

EX-PRIESTS AND ESCAPED NUNS.

ANTI CATHOLIC PLATFORM ORATORS.

A GLANCE AT THE ANTECEDENTS OF CHINIQUEY, BISHOP M NAMARA, ELLEN GOLDING, MARIA MONK, AND OTHERS, WHO PREACHED AGAINST CATHOLICITY.

Among the tactics resorted to by some sections of Protestantism, for the propagation of "True Christian doctrines," is the lecturing ex-priest. Anti-Catholic zealots seem to look upon the ex-priest or ex-nun as the very acme of weapons for attacking the honor of the Catholic Church. This weapon is invincible; with it they delude themselves that they crash through the ramparts of Catholicity, tear down dozens of false doctrines and carry terror into the heart of a church whose ministers are at best but hypocrites.

This is their great mistake, there is nothing so damaging to their own religion as the parading of fallen priests.

In every age there have been some few—a very few—ministers of the church who have deviated from the hard path of righteousness which it was their duty to follow. The worst of these, when denuded of their privileges, have turned, and by puny snappings and barkings have sought to dismember the church of centuries. But the rock of Peter, that for nineteen centuries has withstood the surge of heresies and reformations, is not likely to be shattered by the puny tirades of a malicious ex-priest. The feelings which actuate a Catholic priest to leave the Church and join the Protestant faith, and the feelings which prompt a sincere Protestant to embrace Catholicity, are wide as the poles apart. The one—the Protestant—embraces a religion which will bind him to a definite path of the strictest rectitude. The other takes up a religion the tenets and dogmas of which are of such a hazy and nebulous character that they may be interpreted to mean anything, from the verge of license to the extreme austerity of the Puritan.

The Protestant religion is a religion made to suit every taste, a man may choose those doctrines which suit his inclinations and cast aside the others. This is very convenient in some cases, and the reasons for ex-priests joining such an amenable religion are obvious.

Of course these varying circumstances occasion a wide difference between the department of converts to Catholicity and of those to Protestantism. When a good Protestant joins the Catholic Church he does not spend his time howling anathemas at his former co-religionists. No, he endeavours, first and foremost, to become a good Catholic, and being so, he becomes tolerant to those who believe differently from himself. A good Catholic is always tolerant—intolerance is as much a badge of ignorance in the Catholic Church as in any other.

What does the average ex-priest do on his "conversion?" He immediately contracts to lecture at so much a night, and so as to adequately impress his audience he condenses as much vileness as he is capable into a two hour's tirade against the doctrines and religion in which he formerly believed. In doing this he forgets that he lays himself open to a charge of deep culpability in so long continuing to be a member of a church which he knew to be "atrociously wicked." Of late years there have been quite a number of ex-priests drifting around like derelict ships in Canada and the United States. There have also been quite a number of "escaped" nuns. Very few of these so-called nuns have ever been inside a convent, therefore their somewhat lurid imaginations have a good chance to exert themselves. A little enquiry into the antecedents of most of the ex-priests and ex-nuns that lecture in this country against Catholicity may be profitable.

Among the escaped nuns who have gained a small notoriety by their vile and unwomanly tirades, are Margaret Shepherd, who, recently, in a court of law, admitted to having served, in England, a term of six months in the common jail for stealing. She also testified that in Ireland she gave birth to an illegitimate child. This woman has, at various times, lived under the names of Louisa Probia, Louisa Helen Wesley, Mrs. Parkyn, Margaret Herbert, Louisa

Egerton, Mrs. Shepherd and Margaret Egan. After all this she poses as a misused innocent, an escaped nun, and publishes pamphlets of fictitious exposures of abuses in Catholic convents.

Another brilliant star among the escaped nuns is a Miss Ellen Golding, who, after leaving a convent in France, was tempted by some unscrupulous Protestants to lecture against Catholicity. This she did for some time with considerable success, but the wind was finally taken out of her sails by the following letter, published by her own sister, who is a Protestant, but happily, for the cause of justice, a very honest lady:—

"I am not myself a Roman Catholic, nor have I any desire to favor them, but for the sake of truth and justice I consider the facts should be made known. My sister joined an order in England, and went abroad to a convent at Calais belonging to the same order. While she was there I used to go once or twice a year to see her. The nuns were always most kind to me, and I usually stayed in the convent. * * * It is nonsense for her to say she had difficulty in getting outside the walls. She went about the town with me, and once when leaving she came with me to the boat, and was actually on board till the moment of starting. I said to her: 'Now, Nellie, if you want to leave, you have nothing to do but to come along,' but she refused. After leaving the convent she stayed with us for six months and wanted for nothing. She told me about her life in the convent, but never said one word about the poisoning or immorality she speaks of now. I am positive that if there had been any foundation for these statements, I would have heard of it. The dark room she now speaks of is an invention; and as for the steel belt she says they were forced to wear, she never saw one in her life until she visited the offices of the Protestant Alliance."

It was members of the Protestant Alliance who induced her to lecture.

The furore created by such minor renegades as Mrs. Shepherd of the multitudinous aliases, Miss Ellen Golding, etc., etc., dwindles into nothing when compared with the intense excitement created by the "Awful Disclosures" of Maria Monk. A Mr. Hoyte, describing himself as a minister, of New York, persuaded Maria Monk, who, according to her own mother's sworn statement, was occasionally deranged, to publish the book of awful disclosures of convent life. Mr. Hoyte used every persuasion in his power to induce Maria Monk's mother to swear that her daughter had been in the convent of the Hotel Dieu, and it was, undoubtedly, by his very material assistance that Maria Monk's book was published. The book immediately, on its publication, sold in tremendous numbers and aroused the most intense resentment against Catholic institutions. But very soon there was evidence forthcoming to refute every statement in the book. And now, none but the most ignorant of Protestants would give the smallest belief to its statements.

Among those who testified to the utter untruthfulness of the book were Maria Monk's own mother, and some of the leading Protestants of Montreal, who formed a committee of investigation. The last blow was given to the work when the Rev. William C. Brownlowe, a prominent Protestant, came out in the Protestant Vindicator and admitted that the whole thing was a forgery.

Maria Monk led a dissipated life, and her death was in keeping with it. Dolman's Register (a New York publication) of October 9, 1849, says:—

"Two months ago, or more, the police book recorded the arrest of the notorious but unfortunate Maria Monk, whose book of 'Awful Disclosures' created such excitement in the religious world some years since. She was charged with picking the pockets of a paramour in a den near the Five Points. She was tried, found guilty and sent to prison, where she lived up to Friday last, when death removed her from the scene of her sufferings and disgrace."

Among the renegade priests are ex-priest Slattery, who is now lecturing against Catholicity in the United States. Mr. Slattery was expelled from his pastorate by Archbishop Walsh of Dublin. His offence was repeated drunkenness. Mr. Slattery was expelled, after his apostasy, from the Baptist Brethren of Philadelphia, and also from the Baptist university at Colgate. On one occasion the Rev. Father Slattery was arrested in

Boston for "selling immoral and obscene literature on the street." An account of this incident appeared in the New York Sun.

Another notorious ex-priest, now dead, was one Leahy, who claimed to have once been a Trappist monk. It was afterwards ascertained that he had been merely a novice in the order and was expelled for some misdemeanour. He toured the States lecturing, and was arrested for some offence in Portage County. During his trial he shot and killed Attorney Manley, who was prosecuting him, and attempted to kill the presiding justices, for which action he was sent to the State penitentiary for life. While in that institution he became penitent, was received into the Church by Father Dale, formerly of Fond du Lac, and made a full confession and retraction of all his charges against the Church. He was afterward pardoned and entered a monastery, where he died some years ago.

There is in the States one Rudolph, an ex-priest and anti-Catholic lecturer. This man, according to his own published statement married his housekeeper. It is not necessary to say any more about him, except that he was suspended by Bishop Gilmour in 1881.

"Bishop McNamara" is the self-imposed title of James McNamara, one of the oldest ex-priests of the States. In 1879 Mr. McNamara started a new religion. There must have been something wrong with this religion however, for it fell to pieces in about two years, and its disconsolate founder joined the Baptist Church, into which he was received by the Rev. Justin D. Fulton, of Brooklyn. McNamara married a Miss Gilmour of Brooklyn. Before his apostasy he was a member of the Lazarist order and pastor of a church at Raleigh, N. C.

The Rev. Mr. Chiniquy of this city, is perhaps the most notorious of ex-priests in America. His articles on the confessional published last year in the Montreal Daily Witness were so vile that even that bigoted organ was obliged for decency sake to suppress the greater part of them.

The following by Father Brune of Haverhill, Iowa, gives an idea of Chiniquy's career:—

Father Brune says: "I spent several years in Canada. I saw the place where Chiniquy was born, visited various places where he officiated as a Catholic and afterward a Protestant minister. I am in possession of unmistakable proofs as to Chiniquy's life and character."

"Chiniquy was born in the town of Kamouraska, Canada, studied at the seminary of Quebec and was ordained a priest in 1833. He distinguished himself by his talents, as also by his great zeal as a testotaler. His successes and the consequent honors elated him and caused his fall. He became careless in his duties and soon fell into sins of immorality. In the trial which followed it was charged that Chiniquy had been intimate with a woman. Sept. 28, 1851, he was suspended and deposed. He then left Canada, and for several years loomed up at various places in Illinois, until the Bishop of Chicago, having learned who Chiniquy was, suspended and deposed him again, Nov. 20, 1856. Subsequently Chiniquy travelled to Europe to collect money for a pretended seminary in Chicago and his thirty promising pupils. In 1862 his fraud was discovered, that he had neither seminary nor pupils; he was accused of fraud and gross swindling and rejected or expelled by the Protestant Synod of Chicago. * * * For a few years the Presbyterians managed to get along with him, but soon he was accused of having squandered great sums of money intrusted to his care. He was consequently rejected by the Presbyterians, and wandered about, giving vent to his anger against the Catholic Church that had expelled him for his immorality."

After the above it is very easy to understand why so little good ever comes to Protestants through engaging ex-priests and nuns to promulgate true christian doctrines and tell the "Truth about the Catholic Church."

L. O.

FANATICISM ABROAD.

To the Editor of THE TRUE WITNESS:

DEAR SIR:—Just at present the hydrophobia of bigotry and fanaticism seems to hold in its grasp the notorious advocates of P. P. Aism. It appears, according to a writer in the Star, who styles himself "Moderation" (and by the way

very moderate he is indeed) that, if justice is rendered to the Catholics of Manitoba, separate schools shall be abolished in Ontario. One would think, forsooth, that the reverend gentlemen of the Methodist persuasion ran everything in the country; but can't this be worked both ways? What about having public schools in the Province of Quebec with only Catholic text books and Catholic prayers at the beginning and end of the classes? Oh, imagine, sir, the howl that would go forth, that the schools were run by Romanists and the Church of Rome.

According to Arch. M'Goun, jr., and the article in the Star, the Catholics ought to be satisfied with whatever huaks are thrown to them. Why, indeed, should we demand anything?

Do not the Catholics of the country contribute their share toward the treasury, and consequently are they not with all sense of reason entitled to their share in the distribution? If they are not to have their own schools let them not be asked to pay the school tax for others.

The truth is, Mr. Editor, that they are seeking, by every possible means, to crush the Catholic Church, and these bright luminaries of the 19th century imagine that they can do it by preventing separate schools, in which the children of Catholic parents will be taught the creed of their fathers.

This is indeed the time for Catholics to stand shoulder to shoulder and lend their sympathies in every possible way to the Ministry of Manitoba. Their grievances are ours, and it is our duty, one and all, to see that justice is meted out to them.

A SYMPATHISER.

Montreal, March 9th, 1895.

A FRIENDLY CRITIC.

To the Editor of THE TRUE WITNESS:

SIR,—I was once asked to explain how it was that Protestants were so much better than Catholics. In reply I told my questioner the little story about King James the 1st of England and the would-be philosopher who wanted to know why a live fish put into a bowl of water did not increase the weight. Somebody suggested the advisability of testing the accuracy of the statement, which being done, there was no need of explanation, as the assertion was found to be untrue. My friend, applying the story to himself, acknowledged that he had not verified his data, and the sought for explanation was adjourned "sine die."

I had almost forgotten our conversation when your allusion to English ignorance and "English Catholic's" reply recalled it to my mind. I, too, am an English Catholic, but your remarks did not worry me any more than the remarks of the philosopher, in the story above referred to, worried the fish. The fish weighed his full weight all the time, though the philosopher did not know it, and I was content to know that the same was true of my countrymen. Like the old lady who, being told by her minister that her son was "a bad wee boy," replied: "Thank God, there are a great many more boys far worse than he is," I may have been consoled by the thought that, while there is beyond question a great deal of ignorance, and worse than ignorance, in "Darkest England," it is unfortunately too true that ignorance and vice are too prevalent in every country on the face of the earth.

I had the honor of living about ten years in the vicinity of Sandy Row, Belfast, and while in that classical locality learned many scraps of history which would never have reached my ears as a mere Englishman in England. Among other things I was credibly informed that the battle of the Boyne lasted twelve days—from "July the first at Old Bridgetown" to the memorable Twelfth, when victory finally declared against "Brass money, wooden shoes and Popery."

Now, here was a remarkable fact which had entirely escaped the notice of our English historians and teachers, or had been deliberately ignored by them, like that other, equally well authenticated fact, that it was "Bill Adams as won the battle o' Waterloo."

No wonder we are a little behind the age in matters relating to history!

When I subscribed for THE TRUE WITNESS (this is my first year, but I hope to renew when the year expires) I did not expect very much. I had an impression, and I still have the impression, that the financial condition of the paper does not