two guardian angels, they were pro-tecting him. Truly, the ways of love and charity were best! The saints on high, they "were not overcome of high, they "were not overcome or evil," but overcame evil with good. How unjust, how unfair he had been to the man Schneitzer! "O Lord forgive me!" he cried from his heart. And teach me Thine own thought of

Yet long before he had well learned his lesson - his new lesson of humility, -prosperity returned. A big order came to his mill, the old schedule as to work and wages was restored and the strike averted. Two new Sisters with sweet faces appeared in the parish, and Marguerite was recalled to the

Mother House of the order.

Yet Bernard O'Keefe was still glad -he had found the secret of happiness. His preparation for Christmas was generous and jubilant. Father Philip stood amazed; the parish rejoiced, and as for the 'hands' at the silk mill,

they fairly shouted ! But only Sister Evangelist had knowledge of the finer spiritual threads, which, in the deep of his soul, bound the Feast of Ogni Santi to the higher glories of Christmas.—The Josephite.

"WEAK SPOTS IN PROTESTANT ISM

A Pittsburg Presbyterian Minister Enumerates Some of Them - If this Enumerate is a postolic Christianity, Then God

A striking sermon on the "Weak Spots in Protestantism," delivered by Rev. Alfred Nicholson in the East End Presbyterian church, Pittsburg, on Sunday, November 18, has created considerable comment and controversy in that city and the vicinity. Mr. Nich-cleon took for his text, "Every king dom divided against itself is brought to desolation," and he probed the sore places in the Protestant system—or lack of system-with no gentle or hesitating touch.

"The present decade is one that ha bristles with repellant bred and forces," he said, "both numerous and Organ is in conflict with organism; progenity with parents; individual with corporate interests statal with national issues and personal caprice with canonical obedience. This may be a sign of development, it may be a sign of independence of thought, it may be a sign of retrogression, it may be a symptom of anarchy. The significant individualism of the age appears in all the departments of man's life and labors. As an honest and hard-working teacher of good morals and sound doctrine I have not scrutinized without alarm, the effect of the present tendency upon the whole area of Protestant Christianity, and what is more lamentable, upon the very vitals of Christianity itself. The protean forms of ecclesiastism are of no more moment to me than monkish jungles, but as a rational and moral being endowed with parental responsi and immortal aspirations I can not but view the present outlook of gospel vigor with apprehension, discouragement and doubt.

We make the claim that Protestantism is composed of those, who, having protested against the innovations of med!ævalism, endowed posterity with the apostolic form of Christianity. If Protestantism as we see it is essentially apostolic Christianity, then God pity What advantageth us if we have fought with beasts at Ephesus? Let

us eat and drink for to-morrow we die. Mr. Nicholson thinks that Protestantism in general, and Presbyterianism in particular, is totter He strikes the vital point very aptly

when he says: "The first and fatal weakness of Presbyterianism to-day, and generally of the entire Protestant fabric, is lack of authority. This weakness is vital. It is as undeniable as it is deplorable The Protestant ministry in general and Presbyterian clergymen in particular, have lost nearly all their authority over the manners, morals and government of their churches They can only assert their authority by resigning 't, if affection and ability come into play, their demands may be then conceded. It used to be that the members of a church feared the disap proval of their pastor as a partially divine disfavor. To day he fears the disfavor of his people as having his professional career and personal support within the power of their capricious will. The preacher asks himself what will please the people, not the Almighty. He speaks his piece. The audience, especially those in the re-served seats, hiss or applaud him."

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The second vital weakness Mr. Nicholson deplores is the lack of dignity in the mode of ministerial appoint-ment. The term "call from God" has no longer any meaning. A man is not called any more to a particular pulpit; he is juggled into it. "Ro bust Presbyterianism" offers an opening for ambitious young men. The old ministers are heartlessly "shelved."

The third weakness arises from the unbusinesslike methods of the Protest

ant system.

"No church ought to be permitted to build," he says, "without demonstrating to the business minds of the presbytery the feasibility of carrying on the work to the glory of God and the comfort of the people. In New Jersey not long ago Bishop Wigger floated the consolidated mortgages his diocese amounting to some millions, at the absurdly low interest of 2 per cent. We pay 6 and sometimes 7
Why count every presbytery pool all
church property within their jurisdicchurch property within their jurisdiction, raise mortgages at 2 per cent.

and make an annual assessment on all churches to pay off the entire encum brance in installments. The sad fact

is that there is no affiliation and very little fraternity between us

Along this line there is the precarious, paltry and disproportionate revenue of the church. A rich man will give a paltry sum and a poor man near him will give twice as much. Some that are extravagant in their private life will accompany their devotions with pennies. If a large sum is demanded, they will return not again to . When subscribers get in they are not reminded of their worship. At the end of the year obligations. there is a deficit and the usefulness of the pastor is disparaged, but the financial end escapes unscathed. A Catho lie would fear to worship in his sanctuary lest the curse of God would blast profanity that refused to support honor of his religion.

Mr. Nicholson concluded with a denunciation of what he calls lay and clerical "tramps." The lay tramp is the church member who follows any new and sensational preacher, who living in the north, worships in the south, etc. The clerical tramp comes in for a still larger share of Mr. Nichol

on's contempt.
"It is his peculiar prerogative to dose and drench moribund or sterilized congregations with patent spiritua stimulants and tonics. The effect o The effect of their kindly intended labor and very hopeful patients is much like the hy injection of morphia for podermic pain or the imbibing of whisky for weariness, or the application of a whip to an unfed horse.

AUTHORITY AND BLESSEDNESS OF CONFESSION.

In going to confession are we not too liable to forget that it is really not so much the man to whom our confession is made as to our Lord Jesus Christ Whom the confessor represents, and by Whose authority absolution is pronounced It is as our Lord Himself sat in the tri bunal and listened to our confession The old adage Qui facit per alium facit per Sc-What one does by another he does himself — holds good here with. out any qualification. The official act of a representative of the government whether at home or abroad, binds the government to the obligation of fulfilling the contract, whatever it may be.

The authority of the confessor is derived from the solemn act of our Lord Himself, when He said : you [the apostles] the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatsoever you shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." And again Whose sins you shall remit they are remitted unto them, and whose sins you shall retain they are retained." only in confession that sins are made known to the confessor so that he can judge whether to remit or retain them. A general confession in common with a general wholesale absolution, will

not do. Reminding ourselves that Jesus Christ Himseif sits in the confessional should remove all timidity and sense of shame from the penitent, however great his sin, and it should operate owerfully to deter him from yielding to the temptation to conceal a sin and thereby make a sacrilegious confession It is a very strange and a very awful thing, when you come to think of it, that any sensible person should ever yield to the temptation to conceal a sin in confession. It would seem that only a very ignorant and thoughtless person could ever think of being guilty of such a dangerous act of sacrilege.

But the thought that our dear Lord and Saviour sits in the cenfessional in the person of His authorized agent —the priest—should really appeal not so much to our fears as to our feelings of confidence, of love and of gratitude. Oh, what a heavenly boon is the con fessional to the truly penitent heart burdened with sin and longing for peace. It is because we too often do not feel the sinfulness even of venial sin in the sight of God, that we do not realize and fully enter into the bless ness—the peace, the comfort and the satisfaction—that flow from the absolution of the priest after a good confes-

Our Protestant friends tell us that they prefer to go directly to Christ for the forgiveness of their sins. Well, we will not say one word to discourage them from going directly to their Saviour and deriving all the comfort they can from their petitions for pardon No doubt, if they are sincerely penit ent and in good faith, they may suc ent and in good faith, they may succeed in persuading themselves that they are forgiven; but, un fortunately, experience, we believe, abundantly proves that they have no evidence except that of evanescent and very uncertain feelings, which are far from producing that form appropriate that the second state of the second state o producing that firm conviction which is necessary to relieve the burdened soul from the discomforts of doubt, uncertainty and oftentimes har-rassing anxiety. Not so with the rue penitent who has received the absolution of the priest after a good confes-sion. He believes firmly and on the best of evidence that our Lord has really appointed the priest His agent to act in His name, and has given him authority to remit the sins of the penitent on his making a gool confession He believes that the act of the priest is ratified in heaven, and is it not manifest that such a penitent enjoys an advantage and an inestimable privilege which nothing else in the world can

give. In this connection it is a very signi ficant fact, and worthy of notice, that when the ten lepers came to our Lord to be healed He told them to go and show themselves to the priest, and as

economy, as made known in the Chris- weather was terrible; a heavy snow tian system, that men should be saved through the instrumentality of di- tracks and made traveling well nigh vinely appointed means and agencies; in other words, by the ministry, the sacraments, and ordinances of the Among those sacraments, Church. one of the most conspicuous and consol ing is that of penance. true penitent of the Catholic Church has had frequent and most blessed experience

That the tribunal is too often approached in a perfunctory manner is no argument against the confessional any more than the perfunctory performance of any other duty-say against the duty itself. Human na ture, even in the best of us, is weak, and needs to be kept up to the mark by the constant application of the most judicious means. The confessional furnishes just one of those means. There is something very serious and impressive in going to confession. We contend that one who " goes direct for pardon, as cur Protest to Christ ant friends say, is far more likely to be careless and perfunctory about it than is the Catholic in going to confes-

It is a humiliation, of course, to ack nowledge our sins and shortcomings to mortal man; but it is a blessed hum iliation when it is considered that this mortal man is the authorized representative and agent of our Lord and Saviour, and that if we are truly peni tent his absolution is ratified in heaven. As the priest pronounces absolution and says, "Go in peace," we leave the confessional with an infinite sense of relief. The burden that oppressed us is removed, and we experience that beace which surpasseth all understand ing, and which the world can neither give nor take away.—Sacred Heart Review.

CONFIDENCE IN GOD.

We must not doubt that God, who has promised to hear all our prayers, will keep His gracious promise, be cause as St. Paul says: "He who is faithful cannot deny himself." If only we could realize this as St. Francis Xavier did, who exclaimed one day Far from fearing to lose the lov and protection of my God, I fear to my doubts and distrusts of His great mercy an obstacle to His gener Two or three striking in stances of the reward granted to such confidence were related to me by a priest the other day, which I am going to record here

A very holy religious, who was in large workhouse, was charge of a roused one night from a sound sleep by a message to say that a man was dying in the infirmary there, and earnestly desired the last sacraments. The good priest dressed quickly and, taking the hely oils, hurried to the workhouse. On his arrival he naturally inquired of the night porter where the man was whom he was to attend. The porter replied : "But, Father, no one has sent for you. is no one dying that I know of-stay, he added, "I remember a man coming in last evening who looked very ill.
Perhaps it is he?" "I will go up to the infirmary and see," priest, and hastened upstairs. As he entered the sick ward a man lifted up his hands and cried out: "Thank God, our Lord has heard my prayer and sent you to me. They told me you were coming at 7 o'clock to say Mass, but that would be too late for me! The poor fellow instantly made his confession and received the last sacra-ments with the greatest thankful and

joy. Half an hour after the end came. The priest remained to the last, but when all was over returned to his monastery and, meeting the lay brother said to him : "I am so thankful that you called me. I was just in time to help that poor fellow." The lay brother stared at him in utter surprise and exclaimed : "But, Father, I never called you. I d'd not know you had gone out." It turned out to be quite gone out No one had called him save the angel sent by God to answer to the prayer of his faithful servant.

A similar case happened to a priest in the Aberdeen diocese. He was also suddenly roused to go to a woman whom he did not know, and the name of the street and the number of her house were carefully given to him. When he arrived, to his great astonishment he found her sweeping the floor. In answer to his inquiries she said she was not ill; that no one was dying in the house, and that she certainly had never sent for him. The priest replied: "Weil, I can't understand it, but since I have come I will hear your confession if you like and give you absolution." The woman, who was a good Catholic, readily con sented, and thanked him warmly afterward for having taken the trouble to come. The priest went home, but before he had reached his house a boy ran after him to say that directly after he had left the woman had dropped down dead from heart failure.

A still more curious and awful even of this sort happened to another Scotch was a gentleman living priest. a remote Highland place and a Cathelic, but one who had neglected his duties for many years and lived a bad and immoral life. Still he had the faith, and in answer to all remonstrances, always declared he would change some day, trusting, in fact, to a death-bed repentance. In order to insure out the sacraments, he always had a priest in his house and sometimes even two. As it happened, he was taken seriously ill one day, and at that very time both priests were away from different causes. In despair he sent a messenger for the nearest parish priest, who lived some miles away. The however, that he should not die with-

storm had obliterated all the mountain impossible. Still the priest determined

to go, and saddled his pony according-When they had started, however, the pony absolutely refused to go the way he wished, in spite of coaxing or whipping. At last, in despair, he gave his head and let him go as he would. The pony took a most difficult track, and, to avoid a bog, went for more than a mile on the top of a wall, which the priest only dis covered a day or two later, when the Suddenly he storm had subsided. arrived at a desolate cottage high up duty of prayer - is an argument in the hills, where the pony deliberate ly stopped at the door. The priest dismounted, and on opening it a poor rushed forward and exclaimed O, thank God and Our Lady who has heard our prayers, my mother is dying, having been taken suddenly ill last night, I could not leave her to fetch a priest, and I had no one to send and was almost in despair. But she went on praying, full of confidence He would not le in God that her die without the sacraments, for which she has always so earnestly prayed. And now God, has brought you here and she will die in peace The priest, marvelling more and more at this explanation of his pony's un usual behavior, hastened to the sick room, administered the dying woman, who received him with tears of grati tude and joy, and then started off again to try to help the sick man for whom he had been summoned. This time the pony made no objection, and he quickly reached the big house up But it was too late. gentleman had died, in agony of body

MODERNITY AND MODESTY.

and mind, almost immediately

Lady Herbert.

sending for the priest. Thus God had

rewarded the faith and love of the

poor unknown peasant woman in this

truly supernatural manner, and left

the rich man, who had so long trifled

with grace, to die unabsolved and miserable.—From Wayside Tales by

It is perhaps not singular that the chief speakers at the recent Sacred Heart centenary celebrations should have struck an identical note in their interpretation of the "signs of the The phenomena in connec times. tion with the subject of woman advance and the trend of modern though are too conspicuous to escape even the mosts uperficial observer. The terrible danger against which all good society has to guard itself is the force of use Once let the spirit of deterioration be suffered and accepted as something in evitable, there is no setting a bound to the flood of moral decline. We may vainly hope to fight against that poison which is imperceptible in its working. The standards of manners are intimately related to the standards of morals, and these, again, are so re lated to intellectual ideas which are sought by either sex from different starting points that in the pursuit of often unattainable ends the of these hunters lose sight of the true conditions of success It is a curious ano-maly in this ideal chase that it should be forgotten, apparently, by many that the chief ideal, woman herself, should be regarded as if her status were of no particular value in the equation. The attempt to ignore the distinction between the two great branches of the human kind simply the destruction of the mo beautiful of all ideals; and to this end the vogue of the present day is undoubtedly tending. What between the eystem of co-education and the elimin ation of many of the which separated the feminine from the masculine ideal in studies, dress, pastime and all else, a perceptible change has taken place in the general moral standard. Custom is a deadiy opiate. Let society once get used to the daily eight of things that ought to shock and its ears grow accustomed to the mode of speech and the class of ideas of which slang is the most ready medium, there can be no hope of re covering lost ground. It is a case of facilis descensus Averni. The world could better afford to lose a continent, like another Atlantis, than lose its standard of womanly superiority. How long it will be able to retain it at the present rate of change in educa tional systems it is not easy to fortell But that the symptoms threaten de struction no intelligent observer can

deny. Even inside the Church there are disquieting symptoms. The advocates of perpetual change are clamorous and insistent. We are being constantly reminded of the danger of being "be hind the times" and the inexorable necessity of adapting ourselves to new conditions. When all this outery is examined and reduced to mathematical terms, it is generally found to crystal lize itself in one word-novelty. feature of the agitation about higher education for women formed the gist of the address which was delivered in New York on the occasion of the cen tenary by the Rev. Thomas Campbell, S. J. The whole of this address, which, it is hardly necessary to say, ranks with the highest efforts of thought and expression, has been issued in pamph let form by the Jesuit Order. By way of introduction to his special theme "Madame Barat and the Higher Edu cation of Women," the eminent Jesuit had this to say about the false notions of those who clamor about progress:

results obtained. It could not be otherwise,

results obtained. It could not be otherwise, for all the splendid end-avors are one sided, all advised and incomplete.

"It is beyond peradventure true that the scholastic triumphs which constitute the glory of the nuns of former days have failed of accomplishment in our own. But the blame is to be put where it belongs. It is the fault of the age in which we live. It is at threefold combination of a shirking of labor, a squandering of time in frivolous occupations and an unconquerable dread of even temporary seclusion from the world."
"Much is said about the necessity of convents adapting themselves more than they do to the requirements of the times in which we live. If adapting themselves to the requirements of the times means yielding more than they have already done to the clausorous demands of parents for interruptions of study and more plunges on the part of their students into the vortex of the frivolous amusements of the day, of theaires and receptions and routs of every description, and students into the voltes of the arrest and receptions and routs of every description, and consequently more relaxation of the moral fibre and more inability to work, then the position of modern Catholic educators is a hard one, placed as they thus are between the impossibility of really educating their charges or the necessity of closing their establishments.

"They are confronted not with a problem of education, but of domestic economy. God grant they may at least preserve the traditions of Christian modesty, and that the swaggering, over-confident dansel who affects masculine fashions and, it is said, is cultivating masculine vices, may never issue from our convent schools."

These are pregnant observations They are not merely flowers of rhet oric, spoken for the purpose of illustrating a theme with noble figures or giving empty comfort for the future by recalling the glories of the past. They open up before the mind's eye of the Cathelic parent the most solemn of vistas and the most respons ble of problems. We are mouldering the morals of the future, nothing less, by our decisions in the present. se our standards the Philadelphia Catholic Standard and

THE WORLD OUT OF JOINT In a recent letter to his priests, Car-

dinal Vaughan draws the following gloomy picture of modern civilization. Let us consider the social and political conditions of the world. The sense of uncertainty and unrest is universal The Vicar of Christ, despoiled of his legitimate power, is a prisoner sub hostili dominatione constitutus. Races are exasperated against races. Rival nations provoke each other to strike by gibes and insults. Men asking, Whose influence is to be paramount and to dominate mankind? Northern hordes again sweep down over Europe? When Asia shall have been armed like ourselves, will the heathen races prevail against the Christian? What may not the coming century have in store wherewith to scourge those who have sinned against light? Meanwhile, etvy, jeal. ousy, hatred and desires of revenge, avarice, greed of power and of influence, have broken out amongst the nations like a plague of vices that threatens to decimate, if not to destroy, The governments of the their power. see all this plainly enough, and tremble for the result. They apply remedies; but their remedies are worthless. They call a conference of eace, but exclude the Pope. They forge weapons of destruction; they arm their populations in self-defence.
They establish compulsory education, without religion. They declare all religions to be equally good-or equally useless. They preach a gospel of commerce, of the 'open door,' and of 'spheres of influence;' and, then, dis The people dig patch armies to fight. passionately into the bowels earth for more, and yet more, of the precious and the common metals. taxation increases and wants multiply We are deafened by the everywhere. chaos of conflicting crise and there is no common agreement. The world in deed is out of joint, and sick unto death, as the nineteenth century passes into the dawn of the twentieth.

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