

# The Catholic Journal.

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## AROUND THE GLOBE.

### What the Church is Doing in this and Other Continents.

There is a movement on foot in Bohemia to erect a monument to the memory of miscreant John Huss.

Archbishop Gross, of Oregon, ordered a triduum in his province for the stay of "la grippe."

Rev. P. J. Gleason, rector of St. Francis Xavier's church, Pendleton, Oregon, is dead, aged 54 years.

A Greek Catholic college has been founded at Athens. The Holy Father himself provided the necessary funds.

Rev. Father Brophy, rector of the Church of the Sacred Heart, West Fifty-first street, New York city, is dead. He was Archbishop Corrigan's representative at the Centennial last fall.

Miss Pringle, the matron of St. Thomas Hospital, London, was received into the Church last week. This is the third case this year of the matron of a London hospital becoming a Catholic.

The Pope now devotes the time between half-past five and ten at night for the ardent perusal of newspapers of all nations. He reads the Catholic papers with much care, and often praises the orthodoxy and loyalty of some editors.

The feast of St. Cecilia was celebrated this year in Rome with imposing ceremonies in the catacombs of St. Calista where her body was found. An interesting lecture on the Christian catacombs was given by the noted archaeologist, De Rossi.

Bishop Dwenger, of Fort Wayne, thinks too much attention is paid to the education of girls, as a rule, while the boys are comparatively neglected. He is of the opinion that more should be done for the boys, as upon them our future is based.

Rev. Maurice J. Dougherty, of Holy Cross church, New York city, is dead at the age of 39 years. He graduated from Manhattan College in 1872, and from St. Joseph's Seminary, Troy, in 1876. Pneumonia was the cause of death.

Mr. W. N. B. Vance Pookman, lately an organizing Secretary of the English Church Union, and the editor of the *Church Review*, one of the Ritualistic journals, has become a convert to Catholicism. He has received Confirmation at the hands of his Eminence the Cardinal-Archbishop.

Crispien is trying to arrange with the Cabinets of Berlin, Dresden and Munich to have the great German pilgrimage to Rome divided into sections, so as to avoid the impression that would be created by the presence at the same time in Rome of several thousand German Catholics.

Bishop Cotter, of Winona, was installed at St. Thomas cathedral on January 5th. Archbishop Ireland conducted the installation. Among the clergymen present were Bishops Stanley of Jamestown, McCullick, of Duluth, Archbishop Grace of St. Paul, and Mgr. O'Connell, president of the American College at Rome.

Bishop Wadhams, of Ogdensburg, has applied to Rome for a co-adjutor. This news will be received with sorrow by all the Catholics of his diocese, as eighteen years of the seventy-three of the Bishop's life have been spent among them. Bishop Wadhams has been forty years a priest, and was consecrated bishop May 5, 1872. Under his direction the diocese of Ogdensburg has made wonderful progress. Who the co-adjutor will be is not yet known, but may be Very Rev. Vincent Walsh.

## AGNOSTICISM.

### Spencer and Huxley Cleverly Refuted by Father FitzSimons, of Lima.

A pamphlet that is sure to be read and, if read, is certain to set the reader thinking, is the brochure recently issued, "A Refutation of Agnosticism and the Philosophy of the Unknown." It is from the pen of Rev. S. FitzSimons, pastor of St. Rose's church, Lima, and is not a ponderous or heavy volume, containing but 77 pages, and a wide margin is left for interlineation and annotation, should its peruser so desire. More persons will be apt to examine its contents, for, in this age, "brevity is very good," and "wordy fabrics," however valuable they be, receive but scant notice from the major portion of mankind. Newspaper men, especially, appreciate this fact; they know the people demand all the news they can get, compressed into the least possible space. Therefore it seems to us Father FitzSimons has scored one valuable point before issuing his book, viz: placing it in such shape that, if a man begins it, he will be apt to read it through.

The pamphlet was written as a sequel to a discussion waged on the other side of the Atlantic in the *Nineteenth Century* between Professor Huxley, champion of Agnosticism, and Professor Wace, defender of Christianity. The latter gentleman made a good defense, but that was all. Father FitzSimons carries the war into the enemy's camp. As Agnosticism consists merely of denials, for which there must be a reason as well as for affirmation, he proposes to examine those reasons and refute them. In opening, he says truly "Agnosticism is anything but an unchangeable quantity and every day it is becoming more and more an unsteady factor, with a tendency to branch off into as many agnostic sects as there are agnostic individuals." He then proceeds to analyze the agnosticism of Messrs. Liang, Huxley and Spencer. The first named is dismissed almost summarily, because when he wrote, at Mr. Gladstone's request, a short summary of the negative creed, Prof. Huxley rejected it *in toto* and Mr. Liang had not sufficient courage to defend it. Professor Huxley, the reverend author admits, cannot be so easily set aside, as he is the avowed champion of agnosticism, proclaims himself supreme dictator, claims credit for its origin and baptism, and sets himself up as its sponsor. But Father FitzSimons laments that Huxley's definition is so hopelessly inexact and so elastic as to mean very much or very little.

"Agnosticism," he tells us in his condemnation of Mr. Liang, "is not a creed, but a method, the essence of which lies in the rigorous application of a single principle. Positively the principle may be expressed: In matters of intellect follow your reason as far as it will take you without regard to any other consideration, and negatively in matters of fact intellect, do not contend that conclusions are certain which are not demonstrated or demonstrable. That I take to be the agnostic faith which, if a man keep whole and undefiled, he shall not be ashamed to look the universe in the face whatever the future may have in store for him." In explanation he adds: "The results of the working out of the agnostic principle will vary according to individual knowledge and capacity, and according to the general condition of science. The only negative fixed points will be those negations which flow from the demonstrable limitations of our faculties."

Father FitzSimons points out these positive and negative expressions of what Huxley is pleased to denominate "the agnostic principle" taken in their broad sense, omitting the annexed explanations, are words worthy of agnostic or Christian. More recently Huxley says:

"This principle may be stated in various ways, but they all amount to this: that it is wrong for a man to say that he is certain of the objective truth of any proposition unless he can produce evidence which logically justifies that certainty. This is what agnosticism asserts, and, in my opinion, it is all that is essential to agnosticism."

This leads the refuter to ask "Is Mr. Huxley's view of agnosticism broadening as the years pass by? Or is it simply a broadening of his acquaintance with great principles? \* \* \* The principle that it is wrong to believe propositions as certain without satisfactory evidence, quite possibly may be a perfect novelty to the 'men of science,' as indeed the history of speculative science would seem to indicate \* \* \* but it is to be hoped that there is no other portion of the intelligent world on which the discovery is yet to dawn. Surely this principle is not a whit more agnostic than it is Gnostic, or Christian, or Jewish, or Turkish or heathen."

Father FitzSimons strikes the keynote of all agnosticism when he says: "The essence of all agnosticism consists in one common agnostic superstition, and to it all of them are reducible, viz., that Christianity is a deadly enemy to all falsehood, to false philosophy, as well as to false science. It has therefore been decided by common consent that the truths of Christianity are not the proper object of knowledge; that if a thing cannot be adequately known because it is beyond the reach of our faculties, that neither should it be believed, and that no amount of testimony should justify us in admitting it to a hearing. A further rule of action would seem to be that if a thing be not wholly within reach of our faculties, nothing will justify us in believing it, but, on the contrary, it is our duty to ignore and deny it, and treat it as pure fiction; and that consequently anti-Christian agnosticism is justified and sanctified in opposing Christianity, and is all the more deserving of merit if at a1 times and in all places it wages a ceaseless warfare against it."

The reverend writer next turns his attention to Herbert Spencer, whom he styles the author of agnosticism. "Mr. Huxley may have introduced the name, but Mr. Spencer created the thing." Mr. Spencer's definition of agnosticism is given in clearer and more precise terms than that of Mr. Huxley. It is: "The name agnosticism fitly expresses the confessed inability to know or conceive the nature of the power manifested through phenomena."

Father FitzSimons then dedicates the following delicate sarcasm to what he terms Spencer's "Reverential Motive."

"Mr. Spencer found man on far too intimate relations with his Creator. His heart was sorely grieved and his spirit groaned within him on beholding the sacrilegious familiarity with which men worshipped their Deity \* \* \* The pious revelled in impiety, and religion luxuriated in irreligion to a degree that aroused all the righteous indignation of Mr. Spencer's reverent nature. It must not, it shall not be. \* \* \* Deep must be added unto deep, and abyss linked to abyss to place between the finite and the daring impiety of man an endless chaos, the greatness of which shall awe and humble into quietude the

restless mind of man. The darkest clouds of deepest midnight must be interwoven, and told upon fold of mystery added until a curtain is drawn between man's reason and the Absolute so mysterious and awe-inspiring that even omnipotence cannot pierce it, and omnipresence be powerless to penetrate it. Not only the profaneness of insolent inquiry and prying curiosity must be shut out, but even the worship that bows in lowliest homage before the Sovereign Dominion must be told it is sacrilege, and the prayerful words that would bless and praise the sovereign majesty must be accounted either meaningless mummerly or highest blasphemy."

CONCLUDED NEXT WEEK.

### In the Wilds of Africa.

Where have the Catholic missionaries not penetrated? In the wilds and jungles of India, into the empire of the almond-eyed Celestial, the leaders in discovering America, and lastly into the unexplored and unknown recesses of Central Africa, brave and heroic soldiers of the cross have borne the truth that saves men's souls. Wissman's last dispatches mention a Pere Schynse, a Catholic missionary, as one of the whites now with Stanley, Emin and party. An exchange gives the following history of his life:

"This priest is a Rhinelander, a native of Wallhausen, near Kreuznach, and a student of Treves and Bonn. Ordained in 1880, he joined the Algerian missionaries in 1882, and in 1885 was sent out with a missionary expedition to the Upper Congo, to determine suitable sites for mission stations. He founded one among the Bayanzi, at Bangana, at the mouth of the Kassai river, and in 1887 returned to Algiers. In his recently published book, 'Two Years on the Congo,' he describes how, on March 24, 1887, he met Stanley together with Tippu Tib, at Matadi on the Lower Congo, when Stanley was starting up stream for the Aruwimi and Lake Albert Nyanza. On July 17, 1888, Father Schynse started once more for Zanibar, and thence, via Saadani, after a journey of two and a half months, reached the station of Kipalapala, near Tabora, for which he was destined. The threatening attitude of the fanatic Arabs of Tabora, however, made it prudent for the mission to be withdrawn, and Father Schynse, with numerous negro children who were being educated in the station, retired by Tjui and Usukuma in order to reach the mission of Ukumbi in the south of Victoria Nyanza. It would seem that a curious fate thus led him to again meet Stanley, this time in East Africa, at Usukuma; and he has traveled under the protection of the great explorer to Mpwapwa. Probably the roads to the Nyanza are blocked by hostile forces."

### Voltaire's Death.

There has been some discussion lately as to whether Voltaire, the notorious French infidel, died outside the pale of the Church. According to the *Catholic Advance*, the illustrious Mgr. de Segur writes as follows on the subject:

"On this occasion his repentance disappeared with the danger. A few weeks afterwards, he had a relapse, and sent for a priest, once more; but, surrounded by infidels, who did not heed his cries, and who prevented the pastor of St. Sulpice from coming to his side, the atheist died on the 30th of May in a state of the most frightful rage and despair. Fury took possession of his soul, and God alone knows the rest."

Voltaire was denied Christian burial. If he had died in peace with the Church, his body would have been allowed to rest in consecrated ground.

## DIOCESAN NEWS.

### What is Going on in the Parishes outside Rochester.

Miss Julia Nelligan, of Phelps, is visiting friends in Rochester.

Miss Lizzie FitzGerald, of Mumford, visited LeRoy last week.

Miss Kate Murnan, of BeRoy, is the guest of friends at Mumford.

The friends of Rev. D. Curran, of Churchville, will be pleased to learn that he is recovering from his severe attack of pneumonia.

Miss Emma A. Smith, of Seneca Falls, who has been visiting friends in Rome, has returned home, accompanied by her cousin, Miss Kate Uper.

The funeral of Charles Englert was held at St. Columba's church, Caledonia, at 10 a. m. on Thursday. The interment was at Scottsville cemetery.

James Quinn, who has filled the position of boss over section 12 of the Auburn branch of the Central road, has resigned. Wm. Nolan, of Camillus, has been promoted to the vacancy.

Miss Maggie Slattery, of Lima, died last week at the age of 21 years, after a lingering illness of consumption. The funeral was held from St. Rose's church on Sunday morning.

A bazar and festival will soon be held at Trescott Hall by St. Michael's society, Livonia, under the management of Rev. Father Hendrick. A handsome gold watch, now on exhibition at J. D. Howell's, will be drawn.

Mrs. Smith, of Seneca Falls, wife of ex-trustee P. H. Smith, died suddenly on Tuesday. She rose at her usual hour and while sitting by the stove, complained of feeling ill. She went back to bed and before medical aid arrived had expired. She was 42 years of age.

The fair recently held by the Catholic society of St. Vincent's church at Churchville was a grand success. The total amount realized was about \$1,000. One of the principal features was a contest for a gold watch between six young ladies, resulting as follows: Miss Dorey, \$162.67; Miss Weldon, \$112.90; Miss Brady, \$80.03; Miss McGovern, \$59.18; Miss Keenan, \$36.90; Miss Cunningham, \$10.70. Miss Dorey, the successful candidate, is a well-known Rochester young lady.

Edward O'Connor, formerly of Caledonia, has been elected a member of the Common Council of Omaha, Neb. The *World-Herald* of that city, in a recent issue, thus comments upon his election: "Edward O'Connor, of the Fifth, the youngest member, but one of the Council, has grown from a lad to a self-made man within the memory of recent settlers, and, like Ex-President Lee, began life as a hotel porter. He was popular and thrifty, and owns a saloon in the Fifth ward in which he is about as much of a stranger as any man. He is the third democrat among the hold-over members and is chairman of the committee on streets and alleys." Mr. O'Connor was well known in this vicinity.

### Waterloo.

Charles Cullen, son of Prof. A. B. Cullen, of this place, is in charge of Hoag's drug store at Seneca Falls.

C. J. Ryan, of the firm of Ryan & McDonald, was in town Saturday and left for the metropolis in the evening.

P. J. Tracy, an employee of Ryan & McDonald, had the misfortune to have a hot steel chip from his lathe strike him in the right eye one day last week, nearly causing the loss of that member. He is experiencing great pain, it having come in contact with the corner of the eye. There is hope of yet saving it, but