of the characteristics of the race; they are strangers to the faith which alone has kept Irish feet steadfast in duty's path, though it led down to the valley of death, and which has made them "sowers of infinite seed," unto the uttermost bounds of the earth.

'Tis a pity that the Orangemen were not around when Patrick banished the snakes.

CRITICS AND CRITICISM.

Most men—they at least who have common sense—do not choose the role of critic in the drama of life. It demands time, a knowledge of the thing criticised, and an unbiased mind. These qualifications are sadly lacking in many of the criticisms of Canadian literature and history. Their authors may indeed be conversant with the requirements of true criticism, but their writings would imply the contrary. There is a partizan ring about them that reminds one of the political pamphleteer. Men who have never been heard of beyond their native burgh are heralded as being in the forefront of Canadian literature, and others who have rendered valuable and enduring services to our literature are given the condescension of a few sentences.

The sapient critics to whom we refer take as a first principle that a Catholic is incapable of winning a place in the temple of literature, and makes it the basis of their criticisms. They may not have read a line of the works which they presume to criticize, and yet their disquisitions, sham as they are, are dubbed "scholarly and judicial" by the up-to-date newspaper.

How quickly they pass over the early Canadian history! They dilate on the worn out theme of assault and rescue, but they have comparatively little to say of the missionaries who gave every energy of their being, and sometimes their lives, to the upbuilding of our present civilization.

We do not expect criticisms to be panegyrics on Catholic literati or pioneers. We are prepared to accept any adverse remarks when they are well deserved, but we will not accept the amateurish dicta of the gentlemen who are either members of a mutual admiration society or cursed with crass ignorance. In either case they should step down and out.

A COMPARISON.

The sermons of Protestant ministers, if we may judge from the extracts given in the daily press, always remind us of that saying of Balmes that Protestantism is destitute of ideas. They give evidence betimes of the literary training of the speaker, but they give little else. Rounded periods may tickle the ear, but they have no influence on the mind. Skillful phrasing and oratorical flourishes may cast sweetness into an idle hour, but they are of no value to those who, harassed by doubt, are seeking a sure way to the other world.

The principle of Protestantism has been and will be to the end not only the cause of confusion, but the prolific mother of unbelief. The Bible which was its guiding-star is fast disappearing under the searching analysis of the ministerial critics, who will probably declare at no distant future that "they can beat the Ten Commandments." Ingersoll said that once upon a time when men were gullible enough to pay money to hear the God of their fathers reviled and ridiculed, but to day you can hear language strangely similar, and for nothing, from the lips of Christian ministers. We know well that these remarks do not reach a great many God-fearing men who are doing everything in their power to safeguard the Bible which has been handed down to them as a heritage, but they do apply to some of the so-called leaders of the different sects, who, because they love sensationalism or posing as advanced scientists, are destroying old traditions and making a passage for the inroad of infidelity.

Protestantism has endeavored to limit the right of private judgment, but it has signally failed. "It," says Balmes, "raised its voice against it, and sometimes appeared to attempt its total destruction; but the right of private judgment, which was in its own bosom, remained there, developed it-

self and acted in spite of it. There was no middle course to adopt."

Now and then a minister trifles with the tenets of his particular sect, and he is summoned forthwith to be tried for heresy. Why? He has done nothing save the exercising of the right to examine what he ought to believe—a right which is the foundation of Protestantism. What right has a moderator or any other chief or chairman of a sect to condemn anyone who takes from the Bible anything his imagination may suggest?

Protestantism talks of faith, says Balmes, and its fundamental principle destroys it; it endeavors to exalt the Gospel, and its own principle, by subjecting that Gospel to private judgment, weakens its authority. The human mind must have some authority on what it can depend. Abandoned to its own delirious dreams it is forced again into the gloomy paths which led philosophers of the ancient schools to chaos. Private judgment can render it no assistance. God alone can guide it, for He alone can claim the homage of understanding and will. Even as He in the olden time clad Himself in the garb of Humanity and showed it the way, so today He does the same. We do not meet Him as they who saw Him in Judaea; but He lives with us, and guides us, and speaks to us by the Church which is the pillar and ground of truth. It were a poor gift to man, a mysterious book like the Bible only a life friend. Man has not changed since the days that Mary's Son dwelt in Palestine. His wants are the same and they cannot be satisfied by letters in a book however beautiful. He wants the vivifying touch of the Redeemer, and this can be had only in the Church founded by the Redeemer—the Catholic Church.

We are pained when we read of the struggles of the pagans who, knowing they had immortal souls, and convinced that its longings for immortality and happiness could not be silenced, cried out in bitterness of heart that God alone could teach them. The same cry comes to-day from many who have clamored for bread and have been offered a stone and who have failed to see in the ever changing mass of Protestantism any likeness to the body which received from the hands of Christ the crown of unity.

ST. BLASE.

St. Blase, whose feast will be celebrated on February 3, was born at Sebaste, in Armenia. In early life he applied himself to the study of medicine, but, listening to the call of God, he gave up this profession and studied for the priesthood. The Bishop having died, St. Blase was appointed to succeed him. In the meantime Agricolaus, the Governor of Armenia, by order of the Emperor Licinius, began persecution against the Christians. At the earnest entreaty of his flock, the holy Bishop retired to the vicinity of Mt. Argeus, where for some time he hid himself in a cave. One day while the soldiers of Agricolaus were following the chase, they discovered the holy man's hiding-place and arrested him. The sad news spread quickly among his flock, and the people went out of the city to meet him. Among these was a poor widow, whose only son was dying from the effects of a bone which had lodged in his throat. Prostrating herself on the ground, she implored him to save her son's life. Moved to pity by that mother's grief, the saint placed his hand upon the child's head, praying the meanwhile, and then blessed his throat. The boy was instantly cured. On account of this miracle, as well as of many other singular favors of the same kind which have been obtained through his intercession, St. Blase has come to be the patron of those who suffer from ailments of the throats.

NEW LITANY OF THE SACRED HEART.

It is new and it is old, this Litany of the Sacred Heart, the singing and recitation of which in the churches of the Diocese of Paris is authorized by a recent Roman decree, says the Paris correspondent of the Liverpool Catholic Times. It was sung for the first time at Montmartre some three weeks ago at the closing of the National Congress. On New Year's Day it was sung for the first time in the Paris churches, when a pastoral on the subject by the Archbishop of Paris was read from the pulpit. It is based on the litany in use at Marseilles at the time of the great plague there in 1820, when the Bishop, Henri de Belzeunce, by consecrating the town to the Sacred Heart, turned back the tide of the calamity. It has now received the addition of six fresh invocations, the whole numbering thirty-three, in honor of

the years of our Lord's life on earth. Some of the best musical art of Paris was brought to bear on singing this litany in the churches on Sunday.

BLESSED CANDLES.

How the Practice of Using Them Originated—Ancient Custom in the Church—Candlemas Day—The Blessing of the Candles—Their Signification.

Providence Visitor.

The first Christians were of the seed of Abraham and it is likely, according to some authors, that they continued, together with sundry observances of the Old Law, the use of lights in the celebration of the rites of their new faith. Others think that the use of lights in the service of the Church is a survival of the days when the Christians of Rome met to hear Mass and the preaching of the Gospel in the dark, underground chapels of the Catacombs. For nearly three hundred years, until the conversion of the Emperor Constantine gave lasting peace to the Church, this course was necessary to avoid imprisonment and death. When the Church emerged from the Catacombs where lights were a necessity, the practice of using them was still kept up as a memorial of the heroic past. Be that as it may, the first direct testimony we have about the use of lights is given by St. Jerome, who lived in the fourth century. A certain heretic had attacked the practice as superstitious. St. Jerome answered that lights were employed not to drive away darkness but to symbolize the light of the gospel.

In one word then, what ever the origin of the use of lights in our religious services may be, whether a memorial of the ceremonies of the Jewish Temple, or of the centuries during which the Church of Rome found refuge in the Catacombs, the practice dates back to the early days of Christianity. Our candles are a figure of Christ the Light of the World, and of the illumination which His gospel brought to the shadow of death. Now, blessed candles are used in the Church on a great variety of occasions. And to begin with the blessing of them takes place, ever since the end of the fifth century, on the Feast of the Purification—which feast commemorates the presentation of Christ the Light, which enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world by his Virgin Mother Mary in the Temple of Jerusalem. It appears that the peculiar ceremonies of this day were instituted by Pope Gelasius by way of substituting a Christian ceremony for the remnants of an ancient pagan custom attached to the season, which had not yet died out completely among the people. That ancient pagan custom consisted of the carrying of torches through the streets of the Eternal City and the performance of certain ceremonies for the purification thereof. The Candlemas procession took the place of the old heathen rites.

The blessing of the candles, which in compliance with the requirements of the liturgical law of the Church must be of beeswax, is an interesting ceremony to look into. Five prayers are said by the priest which make known to us the mind of the Church with regard to the use of these candles. Here is a part of the first prayer:

"We humbly beseech Thee that by the invocation of Thy most holy name, and by the intercession of Blessed Mary, whose festival we this day devoutly celebrate, and by the prayers of all Thy Saints, Thou wouldst vouch safe to bless and sanctify these candles for the service of men and for the good of their bodies and souls in places, whether on sea or land."

The second prayer, after recalling that the feast commemorates the presentation of the Son of God in the Temple, and the action of the holy man Simeon who received Him in his arms, proceeds as follows:

"We humbly beseech Thy mercy to bless, sanctify and give the light of Thy heavenly benediction to these candles; that by offering them to Thee our Lord God, we may be influenced by the fire of Thy sweet love, and made worthy to be presented in the temple of Thy glory."

The third prayer is so striking that we give the whole of it:

"Lord Jesus Christ, the true light which enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world: pour forth thy blessing upon these candles, and sanctify them by the light of thy peace; and grant us thy mercy thus as these candles by their visible light dispel the darkness of the night, so our hearts burning by the grace of the Holy Ghost, be delivered from all blindness of sin. Now the eye of our soul being purified, we may discern these things that are pleasing to Thee and beneficial to our souls; that after having finished the darkness passage of this life we may come to our never fading joys through Thee, O Lord Jesus Christ Saviour of this world, who in perfect Trinity lovest and reignest God forever."

The fourth prayer asks of God that as the candles supply us with visible light, so by His assistance the light of the Spirit of God may never be wanting inwardly in our souls. When the

whole ceremony of blessing is done the candles are, where the old-time practices are kept up, distributed to the people who carried them, lighted, in the procession, or, if there be no procession, hold them during the Mass which follows.

The Church carefully regulated not only the material of the candles to be used in her services, but the number of them as well. At the low Mass of a single priest only two may be lighted, except on special occasions, when four are permitted. At a low Mass of a Bishop four may be lighted. At high Mass celebrated by a priest six candles are required. But when a Bishop says a solemn Mass in his own diocese seven are called for, the seventh being placed behind the crucifix. At Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament twelve candles are commanded.

Candles are used not only at Mass and Benediction, but in the administration of all the sacraments. Hence the necessity of having them in the house so that they may be at hand in case of sickness in the family. When a child is baptized, the priest is directed to place in the hands of the sponsors a lighted candle, saying at the same time these words, which appear to be suggested by the parable of the virgins:

"Receive this burning light, and preserve your baptism blamelessly; keep the commandment of God so that when the Lord will come to the marriage feast you may run to meet Him with all the Saints in His heavenly palace and may have everlasting life." Remembering the spirit of the Church with regard to blessed candles, light them in times of danger from the elements. There is no vain superstition in this, for the Church has prayed that those who use them in the spirit of faith may enjoy the divine protection both on land and sea. The most beautiful use of the blessed candle is the placing of it in the hands of the dying. Then of all times we see its meaning. It is a symbol of faith in Jesus Christ, the Light of the World; that faith which gives an illumination to life; which consoles the departing Christian by the remembrance of the eternal light which shall shine upon him after his passage through the dark valley of death.

A NOVELIST'S TRIBUTE TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN.

Notable Passage in a Work of Fiction Recently Published in Germany.

An old friend, himself an author, has directed our attention to the following passage to be found in a work of fiction recently published in Germany. It has created a sensation among all classes of readers. "Moribus Paternis" is a subject of conversation and discussion in literary circles everywhere, and there is much speculation regarding its authorship. We are permitted to state that Ansgar Albing—which is a *nom de plume*—is a native of Hamburg, who some years ago renounced the errors of Protestantism and became a priest. His book is so vigorous and so well written, so skillful in plot and so broadly sympathetic that even non-Catholic critics have nothing to say against the author's ardent championship of devotion to the Blessed Virgin. It is gratifying to hear that "Moribus Paternis" is having a wide sale; and it is pleasant to think that such words as the following are being read by many non-Catholics who could not, perhaps, be induced to open a doctrinal work.

"Only one who loves purity and strives after it can understand the holy emulation which springs up among the children of the Church when there is question of honoring the Blessed Virgin. Jesus, our highest good, the only hope of our souls, was presented to us by her. To redeem us, was God made man; to become man, He took Mary as His Mother. Therefore, after God, after Christ, as the principal instrument of our redemption, she is the cause of our joy. God chose her and no one else, because in His sight she was the purest of all creatures. And Mary consented. 'Be it done to me according to thy word,' she replied to the heavenly messenger. Is not this choice of God a high, an unspeakable honor?"

"Are we Catholics wrong in honoring Mary and doing her homage according to our powers? Are we not doing just what God Himself does? With all our efforts, can we possibly honor Mary as the Almighty has honored her? If we took the most costly metals, the most precious jewels, to adorn the grandest temple of the world; if we celebrated the most solemn ceremonies with the music of the first masters and invoked the aid of the best artists—offered to Mary whatever we could produce or secure, would all this equal the honor which the Thrice Holy has conferred on her in choosing her for His mother? Let us not hesitate, then, in our impetuous love of Mary. The teaching of our faith is clear; it tells the enemies of the Church that we do not adore her—that we do not offer her the supreme worship and sovereign honor which are due to God alone.

"He who looks for instruction can easily find it. But if the objection is made that in practice—in reality—our love of Mary oversteps those bounds

which the doctrine of the Church prescribes, let it be answered: 'You are mistaken, you poor mortals, who display your ill will toward so excellent, so amiable a Mother. You err. We do not adore Mary and yet we are incapable of offering that measure of homage which is due to such an exalted dignity as hers. You are mistaken. We are far from reaching the bounds to which we might go. We are far from imitating God in our love and honor of Mary. Is not Mary a princess of this world more honored, more praised, more celebrated by unbelievers than the Mother of the King of kings?'

Can it be possible that there are some who would wish to love and serve Christ but who will not love His Mother? She is loved by Him above all creatures. To love Christ and not love what He loved! Not to honor her, the only one whom the Eternal Wisdom honored as she was honored! Not to be willing to do homage to her whom the Creator of heaven and earth obeyed with a childlike obedience! There are people who favor monuments and public honors to the heroes of unbelief and licentiousness, while they refuse every mark of external homage to the most faithful, the purest of virgins. Not even that sweet name which was so dear to Jesus Christ is sacred to them. Can such persons truly love their Saviour?"

"Let us pray for all the enemies of Mary, but above all for those who are of good-will. She is honored and loved in account of her relationship to the Redeemer, whom she brought into the world. Whoever is zealous for Mary is zealous also for Christ."

A GREAT ROMAN CATHOLIC INSTITUTION.

From the N. Y. Sunday Democrat.

The Institution of the Propaganda claims attention as a religious and scientific establishment, and comprises four great departments, the college, the press, the library and the museum. The first has for its object the education of missionaries destined to propagate the faith in all parts of the world, especially in those where the light of the gospel has not yet penetrated. Students from every corner of the civilized world, and belonging to every rank in life, are trained here. But it is also a scientific establishment and owns one of the finest presses and possesses what purports to be one of the completest collections of types in the world. An idea may be formed of the wealth of this press by mentioning the fact that when the Council of the Vatican sat the *Pater Noster* was printed in no fewer than two hundred and fifty different languages; at present the press issues Bibles, catechisms and missals in the characters of every known language.

The spacious shelves of the library contain about 45,000 volumes, and it is the fortunate possessor of manuscripts of incalculable value to the student of philology. From an ethnographical point of view it is said that there are few Continental museums which equal the museum attached to the Propaganda; the class of curiosities it owns is of a very varied character—pagan idols, arms, and utensils of every kind are ranged side by side with the grim instruments of missionary torture. It may be added that the variety of information which is available in the Propaganda is unique. There is, perhaps, no other European cabinet which is gaged in more active correspondence than the Secretariat of the Propaganda, and none the sphere of whose action embraces a wider area.

PROFANITY.

A repulsive feature of contemporary life is our reckless profanity. The vice is not confined to the "tough" element, but is indulged in by "respectable" people. The name of God is outraged by oaths and imprecations quite as a matter of course and without the excuse of anger or excitement. The sacred name of Jesus Christ is a by-word, and the air is vocal with expletives which are not according to the second commandment. Profanity is a sin, and profanity is ungentlemanly. One can understand why boys, who imagine that it is manly, indulge in it. One can understand how a man under the influence of deep feeling, like Uncle Toby for instance, might, now and then, find ordinary language inadequate to the situation—though this rather palliates than excuses. But that a man in the regular intercourse of life should season discourse with oaths and curses is a strange and foul thing. The growth of Holy Name societies throughout the country is an encouraging sign. It is a matter which ought to appeal to every sincere Catholic man—this crusade against blasphemy. "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord, thy God, in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that shall take the name of the Lord, his God, in vain."—Providence Visitor.

He who wishes to become the most pleasing to our Blessed Lady must humble and annihilate himself beneath all; for because Mary was the most humble of all, she pleased God more than all other creatures.—St. Paul of the Cross.