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Feast of Mary Immaculate.

Next year on December 8 the whole church will celebrate the golden jubilee of the great Feast of the Immaculate Conception. Forty-nine years ago this very week Pius IX of old holy memory solemnly promulgated the bull "Ineffabilis Deus" by which the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception was formally defined, and for ever put an end to discussion on a doctrine which had been accepted by the church from the earliest times. The advisability of the formal definition of the doctrine that "the most Blessed Virgin was, in view of Jesus Christ the Saviour of the human race, by the singular grace and favor of Almighty God, from the first moment of her conception in the womb of her mother, preserved free from all taint of original sin," had exercised the minds of many sovereign pontiffs, but when Pius Nono conferred with the bishops on the subject and requested their views, an overwhelming expression in favor of the definition of the doctrine was the response. The church had waited long but scarcely impatiently for this tribute to the Mother of God—this notice to the world that from that day forth no man should challenge her claim to have been conceived without sin, and remain a member of the church.

How strongly many of the great seats of learning and theology felt on the matter, may be judged from the action of the University of Paris as far back as the 15th century, when it made formal acceptance of the doctrine a condition for its degrees and cut off the Dominican order from the privileges of the university because of its reserved attitude towards the doctrine. More than one great doctor of the church and theologian, and strangely enough some who were most devoted to our Lady, got athwart the mighty stream of the belief of the universal church, on this subject, but their opinions were brushed aside for the opinions they were. The humblest member of the church has often as strong nose for heresy as a bench of bishops.

And now we look forward with glad expectancy to the day when that additional gem shall be added to our Heavenly Mothers diadem in the shape of the formal definition of the doctrine of her assumption in heaven. But while this is our way of paying glory to God, we find "ministers of Christ" so-called, seriously ruminating and speculating as to the advisability of longer maintaining His "Virgin birth." Last week's "British Weekly" found space for a column of this blasphemous trash. Where the rudderless craft of Protestantism will ultimately land it God alone knows, thinking men are certainly becoming indifferent.

Poor Professor Coddington.

In an open letter addressed to Dr. Coddington of Syracuse University, through the columns of the "Catholic Union and Times," the Rev. A. Guggenberger, S. J. of Canisius College, Buffalo, makes mince meat of the Professor and his charges against the distinguished religious order of which he (Father Guggenberger) is a member. It contains excellent pabulum for Protestant and Catholic minds alike. It brims over with facts, and all presented in a delightful vein of irony which piece-meal strip every shred of flesh from the ugly bones of the professor's arguments and charges. Dr. Coddington shamelessly trotted out

all the old stock calumnies against the society of Jesus and just as carefully does Father Guggenberger conduct them back to the musty dark recesses from whence they were dragged. The doctor is rebuked in delicious and stern terms for his unpardonable garbling and ignorance of Latin. Word for word does his Jesuit adversary stalk his miserable diatribe, getting in telling shots at its every turn and "double" until with the parthian shaft of a challenge to pay him or any of his bright pupils \$1,000 if he can prove his charges, he pins it to the earth. Father Guggenberger does not, cannot hope to convert a mind, so warped as to rake up at this stage of the world's history charges so disreputable, and so unfounded, but he does at least afford convincing, irrefutable proof to right minded men that attacks on the Jesuits are merely badly concealed attacks on the faith of which they have ever been the foremost and invincible champions. The Catholic Church needs no religious organization on which to lean as a prop—she is the support, not they—but she recognizes with admiration and gratitude the genuine work the Society of Jesus has done both toward the salvation of the souls of its own members, and those of mankind at large.

Hide your diminished head, Dr. Coddington, if you have any regard left for truth, honor, logic, or even a sense of the ridiculous.

Truth Sought With a String.

Miss Helen Gould has long enjoyed a reputation for charity and for good works. In fact many have thought that her efforts in this direction might balance in some degree at least, the unenviable reputation achieved for sharp business dealing by the male members of the Gould family.

In view of events of the last few weeks this good opinion of Miss Gould must be revised and she stands forth as—well one cannot help classing her with the narrowest of narrow bigwigs.

It appears that Miss Gould has maintained a sewing school in her home town of Irvington. Girls of all creeds were made welcome, so it was understood. Not long since the sewing school had some sort of an entertainment, and luncheon was served. Although the affair took place on a Friday afternoon meat sandwiches were among the viands provided. Several of the Catholic girls in attendance, so it is said, partook of these sandwiches. It may be that they forgot the day, or it may be that they gave way to a desire not to appear "out of touch" with their companions it may be that they yielded to the tempter's plea that no great harm would be done anyway. To be sure the blame rested on their own shoulders but would it not have been better for all concerned if the true spirit of politeness had been shown and guests had not been tempted to do what their conscience forbade?

The Rev. Terence Early, Catholic parish priest of Irvington, learned what had happened and told the Catholic girls that they must not attend the school if the Friday episode were repeated. Had Miss Gould been a true gentlewoman she would have apologized for what may have been a mere oversight on the part of the Gould cook. Instead she made reply that the meat sandwiches were served with full knowledge of the Catholic inhibition against eating meat on Fridays with the added insult that no one was obliged to eat them. She then went further and said, practically, that she was glad the episode had occurred since it had led her to decide upon compulsory Bible reading and study in the sewing school.

Father Early courteously pointed out that inasmuch as the King James version of the Bible would be read in the Gould school and that version dated back only to the days of King Henry VIII and was not the true version, Catholic girls could not go to the school.

Miss Gould takes issue with Father Early on the last statement as she has an undoubted right to do. In order to promote an inquiry into the origin of the Bible she has offered three prizes, \$1,000, \$500 and \$250, for the best essays on the origin of the recognized and authorized Catholic Bible and the recognized Protestant version. Were this competition

to be conducted on perfectly fair and unbiased lines, seeking as it is proclaimed, to lay bare the plain unvarnished truth, it would be of more than passing value to the educational and religious world.

What are the terms of the competition?

Those who wish to enter must pay in a dollar in order to become subscribers to a so-called "Bible Bulletin" published by the Bible Teacher's Training Class, a Protestant institution, in which the terms of the competition will be published. The essays are to be limited to 8,000 words and must be not only thorough but also popular statements of fact for popular use whatever that may imply. Writers of papers must "ascertain and clearly set forth what is the authentic version (of the Bible) authorized by the Roman Catholic Church to be read in the homes of the people."

Who is to judge the comparative merit of these essays?

Inasmuch as the Catholic church is clearly one interested party to the inquiry, it would be natural to infer that one or more of the judges would be Catholic educators of repute, at least that they would be asked to serve because none but Catholics are competent witnesses as to what version of the Bible is authorized to be read in the homes of Catholics. No such thing has happened, nor is it likely to happen. The Rev. Dr. White principal of the aforesaid Bible Teacher's Training School, and the faculty of that institution, all Protestants, are designated by Miss Gould as the judges of her essays!

Verily the much advertised woman philanthropist is a lineal descendant of the financial wizard who wrecked railroads and hobnobbed with Tweed. She professes to be seeking after truth but it is determined that the truth must be what she says it is. Likewise the circulation of the "Bible Bulletin" must be boosted up.

Preacher, Heal Thyself.

One of ten Commandments of God is "Thou shalt not steal."

A Marietta street publication is the most bare-faced and persistent violator of that injunction in the realm of Catholic journalism.

A few weeks ago it tried to give its readers the impression that an article on "Unchanging Truths" specially written for the "Columbian," the official organ of the Knights of Columbus by the Rev. Dr. Mullany of Syracuse, had been contributed. Later another installment was published of Rev. Dr. Mullany's article with the statement "contributed Rev. John F. Mullany, D. D., rector of St. John's church, Syracuse."

If the editor of the publication referred to thinks he can clip any article that he sees fit and put it in his columns as a "special contribution" and imagine that he is the only one who would know the difference between an article stolen and one that was paid for he is very much mistaken and he should learn to give credit where credit is due.

One of the injunctions of Holy Writ is to cast the mote out of thine own eye before attempting to cast the beam out of thy brother's eye.

Before the booklet attempts to call down its contemporaries, either of the daily or Catholic press, it should learn to stick to the truth in all things and not appropriate to its columns, small as they are, the very able articles written by our Reverend friend of Syracuse, without giving credit where credit is due.

Miss Helen Gould professes to desire the whole truth as to whether Catholics read the Bible but she insists that the verdict must be rendered by a jury packed with Protestants who have prejudged the case adversely in advance.

Judging from newspaper reports General Wood is in the wrong pew. He should have been in the post office department.

Those who are fighting to prevent Apostle Reed Smoot taking his seat in the United States Senate are admitting the weakness of their case when they concede that "we have a hard fight before us. We know that the Senate cannot be swayed as easily as the House was in the Robert's case."

"Was there ever a time when superstition was so rife in civilized communities, as during the last sixty years?" asks a writer in a secular contemporary. What's more, he proceeds to cite proofs in support of his contention. This will not please the adherents of the "higher education" fetish.

Labor and capital should get together else they will destroy each other. One cannot exist without the other.

Thomas and Benjamin must have been the cognomens of the Kilkenny cats of ancient memory.

Book Notes.

"The Catholic Home Annual" for 1904 is up to the usual standard of excellence set for it by its publishers. The frontispiece is a portrait of our Holy Father Pius X and an interesting biographical sketch accompanies the picture. There is also an illustrated biography of Leo XIII. Besides these, there are short stories by such well known authors as Marion Ames Taggart, Frances Maitland and many others. The book teems with beautiful illustrations and is well gotten up throughout. It costs but 25 cents and is published by Benziger Bros.

"Little Folks Annual" This is a miniature replica of the above, published for children. It contains quite a few short stories, biographies of the saints, and has many beautiful illustrations. The price of the booklet is 10 cents and it is published by the same house as is the above.

"Saint Cuthberts" by J. E. Copus S. J. We are glad to see a new book from the pen of Father Copus. When his first book was put on the market a short time ago the critics acknowledged that it was a good book, but they raised the usual cry that a writer could not be called a good author until he had written at least two good books. Father Copus has given abundant proof that he belongs to the first class of Catholic authors. "Harry Russell" has found a worthy successor in "Saint Cuthberts." Both are bright, wholesome stories and are well worth reading. They are published by Benziger Bros.

"Monsanto and Languellier's Practical Course in Spanish." We take great pleasure in calling our readers attention to a new Spanish grammar published by the American Book Company. "Monsanto and Languellier's Spanish Course" has been before the public so long that no extended mention of its merits need be made. The advance in linguistics however and the new rules of accentuation promulgated by the Spanish Academy have made a revision necessary. This work has been well performed by Professor Josephyn of Boston University. This book while being very valuable in the class room is also adapted for private instruction. The price of the book is \$1.25. Its publishers are the American Book Company of New York, Chicago and Cincinnati.

"Visits to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament" This is the title of a new prayer book from the pen of the author of "Avis Spirituels." It is translated from the French by Grace McAuliffe and is published in this country by Benziger Brothers. The prayer book costs 75 cents.

Five Minute Sermon

John Bears Witness to Christ.

St. John informed the Jews of the nature of his mission, and directed their attention to the prophecy of the Isaiah which foretold his coming, by quoting the words of prophet: "Speak to the heart of Jerusalem, saith the Lord, and call aloud to her; be ye comforted, My people, for your evil is come to an end. Then shall ye hear a voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight His paths." He also gave them a striking proof of his great humility, for though promised by an angel, born by a prodigy of the Most High and sanctified before his birth by the presence of the Redeemer, yet he merely says of himself: "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness."

We should learn to practise humility as St. John did, by confession sincerely our nothingness, but not sounding our own praises even when there may be occasion to do so without danger of ostentation, and by suffering with patience injurious words even when performing faithfully our duties.

We should consider what our own answer will be when, like St. John, we asked: "Who art thou?" Grant, O Lord, that we may be able to answer when the time comes: "We are Christians." Lastly, let us apply to ourselves these words: "Make straight the way of the Lord." Let us make every effort to prepare for the spiritual new-birth of Jesus Christ in our souls.

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