

me to receive unworthily, and as there was no other way of probing my worthiness than by self-examination of conscience, I was naturally very much perturbed, since I was not absolutely sure whether I was worthy or not. Suppose that I should "eat and drink eternal damnation unto myself," as the phrase read in my catechism, would it not then be better not to approach the Sacrament of the altar at all? For if I actually did go and damn myself for the first year, there was no way of repairing the damage done. Yet through meditation, prayer and other means of approaching our Lord, I gained sufficient reassurance to enable me to receive my first Holy Communion. It was my last one as a Protestant, too, because I could never afterwards persuade myself to believe that I was worthy of receiving my Lord and Master, although I made several attempts to get into the right state of mind. Very likely my intentions may not have been good enough to deserve such a great favor from God.

At the age of seventeen, I had already finished my general college course with quite some distinction, and I looked forward, with the self-reliance of conceited youth, to a great academic career. I matriculated in the faculty of philosophy at one of the royal universities, and I was a proficient Latin scholar. I wrote my specimen for the Doctor's degree in that language already during the first year of my academic citizenship. The praise I received subsequently to this achievement bolstered up my pride still further, and I gradually became so exceedingly well pleased with myself and my alleged great learning, that my inner vision covered very little beyond that limited sphere. In short, it was a clear case of exaggerated ego. I will not dwell very long on the four years of my university life. Suffice it here to say, that after completing my philosophical and general course of humaniora, and when I was a little over twenty-one, I was ready to pass my examination for admission to the judiciary and administrative departments of the governments. At this juncture I was drafted for military service, and when I got through with that, after a period of rather rough and vulgar garrison and camp life, I decided to visit one of my brothers in the United States, with the intention of returning to my native country after replenishing my inherited funds which had run miserably low.

Things American, however, suited me to perfection, and my desire for going back to Sweden was more and more as one year after another passed by. I experienced shifting fortunes during my early years in this country, but managed somehow to keep in the swim. All this time I was not cognizant of any religious wants. It is true that I would have spells—especially at night—when I felt a vague longing for some spiritual food to build up my soul and strengthen my character. While under this mood, I once in a great while attended religious services in Swedish churches, but the shallow discourses of their preachers were not of the kind to arouse any religious fervor in me. I suppose that I must have stered to their people in good faith and according to their best knowledge, and it is more than likely that the average church goer received all the consolation expected and desired. As for me, I came away from such services more downhearted than before and with a feeling of either gloom or irritation. Before long I made up my mind not to bother at all about any church, but to live along according to my own ethical standards which were, I must be admitted—not particularly exacting. In this connection I wish to say that God in His great mercy did never suffer me to fall altogether out of the ranks of believers. He graciously kept alive my faith, such as it was, and I remained a Christian, in theory, if not in practice. In other words I became an Indifferentist.

The years went on, and in time I married a true girl of my own nationality. She had been brought up in a good Lutheran home in Sweden, and had remained faithful to her creed also after her arrival in this country. My example and influence caused a change in this, inasmuch as she adopted the same kind of conscience-religion, as I had followed for so many years. Still she never accepted this spiritual condition with the complacency that had lulled me into a state of artificial peace of mind. She yearned to get into more immediate communion with Almighty God, and when our first child became old enough to be taught religion, her anxiety that we should affiliate ourselves with some church was also shared by me to a certain extent. About this time the Paulist Fathers of New York were giving a Mission in the parish where we happened to live. Our landlord was a Catholic, and his daughter suggested to my wife that she accompany her to one of the Mission services. When she came home, she made me promise to go with her to the church the next evening. I shall never forget that evening. With the preconceived idea that I would come away from that Mission service as little edified as I had been on previous similar occasions in Protestant churches, I resigned myself to the fate of spending a weary hour listening to a string of stereotyped admonitions, interspersed with scriptural quotations. But I had not been long in church before I surprised myself at listening intently to the explanations one of the priests gave to the

more or less silly inquiries which had been deposited in the "Question Box" at the door. First I admired what I then considered the clever argumentation of the cleric, but in a short while it dawned on me that there actually was no cleverness, much less any sophistry, needed to elucidate the points involved in the questions. Why, it was nothing but ordinary common sense and of course, the word of God, as accepted by all of us Christians in the Bible, which the priest referred to for a satisfactory solution of the problems presented. I could not help pondering over these instructions and the dignified, clear exposition of religious truths to which I had been listening. How unlike it was it not to the frantic efforts I had so often seen employed at prayer meetings, when the preacher had endeavored to work up enthusiasm in his audience, yet effecting nothing but a sort of spiritual intoxication, at the best, which would be slept off over night.

I did not go to the Mission services again, nevertheless, for fear that I would become a Catholic, if I did. Yes, my oldtime prejudice against the Catholic Church reasserted itself, a prejudice nurtured by the traditions and teachings implanted in me from the first day I commenced to study theology and church history, which subjects are obligatory in the Swedish elementary schools. How could I possibly think of becoming a Catholic? It would mean, as I thought, abnegation of my whole previous existence, of nationality, of family traditions, in fact, everything that had served to mould my character and define my station in life. Yet I could not rid myself of the impression I had received, and many an evening found my wife and myself discussing the subject of religion.

I had then two friends who visited us quite frequently, one of which was more or less of an Agnostic and the other an Indifferentist of my own brand. We often spoke of religious matters, but after my attendance at that mission I could not agree with them on many points where our opinions had formerly been identical. Really, in our conversations I became, half unknowingly, a champion of Catholic doctrines, and I remember particularly well one evening, when I smoked vehemently at my indifferentist friend who denied the grace of Almighty God as a factor in our daily life. When both of them soon after ceased their visits to my home, I realized suddenly that I had already started to cut loose from my former associations, but instead of it making me feel downcast over my rashness, it rather seemed to give me more breathing room, so to speak. I cannot describe the spiritual regeneration that immediately transformed me when I looked back now on those two or three weeks after the memorable Mission it seems to me that the glorious grace of faith all at once flooded my soul, rousing my whole being, filling the dark and empty recesses of my mind with the light of Truth.

I communicated my new spiritual condition to my wife, and we both responded with alacrity to what we sincerely believed, as we always will do, to be God's own call for us to come to the bosom of His holy Church. To test ourselves we decided however, to attend devotions at the nearest Swedish Lutheran Church on the following Sunday. When we arrived there, some minutes before the scheduled opening of the services, we found the doors locked and a few persons standing outside waiting to get in. We did not join them but retraced our steps home. The next evening, if my memory is right, we sought the pastor of the Catholic parish in which we resided, and were received most benignly. I told him our story, and he agreed with us that it was by a special and most immediate act of merciful grace that Our Lord had gathered us in among His faithful. We received instructions during a couple of weeks, but everything appeared so familiar that both of us felt as if we had never been anything but Catholics. Not a feature in any of the doctrines caused us any difficulty to understand, and the supreme gift of faith with which Our Lord had endowed us, bridged over the unfathomable chasm of the divine mysteries.

There is not much more to add. We were duly received into the Church, together with our little son, by conditional baptism, and a year afterwards we received the sacrament of confirmation. Our Lord has conferred more bountiful blessings on myself and family than ever during these past years, the greatest of them all being the strengthening of our faith more and more, as we pass the milestones on the path toward our eternal goal. Our dearest wish and daily prayer is that God will deign to call our two sons to the holy priesthood, and that they may become the means of propagating the true faith among the people of that dear old country in the Far North where a truly and deeply religious sentiment makes a deeply religious promise to go with her to the church the next evening. With the preconceived idea that I would come away from that Mission service as little edified as I had been on previous similar occasions in Protestant churches, I resigned myself to the fate of spending a weary hour listening to a string of stereotyped admonitions, interspersed with scriptural quotations. But I had not been long in church before I surprised myself at listening intently to the explanations one of the priests gave to the

are told that there never was a national flag for Ireland. The golden harp on green; the golden harp on blue; blue, green and gold; the golden sunburst on green—all are familiar, but none of them can be considered the true national flag of Ireland.

The Irish tricolor, green, orange and blue, is suggested by those who maintain that there can be neither peace nor prosperity in Ireland until all the forces of the country can be reconciled to one common platform.

THE FRENCH CHURCH UNDER SEPARATION

From the Tablet

The participation of English Catholics in the recent celebrations at Calais and Boulogne has served to recall the present situation of the Church of France. From time to time there is seen in the press an attempt to support the Bill for the Disestablishment of the Church of England in Wales by an appeal to what has happened in France under the régime of Separation. The view of the people who thus use the case of the French Church as an argument is that Disestablishment in Wales will be justified by its results as it has been across the Channel. But what is the spectacle that has been there presented to the world? We have seen the Church of France disestablished by law far more drastic and severe than the bill promoted by Mr. McKenna for the accomplishment of a similar process in Wales. The Concordat was abrogated without any reference to Rome, the other contracting party; the cathedrals, churches, bishops, houses, presbyteries, seminaries, and the funds for their upkeep were declared the property of the State, the departments, or the communes. On one condition alone might they be retained for the use of the Church which built them or to which they had been given—the formation of Associations of Worship, which would have reduced the Church to Congregationalism. The Pope forbade, therefore, the formation of these Associations, in which the rights of the hierarchy had no legal recognition and as a result the Church of France, with silent and docile heroism, gave up some 331,000,000 francs' worth of property rather than surrender the spiritual claims involved in the divine constitution of the Catholic Church of which she is a member. True, she has still the use of the cathedrals and churches, but it is neither by legal right nor even compliance, but as a mere occupant at will, because the politicians in power feared to close them and so irritate the voter. Such a renunciation as that could not but strike the imagination of all thinking men, and the Bishop of Oxford, in his speech on the Welsh Bill in the House of Lords in February, said of it: "I think what attracted our attention at that time was the magnificent loyalty with which (the Church of France) asserted its principles and made its spiritual claims, and at the same time betrayed an extraordinary degree of indifference as regards its secular position and as regards its financial resources. I think that process was extraordinary; I watched that process with admiration."

But Bishop Gore did not end there. Whilst admiring the wisdom displayed by the French Church in asserting her spiritual claim, putting her spiritual principles first and her secular position and finances last, he implied that there was and would be an increasingly great revival as a result of this process of Disestablishment and Disendowment. His lordship also regretted that the spiritual claims of France in such complete subjection to Rome. For this view he has been taken to task in the Nineteenth Century by the Comtesse de Franqueville in an article which, though chiefly intended as an argument against Disestablishment in Wales, is full of instruction upon the real facts of the situation in France. In the first place, in regard to this "subjection to Rome," she points out that it was really "the key to the whole situation." The magnificent loyalty was to the Pope. To me that loyalty is all the more truly magnificent, and that heroism is all the greater, because very many among the French clergy, as well as the laity, hoped the Pope would decide otherwise. All realized to the full what beggary would mean to themselves, and still more in the crippling of their work at a time when the need for temporal means was ever increasing. This is but what M. Goyau has already pointed out in his article in the Constructive Quarterly for March when he said: "While aiming at vengeance upon the Pope or at his chastisement, certain of his adversaries who were suspicious of 'Ultramontane influences' have, quite to the contrary, sanctioned and finally completed the full sovereignty of the Pope in the Church of France; and the very independence of that Church in regard to the State consecrates and finally completes her docility to Rome." As suggested it would be absurd to suggest that the French Church desired; as to Separation, the Comtesse de Franqueville declares that she knew of no Bishop who would have lifted a little finger to help it. "Indeed, Mgr. Dadolle, late Bishop of Dijon repeatedly told me that despite the ever increasing hostility and unfairness of the State officials to the Church, warping to this effect the natural intention in the Concordat, he felt so strongly the importance of the nation of that public recognition

of Almighty God, which must cease with Separation, that, for that reason more even than for the endowments, he tolerated the inconveniences and shackles of the Concordat." Then, in regard to the Bishop of Oxford's remark that the Church of France, though she had by Separation lost influence in many ways, was vindicating her claim to be the Church of the country, the Comtesse points out to His Lordship with blunt frankness that "there is no competition of Churches in France. The competition is solely between Christ and anti-Christ. The Church in France receives all the blows because it alone is the organized, living medium of the Incarnation in France."

The great revival in France is next dealt with, and again the facts noted are a justification of the course taken by the Pope. "There is," writes the Comtesse de Franqueville "more vigorous life and energy. The line taken by Pius X. as to Modernism has had as one result the concentrating of energy on practical work. Also, now that the Pope alone chooses and nominates the Bishops, there is at least a security for choice on spiritual grounds. The connection with Rome has been tightened, the spell of State officialdom has been broken." But as regards the activity that has been so remarkable, its secret, she thinks, "lies in the freedom, hitherto denied, of the assemblies of the clergy, and, above all, in the newly acquired facility for making parishes where required and therein building new churches." At the same time, however, not all is, she declares, as bright and full of promise as some would have us believe. In insisting upon the priceless value of the parochial system, she states that the number of country parishes without priests is increasing, partly because of the want of clergy and partly because of the want of funds to maintain them. Indeed, in many dioceses the situation is described as "very serious." Apart from the contributions of the *denier du culte*, the real contributors remain about the same in number. It is a general rule, she says, to find funds for a new church; a rich lay benefactor comes forward, and some of the parishioners give generously in small sums. But it is the maintenance of the church and clergy that is the difficulty. The *denier du culte* produces less than was hoped for, whilst in country districts, where formerly the clergy received gifts in kind, everything is now taken for sale to the nearest market if there is any. A new agreement with that given in the striking article by M. Goyau already referred to. All goes to show that whatever the Church of France is achieving under Separation is due to the devotion of the clergy, aided by the generosity of the faithful laity. As M. Goyau has eloquently put it: "Sometimes we speak of the 'cure of the Concordat,' so easily treated as State functioning, in contradistinction to the 'cure of the Separation.' The latter is a newcoming, utterly careless of earthly interests, indifferent to political contingencies, concerned only to be at the disposal of the throng, as the servant of the servants of God. And the glorious thing for the Church of France is the thoroughly apostolic ease, the glad disinterestedness, the joyous and fruitful energy with the 'cure of the Concordat' has transformed himself into the 'cure of the Separation.'"

WHAT KEEPS PROTESTANTS OUT OF THE CHURCH?

PRIDE OF HUMAN REASON AND IGNORANCE OF CATHOLIC BELIEF AND PRACTICE, SAYS ARCHBISHOP MANNIX.

The Most Rev. Dr. Mannix, Coadjutor Archbishop of Melbourne, Australia, preaching recently from the text "and other sheep I have that are not of this fold; then also I must bring, and they shall hear. My voice, and there shall be one fold and one Shepherd" (John x, 16), said: "The Church of God was to be one fold. But outside the Catholic Church there exists, not the unity of a single fold under one Shepherd but the chaos and confusion of shepherds innumerable, calling to sheep that will not follow. I speak not merely of the confusion and discord between the different sects of different nations, but of that existing between the sects of the same country and between those who, because they were born into the same sect rather than from any unity of religious conviction, sit side by side upon the benches of church or chapel. They may be, and many of them are, earnest, zealous, pious people, but they are 'other sheep' who are not of the fold of Christ. That pride which prevents people from accepting the infallible authority of the Church in favor of their own private judgment is one of the chief, if not the greatest, obstacles, to conversion from Protestantism."

"Of course, there are other obstacles, and very serious ones. There is among Protestants an appalling ignorance of what Catholic belief and practice is. We live in the midst of them, and for the most part they are good neighbors, as we say, and friendly. But they know very little about our religious belief. They see that we go to church more regularly, indeed, than they do, and that we abstain from meat on certain occasions, and that we are, therefore, troublesome guests to provide for

on a Friday or a fasting day. They know very little else about our faith. With many of them, almost all, the rest is mere suspicion and error. They have an uneasy feeling that we give divine worship to the Blessed Virgin Mary, to the saints and even to images; that we buy pardon for sin in confession; that we can take out a license to commit sin by paying for indulgences; that we immure nuns in prisons which we call convents and keep them there against their will; that we believe that the Pope cannot commit sin, and that he can bind us to accept any teaching he pleases, in religion, astronomy, politics or any other science. Is it any wonder that they do not flock into the Church? If the Catholic Church were what they think it to be, they would assuredly be bound to keep far from it.

BORN WITH THEM, AS IT WERE

"But you will ask, why do they not seek information? Why do they not open their eyes to facts around them on every side? In many cases not in all, it is because prejudice against the Church has been born with them, as it were. From their very earliest years many of them have been taught to distrust and hate priests and nuns and to abhor what they think to be Catholic faith and practice. Very often, apparently, that is the only religious instruction, the only spiritual capital, with which children are started in life. That is a definite creed, easy to reach and to learn. Other teaching in the sects is not so readily formulated or assimilated. When these children grow up the case against the Catholic Church is already prejudiced, and finally decided. It never occurs to them to examine the ground of their preconceived view, or to hear what the Church has to say for herself. Or, if such a thought does enter their minds, they at once banish it as a temptation or a foolish suggestion. For us we can only pray that the fullness of time may be hastened, that the light may shine in darkness, that the Church may be seen in her own colors and that within her fold all those who seek the truth may at length find the peace and joy and rest that belong to the true believer."

THE PROTESTANT MIND REBELS AGAINST MODERNITY

"Even though the mists of prejudice and ignorance regarding the Church were dissipated, there would still remain the difficulty of submitting to the authority of the Church. The revolt in the sixteenth century against papal authority, and its strongest bulwark to-day is in the unbending pride of human reason. Men will not humble themselves to hear the Church. Religion, they say, is a matter between each man and his Maker. They can, they say, judge for themselves. They do not object to listen to the discourse of a preacher in a Protestant church. He may have strong, definite views and may try to enforce them with argument and compelling authority; it is understood on both sides that each member of the congregation is free to accept as much or as little as he pleases. With the Catholic Church is it quite different. She does not commission her spokesmen to teach a number of doctrines which men are free to reject, or from which they might pick and choose as they might choose from the program of a political party. She demands an absolute, unquestioning assent to each and every truth which she teaches to be a part of the divine revelation. This is what the Protestant mind rebels against."

THE ESSENTIAL DIFFERENCE

"I will allow no man, the Protestant says, no priest, or Pope to come between me and God. The Bible is enough for me. This attitude brings out the essential difference between the Catholic and the Protestant system. Is every man to go direct to the Bible and spell out his own creed, or is he to go, rather, to the Church and sit at her feet, while she teaches him revealed truths, not merely from the Bible, but from the traditions that she claims to have brought down without a break from the days of Our Divine Lord and His Apostles? The Catholic Church merely continues now the very same method of teaching the Gospel which Christ and His Apostles followed at the foundation of the Church and in the early years of Christianity, and her system is not merely consistent with what we read in the Bible and with what we know of the method used by Christ and the Apostles, but it has been proved by nearly two thousand years' experience to be the one and only system of teaching that maintains intact its purity and unity of doctrine which was to be mark of the true Church in all ages, and even when it had spread among the nations of the earth."

PEOPLE IN GLASS HOUSES

CHURCH OF ENGLAND RECTOR ATTACKS CALDEY MONKS

The Norwich Church of England rector discharged an epistolary javelin at our devoted head the other day, says the editor of The Lamp, couched in the following terms: "I say nothing about the Caldey Monks who have taken with them to Rome money given them for Church of England purposes, other than to point out that it is little wonder so many 'men of the world' refuse to believe in the sincerity of those professing to be religious." Now that we go to church more regularly, indeed, than they do, and that we abstain from meat on certain occasions, and that we are, therefore, troublesome guests to provide for

daughters much more even than when she first executed the deed of transfer we think our Anglican brethren had better reflect that people who live in glass houses should not throw stones.

Reference to Caldey is particularly unfortunate in this connection because it is notorious that Henry VIII. robbed the Catholic Benedictines of the island in the 16th century and in this twentieth century act of restitution the hand of God is so plainly manifest that we wonder how any reverent man, Catholic, Anglican or non-Conformist, could fail to see it.

ROB MEXICANS OF FAITH

BAPTISTS VOTE \$2,500 TO PERVERT CATHOLICS IN TEXAS PARISH

Recently the Baptist Mission Board voted \$2,500 for the work of "converting" the "Romanists" of Father Kemper's parish, in a remote section of Texas. There are about four hundred Mexicans under his care, five of whom are Methodists, the rest Catholics, but none Baptists. According to the Baptist point of view, this is three hundred and ninety-five too many Catholics. They need "evangelization." They should have the free rays of the King James' edition flashed on their eyes. In short they should be rescued from the "Roman converts," and swell the number of "converts" that the Baptist Home Missionary Society shows to its benefactors. So the \$2,500 was voted to offset the work that Father Kemper, the man who went down to Texas to die, is doing.

BAPTISTS BUILD CHURCH

The Baptists evidently forgot that in the large cities their churches are for the most part temples of solitude. They overlooked the fact that in the city they have proven themselves a failure, and the logical thing to do would be to fill their own churches first before they construct more empty ones. But that is not the way the Baptists viewed the situation. Here was a happy hunting ground—entirely innocent of even one Mexican Baptist. Here was the field of endeavor for them, so they built a church, and hired an inexperienced Spanish priest to help vilify the religion he had rebelled against. But the priest from Chicago, has so far come out ahead.

"This will show you," Father Kemper remarked to a member of the Catholic Church Extension Society, "better than anything else the progress that my little Notre Dame school

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made last year. Nothing would please me more than to be able to build a church and school for the Mexicans right opposite the Baptist place. Now is the time."
The Catholic Church Extension Society has already aided Father Kemper in every possible way. It has sent him donations that benefactors of the society designated for his missions. The other day a beautiful cibarum found its way down there. And evidently it was an opportune gift.

1,000 COMMUNIONS DURING VACATION
"We have great need of a new cibarum now," he remarked, for every week I have to fill it with at least one hundred altar breads. This would have been enough for a whole year three years ago. During the vacation months I had over a thousand communions. Let this give you an idea of what one year of parochial school life can do for a mission district. This year," he went on, "I am opening a boarding annex for girls."

Father Kemper completed his seminary course in the American College in Rome, and on his return to Chicago, his health failed and he was sent away to Texas to regain it. But evidently and perhaps to the regret of the Baptist Home Missionary Societies his hour had not come. Unknown to himself, his life was to be filled with hardships of a missionary career, and down there in Texas among the Mexicans he found his field. Donations for his work may be sent to the Catholic Church Extension Society, 1133 McCormick Building, Chicago, and they will be promptly forwarded to this zealous young priest, who has found life on the missions one complete tension.

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