

GLORY OF IRELAND.

TO DEFEND GOD'S CHURCH IS ITS PEOPLE'S MISSION.

Placed by God Among the English Speaking Nations to Spread the Truth, the Irish Race Has Reserved Its Faith and Retained Its Nationality.

It was by no mere chance of events that the Irish race was scattered by what seemed a cruel fate all over the world. With them went everywhere their faith and their fidelity to nationhood, as an example to Christians of other races and an incentive to patriots of other countries. Their mission is to spread the truth and by their fidelity to their country to prove that faith exalts a nation and that Providence, for its own wise ends, can use even the dispersing of a people to spread religion and to make the glory of a nation.

With other races the loss of the native language has meant the loss of nationality. Why is it that such has not been the case with Ireland?

The wonderful extension of English power throughout the world, its vast colonial possessions, the greatness and glory of the United States, have made it certain that English is going to be the language of the future. To have excluded the faithful Irish from its influence upon the English people, present and prospective, of the world would have been to have left these people without a guide or exemplar in the ways of truth.

Since the so called reformation, at the bidding of kings and queens, princelings and protectors, parliaments and ecclesiastical courts, the English people have time and again in each century changed their church, their beliefs and their form of worship by rejecting what they had accepted and again reverting to what they had rejected, constantly the willing or unwilling victims of innovation and false progress.

Hence ensued the loss of unity in religious belief, even on fundamental points. This has since, and especially in our times, divided the English speaking people into hundreds of jarring sects, when it has not completely engendered unbelief and infidelity. The nations which have gone out of England have been subject to the same fate, and none of them has reached the end of their wanderings in the ways of error and religious innovations.

Had not the Irish people, speaking the English language, been placed by God among the nations of that tongue to defend his church and spread its teaching, these nations would have been left almost without hope and the possibility of learning the truth.

The mission of the Irish race is therefore a grand and divine mission, and its vocation and consecration to that mission has been brought about under Providence by means which the world would have considered inevitably fatal. Dispersed throughout the earth and losing its language, it preserved its faith and nationality; adopting the language of another people, it thereby became the teacher and messenger of truth to that people and to all its kindred offshoots. If at the Vatican council there were more bishops of Irish nationality than any other, it is proof that the Irish people has already begun and has vigorously pressed forward in its chosen work and given evident proof of its divine mission, and evident promise of its ultimate triumph. If ever the English speaking peoples of the earth revert to the truth, it will have been under Providence the work of the Irish throughout the world, and they whose fathers would have annihilated the Celtic race will have received through that race and from its heroic sons and daughters the supreme benefit of regeneration and will owe to them their life and their salvation.

A grand mission it is and worthy of the gallant race which in every battlefield of Europe, of America, of Asia and of Africa has displayed to an admiring world the splendid spectacle of heroic valor; of a race which in art and literature has furnished to the world more masterpieces in proportion to its numbers than any other people on earth; of a race which has given to America more writers and editors of papers than any other people; of a race which has ever led the vanguard in the path of progress and liberty; of a race which in its gallant struggle of 700 years has taught the English people the principles of liberty and self government; of a race which ever has been, and by the grace of God ever will be, strong and enthusiastic, virtuous and pure, faithful and aggressive.—Monitor.

Catholic History of New York City.

From the achievement of our independence as a nation to 1800—a period of 20 years—New York had but one church, St. Peter's, and then came St. Patrick's in Mott street, which became and remained the cathedral until St. Patrick's cathedral in Fifth avenue reduced it to the rank of a parish church. In 1838, when the first of the present series of Catholic almanacs was issued, there were only four Catholic churches in the city—old St. Patrick's cathedral, St. Peter's, Christ church and St. Mary's. In 1843 New York had 11 churches.

In 1850 New York was made an archdiocese, with all the dioceses of the states of New York and New Jersey for suffragans. In 1853 she had 28 churches and 12 chapels; in 1863 she had 81 churches and 12 chapels; in 1873 she had 143 churches and 25 chapels; in 1883 she had 243 churches and 41 chapels, and in 1893 350 churches and 42 chapels, and this, too, in a city where scarcely over a century ago mass was celebrated in the loft of a carpenter shop for a congregation of 1,300 Catholics.—Catholic News.

A Prayer.
Oh, give thy servant patience to be still,
And banish grief;
And let thy peace be wholly on the soul,
That will not harm.
The peace that will be left to the stray
That will not harm.
The peace that will be left to the stray
That will not harm.
The peace that will be left to the stray
That will not harm.
The peace that will be left to the stray
That will not harm.

THE FORTY HOURS' DEVOTION.

Under Certain Conditions Indulgences Are Granted—History of Its Origin.

One of the most touching and tender devotions which the church presents to her children is that known as the "40 hours' devotion." The exposition of our Lord in the blessed sacrament brings our soul at once into the very presence of its Maker and stimulates our deepest love and veneration. As the devotion had its origin in the penitential season of Lent the following history is timely.

The scandalous scenes and irreverent acts committed during the days of the carnival preceding Ash Wednesday at the altars of the church, where the faithful soul at once into the very presence of its Maker and stimulates our deepest love and veneration. As the devotion had its origin in the penitential season of Lent the following history is timely.

The time should be given to prayer. It is not intended to give sermons and instructions and make it a mission or retreat. A plenary indulgence is granted to all who, after confession and communion, visit the church where the blessed sacrament is exposed and pray devoutly for peace and union among Christian powers, the extinction of heresies and the triumph of the church. Partial indulgences are granted to all who visit the church and pray with the intention of approaching the sacraments.—Catholic Review.

Primitive Man Not a Savage.

One by one the inferences of the rationalists who put forward as a settled conclusion that the primitive man was a brutal and degraded savage are being proved to be glaring errors resulting from utter misinterpretation of facts brought to light by antiquarian research.

Rationalistic students of the literature of ancient India were confident that they had found there proofs that Christianity was not a divine revelation, but an outgrowth from the idea of the people of ancient India. More thorough studies have shown that the religious notions of the most ancient peoples of India and Persia and adjacent regions have a common basis, and that as time went on they did not develop into purer and more elevated ideas, but degenerated into grosser ones having a clearly traced affinity to the lowest forms of idolatry and fetish worship. It is clear that these ideas had a common origin; that in the lapse of time the peoples retrograded, not advanced, as regards both intellectual and religious enlightenment, and that the only evolution or development that can be traced among them is an evolution backward and downward.

The Catholic belief in a primitive revelation from which the peoples of the earth departed and the traditions which became fainter and were perverted more and more as time passed on furnish the only clear and consistent explanation of the facts brought to light by the investigations and studies of antiquarians.—Catholic Standard.

What Constitutes Prayer.

The simplest explanation of prayer is that it is speaking to God. God is everywhere present, and to pray is to recollect that he is near us and to speak to him as present. To think about God is a good preparation for prayer. But prayer means more than this. It means turning ourselves to God and addressing him. Hence the catechism speaks of prayer as the raising up of our minds and hearts to God. It says nothing about words, as these are not necessary to constitute prayer. If we speak to God in our hearts, this is called meditation, or mental prayer. If we also use words, it is called vocal prayer. But unless we aim at directing our thoughts and hearts to God it is not prayer at all. There must be at least some little speaking to God as our Maker or Father or Redeemer or future Judge. A mere cold thinking about God is not enough to make prayer.

The Church and the State.

I am firmly persuaded, both by study and observation, that the church is more sturdy in her growth and is more prosperous in her career when she is free to pursue her divine mission without any interference on the part of the state. Here, thank God, the church is free, and therefore she is prosperous. Here the church and state run in parallel lines, each assisting the other, and neither unwarrantably intruding on the domain of the other. Here the constitution holds over the church its protecting arm without interfering in ecclesiastical affairs.—Cardinal Gibbons.

Catholic Notes.

The pope has decided that the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Mexico's patron saint, shall be observed as a general feast in Mexico.

The number of priests that St. Mary's seminary, Baltimore, taught by the Sulpicians, has given the American missions may be judged from the circumstance that its alumni association counts at present 700 members.

The famous Strasburg cathedral is undergoing restoration. All the defaced carvings of the exterior are being minutely remodeled by the aid of old pictures and casts, so that the ancient edifice will soon be seen in its original glory.

WHERE NEWMAN LED.

The Modern Episcopal Tendency Is Toward a Return to the Mother Church.

The tendency and but half suppressed yearning of the modern Episcopal communion to return to the fold of the mother church are evidenced in many ways by the gradual advances in their forms and ceremonials toward the one church whose title to be called Catholic, though often sought by ambitious claimants, the world has never permitted to be transferred or held in common.

The Episcopal Church of St. Ignace in New York city is one of the most noted for its Catholic leanings. The rector, the Rev. "Father" Arthur Ritchie, is an enthusiastic ritualist, and the services in his beautiful church might be mistaken by a Protestant for being really Catholic. On Sundays there are four low "masses" for communicants and a solemn "high mass," with sermon, at 11 o'clock. There are also the marble altar, the crucifix, the lighted tapers, the vestments, the incense, the holy water, the Catholic form of the bread and wine in the eucharist. And imagine this zealous Episcopal minister in a recent sermon saying of his church:

"The church is Catholic, not Protestant, despite her unfortunate title page description happily contradicted by her creed. Therefore we hold and teach all doctrines and practices which were undoubtedly held and taught by the whole Catholic world in old times; we believe in the real presence; we think it a pious custom to call upon saints and angels for their prayers on our behalf; we offer the sacrifice of the mass, and we make use of the confessional."

It seems a pity that when a communion small comparatively in members, but unquestionably seeking the light, and already, as it were, upon the threshold, should hesitate about entering the true sanctuary from which they have been separated not by any act of their own, but by the confusion of the tempests of past generations. It was in this stage of his progress toward the truth that the soul of the gifted Newman throbbed with the holy aspiration:

So long thy power hath blest me, sure it still
Will lead me on,
O'er moor and fen, o'er crag and torrent, till
The light is gone;
And with the morn those angel faces smile,
Which I have loved long since and lost awhile.

May these followers of the light be granted the grace to overcome the last obstacles of prejudice and follow where Newman led to the one, true Catholic fold.—Irish World.

The Confessional.

Why does the world hate the confessional? I will tell you in a word. Because the men of the world are afraid of laying their hearts open. They know that there are black spots; that there are dark stains, deep wounds, old scars, open sores, and they hide them in darkness. The innocent have no fear, for their hearts are unspotted, and though conscious of many faults and many weaknesses they are free from the stains and the wounds of an evil life. They are not afraid; to them confession is easy. But those who are conscious that they are carrying within them a secret which the world does not know, of which their neighbors are not aware, which the nearest to them does not suspect, which they would rather die than reveal—according to the shrinking of flesh and blood, forgetting all the while that God knows everything—they fear and hate the thought of confession. This is the true reason why the world rails against confession; this is the reason why every revolution that breaks out at once burns the confessional. It dare not come near the confessional. When it sees a confessional, it sees a forerunning witness of the great white throne and of the day of judgment, and to get rid of this intolerable reality the anti-Christian revolution tears it out of the church and burns it in the street.—Cardinal Manning.

A Great Catholic Building Proposed.

Cardinal Parocchi, vicar general of Rome, has submitted to the pope a vast scheme for adding another to the Catholic edifices of the country. The cardinal's scheme is to erect on the Monte Vancile a church with a cupola equal in size and effect to that of St. Peter's, the cost of which is to be defrayed by contributions of the Catholics throughout the world. Round the sacred edifice it is proposed to group the ecclesiastical colleges of the different countries that are now situated in Rome. The further consideration of the proposal will be submitted to a commission of cardinals. The estimated cost of carrying out the scheme is about £4,000,000, and it is calculated that its construction would give employment to 14,000 workmen for six years.

The Church in the United States.

Statistics show that the Catholic population of the United States is 8,808,085, with 14 archbishops, 75 bishops, 9,388 priests, 8,477 churches, 3,485 stations, 1,768 chapels, 38 seminaries, 127 colleges, 650 academies, 3,887 parochial schools, attended by 738,209 children; 245 asylums, caring for 26,538 orphans, and 463 other charitable institutions. The archdiocese of New York of course leads all the rest, and the suffragan sees of the archdiocese contain one-eighth of the entire Catholic population. Brooklyn, which has 280,000 Catholics, ranks above the archdioceses of Baltimore, San Francisco, St. Paul, St. Louis, Milwaukee, Cincinnati, Santa Fe and Oregon.—Exchange.

Winter.

His old teeth chatter loudly when
His soles crunch drift and powdered sleet;
So January, with reddened chin,
Stalks where keen breezes pass and meet.
Frost whisks the breath of February,
As on the window, dashed with rain,
His palsied fingers one may see
Etching wan flowers—a labor vain.
The fairy flakes are swift of flight;
Among the belfries fierce winds blow;
The lone day wears to deep night,
When March reigns monarch of the snow.
Beneath the ice fringed, drifted eaves
The lone day wears to deep night,
When March reigns monarch of the snow.
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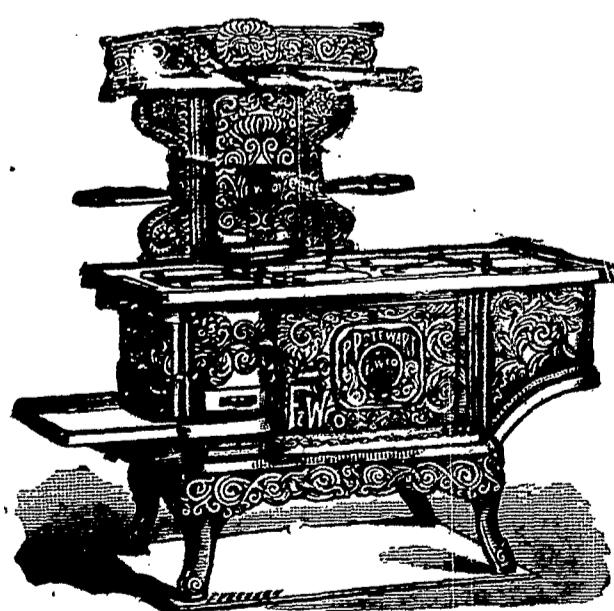
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