

THE PROGRESS OF PROTESTANTISM

The progress of Protestantism may be likened to the regressive motion of a crab as it marches backward! The "progress" which Protestantism is making—like the creedless conglomeration of sects itself—is very peculiar. In Brooklyn, New York, a Protestant church called St. Ann's has given way to the progress of commerce; Sands street Methodist church is almost devoid of a congregation; the Baptist church on Nassau street in New York, has been transformed into a book bindery; the fashionable church known as "Dr Spencer's" in Brooklyn, makes a very spacious carpet show room, and the congregations of two others sectarian edifices had to double-up into one church so as to save both from tumbling into the ditch of decay!

Elm place Congregational church has been converted into a theatre; the First Reformed Church on Jerusalem street has been sold, and so going to be transformed into a concert hall, and Waverly Avenue Chapel has been converted into a chair making establishment.

It may be surmised that the congregations which attended these churches have erected edifices elsewhere, but this is not so. The Churches collapsed for want of congregations, for the reason that so many of the non-Catholic masses have turned Agnostics, Infidels, Rationalists or Materialists, that "a corporal's guard" was left to pay the preachers, and when that class of salvationists do not get good pay, they quietly slip off the clerical cloth and find a place in some of the professions where money can be rapidly made. In the secular sphere Protestantism is, in this way progressing, but—as a religion—it is rapidly being whittled down to a fine point by the internal error of its composition.

TOO MUCH PRAYING

Has it ever struck the parents who are afraid of too much praying in parochial schools, that it may make the greatest difference in that supreme hour—the hour of death—whether the children have prayed much or not.

A priest, out in the west, tells of his experience with young men, who in the free and easy atmosphere of each life soon lose all thought of prayer.

"I have found," he says, "that there was always a hope for a young man who had attended a Catholic school in early life. He, when ill, always wanted me and knew why he wanted me. It might be many years since he made an Act of contrition, but he knew its meaning. He perhaps had not been to confession since he made his first communion, but it does not require long to recall his early instructions to his mind. The case of the poor fellow, Catholic in name, but scarcely instructed at all, is very different and very hard. He hardly knows the meaning of an Act of Contrition: he is afraid of religion because he is ignorant of it. Many a time in preparing one of these poor boys for death in a short time, have I blessed the parochial school."

The consideration contained in the simple words of this good priest is one that ought to touch the heart of all mothers. What can console the heart of a mother if her son die without the last sacraments, after years of carelessness? His career may have been splendid; his talents brilliant, his education admirable in a purely secular way—will that console her when she kneels at his grave?

The objection of "too much praying" is an un-Christian one made against parochial schools. The people who make it use it generally to conceal some other motive. They think their children in school pray too much because they pray too little.

The parochial schools can very well meet any objections made to them on sensible and reasonable grounds especially in the primary departments the improvement is marked. If parents have no more valid objection to make than that their children ask the Mother of God to pray for them 'now and at the hour of their death' too often they had better close their lips in shame.

From the age of seven to that of fourteen, the public school system grinds out the pupils under it. What is the result? Has it produced miracles in education? Has it made the body of the people more reverent, more capable of self-support, more industrious, truer, honest. So far, it has not.

Can any critic of parochial schools honestly say that any child once in them has not been made better by the religious instructions there received?

"Too much praying." That phrase is a disgraceful one in the mouth of any parent who loves pure, innocent and reverent childhood. It betrays a shallowness of thought and poverty

of religious feelings which even Pagans would despise; It ought to go out of fashion.

FIRST AMONG MANY.

Ordination of a Negro Priest. The "In Memoriam" card of Rev Augustus Tolton, the negro student of this country at the Propaganda, Rome, has just been received by the writer, Dr. O'Connell having kindly sent it to him. The lamented Bishop Baltes sent the young aspirant to Rome several years ago. He is now enjoying the reward of his faithful perseverance. He is "a priest forever according to the Order of Melchisedech." Truly "black but beautiful." This negro priest said his first Mass in St. Peter's Basilica, Rome, on Easter Sunday, The Centre of Unity, where priests "of all nations, and tribes, and tongues" are seen, was the fitting place for this first offering. For the Mother and Mistress of Churches rightfully took under her aegis and sent forth with her blessing this first priestly fruit of the American negro. Easter Sunday, too; what more fitting day? May it prove an augury of the raise of his entire race to all that is holy and ennobling in the Faith! With admirable taste, this young priest selected, as echoing the joy of the heart; this passage of the 115th Psalm: "What shall I render to the Lord, for all the things that He hath rendered to me? I will take the Chalice of Salvation and I will call upon Thy name." To his holy sentiment the youthful minister of the altar adds the complete offering of himself: "My whole self and all that Thou hast given me in union with the passion and Death of Thy Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, I offer to thee. "Ad multos annos," may he prove the "first born among many brethren!"

Apropos of this ordination, the writer may add that he knows a colored youth who is now finishing Rhetoric. He is in a college of good standing in Canada, where he was obliged to go in order to secure what would be denied him in the United States. Some years ago this young man refused to accept the offer of a gratuitous education in a Presbyterian (colored) University, thus counting the pearl of faith above all price. The president of the college, the professors, his confessor, and all who know the young Rhetorician are convinced that he has a vocation. "The Lord will provide" seems his motto. He is most anxious to be a priest among his race in the South. "Greater things than these thou shalt see," Henceforth the words of Royal Psalmist will begin to be realized among us; "And before Him, the Ethiopians will fall down." For among the black millions of our land, very soon let us pray, must cease the wail, "days shall be formed and no one is them." Richmond, May 11th. J. R. S.

FALSE IDEAS.

Generosity is a privilege that a man has no right to indulge in as long as he refuses to perform a single well-defined act of justice. Indeed, we may safely assert not only that all men and women should be just before they are generous but that they cannot be generous before they are just. Should we call that man generous who took the bread that the poor man had earned for his children and gave it to another family because they were hungry? Yet what else does he do who withholds a just debt or takes advantage of a man's poverty or ignorance to obtain from him labor and good at less than fair price, and then bestows such ill-gotten gains upon any so-called benevolent object, public or private.

The total number of human beings on the earth is computed at over 3,000,000,000, and they speak 3,994 known tongues. The average duration of life is 33 1/2 years. One-fourth of these born die before they are seven years old, and one-half before the age of 17. Out of a 100 persons only six reach the age of 90 years. Out of 500 only one attains the age of 80 years. Sixty persons die every minute, all men live longer than short ones. Married men are longer lived than the single. Rich men live on an average 42 years, but the poor man only 30 years. There is a drunkard to every 74.

FOOD FOR MAN

The old saying that what is one man's meat is another man's poison is realized in the opposite tastes of people. The Turks shudder at the thought of eating oysters. The Digger Indians of the Pacific slope rejoiced in the great locust swarms of 1875 as a dispensation of the Great spirit, and laid in a store of dried locust powder sufficient to last them several years. The French will eat frogs, snails, and the diseased livers of geese but draw the line at alligators. Buckland declares the taste of boar constricting good and much like veal, Quass.

the fermented cabbage water of the Russians, is their popular tippie. It is described as a mixture of stale fish and soapuds in taste, yet; when the beer, it has more fermented beverage. A tallow candle washed down with quass forms a meal that it would be hard to be thankful for. In Canton and other Chinese cities rats are sold at the rate of two dollars a dozen, and the hind quarters of dogs are hung up in the butchers, shops alongside of mutton and lamb, but command a higher price. The edible birds, nests of the Chinese are worth twice their weight in the finest variety for selling for as much as 30 dollars a pound, The negroes of the West Indies eat baked snakes and palm worms fried in their own fat, but they cannot be induced to eat stewed rabbits. In Mexico parrots are eaten, but they are rather tough. The Guachos of the Badda Oriental are in the habit of hunting skunks for the sake of their flesh. The octopus or devil-fish, when boiled and then roasted, is eaten in Corsica and esteemed a delicacy. In the Pacific Islands and West Indies lizards eggs are eaten with gusto. The natives of the Antilles eat alligator eggs and the eggs of the turtle are popular every where, though up to the commencement of the last century turtle was only eaten by the poor of Jamaica. Ants are eaten by various nations. In Brazil they are served with a resinous sauce and in Africa they are stewed with grease or butter. The East Indians catch them in pits and carefully wash them in handfuls like raisins. In Siam a curry of ants eggs is a costly luxury. The Ceylonese eat the bees after robbing them of their honey. Caterpillars and spiders are dainties to the African bushman. After they have wound the silk from the cocoon the Chinese eat the chrysalis of the silk worm, Spiders roasted are a sort of desert with the New Caledonians.

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