

the very thought of missing Mass, through neglect or for some light excuse, on a Sunday or holiday, when every Catholic is obliged by such a sacred command and under penalty of mortal sin, would not have entered Grace's mind, much less, as now, be looked upon as a mortal sin. And to plan deliberately to miss Mass, without the least shadow of excuse—to contemplate without any qualm a deliberate mortal sin—what a change.

Realizing that further pleading was useless, Florence awaited her brother's return. Patiently Walter listened as she explained. He was silent for a minute or two.

"Florence," he said, "send Grace to me. In the meantime, I am going to telephone to Agnes Lyons and tell her that it will be useless for her to call as she intended, because you will both be at Mass."

"Oh, Walter, Walter, how could you do such a thing?" Grace exclaimed as she rushed into the room a few minutes later. "I just heard your last words to Agnes. What will the girls think of me? I shall never be able to look at them again. It was so lovely of Agnes to offer to take us. If you get us a car like other girls we shouldn't have to depend on the charity of our friends. Just because of Florence's miserable scruples—she's so narrow-minded—everything is upset. She makes me so weary! I can't imagine what the girls will think of me. Oh, Walter, why did you telephone?"

The excited girl flung herself, weeping, into a chair. Gently Walter tried to quiet her. He realized that firmness was needed, and, although his words seemed almost lost, he tried to reason with her between her sobs.

"You know, Grace, that nothing pleases me more than to see Florence and you happy, and that I would not do anything that would deprive either of you of any pleasure, but the mere fact that you have planned an excursion for Sunday is no reason for your not hearing Mass, especially when you can do so without grave inconvenience. Now, dear, dry your eyes or you will make yourself ill. You can go to the first Mass and take the eight-o'clock car which will bring you down to the wharf in plenty of time. The enjoyment of an automobile ride does not justify you in violating a serious command of the Church."

"Yes, and if the car is late?"

"The car is very seldom late. What about delay with the machine? You might have run the same risk of being late because of a tire blow-out. Personally, I do not see why you girls do not take the trip to Oak Point. The sail is really beautiful and the boat does not leave until 10 o'clock. There will be no interference with you hearing Mass."

Evening was always a time of pleasure in the little home, but tonight the hours dragged slowly, for Grace, in her disappointment, deliberately made herself as disagreeable as possible.

Sunday was everything that a perfect Summer day should be: the grass and the flowers were fresher and fairer after the rain and the dark rain and dark skies of Saturday. Florence was filled with the spirit of the new day. The gloomy weather was the cause of all our trouble yesterday, she told herself, as she listened to the birds filling the outside air with song. Grace will be reasonable today; this beautiful weather would put anyone in good humor. She will be her own sweet self, and we shall have a lovely day. However, things are not always as we plan, and when Grace appeared, it was quite evident that she was far from being her own sweet self.

"Don't worry about the valise," Walter had told the girls, as they started for Mass. I'll meet you at the car on my way to the Holy Name Mass.

An hour later, he met his sisters as he had promised.

"That thermos does weigh the valise down. I'm sorry I can't take it in to the boat for you, but the fact is, I shall not have time to wait until the car comes in. I shall have to start back now to get into my place in time. Good-by, girls; a pleasant day. Remember that a boot leaves at 10 for Oak Point, should you miss the one you are starting out to get."

"Oak Point, indeed!" Grace snapped rudely. "Who wants to go to Oak Point?"

Some trouble with the rails unexpectedly delayed the car, and it was almost half a hour late in starting. When the girls finally reached the pier, it was to learn that they were five minutes behind time. The boat, its white sides glistening in the sun light, was well out in the stream.

Coaxing and petting were useless, and it was out of the question even to mention Walter's suggestion of Oak Point, for Grace, in her anger, took the valise to the end of the pier and emptied the lunch into the water below. The ride home was a miserable one. More than once Grace indignantly referred to "scrupulous nuns," who should be in the convents and not living in the world and taking the joy out of the lives of everybody near them.

"The next time," she snapped, "you may be certain that I will follow my own wishes, no matter what Walter may say. Everything is spoiled and all because of your convent scruple."

During the afternoon, a thunderstorm, as severe as it was unexpected, killed all hope that perhaps the beautiful weather might coax Grace to go out. Book in hand, Florence had resigned herself to the inevitable. There was nothing for her to do but to wait for the long afternoon to pass. Grace had gone to her room and Walter would not be home until the evening.

The silence of the house was suddenly broken by the sharp ring of the telephone bell. With a start, Florence awoke, bewildered and confused. How long she had been asleep, she could not tell, for it was now dark. On her way to the telephone she stumbled over Grace, whom she had not noticed in the shadow of the room.

"Is that you, Florence?" Walter's voice called anxiously over the wire.

"Yes."

"Is Grace there?"

"Yes."

"Thank God!"

"Walter, what has happened? Where are you? What are you saying? Grace, come and take the phone; something is wrong. I'm so nervous, I can't hear what Walter is saying."

"Nervous! I should think you would be nervous, after your muddle of today. Well, Walter, what's the matter?"

"Is that you, Grace?"

"Yes," came the cold answer.

"Tell me how you two girls came home?"

"What are you talking about, Walter? We came home in the cars by which we went, and which we have to thank for missing the boat, all through following your wise advice!"

"Thank God you did, Grace. The steamer to Sound View was wrecked in the storm this afternoon, and the Western Union telegraph operator here says that they don't know how many have been drowned. The government revenue boats are bringing in the survivors."

Grace stood dazed at the telephone.

"Florence," and her voice came in an awed gasp, "Florence—the boat, the Sound View boat is wrecked."

A sudden rush of tears blinded her and she hung up the receiver. For a moment she stood as though stunned and about to faint; then she threw her arms convulsively about her sister's neck.

"Florence, forgive me for being so ugly and so disagreeable today and for daring to call your sense of duty a miserable scruple. God saved me through you and Walter. What might have happened if we had neglected our duty to God and missed Mass without reason?"

—Anna W. Mullrine in Messenger of Sacred Heart.

MISGUIDED GENIUS

Whether is the literature of this generation tending? To pass the book shelves of our cities and to glimpse the absurd titles that books of today carry is to get some idea of the abyss into which an unthinking generation can fall when high inspiration departs. Years ago, when had poets and authors of fiction of whom we could justly feel proud.

The subjects of which they sang or wrote were lofty, and carried a moral lesson. They left the world better for their effort and labour. They knew no such thing as slang. They shrank from the profane and touched on religion only with the reverence of God fearing men. Today, with but few exceptions, what do we find? Sex hygiene treated in such a way as to hurt rather than ennoble. Love, more love, then, free love, disparagement of the marriage bond, the exaltation of divorce and prurient themes that attract fallen human nature and cater to base passion.

Is it any wonder that we are faced with the problems of juvenile depravity and delinquency? Is it to be marvelled at that disobedience is a common fault? Can we question the fact that bad books are to blame for the great lack of reverence for duly constituted civil and ecclesiastical authority and for an absurd independence, so called, that are making a shambles of family and national life?

It was said of old that no man thought in his heart. This is a strong indictment of this generation. It is far easier to carp and criticize than to uplift and construct. It would be far more pleasing to praise our present ephemeral writers than to indict their lubricity, but there is sad need of the same solid thought and lofty principles in writing that made of the past generation a memorable people who built for the prosperity and happiness of posterity.

The mass of slang and nonsense that is passing for best sellers does no credit to literature. In song and story, the tale is the same. We must go back to get inspiration. And that composition whether in music or literature which vivifies and fortifies us comes from a strong religious instinct of a religious generation.—The Pilot.

Dangers are to be met with in spiritual aridity as well as in consolation. If consolation may inspire pride, aridity may induce lukewarmness.—St. Ignatius Loyola.

A man may have some doubts about his views being right, but he hardly ever doubts that his opponent is wrong.

MACAULAY, THEN AND NOW

By Edward H. Peters, C. S. P., in The Missionary

Mr. Chesterton's recent article in the Catholic World on the youth of the Church calls to mind the fact that he is not the first to recognize the great paradox that the Church is ever being defeated, and yet is ever triumphing. No one has described that two-fold, seemingly contradictory process more vividly than Macaulay.

"The proudest royal houses," he says, "are but yesterday when compared with the line of Supreme Pontiffs. That line we trace back in an unbroken series from the pope who crowned Napoleon in the nineteenth century to the pope who crowned Pepin in the eighth; and far beyond the time of Pepin the august dynasty extends, till it is lost in the twilight of fable. The republic of Venice came next in antiquity. But the republic of Venice was modern when compared with the Papacy; and the republic of Venice is gone and the Papacy remains. The Papacy remains, not a mere antique, but full of life and youthful vigor. The Catholic Church is still sending forth missionaries as zealous as those who landed in Kent with Augustine, and still confronts hostile kings with the same spirit with which she confronted Attila. The number of her children is greater than in any former age. Her acquisitions in the new world have more than compensated her for what she has lost in the old. . . . Nor do we see any sign which indicates that the term of her long dominion is approaching. She saw the commencements of all the governments and of all the ecclesiastical establishments that now exist in the world, and we feel no assurance that she is not destined to see the end of them all. She was great and respected before the Saxon had set foot on Britain, before the Frank had passed the Rhine, when Grecian eloquence still flourished in Antioch, when idols were still worshipped in the temple of Mecca. And she may still exist in undiminished vigor when some traveller from New Zealand shall, in the midst of a vast solitude take his stand upon a broken arch of London Bridge to sketch the ruins of St. Paul's."

So does he sing the triumphant march of the Church through history in the first pages of his discussion of Von Ranke's History of the Popes, and the note of the eternal perseverance of the Church then struck is carried through the entire essay. But he does not neglect the other side of the paradox, for he enumerates four deadly struggles through which the Church has passed, and he discusses their effect upon her. They are the Albigensian heresy, the "Babylonian captivity" at Avignon, the Protestant revolt, and the French Revolution. In two of these, he tells us, she seemed to have received a mortal wound. Yet she passed through them all successfully, and despite conflict and loss, her membership is still far more than that of all other Christian bodies—a revelation to many English-speaking persons, even Catholic, who fail to get a proper perspective because of their immediate surroundings.

The first two struggles are easily passed over in the essay because of their lack of present interest. But his treatment of the third trial through which the Church has passed must have been a bombshell to many a stolid, self-satisfied Englishman. His description of the laxity and even vice that had crept into high ecclesiastical circles would cause no great surprise, for that was many an Englishman's daily mental food, but the startling thing was that he was not a bit more gentle with the "reforming" party. The initiators of the Reformation are great heroic figures in his mind, of course; but he says that the great old leaders left naught but lukewarm and worldly successors, divided among themselves, and ready to compromise with the enemy.

And he does not content himself with the admission that some of the reformers were not saints. He also contends that not all the Catholics were scoundrels, but that they had their saints as well. This, he says, was because, "two reformations were pushed on at once with energy and effort, a reformation of doctrines in the North, a reformation of manners and discipline in the South." He tells us that the Catholic reformation spread its influence from the Vatican to the most secluded hermitage of the Apennines. He tells of the various monastic reforms,—the Camaldolese, the Capuchins, the Barnabites. He compares the Theatines to the early Methodists in their strictness of life; and from the Theatines he led on to St. Ignatius and the Jesuits.

If ever there were a place where we might expect vilification and abuse from a popular English writer of the last century, it would be in his discussion of the Society of Jesus. But hear what Macaulay says. He tells us that when in the midst of visions of martial glory and prosperous love, the constitution of Ignatius Loyola was shattered and he was doomed to be a cripple for life, a new vision rose in his soul, and he resolved to smite the Red Dragon, and become the champion of the Woman clothed with the Sun. How he took up his abode at Venice in the convent of

the Theatines, who were among the most zealous and rigid of men, and their movements sluggish. Of his order, Macaulay has this to say: "In the order of Jesus was concentrated the quintessence of the Catholic spirit; and the history of the order of Jesus is the history of the great Catholic reaction. . . . Wherever a Jesuit preached, the church was too small for the audience. The name of a Jesuit on a title page secured the circulation of a book. Literature and science, lately associated with infidelity and with heresy, now became the allies of orthodoxy. In spite of oceans and deserts, of hunger and pestilence, of spies and penal laws, of dungeons and racks, of gibbets and quartering blocks, Jesuits were to be found under every disguise and in every country; scholars, physicians, merchants, Sweden; in the hostile Court of Charles, in the old manor-houses of Cheshire, among the hovels of Connaught, arguing, instructing, consoling, stealing away the hearts of the young, animating the courage of the timid, holding up the crucifix to the eyes of the dying."

It is this revival of Catholic zeal that Macaulay uses to explain the outcome of the religious struggles of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. He tells us that, "at first the chances seemed decidedly in favor of Protestantism; but the victory remained with the Church of Rome. On every point she was successful. If we overlap another half-century" (to a date a hundred years after Luther) "we find her victorious and dominant in France, Belgium, Bavaria, Austria, Poland and Hungary. Nor has Protestantism in the course of 200 years been able to reconquer any portion of what was then lost. Fifty years after the Lutheran separation Catholicism could scarcely maintain itself on the shores of the Mediterranean. A hundred years after the separation, Protestantism could scarcely maintain itself on the shores of the Baltic. The contest between the two parties bore some resemblance to the fencing match in Shakespeare: 'Laertes wounds Hamlet; then, in cuffing, they change rapiers, and Hamlet wounds Laertes.'"

In his description of the fourth great trial through which the Church has passed successfully, Macaulay shows a depth of understanding of the internal life of the Church that is surprising in one who remained outside the fold. The distinction between the essential and the accidental in doctrine, and the proper extent of the inerrancy of the Church, are ideas not easily grasped by the ordinary Protestant. Macaulay tells us that the young Brahmin learns to smile at the myths of the Hindus when he begins to go to school, because the Hindu myths are bound up with an absurd geography. He explains that this has not been the case with Catholicism.

"If Catholicism has not suffered to an equal degree from the Papal decision that the sun goes round the earth, this is because all intelligent Catholics now hold, with Pascal, that, in deciding the point at all, the Church exceeded her powers, and was, therefore, justly left destitute of that supernatural assistance which in the exercise of her legitimate functions, the promise of her founder authorized her to expect." He even uses the word accidental. He says of the French Revolution that "irreligion, accidentally associated with philosophy, triumphed over religion accidentally associated with political and social abuses."

It is a wonderful picture that Macaulay has painted for us. He holds up before our eyes the oldest of ecclesiastical establishments, and the one that is likely to survive them all. This institution conceals the two great eras of civilization. Its head is the possessor of the highest dignity in the world, antedating all others in the splendor of its antiquity. This society has successfully weathered the storm of centuries. It has survived the attacks of deadly enemies without. It has overcome the treachery of more deadly enemies within, enemies that preyed upon the vital life of its sanctity. At the present time it is greater in numbers and moral force than ever in its history, while for 200 years—it is close to 300 now—the other Christian bodies have had to struggle to maintain their positions.

All this was not the result of a passing phase in the life of the great historian. The main lines of the essay can be seen in his notes and correspondence during his visit to Rome in 1828, two years before the review of Von Ranke's History appeared. As for the reformers, he expresses the same sentiments in their regard in his essay on Hallam's Constitutional History.

This intellectual appeal of Catholicism was accompanied by no small emotional excitement. His wonderful burst of rhetoric quoted at the beginning of this article would be proof enough of that. But he has expressed it definitely himself in another place. "I have finished Manzoni's novel (Il Promessi Sposi) not without tears," he writes. "The scene between the Archbishop and Don Abbondio is one of the noblest that I know. . . . If the Church of Rome were fully what Manzoni represents her to be, I should be tempted to follow Newman's example."

There are a few remarks in the essay that may not entirely please Catholics. They would prefer that the origin of the Papacy would not be referred to as lost in the twilight of fable. We do not like to hear the old slander about Jesuit laxity in moral teaching repeated. We could well afford to do without both the pity and the smile which he bestows upon St. Ignatius' visions of the Trinity and transubstantiation. But on the whole, the picture of the Church is true to type, and even winning; and none of the points just mentioned would long stand in the way of one who was attracted in so many ways toward the true fold of Christ. Yet Macaulay did not come in.

It was something more fundamental than any of these things just mentioned that was responsible for his failure. Despite all his vivid imagination, his great understanding of, and sympathy for the Church, his recognition of the true character of the religious history of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, despite his victory over the common rancor against the Jesuits, there is still deep down within him a solid core of the old British insularity, like another "old Adam." It is true that the Church is not for him the great harlot, nor the beast of the Apocalypse of St. John. He knows better than to imagine every character of a Jesuit, and every Jesuit, a villain. But neither the intellectual nor the emotional appeal that the Church made to him while he was on the continent could overcome the practical difficulties attendant upon being a member of her communion at home. It was not considered the proper thing then for Englishmen to become Catholics. "Nice people" did not do it. And so, in self-defense, he set upon what he considered the backward condition of the southern countries of Europe as an instance of the stagnating effects of Catholicism. He claimed to have judged Catholicism by its fruits and to have found it wanting.

A Catholic, however, will obtain no little comfort from the course of events during the last century. He might even take some pleasure in speculating as to what Macaulay's conduct would be in the face of modern conditions. No one considers it improper now for an Englishman to become a Catholic. Ever so many of the "best people" are doing it. Things have greatly changed since Macaulay's time, but the Church still continues, as he predicted, to present the same attraction to inquiring minds that she did to that of John Henry Newman. If we consider the present situation of Europe we see what a tremendous surge of masonry and steel the northern industrialism which Macaulay so admired has become. It is the South of Europe, and not the North, that is the better off now. Even the unmanly attack upon the Church recently made by a clergyman of the Church of England admits that the Catholic Church is the one great religious force that gets results. It might be that if Macaulay had lived to see our day he would have recognized that the mastery policy of the Church has its economic as well as its political and religious influences. He might see that the Protestant revolt was an attack on the physical and political as well as the religious well-being of Europe. His eyes might open, and he embrace the spirit to follow Newman into the Kingdom of God, where, as St. Paul tells us, all at length shall be peace and joy.

WHAT DO RELIGIOUS STATISTICS MEAN?

The Washington office of the Federal Council of Churches has just sent out a news letter to show statistically that "America is growing more religious." The figures are a compilation made by its own statistician, Dr. Watson, who finds the present membership of all religious bodies in the United States to be 47,461,658, indicating a total growth of 1,220,428. This increase he calculates to be approximately fifty per cent. greater than the average annual growth for the preceding five years. Looked at from another angle, this growth supposes that each day of last year an average of 6,345 persons joined the various religious bodies. Moreover the increase in the clergy and in the number of congregations was doubly as great as the increase in membership.

Judged by figures alone Americans are rapidly becoming a religious people, but numbers count for little while the evidence of increasing divorce, birth control, and similar evils gives pause. Juda and Israel were seldom, if ever, more religious, so far as mere outward acts of worship and the observance of religious rites were concerned, than when the Prophets in vain thundered forth their denunciations against the prevailing rationalism or idolatry that was then almost everywhere mingled with the pure Mosaic Yahweism or else entirely supplanted the one true Faith of that day. The question is not so much now, how many are being daily enrolled in the various Christian bodies, but how pure is their Christianity, how firmly and inflexibly do they hold to the Divinity of Christ, to the inspiration of the Sacred Scriptures, to the truth and the whole truth of Revelation?

It is well indeed that there should be any growth whatsoever from stark infidelity to faith in God, but statistics are very illusory. Is religion merely spreading out into

shallows, or is it gathering into the ocean depths of a faith that can remain tranquil, though the hurricanes sweep its surface and lash it into storms? This is evidently the great question to be determined to-day.

Our Catholic figures are given by Dr. Watson as 18,104,800 baptized persons, or over 15 per cent. less than the carefully collated statistics of the Catholic Directory. Even these latter statistics are always of necessity far below the actual numbers, since no account is taken in them of the many thousands who constitute our large "floating" Catholic population, which will never be listed in any chancery. That, however, is in itself but a small matter which we can readily overlook. The Jewish figures are set at 1,600,000, although we are fairly informed that Jewish authorities estimate their Jewish population at more than 3,300,000. Finally the combined membership of all the various Evangelical Protestant Churches is given as 27,454,080. The greatest increase in membership is accredited to the "Roman Catholic Church." The figures, 219,158, are in fact somewhat higher than the gains we ourselves claim. It is stated, however, that these statistics indicate a lessening of our growth as compared with the normal average for the preceding five years.

But the most interesting and at the same time the most misleading feature of this, as of other similar tabulations, is the great triumphant final estimate of religious constituencies. At the head of this tabulation, standing out most prominently and most forcibly impressing the casual reader, are the figures: "Protestants . . . 78,113,481." How are these numbers, which the Ku Klux Klan and others love to flaunt in round numbers as 80,000,000 Protestants, obtained? The explanation is thus briefly given:

"The total religious constituency of the country is placed at 98,878,367 persons. Church officials define constituency to mean all baptized persons, all adherents and all those who in the supreme test of life or death turn to a particular communion."

Subtracting from this enormous figure that represents almost our entire population, the Catholics, Jews, Mormons and Eastern Orthodox Christians, none of whom is accredited to "constituencies," the proclaimers of a "Protestant America" have approximately the round 80,000,000 standing in their favor, figures that sound so large and mean so little. How many, we ask, of these 80,000,000 would lay down their lives for the defense of the Divinity of Christ, or of the Divine inspiration of that Bible which is now to be sold to them at a penny a copy? These are the statistics we would like to have, for what is Christianity, Catholic or Protestant, without faith in a Divine Christ—America.

FEAR OF DEATH

St. Teresa found that it was harder to suffer than to die. Indeed St. Teresa like St. Paul and other saints in whom the love of God had grown so strong that they longed to be dissolved and to be with Him had a fear of life rather than a fear of death.

"When Cardinal Wiseman was on his deathbed," writes Bishop Vaughan, "he is reported to have said that he had no misgivings, but felt full of joy. 'Like a schoolboy going home,' the great theologian Suarez during life had an almost abnormal fear of death, yet when it was actually on him, he smiled, as he exclaimed, 'I little thought how sweet a thing it is to die.'"

A holy religious was dying and one of his companions after he had given him Extreme Unction asked him if he were not terrified at the thought of meeting our Divine Lord. "What," he explained, "I feared to meet Him whom I have served and labored for, during the past forty years, and who is charity itself? Certainly not; I would be much more afraid to meet the Provincial."—The Sentinel of the Blessed Sacrament.



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