

The Catholic Record.

"Christianus mihi nomen est, Catholicus vero Cognomen."—(Christian is my Name, but Catholic my Surname.)—St. Pacian, 4th Century.

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PRESBYTERIANS ON "RE-TREAT."

The Church Economist states that the Presbyterian pastors of New York city have, for the "deepening of the spiritual life," determined upon making a "retreat" every year. We congratulate them on the adoption of such an innovation. It cannot be productive of lasting good, and we hope that the Holy Spirit, by whose power alone we say, according to the Apostle, the Lord Jesus may guide and enlighten them.

SISTERS' HEROISM.

Some of the newspapers which never fail to chronicle the incidents of a prize fight, or the vagaries of an anti-Catholic preacher, are strangely silent with regard to the noble women who are ministering to the victims of the Bubonic plague in Vienna. The story of their unselfish devotion will make sweet music in ears that have been wearied with reports of mock heroism. When volunteers were asked for to nurse the sick the Sisters offered their services, and, accepting the condition that they were not to come out until they were dead, or the plague were stayed, went gladly within the precincts of the pest house.

Such charity is of the highest order. The love of a mother is, though pure and holy, tinged with a certain degree of selfishness; but the love that goes out to all, irrespective of class and creed, is on a higher plane, and that love finds an abiding-place in a heart consecrated to God. Its deeds emblazon the catalogue of gifts bestowed on mankind by the Church, and when men deny her mission and her character she can point to them as proofs that the charity with which she was filled on the day of Pentecost by the Holy Ghost abides still within her and marks her out as the Church of God. How poor and pitiful is the speechifying about the brotherhood of humanity compared to the practical and heroic deed of the Sisters of Vienna! For individuals whom they had never seen, but who personified for them the Redeemer, they went as gladly into that hospital as men to a marriage feast. This story of heroism is to a selfish world what the pure sunlight is to a dark and noisome tenement. It quickens enthusiasm and strikes from hearts the generous waters of strong resolve. That deed is the best Christmas gift that could be given to Vienna.

BETHEHEM'S LIGHT STILL SHINING.

Before the coming of Jesus men were like unto the simple folk of an Alpine village who have a legend of a buried city, and tell you when they hear the sound of distant bells chiming that the bells of the buried city are ringing. They also could narrate a story wondrous indeed but too sadly true. They could tell of a city built by God when the earth was young, where there was every beauty that could elevate the intelligence and every charm that could touch the heart. Grace and heavenly charity brooded over it, and they who dwelt therein had God for companion and friend. But the sea of disobedience rushing from out the human heart defaced its beauty and left o'er it all the marks of guilt, estrangement and debt. Such is the story told at the fireside of an age that they termed the age of gold. They treasured up the remembrance of that state of innocence and grace in which the human race was originally constituted, and in their hearts was sounding the music of that far-off time when God walked with man and spoke to him as friend to friend. And though the curse wrought by sin raised up a wall of separation between man and his Creator, never was there a time when man relinquished finding out God.

Even when primitive traditions became faint and blurred, and error and vice corrupted the nation, he still sought the God whom he had lost. He looked for Him in nature and threw his foolish imagining of God into bronze and marble, and adored them. And in the fullness of time God came to satisfy the passionate prayer of mankind, and to lead His children back to the path of justice and truth. He came on the hillsides of Bethlehem as a little child. He put away

His glory, emptied Himself of His power, and came to teach us, to encourage us by His example, to partake of our miseries and to compassionate our sufferings.

And though He is no longer visible to men, His work is carried on by His Church. Christ is the head of the Church. No one ever hated His own flesh. We are members of His body, of His flesh, of His bones. As Jesus was not only God but also man, He left a society at once divine and human to continue His work. As He took a human body and in it and through it taught His children, so in human society He continues to do the same. Thus the light which shone from the stable is shining still—leading by its kindly rays many a belated traveller to the haven of truth and giving rest to souls wearied and unsatisfied with paying homage to every fad of self-constituted teachers

CHRISTMAS.

With the first tidings of the advent of December, delightful visions of Christmas, with its joys and festivities, its decorations and its family gatherings, and last, but not least, its gifts, flit through the minds, not only of the children, but of many of the larger folk as well.

What a charm hangs about the very name of Christmas, Fairyland of childhood! How we remember still the slow tread of the days as they neared our longed-for Aurora; how we counted the hours until the dawning of that glorious day expected with such a thrill of delightful anticipation! How we watched and waited for Santa Claus until our eyes grew heavy with sleep, and our awaking brought us the yearly disappointment of his having come and gone unheard and unseen! How quickly our regret vanished, however, when we found that he had left tangible proofs of the reality of his visit in the well filled stockings and the very articles that we had hoped to receive from his bounty.

But if the joys of Christmas are great, so too are its sorrows. Someone who helped to make Xmas bright last year is no longer here to share our gladness, and sometimes the loved one who has passed over that river where no returning current flows gets all our sorrow, and joy is to us only a bright memory of yesterday which renders deeper the gloom of to-day.

Christmas, however, would, despite its attractions, be but a season of hollow gaiety, a festival of vanity and frivolity, if we did not let our greatest joy be that engendered by the spiritual side of this greatest of Christian anniversaries.

It is for parents to instill into their children a deep and tender love for the Divine Infant, whose poverty and neglectedness we often add to by our indifference, more marked and more culpable than that of the ignorant inhabitants of Bethlehem. Teach the little ones to make some sacrifice in order to procure pleasure for children whose Christmas is often devoid of all that makes it so attractive to your own well-supplied boys and girls. Their half-worn toys, neatly mended and freshened up, would bring happiness to many a child's heart starving for some of the playthings possessed by their more fortunate neighbors.

There are many pretty customs which if taught to the children would make them enter into and appreciate more and more the true beauty of the Christmas festival. The Swedes save from the harvesting a sheaf of wheat which they call "God's Sheaf," and on Christmas day this is set up on the snow-covered fields that the little birds may make a merry Christmas for themselves.

In Italy it is customary for each family to give a sumptuous repast to three peasants—an old man, a woman and an infant—in honor of the Holy Family.

Another pious practice is to dress a little infant in a complete suit of new and dainty clothing made by the children of the household.

Pious and laudable as all these customs are there is one still more beautiful and more appreciated by the Divine Babe. This is to give Him a shelter less rough and cheerless than the midnight cave, and to render His coming less attended by neglect and indifference than His advent of years ago.

The children who receive Communion on Christmas day will do this and receive abundant measure of the peace proclaimed by the Angelic Host.

THE CRADLE OF SCIENCE.

Carlyle used to say that one of the achievements of the century was the bringing into existence of an almost incredible number of bores. When one glances at the valueless books that are scattered over the land and dubbed as original by the "critics"; when we see old theories that have been buried for centuries, unearthed and exploited as a new find, and exhibited as testimony to the genius of the age, we are apt to smile at its claims to superiority over past ages. But what is more astonishing is that any scribbler with a talent for generalities and cheap rhetoric will, if he assert his emancipation from all creeds, obtain a hearing. He need not have any principles or scholarly qualifications which are the guerdon of patient and persevering study. He need not reflect that had he lived in the ages which he contemns—ages of true intellectual development, when men deemed that years of toil were necessary to fit the mind for the discussion of questions which are treated to-day with levity and flippancy—he would have been assigned a place in the elementary classes.

The temple of knowledge is filled with charlatans crying their wares, and we wait for the time when they will be lashed out of it and forced to essay a role other than that of authorship.

Take one assertion which, like Banquo's ghost, is always popping up, namely, that the Church has ever impeded the progress of science. How dogmatically this is stated by an "eloquent" author and accepted as a proof of his erudition and originality by those who have never seen a book of his story except through the glass doors of a public library, or perchance have read one but through the glass of prejudice! It is needless to repeat what has been said so often and well, that the Church has ever been the consistent friend of scientific advancement, and that the individuals who persist in denying it would, but for her influence, be wandering around to-day in goat-skins and in a state of barbarism, which after all is preferable to a state of mendacity.

Every student of history should not only know but thank the Church for the civilization that has, since her advent into the world, marked her progress.

It is not a difficult task to prove it, for before us are historians who tell the story of the transformation effected by her in the moral and intellectual order. She has encouraged her children to spare no effort to develop their talent, and she has more than once denounced those who would fain belittle the power of reason. We shall not weary our readers with recounting how she founded the universities of Europe, where, to quote Carlyle, nearly all the inventions and civil institutions, whereby we yet live as civilized men, were originated and perfected.

In the middle age, however, says Schlegel, as in antiquity, the era of the foundation of states and nations, the era of legislation preceded that of the arts and general refinement. Of ignorance, however, and defective civilization it is scarcely possible to accuse an age wherein the Mediterranean was covered with ships as richly laden, and its coasts by commercial cities as prosperous and powerful as the most flourishing epoch of Greece. And he goes on to say of this age—in which the power of Catholicism was paramount—that natural science and mathematics were studied with untiring eagerness; that literature and philosophy were assiduously cultivated, and architecture and painting attained perfection. The Gothic architecture of the middle age is the wonder and model of the present day, and painters marvel still at the genius that has thrown into life and shape such masterpieces as the "Transfiguration."

The children of Catholicism have not only distinguished themselves in every field of human enquiry, but they were the pioneers who blazed a way for the generations of the future. To under-rate their work, and to decry the source whence came their inspiration and encouragement, is to be guilty of base ingratitude, to imitate that son who reviled the father who gave him a goodly inheritance.

Every Catholic knows that the teaching of science can never contradict the teaching of revelation. The God who wrote the Bible wrote the illuminated manuscript of the skies. No contradiction can ever be conceived between them. The Church, because she is Christ continuing His mission and teaching with authority, will, despite all the attacks of so-called scientists, remain until the end. True science will find in her, as in the past, a staunch friend, but science that is founded on either atheistic or materialistic imaginings or unthinking hatred will obtain no quarter.

She tells her children to "love understanding exceedingly," to bend their energies to the unravelling of the modern problems, to historical research, to everything, in fine, that can appeal to the intellect, because any conquest of science but confirms the truth of the revelation confided to her, and because Catholics should, true to tradition, be in the forefront of progress and scientific advancement.

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THE REAL PRESENCE.

A Sermon Delivered in St. Mary's Church by Rev. Father Drummond in Reply to Ven. Archdeacon Fortin's Recent Discourse.

Windsor Tribune, Dec. 10.

St. Mary's church was filled to overflowing Thursday evening, when Rev. Father Drummond preached upon the "Real Presence," in reply to the sermon of Ven. Archdeacon Fortin. His text was John 6: 55, "For My flesh is meat indeed, and My blood is drink indeed."

He said he did not intend to refer to those topics upon which the Anglicans themselves differed, nor to enter upon a useless or aggravating controversy. He was merely going to prove the truth of the Catholic doctrine. He had with him Archdeacon Fortin's sermon as it appeared in The Tribune, and he thought it would be best to read the sermon and comment upon the different points as he went along.

He thought it strange that Archdeacon Fortin should criticize the Archbishop of Canterbury, the head of his Church. Pope Honorius was called a heretic only by his enemies. The archdeacon had selected from the Council of Trent a rather curious quotation, to the effect that outside of the Church of Rome there is no salvation. It was curious to quote this as characteristic of Trent, since every other council had held the same doctrine. This doctrine only meant that there is no salvation for those who, knowing that they ought to be in the Church, still remained out of it.

The Church of Rome has never added any teaching contradictory to the word of God. The archdeacon's reference to the text "Call no man father," was an example of the ignorant method of quoting scripture. The text merely means that no one on earth has so good a right to the title of father as God. In Hebrew, as in most Oriental languages, where terms of comparison are wanting, the writer who wishes to show the superiority of one person over another has to say "This one alone is great and that one is of no account." Instance of this occurs in the well-known text, "He that hateth not father and mother is not worthy of me." This simply means, "He that loveth not me more than father or mother is not worthy of me." Hebrew not having the expression "more," one is obliged to say one is "hated," when he means it "to be loved less."

Again, Archdeacon Fortin says that St. Paul was entirely opposed to priest-craft, and this is another instance of inaccurate quotation from the scriptures. There was nothing in St. Paul's epistles to show that he was opposed to the government of his superiors. Further on the Archdeacon referred to the "Romish system," which expression Rev. Father Drummond characterized as an "antiquated piece of vulgarity." As to the text, "Search the Scriptures," the correct translation of the original is, according to the Revised Version, "Ye search the Scriptures."

Catholics have at least as much faith as any other people. The Catholic does not yield his conscience to the priest, but he goes to the priest for advice and counsel.

The subject of Archdeacon Fortin's sermon was the "Real Presence," or rather the "Real absence," for his purpose was to show that Christ's body was not present in the sacrament. The archdeacon had evidently made an attempt to understand the Catholic doctrine, but he had got them lamentably confused.

By the force of the divine words uttered by the priest the bread and wine are turned into the flesh and blood of Christ, though the accidents remain the same. The appearance of the bread and wine is not changed, yet the Real Presence of Christ's body is there. When the divine words have been spoken we know by faith that the substance is no longer bread but the Body of Christ.

Archdeacon Fortin attempted to show that the words "This is my body; this is my blood," were mere figurative expressions, the same as "I am the door, I am the vine, I am the way." The latter expressions Father Drummond said were obviously figurative, and to prove this he read the context of John 10, 7-14, which refers to the words "I am the door of the sheep." He also read John 15 1-6, beginning "I am the true vine."

"The context showed," said Father Drummond, "that these were metaphors and allegories, but you will search in vain in Hebrew or any other Oriental language for a figure in which the living body is represented by bread. Besides when Christ said 'I am the door,' 'I am the vine,' He did not speak of any special 'door' or 'vine,' whereas when He said 'this is My Body,' He pointed out a very definite body, His own, which certainly was not a metaphor."

The rev. speaker hoped that one result of his sermon would be that every one would read carefully the sixth chapter of St. John. Catholics consider that the first part of the chapter refers to faith in Christ and the last part to the gift of His body.

"As," said Father Drummond, "the archdeacon has garbled and distorted the sequence of the sacred text, I will read John 6, beginning with verse 51, and make a running commentary on the same." The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" Father Drummond said: "Whenever Christ's hearers misunderstood Him and took His words in a literal when they should be taken in a figurative sense it was Christ's uniform custom to correct the mistake and explain the words in a figurative sense. For instance when He said, 'except a man be born again he cannot see the Kingdom of God; Nicodemus said unto him, how can a man be born again when he is old?' Immediately Jesus explained to him that it was a spiritual birth and said, 'Except a man be born of water and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.' But when His hearers understood Him in a literal sense which was the right one He did not correct His first expression, but simply strengthened it. For example when Jesus said, 'Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it and was glad.' The Jews said unto him, thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?' Jesus said unto them, 'Verily, verily, before Abraham was I am.' Thus He affirmed His identity with that being who, had said to Moses, 'I am who I am,' and so well did the Jews understand Him as claim to be God that they took up stones to cast at Him. He knew the danger He was running, and yet He simply reaffirmed what He first said. Now apply this principle to the verse just read, John vi. 52, when the Jews said, 'How can this man give us his flesh to eat?' If Christ had intended to instill into a mere symbol He would have explained that it was not His own flesh and blood that they were going to eat, but would have said, 'My dear friends, do not be alarmed, I only want you to take a piece of bread or a sip of wine in memory of me.' But what He did say was very different, 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth of my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life and I will raise him up at the last day, for my flesh is meat indeed and my blood is drink indeed.'

"In reference to the 60th verse and the following, Archdeacon Fortin takes an unpardonable liberty with the sacred text: 'They were greatly offended, so that very many left Him and would no longer listen to such teachings, wherefore the Saviour explained Himself. He said, why should ye be offended; I am speaking spiritually.' Now these last four words, 'I am speaking spiritually,' are not to be found in the New Testament; they are an invention of the Archdeacon's. What Christ said was this: 'When Jesus knew in Himself that His disciples murmured at this, He said unto them, doth this offend you? What then if ye shall see the Son of Man ascend up where He was before? It is the spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing. The words I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life.' The word 'flesh' here does not mean the material 'flesh.' In this, as in all material texts where 'flesh' is opposed to 'spirit,' 'flesh' means infirmity or sin, but what does Jesus mean when He refers to His ascension? He means to call attention to the glorified existence which He will lead under a sacramental veil. According to Catholic teachings Christ's existence in the Blessed Sacrament cannot be fully explained. When the bread is touched by the tooth no pain is caused as it would be to a carnal body, which is in an etheralized state. The risen Christ passed through the closed door of the disciples' chamber, and yet His body offered a real resistance, for Thomas was invited to touch the print of His wounds. All glorified bodies can pass through material objects. Now Christ's body in the sacrament is a glorified one. Therefore

what our Lord meant by referring to His ascension was to hint that His presence in the Blessed Eucharist was to be quite unlike that of meat which we buy in the butcher's stall. His body was to be in a sort of spiritualized state, not subject to exterior influences as ordinary bodies are, and thus His words come true that it is the 'spirit that quickeneth.' The flesh of Christ without the spirit of His divinity would not, but being the flesh of God it really does quicken and sow the seeds of eternal life.

"Commenting on verse 66 'from that time many of His disciples went back and walked no more with Him.' Rev. Father Drummond said 'surely if Christ were instituting a mere symbol it was now high time that He should speak out His mind and prevent His disciples from forsaking Him; and yet He does no such thing. He simply turns to the twelve and says, 'Will ye also go away,' as much as to say, 'If you will go I shall have to lose you, but I cannot change my doctrine, and then it was that Simon Peter, the future head of His Church, answered Him, as all Catholics have answered throughout the ages, 'Lord, to whom shall we go. Thou hast the words of eternal life, and we believe and are sure that thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God.' Can any story be more convincing than this to show that what Christ promised was not to be a simple symbol but a living reality."

Archdeacon Fortin had stated very dogmatically that a body could not be in two places at one time. But God can do everything that is not a manifest contradiction, and no one can prove that being in two places at one time is a manifest contradiction. Catholics believe that by the power of God, supernaturally exerted, one thing can be in two or a thousand places at one time.

Some persons ask how it is possible for the whole body of Christ to be in a little wafer; but the great Newton said that by the power of God the earth could be compressed into a cubic inch. Nobody knows what is the composition of matter. It is not necessary for us to prove how the body of Christ is present in the seeming wafer, but merely to show that it is not a manifest contradiction. There is nothing contradictory in the doctrine of the blessed sacrament, either to human reason or to scientific facts. It is a supernatural mystery.

"We have no difficulty," continued Father Drummond, "in daily life in admitting natural mysteries which no one can explain. Who know the real nature of electricity, and yet who doubt the reality of that wonderful agent? Similarly we must admit mysteries in God's dealings with man, because the very nature of God is beyond our ken. The Archdeacon says 'No one, not even the ritualists or Romanists (he is improving his manners; he now calls us Romanists. Some day he will call us he ought to do, Roman Catholics) would like to affirm that wicked people actually eat the body of the Lord and drink His blood at the last supper.' In this the Archdeacon is grievously mistaken. Catholics teach most explicitly that even wicked people actually eat the body of the Lord, and in this they follow teaching of 1 Corinthians, 11-27, 'Whosoever shall eat this bread and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord'—"

for he that eateth and drinketh unworthily eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.' These words are strong confirmation of the doctrine of Real Presence. St. Paul says, as you will observe, that the wicked who receive the sacrament eat and drink damnation to themselves. Now, if the sacrament were a mere symbol, no such awful threat could be justly uttered. If the wicked communicant incurs damnation, he must have committed an awful sacrilege on what St. Paul himself calls the Lord's Body. Thus Catholics believe that even the wicked receive the real Body of Christ when they take the Blessed Sacrament, but by doing so they commit sacrilege and their souls become blacker.

"At the last supper Christ said to His disciples, 'This is My body, which is broken for you.' Therefore, it is the real body that was bruised in the Passion. 'This is My blood, the blood which is shed for you. The very same blood poured out on Calvary. This is no figure; men do not speak in figures when they are about to die. When a man establishes a rite he does it in the clearest and most explicit language."

"Thus the circumstances in connection with the establishment of the sacrament prove the real presence of the body and blood. The Catholic church has always believed this, and has given the strongest proof for it. It is one of the fundamental doctrines: it is the very well spring of spiritual life in the Catholic church."

At the conclusion of his sermon, Father Drummond said he would reply to Archdeacon Fortin's most disgraceful sermon on the confessional on Sunday evening, Dec. 18, provided his sore throat, from which he suffered, was dispensed by that time.

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