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### PROTESTANT OR CATHOLIC?

Naturalists, we are told, sometimes come across a peculiar variety of plant or animal, which it puzzles them to classify. If they transferred their studies to religion they would be apt to meet occasionally with the same difficulty. Especially would they be puzzled to tell to what species of religion the Protestant Episcopal church in America belongs. Indeed, it might stagger a member of that denomination—or even the entire Protestant Episcopal church itself—to decide the question. Now we find it classing itself as Protestant. Now it classifies itself as Catholic. Now it abhors from its soul all the abominations of Popery. Now it copies from popery all its "greatest superstitions" and "damnable idolatries"—as the English coronation oath puts it. Indeed, there are few things more amusing than the frantic efforts of the Protestant Episcopal church to be Protestant and Catholic at the same time. Here, for instance, is a paragraph from the Living Church, an Episcopal organ, which is going the rounds of the press:

"Negative Christianity—and Protestantism is, by its very name, shown to be negative—proves its utter insufficiency. In the astounding increase of Christian Science and the like, which shows the yearning of the human soul for a positive religion based on faith, the Catholic religion, tully comprehended, would make these cults impossible; but the lack of certainty, the unreality of the faith, and the feeble hold on prayer held by Protestantism alike are shown by the tendency of Protestants, within as well as without the Catholic church, to seek these oryings of the human soul—religious certainty, faith and prayer—in grotesque forms which parody the Church's doctrines, rather than in the Church herself. It is a fact easy to discover that where individuals have had the full conception of the Catholic position of the Church, her losses to Christian Science and kindred cults have been trivial, but where Protestantism is uppermost, her losses have been large.

This fling at Protestantism as well as the desperate scramble to get on the Catholic band-wagon can be fully enjoyed only when it is remembered that it is uttered by an organ of a church that rejoices in the truly Catholic title of "Protestant Episcopal." The rebuke of Christian Science by the Living Church is fully as amusing as its rebuke of Protestantism. It would puzzle most people to show cause why an old woman down in Massachusetts has not as much right to indulge in her own private interpretation of the Scriptures as the Living Church itself. If private judgment tells Mrs. Eddy that disease is a phantasy, that matter does not exist otherwise than as a mental sensation, and that all two-legged sensations in the form of physicians are an abomination, the Living Church should be the last to cast the first stone (if a "bull" may be permitted), as long as it maintains that its own private judgment assures it that it can claim to be Catholic and Protestant at the same time. Doubtless Christian Science is a delusion. But the Living Church's lofty condemnation of it looks very much like Satan mouthing words to rebuke sin.

THE NEXT ORDER FOLLOWS.—August 10th, Groton, Romania. SE.

## OUR BLESSED LADY'S ASSUMPTION.

The Catholic Church at present celebrates about twenty festivals in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary, but as late even as the twelfth century only four were enjoined for observation, and then as now the Assumption was a solemnity of the highest importance. It is now a holy day of obligation in this country and kept on Aug. 15; but important as the commemoration is, it is worthy of notice that belief in the corporal assumption of Our Lady is not a dogma of faith in the Church and has never been defined as such authoritatively.

It is spoken of as a traditional pious belief and it is mentioned in numerous martyrologies and missals in the liturgies of the Visigoths and Franks and by Andrew of Crete (seventh century), St. Gregory of Tours (sixth century), and St. John Damascene (born 690), selections from whose writings and from St. Bernard's are placed in the breviary office for the Octave. The corporal assumption is further considered to be proved by several writers, although a collection of circumstantial evidence therewith and ascribed to Melito of Sardis, are rightly rejected as of no value. It is, besides, the consistent opinion of all the churches, Latin and oriental.

Apart from the weight that should be attached to the common unanimity of the faithful, it is a remarkable fact that, while relics of the Martyrs and saints are so numerous, none of the Blessed Virgin's body exists anywhere. Another argument in its favor is its "intrinsic reasonableness." After her death, the date of which is uncertain, it appears most probable that the Blessed Virgin was buried in Gethsemane, near Jerusalem. But the fact of her immaculate conception would not have prevented corporal decay; even our Lord's human body in the ordinary course of events, says St. Augustine, would have been subject thereto. But it is reasonable to believe that our Lord would not have permitted that her body, which had been his temple and his dwelling, should see corruption, but that He should consider it due to His Holy Mother that she, anticipating the general resurrection, should, like himself, come forth from the tomb on the third day and be assumed both body and soul into heaven.

So Melchior Camus writes: "The denial of the Blessed Virgin's corporal assumption into heaven, though by no means contrary to the faith, is still so much opposed to the common agreement of the Church that it would be a mark of insolent temerity."

The assumption of Mary into glory was the triumph of humility and no more complete or beautiful subject has presented itself to the pen of the poet or the brush of the painter. The genius of a Raphael has not disdained the work and others have followed more or less worthily. Earth and sorrow are left behind, and the Virgin's pure spirit clothed in its tabernacle, unspotted by original or actual sin, is reunited to the Divine Son. The treatment of the subject was open to the artist's individual fancy. So Giunta Pisano (1230) has depicted Christ and the Virgin ascending together; the apostles and the tomb are seen below. This is in reference to the words of Canticles viii: "Who is this that ariseth from the wilderness, leaning on her beloved?"

And again Andrea Fraegna (1359) represents the Virgin seated within a "mandoria, an almond-shaped aureole, cleaving the air upwards, borne by four angels.

The Catholic Church teaches nothing but what has been revealed by Almighty God or what is necessarily derived from revelation. He is the author of all scientific truth as He is the author of all revealed truth. "The God who dictates the Bible, as Archbishop Ryan has happily said, "is the God who wrote the illuminated manuscript of the skies. You might as well expect that one ray of sun would dim of revelation can be opposed to any the light of another as that any truth of science. No truth of natural science can ever be opposed to any truth of revelation, nor can any truth of the natural order be at variance with any truth of the supernatural. Truth differs from truth only as star differs from star. Each gives out the same pure light that reaches our vision across the expanse of the firmament.

The Catholic Citizen, in an article on "Falling Away From the Faith," says: Here is a man who ceased to practice his religion because of a dispute regarding the location of a new church site; another, because some "good" church man owed him money and did not pay; another, because he disagreed with his local pastor on the school question or in politics; and another because sermons were not preached in English. These cases and a hundred others result in disaffection from religion, and people, otherwise good, fall away. A truly Catholic spirit is something not to be gained without effort or kept without care. It is not disturbed by personal feelings; it bows to authority in matters of faith.

## CATHOLIC NOTES.

A new church for the Polish Catholics of Passaic, N. J. will be opened in the very near future.

It is reported that Rev. Dr. Joseph H. McMahon has secured an edifice, formerly a Protestant church, and that services will be held shortly in the new Manhattanville parish.

Rev. Dr. James J. Dougherty rector of the Mission of the Immaculate Virgin has commenced the erection of a building in West 56th street, to be the second Boys' club under the Missions direction.

Archbishop Katerer will go to Racine on August 1 and celebrate Pontifical High Mass at St. Catherine's Convent in honor of the canonization of several martyrs of the Dominican order.

St. Agnes parochial school in East Forty-third street, New York, has received two more endowments of \$500 each. One is in memory of Mrs. Martin B. Brown and the other of Miss Nellie A. Delaney. Both died recently.

Catholics at York Beach, N. H., now have a church. Early in the year the Hon. John M. Mitchell, a well known attorney of Concord, and Mr. Roger G. Sullivan, a prominent Manchester cigar merchant, took upon themselves the task of building a church at York. The new structure is situated on Church street and is of Gothic architecture.

Land has been bought at Stephen's Point, Wis., and some immense buildings are to be built there as a mother-house for Sisters speaking the Polish language in Wisconsin, Michigan and Illinois.

In the presence of the Holy Father, on the 9th inst., the members of the Congregation of Rites gave their decision as to the heroic virtue of the Ven. Father Colombiere, S. J., whose canonization is under consideration.

It is stated on good authority that the Holy Father will shortly publish an important document against divorce. In reply to the letter which the Italian Bishops addressed to His Holiness some time ago, protesting against the proposed law authorizing divorce in Italy.

Fire destroyed twenty-nine houses and one college at La Prairie, Montreal, the 28th ult. The blaze broke out in a frame cottage and quickly spread to others. The most important structure burned was the provincial house and Novitiate of the Brothers of the Christian Schools. The loss is about \$100,000.

A beautiful statue of the Sacred Heart for the chapel of the Catholic Women's Guild House, 260 South Fourth street, Philadelphia, was blessed by Archbishop Ryan recently. He was assisted by Very Rev. D. J. McDermott and Rev. Joseph A. Hefreman of St. Mary's. The statue is the gift of Mrs. Bowen, sister of the Archbishop.

### AN OLD SOLDIER'S TRIBUTE.

Among the graves in Calvary cemetery, St. Louis, Mo., where rest the Sisters of Charity, is one marked with a marble slab bearing this inscription: "Erected as a Tribute of Gratitude from an Old Soldier. Here rests Regina Le Croix, known in her order as Sister Louise, and the monument was erected in 1895 by Thomas Trahey, sergeant, Company H, 16th Michigan, and a member of Ransom post, and ever since he has kept the mound decorated during the summer months, and on Memorial Day it is marked by a silk flag and beautiful flowers. Trahey's story is as follows: "In 1863, shortly after the Battle of Gettysburg, I was attacked with typhoid fever, and was taken to the hospital at Frederick, Md. For two months I was near death, but the care and attention given by Sister Louise seemed to cheer me day by day. I was young then, and, outside of my family, which was in Michigan, I thought there was no one on earth who cared for me. But Sister Louise took an interest in me and did all she could for me. I have always said I owed my life to her."

### A PRIEST WHO WAS BORN OF QUAKER PARENTS.

Rev. Francis Martin Fowler, of the Archdiocese of Baltimore, formerly chaplain of Notre Dame college, is dead. He was born in Brooklyn, N. Y., in September, 1848, and was the son of John P. and Matilda Landis Fowler, who were Quakers. At the age of 15 he entered St. Charles' College, Billicott, Md., and while there became a convert to Catholicism. He was ordained a priest at the seminary in Baltimore in 1874. His first charge as pastor was at Hickory, Md., where he remained 15 years. He was chaplain of Notre Dame from 1894 to 1899, leaving here to go to Brooklyn.

### PRESIDENT OF DUNWOODIE SEMINARY HONORED.

Very Rev. Dr. E. R. Dyer, S. S., president of St. Joseph's seminary, Dunwoodie, has received a new honor. Father Captier, the superior-general of the Sulpicians resigning, Father Lebas, well known through his work at the Lyons seminary, was elected to succeed him. Father Dyer has been chosen as assistant to the new superior-general. He will continue to be president at Dunwoodie, as his new duties do not require him to relinquish that office.

A few Catholics near Loring, Canada, have made arrangements to build a church for themselves as soon as possible.

## SOCIETY OF JESUS.

ORDER COMPOSED OF THE CHURCH'S MOST VALIANT SONS.

Founded by St. Ignatius Loyola in the Year 1540—the Society Comprises Five Classes of Members—An Explanation of Each Rank and its Duties.

Recent attacks on the members of the Society of Jesus make it desirable that our readers should know the truth about the Society of Jesus, says the Pittsburg Catholic. The society was established in 1540 Sixteen years afterward, at the death of St. Ignatius Loyola, the founder, it numbered more than 1000 members. In 1615, it counted 13,000 followers. In 1773, when it was suppressed by Pope Clement XIV., it had 22,782 adherents. To-day it has probably 13,000 members, including 1,000 in this country, and there is not one of them who is not loyal to the republic.

The Society of Jesus comprises five classes of members. In the first of these are the Jesuits par excellence. They are priests, all of them, picked men, distinguished for virtue and learning, of mature age, long in the society, who have taken the fourth vow of obedience to the Pope, so as to be always ready at his bidding to go at a moment's notice to the ends of the earth in the interest of religion and humanity. They are called the professed. From them the general, as the head superior is called, his chief assistants and the provincials are chosen.

The second grade is composed of priests, who are called spiritual coadjutors, and assist the professed in their mission of education and evangelization. Some of them are, in course of time, called up higher, but many of them never reach the first rank, as all the members are explicitly forbidden to seek promotion, either in or outside the organization; there is no wire pulling for offices or distinctions, so that, if the invitation comes from Rome to a Jesuit father to make the fourth vow, he makes it. If it is never tendered to him he never lets the omission fret him, but keeps on the even tenor of his way, doing good and making better Christians and better citizens. If their critics followed their example, they would have no time to calumniate the Jesuits.

The third class is made up of scholastics—young men who, aspiring to the sacerdotal dignity, have already made their vows and are either pursuing their course of studies or at work as teachers in the colleges of the order. It is a pity that their critics do not visit some Jesuit college and see these bright young men studying and teaching just as they did when Lord Bacon pronounced them the best educators.

The fourth rank is held by the brothers, who are otherwise known as the temporary coadjutors. They are all laymen, and have no intention to become clerics. They take the three vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, and act as laborers and domestic householders in the houses of the society. These humble lay brothers are men of the most exalted piety, and there is not one of them who could not teach the whole bench of Episcopal bishops of the United States.

The fifth class is composed of novices who intend to become either priests or brothers. Strictly speaking they are not members of the society. They enter its novitiate to study in the order, to examine their own fitness for the career it offers, to investigate its requirements, and to learn how to practice virtue even of the most exalted order. If at the end of two years' probationship they make written application for admission, and the superiors look upon them as fit subjects, they are formally received, and there and then pledge themselves to observe the counsels of the highest Christian life. But if during that period either they or the superiors are not satisfied for them to stay in the order, the door is open for them to quit at any time. And, indeed, even after a novice has taken the vows—yes, even should he become a priest—if he makes up his mind to abandon the institution, never is the slightest coercion used to detain him. The society will have no unwilling soldiers among its troops.

### THE CHURCH ABROAD.

It is said that the Cure d'Ars, the Ven. John Baptist Vianney, is to be beatified before February, 1902.

The Holy Father has appointed Cardinalis Satolli, Steinhuber and Classa as members of the commission for the correction and revision of the books of the Oriental churches.

The Cathedral of Notre Dame at Paris, which has up to the present time been only lighted with candles is about to be lighted by electricity.

It is said that the famous old log church at Alsace, Ontario, Canada will shortly be replaced by a modern brick structure. This speaks well for Catholic progress in that part of the country.

Thirty Bishops and Archbishops consecrated, in the presence of 50,000 people, the new Basilica of Our Lady of Breberies, near Armiens, France. It is an immense edifice.

JAMES G. BLAINE'S ESTIMATE ON A TRUE CATHOLIC. When some lady was introduced to the late James G. Blaine at St. Mary's Notre Dame, and there was question of her faith as a person in name, but not in practice, he said: "My highest conception of all that is great and good on earth is a true Catholic, the type of which I found in my mother." So wrote the Mother Angela (Gillespie), a near relative, who was superior of the convent.

## WEIS & FISHER CO'S. Great Alteration Sale BEGINS SATURDAY, AUGUST 10th.

We are planning extensive improvements in our State Street Store and these will necessitate an immediate reduction of our stock in all departments. We are making rush prices that will help to clear the floors quickly. If it's anything in Furniture or House-furnishings, now is the time to buy.

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