

FOREIGN FREEMASONRY.

Its Position Vis-a-Vis of Christianity and of Catholicism.

(Continued.)

By D. MONCHIEFF O'CONNOR, IN THE LONDON TABLET.

Curiously enough about the same time, the close of 1865, the utility of this formula was questioned in France.

As for Italy, in the Constituent Assembly of Naples in 1867, Brother d'Ayala had a scruple of logic, not of conscience.

It would appear scruples of logic are contagious, for in this year they penetrated even France.

I am particularly anxious to avoid quoting individual opinions and treating them as general statements.

Despite, therefore, "the basis" and "the principles" of Masonry, the Existence of God and the immortality of the soul are declared by Masonry—and the declarations are officially published.

In his touching "Romance of a Royalist" the Marquis de Beauregard gives the Count de Vieux's reply to the chaff of his friend de Gilliers upon Vieux's solemnity and length of face when he returned from the Congress of Wilhelmshafen.

The fierce summoner, under the Duke of Brunswick, of that terrible congress, was a Bavarian jurist, a genius in organizing, bold to audacity, fertile in resource, unscrupulous as to means, the pantheist Adam Weishaupt.

The Court of Bavaria realising the danger of Weishaupt's teaching, the Elector ordered October 11, 1786, a seizure of all papers to be found in the house of Councillor Xavier Zwack, and in the Castle of Baron de Bassus, Weishaupt's trusted leaders.

* I cannot discover who this Bremond was; I cannot think him the painter of so many religious subjects, and the decorator of La Vierge. He would be glad at this time. But painters of religious subjects are not always religious painters.

and sects of the Illuminati." Therein will be found this address of Weishaupt to his masonic adepts:

"Do you remember that with the first invitations with which we drew you to us we began by telling you that nothing against religion entered into our projects? Do you remember that this assurance was again given you when you were admitted novices? Do you also recall, when in the early grades, we spoke to you of morality and virtue, but how the studies we prescribed and the lessons we instilled made both virtue and morality independent of all religion? ... Do you remember with what art, with what feigned respect, we spoke to you of Christ and His Gospel.

Fraud—the word is their own. Nor are these the maxims of a zealot. In a letter to Thiriot, Voltaire, a mason, declares: "Lying is a vice when it leads to evil, but it is a very great virtue when it does good. Therefore be more virtuous than ever. Lie, my friends; we must lie like the very devil; not sheepishly, not at odd times, but brazenly and perpetually."

In 1835 the mason Malegarell wrote, from his shelter in London, to his fellow mason Dr. Breidenstein:

"We are an association of brothers all over the world; with common vows and interests; all tending to the enfranchisement of humanity. We would shatter every kind of yoke, and yet there is one of us whom we do not see, we scarcely know, but whose hand is over us, whence is he? No one knows, or at least none say. The association is secret, even to us veterans of secret societies. It exacts deeds from us which sometimes make one's hair stand on ends: and would you believe it? they write me from Rome, that two of our fellows well-known for their hatred of fanaticism had, by order of the supreme chief, to kneel down and take communion last Easter."

And Bottalia states it to have been a well known fact that Count Cavour, the better to cajole Italy and Catholic Europe, gave orders that the masonic press proclaim him a sincere Catholic.

The Alta Vendita is the mother Lodge in Italy of that masonic advance guard, the Carbonari. So strict is the secrecy maintained that, following the Illuminati, they correspond and are known to each other under pseudonyms. In 1822 a Piedmontese Lodge was inaugurated by a Jew, "Picolo-Tigre," who, in a letter dated January 18, thus instructs his agents there:

* This very active Mason and Revolutionist was educated for the priesthood. Served Austria as captain of cavalry; settling in France after honorable distinction as a soldier, he acquired considerable fortune as a speculator upon which subject he wrote frequently and well. The Revolution broke out in Italy, opposing Giolitti and Charles Albert; and giving himself up to what are euphemistically called "Mazzinian politics." He is an authority of weight and distinguished services.

It has been decided in our councils we want no more Christians: Make no more martyrs, but popularize vice among the masses. Let them breathe it by the five senses; let them drink it in; let them be saturated with it; and this ground which Aretino, the choice of authority will not escape you, has sown, is ever ready to receive lewd precepts. Make hearts vicious, and you will have no more Catholics. Withdraw the priest from work, from the altar, from virtue, find out adroitly how to otherwise occupy his thoughts and his time. It is wide spread corruption we have undertaken; the corruption of the people by the clergy, and of the clergy by us, a corruption which must one day enable us to bury the Church in its grave. I lately heard one of our friends laugh in a philosophic way at our projects, saying: "To bring down Catholicism, you must begin by suppressing woman." This is true in a sense, but as we cannot suppress woman, let us corrupt her at the same time as the Church. Corruptio optimi pessima. The object is fair enough for such men as we are. The best dagger with which to pierce the Church to the heart is corruption. To work then till it be done!†

Heaven's sweet cup, or poisonous drug of Hell? Is, then, Ragon's ascription of the doctrine of the Love of God to masonry a fraud? Are the principles of the Existence of God and the Immortality of the Soul in the Masonic statutes an imposture? Is its motive really truth or the discovery of truth?

On May 6, 1844, George Kloss, a sound Mason, versed in the craft, Councillor of the Grand Duke of Saxony, drew up a report on the impossibility of introducing Positive Christianity into Masonic Lodges. The report was printed as a Manual for Masons, and is, therefore, official. From it we learn:

"If the Masonic lodges are considered as Christian institutions and forbid themselves to those who do not profess Christianity, they forget the essential aim of Masonry; which is to unite humanity, which has been divided by religious beliefs or political events. If Masonry lose sight of its august mission, it will no longer serve but to confirm the error and prejudices of which better enlightened Masons seek to rid men. One after another crumble the stones of that thick wall built by the friends of darkness, by means of lying and dissimulation, forebodings and legends, false traditions and accursed symbols. . . . It was to the Temples of Masonry and under the protection of Secrecy that generous hearted men of all classes and conditions first taught, then proclaimed, the maxims which were then execrated as heresies and criminal innovations."

Let these be considered the heated words of individual irresponsibility, open the Masonic Review for that masonically active year, 1848, and read an eminent Mason, Fischer, thus: "Those who attack the religious side of the order are fighting an illusion. Excepting a few private Lodges the great majority of the order not only do not admit Christianity, but even oppose it to the death." How true were the words of Joehms, a Mason, "A very paganism is nearer us than Christianity!"

In 1717 Jews were admitted to the order,—excepting into three Lodges of Berlin. In the Masonic publication, The voice of the Orient, issued by Gotthald Solomon, a Jewish preacher of Homburg, Doctor of Philosophy, Honorary member of the Lodge Silver Unicorn of the Orient of Neuchou, we read:

Why is the name of Christ never once pronounced in the oaths nor in the prayers at the opening of Lodges or at banquets? Why do Masons date their era not from the birth of Christ, but like the Jews, from the creation of the world? . . . But supposing we could or would forget for an instant that a Christian Masonry would be a flat contradiction, a square circle, a round square, &c.

Curiously enough an answer to one of this Jew's questions is discovered in a letter of a vice-Grand Commander of the French Lodges to a brother Mason in Berlin, the Count de Fernig to Berendt: To affirm that Masonry only dates from the Christian era is to misconceive the solemn traditions of the Royal Art. The constant image of the Temple of Solomon, . . . in fact many other usages, do they not prove that we existed before the establishment of Christianity?!

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THE POPE AND THE MASONS.

A Strong Pronouncement Against Them.

ROME, October 10.—The letter recently written by the Pope to Cardinal Rampolla, Papal Secretary of State, protesting against the fetes in celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of Italian unity, has greatly stirred up the Liberals, and is likely to add to the warmth of the popular reception of King Charles of Portugal, who is expected to visit Rome on October 17.

The Pope's letter follows: "The sentiment of humanity, which even minds dominated by passion retain, seemed to permit of the hope of some consideration in our old age; but this has been brutally ignored. We have been reduced to become almost immediate witnesses of the apotheosis of Italian revolution and the spoliation of the Holy See. That which most afflicted us is the design to perpetuate rather than to terminate the conflict of which no one can measure the disastrous effects. The final object of the occupation of Rome was not to complete political unity; but, in destroying the walls of the temporal metropolis, to more closely attack the spiritual powers of the Popes. The object was to change the destinies of Rome, return to paganism, and give birth to a third Rome and a third era of civilization.

That is what it was desired to celebrate recently under the sanction of the new law by noisy demonstrations conducted by a sect which is the enemy of God. The nation suffers, for not only are the promises of mutual benefits unfulfilled, but, morally, Italy is divided and subservient to factions which menace all civil and social institutions in augmenting numbers and force. Nothing will ever confer veritable independence upon the Papacy so long as it does not have temporal jurisdiction.

The letter of the Pope then refers to the blessing of pontifical sovereignty and invites Italians not to be bound up with sects and to consider how pernicious it would be to perpetuate the conflict which is profiting the enemies of Christianity. It affirms that the head of the Church follows with loving vigilance humanity's road and does not refuse to accept the reasonable necessities of the time. The letter of His Holiness concludes with:

"If Italians, throwing off the Masonic yoke, would listen to us we could open our heart to the fondest hopes. Otherwise, we can but predict new perils and greater disasters."

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