

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS. A HARD TEST.

When Ted and George Black came back from school last night, there was no snow on the ground, but since then there has been such a fall that now it is by quite thick and crisp; the boughs of the trees bent down with its weight, and each nook and crook of wall and fence had a share too.

It was the last term at Shoon Hall School, and the minds of the most of the boys were full of thoughts. "Have I a chance for a prize?"

Ted and George went to this school now. They had come to West Shoon to live, for they had no home of their own. Mr. and Mrs. Black were both dead, and left them to the charge of a friend, Mr. Sims.

She was glad they had come to live there, for it was nice for her to have them to play with and to talk to. The boys were soon quite at home with Grace and Mrs. Sims, but they still felt shy and strange with Mr. Sims.

For an hour at a time Ted would sit with pen and ink, and draw and sketch all kinds of things, and his mind was so bound up in it, he took no heed of what went on around him.

Grace and George might roam about as they pleased, but if in any play they ran away with his paint-box or his pens, or a sketch he had just done, he would rouse up, and, as George said, "get in such a rage."

George was a sharp, quick boy, and when he chose, could keep well at the top of his class. Ted was not as quick as George, but he took more pains with his work.

"I hope you will get that prize," said George, as they went on their way to school.

"Yes," said Ted; "I hope I shall too; and I say, George, do you know what I have made up my mind to do when I grow up?"

Ted, as a rule, kept his thoughts and plans to himself, and George felt quite proud when he let him share in them and know them.

"No," said he, "do tell me!" "Well, I mean to draw and paint all day long, and some day I shall be quite a rich man."

"But you'll have to stay in the house all day long," said George, and he thought to himself, "What a miff you are," but did not say so, as Ted would have thought it rude.

"I mean to go to sea, so that I can leave school soon. Then he bent down, made up a good snow-ball, and threw it at some of the boys who stood at the gate of the school. Then there was a great fight and fun till the school bell rang and put an end to it.

That night when tea was done, Mr. Sims took a book down from his shelf, and said, "Ted, would you like to look at my old sketch book?"

"Yes, sir," said the boy, and the look in his eyes spoke his thanks far more than his words could have done.

Ted kept the book a long time, then he gave it back to Mr. Sims, and said, "I wish I could draw as well as that."

"Well, my boy, you will some day, if you make up your mind to work hard at it. These books are full of good prints. I will let you see them some day, and if you gain a prize at school, I will give you one of them for your own."

"Ted means to draw and paint when he grows up, and says he shall sell what he does, and grow rich," said George, who thought this would be a good thing to break the news to Mr. Sims, that he meant to go to sea, and hint to him that he would like to leave school as soon as he could.

"Oh! does he?" said Mr. Sims. "That means hard work for some years to come, but I hope he may some day." Ted's cheek grew hot at these words, and he thought—

"Why does George talk about what I say?" "The boys had not been gone long the next day when Mr. Sims had to take up some new shirts for Ted, and put them in his box, and in it he found Mr. Sims' sketch-book, and one of his books of prints.

When she went down, she said to Mr. Sims: "Did you give these books to Ted for they were both in his box?" "This is a strange thing, I did lend him the sketch-book last night, but he gave it back to me, and I put it in its place on the shelf. It was not right of him to take it like that. I must speak to him at the time so when he comes in."

Grace was in the room when Ted came in, but she told how it had got there. Yet all that day she could not get out of her thoughts. It was a bad day at school with her; she sat at her desk with her books in front of her, but all she learned from them they might have been shut up, and she sat at play home.

When the boys came home Mr. Sims spoke to Ted, but he said he did not know where the books were, for he had been to that day.

Mr. Sims said if he would speak truth, and tell him why he had done he would pass it by this time; but how he might, no more could be told from Ted than, "I did not take books."

"Till I have proof of it, Ted, I think you did," said Mr. Sims. "If your wish to draw well is so strong that it leads you to do wrong, and in such a way, and say what is not you must give it up at once. I will let you learn to draw next term."

THE CATHOLIC RECORD.

NOVEMBER 16, 1901.

THE TRUTH ABOUT THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

BY A PROTESTANT THEOLOGIAN.

CLXIII.

The popular assumption among Protestants is, that the free circulation of the Bible has always been the deadly enemy of the Catholic system of doctrine; that the restrictions put upon the Bible reading in the Middle Ages betray a want of confidence in their own teachings on the part of the leaders of the Church; and that if only the Scriptures could be placed in every Christian household, evangelical Protestantism would soon become the nearly universal religion of Christendom.

There are some serious historical objections to this popular assumption. The fundamental objection is that primitive Christianity grew up in an atmosphere of unrestricted Bible-reading, and that the Church expanded rapidly, steadily and irrevocably, into the Catholic form of doctrine, polity, discipline, and worship. Protestant scholarship sees in the prevailing Church of the year 200 the essential Catholic type. It commonly assumes that many elements have been received into it since which have more or less distorted it; but the essential identity with the later Catholic Church is usually acknowledged.

Moreover, looking back towards the beginning, scholarship finds no break in this development. The Ignatian letters are coming to be generally acknowledged as dating from before 120, and even Harnack puts them before 140, and maintains their genuineness so strongly that he declares it may not be long before the acceptance of genuineness will be a test of a scholar's historical feeling. Yet the Ignatian epistles are plainly the germ out of which the fuller Catholic development of the year 200 has grown. This explains the very great hostility of the most rigorous Protestantism to them, as appears in its most comical extreme in the case of Dr. Killen of Belfast. Dr. Killen is a High-Church Presbyterian, although I am happy to say that he does not appear to be a bit of an Orangeman.

Moreover, that the Church of the year 400 is fully Catholic in type is past the denial of the most skeptical. Yet so universally was the Bible read and heard at that time that St. Jerome tells us that old women and half-grown boys were not afraid to offer their opinions about the meaning of the obscurest passages of Scripture. You would almost think that the Church of the year 400 was a free school, and that the fullness of the Bible was a common possession of all. Yet these two passages of Scripture, and the fact that the Church of the year 400 is fully Catholic in type is past the denial of the most skeptical. Yet so universally was the Bible read and heard at that time that St. Jerome tells us that old women and half-grown boys were not afraid to offer their opinions about the meaning of the obscurest passages of Scripture. You would almost think that the Church of the year 400 was a free school, and that the fullness of the Bible was a common possession of all.

It may be asked how Christians of that time can have known the Bible so well, when so few knew how to read. A good many more, I fancy, than we commonly suppose. Reading and writing were more familiar to the Greeks than we imagine as early as 500 or 600 years before Christ, as appears by Greek inscriptions of that date from Egypt, and written in the Church there was a universal desire to know Scriptures, and therefore a universal desire to make them known. Moreover, during the first centuries the Christians belonged predominantly to the mercantile classes, to whom reading and writing were necessities. In the country people came in, although in Christian use, hardly means peasant, but rather citizen, one that is not a soldier of Christ.

In the early centuries, as we know, services were held daily, and were largely attended. At these services which might well be revised length, and if the vernacular was not Latin or Greek or Syriac or Coptic, were commonly translated as the reader went on. The ambon, or reader's desk, was often the loftiest object in the church. Among the Franks, a good deal later, the ambon of Rheims was so high that at coronation the King's chair was placed upon it.

Thus, we see, in the first centuries, the determination of Catholic doctrine and the expansion of Catholic worship went on unimpeded in an atmosphere saturated with Scripture. Martyrs and Bishops and theologians and people read or heard the Bible night and day, and drew from it not doctrines, but fuller confirmation of their Catholic belief.

It is true, the early ages saw many species of widely extended heresy, sometimes, perhaps, having more disciples in the aggregate than the Church. Yet assuredly none of them witnessed any Scriptural dissent from Catholicity. On the contrary, most of the heresies were corrupted and mutilated the authentic text, and the very reason that the authentic text would not bear out their systems. Where they did not, they had to fall back on the pretext of a hidden apostolic tradition, something absolutely repugnant to Protestantism. Indeed, except Montanism, there is not a heresy of the second century which Protestants have not to be even Christian, although a low view of Marcionism as a wildly aberrant type of real Christianity.

I need not speak of Arianism, Nestorianism or Eutychianism. Trinitarian Protestants will not own themselves to be tainted with these. Moreover, their adherents knew the Bible not one whit better, and studied it not one whit more, than the Catholics. Besides, except as to their three points of heresy, they differed in little or nothing from the Church. Concerning the episcopate and the sacraments they thought and acted just like Catholics generally, and did not in the slightest degree approach the Protestant models. If their Bishops and priests absented their specific errors, they studied the Bible not one whit more, and they found themselves at once perfectly at home in the Church. Scripture knowledge was at neither a higher nor a lower level on the one side or the other.

Protestants might be willing to acknowledge certain affinities with Novatianism or Donatism. Indeed, I have often thought that Donatism supplied important analogies to Protestantism. Yet the rigorous refusal of those two bodies to allow any forgiveness to fallen Christians went far beyond anything that the severest Protestant body would attempt. Otherwise they were perfectly Catholic, in doctrine, polity and worship. There were a few microscopic and transient bodies in those ages bearing a slight resemblance to Novatianists nor Donatists had anything to do. Besides, which is our present point, neither of these schismatic bodies either had or claimed any superiority of Biblical knowledge over the Catholics.

So time went on until the seventh century drew near. This, at its entrance, crosses the pontificate of St. Gregory the Great. This famous Pope is commonly allowed, not indeed, in any way to have revolutionized the Catholic faith into which he was born, but to have so particularized and modified its outward manifestations as to fit it the better to go unscathed through the thousand years of barbarism that lay before it. Yet neither the generalized Catholicism which he inherited, nor the more specialized form which he transmitted, had inspired in him the slightest misgiving concerning the Scriptures. He was, and continued to be, the enthusiastic advocate of their being read by all the faithful. He had not discovered the Bible to be anti-Catholic, nor the Catholic Church to be anti-Scriptural.

The course of events, and of thought, in the obscure ages between six hundred and twelve hundred is only indistinctly known to me. Whether there was a slowly growing reading of the Bible by the laity, I cannot say. I hardly think there was, although there cannot have been much vernacular reading anyhow, for now ignorance was almost universal among the multitude. However, in the twelfth century, or perhaps earlier still, there began to spread over western Europe a multifarious of obscure sects, from a common root in Asia Minor, transmitted by way of Bulgaria. These, indeed, were not so much different sects as locally distinguished branches of one sect, obliged, in the great difficulty of communication, and under the watchful eyes of the orthodox, to act very much as if independent, but holding one or two distinct, and, in some cases, more or less distinct, the supremacy of one head, or Pope, in Bulgaria.

These sects, of whom the best known, those in southern France, were commonly styled Albigenses, brought on a mighty crisis in the whole policy of the Catholic Church, and among other things, in her policy concerning vernacular Bible reading.

We will next consider this great revolution.

CHARLES C. STARBUCK.

Andover, Mass.

FIVE-MINUTE'S SERMON

Twenty-Fifth Sunday After Pentecost.

The Church will soon be celebrating the Advent season. The word Advent means the coming. The Advent season is the time to prepare for the coming—the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, the Eternal Son of the Eternal Father, God Himself, into this world to redeem us from sin, to set us an example of all virtues, to open for us the gates of the kingdom of heaven, and to make us the sharers of His infinite happiness for all eternity. Holy Church, our mother, appoints four weeks to prepare for this great coming, or Advent, which took place at Christmas, so that we may be in the proper state of mind to appreciate the benefits of His coming and to derive from it all the good it was to procure for us. This state of mind should be one of humility, acknowledgment of the greatness, goodness, and justice of the Infinite Majesty, with a deep contrition for all the sins and faults we have committed against Him, with that love which makes us firmly resolve never more to offend Him, and to spend our lives as far as it is possible to human frailty in accomplishing His holy will. In order to bring about this disposition of soul the Church sets out for our consolation the second coming of our Lord, when He shall come in His majesty to judge the living and the dead, in order to strike a holy fear into our souls, for, as the Psalmist says: "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom;" and again: "Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord; he shall be light, exceeding light in His commandments."

In the Gospel of to-day our Lord foretells the destruction of Jerusalem. This was the scene of the most direful calamity and suffering the world had ever seen from its beginning, or probably will ever see again. An immense number of people were assembled within its walls—over two million according to Josephus, the Jewish historian. Suddenly the Roman army surrounded the city on all sides so that there was no escape. Then horrible scenes began within the city—rage and discord prevailed, the people fought desperately and butchered one another without mercy. Then famine and pestilence did their work. Even mothers devoured their own children in the desperate straits. The Romans at last took the place by assault and utterly destroyed it. Over a million souls were destroyed in this siege, and all that remained were dispersed in captivity over the face of the earth. All this was distinctly foretold by our Lord forty years before it happened, when it

appeared most improbable. It was God's judgment executed on this wicked people. Our Lord foreshadows in the wicked of the awful day of judgment, both at death and at the end of the world. "If these things are done in the green tree, how shall it be in the dry?" We shall each one of us have to undergo the judgment of God. Jerusalem, the glorious city, is the figure of the soul. Shortly we shall be surrounded on every side by our spiritual enemies. Perhaps next week or to-morrow some fatal disease will seize upon us. In its grasp we shall be utterly helpless. All the skill of physicians will be of no avail. Our bodily powers will fail. Then our sins will stare us in the face. If we have been dissolute and impatient up to that time, how shall we repent? Racked by pains, the mind enfeebled, how can we drive off the dreadful despair which will surround us? And death will come upon us unprepared. "For as the lightning comes from the east and appeareth even unto the west, so shall the coming of the Son of Man be." Death is the coming of the Son of Man to judge us and settle our lot for all eternity, either for weal or for woe. Brethren, let us reflect on these things; let us turn over in our minds what will take place at the hour of death and all the scenes of the great judgment, when at the sound of the last trumpet the dead, small and great, shall arise to give an account of the deeds done in the body. Let us by many heartfelt prayers to God for contrition and a firm determination so to live as to be ready for this last judgment. Thus we shall make our peace with God, welcome the new-born Saviour at Christmas, and welcome Him with joy even at the great and terrible day of judgment.

THE SOULS IN PURGATORY. "When shall I come and appear before the face of God? My tears have been my bread, day and night, whilst it is said to me daily: Where is thy God?" Psalms. Though the Catholic Church never ceases to lift up her hands to God in supplication for the souls in Purgatory, during the month of November she commemorates the object of her special devotion. We should imitate her at this season, remembering with her the souls of them who are yet undergoing the torments of the "purging fire." We owe it to them as fellow-creatures, as fellow-citizens, as children of the Church. Amongst these unhappy souls there may be a father, or a mother; shall their voices fall upon our ears in vain? Where are the memories of our childhood days, that we can forget our dead? Perhaps a brother, or a sister, or a friend is being detained in this dreadful baptizing fire; shall we make no effort to assist them? It may be that one day we shall cry out like them from the flames of Purgatory. "Have pity on me, at least you, my friends, and we shall then receive as we gave upon earth. Pray for the souls departed. Add new glory to that which already encircles the throne of God. Masses, prayers, and alms, the blessed and other good works are the sacrifices of our effort. Let no day of this fast season pass without something done for love of the Church suffering. Their hour of release will come; they will begin their long, long day of bliss; they will stand in the friendly presence of the Most High, and before His throne will they remember and protect us, as we remember and succeed them in the time of need.—A. T., in Holy Name Calendar.

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