

SEE TRUTH ABOUT THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

BY A PROTESTANT THEOLOGIAN. CCLXX.

The Protestant assumption still maintained by the average teaching, though somewhat less truculently than once, that we have the Gospel and Catholics at best only a distorted caricature of it, could not be made out that there had been, from the Apostles' times, an unbroken and distinctly traceable succession, if not of formally declared, at least of virtual Protestants.

We have noted that the Reformers at first endeavored to find this assurance in the Greek Church. Had they succeeded, they would have secured a great triumph, since the ordinations and sacraments of the Greeks are undisputed. "It is not lawful for a Catholic," says Pope Benedict XIV., "to call in question the sacraments of the Eastern Church."

Moreover, the Greek Russians now number some eighty five millions, and in Melancthon's and Bucer's time they seem to have been relatively quite as numerous. However, Constantinople, after a little consideration, emphatically refused to extend her pastoral staff over North western Europe. She said then in fact what the Greeks have lately said explicitly: "Settle your quarrel with your own Patriarch before you apply to us." Moreover, the Easterns, after duly examining the Protestant positions, sided with Rome in almost or quite every point. Indeed they availed themselves of the Tridentine definitions to round out their own doctrine of the Eucharist, and to complete their canon of Scripture. As we have seen in the case of Bishop Grafton, they still resent any impeachment of the Eucharistic soundness of Trent.

These early overtures were from the Lutherans. After they were repulsed there seems to have been a long quiescence. At last, in the next century the Calvinists, in their turn, made efforts for a Concordat with Greece, and for a little while secured an astonishing victory, putting one of their own disciples, Cyril Lucar, on the patriarchal throne of Constantinople. The bewildered Greeks remained passive for a while, but at length, having fully satisfied themselves of their Patriarch's heresy they persuaded the Sultan to depose him, and I am sorry to say, to put him privately to death. At last, in the Synod of Bethlehem, held I believe, in 1672, the Easterns condemned Protestantism root and branch. Since then the Greeks have been known for what they really are, as at one with Rome in almost everything except the question of the Primacy. The ritual and disciplinary differences are confessedly unessential, and the Apostolic See permits the Uniates to retain them.

Disappointed in their endeavors to find their supposed succession among the Greeks, the Protestants cast about to see if perchance they might secure it through the Waldenses and Albigensians. Our own William D. Howells—though with no polemical intent against Rome—ingeniously describes the Waldenses as the oldest episcopal succession in the world. Such legends greatly amuse the eminent Waldensian scholar, Dr. Emil Comba. They say, he says, he does not worth the paper they are written on. The more carefully, he says, we compare the Waldensian with the Catholic chronicles, the more completely we are convinced that Catholic history gives us the exact truth, namely, that the Waldenses are a body founded about 1173 as a preaching order by the merchant Peter Waldo of Lyons.

Dr. Comba rejects utterly all attempts to find some nebulous predecessors of the Waldenses. He says, the slightest evidence of such, at any time or in any place. The attempts to identify them with the followers of Claudius of Turin are an utter failure, not to say that Claudius himself lived many centuries after the Apostles.

Moreover, he remarks, the Waldenses, although at odds with the Roman See, always held themselves to be Catholics. They finally maintained Transubstantiation, and doubted whether anybody could say Mass except in the name of an unbroken succession. Bossuet points out that they enjoyed yearly auricular confession, and were most confident of its efficacy if made to the parish priest. They were finally driven into Calvinism by the force of their antipathy to the Papacy. Let themselves they inclined rather to Pelagianism. In Italy, they insisted inexorably that their ministers, though not priests, must remain unmarried. In one point, we must own, they were almost as good Protestants as we are in New England; they allowed divorces for almost anything and every thing.

Doubtless priests now and then joined them, but it is not pretended that they ever received one Bishop. Of course then they could not be some episcopal succession, and we have seen that they were in no proper sense Protestants. A small body of them in Austria, in the Hussite confusions, once obtained for three of their ministers ordination to the priesthood and consecration to the episcopate, and transmitted this succession to the Moravians, but did not maintain it for themselves. Besides, as they only date back 732 years, we can not make them serve our turn as a succession of any sort, unless we can connect them with a previous body.

was not Jehovah, but a being whom they put above Him. Their Christ was a mere phantom. The Manicheans, indeed, are understood to have utterly rejected the Christian name. Do we want these for our spiritual ancestors?

It must be said for the Waldenses that when they came finally to understand what the Albigensians really were they withdrew from their fellowship with abhorrence, and thenceforward they themselves unwaveringly on the Catholic side in the controversy against them. Being diligent students of the Scriptures, they are said to have been very helpful to the priesthood in their conferences with the Albigensians. Whatever their faults and errors may have been, it is an insult to them, and a greater insult to us, to find our spiritual ancestry in a line of Manichean Dualists.

The messengers whom the early Protestants sent out to ascertain whether they could not find a spiritual succession through the Waldenses came back, it seems, disappointed and disgusted, reporting that their lines of supposed spiritual ancestors were either malignant heretics or too uncertain and interrupted to be of any significance. The fact is, Protestantism is an independent appropriation of Christianity founded in the temperament of the Teutonic races, but having no other analogies in the past than such imperfect analogies as result from a common opposition to the See of Rome. Wycliffism is hardly Hussism, and decidedly neither is Protestantism, nor were the Waldenses either Lollards or Hussites or heretics. These movements had resemblances, but they were not continuous successions. And yet there are even now fools who declare the Albigensians and the Waldenses two bodies that detested each other to be the Two Witnesses of the Revelation!

CHARLES C. STARBUCK, Andover, Mass.

THEY ARE COMING FASTER THAN EVER.

It is difficult to note all the converts who are coming to the Church these days, the numbers are growing so large. We may mention among the more recent ones: Mrs. Winthrop Ruthford, fourth daughter of Love P. Morton, former Vice-President of the United States. She was a well-known member of Grace Church, New York, where her marriage was celebrated by Dr. Huntington in 1901.

Willrid Shebore, organist and director of music at the Crowley Fathers, (Anglican) Church, Oxford, England, was received into the Church by Father Maturin a few days ago. He is a very able musician, and his work at Crowley received exceptional praise from Padre di Santi, S. J. (member of the Papal commission on music), when he was in England last autumn. Two of the older choir boys of the same church were also received into the Church a few weeks ago.

Mrs. Launt Thompson, sister of Henry Codman Potter, Episcopal Bishop, of New York, and widow of the celebrated and erratic scotter, has been received into the Church, in Florence, Italy.

Mrs. Thompson made a solemn abjuration of Protestantism in the ancient Church of San Piero Gattolino, Florence, Italy, and this was followed by her confession and confirmation. The Archbishop of Florence graced the ceremonies with his presence.

Episcopalianism was "bred in the bone" with Mrs. Thompson it is said. Her grandfather was a Quaker and a farmer, but her male relatives have been in high place and influential in the Protestant Episcopal Church.—The Missionary.

CATHOLICS AND PROTESTANT SERVICES.

The question may sometimes be asked: "Why do Catholics give missions to non Catholics, and speak of their own as expanded by Catholic priests, when at the same time Catholics resent any attempt to get Catholics to attend a Protestant service? The answer is simply this: Protestants are invited by Catholics to listen to explanations of Catholic doctrine, because Catholics know that Protestants can attend without violating any principle of Protestantism, which is a religion of private opinion. Disclaiming infallibility both for himself and for the denomination to which he may at present be giving his allegiance, a logical Protestant must necessarily be in the attitude of a seeker after truth. On the other hand, a Catholic, not resting his faith on varying and fallible witnesses, but on the infallible Church, believes that he possesses an absolute certainty in this: that the one Church and the only Church that Jesus Christ established. This fact is as clear and unshakable in his mind as the mathematical proposition that two and two make four. It admits of no question, no shadow of a doubt. The logical Protestant is and must be a seeker after truth; the Catholic believes that he has already found it. The Protestant therefore can take part in any religious service, for he knows not at what turn he may receive more light to cause him to change his present denomination for another, but the Catholic, because of the facts stated, can not, without violating the essential principle of his faith, take part in the religious service of any Church, but of that which he believes to have been instituted by Christ. Participation therefore in a Protestant service is a question of liberality or toleration or broad-mindedness; it is a question simply of right and wrong.

To-day there is a splendid and growing confidence that truth is stronger than error, light than darkness, love than hate. The doctrine that prophesies the victories of the armies of God and the final reconciliation of all men to Himself is the evangel that is gladdening the world and serving all good men in their conflict with evil.—Rev. R. E. Sykes.

FIVE-MINUTE SERMON. Fifteenth Sunday After Pentecost.

SINS OF PARENTS. And Jesus said: Young man, I say to thee, arise. (St. Luke viii, 14)

Many mourning parents, brethren, are represented by the poor widow of Naim, told in this day's Gospel; and their mourning is for sons dead in mortal sin. These are indeed days of many and various vices, and our young people are far from being exempt. Blasphemy and religious indifference; neglect of prayer, Mass, and the sacraments; drunkenness and impurity; such are the plague spots on the spiritual corpses of many of our young people.

Yet, alas! as parents raise their eyes to our Lord's gracious countenance and beg His pity, they should sometimes confess that they are not without blame for their children by bad example. For if they profane the name of God in the midst of their families, they need not be surprised to find that in after years their children have no reverence for God or for His Church or His sacraments. Fathers who come home smelling strong of drink, and now and then plainly intoxicated, may indeed hope to save their own souls by thorough repentance, but are likely to have drunkards among their children. Parents who tolerate improper language in the household, and can laugh at a double meaning joke, and see no harm in a lascivious dance or a doubtful novel, need not be surprised to find that their daughters have lost maidenly reserve, and that their sons are given to open debauchery. Parents who neglect their own duty, and who do not see their own sinfulness, and who need not be surprised if their children fall quite away from the practice of religion and even from its belief.

Now, it often happens that children who have been treated too leniently while quite young are treated too severely when a little older. Too much authority should not be used with boys and girls who are some years in their teens. With them authority is at best medicine, and not a food. To strengthen a boy's virtue, to make him love religion, to give him a bright notion of the next world and of the value of his soul, the exercise of authority is one means, but perhaps the least useful of all. In some cases authority can only do harm. To make a person who has full use of reason, a good Christian it is necessary to put him in the way of intelligent instruction, by giving him good, readable religious matter, books or papers; by persuading him by such inducements as an occasional little present, and by a continual interest in his progress, to keep his place at Sunday school; by introducing and discussing religious topics in family conversation, and by interesting him to attend sermons and lectures. Meantime let there be many kind words and much sympathetic confidence, forgetfulness of past offences, patience with natural difficulties and with youthful folly; let all this go beforehand and authority will find nothing left to do.

Brethren, do not suppose that it is always best to force one to do what he ought to do; try rather to induce him to do it. St. Francis de Sales has said: "You can catch more flies with a wedge of honey than with a barrel of good example." Therefore it is that so many scolding parents end by becoming weeping parents. Parental authority, which should be merely the supremacy of all that is worthy of affection, has made home hateful and driven the children into occasions of sin—the saloon and the low theatre for the boys; the stolen interview and the common dance for the girls.

But, some one might say, what if your child has got beyond you and will bad in spite of every best endeavor on your part—what then? Well, at any rate there is no sense in railing at him. If you cannot make him better, what is the sense of making him miserable? And is not then the very time to lay in and lead our Lord up to him, and, kneeling down, say: O Lord! have pity on me, for this is my dear son, dead in mortal sin? Say but the word; touch his dead soul with Thy loving hand; stir him up to repentance!

Many such prayers cannot be said without producing their effect; the resurrection of your child's soul from the death of mortal sin.

A Mean Trick.

"It is a well-known fact that a larger proportion of Separate school children than public school pupils, who try the entrance examinations, are successful because the Separate school authorities require a very high standard before allowing pupils to try for such examination."—Toronto News.

What's this? Separate school authorities requiring a higher standard than public school authorities? Why, how can that be when those who favor Separate schools are bent on keeping the children in ignorance? For the Catholic schools of Ontario to play a trick like this just after the News has spent months in proving what an injury it does to educated citizenship is simply intolerable.—Montreal Herald.

LIQUOR AND TOBACCO HABITS

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PROTESTANT ADMIRATION FOR CATHOLIC SAINTS.

Nobody who makes any pretense of being abreast of the times can have failed to notice the changed attitude of Protestants towards principles, practices, devotions, etc., once held to be "Romish" and hence abominable. In no way is this more clearly and strikingly manifested than in the growth of Protestant admiration for some of the saints. Indeed one would suppose that poor St. Francis of Assisi were a true blue Protestant, from the way our separated brethren have adopted him into their gallery of heroes. St. Catherine of Siena is another of our saints who has fallen into Protestant hands, as it were. Miss Vida D. Scudder has just written a book about the saint, "St. Catherine of Siena as seen in Her Letters," and from this book the Protestant and secular press has discovered how much sanity and spiritual excellence there was in the character of a Catholic mystic. The Churchman (Protestant Episcopalian) says, in reviewing Miss Scudder's book: "Until the saint of Assisi won his way to our hearts and minds, there was in the modern world a certain antipathy or at least a lack of sympathy for the medieval saints. Even now, to a vast majority of Protestants, St. Francis is the exception proving the rule; but his popularity has already done much to mitigate prejudice against those of his spiritual type, and to stimulate curiosity at least concerning it. Ten years ago none could see in St. Catherine of Siena little more than an ignorant coquette, in grotesque and painful fashion. To-day students of history and psychology are recognizing that the important characteristics of this remarkable woman are not her hysterical eccentricities, but the spiritual sanity of her mind, the common sense and penetration she exhibited in dealing with human nature, whether in individuals or affairs of State."

We have no desire to deprive our Protestant friends of the luxury of admiring St. Catherine of Siena. They can not very well study her life without profiting thereby. But we would respectfully ask them not to try to make a Protestant of her. Above all things they should refrain from calling her "a forerunner of Luther." Anything "a forerunner of Luther," or anything else concerning St. Teresa which would be for Protestant admirers of Catholic saints to read. "St. Teresa," said this London paper, "was winning and wise, self denying, humorous and discreet; in one simple phrase, she used all her powers in doing, and teaching others do, the right and right thing. Whether in her mystical life, or dealing with dignitaries of the Church and State, she kept the golden mean, never straying into tryanny or heresy or rebellion. Her interior life and her public life show an equal aspiration after justice, the will of God, the precise and definite truth. To all the reformers she is an example; all who in Church and State take the side of absolute right, and a world of indifference and misunderstanding and antagonism, may copy her. She flung no fanatical defiance in the face of the world; she struck out no ray of her own; she did not part company with the past. She neither clamored like Carlyle, nor wailed like Rousseau, nor thundered like Savonarola; but what she believed to be right, for that she worked sparingly but steadily, for the law and light of God."—Sacred Heart Review.

Religious Liberty Wanted.

A new bill for the amendment of the royal declaration that is made when a sovereign first ascends the throne in England has been introduced in Parliament by Lord Liancaff. It pledges the monarch to faithful membership in the reformed Church by law established. The amendment ought to have religious liberty.—Catholic Columbian.

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