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THE ATTACK ON RELIGIOUS ORDERS IN FRANCE.

The American press is beginning to have a profound influence in France, and the vigorous way in which the French attack on Religious Communities is resisted and resented by Americans who appreciate liberty in its highest form, will undoubtedly be felt across the water. The Catholic World Magazine, in an able article, discusses the idea of a religious association with vows, and shows that in nowise can it be harmful to the state that men should gather together to live the higher life and to consecrate themselves to the service of the poor and the helpless elements of society.

There can be nothing else but a distinct hatred of Christian institutions that can inspire so fierce an attack on the religious life as that made by Waldeck-Rousseau. If one views the association of men in religious communities from a social point of view, he will find that the state gains by the religious orders. Anything that teaches respect for law, obedience to authority, restraint of passions, is helpful to the administration of the state. Or if the economic aspect be discussed, it has been demonstrated over and over again that to withdraw a certain percentage of the people from the married life and vow them to celibacy, has not only no deterring effect on the poulation but is health-giving. It makes for domestic virtue. It demonstrates the possibility of restraint of passion, and these lessons are far more effectual than the policeman's club to keep the lawless within bounds.

The Rev. S. G. Bland is a Methodist minister of the city of Ottawa, Canada, and proves himself a fair-minded man. Of the King's declaration against Catholic doctrines, he writes as follows: "Now that the House of Commons has decisively endorsed the protest against the offensive declaration of the coronation oath, the expression of private sympathy seems superfluous. I believe I speak for many Protestants, in assuring our Roman Catholic fellow subjects that we join them in their protest and trust it will be effectual, only regretting that we should have left it to them to initiate an action which would have so gracefully and justly been initiated by ourselves."

The Superior Council of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul has sent to the Archbishops and Bishops of the country a circular letter asking their kind office for the introduction and extension of the society in the various dioceses of the United States. Attention is called to the different sectarian and non-sectarian organizations, whose unlimited resources and perfect equipment make them powerful instruments for proselytizing purposes among the more needy class of Catholics; and it is urged that we should meet the threatened danger with a system equally well-organized and managed, and in time as exqually extensive.

The Little Sisters of the Poor have throughout the world 275 houses, with 4,594 professed Sisters, 319 novices and 49,496 old people in charge. From the origin of the order up to the present time 152,777 persons died in its care. For aged Catholics who died in these houses of the Sisters, surrounded by all that the heart and mind of Catholics love and revere, was a great blessing, indeed.

The Examiner, San Francisco, February 24, states that the corner stone of the Berkeley, Cal., High School was laid on Washington's birthday, according to the Masonic rite, and with full display of "worshipful" Masonic pomp. We wonder how the shouters against "Church and State," "Sectarianism," etc., would find voice sufficient to denounce such a ceremony if performed under the auspices, say, of the League of the Cross. Catholics and Protestants, Jews and men who "belong to no church," contribute to the building and maintenance of our vaunted public schools, including the high schools, an institution that has no just place in a scheme based on general taxation. The association, with the corner stone laying of any public school, of any society distinguished by ritual, scope and object, as apart from the body of the citizens, is unbecoming, impertinent, insolent, un-American.

Father Du Lac, S. J., in his book, just published, on the Jesuit colleges, says that since 1876, the number of Jesuit colleges in France has increased from 16 to 29. The orders and congregations have educational establishments which allow them to have under their charge 1,650,000 pupils.

CATHOLIC NOTES.

Twenty catechumens were baptized and received into the Church on Saturday last in East Memphis, Tenn., by Father Mahony—nine at the Good Shepherd Convent and eleven at St. Peter's orphanage. Those baptized at the convent made their first holy communion the following day.

* * *

Rev. James T. Lennon, rector of St. Joseph's church, Rhinecliff, has, after much labor, succeeded in purchasing the old Episcopal church in Rhinebeck and as soon as much needed repairs are completed, the edifice will be dedicated as a Catholic church.

* * *

The old Protestant city of Basel (Swiss) is rapidly becoming Catholic. The last census has 37,000 Catholics, against 22,000 in 1888. The Catholic Church is too small in Basel All good Swiss in this country should unite and build a second Catholic church in this stronghold of Protestantism.

Edward, the Saxon King of England, was designatel the Confessor on account of his personal piety. After his death he was canonized and his shrine in Westminster Abbey is still an object of reverence. Once a year on the feast of this saint, the Cardinal and Roman Catholic prelates and clergy of England enter Westminster Abbey in procession and before the shrine of St. Edward hold a service of silent prayer.

* * *

The Princess Adelheid, cousin of the Emperor of Austria, has decided to enter a convent at Prague. She has also given her entire fortune of £50,000 sterling to the Church.

* * *

In the congregation in Thurber, Texas, seven nationalities are represented, and sermons are delivered in English, Polish and Italian.

A FATHER'S CONVERSION.

The Victory of a Little Boy Who Was to Make His First Communion.

One day—it was the eve of Pentecost—a gentleman, well known in Louisville, Kentucky, once a son of the Catholic Church, but who had unhappily become one of her fiercest antagonists, and for some eighteen years had not crossed the threshold of the house of God, much less approached the sacraments, rang the bell of a monastery in that town and asked to see the priest who had charge of the parish of St. Boniface. The lay brother who acted as porter, was astonished to see the visitor and it was with some reluctance that he admitted one of such pronounced anti-Catholic sentiments to the parlor and took his card to the Father who was inquired for. The interview lasted long; two, three hours elapsed before the brother, who began to feel anxious, had the satisfaction of seeing the visitor depart, with a much more placid and cheerful expression upon his countenance than it had worn when he entered the house.

What had taken place during those hours? The complete reconciliation of a sinner with God, the sincere conversion and return of a wanderer to the fold of the Church.

What had brought this about? The gentleman in question had a son, twelve years old, innocent and pure as an angel, who was to make his First Communion on the following morning. The boy had been to Confession, and on his return home could not refrain from expressing his delight in view of the happiness in store for him on the morrow. The simple, unfeigned joy of his favorite child touched the father's hard heart; as a proof of his participation in it, he said: "To-day you may ask me for anything you may wish to have. Only tell me what you would like best, and I will do my utmost to procure it for you, whatever it may cost."

The boy hesitated a moment, then in a half-timid, wistful way, he answered: "Father, what I should like best would be for you to go to Communion with me to-morrow morning."

Who can tell the effect this unexpected reply had on a soul that had long been dead to the call of grace? The crust of unbelief that held it captive broke and fell away, as the ice melts before the warm breath of spring. Tears filled the father's eyes; forthwith, he took his hat and stick and hastened to the priest in order to make his peace with God.

And the next morning he was seen assisting at Mass, and [illegible] ing beside his son, whose heartfelt piety had been instrumental, through God's mercy in effecting his father's conversion. From that time forth the latter was an exemplary and fervent Christian, heedless of the raillery and even persecuti[illegible] change of opinions brought upon him from his former associates.—Anishinable Enamiad.

WHY THE CHURCH USES THE LATIN LANGUAGE.

Have you ever wondered why the Church used the Latin language? Well one reason is because the Church is a universal community and a universal community requires a universal language. The Latin language is known as a dead language and cannot change Hence as he understands the ceremonies of the Church from his prayer book, a Roman Catholic is at home in a Catholic Church anywhere in the world.

FED ON FAIRY TALES.

Thirty years ago, "the McAll missions" were established in Paris for the purpose of converting the people to Protestantism. Every year since, Anglo-Protestantism has contributed about $100,000 to these missions. A report in the current Outlook indicates that the McAll mission is steadily declining. It sustains only two-thirds of its former number of stations. The contributing Protestant public is fed on fairy tales.

CHINESE MARTYRS.

The Heroic Constancy of Native Catholics Under the Greatest Sufferings.

Some touching details are given by various Chinese missionaries in the Missions Catholiques of Lyons of the heroic constancy of the native Catholics under torture and martyrdom during the recent persecution. The catechist of Lien-chow, after being scourged and offered the choice of apostasy or death, thus replied. "Four-and-sixty years I have served the Lord of Heaven. At any age apostasy is cowardice, but in my case it would be still more odious. I must show my Christians how to die. Do with me what you will, but know that I will never apostatize!" Two Christian girls followed his example, and all died with heroic fortitude At Tsing-ho in southeast Chili a Christian of Si Kao-Chang was captured by the "Big Knives," and invited to apostatize "I will not apostatize," was his reply, "and you may not only behead me, but cut up my body in pieces. Every portion, if you should ask it, would answer that it was Christian!" He was at once put to death.

Another Christian, U-Wen-Yin, who was tifang or manager of his village, was arrested and summoned before the mandarin. Before leaving he threw himself on his knees before his aged mother to bid her a last farewell The heroic mother exclaimed: "If thou diest for the faith, God will take care of us; do not trouble about me or thy children. If thou deniest thy faith, I will no longer recognize thee for my son." "Mother," he replied, "be at ease by God's grace I will never apostatize." On his being summoned to deny his faith, and refusing to do so, the mandarin ordered him to be bastinadoed till he lost consciousness. On his coming to himself, the mandarin again offered him the same result and the same cruel punishment. He was then hung up in a wooden cage, upon which he said to the judge: "When I shall be no longer able to speak on account of the pain, and you see my lips moving don't think I am pronouncing the w[illegible] of apostasy: "they will be prayers." A few minutes later his [illegible] d, he was cut down and found to be already dead. Are these not scenes worthy of the days of the early Christians?

A CHINAMAN WHO DIED A CATHOLIC.

Lee Foke, a Chinaman, died in Philadelphia recently. In his last illness he was attended by Dr. Luman, a Chinese physician, who had studied medicine in this country and is a Catholic. Lee Foke's family at home in China are Catholics and to Dr. Luman he said he desired to die in their faith. The doctor called at the nearest church, St. Philip Neri's, about four weeks ago, and asked that a priest be sent to his patient. Rev. James J. Smith visited the dying consumptive and baptized him, giving him at the same time the Christian name of William, and later administered the other necessary sacraments, thus preparing him for death.

GOOD TO DIE IN.

So far as I have observed persons nearing the end of life, wrote Oliver Wendell Holmes, who never spoke an unnecessary good word about the Church, the Roman Catholics understand the business of dying better than Protestants. They have an expert by them, armed with spiritual specifics, in which they both, patient [illegible] and priestly ministrant [illegible] trust. Confession, the Eucharist, Extreme Unction,—these all inspire a confidence which without the symbolism is too apt to be wanting in over-sensitive natures. They have been peopled in earlier years with spectres of avenging friends, moving in a sleepless world of devouring flames and their smothering exhalations, where nothing lives [illegible] sinner, the fiends, and the reptiles who help to make life an unending torture. To exorcise them, the old [illegible] of Christendom has her mystic formulas of which no rationalistic prescription can take the place. If Cowper had been a good Roman Catholic, instead of having his conscience handled by a Protestant like John Newton, he would not have died despairing, looking upon himself as a castaway. I have seen a good many Roman Catholics on their dying beds, and it always appeared to me that they accepted the inevitable with a composure which showed that their belief, whether or not the best to live by, was a better one to die by than most of the harder creeds which have replaced it.

PEARL OF THE OAKS.

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BY MARY ROWENA COTTER.

PART SECOND.

[Continued from last week.]

XIV.

For two weeks James did not dare leave the room where, under the care of his faithful attendants, he was fast regaining his strength and flesh, for he still considered himself unfit to appear before his sister. In the evening of the last day of the fortnight Melissa did not come as usual, and fearing that she had been detained on account of his sister being worse, he could keep away no longer. He dared not enter his home or let his presence be known; so, going around to the side of the house where his room was, he climbed on the vines to the window where he could see the interior of the room without being seen. Marie's face, which had changed so much since he last saw her, was turned lovingly toward Melissa, who was reading; and forming a great contrast to the invalid's transparent death-like countenance was the bright rosy cheeked Gertie, who in the bloom of young womanhood seemed to be growing lovlier each day. What a pretty group they were, though the picture was such a sad one, and James wished to join them, but dared not. At last Melissa closed her book and was about to kiss her friend good night, but was detained.

Throwing both arms around her neck as she bent over her, Marie said, "Please do not go, Melissa, for you have not spent an evening with me in two weeks."

Melissa hesitated and the expression on her face told the young man more plainly than words could have done that she was thinking of him and felt it her duty to go to him. "I know it, dear," she said, "but my evenings have been so occupied and when you learn how, you will readily forgive my apparent neglect."

"That is part of your secret, I suppose, but how much longer am I to be kept in suspense?"

"Not long I hope"

"Melissa, I wish you would remain with me just for to-night, I have missed you so much of late, and can you not spare me this evening?"

Had James been waiting for her in Dora's cabin he would have been disappointed by her absence, for she seldom dared to visit him in the day time and he had not seen her since the evening before; but now he was pleased when she promised to spend the night with his sister, for it proved that duty to the sick was more to her than the pleasure of the company of himself whom he knew possessed her purest affections.

Soon his parents and sisters came to bid Marie good night. When they were gone Gertie still lingered, insisting upon watching with her friend all night; but Melissa knowing how much rest she had lost, would not permit it, and she also sent away one of the servants who slept on a cot beside her young mistress. When they were alone Melissa turned down the light and sat by the bedside to watch until her charge was asleep; but Marie was not inclined to sleep.

Turning sadly to her she said, "Melissa, what does the doctor say of me?"

"How can I tell when I have not seen him?" she answered trying to evade the subject.

"I know you were not here when he came; but they must have told you."

Melissa was silent for she did not wish to tell the sad truth, neither did she wish to deceive her on whose young face the imprint of death was already stamped.

"You cannot deceive me; I see by your face that you know what the others are trying to keep from me."

"What is that dear?" she felt that it was a cruel question but must say something,

"That I can live but a short time, I knew from the beginning of my sickness that I would never be well again, but until this morning I had hoped and prayed that I might live until James returned."

"You will, dear," dropped involuntary from Melissa's lips.

"I hope so; but I fear not, for this morning after Dr. Cary was gone I heard mother say that Father Smith must be sent for to come to me at once. She was talking to father in the hall and spoke in such a low tone she thought I did not hear her."

"That is no proof that you will not live to see your brother; for, if, as your father says, he is coming home you may soon see him."

"I hope so," and Marie's face brightened at the prospect, "has he been heard from?"

"We would not be apt to hear from him until his arrival."

"If I can only live to see him it will not be so hard to die; pray Melissa that I may.—James, dearest brother, come home," she sighed.

"Yes, dear little sister," murmured a voice outside the window," "your brother is here and at any risk you shall see him to-morrow."

"What is that, Melissa? I thought I heard Jamie's voice," and Marie's face brightened.

Melissa had heard the faint sound, too, and had turned just in time to see the face which was quickly withdrawn from the window.

"Try to go to sleep, Marie and you may dream of him."

"I often dream of him and when I awake to find that it is not a reality it makes me so sad; but I will try to sleep and I want you to lie down and rest."

The drooping lids closed, giving the sufferer a death-like appearance, broken only by the faint, short gasps for breath, and she was soon asleep. Softly Melissa stole to the window and opening it admitted the man who could'nt have held on to the vines much longer and through the night they kept a silent vigil together. In the silence of early dawn, before anyone in the house was astir, Marie awoke and looked around her. She was not startled as might be expected but with a happy smile extended her hands towards her brother and while they were clasped in each other's arms Melissa stepped into the hall to guard the entrance.

"Oh, James, I knew you had come, I knew it was not a dream and you will not leave me until I am dead, will you brother?"

"I will try to remain until you are better, but they must not know I am here."

"Not tell mother and sisters?—why not, they will be so glad to see you."

"They might little sister, but father *must not know.*"

"I understand, you are enemies now, but I know father would not harm you he loves you too much."

"Yes, Marie, I know that father loves us all to much to harm us; but with him as well as with myself duty is the cause we believe to be right is ahead of all else, even the most sacred family ties and we know not what might happen if he knew I were home"

James had spoken in a low, earnest tone, forgetting how love for his father had once caused him to shrink from the duty of taking him prisoner. Marie never knew how he had thus saved his life or of the sad penalty he had been obliged to suffer in the long imprisonment to which his bravery had brought him. She had only seen the deep scar on her fathers's temple, and while she had listened to the story of how it had been caused by a Federal bullet, she had been loth to believe that the army of which her Jamie was a member was as bad as her father would have her believe.

"How sad this war is," said Marie, "I wish it had never been and that father and you were friends as before."

"I wish that it had not been necessary, but let us talk of this no more, dear sister, rather let us thank God in bringing me home in safety.

At the door Melissa kept her post, listening to the faint murmur of the voices which she did not try to understand until she saw Mr. Levimore, who was an unusually early riser, coming from his own room at the other end of the hall. Quickly stepping into the room she told Marie that her father was coming and pointed to the closet, the door of which James just had time to close after himself when his father entered the room.

"Good morning, papa," said Marie her face beaming with a light he had not seen there before.

"I am glad to see you looking so bright this morning. You must have enjoyed a good night's rest for which I thank your kind nurse" and smiling he bowed to Melissa. All day the invalid was very much brighter than she had been for many weeks and when the trays heaped with delicacies which she had scarcely touched before were sent back empty the cook said that she must be going to die or get well right away as her appetite had improved wonderfully; but only Melissa knew that her happiness had taken away what little appetite she had, and what she was supposed to have eaten, had been passed into the closet. That afternoon Mrs. Levimore was let into the secret and she prepared for her son a room in an unused and obscure part of the attic to which she sent him long after the others had retired and were asleep. To Gertie whose Southern blood was growing warmer each day, she dared not reveal his presence, while fearing that Maud and Rose, who were still children, might betray her she kept equally silent before them.

So far Lennox and the surrounding country had escaped the ravages of war and it was well for Marie that it was so, far perfect quiet was what she needed most, and her physician had discovered this when, too late. "I deeply regret," he said. "that I did not order your daughter to be taken to Europe in the beginning of this conflict far away from the noise of the battle I believe that she might have survived for years; but as it is I have become convinced that her illness has in a great measure been aggravated by the strain on her weak nerves this war has caused."

"And is there no hope for her now?" asked her mother.

"For some reason which I cannot understand, she seems to be improving and if this continues she may yet be able to be taken abroad and her life prolonged."

Father Smith who had returned to Glendale with the messenger was less hopeful for he knew what had revived the invalid's spirits and he saw more plainly than the physician that death would soon claim the pure soul which he had been called upon to prepare for eternity. With a courage remarkable in one so young Maria had received for a second time the last rites of Holy Church and knowing that James was near was ready to die.

All went well at Glendale, peaceful quite reigning supreme until one morning it was reported that a detachment of Grant's army had met the enemy in the woods where the gypsies had camped a few years ago and a bloody battle was feared. Mr. Levimore and James were both all interest; each wishing to go forth to fight for his own side, but the women were filled not only with horror at the thought of having a battle fought so near, but with grave apprehensions concerning Marie. The day before she had sat up nearly three hours and in the morning insisted upon being again helped to her chair near the window from which she could see the beautiful grounds at the Oaks; beyond which was the Tone forest now arrayed in the bright-hued splendor of autumn and the clear winding river on which she had so often rowed with James in the happy days when he was free to go about his home as he pleased. She was alone and in silent admiration gazed upon the beautiful landscape, living over again those happy days; then as her eyes wandered to the little chapel and the graves surrounding it, they filled with tears for she was reminded of the time perhaps not far distant when another grave would be there and her place at home would be vacant. At that moment the roar of a cannon shook the house, then another and she fell fainting in the arms of Gertie who had just entered the room.

From his little dormor window James watched the progress of the battle, his spirit burning with a wild desire to be with the brave men who wore the blue. He felt like a prisoner upon whom much depended and in his mind silently urged his comrades on, cheering them when the victory seemed to be their's and sympathizing with them in their failures; but never daring to move from his hiding place. "How long," he mused, how long will it be ere I can join the brave band again."

He did not hear the light footsteps approaching until Melissa laid her hand on his arm and said sadly, "Come down, James, you are wanted"

"Am I, Melissa, do they really want me over there?"

Unheeding his words she said, "Come, Marie is dying?"

"Forgive me, Melissa, I was so interested in the battle that I did not understand."

He hurried down to the room where around the bedside of his dying sister, the family were all assembled He did not heed the surprised glances of his three sisters nor the look his father cast upon him; but knelt at the bedside and held the hand from which the lighted taper was falling. Marie's searching glance which had wandered from one face to another now rested upon him, and she tried to speak, but her voice was gone. One sweet smile and then all was over.

She had recovered from her first fainting fit, but the sound of the guns had brought on another, and with it a severe hemorrhage which weakened her so that the united efforts of the physician and her mother could not, without perfect quiet, be of any avail. As the morning passed and the conflict grew more severe she had become weaker and the afternoon was not half over when she died.

In silence James knelt for fully ten minutes, heeding neither the silent grief of his parents nor the wailing of the sisters who had never before witnessed death. Melissa alone remained composed and when he arose he whispered to her, "Meet me at Dora's cabin at midnight for I am going away," then he disappeared as suddenly as he had come.

(To be continued.)

NOTICE.

Subscribers and patrons wishing to call us up by telephone will hereafter use Rochester Telephone No. 2353.

The Great West.

If you are contemplating a trip to any point in the West, and your nearest ticket agent cannot give you all information desired, address F. J. Moore, General Agent, Nickel Plate Road, 291 Main St., Buffalo, N. Y., for rates, etc. During February, March and April reduced rate tickets will be on sale to many points in the West and North-west, and the Nickle Plate Road is the best and cheapest route to use.

If you do not see any news from your parish write us, we desire a correspondent in each parish.