

The Catholic Record.

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

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THE OLD PROPHECY.

The correspondents would have us believe that the Church is dying. So talked the Romans of the times of Diocletian and of St. Augustine, who says of these prophets: "I see them sink into the grave while she moves on. She has passed through the full cycle of changes in order to show us that she is independent of them all. They who proclaimed her downfall nigh are dead and their names serve but to remind us of the words of Holy Writ, 'The kings of the earth stood up and the princes met together against the Lord and against his Christ.' But 'he that dwelleth in heaven shall laugh at them; and the Lord shall deride them.'"

WORKS—NOW.

The pocket editions of Voltaire who govern France may stimulate the Catholics to be worthy of their ancestors and to warm into beneficent activity the spirit which made beautiful the life of their own St. Louis, "the humble sergent of Christ." They have learned by this time that a Government that does not recognize God as Master, cannot be master of itself, and must become an unbridled despotism. Ancient the assertion that religion was emigrated from France, we are glad to learn from our esteemed contemporary, The Ave Maria, that Victor Girard, a university professor, thoroughly familiar with the subject, does not hesitate to say: "Politically vanquished, tracked and proscribed and persecuted. . . never since Bossuet and St. Francis de Sales—perhaps not since the thirteenth century—has French Catholicism in reality been stronger, more fruitful, more alive."

THE "EDITOR" AND POPE PIUS.

The "able editors" regret that Leo XIII. is not on the Papal throne. They refer to him as "masterly," though these were when they dubbed him a reactionary and one out of joint with the times. They hint that the son of a Yonatan peasant cannot hope to cope with modern problems. For this assertion they advance no reason, because they have no reason to advance. It is strange, of course, that "able editors," who rub elbows with ward healers and sleep over occasionally, and whose greatest president was a rail-splitter, have the idea that a peasant's son, endowed with a personality that extorts love and admiration and of a line of Pontiffs, compared to which the proudest royal houses are but of yesterday, cannot solve problems which their "able editors" master so easily.

But the end is not yet. The problems will be solved, and by the Church. To the eyes of the editors the Pope is defeated, and, therefore, cannot measure up to the standard of the aristocratic and successful Clemencis or the retired aristocrats of the buccaneering corporations whose platitudes they chronicle so seriously.

The first Pope was a fisherman and yet coped so successfully with the Romans, that he commenced an age of religious sovereignty in which they might spend their own heathen times twice over and not see its end. Many a Pope was of patrician origin; others came from the ranks of the lowly; one was a swineherd; but they all perpetuate the life of Christ, Who was known to the law as the son of a carpenter. We know that with the Papacy as with our Lord a thousand years are as but a day. Patience and confidence. "This is the victory which overcometh the world—your faith."

THE LONDON SATURDAY REVIEW VS. CHRISTIAN GUARDIAN.

The Christian Guardian, published under the authority of the Methodist Church, says: "Protestants and ardent sympathizers with the French Republic are rejoicing that the extreme stand taken by the Papal authorities has backed up the Government in its extreme though altogether reasonable measures."

The London Saturday Review, (Protestant) Dec. 15, says: "As the wires flash across the Channel the daily alarms and excursions incidental to the war against Christianity, now inaugurated in the land of St. Louis, Englishmen begin to realize the meaning of the gigantic act of plunder and sacrilege recently perpetrated by the French Republic. The truth is that the pigmy Jacobins, to whom French folly has entrusted the destinies of a great nation, have torn up the religious settlement which the administrative genius of Napoleon devised

and which for a century had given to France some measure of religious peace. The reasons that have urged these pigmy Robespierres and Dantons to this colossal crime are notorious outside England."

The Christian Guardian is sure that Protestants support the French Government in its altogether reasonable measures.

The London Saturday Review says: "To do these atheists justice, they have for thirty years shouted their beliefs in the market place. From Gambetta's *Le clericalisme va le nier* to M. Briand's *Il faut en finir avec l'idée chrétienne* [We must abolish all idea of Christ], they have marched steadily on to their goal which is the transformation of their countrymen into not only a non-Christian but an anti-Christian nation. Every word in this connection that the Jacobin politicians say, every act that they do, proves them to be not only the enemies of Catholicism, but also of Christianity. The Catholicism which they attack is allowed by learned French Protestants to be the only form of Christianity that practically counts in France. The contemptuous toleration that the Republic extends to powerless Calvinistic sects in no way interferes with its general purposes and serves to blind the eyes of Protestant England to its ultimate designs."

The Christian Guardian, Dec. 19, says: "Many times during the past few months have the weakness and vacillation of the Papacy greatly embarrassed the Bishops and clergy in France."

The London Saturday Review says: "As, however, it is repeatedly stated in the press that but for the Pope the French episcopate would have accepted the dishonorable proposal, let the British public know that they were absolutely unanimous in rejecting it. The only basis, in fact, for the absurd statement to the contrary is that certain Bishops did consider whether it was possible to form associations under the Separation Law on a canonical basis and that they gave up the attempt as hopeless. This week also the absurd fiction has been revived that the Pope has in Germany accepted the principle of *associations cultuelles*. This argument has been invented almost entirely for English consumption. In France they know better than to use it. The fact is that German Church councils are perfectly canonical, for, like English churchwardens, they are merely administrators of Church property, not organizers or controllers of Church worship."

The Christian Guardian says: "Evidently, and from the Church's point of view, Pius X. was not intended for such times as these."

The London Saturday Review says: "But why, says our Erastian journalist, did the Pope and the Bishops refuse to fall in with M. Briand's kind offer and not legalize Church worship under the law of public meetings? The answer is that to have done so would have compromised the whole position of the Pope and the Church and at the best have saved the obnoxious law of desecration only for a year. It may further be added that M. Briand's proposal that a single notice should hold good for a year was in itself a counsel of lawlessness, and that the Pope has left it to the Jacobin Ministry to violate alike the Statute Law and the Rights of Man."

It is a relief to turn from these hypothetical sophistries to contemplate the stand of French Catholics. Their attitude is historically remarkable, for never before in the struggle between the State and the Vatican in France has French Catholicism so unanimously ranged itself on the side of the Papacy. . . . Such facts render the solid unity in the Catholic Church of France and the united resolution of its members to suffer undeserved loss and shameful persecution the more impressive. Only an issue of the first moment could have united so great a body, hampered as it is by Erastian traditions, in so magnificent a protest."

The Christian Guardian refers to the Vatican's determination "to take the extreme obscurantist position and order the utter rejection of recent concessions granted by the French Government."

The London Saturday Review says: "Perhaps the most offensive feature in this press campaign is the attempt made to represent the Pope as the assailant of the laws and liberties of Frenchmen, and to drape this Jacobin anti-Christianity in the honored mantle of Gallicanism. The truth is that throughout the struggle the Republic and not the Pope has been the law-breaker. The very pretext for the Separation Law was the Pope's interference to shatter a grave ecclesiastical scandal which no Church in Christendom could tolerate. The dissolution of the Concordat without notice to the Holy See was in the circumstances a disconcerting violation of the diplomatic usages of civilized nations. The Separation Law violated the spirit of the Concordat in a most dishonorable manner. The paltry salaries paid to the French clergy under that treaty represented the nation's shabby compensation for the great wealth which the Gallican Church, and of which the Revolution robbed her."

The Christian Guardian refers to the "obscurantist position of Pius X."

"The encyclical, the bravest thing in truth that has come to France from the Vatican since the day when Pius VI. hurled the 'Civil Constitution' of the clergy in the faces of the men of the first revolution, should herald the dawn of a new era for the annals of French Catholicism. . . . This conception of associations of laymen for ecclesiastical purposes responsible to a Council of State and independent of the Bishop is absolutely unCatholic. . . . We have said that the principle of the association is unCatholic; no small proportion of Protestants would repudiate it as anti-Christian. Strange as it may seem to the ordinary Protestant, the Pope is today fighting with far better justification and far greater moderation the very war that Chalmers and the other founders of the Free Kirk waged in Scotland sixty years ago for the 'Crown rights of Christ.'"

The Christian Guardian says: "The present animosity is not a religious persecution."

"Not the least melancholy feature in this unhappy story is the fact that English (and American) sympathy is world-wide, is generally on the anti-Christian side. As a fact, the Pope is in every way the injured party, and in this case the cause for which he is fighting is the cause of Christendom. The men who rule France to day make no concealment of their hatred and contempt for Christianity and its Founder. There is no question here of differences between Anglicanism and Romanism, or indeed between Romanism and Protestantism. The Pope in this matter is fighting the battle of Christendom."

For the London Saturday Review, we thank our esteemed contemporary, the Sacred Heart Review.

We do not believe that the Christian Guardian voices the opinions of Methodists in this matter. The editor, we think, speaks for himself, and even he, let us hope, when he studies the question, may refuse his support to the avowed enemies of Christianity.

TWELVE CAUSES OF NEGLECT OF CONFESSION.

Acting upon the suggestion of a correspondent that a discussion of the causes of neglect of confession would result in a great deal of real good to Catholics, Rev. Ernest R. Hall, S. J., the learned editor of The Examiner, of Bombay, who has had long experience as a missionary, writes:

"The neglect of confession is of sufficiently frequent occurrence to make it a matter worthy of examination. We can think of twelve causes which may lead to neglect of confession. These are as follows:

"1. Sometimes, and in a few cases, it is the result of mere pique or sensitiveness. It happens that one day a particular priest has a headache or indigestion, or is worried out of his life for one reason or other—perhaps upset by some unusually irritating penitent, who would indulge in long ruminations about irrelevant matters, or would persist in whispering so low that it would be impossible to hear a word. Under these vexatious circumstances the priest has spoken a little harshly or irritably, and the penitent has gone out in a huff, maliciously resolved never to go to confession again, to 'that man' at least; and perhaps never to go to confession again to any priest whatsoever. Sometimes such a resolution is also made for reasons outside confession, as, for instance, the idea that Father So-and-so neglects to salute me in the street, or to visit me at home, or has refused to receive my visit out of the usual time, or has 'insulted' me in some way or other. Of course this is utterly unreasonable. And so, by way of revenge, I resolve to have nothing to do with him, or to perhaps to have nothing to do with priests at all. No one throws away a whole box of cigars because, forsooth, one of them is worm eaten, or burns hot and crooked. Still less will a man who finds his pipe stopped up one evening resolve to give up smoking for the rest of his life on that account. But the foregoing way of proceeding is no less absurd. Even if some unfortunate incident or some natural incomprehensibility of temperament repels me from anything to do with one particular confessor, this does not prevent me from trying another with whom no such difficulty exists. Otherwise it comes to this: 'I am determined not to save my soul because Father So-and-so is a nasty man.' What could be more irrational?"

"2. Putting aside this foolish cause, it may be that some penitents, being of their sensitive nature, find confession very embarrassing, because of the imagined difficulty of the process and because they apprehend that they will be harassed or heckled by the confessor with awkward questions or demands difficult to meet. This difficulty often arises merely from the imagination, and chiefly from previous neglect of confession. Those who have been brought up well from childhood, and have practiced confession regularly ever since, find it quite simple, easy and natural. They regard it as a matter of course to tell the priest all that lies on their conscience; their training makes the preparation easy, and their completeness and clearness of their confession renders questions unnecessary. But if this early habit has been neglected, people feel awkward. They think it embarrassing to tell the secrets of their lives, irksome to examine their conscience, and difficult to express themselves. The only remedy is boldly to face the day, make a careful examination of conscience, and then blurt

everything out quite straight. When this has once been done, they will be surprised to find how easy the matter is and how ill-founded their apprehension.

"3. Those who have absented themselves from confession for a long time often object that they cannot remember properly what they have done, or how often. They are not in the habit of watching themselves. They live by impulse, sometimes without doing wrong, sometimes having their flag for a time, and soon. How can they recall details? The answer is as follows: There is a difference between theory and practice in this matter. In theory the exact number, species and aggravating circumstances of each and every sin ought to be expressed. But this theoretical rule is tempered by another practical rule, viz., the penitent is bound to confess his sins only in such way as they present themselves to his own consciousness, and only with that standard of exactness which belongs to his temperament, character and habits. No man is bound to turn the examination of his conscience into a head-splitting drudgery. He is only bound to survey his sins with the same degree of care with which he surveys the ordinary affairs of his life. To take an instance: 'How much and how often do you smoke?' You will tell me: 'Well, I never kept a very exact record. I smoke a pipe regularly in moderation, perhaps three or four times a day. Besides this, I always have a box of cigars, and smoke one or two a day, off and on, as well as an occasional cigarette. I might guess that I got through a box of cigars a month and perhaps a pound of Richmond mixture. Without watching myself and taking notes, I cannot tell you more accurately than that.' Now, if the question were about a certain sin, instead of about smoking, this would be considered a fairly satisfactory confession. It would give the priest an approximate idea, and the best you can convey under the circumstances. No more is demanded than this ordinary care. And if, without gross negligence, some sins are forgotten or some mistakes are made, that practically does not matter. You have exercised a reasonable effort to give a true account, and that is all the Church requires. These remarks are, of course, not to be taken as an encouragement to negligence and slipshodness in confession, but only intended to remove from the mind all ideas that confession makes demands which are beyond the ordinary capacity of the penitent."

"4. As a help to method, the following lines can be suggested. Take the big sins first—those which are obvious and grave—impurity, theft or fraud, drunkenness, fighting or quarrelling, hatred or wishing evil to others, slandering others, deliberate lying, gross neglect of family or business duties, inexcusable absence from Mass, omission of Easter duties, unexcusable neglect of fasting or abstinence. It is easy to settle at once what are the chief failings—perhaps only two or three out of the list. Then settle whether these sins were committed more or less daily, or weekly, or monthly, or only once or twice. Next rehearse the list very shortly—five headings. How often for each? Then go in and tell your tale. If you show signs of care in preparation, the priest will not bother you much, if at all. You can save all anxiety by simply saying, 'This is all I remember. Please ask me some questions.' The priest will then put one or two—probably on those vices which you have not mentioned—and then you answer on the spur of the moment, just as you remember; and the whole trouble is over."

"5. There are some who have no difficulty in knowing a certain sin they have committed, but they have a painful dread of mentioning it. They go in to the confessional with a death overcast of sheer embarrassment and trepidation. Where this happens, there is one simple rule to follow. As soon as you realize that you have omitted that sin, interrupt the priest at once and say, 'Father, there is something else.' He will at once ask, 'Well, what is it?' And then if you reply, 'I don't like to mention it,' he will encourage you, or even suggest what it might be; and then all will be put right at once."

"6. Suppose, however, you forget the little dodge, and actually leave the box with the sin unconfessed. You need not on that account be disturbed or remain away from Communion. You can either go in again and tell the priest at once or you can resolve to mention it next time you go. Next time you say simply, 'There was something which I left out last confession, though I meant all the time to tell it,' or whatever the case may be."

"7. There are some who know well enough what their sins are, but they cannot break off their bad habit. They feel sure that they will be committing it in the future, and that a good resolution is of no use. Hence, though they would really like to break it off, they stay away from confession because they think it would be hanging you as it were, and failing to do so would be a failure. At least you can resolve to try to avoid them. A sincere resolve to try is all that is required. The Church does not demand from you a promise never to sin again but only

a firm purpose of trying not to sin again.

"7. Some go further. They cannot bring themselves to make a resolution even to try. The sin is so seductive, they enjoy it so much, that they really want to go on with it. Of course so long as they are in this frame of mind they cannot fulfil the conditions required for a good confession. But they ought to work themselves up as far as a wish not to sin and a resolution to try, and then they will be fit to go."

"8. Some, again, would like to give up a sin, but they find it so hard to keep out of the occasion which leads to it. They cannot give up the company which lures them to destruction, or the habit (say gambling or drink) which leads them to excess. Even here they ought at least to resolve to try to avoid the occasion. And if the resolve is sincere, they can go to confession, even though they have great doubts as to whether they will succeed in keeping their resolution. If there is some very special difficulty in getting rid of the occasion, they should tell the confessor and ask his advice how to act. The essential element required in all these cases is a sincere wish to avoid the sin, plus a sincere intention of trying in a practical way to do so, to the best of one's ability. When this disposition is sincerely manifested to the confessor, he will hardly refuse absolution, though of course, each case has to be considered on its own merits. It is sincerity of purpose which makes a good confession, and conscious insincerity of purpose which makes a bad one."

"9. There are others whose neglect of confession comes from inherent pride, self-conceit or independence of spirit. They know that confession is a duty but their lofty spirit refuses to under take an act so humiliating and so repugnant to their self-esteem. Pride is essentially the spirit of abstinence. It does not mean that a man really thinks himself to be God, or equal to God; the facts are too obvious for that. But his head is swollen to such an extent that he practically goes about as if he were the supreme, and cannot stand even the thought of submission and obedience. He knows that he is only a servant in the house of the Lord, yet he gives himself airs as if he were an independent gentleman at large, and as if the whole of his Master's establishment belonged to him. Before such a man can be fit for confession, he must recognize this pride as a sin, repent of it and be ready to confess it at the head of his list."

"10. Coming to another class, there are some who neglect confession not out of any special repugnance for it or difficulty involved in it, but out of sheer laziness and torpor of soul. They neglect confession just as they neglect everything else which causes trouble or requires effort. Such persons require a spiritual tonic, such as a dangerous illness or the sudden death of a friend or relation, to give them a fillip. It is, however, well to notice that spiritual torpor may sometimes come from bodily torpor—heavy condition of body, or nervous debility, or overstrain. Such persons in the first instance want a doctor's treatment—a change of air, a rest, a course of regular exercise, or a few bottles of phosphates to brace up their bodily system—after which there is a chance of a spiritual revival also. In any case, they are, of course, bound to make an effort to perform their substantial duties, no matter how sluggish or flabby they may feel."

"11. There are others, again, who are energetic enough in all matters of pleasure, business or amusement; who will slave themselves to death over their purely secular hobby or occupation, and are as keen as needles where it is a matter of this world's affairs; but who in the department of religion are as apathetic as a hedgehog, or even as dead as a doornail. These are the victims of mental trophy. We can only recommend them to read 'Fortifying the Layman' and see whether, in the light of the ideas there conveyed, they cannot revive their religious instincts once more—by taking the practical amount, first, of intellectual, then of emotional interest in the things of faith."

"12. Finally, there are those who through the influence of non-Catholic surroundings come first to neglect the cultivation of their faith; and if they have not as fully lost it, have let it grow so weak as to lose all practical influence to their lives. Either the infiltration of the priest's indifference has led to indifference or vice versa, indifference has led to an implicit acceptance of the principles of indifference."

"Speaking in general, the more incidental the cause which leads to neglect of confession, the easier it is to be cured by external helps, such as advice, suggestion or criticism; while the more radical the cause, the more is the case one of the result of external aid. Those who need curing of torpor, atrophy or indifference are, in fact, out of the reach of the clergy. If they are to be cured, they can only be encouraged to make an effort for themselves, otherwise they must be left simply in the hands of God. There is no doing anything with them."

The life of every man is a diary in which he means to write one story and does write another; and his humblest hour is when he compares the volume as it is with what he vowed to make it.—J. M. Barrie.

What all religions, poetical, pure and tender souls are least able to pardon is the diminution or degradation of their ideal.

DEATH OF CARDINAL CAVAGNIS.

Rome, Sunday, Dec. 30, 1906. Yesterday the guests invited to dinner by the Rector of the English College for the Feast of St. Thomas were shocked to learn of the death of Cardinal Cavagnis. Some of them had seen him the very day before, apparently in excellent health—indeed the members of his own household noticed nothing wrong when he retired for the night on Friday. But the Cardinal had suffered for some years from heart disease, and his untimely and was doubtless hastened by the heavy work he attempted to perform during the last two or three years. He was one of the most active, learned and practical advisers of the Holy Father, and his loss to the Holy See and the Sacred College is little short of a calamity at the present moment.

ANOTHER LOSS—CARDINAL TRIPEPI'S DEATH.

But later in the day another shock was in store for the ecclesiastical world of Rome. Cardinal Tripepi had been ailing for a few days, but so slightly that he had not deemed it necessary to call in a doctor. Yesterday morning his servant found him lying unconsciously on the rug bed with his straw mattress which he has always used, and over which he had set the simple motto: *Satis mortuorum*. The doctor immediately pronounced that he had had a stroke of apoplexy, and held out no hope of recovery. At five in the evening Cardinal Tripepi also passed away, and thus within a few hours the Sacred College had lost two of its most illustrious members. Cardinal Cavagnis' works on Canon Law are known and studied all over the world, and besides these he published some valuable treatises on social and religious questions. Cardinal Tripepi's literary activity and versatility was literally amazing—his writings if collected would doubtless fill over a hundred large volumes. During the Pontificate of Pius X., in less than three years and a half, no fewer than sixteen cardinals have passed away, while only six cardinals have been created by Pius X. Cardinals Nocelli and Cretoni are permanent invalids; and Cardinal Martelli is only recovering from a serious illness. Cardinal Gruscha has got over the recent crisis which threatened his life but he is still very weak and has eighty-seven. Yet although Cardinal Cavagnis and Tripepi were among the most active of the Cardinals of the Curia, it is not likely that the vacancies left by them will be filled.—The Tablet.

"GIVING THE PEOPLE WHAT THEY WANT."

That's the cry of every villain who is doing the demon's work of helping souls to hell, says the Calendar, of St. Mary's Church, Chicago. And the cry is always a plea for justification. The theatrical manager puts a nasty play "on the boards." Somebody with a conscientious complaint. The manager shrugs his shoulders and remarks: "I'm only giving the people what they want." Poor man! What a pity that he must violate his own delicate conscience, do wicked things against his life but he is still very weak and has eighty-seven. Yet although Cardinal Cavagnis and Tripepi were among the most active of the Cardinals of the Curia, it is not likely that the vacancies left by them will be filled.—The Tablet.

And then the actress. She wants you to understand that she herself is decent. But she acts in a dozen places. Yes, but she must "give the people what they want." Poor thing! She is a slave, too. And the people are tyrants! Shame upon them! Pity the poor actress!

And the "yellow" journalist. He claims that his own life is pure. And his own family is happy and his children are "nice" and refined. But you say his papers encourage impurity? How do you wreck the happiness of other men's homes? And spoil millions of children. Of course, but how can he help it? He is only "giving the people what they want." Poor man! He has no mind or will of his own. The people dictate to him. Poor fellow! Pity him!

And the saloon keeper. He hates the business as much as anybody. He wouldn't let his own boy drink. Not if he could help it. And his girls are far away from the smell of the saloon—off in an aristocratic convent school, learning lovely manners. But, other peoples boys are going to damnation in his saloon. And other peoples girls come in his side door to his hell—which is his back room. But how can he help that? He must "give the people what they want." He is an object not for blame but for sympathy. Sympathize with him. Poor fellow! And so it goes. It is wonderful how many slaves there are to the demands of the people. The people are awfully cruel to them.

You don't suppose the slaves do the catering just because they want the money? No! No! That would be unjust to them. They don't want the money. They only want to satisfy the people. And the people are tyrants. That's all. Pity the poor manager of the nasty show. Pity the poor actor and actresses. Pity the poor editor of the "yellow" sheet. Pity the poor saloon-keeper. Pity the poor dive keeper. Pity them all. They need all the pity they can get. And pity them now, before they die.

Because you can be sure of one thing they will get no pity after they die. God will not pity them. God will say "You gave the people what they wanted; now I will give you what you deserve. The people wanted help to hell. And you supplied their want. You deserve what they wanted. And you shall have it."

Pity the poor man who gives the people what they want.