

of God. Nor has she, in answer to Professor Carver, ever finished from preaching in all its fulness the gospel committed to her, proclaiming without reservation the reality of those eternal fires prepared for the devil and his angels and awaiting the reprobate. "Depart from Me, you cursed, into everlasting fire," are the words of Christ. She knows that judicial sentences are not couched in figurative language and that Christ meant all that He so plainly said, and so many times repeated.

There is no difficulty indeed on the part of the Catholic; but what has Mr. Hodges to answer to the modern philosophy of despair? Under the name of "the Church" he includes, like the other writers, all the many mutually contradictory churches that in any way still cling to the name of Christianity. This, to begin with, is worse than confusion. The Church of Christ is the Church that teaches His doctrine, and that doctrine cannot be self-contradictory, or Christ would contradict Himself. To prove the vitality of the Church, as he sets out to do, he must therefore prove that there is one, undivided Church, holding the one, undivided doctrine of Christ, and that this Church has come down without any change of doctrine from the days of the apostles. But to prove this is at once to disprove Protestantism altogether. Let us then listen to the defense of Mr. Hodges against the new gospel of despair. His answer, though wrongly expressed and wrongly applied, is taken from the armor of the one true Church. He writes:

"The battle line of the Church is as long as the equator and there is always failure somewhere: somewhere by reason of local weakness, or of bad generalship, or of the occupation of untenable positions, or of the rash advance of a few beyond the main divisions, there is defeat, and some observers declare that the war is over, and that the beaten Church must now surrender and disband. But such observers have been making such declarations since the year one."

The chapters of Church history that seem the most depressing are really, he says, the most encouraging. "They show that the Church possesses an invincible vitality. What perils it has not met, what might of adversity, what treachery of false friends? Into what wrong roads has it not been misled, down what steep precipices has it not fallen! And yet, after all, undaunted, strengthened rather than disabled by hard experience, the Church has come on, slowly mastering the life of man."

This indeed would be the unanswerable argument the Catholic can offer, did the writer exclude his false supposition of weakness and error on the part of the Church herself. Such a false supposition denies the promise of Christ that the gates of hell shall never prevail against her, not even for a moment, much less for centuries, as Protestantism must hold. It denies His promise of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, whom He was to send that the Church might be guarded from every slightest approach of error, as became His spiritual Spouse, that He might present Himself "a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." (Eph. v, 27).

The battle line of the Church, indeed, as Mr. Hodges says, is as long as the equator, her armies may be defeated in places, her generals themselves may prove unworthy, her soldiers may fall in numbers or surrender to the foe at times in almost entire companies; but she herself can never fail or yield over so little to the errors of the age, "misled into wrong roads," for she holds the promise of Christ. Her discipline may be adapted to the changing ages, the truth possessed by her from the beginning may be made more evident and even declared of faith to preserve her children more surely from error; but her doctrine remains one and the same, as the doctrine of Christ. His Spirit of truth abiding within her cannot charge. For this Church let Mr.

Hodges plead, the one, undivided, apostolic, Catholic Church, and he will be able to prove convincingly her true vitality which cannot be possessed by the sects separated from her, divided among themselves as error ever must be, changing within themselves and ever uncertain of their tenets because adrift from the Rock whereon Christ built His Church.—Joseph Russell, S. J., in America.

CHRISTMAS JOY

Rev. James H. Monahan, D. D., in The Missionary

Christmas is again at hand, and presently we shall be invited by the strains of "Adeste fideles" to go over in spirit to Bethlehem, to see there born the King of the Angels. Into a world made white by the ministry of the snow to receive Him, we shall welcome in our midst the coming of that "strange Stranger." In the verses and responses read in the Mass of Christmas morn the shepherds being asked, "Whom have you seen?" (quem vidistis pastores) reply, "We have seen the New Born Saviour, and have heard the carols of the Angels." And so the notes of joy and gladness are the ever-recurring refrain of the simple pastoral of our Lord's Nativity.

It is a tale that is old yet ever new, and year by year it thrills our hearts as we turn over in our mind those familiar pictures of memory: The parting of the midnight skies, nineteen centuries ago, by the gleam of an angel's wings "feathering soft their solitary beat" earthwards; the shining of a great light around some shepherds, and their flocks on the hills of Judea; the tidings of great joy which was to be for all the people; and the answering jubilation of the starry cohorts "Gloria in Excelsis Deo, et in terra pax hominibus bonae voluntatis." Then succeeds that lowly scene, so divinely heralded—Mary and Joseph in the stable, and the infant wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger amid the dumb beasts of the field. We would not willingly omit any homely detail of that picture—the presence of the oxen, faithful servants of man, nor the rude shepherd folk chosen to be the only witnesses of the divine event. For what is most striking in the narrative is the contrast between the humble earthly circumstances of the Incarnation and the heavenly magnificence of its proclamation. Such are the ways of God Who has hidden many things from the strong and revealed them to the foolish and weak. For He would teach us the salutary lesson that not necessarily those who loom largest in the eye of the world find favor and acceptance in His sight; that many a Christian life of simple fidelity, unknown and unnoticed here, awakens loud Halleluiahs in the courts of heaven. He Who was King of Kings chose to be born in a stable with simple shepherds as His only courtiers, to show us that true royalty is not a matter of worldly circumstances but of the soul; that in His eyes

"The only noble to be good. Pure hearts are more than coronets And simple faith than Norman blood."

He was born poorest of the poor, as afterwards it was part of the tidings of great joy and a criterion of His religion, that "The poor have the Gospel preached to them." Such, then, is the spiritual democracy of our Faith. On Christmas Day we renew our divine heritage. On that day the world has agreed to practice its Gospel of love—words of good cheer are on every lip, smiles in every eye, and men vie with each other in caring for the sick and needy. Many a man and woman have denied themselves for weeks in order to afford some token of regard for those they love. The chiming ring out merrily, Santa Claus comes dashing to many a home, the stockings of children, even the poorest, are chuck-full of good things, and many a tiny Tim will pipe a grace "God bless us all" as he sits him down to a full board. And all this festivity is in honor of Him,

Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was born of Mary ever Virgin. Hence every year as the anniversary comes around, clothed in the white garments of the spirit and with the lamp of vigil in our hands, we go over to Bethlehem to see there the new-born King of the Angels.

Light of history is turned on bigotry

DR. GRIFFIN ANALYZES CONDITIONS IN THIS COUNTRY A CENTURY AGO

In those days, when a new wave of bigotry is sweeping the country, when ancient charges are twisted to meet modern conditions, when one receives personal letters from well-meaning, but deluded persons who are not in communion with the Catholic Church, begging one "to give up the errors of Rome before it is too late, and thereby win the crown of glory," it might be well to look a little into the past.

In 1774 there was circulated a book of some three hundred pages, entitled "The Master Key to Popery," written and published by A. Southwick. It was advertised as being "as cheap a book as ever printed in Europe or America, and highly necessary to be kept in every Protestant family in this country; that all may see to what miserable state the people are reduced in all arbitrary and tyrannical governments, and be thereby excited to stand on their guard against the infernal machinations of the British ministers and their vast hosts of fools, emissaries, etc., etc., sent hither to propagate the principles of Popery and slavery, which go hand in hand as inseparable companions."

The book contains most violent and outrageous charges against the Church and Pope.

What we are more interested in now is what might be termed the answer to the charges, published fifty years after and by no less a personage than the son of the publisher, whose sentiments are strongly condemnatory of the principles and acts of the father.

In 1825 Solomon Southwick, son of A. Southwick, was editor and publisher of The National Observer, of Albany. The Truth Teller, of New York, August 19, 1826, commenting upon an article entitled "Bigotry," by Solomon Southwick, states: "It has seldom fallen to our lot to persecute more liberal sentiments toward Roman Catholics than those expressed by Mr. Southwick."

I will now quote extensively from the article as reproduced in "American Catholic Historical Researches":

By Solomon Southwick

If superstition consecrates ignorance and folly, bigotry gives birth to persecution and bloodshed; the one covers the earth with darkness the other fills it with contention and misery.

To say nothing against persecution sustained by the Quakers, which in some cases was horrible, the contrast between our former opinions of the Catholics and those which now prevail forms a curious item in our history. I understood when a child that our countrymen had been taught, from the War of 1766, to look upon a Frenchman as a natural enemy and a Catholic of any country as a monster rather than a man. Our pulpits teemed with anathemas against the "Bast," as the Pope was called, and our presses groaned with denunciations of all who acknowledged his spiritual authority.

I well recollect seeing the Pope burned in effigy on the 5th of November—the last time that ceremony was ever performed in my native town of Newport, although I was not old enough to comprehend the meaning of that solemn farce; and about the same time my father, who was a printer, published a book entitled "The Master Key to Popery," in which the most wonderful stories were told of the trials, rack, tortures, gibbets and other hellish inventions of the Papists to

commit the Protestants or destroy them root and branch, and besides all those gloomy portraits the Popish priests were represented as the vilest wretches, guilty of all sorts of crimes and fit only for subjects of pandemonium instead of ministers of the altar of Christ.

A NEW LIGHT

Such were the opinions our ancestors held of Frenchmen and Catholics, and these opinions were in full force until the era of the Revolution. Then it was that a new light burst upon us. The Catholic King of France took part with the Protestant rebels of America. He sent his Catholic armies to fight our battles, and his Catholic subjects at home were taught to reverence our cause. We found that Frenchmen were not our natural enemies, for they came to befriend us in our struggle for freedom. We found that Catholics were not monsters, for those very Frenchmen who came to fight our battles were Catholics. The Rochambeaus, the LaFayettes and the DeGrasses of France mingled at our festive board with the Washingtons, the Franklins, the Jeffersons and the Hamiltons of America. The soldiers of the Catholic King and those of the rebellious Protestant provinces went hand in hand together to the field of battle and often joined together in worshipping their common Creator.

HONOR OF A CATHOLIC ARMY

I saw the whole French army under Rochambeau go to a grand Mass in a bay, and never did I behold a more sublime spectacle.

Then it was that our prejudices against Frenchmen and Catholics were obliterated and renounced at the altar of liberty.

There is indeed one fact that deserves to be recorded to the eternal honor of that Catholic army. It marched through the United States, it encamped in almost every State, and yet those monstrous Catholics were never known to commit a solitary depredation on the persons or property of our citizens, either male or female; they robbed no farmyards; they trod down no cornfields; they trespassed upon no orchards or gardens; but everywhere they marched with a track of morality and their banner, the emblem of that justice for which they fought and which they practiced in camp.

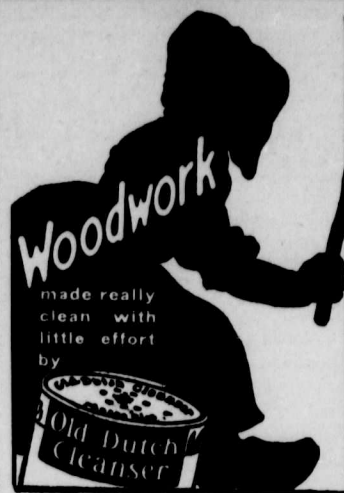
This grand era of mutual danger in the field and mutual toleration in the camp and church of a Catholic and a Protestant army ought never to be forgotten either in this country or in France. It should ever be realized by our orators on the annual jubilee of our freedom; it ought to be impressed upon the minds of the people as a proof that the more mankind know of each other, the less they will be disposed to worry and persecute each other for differences of opinion.

Before I conclude, let me ask is not the venerable Carroll the last surviving signer of the Declaration of Independence, a Catholic? And did any man risk more than this holy patriarch by signing that imperishable document? It is certain that all good and wise men are the friends of civil and political liberty; and sure I am that all men who truly reverence God are the friends of unlimited religious toleration, for to God alone belongs the power of chastising infidelity; and the man, therefore who reverences Him will not attempt to usurp His authority.—William L. J. Griffin in Catholic Herald.

CATHOLIC PRESS

IS FULFILLING ITS MISSION NOBLY

If the Catholics of America realized, as does the editor of any Catholic paper whose duty it is to go carefully through his exchanges, what priceless storehouses of sane, solid information and judgment are to be found on the editorial pages of our Catholic weeklies the question as to the fullest development of the Catholic press would be solved forthwith. Thus writes the editor of the Rosary Magazine; and he says "that the fullest development" is lacking, not because of any lack in the Catholic press itself, but because of lack of co-operation on the part of the Catholic public. He says: "Circulation is all we need for the present. If our Catholic papers were appreciated by the laity as they should be, and enjoyed the circulation they eminently deserve, further improvement in editorial management might easily be undertaken. No editor, however, unless he is a fool and of course no one likes to think of himself in that light—would voluntarily assume heavy financial obligations without at least a reasonable prospect of being able to discharge them. As



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a matter of fact, with the scantiest kind of appreciation, financial or otherwise, all of our Catholic papers are giving, week by week, the very best at their command. And, bear in mind that this "very best" is of the quality that would win instant recognition and generous remuneration in any other field than that of Catholic literature.

"DON'T KNOW HOW TO DIE"

PROTESTANT PLEADS FOR CATHOLIC PRACTICES

Notwithstanding all her voluntary schools—and we must admit that, aided by Catholicism, she made a good fight for the principle of Voluntary or Church schools—the Church of England seems to have a good many adherents of her Communion who have no real grip of Christianity. Such at all events is the impression conveyed by Rev. Walter J. Carey, one of the librarians of Pusey House, Oxford, in his article, "What's Wrong with the Laity?" in the Church Times of October 28. "I do not mean at the moment," he says, "our more or less ecclesiastical laymen, but the large mass of baptised and confirmed people who say they are Church of England, but do little to justify their assertion by their works. Is there anything more disheartening than the spectacle of this unlearned mass of so called Church of England people? Don't I know them well. 'What are you in religion?' Roman Catholic, Church of England, or what? 'Church of England.' 'Have you been baptised and confirmed?' 'Yes.' 'Do you ever go to Communion?' 'No.' 'Do you ever say your prayers?' 'No.'"

CANNOT PRAY

"And sometimes there's an accident, and you are called in. The man is badly hurt, silent attendants hover in the background with bandages and basins. You kneel down and ask gently, 'Well, sonny, how are you?' 'Can I do anything for you spiritually?' 'Do you ever pray?' 'No.' 'Isn't it appalling?' 'Whose fault is it? I resent it when I hear it's altogether the fault of the clergy. Two or three clerical men live amid ten thousand people; they do their utmost, possibly, yet there are hundreds of homes who do not admit them, hundreds of children whose parents will not send them to Sunday school, thousands of grown ups who will not come to church, and don't mean to come to church, and Christ Himself couldn't bring them to church because of their unbelief, their denial of the promptings of natural religion within them.' He speaks of the 'great mass of boys and men' who are 'simply muddled over religion; they do not deny it but don't know how to live by it, and are hopelessly ignorant as to how to die in it.'"

"DON'T KNOW HOW TO DIE"

Mr. Carey declares the great enemy is vagueness, and the cause of the situation is "mainly in the Reformation and the Prayer Book. The Reformation was largely a revolt from over-concreteness and over-elaborateness, and, as usual, the revolt went too far, and we became over vague." Then the Prayer Book is too dignified, more suitable for "educated and statesman like persons" than for the ordinary mass of people. "You want something simple, more direct, more affectionately concrete. The Romans (sic) were there, right enough. For prayer there's the rosary, for dying there's the crucifix and the Last Sacraments. Our boys don't know how to die Christianly, though they die like men all right. So that my remedy for vagueness is concreteness." Thereupon the rev. gentleman makes some concrete proposals among which is one, that the people should be taught to "wear a crucifix round their neck, so that in the hour of danger or mortal agony they can take it out and kiss it." Another is, "Let the Church of England issue an official Church of England Catechism, the exact equivalent of the Roman 'Penny Catechism.'" Then, he argues, the clergy could go to work and instruct the people in "the functions of clergy and laity alike."

AN APPEAL TO THE BISHOPS

"Do they know these things at present? No, they do not. Their idea of a priest is a good chap, and their ideal for themselves is 'not to do any harm to anybody.' Hence they live vaguely and they die vaguely, and we are all in a helpless muddle. O Bishops, if this catches the eye and conscience of any of you, do stop pondering how to reduce Ritualists to order, and don't even waste too much time on Welsh Disestablishment. There are hundreds and thousands of your English boys who don't know how to live and don't know how to die. Give us something concrete; something more definite than prayer book for their poor little prayers, something they can learn instead of the Catechism which they can't. Speak to them officially and affectionately; let us proudly give them their little Prayer Book in your joint name. Let them know that their Bishops want to help them to die as sincere Christians should—for at present they don't know how."

The whole article is rather a distressing picture of the lack of vital and practical Christianity among great masses of non-Catholics. But it also shows that some Anglicans at least appreciate the Divine genius of the Catholic Church in making use of the concrete and material to bring home religion to people's hearts and lives. After all, this was only what Our Lord Himself did and designed. —Allan, in Edinburgh Catholic Herald.

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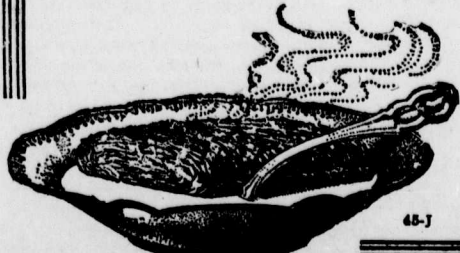
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