

## The Life and Catholic Journalism

OF THE LATE

## JAMES A. McMASTER,

*Editor of the New York Freeman's Journal and Catholic Register.*

Edited by VERY REV. MARK S. GROSS.

*For the Carmelite Review.*

## CHAPTER VI.

McMASTER'S JOURNALISM FOR FORTY YEARS UPHELD EVERY MOVEMENT BENEFICIAL TO SOCIETY.—LOUIS KOSSUTH—ACQUISITION OF CUBA—THE UNITED STATES AND THE HOLY SEE—THE PASSION PLAY—THE DEFINITION OF THE DOGMA OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION.—TAXATION OF CHURCH PROPERTY.—THE FREEMAN'S JOURNAL UNDER McMASTER, AN ORGAN OF WIDESPREAD CHARITY, COLLECTING ALMS FOR GREAT NEEDS.—HIS CONSTANT AND MUNIFICENT PERSONAL CHARITY.



THE two great questions of Christian education and Papal authority have been the leading ones of the nineteenth century. But the *Freeman's Journal* has been identified with many movements, less than these

from a comparative standpoint, but very important in themselves, and all tending to the general welfare of the Catholic Church. One of the most signal of these was the establishment of the American College in Rome, which has trained so many fine priests for the United States and given us several bishops. This journal was the first to suggest the idea, and for this purpose secured through its columns twelve gentlemen who subscribed \$1,000 each before the subject was taken up in any other quarter.

Another important work which McMaster advocated, and that at a period when there was scarcely such a body in the country, was the necessity of associations for Catholic young men. Since that period organizations for Catholic youth have multiplied wonderfully, and the *Freeman's Journal* can justly claim to have been a mighty factor in educating a generation to the idea. It has often been critical, but

that arose from its very interest in such bodies, whose cause it was the first to champion, and its care to preserve them within the lines of true Catholicity and eminent usefulness.

McMaster also advocated the introduction of canon law, so that the clergy would be placed upon the same basis as the Bishops—that is, as the Vicars-Apostolic had been changed to stationary Bishops, so should the mission priests be changed into parish clergy—is too well known to need mentioning here, and has been practically endorsed by the action of the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore.

During the forty years that McMaster was the proprietor and editor of the *Freeman's Journal*, scarcely a month passed that he did not drag to the light of day and expose to the scorn of men some proselyting scheme carried on at the public expense, many of which it was able to crush, while many still flourish with the vigor of hoary iniquity.

In the latter part of 1851, Louis Kossuth, the sham Hungarian "patriot," arrived in New York, and the occasion was marked by a good deal of fuss among the ignorant people. He was feted and applauded by such as are always ready to avail themselves of any chance for excitement. Few took the trouble to examine into the facts of the Hungarian Revolution, or to inform themselves in regard to the part played therein by Louis Kossuth. Simply because he had stirred up a lot of trouble and diverted a legitimate agitation for their rights by the Hungarian people into the broad channel of the general European movement against religion and society, he was hailed as a republican, and had oceans of cheap rhetoric poured over him by noisy orators anxious for a little passing notoriety. Against this senile exhibition of folly over a man who sported half a dozen secretaries, and had a platoon of soldiers with drawn swords standing guard at his door in the Irving House, this journal protested with all the energy of which it was capable—and that was not a little. It showed that Louis Kossuth was no republican—that he had no care for the Hungarian people, but acted solely for the benefit of the brutal Magyar aristocracy who held the Hungarians in a state of servitude compared to which the condition of the Southern negroes at that time was