

THE JESUITS.

The following paper was read before the St. Mary's Academy of the St. Louis University, May 9, 1882, by Rev. E. A. Higgins, S. J.

MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN:—Attacks upon the Catholic Church, and especially upon the Jesuits, are not of such rare occurrence as to excite much surprise. We are treated to these compliments so often that we have come to regard them with equanimity, if not with indifference. They proceed from the most diverse and dissimilar sources—now from an "escaped nun" or a "converted priest," now from a romancing historian, like Mr. Froide, solicitous for republican institutions; now from an aspiring politician, like Mr. Richard Thompson, ex-Secretary of the United States Navy, who hopes to ride into power on the tide of anti-Catholic bigotry; now from a scientist, like Mr. Paul Bert, determined to give the finishing stroke to those "remnants of superstition." For those who accuse us falsely, through ignorance or inherited prejudice, we feel only a charitable compassion. Even where malice and dishonesty combine to assail us, we are not without motives, in the example of our Lord and Master.

TO INSPIRE US WITH PATIENCE AND FOR-

BEARANCE.

Accusations against us that are circulated and intended to mislead the unwary or the unthinking are sometimes constrained to notice, lest by our silence we should seem to acknowledge their truth. For this reason I propose to deal briefly, and I trust in good temper, with the latest assault on the Jesuits, which appeared in the March number of Harper's New Monthly Magazine. The writer in Harper's professes to introduce to the American public a book entitled "La Morale des Jesuites," by Mr. Paul Bert, and in doing so adopts and indorses as his own the charges made by Mr. Bert against the moral teaching of the Jesuits. What are those charges? Chiefly these: "That for the last 300 years the Jesuits have been corrupting the youth of all nations; that they uniformly taught as morals a set of doctrines that struck at the very foundation of human society; that they countenanced debauchery, theft, incest, robbery, murder, lying," etc.

THESE BE GRAVE CHARGES, GENTLEMEN, and would seem to need for their support weighty arguments and clear evidence. And yet they have not disturbed our peace though Mr. Bert's book has now been before the world for two years. And for this reason: That his charges are not only false, but they are old and stale, and have been refuted "ad nauseam." They are as old as the Provincial Letters of Pascal, on which they are clumsily modeled. Mr. Bert may have the malice and the unscrupulous effrontery of Pascal, but he has not the consummate art of that skillful workman. He has garbled his extracts from the works of Father Gury without half the cunning which Pascal displayed in mutilating and distorting the older theologians. Need I tell you that the unfairness, dishonesty and calumnies of the Provincial Letters have been repeatedly exposed? That the work was at once condemned as a malicious libel, and was burned by order of Louis XIV. in the streets of Paris? That it was refuted as a whole, and in every detail, by the Jesuits and other authors? (The latest work on this subject, by the Abbe Maynard, leaves nothing to be added.) Yet the Provincial Letters are quoted by Paul Bert and his echo in Harper's, as if they had never been answered; and have served for them, as they have served for hundreds of others, as a stone of accusation against the moral teachings of the Jesuits.

AS THE CHARGES OF THE NAMELESS WRITER in Harper's are of no weight whatever, except in so far as they are a reproduction of those contained in Mr. Bert's "La Morale des Jesuites," I shall address myself to what the principal has to say, rather than to what the tool repeats. I shall show you that what Harper holds up to the reputation of the public is not the moral teaching of the Jesuits, but the malicious and immoral invention of Mr. Paul Bert. I shall not, however, attempt to follow Mr. Bert into all the details of misquotation, misrepresentation, and other dishonest practices with the volumes of Father Gury. The work of refuting his false charges has already been done in the Catholic World and the American Catholic Quarterly. What I propose to do is to give you some idea of the reason for Mr. Bert's attack on the Jesuits, and to show you his method of dealing with their books. Now I can imagine some of you asking:

WHO IS THIS PAUL BERT? What manner of man is he? Why should you notice his utterances rather than those of Edith O'Gorman or Padre Gavazzi? Well, Mr. Bert is, in a certain way, a representative man. He is the spokesman of the Freethinkers in France. He enjoys the distinction of being the fittest instrument Gambetta could pick out for the office of Minister of Public Worship, to harass the Catholic Bishops and dechristianize the schools of France. Of all the horde of Atheists among the public men of France, "who rage against God and His Christ," there is not one more noisy and indecent than Paul Bert. To him "all religion is superstition," which is his vocation to root up. In his opinion "science has left no place in this modern world for God or the supernatural." Two years ago when the Radicals of the left were clamoring for the closing of the Jesuit schools and the expulsion of the religious orders, the loudest demagogue of them all was Paul Bert. At first he demanded the closing of the Jesuit schools on the ground that "their teaching was 'not French enough.'" What did he mean? He meant that

THE FRENCH JESUITS DID NOT TEACH THEIR SCHOLARS PATRIOTISM. They were not patriotic themselves; they could not love their country, being priests and religious; how then could they make their scholars patriots? The charge was answered with a few facts which disposed of that accusation once and for all. If patriotism consists in the prompt and ready will to make and endure every sacrifice for one's country, then the pupils of the Jesuits proved themselves better patriots than Paul Bert and his friends. Here are some of the facts. Every Jesuit College in France had its representative in the French army in 1870. The single College of Ste. Genevieve, the famous

school of Science in the Rue Lhomond, Paris, gave to the French army, in the war with Germany, 1,100 officers, of whom eighty-six fell on the field of battle, and 184 won distinction for conspicuous gallantry. How well these young men served their country was thus told by an old French officer, before the Council-General at the Voges:

"IN THE COURSE OF A LONG MILITARY CAREER, I have in various circumstances, often had under my orders, young officers trained up in the religious school, particularly in those conducted by the Jesuit Fathers. I cannot tell you how much I have been struck by their noble character and sentiments, by their respect for discipline and duty, and their entire devotion and unshaken patriotism. I have since had many opportunities of watching the conduct of those religious men themselves, who are now a prey to attacks in the press, which I will not qualify, and which are as well known to you as they are to me. I have seen those priests at work, whom men affect to treat as aliens; and to sum up in a few words the impression which their behavior had made upon my mind, I declare to you that I should think was passing the highest and most flattering encomium possible on any one of my hearers, if I told him that he was as true and loyal a Frenchman as they were."

FACTS AND WITNESSES LIKE THE FOREGO-

ING proved too strong even for Paul Bert; he was obliged to shift his ground. Just then he heard for the first time of the moral theology of Father Gury, S. J., and it was suggested to him by his friends that there was an occasion to rival, if not to surpass Pascal in attacking the moral teaching of the Jesuits. He set to work at once, pursued substantially the same methods as the Provincial Letters, and produced his famous attack on the Jesuits. His methods are briefly these: He distorts and falsifies his author's meaning by incorrect translation, by suppressing qualifying clauses or important words, by leaving out distinctions and conditions on which the whole question depends, and by stretching legitimate consequences far beyond the bounds of truth and justice. And in this way he proves that the Jesuits countenance cheating, lying, stealing, debauchery, incest and murder. Meanwhile the accused parties were not idle. No sooner had the book "La Morale des Jesuites" appeared, than the representative of Father Gury, his literary executor, instituted suit against Mr. Bert in a court in Lyons, for maliciously distorting and falsifying the teaching of Father Gury. The case came to a trial, and over sixty passages from "La Morale des Jesuites" were cited to sustain the complaints of the prosecution. The charges against Mr. Bert's book were made good, and the Court pronounced sentence against the libel and slander on the works of Fr. Gury and the Jesuits. If I am correctly informed, Mr. Bert soon had his revenge on the Lyonsese judge, for when Gambetta & Co. carried their bill for the reform of the magistracy,

THIS PARTICULAR MAGISTRATE WAS RE-

PRESENTED TO US

in Harper's Magazine, of this Paul Bert protesting against the immoral teaching of the Jesuits? This man, branded by the sentence of a French court as a slanderer, introduced to the American public as the champion of truth, honesty and morality, against the teaching of the Jesuits, which he misrepresents and falsifies on every page. His book, which has been characterized by one critic as "full of reckless and unblushing mendacity," and by another as "one of the colossal lies of the present age," is called in Harper's a successful exposure of Jesuit "immorality." Is it possible for any sane man to believe that it has been reserved for Paul Bert to discover the immoral teaching of the Jesuits? Has not their colleges been open to the public for 300 years? Catholic and Protestant, Jew and infidel have listened to their preaching or sat in their schools. The world of Christian youth in every land have been their devoted pupils. Their books are in every library, they are for sale in every book store. Their works on moral theology have received the approval of Catholic Bishops, and are in the hands of clergy and seminaries all over the world. Is it only a French Radical or a Paul Bert who has the courage to lift up his voice against their immoral principles? Where are youth taught to be chaste and modest, honest and obedient, truthful and charitable? In Catholic or in infidel schools?

WHERE IS THE OBLIGATION OF RESTITUTION

in Catholic or in Atheistic schools? Where are youth taught, "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor?" Certainly not in the school of Paul Bert. From him they can learn only the principles of a brutal materialism, which will make them selfish and cruel, without conscience and without God. Parents who believe their children have souls to be saved, consciences to be lightened, minds to be cultivated, hearts to be disciplined to virtue, will not be deterred even by the slanders of Mr. Bert or the Harpers from intrusting them to the care of those who hold that the soul is more important than the body, and that the next life is more important than the present. They know that Christianity produces saints and heroes; while atheism and materialism can beget only a Paul Bert or a Louise Michel. In the struggle for the possession of men's souls Mr. Bert and the Catholic Church are on opposite sides. He fights under the lead of one who, from the beginning, has been a false prophet, a favorite apostate, and deserved to be called "THE FATHER OF LIES."

THE EXAMPLE HAS NOT BEEN LOST ON THOSE who belong to that school. When the thing that is will not serve Mr. Bert's purpose, he has no hesitation to invent the thing that is not. What though his falsehoods are exposed and his calumnies refuted? They will in the meantime have done their work of poisoning minds against the principles of Christianity or the persons of its ministers. If men would only reflect and examine for themselves, the calumnies of Mr. Bert and the Harpers would meet with little success in discrediting the moral teaching of that Church which has been, in every age, the mother of saints. That cause must be strong, indeed, which cannot be assailed except with the weapons of dishonesty and falsehood.

A NEW CATECHISM IN DRAYTON.

Q.—What is rheumatism? A.—Rheumatism is a humorous sensation that causes men to rub their joints with St. Jacobs Oil, play practical jokes, throw things around, wear crutches and stay indoors swathed in red flannel.—Drayton (C.) New Era.

Q.—What is St. Jacobs Oil?

A.—A peculiar substance of a very penetrating nature, which causes rheumatism to leave the system astonishingly quick, insuring evenness of temper thereby, and ability to do one's work satisfactorily. It banishes crutches, retires flannels, produces happiness, and brings us down to a serene old age without the martyrdom of pain.—Exchange.

pendium of Moral Theology is not an innovation in the theology of the Catholic Church. It lays claim to no novelty. It has invented no new principles of morality which cannot be found in Archbishop Kenrick (of Baltimore) or Father Liguori's compendium. It does not make lawful now what was essentially unlawful three hundred or a thousand years ago. The principles of Catholic morality are the unchanging principles of natural law and right reason, supplemented and made perfect by the law of the Gospel and the legislation of the Church of Christ. It is only the application of those principles that varies, according to the ever-varying circumstances of individual lives. If Jesuit teaching corrupts youth now, so does all Catholic teaching, so does Christianity itself. And here, gentlemen, I have reached

THE REASON AND MOTIVE OF PAUL BERT'S

ATTACK

upon the Jesuits. They are only the pretext. What he assails, what he hates and longs to destroy, by any means, however foul, is the Catholic Church, and, in her, Christianity. He makes no secret of his object. The work he seeks to accomplish he has avowed to the world. It is the aim of the party in which he holds a leading place, to overthrow Christianity and leave in its place "superstition" in France. First close all religious schools and expel the religious orders; then make the State schools atheistic and force into them all the children in France; and finally legislate against the Bishops and clergy till they are driven from the country. Such is the programme. And to expedite the work of dechristianizing the youth of France, this same Paul Bert has framed a catechism of Atheism, which is to supplant the catechism of Christian Doctrine; a catechism in which the children are to be taught, that "God is only a name," that "religion is superstition," that "the soul is not a spirit," and that "there is no heaven and no hell." In a word, Mr. Bert and his friends have undertaken to produce a nation of atheists, of moral monsters, such as the world has never yet seen. How long they will be suffered to humiliate and chastise their unhappy country, God alone knows. It is hard to imagine what greater punishment could be inflicted on any country than to be, even for a short time, under the dominion of such. And now,

WHAT SHALL WE SAY OF THE SPECTACLE

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in Harper's Magazine, of this Paul Bert protesting against the immoral teaching of the Jesuits? This man, branded by the sentence of a French court as a slanderer, introduced to the American public as the champion of truth, honesty and morality, against the teaching of the Jesuits, which he misrepresents and falsifies on every page. His book, which has been characterized by one critic as "full of reckless and unblushing mendacity," and by another as "one of the colossal lies of the present age," is called in Harper's a successful exposure of Jesuit "immorality." Is it possible for any sane man to believe that it has been reserved for Paul Bert to discover the immoral teaching of the Jesuits? Has not their colleges been open to the public for 300 years? Catholic and Protestant, Jew and infidel have listened to their preaching or sat in their schools. The world of Christian youth in every land have been their devoted pupils. Their books are in every library, they are for sale in every book store. Their works on moral theology have received the approval of Catholic Bishops, and are in the hands of clergy and seminaries all over the world. Is it only a French Radical or a Paul Bert who has the courage to lift up his voice against their immoral principles? Where are youth taught to be chaste and modest, honest and obedient, truthful and charitable? In Catholic or in infidel schools?

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DEVOTION TO THE SACRED HEART.

The Experience of a Layman in Reference to the Promises Made to Blessed Margaret Mary.

Boston, May 5, 1882.

To the Editor of The Catholic Record:—I was very glad to see, in your last issue, the extract from the Messenger of the Sacred Heart, in regard to the consolatory promises of our Lord, of the grace of Holy Communion on nine first Fridays. There is another promise, intimately connected with this, made to the same Blessed Margaret Mary, to which I desire, with your kind permission, to call the attention of your readers; I mean the promise that He will bless every household in which a picture or statue of His Sacred Heart is exposed and venerated.

Unfortunately, there are a great many Catholics, especially those who have been educated in our public schools, who have no faith in these extraordinary manifestations to the saints, and hence these promises of our Lord to His favored servant, who was specially chosen for the propagation of devotion to His Sacred Heart, are passed by as not worthy of credence, and of course, they deprive themselves of the great benefits of which they must otherwise be partakers. Now, I am confident that I have experienced the fulfillment of our Lord's gracious promise, to which I have alluded, in my own family, and that, too, in such a marked manner that I feel constrained, from a sense of gratitude, as well as from a desire to extend the benefits of this devotion, to recommend, most earnestly, to my fellow-Catholics generally the fulfillment of the conditions necessary to entitle them to share in this precious blessing. I have had, for several years, in my house, a good sized Sacred Heart statue, standing on a pedestal in the upper hall. Also a picture of our Lord and His Sacred Heart, and I have taken pains to encourage this beautiful devotion of the Sacred Heart in my family, the members of which, I am happy to say, are not ashamed, nor are they afraid of the sin of idolatry, in paying acts of affectionate reverence and devotion towards these representations of our Lord and His Sacred Heart, under the attractive character of a supreme lover. Let any one who is doubtful try the experiment in good faith and if his experience corresponds with mine, and I am sure it will, he will find the blessings of peace, harmony and love gradually descending upon his household; the little bickerings and misunderstandings which will sometimes occur to mar the complete happiness of the best regulated families will cease; and, if I am not mistaken, he will find that some kind Providence that thus pours the ointment of peace over his household will also provide that the barrel of meal shall never diminish. To those who are skeptical on this subject, I would earnestly recommend the reading of the life of Blessed Margaret Mary Alacoque.

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