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God in the Constitution.

Bishop Spaulding's Reply to Colonel Ingersoll.

In the April number of the *Arena*, Rt. Rev. John L. Spaulding, has an able answer to Col. Ingersoll on "God in the Constitution." The bishop starts out by saying that the founders of the Colonies from which the United States have sprung were deeply religious, and this was the chief motive that impelled them toward the New World. When the War of Independence broke out, the descendants of the original settlers were still believers in Christ. To represent them, as has Colonel Ingersoll, as skeptical, would be a perversion of history. When they declared that "All governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed," they certainly did not believe they were renouncing the Deity. For them the providence of man was but a phase of the providence of God. Their world view did not permit them to think that man makes the sun shine, the rain fall, the wind blow; gives to earth its double motion, and drives the innumerable stars like a flock of birds through the limitless expanse of the heavens. In affirming this truth our fathers could have had no thought of denying God, since they held that from Him man derives his nature, and therefore his political rights. For them, as for the American people today, all that we are, and all that we can hope to be, comes from the infinite Being in whom we live and move and have our being. All this was the faith of the framers of the constitution. They were practical men, facing almost insuperable difficulties. In the disrupted state of affairs, it seemed almost impossible to frame a constitution that would be ratified by all the states. So they, so far as possible, avoided irritating subjects, and set themselves to work "to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defence, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty." It was prudence, then, and not skepticism, which induced them to leave the question of religion to the several States, and which led to the first constitutional amendment taking from Congress the power to make laws "respecting the establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." This amendment was made not for the destruction, but for the protection of religion, by men who believed that religion, which alone gives to the moral character the glow of enthusiasm and the strength of abiding convictions, is the surest safeguard of free and healthful public life. Had our fathers been skeptics or anti-theists, they would not have required the president and vice-president, the senators and all representatives in Congress, and all executive and judicial officers of the United States, to call God to witness that they intend to perform their duties under the Constitution like honest men and loyal citizens. The causes which would have made it unwise to introduce any religious controversy into the Constitutional Convention, have long since ceased to exist. We have become a united people; the States have coalesced into the nation; our political and religious differences are of a prolific and emulative nature. If there are still reasons why express recognition of God's sovereignty and providence should not form part of the organic law of the land, they are certainly not those by which the minds of the authors of the Constitution were swayed in omitting to do this. Colonel Ingersoll, however, raises objections to the recognition of God in the Constitution

which he deems insuperable, and I proceed to examine them. "Intelligent people," he says, "know that no one knows whether there is a God or not." This is a radical assertion. To know that no one knows whether or not God is, one should have a thorough, comprehensive, and critical knowledge of the development and history of philosophic thought from Socrates to Kant and Mr. Herbert Spencer, and I venture to think there are not a dozen intelligent Americans who are willing to claim that they possess such knowledge. Nearly all intelligent men, in every age, including our own, have believed in God, and have held that they had rational grounds for such faith. What new information, what deep insight, what access of mental strength have the intelligent people of Colonel Ingersoll gained, that they know that no man knows whether God is? Has any argument for God's existence, however it may have been modified, been invalidated or weakened even by the revelations of science? * * No believer, it is needless to say, claims that we have an adequate knowledge of God, for this would be a denial of the necessity of faith. He alone can grasp His own infinite perfection, and we look to Him as to the sun with eyes blinded with the too great light. But is not all knowledge partial ignorance? So long as we walk contented through the world of fact and appearance our path is smooth and our progress secure; but when we attempt to look beneath and ask ourselves what anything is apart from its sensible presentation, we sink into boundless regions, where intellectual sight grows dim. The mind is superior to whatever it comprehends, and hence the infinite Adorable must forever clothe Himself in mystery. But our knowledge of the truth of science is not more certain or more clear than our knowledge of God's being. We know that matter is, but what it is we can only conjecture. It can be known by us only in terms of mind, and hence our knowledge of the soul is more intimate and more immediate than our knowledge of corporeal substance.

It is difficult to answer the arguments of the idealists, but our confidence in the objective reality of the external world remains unshaken. The determinist has weighty considerations to show that freedom is impossible, but all the same we remain conscious of our freedom; the atheist and agnostic advance with confidence to prove there is no God, or that man cannot know there is; but the human soul, in the midst of a transitory and shadowy world, cleaves to the Eternal, the source of life and love and hope. Americans believe in God, believe they know He is, and to assure them, as Colonel Ingersoll does, that such faith is evidence of lack of intelligence, will, I imagine, leave the fact unchanged.

But, if we are, as a nation, to recognize there is a God, what God, asks Colonel Ingersoll, shall we choose: the God of the Catholics, of the Presbyterians, of the Methodists, or the Baptists? This objection is childish, and it is enough to answer, that whatever doctrinal differences on other points may exist among them, Christians and Jews acknowledge one and the same God, as Republicans and Democrats have the same country, as men of science have for the object of their investigation one and the same nature, however various and contradictory even their views and conclusions may be.

TO BE CONTINUED.

The Pope wore a shamrock on St. Patrick's day, the present of Prior

AROUND THE GLOBE.

What the Church is Doing in this and Other Continents.

About 2,300 men made the mission, closing March 3d, at Lawrence, Mass. April 2nd, Father Valtman, of Canal Fulton, Ohio, celebrated his silver jubilee.

Mgr. Bohoni, the famous African missionary, is about to establish a mission at Asmara, Abyssinia.

The Centre Party (Catholic) of the German Reichstag has grown from 58 members in 1871 to 107 in 1890.

March 28th, Very Rev. Nicholas Cantwell, vicar-general of the archdiocese of Philadelphia, was invested with the robes of a monsignor.

The Holy Father has sent his Apostolic Benediction to the committee of arrangements and all who aid in any way in carrying out the coming centenary of the great Father Mathew.

The enormous total of 11,800 people made the recent mission given at St. Joseph's church, Lowell, Mass, for French Catholics, by the Oblate Fathers. There are but 16,000 Catholics in the parish.

A young millionaire, J. M. O'Donoghue, died recently in San Francisco. He left by will over two million dollars to Catholic charities. A Mr. Johnson, lately deceased there, left two-thirds of one hundred thousand dollars to Catholic institutions, in which all creeds and classes are received when in distress.

M. Alphonse Dautler, the learned French author, best known for his admirable work on the "Benedictine Monasteries of Italy," in his work entitled "L'Italie, Etude Historique," Vol. I, writes: "The most ancient example of consecration (or royal anointing) is related in the history of the Irishman Columba, who at the call of God, about the year 573, ordained and consecrated Aiden, king of the northern Scots."

Since the commencement of the trial of the Bishop of Lincoln on account of his ritualistic practices, nearly a dozen clergymen of the Established Church have been received into the Catholic Church—some by Cardinal Manning himself, others at the Brompton oratory, and several in various parts of the country. Most of them are celibates and are already studying with a view to entering the ranks of the priesthood.

A Paris dispatch says the latest accession to the ranks of Chartreuse is Abbe Chaffaut, son of the senator of that name, and an eloquent and fashionable preacher. The community numbers sixty members, among whom are Baron Nicola, a Russian general who took a prominent part in the campaign in the Caucasus; Prince de Broglie; Comtes de Ruin and Sonas, officers in the French army. The prior was formerly a French general.

A petition of the Jews to the Holy Father at the present day seems piquant says the *London Tablet*. That the Pope, however, should step forward as the defender of the Jews is no new thing in history. There is a well-known Bull of Innocent III. for their protection from violence and injustice, in which that great Pontiff cites "our predecessors of happy memory, Calixtus, Eugenius, Alexander, Clement and Celestine" as having protected the Jews. A learned Jew, Avigdor, declared Gregory the Great to be the protector of the Israelites in every part of Christendom; and among other Popes who have, in one way or another, stepped forward to save them from oppression, are Alexanders II. and III., Gregory XI., and Clement V. and VI.

ST. JOSEPH'S HALL.

Dedication of the New Structure on Monday Last.

St. Joseph's parochial hall was blessed by Bishop McQuaid on Monday last at 4 p. m. The threatening weather of the morning having pacified, there was a large attendance. At 3:30 p. m. the clergy, choir and societies of the church met at the convent of the Most Holy Redeemer and marched to the church, the bells chiming forth a merry welcome. On entering the church the blessing of the Holy Spirit was invoked by singing *Veni Creator Spiritus*. The procession then moved to the new hall, around which they marched, the Bishop sprinkling holy water upon the walls and blessing them. Entering the hall, the ceremony was repeated in each room. Afterward the crucifix was erected, symbolizing the dedication of the building to the propagation of the truths imparted by Him who died thereon. The exercises concluded by an address from Bishop McQuaid, in which he impressed upon his hearers the necessity of upholding parochial schools, which, he said, many persons were endeavoring to drive out of the country. The singing of the *Te Deum* by the assembled throng concluded the dedicatory ceremonies.

The Rt. Rev. Bishop was assisted by Very Rev. Mgr. DeRegge, Very Rev. Joseph Wirth, rector of St. Joseph's, Rev. F. X. Sinclair, of St. Peter and Paul's, Rev. F. C. Oberholzer, of the Most Holy Redeemer, Revs. A. Pingel, Kuborn and Henn, of St. Joseph's church. The children of the parochial school participated in the exercises.

In the evening the hall was filled to overflowing by those who came to witness the rendition of Stehle's operatic drama, "The Legend of St. Cecelia," by the St. Cecelia singing society. The principals, Misses Ida Koesterer and Mary Lighthouse and Messrs. Philip Freid, Col. J. J. Schuler and J. P. Leinen, filled their respective roles remarkably well. The chorus, too, did splendidly. The director, Prof. Joseph Bauer, is to be congratulated upon the success of the affair.

At Sacred Heart Convent.

Monday afternoon an entertainment was given at the Sacred Heart convent on Prince street, it being the feast day of Mother Carrigan's patron saint. Tasteful draperies of lace, flowers and ferns constituted the decorations of the study hall in which it was given. Several young ladies sang a chorus, followed by an address, at the close of which a floral chalice was presented. "Aida" from Verdi, a quartette on two pianos, was the next number, after which the "Legend of the Forget-Me-Not," a recitation in French, was given. A duo from Lohengrin was followed by an original comedietta, "The Fairy Telephone," charmingly acted by a dozen little girls dressed in white. At the close they presented two flower pieces, one a pillow on which were the words: "God Bless You." A short address was made by Mother Carrigan, thanking her entertainers. A number of presents were given by the pupils, including a purse concealed in the chalice first presented, containing money for a golden door to be placed in the tabernacle of the marble altar which will be in the new chapel, soon to be erected on the convent grounds. The stained glass windows are to be imported from Munich and will, it is said, be severally presented by wealthy friends of the convent. Among other presents were vestments for the new chapel of white moire, gold embroidered, and altar linens of the finest

DIOCESAN NEWS.

Catholic Notes Gathered by Our Special Correspondents.

Father FitzSimons, of Lima, has met with a sad affliction in the death of his brother, and will have the sympathy of all who know him.

St. Mary's church, of Auburn, will hold a fair in the Genesee Opera house in June, commencing on the 16th and continuing ten nights.

Joseph Britton and Matthew Dailey have bought out the clothing business of Geo. W. Phelps, Jr., at Mt. Morris. May the best of success be theirs.

The Easter music at St. Patrick's church, Seneca Falls, as usual, was of a high order and well rendered.

East Bloomfield.

Margaret Francis Reagan died very suddenly last Friday morning. She had been suffering from the effects of "la grippe" for about six weeks. The funeral was held at 1 p. m. The remains were interred in the Catholic cemetery at Victor.

Henry Wilkins was taken sick very suddenly last Sunday morning with an attack of pneumonia, followed by an attack of typhoid fever. He was very sick, and it was feared he would not get better. He is now gaining, and all hope he will recover.

Dansville.

There is a young editor at the home of Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Burgess. He was born the 28th of March.

Mr. and Mrs. T. E. Gallagher are also rejoicing over the birth of a son.

Miss Tillie Barrett, of Buffalo, spent Easter at home.

Phil. Schumbel, of Rochester, was home over Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. J. C. Lockney have gone to Groveland to live.

T. J. Daugherty has gone to Denver, Col., in hopes of regaining health. Rev. Father Dougherty, of Auburn, will preach in St. Patrick's church next Sunday.

Mr. Fred Schwan and Miss Kate Stodtler were married at St. Mary's church on Tuesday morning by Rev. Father Barber.

The community was pained on Wednesday last to hear of the death of Sister Julia, which occurred at Nazareth convent. Sister Julia was one of the sisters who opened our school, when new, and while here gained the love and respect of all who knew her. A requiem mass will be said for the deceased Sister on Friday.

On Easter Sunday the music in St. Patrick's church was exceptionally fine. The choir sang Battmann's Kyrie, Leonard's Gloria, and St. Ludwig's Credo. The soloists were Misses Jordan, Power and McNeil and Messrs. Dowling and McLane.

Genesee.

Miss Mary Biggins spent Easter with her sister, Mrs. T. Curran, at Avon.

Mr. and Mrs. P. Carragher passed Easter with relatives and friends in Avon. Jas. Haley, Jr., and W. Totten ate their Easter eggs in Rochester, with relatives.

Mrs. Wm. Crystal has been visiting her parents at Farmington this past week.

Quite a number of our young ladies have gone to Rochester to live, and on Wednesday last Misses Kate and Nellie Toner left for the same place.

Rev. J. A. Hickey starts next Monday for an extended western trip of about two months. A priest from the Rochester Cathedral will take his place during his absence.

The usual Easter services were held at St. Mary's church at 11 o'clock a. m. The altar was handsomely decorated with potted plants and flowers. Rev. J. A. Hickey preached an interesting sermon, and the choir rendered some excellent music, which they had been preparing for this occasion.

Michael Scully and Miss Susie McCoy were united in the holy bonds of matrimony at St. Mary's church last Tuesday morning at 10 o'clock, by Rev. J. A. Hickey. There was a large number of guests present, and the happy recipients of many articles. The