

THE
IRISH
FRANCISCAN
MARTYRS.
1642—
FATHER
FRANCIS
O'MAHONY.
1650—
FATHER
FRANCIS
FITZGERALD.

ACCORDING to Father Ward, the Convent of Cork was called the Monastery of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and was founded in the beginning of the thirteenth century. Father Wadding says that this house was called the "Mirror of all Ireland," on account of the strict observance of regular life, and the piety of the brethren. It was erected into a Convent in the year 1260 in the General Chapter of Narbonne. It passed to the friars of the Reformed Observants previous to the year 1500, and remained in their possession till the year 1540, when heresy and persecution began to rage, and it was the first convent in all Ireland that was suppressed by the heretics. Father Maurice Ullan, who was provincial in 1609, erected a residence in the city for the Fathers, and Father William Farris was appointed the guardian, and from that time to this the good Fathers were indefatigable in their labors among the generous-hearted people of the city of Cork.

Father Francis O'Mahoney or Matthew, as he was usually called, was born in the city of Cork, towards the close of the sixteenth century. He entered the Franciscan Order at an early age, and very soon distinguished himself by his learning and piety. Shortly after his ordination he became one of the most active of that band of heroes who, not satisfied with laboring for the preservation of the shattered remains of the Order, determined in the time of cruellest persecution to restore the Irish province to its ancient glory.

In the year 1626 he was elected Provincial at the Chapter held at Multifarnan, under the presidency of Father Francis Coleman.

Father Matthew devoted himself to the restoration of the Order with his characteristic energy. In 1626 he reopened Athlone, under the guardianship of Father Antony Geoghegan; Dundalk, with Father Taaffe as guardian; also Carrigfergus and Quin. The following year a new convent was opened in Youghal, from which the Franciscans had been driven in 1583. Father Meade was appointed guardian. Later on in the same year they took possession of their own convent in the island of Inishmerring, and built a new one in Downpatrick.

He opened up schools in various parts of the country to train Franciscan students for their future arduous missionary lives. In Wexford he established a school for classical studies. In Cashel, Drogheda, Multifarnan, and Kilkenny, he appointed professors for philosophy, and Dublin was set apart for philosophy and Divinity. Here he appointed the learned Father Thomas Strange and Didacus Grey professors. These were the first ecclesiastical schools in Ireland since the suppression of the Religious Orders.

Father Matthew was a very learned man, well versed in theology and canon law. He wrote several works, some in defence of the privileges of the Orders and others on historical matters.

He was guardian of the College of St. Anthony at Louvain, for several years, and while there was the friend and fellow-laborer of O'Clery, Colgan and Fleming, and the other Irish Franciscans of that period who have reflected such honor upon their country.

Father Matthew was guardian of the convent in his native city when the rage and fury of the heretics against the Catholics appeared to be at its height.

Cardinal Moran tells us that the Puritan troops "displayed an insatiable thirst for blood, putting to death men and women, young and old; sometimes they flung whole bands of innocent victims from the rocks into the sea, or from the bridge into the river; others they shut up in houses and then set fire to them; they singed the hair and beard of others, so that even their own wives could not recognise them. Sometimes they put a loaded pistol into the

mouth of the unoffending Catholic and fired it off; they took infants by the heels and knocked out their brains against the rocks; other infants they threw to suck the breasts of their dead mothers." The cruelties exercised by the Puritans about this time in the city and county of Cork almost surpass belief.

Yet in spite of the ravages made by these inhuman monsters, our Fathers were indefatigable in their labors, reviving piety and instructing the people by word and example.

Nothing can be more admirable than the heroism displayed by the citizens of Cork when the persecution against the Catholic Faith appeared to have reached its height.

Archdeacon Lynch, who lived at that time, tells us in his M. S. history of the Irish bishops that "the city before evening. Three canon enemy through stratagem, the governor reckoning it unsafe to place trust in any Catholic, commanded the citizens by edict either to renounce their religion or quit the city before evening. Three canon shots were the signal for departure. Sad was the spectacle of suffering which the city then presented, although a glorious one in the sight of Heaven, and meriting the applause of the Christian world. Before the third signal the whole body of the citizens, mothers with their infants, aged men, who had held high posts of dignity, with their families, were seen scattered through the fields, going forth to voluntary exile, preferring the faith of their fathers to their homes and paternal inheritance. In the morning they abounded in wealth; in the evening they were despoiled of everything, save their belief in God, and confidence in His mercy.

In July, 1642—some say 1644—Father Matthew was cast into prison. After a few days he was brought up for examination. He at once confessed he was a Franciscan, but denied that he had engaged in any conspiracy to betray the city to the Confederate Catholics. His attachment to the faith was put to the test by the most cruel tortures. The executioners covered all his fingers first with canvas, then with pitch, and between each finger they put a pitch candle and lighted it, so that all his fingers were set on fire together. While his fingers were being slowly consumed by the fire, he preached to the crowd, and earnestly exhorted the Catholics to be steadfast in their faith, and he strongly advised the heretics to repent of their evil ways and return to the bosom of their God. One of the ministers present was much astonished at the extraordinary patience of the martyr. He asked him if he felt any pain. "Touch my fingers if you wish to know the pain." When all his fingers were burnt away to the very last joint, the cruel tyrant condemned him to be hanged. The man of God, raising his voice in thanksgiving to his merciful Saviour, went forth with joy to the place of martyrdom as if he was going to a feast. Having arrived at Greenmount, on the south side of the river, which was the place of public execution, he addressed a few words of exhortation to the people, and ascending the ladder, fixed the rope around his neck, and being well prepared for a holy death, desired the executioner to do his duty. He was then thrown from the ladder, and remained hanging from eleven o'clock in the morning till five in the afternoon.

Many near relatives of Father Matthew lived in the city. At the time of his execution one sister, two nephews, and four nieces, were living there. Some of those who were in high social position went to the heretical governor, and asked him to allow the dead body of the priest to be taken down from the gallows, and buried in the tomb of a friend with the ceremonies usual among Catholics. The governor, though more cruel than Pilate, assented. They then carried the body of the house of his sister in Castle street, and having clothed it in the habit of the Order, they laid it on the table. Lighted wax candles were placed near it, and the family kept watch with great devotion round the deceased martyr of Christ.

About two o'clock in the morning, while the crowd of Catholics who had gathered into the house had been fervently praying, Father Matthew was seen to move. He looked from his sister to the assembled people, and rapidly recovering consciousness, told them not to be afraid. They removed him from the table, and found to their great joy that he was really alive and in full health. His friends then began to congratulate him and each other on the great mercy of God, by which he had escaped the executioner.

"It is not so, my dearest friends," said Francis, restored to life; "for my soul happily released from the prison of my body must again return to it by the command of God, who desires the salvation of heretics

straying here and elsewhere from the path of truth. Call to me, therefore, the governor of the city that I may once more set before him the message of salvation." His friends and relations besought him with tears to abstain from such a useless and dangerous proceeding. "We ourselves have need of your spiritual help; you can therefore remain with us in safety." "It is the will of God," he replied, "that I preach once more the words of life to those erring people. Call, therefore, the governor and other officers of the army, or weak as I am, I will go into their presence."

Charged by the command of Father Francis, his friends sent word to the governor that the Father was alive and in good health. The tyrant was thunderstruck at the message he received, and hastened with his principal officers and a strong body of soldiers to the house in Castle street where Francis awaited him. As soon as the governor entered with his guard Father Francis rose to his feet, and with his usual earnestness and zeal, set before them the wonderful mercy of God in their behalf. He exhorted them to renounce their errors while God still gave them life, and return to the bosom of our Holy Mother the Church. But the hearts of these wicked men were closed to the grace of God, and the governor, like the tyrants of old, flew into a passion and stormed against the holy martyr. He then ordered the Papist as he called him,—who had preserved his life by magic—to be hanged again in the very room in which he stood. The executioners were at hand, for the officers of the Puritan army, not to speak of the soldiers, thought it no disgrace to torture and hang a Catholic with their own hands, especially if he were a priest. They pulled off the cord which bound his habit, and tying it around his neck, drew him up to the beam which supported the ceiling of the room. He was left hanging all night, and Puritan soldiers were appointed to keep guard over the body. Next day the body of the martyr was reverently taken down by his friends, and buried in the Church of St. Francis.

Father Murphy, S.J., in his work—"Our Martyrs" gives the following brief account of Father Francis Fitzgerald:—

"He was born of a very illustrious family in Munster, and in the year 1650 he was hanged in Cork, by order of the rebels, because he administered the sacraments and offered the Sacrifice of the Mass."—By Rev. Father Antonine, O.F.M., Killarney.

QUESTION
BOX
AT
MISSIONS
TO
NON-CATHOLICS.

QUESTION. I have heard you refer very frequently to "the Catholic Church." Do you mean the Roman Catholic Church? and if so, why do you claim for it that it is the old original and first Christian Church, while the facts are that the first Apostles at Antioch, Asia Minor, and remained there for quite a time?

ANSWER. We call the Catholic Church the Roman Catholic because the head of the Catholic or Universal Church is at Rome. St. Peter, the head of the Catholic Church, died as Bishop of Rome. The one who was elected Bishop of Rome to take the place of St. Peter as Bishop of Rome, also, by the fact of his election as Bishop, took St. Peter's place as head of the Church; so that, to this day, the Bishop of Rome is, by that fact, the head of the Catholic Church. Hence the name Roman Catholic Church. The name Catholic is not the same as Christian. Christian Church, as applied to those at Antioch, means a gathering of the followers of Christ. The Universal or Catholic Church means a society which was formed before there were any followers of Christ at Antioch. Christ said that He would found a Church on St. Peter; "Thou art Peter, and on this rock I shall build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Since Christ promised that the gates of hell should not prevail against His Church, it will last forever. You say that the first Christian Church was at Antioch, and remained there for some time. Taken in your sense, this Church at Antioch only lasted for a time. Hence it could not be Christ's Church, which He promised would last forever. Taken in our sense, the Church at Antioch was

not the first church; it was only a part of a Universal or Catholic Church founded by Christ for all nations and for all times. The Church of Christ was not to be the Church of any one city or of any one nation. It was to be for all nations. So the Catholic does not say that his Church was the first Christian Church established by Christ, with members, during the time of the Apostles, at Jerusalem, Damascus, Antioch, Athens, Rome and many other places. All these followers of Christ and members of Christ's Church, the Catholic or Universal Church, were united together in one society, with St. Peter as its head. So when the members of the Universal or Catholic Church at Antioch were called Christians, this did not separate them from the Universal Society of Catholics; nor did it make their Church at Antioch the first and original Church of Christ. The Church at Antioch was simply a part of the Universal or Catholic Church, founded by Christ, with St. Peter as its head. When St. Peter went from Antioch to Rome, Rome became the centre of the Universal or Catholic Church, founded by Christ, of which the Church at Antioch was simply a part. Because each of the great cities may have had a Bishop, and the Church in that city was called the Church at Antioch, the Church at Jerusalem, the Church at Alexandria, these different bishops and these different appellations did not destroy the Universal Church, nor the bond of brotherhood between all the churches. They were all united together into one great, universal society or Catholic Church by means of their union with the head, St. Peter, and his successor, the Bishop of Rome. Hence our Church, but is called the Catholic Church, or the Church established by Christ for all the nations. It is called Roman Catholic to emphasize its head, the Pope of Rome, the successor of St. Peter, in opposition to those who would deny that the Church had any head at Rome.

QUESTION. Why does the Church use Latin at her Mass, and why does the priest stand between the worshipper and his God? The non-Catholic service is better than the Catholic Mass because it is in the language of the people; the worshipper goes directly to his God; no priest makes intercession for him.

ANSWER. The Latin language is used because it is necessary for a Universal Church to have a universal language. Just as the United States, a nation made up of many States, runs more smoothly on account of having one common language; so also the Church Universal, embracing all the nations of the world, with their different languages, seeks for the sake of order and uniformity, one language. The Latin language has been selected because it is a dead language. Every word has a fixed meaning. A living language changes constantly in the meaning of its words. This is why it is called living. A dead language, like the Latin, also preserves the meaning of the doctrinal terms so necessary for a teaching Church to use in the expression of her doctrines. Because of this Latin language the Catholic and the priest are everywhere at home in the wide world. There is the same Mass, the same sacrament with their same words; the same doctrine, expressed in the same words, with the same meaning, etc., etc.

You say the priest at Mass stands in the way of the worshipper and prevents him reaching to and speaking to his God. We think you are mistaken. Let us see. The priest, by the power given to him by Christ through the Bishop who ordained him, brings down Christ upon the altar by the words, "This is My body." "This is My blood, which was shed for the forgiveness of sins." The worshipper pays no attention to the priest. His whole heart is lifted up to Christ on the altar, shedding His blood for his sins, supplicating the Father to spare the sinful one from the just punishment of his sins, and pleading with the Father to make him an adopted son of God, a brother to Jesus Christ. The worshipper can then speak face to face with Christ, just as St. John and the Virgin spoke to Him at the crucifixion. He thinks of no one, sees no one, hears no one but Christ and Him crucified. He worships Him, he cries for mercy to Him, he thanks Him, he prays to Him. The priest is forgotten, God alone occupies and fills his heart and mind. He speaks to God freely, in his own way, by means of a book, by vocal or mental prayer or by short ejaculations from the heart. There is none to come between heaven and earth. The soul flies up to God and God descends to the soul. If any one is bound and limited, it is not the worshipper in the Catholic Church; it is the priest. The priest speaks to God by means of the prayers of the Mass book appointed by the Church. But his eyes are free; no words of the ritual can

fetter them, and his Lord and God can feel his heart throbbing with love and gratitude to his Creator, his Redeemer and his Mediator. The eyes of the priest can speak their own burning language, face to face with Christ and Him crucified, while his lips and mind use the Latin tongue to speak to Christ, because he has been placed apart by the Church to bring Christ upon the altar for the benefit of the people and himself, and to supplicate the Saviour for the needs of the congregation and himself. Priest and people speak face to face with Christ and Him crucified. They speak to Him with eyes of faith and hearts of love. No saint, no angel, no Blessed Mother of God, no Pope, no Bishop, no priest, nothing stands between Christ and the worshippers as they cry, "My Lord and my God, have mercy upon me a sinner. Let me love You with my whole heart and above everything else." Thus they continue during the long service of the Mass. The lights and the incense help the mind to realize that the soul is before its God. The priest, with his Latin language, cannot distract them, for they know not what he says. The choir may sing, but they, too, use the Latin tongue. Their words cannot separate him from his God, while the music, with its accents of love, of praise, of adoration, of hunger for God lifts his soul closer and closer to its God; but in his own way.

How different it is in the Church of the non-Catholic. The choir sings, the sermon is preached, the minister prays; but the worshipper, what does he do? He prays, but with the minister, in the words of the minister's prayer. He listens to the sermon, but his mind is with the preacher's mind. He hears the choir singing its words of praise, and his mind is filled with the words he hears. But where is the free untrammelled long intercourse between God and man, between Christ and the sinner, between the Creator and the creature that takes place at the Mass in the Catholic Church? Where is the act of worship, of adoration, when the soul exclaims my Lord and my God? Where is the cry of hunger that comes from the soul that it needs its God? Where are the acts of private love, of private contrition, of private aspirations? They are not there; there is no individual service. There is but one road to God. Everything in the church comes between the individual and his God, so he can only reach his God through his minister who selects the service. Non-Catholics wonder why the Catholic Church is filled with men and women at the many services on Sunday morning. The non-Catholic can see only the priest at the altar, and he hears only the sound of a foreign language. He sees the priest moving up and down the platform before the altar. The congregation is silent, and he thinks the priest is doing all the work and the Catholic worshipper does nothing. He calls such a service slavery to a priesthood. He looks upon his own service as much superior. He is free, he explains; free from the intercession of the priest, free from ceremonies, free from a foreign tongue, free to speak to God as a free man.

Is not the slavery in the non-Catholic Church, and not in the Catholic? Slavery to the music, slavery to the sermon, slavery to the public prayer? Where is the free and long private intercourse between God and man that is had in the Catholic service? Where is the opportunity given to Christ to act upon the soul of the worshipper and lead him to further heights in religion? Where is the opportunity for private initiative which is necessary for all progress, even in religion? No two souls can be led by any minister in the same path to God; each must do his own work in his own way. The Scripture puts it thus: "Every man must work out his own salvation." The soul in its intercourse with God must not be fettered by music, by sermons or by any public prayer. You said well when you declared your opposition to a priest standing between the soul and God. Your condemnation can only apply to your own church, and not to the Catholic. Is it any wonder that the non-Catholic says that "I can remain at home away from church and in my own way speak to God;" or "I can go out into the fields, face to face with the God of Nature, and tell Him how much I love and adore Him?" If non-Catholics but knew how sweet it is to speak in their own way, face to face with Christ crucified, as He is upon the Catholic altar, they would not say that we were slaves to the priests, that we could not go directly to Christ, but needed priests, saints, angels and a Virgin Mother to intercede for us. If the non-Catholics but knew how Christ crucified speaks back from the altar to the Catholic soul, they would leave the green fields and their communion with the God of Nature, and go to the Catholic Church on Sunday morning and share some of the

joy that fills the Catholic heart that has spoken to his crucified God upon the altar of the Church and received divine tokens of love and forgiveness in return. They would see the difference between a communion with the God of Nature, where their God is not a person, but a force and can tell them nothing of forgiveness for sin, and a communion with a crucified God who comes to them as a person under the appearance of bread and wine to enter into union with their soul and fill the soul with a flood of tender love and divine forgiveness. This is religion, personal religion, free religion.

One of the greatest misfortunes of the Reformation in the sixteenth century was the overturning of the Catholic altar and the destruction of the Catholic priesthood in Germany and in England. God only knows how much from these alone the non-Catholic has lost from his spiritual life. You have asked, do not the priest and the Latin tongue stand in the way of intercourse between the worshipper and his God? The crowded houses of Catholic worship in every city in our land give the denial more powerfully than any words of mine. You say that the service in the English tongue of the non-Catholic churches is better than the Latin Mass of the Catholic Church. The empty churches of the non-Catholics prove the contrary. You say that the Catholic worshipper is the slave of the priest. Not at all. The Catholic is as free as the birds of the air to sing his own song of praise and love and gratitude and adoration to his own dear Redeemer—Catholic Standard and Times.

THE
A.O.H.
ON
COERCION
IN
IRELAND.

THE following resolutions were adopted at a meeting of the County Board of the A. O. H. last week.

Whereas, The British Government, through the Lord Lieutenant Earl Cadogan has proclaimed the Coercion Act in Ireland.

Whereas, The only reason alleged in defence of such action is that the lives of persons are made miserable by boycotting and intimidation.

Whereas, The reasons alleged are but the application of the legitimate principles of trades unionism, to a perfectly constituted organization.

Whereas, That notwithstanding the Normandy case, and the Walker charges in the British House of Commons were characterized by Mr. Wyndham himself as a tissue of falsehood, show the farcical nature of the alleged "violence and outrages."

Whereas, It is admitted by the Chief Secretary that there is a comparative absence of crime in Ireland, be it

Resolved, That we the County Board of the Ancient Order of Hibernians representing the County of Hochelaga, Province of Quebec, Canada, in meeting assembled, most emphatically protest against and denounce the unparalleled folly and tyranny of the British Government, in bringing on a peaceably disposed people the horrors of coercion, the effect of which will be to flood peaceable districts with police, break up legitimate meetings with batons, and persecute and imprison the trusted leaders of the people. As loyal Irish Canadian citizens enjoying the fullest measure of liberty, we deplore the tyrannical action of Lord Salisbury and his colleagues, in depriving millions of fellow-citizens of the empire of the only constitutional means available for the redress of their admitted grievances.

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AN HISTORICAL
ROMANCE
—OF THE—
Times of
Queen
Elizabeth.

CHAPTER XX CO
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WIDESPREAD
IS
ELECTRICITY

Lord Kelvin, the British scientist, in a speech in New York the other evening, said the world owes Edison a great debt. His light is now in use all through the civilized world, not only in America, but all over Europe and Asia, and even among the Zulus in South Africa. "And furthermore," said he, "New York is the foremost city in the world in electric lighting. I have looked over the harnessing of Niagara Falls to produce light and power, and was amazed and gratified by what has been achieved there. But it is only in the beginning of its greatness. Its possibilities are difficult to even conceive. Beginning with three dynamos it now has nine, with more to come. When mankind needs the 4,000,000 horse-power of Niagara it will be used."