

The Columbian Catholic Congress.

The World's Fair in Chicago is the greatest fact in the world's history, and the Columbian Catholic Congress was the greatest fact of the World's Fair. The White City in South Park will mark a new epoch in the history of human progress. The Columbian Catholic Congress will have opened a new era in the history of the Catholic Church.

It was altogether fitting that there should be a Catholic Congress during the World's Fair in Chicago. This is the way a great secular paper—the Chicago Herald—puts it: "At the close of a beautiful blue June day just 220 years ago, when the new world was but a sleeping forest, peopled only by a copper colored race, barbarous and cruel, a small birch bark canoe, in which was a little band of hardy pioneers, floated down the Chicago river, and was beached upon what is now the site of the great city of Chicago. There were four men in that canoe, two Indians and two white men, the latter being Father Marquette, the famous Jesuit, and his faithful companion, Father Joliet. Yesterday morning," continues the Herald, "in the Hall of Columbus in the Memorial Art Palace on the lake front, perhaps on the very spot where the old Jesuit cried to the red men: 'Peace be with you, and peace be with your people,' the representatives of the great Papal Church were gathered to cry out to the world the same words uttered over two centuries ago by the Jesuit missionary: 'Peace to all men.'"

Yes; this was the greeting given by the Catholic Congress, and the peace it offered it was able to give; and this is why that congress of Catholic laymen was the greatest fact of the World's Fair. The momentous significance of the Congress is precisely this, that it was a representative assembly of the Catholic laity. Ecclesiastics indeed were there in numbers and strength and dignity; several hundred priests, over twenty Bishops, eight Archbishops, the illustrious head of the American Hierarchy, Cardinal Gibbons, and the distinguished representative of Leo XIII., Archbishop Satolli, Delegate Apostolic to the United States. But priests and prelates united in saying that they did not come to the Congress to speak or direct or preside: they came to see and hear the chosen lay representatives, the parliament of the great Catholic people: they came to assist and encourage the Congress by their presence: they came, not to teach, but to learn. Truly a momentous change, a new departure, a new era in the life and action of the Catholic Church.

But may it not be, too, a dangerous precedent, an overturning of order, an abuse of power? No; it is only a most striking proof, evident to all, of the splendid liberality and magnificent confidence of dogmatic authority, and of the wholesouled, generous loyalty of Catholic obedience. Priests and prelates show how they trust their people; and the people, in their chosen representatives, show to the world how worthy they are of their brave confidence, and how they appreciate this large-minded religious freedom.

The entire Columbian Exposition is a splendid benediction of the Catholic Church in her relation to human progress. She has been accused of being hostile or indifferent to human learning, science and art. Here is her answer. Men believe now in what they see. Let them see in the Catholic Educational Exhibit what the Catholic Church has done, and is doing, in the cause of mental culture. Let the treasures of La Rabida and the invention of Jesuit astronomers tell them what the Church has done, and is doing, for science; and let the old masters tell them in painting, sculpture and music, that without the Church's encouragement and fostering care there would be no Fine Arts Building at all.

But the modern cry against the Catholic Church is "clerical domination"—*l'ennemi c'est le clericalisme*—and this clerical domination, they say, is the enemy of all social and civil progress. Three thousand Catholic freemen hurl back this cry as a falsehood from the Congress Hall in Chicago; and not only so, but these representative Catholic laymen tell the world that they had come together with the blessing of the Catholic Church to discuss, with perfect freedom, some of the most important problems of social and civil progress.

But the peculiar power of the Congress was not that its members came together to discuss social questions or solve social problems. Indeed the most remarkable and significant feature of the Congress was the absence of all discussion. There was no need for discussion in a Catholic Congress. These three thousand men thoroughly agreed on social principles, and cordially accepted the only true solution of social problems. The highest and best authority on earth had spoken, and the members of the Catholic Congress had not only read and studied and understood Pope Leo's Letters—they had lived them, and had put the great principles of these luminous Letters into practice. They came to Chicago to report progress on the complete success of the solutions Pope Leo had given, and to encourage each other in the glorious practical work of applying those infallible remedies to the buried ills of the social organism.

When Pope Leo's representative, Archbishop Satolli, summarized in a splendid address the teaching of his Master in social questions, the hearty, earnest outburst of applause that greeted his words came from men who not only accepted these principles, but had applied them, and had proved their truth by practical experience. "There are three elements of social order," said the Apostolic Delegate, "and three principles of social action. The three elements of social order are: God, man, and nature. The three principles of social action: eternal truth, correct thought, and rightly directed will." To a non-Catholic audience these golden words might seem the tinsel of abstract theories. To the men of the Catholic Congress the Delegate's words were inestimable treasures, that they knew from experience would purchase social success.

The members of the Catholic Congress did not come to Chicago to talk,

nor even to listen. They were essentially and intensely practical men; they came to Chicago to work, and their work was done in the committee rooms, where the several societies held their meetings. There they reported progress, exchanged ideas, and compared and perfected plans of action. Thence they departed, with renewed strength and sublime purpose, as true apostles of social progress, civic prosperity and national peace. These Catholic laymen took up the parable that two Jesuit missionaries first preached in Chicago, and went to their homes to preach by personal action the gospel of peace to all men; continuing the good work the brave Sons of Loyola began—the work the Sons of Loyola are doing to-day all over the world.

The Hon. Wm. J. Onahan of Chicago has wisely planned, and brought to successful issue many a noble work; but the crowning glory of his organizing wisdom and exquisite tact, graceful eloquence and charming manners must ever be—the Columbian Catholic Congress.

Dying Out.

The *Canadian Churchman*, while honoring us with a reference to our conclusions drawn from the admission of Rev. Dr. Douglas—that the New England *pur sang* race is dying out—says: "A certain *soi-disant* Catholic print, published in Canada, has recently crossed swords gleefully with Rev. Dr. Douglas," etc. What objection can the so-called *Canadian Churchman* find for withholding our title of CATHOLIC REGISTER, or seeking to deprive us of a local habitation and a name? A churchman ought to exercise a little charity towards its contemporaries, and not act the proud Pharisee in thinking itself better than the rest of mankind, or even this REGISTER.

THE CATHOLIC REGISTER had no intention of crossing swords with the Montreal preacher on the necessity of doing something towards the promotion of social purity, or of warning its readers against a sin that called down Heaven's vengeful fires on seven wicked and adulterous cities.

It merely accepted the statistics given in proof of the mighty influence which Catholic teachings and discipline wield in saving society from the unnatural and horrible crime of feticide.

The words of the Montreal doctor were: "It is thus seen that the outcasts of Europe and the inferior races of this continent are going in two generations to possess the land, and all by reason of the crime that accepts marital relations, but rejects the responsibilities through devices that I refuse to suggest or name—a crime that strikes at the very heart of the church, as well as in the world, vicious and degraded."

The *Canadian Churchman*, far from joining in the honest effort of the Rev. Dr. Douglas to suppress a crime so abominable and so widespread in the New England States, makes light of the subject and ridicules any attempt at moralizing on facts and drawing inferences. It says that it regards man only as a reproductive animal amongst other animals; so that his

powers may be compared with those of cats, rabbits, sparrows, etc. It is quite another question whether the rapid increase of certain races and types of mankind is any more desirable than that of certain lower animals or birds.

The writer in the *Canadian Churchman* must belong to the Darwinian school of Infidels, that sets no more value on a human being made unto the image and likeness of God than it does upon the brute beast that was created for man's use and benefit. If, as some theologians maintain, the myriads of fallen angels who were cast out of Heaven are to be replaced by faithful souls washed and sanctified in the blood of the Lamb; and if the rays of infinite mercy, streaming from the pierced heart of the all-atoning Victim on Calvary, were to penetrate the uttermost parts of the earth and bring salvation to every soul made for Heaven and for undying glory in the Kingdom of God then, indeed is it of the very greatest importance to preserve human life, and prepare souls for their everlasting destinies. How any Christian periodical with the *titulus coloratus*, or suspicion at least of being a church organ, can lower itself to so deep a level as to compare human life with "the rapid increase of lower animals or birds" is to us incomprehensible.

The *Churchman* again betrays crass obtuseness of intellect when it can not see the difference between the Frenchman of Canada and his brother in Europe. The European Frenchman, it says, is notorious for "the dying out phenomena; they are almost as famous, or infamous, as the typhical New Zealander. So there is nothing in the argument against Dr. Douglas on that score."

THE CATHOLIC REGISTER maintains that there is everything in the argument on that score. Is the *Churchman* not aware that the European France is just as notorious for its infidelity, and its hostility to Church discipline, as it is for the "dying out" infamy? The Frenchman in Canada escaped the lessons taught in the schools of Voltaire, Diderot and Jean Jacques Rousseau. The French in Canada did not participate in the horrors of the French Revolt on; they are not the heirs and inheritors of Robespierre and his colleagues, who massacred the priests, made war upon the Christian name, and worshipped the goddess of Reason.

The *Churchman* seems to have adopted the principles of Chauvinism with those of Darwin and Herbert Spencer, when it sets no more value on a human soul than it does on the instinct of self-preservation bestowed upon cats and dogs.

Personal.

The Rev. Father O'Neill, C.S.B., has returned to Plymouth, England, having sailed yesterday by the American Line from New York. He is accompanied by Mr. McNulty of Norwood, Ont., who goes to take a position on the staff of Beaconfield College, which is in the charge of the Basilian Fathers.

On Saturday last we were favored with a call from the Rev. Dr. Marner, parish priest of Kilkeel, Ireland, who is on his way to Chicago and California. An interesting conversationalist and an ardent Homo Ruler he spoke in feeling and hopeful terms of the prospects of the dear old land, whose cause he thought was healthier than at any previous time.