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THE AUTHORSHIP OF THE "IMITATION OF CHRIST."—WHY IS IT UNCERTAIN?

Rev. Reuben Parsons, D. D., in the Ave Maria. Among the millions of books which have been composed since the day when man first took pen or stylus in his hand, two alone can be said, strictly speaking, to be of incalculable value.

To praise this book to Catholics were a work of supererogation; the only excuse one could tender for so doing would have to be based upon those expansive feelings which, when one has just left this spiritual feast, call persistently for manifestation, yearning to participate their own gladness with all who are heavy laden.

But subtle as this work is, its author, strange to say, is unknown. Profound and often impassioned discussions have been held by men of sincerity and of unquestioned erudition, but not one of their evolved opinions has been supported by thoroughly convincing arguments.

In the Middle Age one of the salient characteristics of the faithful was a profound humility, and this virtue shone in an eminent degree in the writers and artists of the time. One of their least anxieties was for fame in the minds of posterity; and in innumerable instances their names were not affixed to their most creditable work.

In the days of faith a right kind of communism was practiced in other conditions of life than the monastic state; very frequently individuals reserved to themselves no portion of the material fruits of their labors and talents; literary and artistic proprietorship appear to have been scarcely known during that period.

There is, however, another reason, one more material than the one just indicated, for the mystery enshrouding the identity of our author. Not humility alone, but what seemed to him a fitness of things, might, and probably did, cause him to withhold a signature which would draw personal praise to himself.

tion. M. Arthur Loth, in an excellent work on our subject, gives many instances of this unhesitating appropriation in the "Imitation." Thus the sayings, "He rides safely whom the grace of God guides;" "Blush, Sidon, says the sea; and if you ask wherefore, listen;" "Truly the life of a good monk is a crucifixion, but it leads to heaven;" "Thou art human, and not divine; thou art flesh, not an angel," are metrical verses in the original Latin, and were current maxims of the day, though placed by the author of the "Imitation" as prose in his text:

"Satis suaviter erant. Quam gratia Dei portat." "Eubrese, Sidon, ait mare: Et sic casum quietis, auid quare." "Vere vobis homo nati cruci est, Sed dux paradisus."

Again, our author adopts entire passages, almost word for word, from the works of St. Bernard, Hugh of St. Victor, St. Peter Damiani, Pope Innocent III., St. Thomas Aquinas, Blessed Jacopone da Todi, and many others. Take, for example, the following from chapter II, Book IV., and then compare it with a passage from a sermon of Cardinal James de Vitry, Bishop of Tusculum, found in a MS. as old as the middle of the thirteenth century.

The House of Lords is the champion anomaly of the British constitution. The day of its destiny is over; the star of its fate has declined. In former times there was indeed a grandiose and high-sounding Tory doctrine about the mission of the House of Lords.

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In the first book, chapter 23, our writer translates this verse almost literally: "If thou hast at any time seen a person die, reflect that thou too must pass the same way."

The similarities and identities just indicated seem to prove that the anonymous author adopted a special method in composing his book—one which may be styled a method of appropriations and souvenirs, but which was not, in the Middle Age, either an isolated instance or a peculiar system.

In conclusion, we would remark that among the innumerable editions of the "Imitation" in nearly every language, probably the most acceptable is that issued in 1887 at Tournai by the Society of St. John the Evangelist.

almoner of the Visitandines at Orleans, is scrupulously exact—a merit quite frequently absent in the work that we have seen. Besides the appropriation of the Holy See, this edition has received that of the Academy of Sciences, Belles Lettres and Arts of Besancon. Its principal charm is derived from the presence, at the end of each chapter, of reflections borrowed from the gentleman-saint, Francis de Sales—an ingenious proceeding which can not fail to produce a happy effect on the mind of the reader; for no two writers seek each other's companionship more naturally than the author of the "Imitation" and the composer of the "Introduction to a Devout Life."

THE HOUSE OF LORDS AND HOME RULE. An Anomaly and an Anachronism.

Under the head of "The Useless House of Lords," Justin McCarthy, M. P., in the course of a timely and interesting article in the North-American Review for August says:

The House of Lords is the champion anomaly of the British constitution. The day of its destiny is over; the star of its fate has declined. In former times there was indeed a grandiose and high-sounding Tory doctrine about the mission of the House of Lords.

They are inclined to think every man a fanatic or a bore who has ideas of his own on public questions, or, most often, a fanatic and a bore combined. But the majority of the House of Commons are practical men, and are responsible to their constituents, and they very soon find it borne in upon them that their constituents are really in earnest about some particular measure, and are determined to have it passed into law.

It surrenders, but does not die. One session the peers through their majority give their non-possimus. They can not hear of the proposed change. Personal conscience and national honor alike forbid them. To pass such a bill would make them accomplices in the destruction of England's safety and England's glory.

would make them accomplices in the destruction of England's safety and England's glory. The voices of the past, present and the future alike forbid the House of Lords to sanction such legislation. The dead would arise from beneath their marble tombs and their monumental brasses to forbid such a sacrifice of all that English tradition holds most dear.

THE FULL RESPONSIBILITY. for its postponement. A lesson of that kind would cure the House of Lords very soon of its passion for spoiling good measures. Ireland has, of course, been always a happy hunting ground for the House of Lords. It has been much safer to spoil, or even altogether reject, a good bill for Ireland than to spoil or reject a good bill for England.

IRLAND WILL SOON BE FREE to settle her domestic legislation for herself. It may be asked whether, then, I see no countervailing advantage to the country in the existence of the House of Lords.

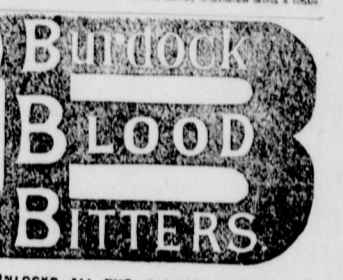
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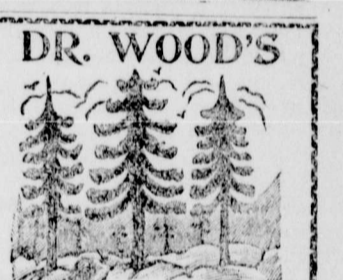
Hood's Sarsaparilla. She felt a little better. Could keep more food on her stomach and grew stronger.

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such religious schools as they thought proper, but especially to grant them immunity from taxation for the education of other people's children, so long as they attended to the education of their own. This was no favor, but simple justice.

At this time the predominant population of Manitoba was Catholic, yet Protestants were not far from being one half, and it was unknown which religion would predominate when the new Province would become more thickly settled.

Under these circumstances, the newly formed Provincial Legislature passed school laws ensuring to Catholics and Protestants alike the right to establish schools, so that all denominations might in future have complete liberty to educate their children in accordance with their conscientious convictions. These laws were passed in the conviction that the Legislature itself would not be able to repeal them, owing to the protection to minorities afforded by the British North America Act.

The Catholic majority in Manitoba never thought of restraining the liberty of their Protestant fellow-citizens. But as soon as the Protestants became the majority they set themselves to the task of depriving their Catholic neighbors of their liberties, all the time professing to be in accordance with their conscientious convictions. These laws were passed in the conviction that the Legislature itself would not be able to repeal them, owing to the protection to minorities afforded by the British North America Act.

With singular unanimity the Protestant press of Ontario ask the Catholics of Manitoba to endure the wrong which has been inflicted upon them, and appeal to the Catholics of the Dominion not to sustain their Manitoba brethren in their demand for justice. In answer to all these appeals we say that the Confederation compact is a farce if the Protestant majority in Manitoba is to be allowed to break it at will. If Quebec attempted to violate that compact we would hear no end of threats to coerce the French-Canadians. But neither French nor English-speaking Catholics desire to violate those obligations. Neither shall we desert from insisting that the provisions of Confederation which were inserted into the Confederation Act for the protection of all creeds and nationalities, and the agreement made with Manitoba when it became part of the Dominion, shall be faithfully observed.

The Home Rule Bill. The New York Tribune estimates properly the value to be set upon the defeat of the Home Rule Bill by the Lords in the following bird's eye view of the situation: "It is an anomaly which will tend to develop Radicalism, when a privileged class beats the drums and holds such a dress parade. For when all is said, the fact remains that this is the last decade of the most progressive of centuries, and in an enlightened country like England there is something incongruous in the exercise of legislative power by hereditary right. The Commons represent the people of the United Kingdom, while the Lords are merely the sons of their fathers."

The Bien Public indicates the public opinion of the continent, stating that the triumph of the Bill in the House of Commons, where each member represents 50,000 citizens, is of more importance than the defeat by the Lords, as each peer represents only his own opinion. In the meantime the Reform journals are directing public opinion in England to that point of the compass which the National Liberal Federation manifesto indicates. The London Daily News now styles the House of Lords "an aristocratic Antiquarian Society," whose caprices it would be monstrous to obey. The Lords who laughed so merrily as they voted down the Bill will find it no laughing matter. Their conduct has brought upon them the struggle for very existence. They blamed the Government for not having considered sufficiently the clauses of the Bill, yet they were bold enough to finish in four days their own consideration of it, whereas the Commons had it under their earnest consideration eighty-two days. If the Lords are of opinion that each of them is more than twenty times as wise as a Commoner, they may soon find out that the country does not estimate their legislative ability as highly as they do themselves.

This Chicago Interior announces that of 7,292 Presbyterian churches in the United States under the General Assembly's control, 1,265, or over 17 per cent., are vacant. This indicates a great falling off of Presbyterianism in a large section of the country. Over 9 per cent. of the ministers who are not superannuated are secularized or without any ministerial employment.

JAMES ANTHONY FROUDE.

James Anthony Froude is again exhibiting his talent for ingenious slander and misrepresentation of facts. The Catholic Church is his bete noir, and consequently everything pertaining thereto comes under his law. In any other field but that of history he might play a prominent part and bequeath posterity an enduring name, but history demands a calm, judicial mind, a dispassionate statement of facts—qualities to which Mr. Froude is an utter stranger. In a recent article in Longman's Magazine, on the Seamen of the Sixteenth Century, he describes at length and in laudatory terms the exploits of Drake and Hawkins. They did much for England's fame, but their methods do not appeal to any right-thinking man's sense of morality. Take, for instance, the conduct of these seamen with regard to the slave trade. They carried thousands of negroes into the slave marts, and thus acquired through the sale of flesh and blood immense fortunes. A company was organized for the furtherance of slavery, having at its head and principal stockholder Good Queen Bess.

Mr. Froude does not attempt to justify it: he contents himself with stating that poor sailors, accustomed more to wind and wave than to questions of casuistry, could not presume to decide a question of such moment. Nay, more, when he came to consider that slavery was not condemned even by Catholic authorities, the actions of Drake and Hawkins in connection with the infamous traffic might be held excusable! Verily Mr. Froude's eye is not single. He knows that reputable Catholic theologians have in no uncertain words denounced slavery, and that the efforts of the Papacy have been always directed to its extirpation. The records are there: let him read them. And to garb Messrs. Drake and Hawkins in the vesture of God-fearing beings, struggling against scruples, undecided as to the solidity of a moral act, is sufficient to provoke the risibility of anyone conversant with the lives of these worthies of the Elizabethan period. Mr. Froude knows that the foulest blot on England's history is her encouragement of slavery. It constituted the most important factor of the prosperity of Bristol, its great seaport in those days. The nefarious trade flourished and prospered: and only when civilization arrayed itself against it, and public opinion was aroused by earnest men who pointed out its enormity, did England consent to denounce it.

We have nothing to say of freebooters as Hawkins or Drake, for history paints them in their true colors: we state simply that Mr. Froude has once more demonstrated his incapacity for the post of an impartial, dispassionate historian. He has essayed and failed, and pity it is that his sparkling epigrammatic language should adorn statements that are due to an unrestrained imagination.

WHAT HOME SHOULD BE.

"The best citizen on earth is the man who owns his home. Next to his wife and children, it is the dearest thing on earth to him because it shelters them." Such were the words spoken by Frank Sheridan at the Catholic Congress at Chicago; and they should be treasured by every Catholic son and husband. Home, where we may hear words of heartfelt affection and see naught but selfless devotion! Home, where the sweet, tender face of a mother looks lovingly upon her dearest ones, and where every heart-throb is one of purest love!

But we speak of a home which parents strive to model after the home of Nazareth—not of homes where criticism and slander form the daily topic of conversation and where children are taught by word and example that material success is the one business of life. Good homes send forth pure women and strong men, and frivolous homes give birth to an emasculated species of humanity. This is the general rule. Hence the Church has ever watched with more than a mother's solicitude over the household, and she has never wearied in exhorting fathers and mothers to develop with firm hand and tender the character of their children.

If not done in early youth the injury to the child is irremediable, and in after years he cannot but mourn the deficiencies of his home education. What may not a mother do with her children? Macaulay's mother gave her boy his love for literature; Goethe's his fearless nature and lyric heart; Moore's his enthusiasm for Celtic melody. And any mother may, if she desires, make her son, if not a genius, at least



REV. W. J. KEILTY, P. P. DOURO, DIOCESE OF PETERBOROUGH. Who recently celebrated the 25th anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood.

God's noblest work—an honest man. It is touching to read in the lives of great men their reverence for their mother. The love seemed to spur them to greater efforts, for one always works well when love prompts him. They always ascribe to her their life's success. Humble she may be, and deprived of all culture and refinement, but she bears the title that awakens every pure and noble emotion of the human heart—that of mother.

But only at the feet of the good mother is laid the tribute of love and veneration.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

We have received a little book entitled, "Jesus Only, or Glimpse of His Love," and we have no hesitation in complimenting the author, Miss Siddons, of London, daughter of Mr. John Siddons, of the Customs Department, on the care she devoted to her literary effort. It is bright and well written, and it is happily not pretentious. What we like best about it is the earnest tone. We trust she will push on to more ambitious ventures in the field of literature.

In the September number of Harper's there are two extracts from the letters of James Russel Lowell that may be read with profit by all who lust after the fleshy school of poetry. Mr. Swinburne has a certain vogue in Canada, and but recently have we heard a writer advocating his claim to the poet laureateship rendered vacant by the death of Lord Tennyson. The American poet hesitates not to condemn the effusions of Swinburne. Poetry is, after all, but the setting of gems of noble thought in a symmetrical frame: it is utterance in harmonious, flowing language of pure sentiment that may uplift a man and fix his eyes upon the ideal. "The true Church of poetry is founded upon a rock, and I have no fear that these smutty back doors of hell shall prevail against her." "Let no man write a line that he would not have his daughter read."

The Ritualistic ministers of England are engaged in a new scheme, namely, that of hearing the confessions of simple-minded seamen, under the pretext that they were about to obtain absolution from priests of the Catholic Church. We imagined that no clergyman could be so bereft of a sense of rectitude as to impose upon persons in such an important matter. This subject has been brought to the notice of the authorities, and steps will be taken to chastise the unblushing effrontery.

Some time ago Archbishop Katzer of Milwaukee asked the Odd Fellows to furnish him with a copy of their Ritual, as he wished to examine it and to decide whether it contained aught that might prevent a Catholic from subscribing to its tenets. The request was refused on the grounds that the constitution forbade the revelation of the secrets to anyone not a member. And yet, in spite of this, we find Catholics, who pose as broad-minded men, not only approving it but inscribing their names on its membership roll! They are the first to lament over the non-existence of Catholic societies, and where there is question of their formation or supporting them, they are conspicuous by their lack of all those qualities that make a Catholic an earnest,

unselfish promoter of the interests of his Church. A prominent American prelate truly said that he would prefer a Catholic to renounce his faith than to become a member of a society not approved of by the Church.

Women are now privileged to become students in the Jesuit College of St. Francis Xavier at New York. This innovation—for it is the first event of its kind in the history of the institution—places the women upon the same footing as the men, with the exception that they are disqualified from taking degrees. At present they are admitted only to the post graduate course, but it is but the commencement of a new order of things. To Father Halpin, the lecturer in ethics, is due this important change; and, judging from the good wrought among men by his eloquent and learned discourses, we have no hesitation in saying that his efforts in a new field will be crowned with success.

Poor Pere Hyacinthe is a pauper. He lives now on what his friends can collect for him. What an object lesson for the self-sufficient and ambitious! Had he remained a simple, humble priest, the years he spent in prostituting his splendid powers to the slandering and vilification of the religion of his youth would have but marked the progress of loyal service. He is now old, without money or honor, dependent on strangers, who gloried in his downfall and who have scant pity for him in his old age.

The Boston Republic calls attention to a new departure in the dramatic line, the presentation of an Irish drama in Boston which "is free from the disgusting features that have in the past made such plays painfully objectionable and obnoxious." It has been so much the custom to represent the Irishman on the stage as a drinking, fighting character, with a green vest and, flourishing a shillelah, that it is a relief to see his place taken by a real Irishman such as may be found in any part of Ireland, a rational being of whose wit and good humor Irishmen have no reason to feel ashamed. The new drama is called Glendalough, and it has none of the repulsive features which have usually marred the Irish dramas hitherto presented.

CARDINAL PAROCCHI has addressed a letter to the Bishop of Chartres, France, in which he communicates a decree of the Holy Office in Rome absolutely forbidding associations to assume the titles Heart of Jesus Penitent, Heart of Jesus Penitent for us, Jesus Penitent for us. A prohibition similar to this was issued as far back as 1875, but it has been found that an association at Loigny has obstinately retained these titles, and accounts of visions and revelations have been from time to time published which are said to have emanated from the Sacred Heart of Jesus Penitent, and it is to put a stop to these proceedings that the recent decree has been issued.

The split between the two sections of the Catholic Party in the German Reichstag has not been a permanent one, and Herr Lieber is now the recognized head of the undivided party. The question of the Army Bill, which was the cause of the secession of the aristocratic wing of the party, has not

made either section of the party less firm on all Catholic matters. The party is therefore as strong as ever it was in the Chamber. Its reunion is the result of the prudence of Herr Lieber, who met the members of the aristocratic section on cordial terms, and they unhesitatingly accorded to him their adhesion, thus showing that on Catholic questions they are not to be found hesitating. Herr Windthorst's tower of strength thus remains unimpaired, though it is certain that at the elections Chancellor Von Caprivi made a desperate effort to destroy the Catholic party at any cost. The Government even went the length of supporting Socialists against Catholic candidates to effect this end, but its failure was as complete as that of Bismarck, from whose discomfiture Chancellor Von Caprivi does not seem to have learned his lesson sufficiently. The complete victory which has given back to the Catholic Party its undiminished strength is due largely to the loyalty of the Catholic press of Germany, and of the clergy. Out of four hundred and fifty Catholic papers, only three or four sided with the military seceders.

MONDAY, the 9th inst., was a gala day at Assumption College, Sandwich. It was the feast of St. Denis, the patron saint of His Lordship the Bishop, who is now making the tour of the parishes in the south and west of the diocese for the purpose of administering confirmation in those parishes in which classes of candidates have been prepared for the reception of this holy sacrament. His Lordship visited the college on his feast day, and was received by the pupils with great joy and acclamation. A holiday was granted the pupils in honor of the occasion, and was thoroughly enjoyed by them.

The character of Mr. Gladstone's Edinburgh speech is given very differently according to the political view of the various journals which give an opinion on the subject. The Times says of it:

"The Prime Minister's indictment of the House of Lords rests upon a series of the most audacious assumptions, and his conclusion is as lame and impotent as any ever put into words by the leader of a powerful party."

The Daily Chronicle (Liberal) takes quite another view of it, saying:

"Mr. Gladstone never made a speech which more fully responded to public expectation. He not only shattered and pulverized the case which the House of Lords attempted to set up for the rejection of Home Rule, but convicted that assembly of legislative incapacity which deprived them of any title to guide the policy of the country."

MR. FLORENCE O'DRISCOLL, M. P., of the whip of the Irish National Party, arrived recently in New York on his way to the World's Fair, to which he has been sent as one of the British Commissioners. He was interviewed by a representative of the New York Times regarding the prospects of Home Rule for Ireland. He expressed his conviction that it will be passed again by the House of Commons in 1895, after another general election, and that it will then be accepted by the Lords, who will recognize the necessity for it, and will yield to the House of Commons even though with an ill grace.

The University of Washington has secured a treasure in a collection of all the official publications concerning matters of historical and archaeological interest from the French Government. Several collections of historical documents of the Middle Ages have also been secured.

The Toronto Mail is very severe on the Alien Labor Law of Uncle Sam. It appears to us the law is a just one, for the working classes of the United States should be protected against the paupers of Europe and the Chinese, who would, were such a statute not in existence, be brought into the country by the thousands by soulless capitalists, and American manhood would thus be degraded as are the classes referred to. We are willing to admit, however, that in so far as Canada is concerned there has been a disposition to apply the law too harshly, in view of the fact that Canadians and Americans are in almost every regard one and the same people. While it is quite right to insist that money earned in a country should there be expended, we think it were unworthy of the great American nation to carry out the law in regard of the few Canadians who live in border towns and work in large American cities. But our Toronto contemporary, while catechising

the shortcomings of the Yankees, should open its eyes to scandals, even villainous practices at its own doors. What, for example, does the Mail think of thousands of people in Toronto and other places in Ontario who have taken an oath not to give employment to, nor have any business dealings with their Catholic fellow-citizens? Such an oath istaken by the members of the Protestant Protective Association. Will our friend of the Mail speak out in meeting and tell us what he thinks of this conspiracy?

Conversion of a Distinguished Scientist.

This well-known scientist and agriculturist of the Southwest died at the Providence Infirmary, Mobile, Ala., on Tuesday, September 26. A few days before his death he became a member of the Catholic Church, being baptized, making his first Communion and receiving the last sacraments on his death bed.

Prof. Stelle was for twenty years agricultural editor of the Mobile Daily Register. His department was a feature of that paper and conducted on the principles of the most advanced ideas in this Province. He contributed to most of the Southern papers on these subjects. His constant aim was to bring farming in the South to its highest development. He was regarded by the agriculturists as their best friend and authority. Through Prof. Stelle's researches the remedy for the cotton worm was discovered. He introduced the Yengau, or upland rice, throughout the South; as also the culture of Cuban tobacco in regions adapted to it. Many choice varieties of fruits and vegetables he brought into general use, and to his constant study the farming class of the South are indebted for much comfort and profit. He had many honors conferred upon him by scientific societies.

Prof. Stelle's home was with his family in Fort Worth, Texas. When his health began to fail he went to Citronelle, Ala., the well-known health resort, hoping to find some improvement. Here he failed so rapidly that he was taken to the Infirmary at Mobile, where he might have the careful nursing of the Sisters of Charity. He also wished to be received into the Catholic Church. When the priest came to instruct him he found the learned old professor fully informed on all the doctrines of the Church. He was even familiar with the ritual of the services, having frequently attended them. Prof. Stelle's death was a most edifying one, his only regret being that he had put off "his duty to God," as he expressed it, until the last. He was about sixty years of age, and although a native of Illinois, had spent the greater portion of his life in the Southwest.

Father Joseph Hadenkamp, S. J., performed the funeral services in the chapel of the Infirmary and the remains were interred in the Catholic cemetery at Mobile. Some members of Prof. Stelle's family became converted to the Church several years ago.

Laying the Corner-Stone.

About one hundred and fifty persons went from Chatham, N. B., to Nelson, N. B., on Sunday, Oct. 8 on the steamers Nelson and Miramichi, to be present at the laying of the corner stone of the new Catholic church. The solemn and imposing ceremony was performed by His Lordship the Bishop of Chatham, assisted by Father Morrissy of Hartburg, Father Dixon of Newcastle, Father Wallace of Barnaby River and the parish priest, Father Power. His Lordship made a brief address at the close of the ceremonial, and Rev. Father Dixon preached an eloquent sermon in harmony with the occasion. The attendance was large, and the collection plates were generously heaped up with coin and notes.

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