

A MINISTER'S TRIBUTE.

Dr. Parker's Praise of the Roman Catholic Church.

HER GREAT POWER FOR GOOD—A HARTFORD PROTESTANT CLERGYMAN OUT-SPOKE IN HIS DENUNCIATION OF UNREASONABLE PREJUDICES—KIND WORDS FOR THE POPE AND BISHOP TIERNEY.

Widespread attention has been attracted to a remarkable sermon delivered two weeks ago in the South Congregational church, Hartford, Conn., on the Roman Catholic Church. Dr. Parker said that the Roman Catholic Church in its manifold aspects, its historical continuity, its admirable organization, its compact unity, its faith, its worship, its missionary enterprises and in its other phases would occupy their attention for the evening. He did not intend to attempt a thorough or learned treatment of any of the phases of the Roman Church. His purpose was simple. It was to say a few things about the Roman Catholic Church in view of the unreasonable prejudice which is being worked up against it and the unfounded theories in relation to it which are being advanced by some Protestant Christians.

In his (Dr. Parker's) boyhood and youth, in a corner of New England where there was no Catholic church, he shared the common feelings of great antipathy to that church. He looked upon it almost as anti-Christ. The simple fact was that he knew nothing about the Roman Church except some foolish hearsay and what he had gotten from violent anti-Catholic literature. But his emancipation from these prejudices is complete. Having observed the Roman Catholic Church at home and abroad he has come to have a large and sincere respect for its mission in the world. He believes the Roman Catholic Church to be a true Church of Christ in the world.

HER SAINTS AND SINNERS.

On the pages of the large history of the Roman Catholic Church there are the names of evil repute and of shameful deeds. There are black spots on it. But on the pages, too, there are the names of heroes, martyrs and saints whose Christ-like services and sacrifices fill page after page. He (Dr. Parker) loves to think on them. He loves to think on that Church surviving the deluge of barbarism which overwhelmed old empires and civilizations. From the Roman Catholic Church the Protestant Church has received its most precious prizes in hymns, prayers, meditations and sermons. If what they have derived from the Roman Church should be eliminated from the Protestant Book of Common Prayer, the remnant would be very poor, and not much of the book would be left but the covers. These prayers and hymns are the outgrowth of the Christian love of people who lived ages ago. He loves the great missionary zeal and enterprise of the devoted men who, taking their lives in their hands, carried the gospel of Christ through Europe, China and Japan, and through the wilds of the western world. These missionaries made noble records, many of them sealing the records with their blood.

There have been bad men among the Popes, prelates and priests. But where did Victor Hugo find his highest type of the Christian pastor which he portrays in his "Les Misérables?" Where did Balzac find the type of the priest which he describes in his romances? Of course there is another and a dark side. Some may ask, why not refer to the dark side of the Roman Church? Because Protestants have wearisomely and unjustly harped upon it. There is no need of it. Another reason why he does not refer to the dark side is that Protestantism has its dark side, too. It has not allowed the Roman Catholic Church to have a monopoly of persecution. The Protestant Church has need to regard the beam in its own eye. Protestantism has had its rapacious wolves in sheep's clothing. It has burned heretics. It has had its own little inquisition. The story of the treatment of Roman Catholics in this country down to the war of the revolution, when it was found polite to treat them decently, make Protestants hang their heads in shame. The Protestant Church is not so enlightened or so holy as to warrant its boasting much over its neighbor. Let the dead past bury its dead, and let them suffer the broad mantle of charity to cover their sins. In the words of the Roman liturgy he said, "Remember not, oh, Lord, our offences nor those of our parents," etc.

EXTREMES OF BIGOTRY.

Dr. Parker referred to two incidents which are related in a volume which he has read and which illustrate two extremes of bigotry. There was a woman in Cork who had a son who was addicted to drink and was very abusive in his behavior. She complained to the priest, who said the boy was not a Catholic at all. "Ah, your reverence," said the woman, "The trouble is he is too good a Catholic; he would strike any Protestant from here to Tralee." It is always the drunken, good-for-nothing Roman Catholic who is offensive and insulting to others. The other incident is that of the Bishop of Raphoe, in Ireland, who was called to attend a dying sailor who was an Orangeman. The Bishop said in a low voice, "Now, my man, you're almost gone; make some sign that you die in the faith." The sailor opened his eyes and, seeing the Bishop, said, "To hell with the Pope." These were two extremes. There are some Protestants who are inspired with the sentiments which the dying sailor entertained. Their religion is of a

negative kind and consists principally of animosity. They are not entitled to much respect. They may be Protestants, but they are not Christians. He (Dr. Parker) would not say even to heaven with the Pope until God calls him. The present Pope is considerably the best man that has occupied the Papal office. He wishes him many years of influence.

Dr. Parker made a kindly reference to Bishop Tierney, saying that he rejoices with all his heart that Bishop Tierney has been promoted to the Bishopric of Hartford, and he congratulated the people of Hartford. Bishop Tierney is a noble and devoted Christian man. In all things Bishop Tierney is a loyal man. He thanked Bishop Tierney for saluting him (Dr. Parker) as "brother" and for signing himself in his letter "Your brother in Christ." He knows that Bishop Tierney meant what he wrote.

Instead of holding Roman Catholics in aversion and in suspicion and of dividing Protestants and Catholics into hostile camps, they should rather have respect and charity for them. He differs radically from Roman Catholics in religion, but he remembers that they have one Lord and one hope, and that they are on terms of Christian brotherhood. They should not keep alive the old bitterness.

ADMIRES HER UNITY AND HARMONY. Dr. Parker next referred to the statement which some make that if the Roman Catholics are allowed to get the upper hand they will persecute Protestants, and said that he does not believe a word of it. They couldn't if they would, and they wouldn't if they could. All civilized nations except Russia—and that is neither Protestant nor Catholic and is only half civilized—are moving upward to where the atmosphere is freer and clearer. Moral forces are now relied on to propagate truth.

Some object to Roman Catholics as building costly churches. He asked in reply, why not? If they are ready and willing to outbuild Protestants by giving \$1,000 where Protestants give only \$100, he, for one, honored them. He honored Catholics for their love to their Church, for their zeal to have their children brought up in the faith, which they show in their willingness to build churches, colleges and schools, whatever he may say as to their wisdom. He admired their Church, and thinks their benevolence in supporting their Church exemplary. The Catholic Church exhibits a faculty for adapting itself to a large portion of our communities, which our intellectual Protestant Churches seem to lack. When we so appeal to the eye, ear and heart as to bring in reverent devotion together the noble and the peasant, the rich and the poor, the learned and the ignorant, as he had seen them gathered in prayer, we shall have learned a great lesson and shall have made an advance in the right direction.

He often thinks with gratitude of the influence of the Roman Church among the people in this country. It is no discredit to them to say that the great majority of Roman Catholics came to this country in poverty and ignorance. How their condition would have affected the common weal but for their Church is a question that may be answered by their looking at others who came here churchless and without religious belief. The latter are the most dangerous class in the community. The children of the Irish Roman Catholics and their children are among the most orderly and the most respected in the communities in which they live. The Irish give everything to their Church, more, probably, than they are aware. Our debt of gratitude to the Catholic Church is immense. Do you ever hear of an Irish Roman Catholic Anarchist or Nihilist? The Roman Catholic Church is a mighty bulwark against the wild, raging and destructive forces in the social life. It is a mighty conservative factor. It turns its tremendous artillery against the organization that foment discord and that plots destruction.

On the question of supernatural religion the Roman Church is powerful and solid. The Roman Church believes in God the Father; in Christ the Lord; in the Holy Ghost; in humanity's sins, and in divine redemption; and it holds out a blessed hope to eternal life and a warning of retribution against sin. It perpetually teaches these things in the midst of an unbelieving and materialistic world. The Apostolic and Nicene Creeds which Protestants accept are the Roman Catholic Church's. The *Te Deum Laudamus* is her incomparable song. It is true the Catholic Church has symbols in its services which cannot be endorsed by Protestants. The Mass has perilous and serious misapprehensions. But even in the Mass the Catholic Church adores Christ.

FALLACIES DISPELLED.

It is not true that Catholics bow down to and worship images. The invocation of the saints is only the extreme of the privileges which Protestants often avail themselves of when they ask each other to pray for them. The Protestant asks the pastor and the members of the Church to pray for him. "Ora Pro nobis," says the Catholic to the Virgin and to the saints. It is the communion of saints. But behind all there is common ground of Christian faith. He (Dr. Parker) is more closely allied to the Roman Catholic Church than he is to many rationalistic Protestant churches. He could worship with more satisfaction in a Catholic church with some pauses than in some Protestant churches. Dr. Parker referred to the sacred music in Catholic churches. He said that on one occasion he was at a Vesper service in

Rome and heard a nun sing: "Agnus Dei qui tollis peccata mundi; miserere nobis." It was Latin, but what of that when we knew that it meant "Lamb of God, who take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us." He would go a long, weary journey to feel again the spiritual impressions which the singing of that hymn produced. He blessed God for the powerful testimony which the Catholic Church gives to the truths of religion.

HAVE PROVED THEIR LOYALTY.

It is reiterated with wearisome frequency that Catholics are bound in loyalty to the Pope and that they would be obliged to take sides with him and against this country if he commanded them. This is an impossible supposition and a false conclusion. Such a claim is of the utmost improbability, and if it were made Catholics would repudiate it. Mr. Parker referred to the repulse of the Spanish Armada which was sent by Spain to conquer England. Those who fought most bravely for England were the English Catholics, though Spain was a Catholic country. The statement that Catholics owe first allegiance to the Pope in temporal affairs is an insult to their patriotism and loyalty. Catholics have proved their loyalty to the republic. The Catholic religion enjoins on its Catholics that it is their duty as good citizens to make personal sacrifices for their country. In spiritual matters they are loyal, but in political matters they are free.

Dr. Parker referred to a Catholic newspaper called the *American Citizen*, which had a series of editorials opposing a division of the school fund. The editor of the paper received a letter of commendation from a prominent Protestant commending its course. The true American is alien to the Know-Nothing and to the foreigner. Dr. Parker said he did not wish to discuss the A. P. A. He did not know anything about it. It no doubt has some good points. But so far as it goes to ferment religious prejudice it is un-American. He supposed that at the present time unless a man belongs to the A. P. A. or Y. M. C. A. or X. Y. Z., or some other organization with an alphabetic name, he is a curiosity. (Laughter.) Well, he (Dr. Parker) wished to be a curiosity. All the people born in the United States are not Americans.

HIS BLOOD WOULD BOIL.

He referred to a paper which is sent him every week, and which is abusive of Catholics. He would not advertise the paper by naming it. But he wished to say that if any paper misrepresented, caricatured, abused, by text and picture, the religion and Church which he professes and loves, as that paper does the Catholic Church, every drop of blood in his veins would boil with indignation. This is not the way to treat one's fellow-citizens. It is calculated to provoke the evils which it apprehends. He (Dr. Parker) will take his stand with his Roman Catholic fellow-citizens, who are his Christian brethren, as against the spirit of prejudice. He said that he does not stand alone in this attitude. The Congregational ministers of the State, at their meeting in 1893, passed a series of resolutions in which they deprecated the hostility which some Protestants assume toward Roman Catholics, and which is hindering the homogeneity of the population.

In conclusion Dr. Parker said that it is the first time in years he has discussed such a subject and perhaps it will be the last. His fellowship is with the whole Church of Christ. Roman Catholics see differently and they think differently on a great many points from him, but they are members of Christ's Church and they are his brethren in Christ. He is glad the spirit of confidence is growing. They are being drawn nearer politically and religiously eye to eye to see Him as He is.

STUDIOUS IRELAND.

A very curious little point is revealed about Ireland in the census returns which were published recently. It seems that the proportion borne by the "professional class" to the total population is much higher than in England and Wales, or than in Scotland. This is partly due to the large number of soldiers quartered in Ireland, but mainly to the astonishingly large number of persons over fifteen years of age returned as "students." These amounted to no less than 95,766, or from three to four times as many as in Scotland, and two-thirds as many as in England and Wales, notwithstanding that the population in this latter is more than six times that of Ireland. What may be the explanation of this enormous excess of students over fifteen in Ireland the commissioners declare themselves "quite unable to say."

The rapidity with which crowd develops calls for instant treatment; and yet few households are prepared for its visit. An admirable remedy for this disease is Ayer's Cherry Pectoral. It has saved hundreds of lives and should be in every home where there are young children.

Mr. V. T. Wright, P. Q. had Dyspepsia for 20 years. Tried many remedies and doctors, but got no relief. His appetite was very poor, had a distressing pain in his side and stomach, and gradual wasting away of flesh, when he heard of, and immediately commenced taking, Northrop & Lyman's Vegetable Discovery. The pains have left and he rejoices in the enjoyment of excellent health; in fact he is quite a new man.

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WAS THE BRITISH CHURCH ROMAN CATHOLIC?

To answer this question we may ask two others: 1. Did the British Church hold the faith and teaching of the Church of Rome? 2. Was it independent of the Bishop of Rome? or did it allow a superior authority to the Pope?

1. *The faith and teaching of the British Church was the same as that of Rome.* St. Jerome says in one of his letters: "The Church of the city of Rome is not different from that of the whole world. Gaul (France) and Britain, and Africa, and all foreign nations adore one Christ and follow one rule of faith." St. Chrysostom says: "Even the British Isles have felt the power of the Word, for there, too, churches and altars have been erected; there, too, men may be heard discussing points in Scripture in different languages, but not with different belief." When St. Augustine came into England in A. D. 596, and had a conference with the British Bishops, he only asked of them that they should keep Easter at the proper time, that they should administer baptism "according to the method of the holy Roman Apostolic Church, and jointly with us preach the Word of God to the English nation." So it is clear that in all other things, at all events in their faith, they agreed with him. Dr. Goodwin, Anglican Bishop of Carlisle, says in his *Church of England Past and Present*: "There is no evidence of any substantial difference between it (the British Church) and the Church which Augustine established." But it cannot be denied that St. Augustine was a Roman Catholic and that he established or founded in England the Roman Catholic Church, with the Mass, the invocation of saints, the honoring of relics, confession, and all the other points of the Roman Catholic belief and practice. Therefore, from this agreement of the British Church with that of St. Augustine, we may safely conclude that the faith and teaching of the British Church was the same as that of the Roman Catholic Church.

But, further, Gildas, their own historian, tells us that they had Bishops and priests, whose hands were anointed and blessed at their ordination, as is done in Roman Catholic ordinations; that the priests offered "the most holy sacrifice of Christ"—that is, the Roman Catholic Mass; that they had churches in honor of the martyrs, and monasteries of monks, who took vows of obedience, poverty and chastity. A penitential canon of Gildas shows that they practised confession of sins; and the Venerable Bede gives instances of the honor paid to relics.

This, then, is the answer to the first question. The faith and teaching of the British Church was, as far as we know it, the same as that of the Church of Rome—Roman Catholic; but the Britons differed from the Church of Rome in some matters of discipline.

II. *The British Church was not independent of the Church of Rome, but it recognized a supremacy, or superior authority, in the Pope.* This is clear from the missions sent into Britain by the Popes, and from the fact that the British Bishops took part in councils which recognized the supremacy of the Pope.

1. *Roman Missions.* The Venerable Bede, in the first book of his *History* (chap. iv.) tells us that "whilst Eleutherius, a holy man, presided over the Roman Church, Lucius, king of the Britons, sent a letter to him, entreating that by his command he might become a Christian. He soon obtained his pious request, and the Britons preserved the faith which they had received, uncorrupted and entire, in peace and tranquility, until the time of the Emperor Diocletian. This was at the end of the second century."

Some time later, in A. D. 428, as we learn from St. Prosper (*Chronicles*), Pope Celestine sent, in place of himself (*vice sua*) two French Bishops, Germanus and Lupus, "to refute the heretics and guide the Britons to the Catholic faith;" and St. Prosper also tells us that Pope Celestine "kept the Roman island (Britain) Catholic, and made the foreign island (Ireland) Christian; the first by expelling certain native leaders of Pelagianism from their hiding-place in the ocean, the other by ordaining a Bishop (Palladius) to establish Christianity among the Scots of Ireland and of the north of Britain." The Venerable Bede also tells us of the mission of Palladius: "In the eighth year of his (the Emperor Theodosius) reign, Palladius was sent by Celestine, the Roman Pontiff, to the Scots that believed in Christ, to be their first Bishop."

2. *Councils.* In A. D. 314, a Council was held at Arles, in France, which was attended by three British Bishops, Eboricus, Bishop of York; Restitutius, Bishop of London, and Adelphus, Bishop of some other See, probably Lincoln. This Council wrote a letter, signed by all the Bishops, to Pope Sylvester, saluting him with "reverence due," regretting that he had not been able to assist in person at the Council (though he had been represented in it by four clerics) and absent himself from "that place (Rome) where the apostles daily sit," for if he had been there the sentence against heresy "would certainly have been more severe." They then tell him all that they had done, "in order that all might proceed from him." They also say that they have informed him of what they have decreed "in order that all may know what they should observe in future."

In A. D. 347, British Bishops took part in the Council of Sardica. This Council decreed that Bishops accused of any crime had the right to appeal to the Bishop of Rome, who was to appoint the judges and decide upon the case. The Council also wrote a synodical let-

ter to the Pope, Julius, "who though absent in person had been present with them in spirit," giving an account of what they had done. "For," say the Bishops, "it will be seen to be best and most proper if the Bishops from each particular province make reference" (or "send information") to their Head, that is the See of the Apostle Peter (Rome)." Nothing can be clearer from this than that the Bishops of the Council of Sardica, and with them the British Bishops, acknowledged the Pope to be the Head of the Church.

In addition to this we have the authority of their historian, Gildas, who tells us that the British Church held St. Peter to be the first of the apostles and the keybearer of the Kingdom of Heaven. And so we must conclude that the British Church was not independent of the Bishop of Rome, but did acknowledge his supremacy.

Two objections are made against this conclusion: (1) That the British did not keep Easter in the Roman way; (2) that they did not accept the authority of St. Augustine.

To the first objection I answer, with Dr. Giles, the Protestant translator of Bede, that the Britons did not keep the improved Roman way of keeping Easter, but continued to keep the old way which they had learnt, not being aware of the improvement.

To the second objection I answer that the British Bishops did not reject St. Augustine's authority, they rejected him. They had been told by a hermit whom they had consulted, "If at your approach he shall rise up to you, hear him submissively." St. Augustine, however, continued sitting when they were coming to him, and so when he asked them what has been mentioned on p. 1, they replied that they would "do none of those things, nor receive him as their Archbishop."

The British Church was, as we have seen, Roman Catholic. But suppose it had not been, could the present Church of England draw from this any plea for its opposition to the Pope's authority? Certainly not. The Church of England has derived nothing whatever from the British Church; not its orders, if it has any; not its faith. The British would not hold communion with the English, nor would they preach to them. The Church of England originated with the Roman monk, Augustine, first Archbishop of Canterbury, who was sent into England by Pope Gregory. He and his companions and successors were undoubtedly Roman Catholics, and the Church which they founded in England was Roman Catholic; and to this Roman Catholic Church every Englishman should belong, as for many centuries every Englishman did belong.

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