









gether that Christmas night. How can a Christian and separate a mother and her child at such a time? The old man was slowly descending the stairs. He forgot to salute the Duke of Wellington and he did not look like a veteran of Waterloo. Only a sad and tired old man.

"That evening, Margie flew up to my room. "O, Ely! Ely!" she was half crying and half laughing. "Grandma says I am to go back to Kells with the carman; and when my mother is better I am to bring her back and we are to be together not only for Christmas but for all the time."

Next morning, I watched Margie as she mounted the jaunting car and rode away. On Christmas Eve she rode back in Col. Floyd's coach which had been sent for her and which was like a house on wheels. Her mother, pale and gentle but very pretty, was with her.

General Flint did not give any Christmas dinner to his distinguished friends. All the handsome people, however, were brought out, and Miss Martha wore her new red tulle and Miss Martha wore her new red tulle. I think that the dinner was a great success, for everybody seemed so happy. Margie's mother sat beside her little girl, and her eyes were bright and shining as the goblets that held the wine. Nothing would do but come in to the dessert, and the old General asked me if the plum pudding tasted all right now.

CHRISTMAS AT BETHLEHEM.

The celebration of the Vigil—Scenes at the Hour for Matins—the Patriarch's Mass—the Ceremony at the Grotto.

Christmas in Bethlehem! There is a strange fascination in the words. It awakens every thought that has to do with the happy season. We see, in the flash of an eye, the manger, the shepherd keeping night watches over their flocks, the brightness and splendor of the angelic host.

To spend Christmas in such a hallowed place is the desire of every pilgrim to the Holy Land, and when that time of the year draws near, they begin to fill the little towns whose names signify "The House of Bread," making sure that there is room for them, at least, in the inn.

As one journeys over the road the story of old and yet even newer, of that first holy night, comes into the mind with its many details. Perhaps it is the contrast with that which is today; the strange comparisons born of the centuries. One pictures the Holy Family wandering in the streets of Bethlehem. The inn is crowded. Light streams from the barred windows; the sounds of mirth are heard. But there is no room for a late comer.

Overhead the stars shine coldly; there is a chill in the air. The shepherds who are watching to-night draw their garments closer around them. And Herod is giving a banquet; his many friends are gathered in his palace, on a hill hard by, to do him honor. It is a night of festival, and those who are poor would have done better had they made some provision for their accommodation.

After all, what has it mattered? Only a Child born in a stable, a hidden cavern where the ox and the ass are sheltered! All Bethlehem has seen those lights that glow in the ruler's stronghold; but only a handful of shepherds have witnessed the glory of the night; a few simple men, Jesus to their toil in the fields, kneel before the Babe and salute Him King. But they are few and poor and despised.

Such thoughts come into the heart, as one prepares one's self for the ceremonies that are to mark the anniversary of this event. And every song which has brought us into the sight of the city of David. Those who have never yet beheld the town upon its cluster of hills, lean forward in their saddles and murmur: "Bethlehem!"

Every year the thoughts of the whole Christian family, no matter what may be its differences in creed or rite, turn to the little town of Bethlehem. Its name is on every lip; and every song which every word in honor of that day brings us into the spirit to the distant hills of Palestine.

In Bethlehem itself one is not surprised to find the Nativity observed as it could be in no other place. The gathering of pilgrims, the many colored costumes of the inhabitants rich in Oriental splendor, the costly vestments of the officiating priests, the thousands of lighted candles, the decorations, the solemn ceremonies, and the inspiring music of the Church—all these lend to the occasion a picturesqueness and an impressiveness that can scarcely be described to one who has not been present himself. The whole place gives itself up to rejoicing. The streets are thronged, bonfires are lit, and the bells of the Nativity are crowded from the beginning to the end of the services.

The French Consul, who always makes it a point to be present as official protector of the Church in Palestine, and the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem usually arrive a little after noon on the day before Christmas. Almost all the people of Bethlehem are Christians—there are only 100 Mussulmans in the whole town. The Patriarch goes to the cathedral to welcome the Consul and the Latin Patriarch, who comes under the escort of that official. The gathering of the Turkish soldiery is the signal of their arrival. Then the house-tops are crowded with women while the men fill the narrow streets below. The Patriarch is received with loud cheers, and a military "Vivat!" rends the air as he passes along.

Behind the Patriarch ride the French Consul, his chancellor and dragoman, all mounted on magnificent horses. Then follows the crowds of pilgrims, gathered from the four quarters of the globe. They press onward with impetuosity, full of excitement and fervor;

for are they not to spend Christmas in Bethlehem? In the meantime the Patriarch is formally received at the Basilica by the Guardian. After he has blessed the people the chanters intone the Te Deum, and then he enters the Basilica, going immediately to the Church of St. Catherine, where having said the accustomed prayers, he admits the clergy and the faithful to kiss his hand. Then robing himself in pontifical vestments, he chants the first Vespers.

Complines are chanted by the religious of the Order of St. Francis, who are the guardians of this as well as of every other sanctuary in Palestine that the Catholic Church possesses. The Patriarch, who has taken advantage of the time to get a little rest, now returns at the close of Complines to take part in the daily procession to the sanctuaries connected with the Nativity.

Supper in the refectory follows, and there the Patriarch sits at the common table with the religious partaking with them of the same simple fare. By this time the convent has become a vast hostelry, so great is the number of pilgrims that it now shelters. They are in every conceivable place, in every possible corner. Here and there little groups sit around small stoves that they have lighted, contentedly warming their hands. Others calmly roll and smoke their cigarettes or have recourse to their chibouks. Every one is at ease, and makes himself perfectly at home, for the convent is, par excellence, the home of the poor.

Chimes of joyous bells soon tell that the hour for Matins has arrived. The church is crowded already for the people of Bethlehem would do anything rather than miss the ceremonies of this night. The women, gay in their bright colors, occupy the right side of the nave. It is not generally known that these people, who carry themselves with so much grace and display so much dignity of bearing, are lineal descendants from the Crusaders. They are proud of this fact, and treasure their parchment genealogies with the greatest care. Blue eyes and yellow hair and other traces of the Aryan type are common among them. As one sees them in the Basilica, however, their appearance is entirely Oriental. They wear a long gown without fastening at the waist and striped with red, yellow, green and blue. At the throat it is covered with fine embroidery, under which one may catch glimpses of a short reddish vest embroidered in jellow with Arabesque designs. Their head dress is equally strange; it consists of red cotton, spangled with pieces of silver, and these with necklaces made in a similar manner, form their dowries.

On the opposite side of the church are the men, whose costumes are scarcely less strange than those of the women. Among them are shepherds; and seeing them one cannot help going back through the centuries to that Holy Night, when, as here to-day the shepherds went before the princes to honor the new born Saviour.

Matins finished, the Pontifical Mass is at once begun. The Patriarch and his assistants at the altar are arrayed in the vestments presented in the name of the Republic of France. The scene had not made the greatest possible beauty, and at the same time, the highest solemnity. As soon as the ceremony ends a procession is formed, while throughout the Basilica the tapers held by the people are lighted and gleam like so many little stars. The crucifer walks in front of the procession, and then follow in order the Franciscans and the members of other religious orders, and after these, the Patriarch, escorted by his assisting priests. After the Patriarch and dressed in full uniform of their rank walk the French Consul and the various members of his suite. Then the laymen join in the long line which follows.

In his arms, with tender care, the Patriarch bears a cushion over-wrought with fine laces and rich ornaments of embroidery work, upon which rests a waxen figure of the Divine Infant. The features are most lifelike, and the tiny lips are arched as if about to break into a smile.

Across the transept the line passes and through the lateral door into the ancient cloister of St. Jerome. This long gallery ends in the Church of St. Catherine. The procession crosses the aisle at present occupied by the Armenians, and descends by means of the stone stairway into the Sanctuary to get into the limited space of the grotto soon all the entire place. The hymns of joy suddenly cease, and the sounds of music are hushed.

The Patriarch, advancing to the altar of the Nativity, stands before the spot where, nineteen centuries ago, the infant Saviour was placed. Then the officiating Deacon begins to chant the gospel of the Nativity, beginning: "And it came to pass that when they were there, her days were accomplished that she should be delivered." At these words the Deacon approaches the Patriarch and takes up the figure of the Infant. "And here she brought forth her first-born Son," the Deacon chants, and as he does so places the image on the spot that marks where Christ was born. "And wrapped Him up in swaddling clothes," sings the Deacon, and the action is suited to the figure. The Patriarch kneels before the figure of Our Lord and tenderly covers the little limbs with delicate silks. "And here laid Him in a manger," continues the Deacon. The Patriarch goes with the little one in his arms and places Him in the crib or manger before which the shepherds and the Wise Men of the East knelt in silent adoration.

The Gospel ended, the Gloria is intoned and then the Te Deum. The procession returns to the upper church, where the Patriarch chants Ludes and then celebrates his second Mass, at which he gives the Holy Communion to those who wish to communicate. From midnight until 5 o'clock Masses are celebrated in the Grotto of the Nativity by the Franciscan Fathers and other visiting priests. At that hour the Catholics give way to the schismatic Greeks. As soon as these services are over, the Latin priests re-

turn and Masses are celebrated in succession until sunset of Christmas day. This is a signal privilege granted only to Bethlehem for the feast of the Nativity and Epiphany.

At 1 o'clock on Christmas morning the Patriarch sings his third Mass, at which a congregation similar in its bright colors to that of the previous evening, assists.

The Grotto of the Nativity is small, and is partly natural and partly artificial. In order to preserve it from fire, the early Christians built a church over it, and probably made the stairway that we find to-day. The walls of the Grotto and the natural rocks are covered by rich tapestries, and from the ceiling hang a great number of memorial lamps that are kept burning night and day. The spot where the Nativity is marked by a silver star with the inscription, "Hic de Virgine Maria Jesus Christus natus est." ("Here Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary.") At the right-hand side is a sort of niche in the rock, where stood the manger from which the cattle fed, and in which His mother laid the infant in the inn. This place also contains an altar marking the spot where the Wise Kings knelt.

In the afternoon of Christmas day pilgrims to Bethlehem pay a visit to the Milk Grotto and to the Field of the Shepherds. The Milk Grotto is a natural cavern in the rock, and is the place of the Nativity. Tradition reports that Mary hid here while Joseph was making preparations for the flight into Egypt. While suckling her child a few drops of milk fell on the floor of the Grotto. The natives, even the Bedouins, have great faith in the efficacy of this stone, powdered and dissolved in water, as a remedy for infants in want of milk.

The Shepherd's Field is reached by a road leading by the Field of Boaz (or Boaz), where Ruth gleaned. A church was once built on the site where the angels made known to men the glad tidings of the birth of Our Lord. Of this and the monastery of hermits that once stood beside it little now remains save the crypt under the ancient chancel. This is reached by a stairway of twenty-one steps. It contains a little altar, the property of Greek schismatics. This the pilgrims decorate with candles brought from Bethlehem. Then they kneel in prayer, after which the gospel of the day is chanted. There is no other ceremony; and the pilgrims soon return to Bethlehem.

The solemnities at Bethlehem draw members of the Franciscan Order from all parts of Palestine, and every pilgrim, whether lay or cleric, who is attracted enough to go to the Holy Land at this season of the year makes it a point to be in attendance. The afternoon procession to the Shepherd's Field which has just been described, is always made with much pomp and order, and whenever the Latin Patriarch goes about formally while he is in Bethlehem he is escorted by a guard of Turkish soldiers furnished by the Pacha for the occasion.

Since the earliest days of Christianity the birthplace of our Lord has been held in high veneration. Heathen hatred, under Hadrian, tried to convert the place into a shrine of Venus and Adonis. But even this desecration did not make the Christians forgetful of the holy spot, and when the Empress Helena visited Palestine she had the temple destroyed, its idols cast out and in its place erected the great Church in its simplicity and grandeur in its architectural proportions of its architectural pure lines.

It is a strange fact, but this Church of the pious Empress which has come down to us to-day, of all the many churches erected by her orders in the Holy Land, alone has outlasted the storms of time and fanaticism, and remains very much as it was. The towers, its mighty porticoes are gone; the mosaics that shone in court and nave, transept and chancel have disappeared. Of the many paintings that decorated its walls, four alone remain, and of these one is scarcely more than a fragment. But the main features of the buildings are still intact.

The three beautiful portals that formerly gave entrance to the Basilica have been walled up. A small square opening, about three feet high, serves not only to admit the pilgrim, but answers for solemn entrances, such as that of the Patriarch, as well.

These ceremonies at Bethlehem are only one parallel in the world and that is in America. At the Chapel of the Holy Land, in Brookland, near Washington, D. C., there are reproductions of the principal shrines of Palestine, and among them the grotto of Bethlehem. This has been reproduced in the Church in all its details, and at the Midnight Mass on Christmas at the Bethlehem, as mark the services in Bethlehem, as far as is possible, carried out.

As one who has beheld with his own eyes these glad rites in honor of the new-born Son of Man looks back over the years, they bring with them a spirit that could only spring from the lessons of the Christmas season. The lights gleamed brightly in the Palace of Herod, on the hill opposite Bethlehem, on the first of all Christmas nights, while in the lowly stable-cave shone only a single flame. But the lights of Herod's banquet have been forever lost in the darkness of the Christ-child never ceases to fill the hearts of men with his heavenly message: "Glory to God in the highest; and on earth, peace to men of good will."—Rev. Godfrey Schilling, O. S. F.

THE JOY OF FAITH.

The Blessedness Which This Firmest of Convictions Brings.

Baltimore, Md.

There is a blessedness which men of faith attain, and a happiness they enjoy, that is hidden from those who are to the senses given, writes Rev. C. F. Thomas in the Sun. And such is not at all strange if we remember that "the sensual man perceiveth not the things that are of the spirit of God." But "spiritual man judges all things," and he does not forget the words which the Saviour of mankind Himself did say when He rebuked the doubting and insincere forerunner of the apostles: "What can be more blessed, what confers greater happiness, than the conscious possession of truth? The whole world seeks for truth, though some just like Pilate, as if it were chimerical; or recoil from it like Felix, as if it were something fearful; or like Agrippa, regard it with indifference and put it aside as of no importance. All men look for truth; what is truth for us is not a jest, nor an idle fancy, but an earnest query of the soul.

A negative or an unsatisfactory answer causes us discontent and un-fathomable misery; an affirmative and satisfactory one thrills us with untold joyous emotion. All our joys, no matter how false or fleeting, are based on the assumption that the objects which occasion them are solid, true and real and sure. The moment the delusion vanishes or the suspicion arises that they are not what they seem, immediately sorrow seizes our hearts, and we relinquish them for something else. The gladness that something hovers over our lives like the brightest sunshine on a lovely day and communicates itself to our every deed and every word is but the product of an assurance that our affections are lavished upon a worthy object and our sense of beauty attracted by perfection. How dark the world becomes when that object reveals its unworthiness, and how hollow when that perfection manifests its imperfect lines! Nothing contents us but truth; nothing rejoices us but truth; in nothing are we blessed, save in the attainment of truth.

Truth is our soul's life, strength and peace. No wonder there is a tone of inexpressible sadness and weakness in the cry of every man the deeper he advances in science, when he finds a vaster abyss still unexplored and impenetrable before him. No wonder we discover on all sides and in every rank of society mighty protest and vain reflection against human littleness no wonder there are myriad eyes looking heavenward, inflamed by the fever of infinite and unsatisfied desires. For mankind is ever the sport or the victim of a perpetual warfare that arises from desire aspiration for the infinite and the monotony of present reality. The soul cries for peace, but there is no peace, as it wanders in the world through dry and arid places where truth blooms not and flourishes not.

From such despair and anxiety from such weakness and unhappiness, the man of faith is exempt; faith raises him above the world—enlarges the horizon of his vision—endows him with a contemplation of essential beauty and absolute truth in God—breaks from him the shackles of the limitations cast around him by his nature—remedies the inherent defects of his soul—instills new principles of life and new germs of action by which he can hear and distinguish the voice of infallible wisdom uncreated and profess unwavering allegiance to the manifestations vouchsafed; and instead of falling subdued by fatigue and exhaustion on a dry heap of illusions, he ascends with ever-widening spirit until he reaches the Almighty truth which gives him understanding. "In Whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." He has been conducted through the right ways and shown the kingdom of God and given the knowledge of the holy things and been made honorable in his labors, for his prayer has been: "Send forth Thy light and Thy truth. They have conducted me and brought me into Thy Holy Hill, and into Thy tabernacles." (Psalms xlii, 3). Truly that man is blessed and happy. By faith he is glad.

Wisdom has entered his house and he hath reposed himself with her; her conversation hath no bitterness, her company any tediousness, but joy and gladness.

Say you that this certainty is flimsy and rests on no solid basis? Think you that the assent which he gives to the teachings of faith, or the assurance with which he cherishes his hopes, is not of greatest weight? The grace is the Most High Intuitions, the love of God communicates it; and under that heavenly influence the human will leads the mind before the throne of the Infinite, and accepts all the supernatural revelation. What higher de-

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gree of certainty can there be than that which originates in a divine principle? "I believe" is an act that comes not from me; labor and toil, study and reason as I may; be the natural light around me ever so bright, I cannot make the act of faith unless such be given me from above. The arguments may be strong and weighty; the chain of reasoning may seem to be well connected and conclusive; yet vain is the expected result if the grace of God be withheld. And when that grace comes, what can have more power to inspire absolute certainty in the truth of things I accept and profess? I may doubt my own existence; I may call in question the reality of the world around me; I may hesitate about the clearest human conclusions; but when I say, aided by the love and goodness of the Father above, I believe, I possess a conviction the highest and the greatest possible, because it originates in a divine principle.

The motive of faith is the veracity of God Who speaks. I believe because I hear and recognize the word of God. I examine the character of the message handed to me. I scrutinize the men who come to see me. I judge the trustworthiness of their testimony. I subject it all to valid, unflinching tests, and when I conclude that it is the voice of God, I cry out: "Speak, Lord, Thy servant heareth." Or "What wilt Thou have me do, Lord?"

Is there certainty greater than this? Natural wisdom may be illusive; earthly science may mistake; human reason is fallible and often built on unstable foundation. We may be justified in viewing with distrust whatever we hold on human and natural basis; but the word of God is eternal, immutable and infallible—endured forever. Heaven and earth may pass away, but My Word shall not pass away. Whatever rests on His Word partakes of like immutability, and its certainty is of highest possible grade. The testimony of men is great, but the testimony of God is greater. For God is not only infallible in His wisdom, in His knowledge, "His eyes are far brighter than the sun, beholding round about all the ways of men, and the bottom of the deep and looking into the hearts of men, into the most hidden parts;" He is also not less infallible in manifesting that knowledge, and as He cannot be deceived, so neither can He deceive. And when we believe on His Word, because He hath revealed, nothing can equal the certainty we possess of the truth of the revelation.

Wherefore the Apostle St. Paul declares faith to be "the substance of things hoped for, and the conviction of things that appear not." And St. Peter: "We have the word of prophecy more firm." And St. Paul again in the exuberance of his joy and in the perfection of his spirit as he explained the grounds of Christian hopes and the unparalleled certainty of Christian convictions, exclaims: "I know in whom I have believed."

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What is commonly inherited is not scrofula but the scrofulous disposition. This is generally and chiefly indicated by untimely eruptions; sometimes by paleness, nervousness and general debility.

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LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION.

UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA, Ottawa, Canada, March 7th, 1900.

To the Editor of The Catholic Record, London, Ont.: Dear Sir: For some time past I have read your estimable paper...

London, Saturday Dec 21, 1901

BISHOP McCABE AND CROMWELL.

In our issue of Nov. 16 we stated that "Bishop Charles C. McCabe of the Methodist Church, Omaha, Nebraska," showed "treachery and ignorance" in stating that "he would rather have been Oliver Cromwell for an hour than a Catholic saint for a thousand years."

We have received from that reverend person the following letter:

Dec. 2, 1901.

Dear Sir—Your paper with reference to my remark on Cromwell—at hand.

Please read the enclosed articles from Missionary Review for August of this year. From wide travels in South America and Europe I can confirm the statements herein made.

Yours very truly, C. C. McCABE

This reverend gentleman, who is at the same time a nominal Bishop, does not attempt to give any vindication of his strange words, or any justification of his implied panegyric on Cromwell and defamation of the Catholic Saints, which we maintain to be evidences of "treachery and ignorance."

How is it that a person claiming to be a preacher of the Gospel of peace and good-will to men should presume to draw a comparison between the regicide who pitilessly massacred the Irish and Scotch who had the misfortune to become his prisoners, they having taken up arms in defence of the established government of the three kingdoms.

This cruelty was especially perpetrated on the Irish, whose land was wanted that it might be given over to Cromwell's troopers as their reward for serving him and maintaining his act of regicide. Cromwell! who is rightly painted by one of Sir Walter Scott's characters as "that disgrace of mankind, that landscape of iniquity, that sink of sin, that conpendium of baseness."

As well might we compare Jezabel to Deborah, or Ahab to the prophet Daniel, as Oliver Cromwell to St. Ignatius Loyola, whose devotional writings have been the means of teaching more souls the way of salvation than they contain letters, or to St. Francis Xavier, who planted the seed of the Word of God in more heathen lands than any other missionary of whom history gives a record.

Bishop McCabe and his Methodist friends ought to be able to produce at least one or more of their own sect who might be fairly compared for sanctity and zeal with such great Catholic saints as these, or a St. Patrick, an Anselm, an Ambrose, an Augustine, a Charles Borromeo, an Alphonsus Liguori, etc., before uttering such drivel as that we quoted in our issue already referred to.

As the case stands, the Bishop is obliged to leave his own sect and look among the Puritans of Praise-God-Barebones stamp for his saints, and then he has to make the apotheosis of a rebel, a wholesale murderer, and persecutor, and paricide, in order to find model of all Christian virtues.

By making such a comparison, the Rev. Bishop McCabe shows himself an apt disciple of John Wesley who declared in his Methodist Magazine that "no government, whether Protestant, Mahometan, or Pagan, ought to tolerate Popery," and who was the apologist of the bloodthirsty no-Popery riots caused by Lord George Gordon in London, Eng., June, 1780, wherein Catholic churches were pillaged, and the houses of Catholics burned, so that on June 7 thirty-seven fires were visible at the same time. (See Hayden's Dictionary of Dates.)

Bishop McCabe sends us a newspaper clipping "from the Missionary Review for August" in which it is broadly asserted that "all Europe has been moved by uprisings against the Roman Catholic Church," and that from Spanish America the Papal Dominion is about to make its exit, and "there will enter a reign of righteousness," by which we presume it is meant that Methodism is about to become the dominant religion of Europe and America. The pseudo-Bishop adds: "From wide travels in South America, I can confirm the statements herein made. You editors of the Romish Church will not see it, but the great movement is going on all the same."

Bishop McCabe allows his ill temper to get the better of his discretion in making himself sponsor for the random assertions of the Missionary Review. It is true that there have been uprisings against religion both in Europe and South America; for the spirit of the world and of the worldly man will always be at war with God's religion, which curbs worldliness; but it is not true, as says the extract for which the Bishop stands sponsor that "in France the priests who have left the Romish Church and become Protestants have been especially numerous."

We have no doubt that the pseudo-Bishop is himself the writer of the article in the Review. It is written just in his style of wild assertion, and there is another of his ear-marks in it in the use of the vulgar nickname "Romish" applied to the Church of Christ in nineteen centuries. But let us consider some of his statements.

In France there are 71,000 priests, and they are a body faithful to their holy calling; but there must be some unfaithful ones among so large an army. The assertion of a large falling away of priests has been made recently several times, but it has been examined into, and it has been found to be false.

It was said that large numbers had entered into certain Protestant missionaries to become Protestant propagandists, but on investigation the number dwindled down to half a dozen or less than a dozen at most, who had been suspended from the priesthood on account of ill conduct, but who were easily admitted to become Protestant ministers.

When we consider that there was one Judas among the twelve apostles, it will be understood that half a dozen or a dozen faithless priests among 71,000 is a very small number indeed. Bishop McCabe should not forget that it is a very common thing that Methodist and other Ministers stray from the paths of rectitude, as scarcely a day passes on which we do not find some instances of the kind recorded in the daily papers. But it is a most uncommon thing for the like to occur in regard to Catholic priests. We do not wish to enter into a reexamination of cases of this kind here, but if we are obliged to do so we may make out an attested category which will somewhat astonish Bishop McCabe.

The Catholic Church is in a most flourishing condition at the present moment, and has increased to a wonderful degree during the past century. Nevertheless, we admit that Protestantism has also increased greatly the numbers of its nominal adherents. But it must be borne in mind that the character of Protestantism has also greatly changed during that period, as at the present day faith in the doctrines of revelation has greatly declined among Protestants, and it is very doubtful whether there is as much real Christianity among them to-day as there was a hundred years ago.

Japan furnishes us with an illustration of the truth of this view of the matter. For many years past we have heard of the wonderful increase of the number of Protestants in Japan, and it was believed that great progress had been made in that country in the way of introducing Protestantism there, and especially Presbyterianism.

But it is not long since an independent Presbyterian Church was established in Japan, and when this took place it was very soon made clear that this new institution is no more Christian than is Unitarianism which denies Christ's divinity, and the efficacy of His death as an atonement for the sins of mankind.

If Protestantism is to gain proselytes in this way, it will do but little toward the evangelization of the world.

Here it may be asked, why do we call Bishop McCabe "a pseudo-Bishop?" We answer that St. Paul tells us, (Heb. v, 4) that "no man taketh the honor of the Christian priesthood" to himself but he that is called by God as Aaron was.

And again: "Some indeed He (Christ) gave to be Apostles, and some prophets, and others evangelists, and others pastors and teachers." (Eph. iv.)

It is evident, therefore, that the Christian priesthood or ministry must be traceable to Christ by regular succession, as the priesthood of Aaron's

successors was traceable through Aaron to Almighty God. The priesthood or episcopacy of Bishop McCabe is not so traceable, and his assumption of the sacred office is as unauthorized as was the assumption of the priestly functions of the old law by Core, (or Korah,) Dathan and Abiron. (Num. xvi.)

We have also to remark here that Bishop McCabe with characteristic astuteness endeavors to turn from the original question of the character of Cromwell, to a matter altogether apart therefrom. This fact alone is sufficient to show that we were perfectly justified in our remarks.

ONCE MORE DREYFUS!

It is a curious outcome of the Dreyfus case that Mons. Labri, who was counsel for the accused during the trial of the ex-Captain, and who was mysteriously shot and seriously wounded at a critical stage in the proceedings, evidently by some anti-Dreyfusard, to prevent him from defending the accused, has recently declared himself an opponent of Dreyfus. There appears to be good reason to believe that on his becoming fully acquainted with all the details of the case, he has found evidence of Dreyfus' guilt of the treasonable acts charged against him.

It is certainly impossible to deny that much of the evidence brought against Dreyfus was forged, but throwing aside such documents, there still remained much in Dreyfus' conduct to be accounted for, which did not appear to be consistent with the theory that he was faithful to his duties as a French officer. There appears to be little doubt that there was very damaging evidence against the accused produced before the Courts martial which condemned the Captain, but which could not be brought before the civil Courts, as it would have embroiled France with certain other governments—presumably with Germany and Russia—if it had been brought forward. It was from this condition of affairs that the whole trouble of the many trials to which the prisoner of Devil's island was subjected originated.

NATIONALISM vs. CATHOLICITY.

The Mail and Empire publishes an interview had in Montreal with the Duke of Newcastle, who is on his way to British Columbia and the Northwest. His Grace is a son of the Duke of Newcastle who accompanied King Edward VII. on his trip to Canada in 1860. The Duke, being a very High-Churchman, his visit is said to have for object the arrangement of a working plan of union between the English Church and the American Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament. He states that there is just now a truce between the Church factions in England, but that the great questions between them must still be settled.

"The High Church party," he says, "are looking to disestablishment as a solution of the existing difficulties, but they do not wish for disestablishment. Disestablishment would free the Church from State control, and this freedom is what High-Churchmen desire; but the Low-Church party would oppose this movement."

FOR THE SUPPRESSION OF DUEL-LING.

The tragic death of Lieut. Blaskowitz in a duel which occurred a few weeks ago, has brought strongly before the Kaiser William the evils of duelling, and it has been ordered that the most energetic measures shall be taken by the military authorities to prevent the recurrence of such incidents. This announcement was made in the Reichstag on Nov. 27th by General von Gossler, and the interest taken in the matter by ladies of the highest rank and officers in the army was made manifest by the large crowd of high-born persons which assembled in the galleries of the Reichstag to hear the announcement of the future policy of the government in regard to the matter.

Since the date of the Emperor's prohibition of duelling, it was learned that two young lieutenants had declared that they would fight in spite of the Emperor's orders if the circumstances should arise in which they might deem it necessary to do so in vindication of their honor.

The Emperor went personally to the officers' quarters a few days ago for the purpose of reprimanding the officers guilty of this serious breach of discipline, and spoke strongly of the importance of implicit obedience to his orders. He declared that officers who thus disobey shall be ignominiously dismissed from the army after being degraded from their rank. He then personally addressed the offending lieutenants, telling them that in consideration of their youth the present offence of which they had been guilty would be passed over, but that it would not be so easily pardoned a second time, as the imperial commands must be obeyed without question. The two young officers expressed sorrow for their thoughtless vapourings, and the incident closed, forgiveness having been accorded to them.

With the strong and unalterable convictions we hold concerning the unlawfulness of duelling, a question on which the Catholic Church speaks unequivocally, we cannot do otherwise than express our entire approval of the firm stand now taken by the Kaiser in regard to the matter.

It required the distressing situation which arose out of the killing of Lieut. Blaskowitz to open the eyes of the Kaiser and the German government on the question; for only a few years ago, the Kaiser was as strongly in favor of duelling in the army as a means of keeping up the military spirit, as he is now of the opposite conviction.

We are pleased to notice that in Austria also there is a growing conviction of the injury inflicted on society by the practice of duelling; and persons of the highest rank in that Empire, including princes of the Imperial family, generals, and other dignitaries in civil

and ecclesiastical life, have formed an association for the purpose of suppressing duelling in all grades of society. This is a most laudable object, and all true patriots in the Empire will undoubtedly sympathize with the efforts of the newly organized association.

There is, however, one point in the principles laid down by the Kaiser with which we must still express our dissent. He asserts the unlawfulness of duelling simply for such time as the practice falls under his ban. It is thus implied that the Emperor's will makes this practice lawful or unlawful. The law of God is thus completely ignored in the manner in which he deals with the question.

God's law is "Thou shalt not kill; and there is no doubt that duels are forbidden by this law, equally with suicide and murder, both of which are implied in every duel. The Kaiser's error consists in this, that without any care for God's law, he makes the lawfulness of duelling depend upon his ordering or prohibiting of duels.

Surely the Bishop of Bishops of the German Lutheran Church has a high opinion of the prerogatives attached to his office! Neither Pope nor General Council of the Catholic Church has ever attempted thus to confirm or suppress at will the laws of God.

ANGLICANISM AND THE GREEK SCHISM.

A great effort has been recently made by the authorities of the Church of England to effect some kind of union or confederation of ministry with the Oriental Schismatical Church or Churches, and to this end there have been some negotiations with the recently re-elected patriarch Joachim III. of Constantinople.

The Rev. Dr. Dowling as the resident representative of the Church of England at Constantinople, presented to the patriarch two documents in Greek, one of which was the reply of the Archbishop of Canterbury to Pope Leo XIII's decree pronouncing Anglican orders invalid, and the other a work by Bishop John Wordsworth of Salisbury on the resemblance between the Anglican and Greek Churches.

This is not the first proposition of this kind made by the Anglican Church, as a few years ago the Lambeth Conference appointed the Archbishops of Canterbury and York and the Bishops of London to act as a committee to confer with the "Holy Synod of Russia," and the authorities of the other Oriental Churches with a view to establish a closer relationship between the Anglican, Greek and Russian Churches.

In regard to the movement then begun the Christian Commonwealth, a nonconformist organ published in London, had this to say in an editorial article:

"That committee issued a report which is a very curious document. It is a fine instance of the ecclesiastical art of saying nothing at immense length. The orthodox Eastern Church is as badly split up as are the Western Churches. Before there can be reunion between the East and West, surely the big fissures in each should be healed. The Church of England is going to pieces while its Bishops look on and blow their toy trumpets of direction, advice, and instruction. The Eastern Church is cracked up long ago. This is comparatively modern, for it was born in the tenth century through the conversion of the Emperor Vladimir by the Patriarch of Constantinople."

The Russian Church is now an entirely independent Church with the Czar at its head, whereas the "Orthodox Church" so-called, acknowledging the Presidency of the Patriarch of Constantinople, includes the Greek Church

of Turkey, Servia, Bulgaria, Greece, and part of Hungary. The third great division of the Oriental Church is made up of a number of Churches which retain with greater or less pertinacity the heretical teachings of Nestorius, Eutychius, and other ancient heretics. These Churches are numerous, comprising the Gregorian or Armenian, the Nestorian or Chaldean, found chiefly in Persia, and to some extent in Turkey, the Syrian, the Alexandrian or Coptic, and the Abyssian or Ethiopic.

There is a strong antagonism between these sects, so that it is quite a mistake to suppose that they form but one body; and thus a union with any one of them would not lead, directly at least, to a union with all these Oriental sects or Churches.

When it is borne in mind that so recently as two years ago the Anglican Bishops formulated a solemn decree consisting of twelve articles directed against extreme ritualistic practices, which were stigmatized as "papal," and as leading back the Church Rome-ward, it becomes amusing to see them now paying their addresses to the patriarchs of Constantinople and the Holy Synod which regulates the ecclesiastical affairs of Russia subject to the Czar's approval.

In these Oriental Churches Ritualism reveals unchecked. Here it is what the Christian Commonwealth says in regard to this matter:

"A Russian Church is the home of endless ceremonies. There is much that is instructive, but the ritual and the symbolism have become extravagant and overwhelming."

For the administration of the Eucharist, two round flattened cakes are baked, being united in the baking. These represent the union of two natures in Christ. Five of these double cakes are used at each celebration, and each is marked with the inscription IC. XC. NIKA., which means, Jesus Christ conquers. One cake is cut into halves, one piece being named "the Lamb." This is pierced with a small spear to symbolize the Crucifixion. Pieces are also cut off these cakes in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Apostles, and other saints, and all are marked with the cross. There are many other ceremonies constituting a most elaborate and complex ritual, so that the Commonwealth declares that the reformation of this Church to primitive simplicity is a hopeless case. That journal continues:

"The Sacramentalism and Sacerdotalism which threaten to cut up Anglicanism have long ago swallowed up the Eastern Church, until now reformation is hopeless."

The Commonwealth is very decided in expressing this view, and adds:

"That reformation can only come from without, and at present a cruel civil despotism is allied with this corrupt and superstitious communion to crush all nonconformity, directly it attempts to propagate the truth. We repeat that only those ignorant of the real state of Oriental Christianity can excusably imagine that reunion with it would be anything but a curse."

This is very strong language, yet it indicates what is likely to be the general sentiment at least in the Low or Kessitite section of the Church of England itself.

The trouble lies even deeper than in a mere matter of ritual. The Greek Church holds, in common with the Catholic Church, the seven sacraments, the sacrifice of the Mass, the veneration and invocation of the Blessed Virgin and the Saints, the reverence due to sacred images and relics, the usefulness of fasting and other works of penance, and the divine institution and the Apostolicity of the degrees of order in the ecclesiastical hierarchy. On all these points the Church of England is at variance with the Catholic and Greek teaching, and there is thus a gulf between Anglicanism and Greek orthodoxy which it seems impossible to bridge over, without an absolute change in the fundamentals of faith.

The patriarch Joachim is certainly quite conscious of the existence of this gulf, and though he held out a kind of hope that some sort of intercommunion may be possible, he intimated that nothing can be done without a general understanding with the various branches of the Orthodox Church.

It is certain that no real union can be effected without most radical changes in the faith of both Churches, and it does not appear credible that the adherents of either Church can be induced to make such changes in their faith.

SANTOS-DUMONT'S AIR-SHIP.

Mr. Maxim, the celebrated machinist, and the inventor of the Maxim gun, has given expression to the opinion that the results obtained by M. Santos-Dumont are most satisfactory, and that the principle on which his air-ships are constructed cannot be improved upon. In the face of many statements to the effect that the success of M. Santos-Dumont is of no practical utility, this opinion of Mr. Maxim is specially valuable. Santos-Dumont has certainly constructed a dirigible air-ship which is completely under control of its master,

though he has not been able as yet to conquer all the powers of nature. There will probably be improvements on his work; hereafter, though there will always be a limit to the power of man to contend with the forces of nature.

The vessels which traverse the ocean are wonders of human ingenuity and skill, but the best of them cannot withstand the violence of every storm without meeting with some damage, and so it will be with the discoveries of M. Santos-Dumont. His dirigible air-ship will, therefore, always remain a testimony to his skill, even though it may hereafter be greatly improved upon in its details, and he will always be held to be the discoverer of this species of vessel, notwithstanding the jealousy of those who are unwilling to give honor to whom honor is due.

Mr. Maxim points out that M. Santos-Dumont's air-ship is of the class which is in itself lighter than the air, and will therefore ascend of its own nature, leaving it to the machinery to direct it once it has ascended. Of the other kind of air-ship which some imagine to be of a preferable principle to ships of this kind, namely, of that which is built on the model of a bird, and is therefore totally dependent on machinery to raise it into the air, and to be afterwards directed in its motions still by machinery, Mr. Maxim remarks that the discoveries have not yet begun to produce the article which exists in their imaginations. Surely the air-balloon is not to be entirely cast aside until the rival principle of a ship rising in the air by the power of machinery alone shall have been proved to be a possibility at least.

CHRISTMAS.

The festival of Christmas which will be celebrated on Wednesday, 25th inst., is one of the two festivals of the year which are regarded by the Church as of the highest rank, the other being Easter Sunday.

Christmas day is the anniversary of the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ in Bethlehem. The event of the coming of the Messiah was expected by the Jewish nation from the time of the establishment of the law of Moses, and even before the Mosaic dispensation the coming of a Redeemer Who should deliver the world from the predominance of sin and Satan was foretold. A Saviour was promised mankind even immediately after the commission by our first parents of that sin which brought death and sorrow upon the whole human race.

It was impossible for finite man to make any adequate atonement for sin committed against an infinite God, and it was for this reason that God the Son offered Himself to His Heavenly Father as an atonement sufficient to blot out the most grievous offences.

It was for this purpose that He was born in Bethlehem under human form, that He might thus take upon Himself the punishment due to sin, though He was Himself sinless and incapable of sin.

During the forty centuries which preceded the birth of Christ a Redeemer was expected, not only by the Jews, but even by heathen nations, and heathen writers tell us that the Redeemer was expected just about the time when Christ appeared on earth. The Jewish prophets were still more definite, and in the prophecies of Jacob, Daniel, Aggeus and other inspired holy men, the date of His coming was implied in very clear terms. Bethlehem was also fixed as the place of His birth, and the district was named in which He should labor chiefly for the salvation of souls.

The actual coming of our Lord was announced to the Jewish people through a vision which appeared to the shepherds on the mountains of Judea, and to the wise men of the East who came from distant lands to seek Him and adore Him.

Christians have received more full and definite knowledge of our divine Lord and Saviour, and for this reason our fault would be more grievous than that of the Jews who rejected Him, if we were to neglect the means of salvation which He has placed within our reach, especially in the sacraments which He has instituted as the ordinary channels of grace.

During these few days which immediately precede the birth of our Redeemer every Catholic should take care to prepare himself or herself for the reception of these sacraments with proper disposition. We hope none of our readers will neglect this important duty.

A pure soul is like a beautiful pearl; as long as it remains hidden in its shell at the bottom of the sea no one thinks of admiring it; but if you place it in the light of the sun it attracts all eyes. Thus the pure soul which is hidden from the eyes of the world shall one day shine before the angels in the sunlight of eternity.

Vanity in friendship is egotism; and egotism is the poison of friendship.—Balzac.

Sacred Heart Review.

Father Sutton's lectures to non-Catholics at the Church of the Immaculate Conception, Portsmouth, N. H., attracted wide attention and created very good feeling. An Advent preacher has come out with an announcement of a course of sermons "reply," but if those who hear are led to inquire further, the result will be better even than were expected.

This was the first mission of the ever known to New Hampshire since an attendance of 300 inquired on a second night these earnest non-Catholics numbered not less than 600, some of the subsequent evenings were as many as 800 of them in Church. The daily newspapers of the city gave much space to the lectures, and those who were not able to read these accounts were not able to read these accounts without much interest. In fact, an observant reporter who attended during the week of the sessions of Father Sutton to the questions of "Predestination," "a Thinker," and the Pope, were really spoken of with great favor and commendation. The questions generally of a serious turn, and those who give a few to show the ground in which the non-Catholic is groping.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS. Q. Why do Catholics think that we have more power than Christ? A. We do not think so. We reverence her just because she is the Mother of Christ. And she is her, therefore, is all on His account. Q. Why are the Irish people so ignorant?

A. The last United States gives natives-born illiterates two millions, and foreign-born ones at a little over half a million. This does not show that the Irish are ignorant ones. Are not your Irish neighbors as bright and intelligent as other people?

Q. How can I become a Catholic? A. Call upon the priest and give you the necessary instruction, telling you how to know the truth, how to live up to it.

Q. What was the name of the Pope, and in what year did he seat? A. The word Pope is the word, "Papa," taken from the first man to receive the title, probably Adam, the first man, and there are many popes or "papas" to-night. However, taking the designation of the visible head of the first was Peter, who was so called by Christ; and when Christ world Peter became the visible head of His Church. He went to Rome A. D. 43.

Q. What is a Free-thinker? A. One who pretends to be a philosopher, and it is a misnomer to call him a free-thinker. The object of intellect is truth; and when presented to the intellect, or box of man, recognizes it, and designates the visible head of the first was Peter, who was so called by Christ; and when Christ world Peter became the visible head of His Church. He went to Rome A. D. 43.

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NON-CATHOLIC MISSIONS IN NEW HAMPSHIRE.

Sacred Heart Review.

Father Sutton's lectures at the Church of the Immaculate Conception, Portsmouth, N. H., attracted wide attention and created a feeling. An Adventist preacher has come out with an announcement of a course of sermons in reply, but if those who hear him are led to inquire further, the results may be better even than were expected.

This was the first mission of the kind ever known to New Hampshire's coast. On the first night there was an attendance of 300 inquirers. The second night not less than 600, and on some of the subsequent evenings there were as many as 800 of them in the Church. The daily newspapers of the city gave much space to the lectures, and those who were not able to attend read these accounts with much interest. In fact, an observant reporter who has occasion to make many of the leading citizens of Portsmouth each day says that Portsmouth's chief topic of conversation during the week was these lectures and the question box.

The answers of Father Sutton to the questions about "Predestination," a "Free Thinker," and the Pope, were universally spoken of with great favor and commendation. The questions were generally of a serious turn, showing a desire to know the truth. Subjoined we give a few to show the direction in which the non-Catholic mind is groping.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Q. Why do Catholics think that Mary has more power than Christ?

A. We do not think so. All her power comes from Christ. We love and reverence her just because is the Mother of Christ. And our love for her, therefore, is all on His account.

Q. Why are the Irish people so ignorant?

A. The last United States census gives natives-born illiterates at near two millions, and foreign-born illiterates at a little over half a million. This does not show that the Irish are the ignorant ones. Are not your own Irish neighbors as bright and intelligent as other people?

Q. How can I become a Catholic?

A. Call upon the priest and he will give you the necessary instructions, telling you how to know the truth and how to live up to it.

Q. What was the name of the first Pope, and in what year did he take his office?

A. The word Pope is the "baby" word, "Papa," taken from the Greek. The first man to receive the title was probably Adam, the first father, and there are many popes or "papas" here to-night. However, taking the word to designate the visible head of the Church, the first was Peter, who was appointed by Christ; and when Christ left this world Peter became the visible head of His Church. He went to Rome about A. D. 43.

Q. What is a Freethinker?

A. One who pretends to think as he pleases. And it is a misnomer. The intellect is not free. It is not free until the intellect is truth. It is not free until the intellect recognizes it. When data are given to the mind it must act necessarily if it act at all. Thus, if I say "All men are white"—"John is a man"—my mind must say "John is white." The very nature of our minds is such; hence it becomes an authority in these matters. What comes then of liberty (you say) if there is no free thought? The intellect is not the seat of liberty; those who admit the existence of liberty place it in the WILL. Liberty consists in the capacity of the soul to WILL or NOT TO WILL. Political liberty consists in the right of each one to follow the bent of his WILL, so long as he does not trench upon the right of others.

Q. Would a person who has fallen be received in the Catholic Church?

A. I take the word fallen to mean here one who has departed from that life of goodness so pleasing to God. Such a sinful soul returns with a deep sorrow for its wickedness, and the Church would receive her with open arms. How did Christ act? Did He not receive poor sinners with loving condescension? Such is OUR office,—to raise the fallen, to console the afflicted. Our work is that of Christ, who said: "I have come to call all sinners to repentance."

B. Why does God, who knows all things, past, present and future, cause to exist persons who, He knows, will lead such a life as must condemn them to hell?

A. To God all things are present—the past is nothing past or future. It is easier to raise a difficulty oftentimes than to understand its solution. Our limited mind can not fathom all the mysteries in God. Father Lambert thought, Bradford confesses in his journal, that when the day came the majority of the people found it "against their conscience" to work and so went to play, in English fashion with pitch-bar and ball. Later the governor appeared, confiscated their apparatus and told them they must do so religiously. After that period, it is said, Christmas was not "kept openly." Though Bradford acted on his own motion, it is a noticeable fact that Plymouth colony did not follow the example of the Colony of Massachusetts in legislating against Christmas. The men of the Bay, however, who were severely Puritanical, legislated against any and all observances of Christmas-tide, which they regarded as a sore evil. It is not possible now to point out the exact time when they commenced war against the Natives. The Massachusetts laws were first printed in 1648, but no copy of this volume remains, so far as known to the writer, who the second edition of 1660, is one of a large price, being a command of a large price, being a command of a large price, being a command of a large price.

To speak of the right of the Supreme Being I simply come down to a low plane of thought, for, strictly speaking, the Supreme Being has no rights whatever, because He is THE RIGHT, the source, origin and measure of all rights. When we talk of rights we refer to relations between existences. But the Supreme Being is neither an existence nor a creature. He is simply the Being, necessary, eternal, infinite, the source of thought and of things. Having no equal and being entirely unique, He bears no relation to anything except that of cause, and things that depend bear no relation to Him except that of dependence.

To talk about His rights is to make the finite

intellect, groping, as it is, in darkness, doubt and uncertainty, the measure of no infinite intellect, the source of existence, certainty and truth. A moment's reflection will show us how absurd this is.

"Existence being a good thing, God has the right to create existences. Intelligence being good, He has the right to create intelligences. Liberty being good, He can give liberty to intelligent existences. Then to create intelligent free existences is good. This settles the question of right. It is just here that comes in the difficulty of your question. How can the Supreme Being create intelligent, free existences when He knows that some of them will abuse their liberty and deliberately and with malice aforethought place causes that of their very nature lead to eternal painful consequences to the place of those causes? The answer is very simple. It is this. Existence is a real good. Liberty is a real good. But existence and liberty make evil a possible, a more possible; therefore the Supreme Being has a right to do a real good, even though from that real good a possible evil might follow. This possible evil happened. You will say, but why did God permit it to happen? I reply that in giving His intelligent creatures liberty He had to include the possibility of its happening. He had to deny His intelligent creatures liberty or give it to them with the possibility of their abusing it. He elected to give it to them and hold them responsible for its abuse. But why create a man that He knew would abuse it? Because the existence of that man is in itself a good, and will continue for eternity to be a good, even though the man by his own act should make it miserable in reference to himself. His being is God's; his mode of future existence is his own."

In taking up the next question, Father Sutton said that, notwithstanding its length and form, he would read it in full, as had been requested. It is a choice bit of literature:

A parent asked a priest his to bless, who forthwith charged.

He must first confess.

"Well," said the boy,

"Suppose, sir, I am willing:

"What is your charge?"

"To you it is a shilling."

"Must all men pay and all men make confession?"

"Yes, every man of Catholic profession."

"Then when do you confess to?"

"Why, the dean."

"And does he charge you?"

"Yes, a whole thirteen."

"Then, do the deans confess?"

"Yes; sure they do."

"Confess to Bishops, and that smartly, too."

"Do Bishops, sir, confess? If so, to whom?"

"Why, they confess and pay the Church of Rome."

"Well," quoth the boy, "all this is mighty odd—"

"And does the Pope confess?" "Oh, yes, to God."

"And does God charge the Pope?"

"No," quoth the priest, "God charges nothing."

"Oh, then God is best."

"God then is able to forgive, and always willing:

"To God I will confess, and save my shilling."

"I will not take up your time in answering this charge," said Father Sutton, in an amused but somewhat tired manner, "for it can be answered by any Catholic child in the city of Portsmouth. Any one of them, no matter how limited his knowledge concerning the Church, will tell you that no charge whatever is made to have sins forgiven."

The reverend missionary companion turned to an altar boy and said: "Com, little man, did you ever pay to have your sins forgiven?"

The little fellow—a bright boy—stood up and in a clear voice replied: "No, Father."

"Did you ever hear of a priest talking anybody to pay in confession?"

"No, Father, never."

"To whom does the Pope go to confession?"

"To any priest."

"Good, my little man; that is right."

Then, turning to the congregation, Father Sutton said: "You have the answer, brethren, from this child."

This incident created a sensation, and no doubt left a deep impression on those present. On the last night of the lectures a large audience was present, notwithstanding the gale and a down-pour of rain. The Rev. P. J. Finnegan, P. R., thanked the non-Catholics of Portsmouth for their attendance, and extended a cordial invitation to each and all to come to the church at any time. Unquestionably, great good has been done here.

CHRISTMAS-TIDE A SORE EVIL.

From "Catholic World Long Ago," by Dr. B. R. Dooley, in "The Catholic Record."

At Plymouth, on Christmas Day, 1622, there were two parties in the colony, separated in their religious thought. Bradford confesses in his journal, that when the day came the majority of the people found it "against their conscience" to work and so went to play, in English fashion with pitch-bar and ball. Later the governor appeared, confiscated their apparatus and told them they must do so religiously. After that period, it is said, Christmas was not "kept openly." Though Bradford acted on his own motion, it is a noticeable fact that Plymouth colony did not follow the example of the Colony of Massachusetts in legislating against Christmas. The men of the Bay, however, who were severely Puritanical, legislated against any and all observances of Christmas-tide, which they regarded as a sore evil. It is not possible now to point out the exact time when they commenced war against the Natives. The Massachusetts laws were first printed in 1648, but no copy of this volume remains, so far as known to the writer, who the second edition of 1660, is one of a large price, being a command of a large price, being a command of a large price.

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THE MESSAGE CHRISTMAS BRINGS TO ALL NATIONS.

By Cardinal Gibbons.

Today the whole Christian world prostrates itself in adoration around the crib of Bethlehem and rehearses in accents of love a history which precludes all time and will endure throughout eternity. As if by an instinct of our higher, spiritual nature, here well up from the depths of our hearts emotions which challenge the power of human expression. We seem to be lifted out of the sphere of natural endeavor to put on a new life and to stretch forward in desire to a blessedness which, though not palpable, is eminently real.

If asked to explain the rapturous influence which controls us we have no other words than the evangel of joy which the angel gave unto earth: "For this day is born unto you a Saviour who is Christ the Lord." We rejoice in anticipation of a new outpouring of God's blessing light, for the scope of the divine infant's mission is "to enlighten them who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death; to direct our feet into the way of peace." He is in our midst to flood the world with the light of God's truth; to restore to us our lost birthright of joy; to set the discordant will of humanity to new harmonies; to attain to the unity of heavenly hope hearts which for ages had been swept by the wild notes of despair.

The message of Christmas morning is as universal as it is personal and present. It is addressed to each man; it is addressed to all men. It is destined to shape private conduct and to impress and mould the life of society. Divine significance. While holding out a promise of the greater things which shall be revealed in us hereafter it is not without action in time and influence upon the world around us.

Indeed we live and move and have our being in the midst of a civilization which is the legitimate offspring of the religion of Christ.

The blessings resulting from our Christian civilization are poured out so regularly and so abundantly on the intellectual, moral and social world, like the sunlight and the air of heaven and the fruits of the earth, that they have ceased to excite any surprise except to those who visit lands where the religion of Christ is little known. In order to realize adequately our favored situation we should transport ourselves in spirit to ante-Christian times and contrast the condition of the pagan world with our own.

The religion of Christ imparts to us not only a sublime conception of God, but also a rational idea of man and of his relation to his Creator. Before the coming of Christ man was a riddle and a mystery to himself. He knew not whence he came nor whither he was going. He was groping in the dark. All he knew for certain was that he was passing through a brief phase of existence.

The past and the future were enveloped in a mist which the light of philosophy was unable to penetrate. Our Redeemer has dispelled the cloud and enlightened us regarding our origin and destiny and the means of attaining it. He has rescued man from the frightful labyrinth of error in which paganism had involved him.

The gospel of Christ, first heralded by angels, has brought not only light to the intellect but also comfort to the heart. It has given us "that peace of God which surpasseth all understanding;" the peace which springs from the conscious possession of the truth. It has taught us how to enjoy that peace which constitutes true happiness—peace which is attainable in this life— as far as it is attainable by the observance of the commandments; peace with our neighbor the exercise of justice and charity toward him; and peace with ourselves by repressing our inordinate appetites and by keeping our passions subject to the law of reason and our reason illumined and controlled by the law of God.

The message of Christmas day is intended for all men, for all times, for all conditions of existence. Christ alone of all religious Founders has the courage to say to His disciples: "Go, teach all nations." Preach the Gospel to every creature. You shall find witnesses to me in Judea and Samaria and thence to me in all the world.

Do not be restrained in your mission by national or state lines. Let My Gospel be as free and universal as the air of heaven. "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof." All mankind are the children of My Father and My brethren. I embrace all in My charity. Let the whole human race be one people, and the world be the theatre of your labors.

These, then, are in broad outline some of the grand truths and consoling experiences which "the glad tidings of great joy" reveal in their unfolding. Only by stern adherence to the principles herein contained can individuals and nations hope to secure that peace and order which is the fruit of the will of God established by God, and disorder is the synonym for sin and strife.

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THE TRUTH ABOUT THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

BY A PROTESTANT THEOLOGIAN.

CLXVIII.

The Champion gives, as a distinctive doctrine of Protestantism. (6) The doctrines of the Bible are of divine origin.

And do not Roman Catholics, one and all, hold and teach, that the doctrines of the Bible are of divine origin? Does not a Catholic who denies it place himself by that very fact outside the Church? To be sure, there is practically no limit to the degree of effrontery of which a large proportion of the ministers and members of this denomination are capable, where the Catholic Church is concerned.

Unhappily it is the baser part which predominates in guiding the choices of the men who shall be sent out into the world to preach the Gospel.

The Bible ought to be examined in the vernacular language of each people.

It has particularly said that Protestantism lays particular emphasis on the vernacular reading of the Bible, they would have been within their right.

Rome teaches that the Bible ought not to be read in the vernacular. This is a falsehood. The prohibition of vernacular Bible-reading once made was, as we have seen, strictly local and temporary, and when the occasion of enacting it had disappeared, the prohibition was allowed to lapse.

The German Catholics before the Reformation had some fifteen or twenty vernacular editions at their command. The Spanish Church was on the eve of publishing a vernacular Bible when she very wisely allowed herself to be frightened out of it by the Protestant controversies, and when the dread of these was slowly allayed, a Spanish Bible was published, with the sanction of the Inquisition, about 1790.

How much it has been read, I do not know, but it has been published and authorized. A few Spaniards in Isabella the Second's reign were imprisoned, not for reading the vernacular Bible, but for virtually proclaiming themselves Protestants by reading the Protestant version. So I understand the case. If I misunderstand it, I am ready to be corrected.

Of course the profession of Protestantism by a native was then punishable in Spain, as that of Catholicism had been in Sweden as late as 1844.

In Italy I understand the Malini case to have been the same. At all events, we know that in Italy the reading of the vernacular Scriptures in the Catholic version has been recommended by the Pope, who, Leo XIII. has now attached it, if regularly continued, twelve Plenary Indulgences for every year. Within the limits of our own tongue I need not repeat my references to Cardinal Vaughan, to Cardinal Gibbons, and to many other eminent priests.

It is therefore not a distinguishing doctrine of Protestantism that the Bible is to be read in the vernacular.

Perhaps, however, the editors will insist on the word "cautiously," examined." Rome, they might say, has professed to approve—sincerely and zeal in this approval many would refuse to allow—that the Bible should be read in the vernacular. By this she simply means that it may be read to awaken the pious sensibilities, but by no means for any examination into its meaning.

But how is it to be read? The pious sensibilities unless its meaning is known? Otherwise it might as well be read in Arabic, as the Koran is, by those who know nothing of Arabic but the letters. Of course the papal commendation of translations is meant of intelligible translations.

I fully concur with the emphasis lately laid in England by an eminent monastic priest on the Protestant mind by the familiar reading of the Bible. Yet we must own that there are certain abatements to be made. If any one will say that there are not certain parts of the Old Testament which it is not expedient for the young to read I can only say that his native instincts are overborne by an ecclesiastical superstition. Apart from this, there are passages not a few in the common version of the Old Testament which have no meaning at all, which as they stand are nothing but a roll of euphonious sound. Then there are the genealogies of the Paralipomena, or Chronicles, which can not be spared as a framework of the essential parts, but which intrinsically have little more significance than the names of a Welsh pedigree. Yet I do not hesitate to say that a very large proportion of the uneducated parts of the Bible are unintelligible or intrinsically uninteresting to every Christian. How do I stand in relation to it? What will my fate when called upon to give an account? Am I ready and glad to welcome Jesus Christ? These solemn questions can only be answered after looking into ourselves, and finding out what we have been and what we are. The condition of our souls will be the

advantageous to the soul. Yet such readings are not profitable as communicating new truths of God, or as freshening the consciousness of old. They are availing precisely as some of those devotional practices among Catholics are at which Protestants are wont to gibe as unspiritual and mechanical.

I should like to ask these zealous "explorers" of the Bible which is the more for the soul's growth in the Divine life, to be busily busy in making out secondary obscurities in the Bible, or in bathing the spirit in the atmosphere of the Psalms, or the sublime flights of Isaiah, or the Eighth of Proverbs, or the whole New Testament. It is on these that the wings of the spirit rise highest. These ought they to do, and assuredly not to leave any way of God's working among men who come upon us from a sudden examination of some hitherto hardly noted point of history, or of apostolic intimation. Thus the archaeological works of Professor Ramsay are not only highly informing, but spiritually most advantageous to those that can follow their inquiries. They well deserve the Pope's gold medal.

Yet the notion of "exploration" as the chief use of the Bible betrays an uneasy want of restfulness in the greater truth already possessed, while hunting for scraps of new truth, or rather implies, for the means of manipulating the sacred text in proof of predetermined conclusions. The controversial spirit in Bible-reading is a great temptation to the wisest and best. To the mass of Christians it is utterly destructive of the life of God in the soul. That large controversial use of the Scriptures into which Bellarmine was compelled by his protracted debates with the Protestants would have been very deleterious to his spiritual health, had it not been for that deep devotion to the Redeemer in which Principal Fairbairn, the distinguished Congregationalist, regards him as having been so eminent.

What the editors of the Champion and Protestants generally, really mean by their zealous praises of "exploration of the Bible," may perhaps deserve a little longer inquiry than we can make at the end of this article.

CHARLES C. STARBUCK.

Andover, Mass.

FIVE-MINUTES SERMON.

Fourth Sunday in Advent.

THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST.

One of the lessons taught by history is that the coming of every great and important event is announced in some way before it actually happens. The announcement may be secret or public, known to a few or to many, according as the event it heralds is of great or little importance, but known it must be to all who are in a position to obtain the information. The Incarnation, or Birth of Christ, was an event too significant and far-reaching in its consequences to mankind to be launched into the world without a proclamation of its advent equal to its dignity and character.

Accordingly we find that mankind was prepared by a long series of instruction for its worthy reception. This instruction began with our first parents after the Fall. It was continued by prophet after prophet, whose utterances grew fuller and clearer as the time for its fulfillment drew near. It was made the central feature of the Jewish religion, which gave to their worship its meaning and efficacy. It was the support and consolation of the world, groaning under the weight of sin and misery. In a word, it was expected both by Jew and Gentile, and hailed by both as the best evidence that God had not forsaken His creatures. We no longer look forward to the Incarnation, for we believe that the Redeemer has come; but instead Holy Church bids us, lothly forward to His second coming, when He will appear not as Redeemer but as Judge of the living and the dead. The second advent may be regarded as the complement of the first. When Christ was born in Bethlehem, His purpose was not only to satisfy God's justice by His suffering and death, but also to show to be the exemplar of the sons of God. He was to show us how to love God, how to conquer our passions and appetites, how to practise humility. His moral perfection was to be the standard to which we should strive to attain. This being so, we can easily understand that a time will come when He will want to examine the copies, to see how they resemble the original. That time is called the Last or General Judgment; to distinguish it from the first or private judgment, that is passed on every soul immediately after death, and which determines its destiny for ever. Then He will appear in power and dazzling glory, attended by the holy angels, and will summon all men to His awful tribunal. Here, in the presence of that vast assembly will be exposed the thoughts, words, actions, and desires of each individual, and the justice of God will be visible, as it is seldom seen in this life, in rewarding the good and punishing the wicked with an unerring hand.

Now, our blessed Lord has warned us that the Day of Judgment will stand on us suddenly, when we least expect it. The only hint given will be the blast of the angel's trumpet, telling us of the arrival of the glorious Judge. But though we may not know the hour and moment, we may get gather some idea as to about the time of His appearing from the many signs and wonders that are to be His precursors. Some of these signs can be observed even now by those who keep their eyes open. Who is able to tell how far off that day is? The General Judgment ought to suggest several questions of vital interest to every Christian. How do I stand in relation to it? What will my fate when called upon to give an account? Am I ready and glad to welcome Jesus Christ? These solemn questions can only be answered after looking into ourselves, and finding out what we have been and what we are. The condition of our souls will be the

measure of our confidence or despair. If we do not look forward to our Blessed Lord's second advent with the same joy and eagerness as the patriarchs and prophets did to the first, it is because there is something wrong in us. We should set that wrong right at once, for we know not how long the period of probation will last. The present is ours; over the future we have no control. We should pay heed to our Saviour's command: "Work while it is day, for the night cometh, when no man can work." And "Man goeth forth to his work until the evening." Let us then work out our salvation with fear and trembling while we have the day of life, for when the night of death overtakes us all the opportunities for doing that will be at an end.

IMITATION OF CHRIST.

The King's Highway of the Holy Cross.

Turn thyself upwards, or turn thyself downwards; turn thyself without or turn thyself within; everywhere thou shalt find the cross.

And everywhere thou must of necessity have patience, if thou desirest inward peace, and wouldst merit an eternal crown.

If thou carry the cross willingly, it will carry thee and bring thee to thy desired end; to wit, to that place where there will be an end to suffering, though here there will be no end.

If thou carry it unwillingly, thou makest it a burden to thee and loapest thyself the more; and nevertheless thou must bear it.

If thou fling away one cross, without doubt thou wilt find another, and perhaps a heavier.

Do not think to escape that which no mortal could ever avoid? What saint was there ever in the world without his cross and affliction?

Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself was not one hour of His life without suffering; thus it behooved, saith he, Christ, to suffer, and to rise again from the dead the third day. (Luke xxiv, 16.)

IRISH HOLLY.

December, like November, is gay with berries. The gold and crimson and russet of autumn may only be seen in dry woodland corners where the fallen leaves have drifted, but the red of the berry lights the hedge rows cheerily.

The biggest and bonniest of these winter bird-fruits is that of the holly tree. It is in its way as beautiful as the pinky petals it bore in early summer; it is certainly more enduring. Its hue is of the brightest and the happiest, but its color is in its neighborhood dull and dingy in comparison. Its most formidable rival in the berry of the holly.

This heartening evergreen, with its sacred associations, is beautiful with a beauty that lasts.

To Cyril and Maurice the holly is, by excellence, the Christmas tree. The younger boy has often tried to tell me exactly why he regards it as the Tree of Jesse, but his explanations have never been adequately expressed. In some nook of his mind there is an idea for which he has not yet found a verbal equivalent. But it is clear that he has considered the hollies of the garden how they grow; that they are vigorous and enduring, living perennially and little affected by summer heat and drought, or by the frosts and snows of winter; that they are beautiful with the beauty of strength and freshness, and glowing color, and, finally, that they have the closest possible association with

Such music (as 'tis said) Before was never made, But woe of old the sons of morning sung. Happy and blessed are they who constantly meet the Christ-child upon the Golden Stair!

As one contemplates the holly bush under the low lights of December, there is one of its properties that may be easily overlooked. I mean its prickliness. We discover this when, during the process of Christmas decoration, we begin to handle it. There are sermons in hollies as well as in stones.—The Irish Rosary.

A Big Quarter's Worth is always found in a bottle of Fieba's Nerve Tonic, the best household remedy known. It cures rheumatism, neuralgia, toothache, headache, sciatica, in fact is good for everything. His moral perfection was to be the standard to which we should strive to attain. This being so, we can easily understand that a time will come when He will want to examine the copies, to see how they resemble the original. That time is called the Last or General Judgment; to distinguish it from the first or private judgment, that is passed on every soul immediately after death, and which determines its destiny for ever. Then He will appear in power and dazzling glory, attended by the holy angels, and will summon all men to His awful tribunal. Here, in the presence of that vast assembly will be exposed the thoughts, words, actions, and desires of each individual, and the justice of God will be visible, as it is seldom seen in this life, in rewarding the good and punishing the wicked with an unerring hand.

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