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## CURRENT COMMENT

The beautiful art catalogue of High Class Ecclesiastical Statuary which comes to us from the Daprato Statuary Company, of 173 & 175 W. Adams Street, Chicago, and 31 Barclay Street, New York, is the sort of thing one is proud to show to one's friends. It is very large, 13 inches by 10½, and has 122 pages of splendidly executed illustrations, reflecting the greatest credit on Hollister Brothers, the engravers and printers who did this fine work. The colored plates are particularly good. The designs are often startlingly original. Many new statues figure in this collection, for instance Bernadette, the peasant girl of Lourdes, Blessed Gabriel Jean Perboyre, Pius X. (a bust), St. Jerome, St. Agatha, St. Peter Fourier. There are no less than six totally different designs for the Last Supper in high relief.

The recently published biography of the Rev. Hugh Price Hughes, one of the leaders of English Methodism, by his daughter, contains a remarkable passage which shows that he appreciated certain aspects of Catholicism, although he is absurdly astray when he thinks that the Friars alone, among all Catholic preachers and priests, made a deep impression on the masses. There have been in every century multitudes of Catholic priests, secular and regular, who have known how to touch the heart of the people. But Protestants never hear of them till their work happens to cross the plane of literary history. Mr. Hughes once entered a Catholic church in Italy on Christmas Day and was much moved by the devotion of the congregation. When he got outside he said: "I understand this; they have it,—the root idea." Methodism is a form of Protestantism which appeals more to the popular idea of religion than does any other of the sects. It develops very strongly the emotional side. Mr. Hughes saw that the Catholic Church met the intellectual as well as the emotional wants of the people, and on that account he was an admirer, though not a believer. This passage we quote from a review of his biography.

"The Catholic Friars and the early Wesleyans had alone made an indelible impress on the masses of the people. 'The Reformation,' he would say, 'was essentially an upper and middle-class movement, and did not affect the people.' 'Till Wesley came they were left without any abiding religious influence.' He knew the early Quakers to be an exception to this, but as a religious system their influence was nil. It was difficult to conceive how a system which so dispensed with forms could ever have an adherence save that of the few. The Salvation Army again, whose separation from Methodism he always deplored, and the zeal of whose officers he greatly admired, was still less likely to form a permanent organization. Moreover, he was heard to say, 'They do not even make proper provision for the sacraments especially ordained by Our Lord, and that is fatal; and again, 'The devotion of their officers is wonderful, but they lack men of signal capacity.'"

Italy used to be considered the land of art, poetry and romance. Of late years the experience of labor employers is that there is no healthier, more temperate or stronger race of men in the world than the Italians. And now the North of Italy is beginning to realize its industrial importance and advantages. Nature has dowered it with a never-failing water supply which less favored nations might envy. The perennial flow from its snow-topped and sun-kissed mountains is being utilized by the electrical engineers in a way which promises to convert Northern Italy into a great industrial state. Nowhere in Europe is there a population better fitted to aid in an industrial development. The people are dexterous, quick to learn and industrious, and up to the present time the general wage scale compares favorably with that of any competitors which they have to

meet. The result of these favorable conditions has been, for instance, the development of the silk industry at a rate which sounds like statistics of American or Canadian industrial growth.

We have been greatly impressed by Father Thurston's articles in the "Tablet" on the practice of confession in England before the Norman Conquest. These articles are mainly a refutation of Dr. Lea's "History of Auricular Confession." One quotation from Father Thurston reveals the character of that work. "It would be hard, I imagine, to find a more remarkable example than Dr. Lea's book offers of the powerlessness of evidence to convince a prejudiced man against his will. Whenever this American author comes upon a passage in which the people are exhorted to make their confession, he interprets it as an acknowledgment of the failure of all previous efforts to persuade them; wherever, on the other hand, he meets with any sort of pastoral instruction which does not introduce the subject of penance, he finds therein conclusive proof that the practice of confession was as yet unknown. His pages are loaded with scores of references, but the student who may have the patience to look them up in their context will find that not one in ten is capable of bearing the construction put upon it." And, by way of proof, Father Thurston adds in a note (Tablet, vol. 105, p. 363): "It would require many articles to do justice to the misstatements of a single page. Merely as one example I take Dr. Lea's assertion about the famous Abbot Ælfric (c. 1000 A.D.), one of the most distinguished names in Anglo-Saxon literature. Dr. Lea says (I, p. 194): 'Ælfric's Pastoral Epistle, minute and detailed as it is, seems to know of no confession save on the death-bed as a preparation for Extreme Unction.' Now, in the first place, this same Pastoral Epistle explicitly enjoins that every priest should possess a Penitential or 'shrift book.' The only use of the Penitential was to help him in hearing confessions. But apart from this, Ælfric's sermons and other writings abound in references to confession and in exhortations to his hearers to make their sins known to God's priest, to whom power has been given to forgive sins. See for instance, Ælfric's 'Homilies,' ed. Thorpe vol. i., pp. 124, 164, 234, 390, 604, etc."

Our learned contemporary, "The Casket" thus sums up the controversy.

Rev. Herbert Thurston, S.J., has been publishing in the Tablet some extremely valuable papers on the practice of Confession in England before the Norman Conquest. Dr. Henry Charles Lea, of Philadelphia, who, by his deep study of mediaeval records—squint-eyed study, however,—has got himself recognized by many non-Catholics as an authority on the subject of Confession, Celibacy and such matters, denies vehemently that auricular confession was a practice of the Church before the Lateran Council of 1216. Dr. Jessop, the English historian, follows Lea, with the utmost confidence. Father Thurston demolished their positions pretty badly a year ago, and now returns to the attack with fresh ammunition. He quotes the eminent German Protestant, Professor Hauck, whose History of the Church in Germany is held to be a work of sober and solid learning, and without a rival in all that concerns the ecclesiastical institutions of the early middle Ages. Dr. Hauck believes that the practice of confession was already general in Ireland in the sixth century, and was thence introduced into Germany by St. Columban. The same view is taken in the new edition of that standard work, Herzog's Protestant Encyclopaedia. If Columban was an Irishman, Willibrord, Boniface and Alcuin were Englishmen, and they preached and taught in Germany, the practice of confession which they had learned at home. The English practice may be learned from Cynewulf, the Northumbrian poet, who wrote about the year 750; from the Dialogues of Egbert, Archbishop of York, in the middle of the eighth century; from the Penitential ascribed to St. Bede; from the homilies of Wulfstan, Bishop

of Worcester at the Conquest. "Public penance was entirely in the hands of the bishop," says Father Thurston, but it was laid down as a matter of ecclesiastical law that every parish priest ought to possess a "shrift-book," that is a "shrift-book" or confession-book containing a table of sins with the various penances to be assigned by the confessor for each sin. And that not merely overt acts but even the secret thoughts of the heart were considered matter of confession is sufficiently proven by the questions in the Penitential above referred to, which, whether it be the work of Bede or not, is certainly not of later date than the ninth century. Thus does the huge fabric of Dr. Lea's uprearing crumble to the ground.

An Alsatian Protestant minister, the Rev. Charles Wagner, author of "The Simple Life," was lionized in the States last autumn. Not only did Dr. Lyman Abbot take him under his protecting wing, but even President Roosevelt, who is as sane as any man can be that has not the discernment inherent to the true faith, was persuaded to introduce Charles Wagner to a Washington Audience, and praised the "Simple Life" as the best book for Americans. Some even went so far as to aver that Wagner's books, for he has written many, were as good as the "Imitation of Christ." However, we learn from Colonel James R. Randall, in his latest weekly letter to the Catholic Columbian, that the shrewd Alsatian is beginning to be properly "sized-up."

In the Reader magazine, writes Randall, Alvin F. Sanborn discusses Parson Wagner and his simple life, so-called, with delicious unctious. He demonstrates that, in France, Mr. Wagner is not taken seriously, but regarded as something of a humbug. The French intellectually exact artistic style, and bad as some, only too many, Frenchmen are, they have an acute logic. Mr. Sanborn, discussing the Wagner latitudinarians, incisively says that the French idea "comprehends absolute faith and no faith; a religion based on authority and rationalism as a revolt against authority, the orthodox churchman and the seceder from the church. But the religion that includes rationalism and the rationalism that includes religion are alike incomprehensible to it. It is constitutionally incapable of grasping the point of view of a system that makes alternate appeals to reason and to authority, that expresses rationalistic ideas in terms of religion and vice versa, that explains away beliefs while pretending to conserve them, that calls itself Christian while throwing overboard the historic doctrines of Christianity, and that puts forth colossal claims to faith in general, and can not be pinned down to faith in anything in particular."

That is a very absolute and neat statement that punctures the higher critics, the Lyman Abbots, the Wagners and that whole tribe of private interpreters who, however clear-eyed in detecting the ordinary forms of sophistry, are blind to their own monstrous inconsistencies, which must make the Devil laugh. Meanwhile Prof. Goldwin Smith, who has intellectually argued himself out of belief in the Scripture and supernatural religion, finds that he can get no substitute to pacify the cravings of heart and soul and mind. Perhaps, like the great but unfortunate Ste. Beuve, he regrets that he cannot return to the faith of his boyhood, Ste. Beuve never did return and has gone to his account. He did not pretend to be happy in unbelief, and as Goldwin Smith evidently is in the same wretched category, he should pray for heavenly light and escape the dread illumination that arrives too late in the world to come.

The Liverpool "Catholic Times," of April 20, insists as follows upon the constant urgency of Home Rule for Ireland:—

"Mr. Tuff's motion, which was intended to embarrass the Liberals, elicited from the Liberal leader, as speech on Home Rule which has done credit to

him, and which will certainly be of service to the Liberal party. It was a frank, straightforward declaration of faith in the cause of self-government, and in the capacity of the Irish people to manage their own affairs. Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman deserved the tribute paid to him by Mr. John Redmond, when he said that Sir Henry had been courageous and consistent in support of Home Rule, and expressed the hope that after having borne the burden and heat of the day, he would receive the highest position in the next Government. The Irish Leader's own speech was firm and uncompromising. He effectively disposed of Lord Rosebery's assertion that the Irish claim has been minimized. There has been no change whatever in the language of the Irish party. Their demand at present is just what it was in 1886, when Mr. Gladstone arranged the terms of the Bill. Once and for all, Conservatives, Unionists, and weak-kneed Liberals may give up the idea that the Home Rule question can be conveniently thrust aside. So long as the Irish party are determined to press it—and that will be till Home Rule is granted—it will remain an urgent question of practical politics."

Disraeli once said that the conversion of John Henry Newman dealt to the Church of England a blow from which it still reels. A case in point, where the blow has had a disastrous effect upon the brain, is thus handled by the Casket.

Principal Hutton, of Toronto University recently referred to Newman's "Loss and Gain" as a "ribald" work. Imagine the uproar there would be, if Professor Kyle, the clever young Catholic Oxford graduate, who fills the Associate Chair of History in the same provincial university, were to use such a term in reference to Jeremy Taylor's "Holy Living and Dying," which is just about as "ribald" as "Loss and Gain." Yet our non-Catholic fellow-citizens cannot understand why we are unwilling to have our young men study under such teachers as Maurice Hutton whose resentment at the conversion of Newman makes them either ignore or slander the greatest master of English prose. And Catholics as well as Protestants are paying Principal Hutton's salary.

## Clerical News

Msgr. Falchi, who was for many years at the head of the Vatican administration under the late Pope Leo XIII., and who was dismissed from the Vatican a few years ago because many millions of the Vatican funds were lost through investments, is to be restored to his position by Pius X. This is looked upon in Vatican circles as a complete vindication of the prelate, who has lived in the strictest seclusion since his apparent disgrace, but who always maintained that whatever investments he made with the Vatican funds he made because of direct orders received from his superiors.

Rev. Alexander P. Doyle, C.S.P., head of the Apostolic Mission House at Washington, will celebrate the silver jubilee of his ordination to the priesthood this month.

Mgr. Didolf, Bishop of Eodi, has been appointed Apostolic Delegate to Mexico.

Monsignor Bernard O'Reilly, the biographer of two Popes, is nearing his end. He was born in November, 1817, in the diocese of Tuam, Ireland, was the son of Patrick O'Reilly and Eleanor O'Malley, was ordained in the city of Quebec, September 12, 1842 and is therefore in the 63rd year of his priesthood. In 1846 he was missionary at Sherbrooke, Que. In 1849 he dented the Jesuit novitiate at Sault-an-Recollet, was at St. Mary's College, Montreal, in 1854, at St. Francis Xavier's College, New York City, in 1856; went to France for his tertianship in 1861, and shortly afterwards left the Society and engaged in literary labors. One of his great

works was his collaboration with George Ripley and Charles A. Dana in the editing of the American Cyclopaedia. Father O'Reilly was one out of 21 revisers, and he did his duty conscientiously and well. Later on, he was made Domestic Prelate by Pope Leo XIII., whose life he wrote under the Holy Father's supervision.

Says the Catholic Columbian:

A Milwaukee newspaper having reported that Archbishop Messmer is exceedingly generous in his alms to the poor, so many beggars applied for money that the aid of the police had to be asked to protect him against their importunities. Now who will say that advertising doesn't bring results?

Our Columbus contemporary also states that Archbishop Chapelle, who is still Apostolic Delegate to Cuba, has gone there again to attend to the duties of his office. There is no truth in the repeated rumours that the Vatican is displeased with his work in Havana and is about to ask for his resignation. Instead of this, ecclesiastical affairs in the new republic are in process of satisfactory adjustment.

Rev. Father Dorais, O.M.I., who was here this week, says that the new Indian boarding school at Sandy Bay is now built, only a few finishings to be added. The Indian Department has lately approved the construction of three boarding schools under the direction of the Oblate Fathers, one at Sandy Bay, another at Fort Alexander and the third at Cross Lake, north of Lake Winnipeg.

Rev. Father Poirier, of St. Maurice, Assa., was here this week.

Rev. Father Lemieux, of Willow Bunch, Assa., who was in town this week, says that a large body of English and French immigrants will reach Willow Bunch and settle there within the next few weeks.

## Persons and Facts

Captain O'Shea, whose divorced wife married Parnell, is dead.

Thomas H. Carter, a Catholic and a prominent member of the Knights of Columbus, has been re-elected United States Senator for Montana. Born in Ohio, he is the son of an Irish emigrant. He began by selling books, then taught school for a while, also worked in the railway business, studied and practised law in Burlington, Ia., and moved, in 1882 to Helena, Mont., where his successful public career began.

Hon. Charles J. Bonaparte, of Baltimore, was appointed president of the National Municipal League at its annual convention held last week in New York City. It was the eleventh annual meeting of the League and the twelfth national conference for good city government.

The Catholic Columbian, underneath a bright and interesting photogravure of Mayor and Mrs. Dunne and their children, writes:

Judge Dunne, Chicago's new mayor, does not believe in race suicide. Since he and Mrs. Dunne were married in 1881 thirteen children have come to bless their union, and ten are still living. The Dunne children are healthy and happy youngsters, and during the recent campaign they were spoken of as "ten good reasons why Judge Dunne should be elected."

The members of St. Mary's choir, under the directorship of Mr. Perkins, are hard at work rehearsing a musical cantata which they will stage on 30th and 31st of this month. The production which is from the joint pens of Arthur Sullivan and W. S. Gilbert is entitled "Trial by Jury" and, as all arrangements are being carried out on a most thorough and elaborate scale, a musical treat of no mean order is assured.