

THE BARD OF AVON.

SHAKESPEARE, SAYS FATHER BLACKMORE, WAS A CATHOLIC

The Poet's Parents Were Catholics, and There is Every Proof That the Great Writer Lived and Died Faithful to the Church.

Father S. A. Blackmore in a recent lecture at Creighton university asserted that Shakespeare lived and died a Catholic. He quoted passages from the poet's writings to show his sympathy with Catholicism and his dislike for the "new religion" of the day.

"Shakespeare passed his days amid the turbulence of religious persecution," said the speaker. "His personal history was neglected for several hundred years after his death and the scraps of history which were recorded of him were prejudiced by non-Catholic persons."

"Shakespeare was not a Protestant; he was not a follower of the reformation; he met with no patronage from those of his age. He lived at the apex of two great religious epochs. We have no right to consider him an offspring of the reformation, for had he been such he would have been imbued with the spirit that was uppermost during his time in England. He represented the noblest product of the middle age—Catholicism. Non-Catholics were wont to assume that he was a Protestant, that his thoughts embraced the new religion."

"It was political circumstances that caused Elizabeth to embrace Protestantism, of which she never missed an opportunity to express her private dislike. If Shakespeare joined the new religion he had every chance to give expression to the same, which he did not."

"The poet's mother and father were both faithful Catholics, a fact that is indisputable. There is documentary evidence to show that they suffered much for their faith. They did not forsake their religion, notwithstanding the troublesome times in which they lived. In his last testament and will Shakespeare's father expressed his belief in all the dogmas of the Catholic church, which fact was never questioned until many years after the death of the illustrious bard, when his religious tenets were brought into dispute. The entire town of Stratford was Catholic. Shakespeare's relatives and close friends were avowedly Catholic."

"When the poet went to London he associated with those who were aligned against those who stood for the religious persecutions obtaining at that time, which persecutions were arrayed against the Catholics. When Elizabeth died Shakespeare, alone among the poets of his day, refused to pen even a line in memory of the dead queen."

"When King James assumed the throne all looked for a change of religious conditions, but such not coming to pass then Shakespeare was moved to write his great epic dramatic poem, 'Julius Caesar,' which reflected the tyranny of the day."

"From a material standpoint, with his rising success and fame, the poet had every reason to join the majority and renounce his faith in Catholicism, but instead he left London and returned to the solitude of Avon. 'The times were out of joint,' he expressed it. His closest and staunchest friends were being summarily dealt with, and his state of mind changed. His anguish and suffering of mind were marked in his writings at that time. But with all this there is no proof that he changed his religion. On the contrary, we have every proof that he lived and died a Catholic. There are records on file at Oxford to substantiate that fact."

"In his plays he carefully avoided appealing to the popular notions against the Catholic faith. He expressed a decided aversion against the Bible quoting Puritans of the day. The mainspring of the poet's aversion to Protestantism was his love for Catholicism. He ridiculed the clergy of the new church, but not that of the Catholic faith, although the latter was the wont of his contemporaries. His plays teem with teachings and suggestions of the Catholic faith, and he held in respect those things particularly revered by the Catholics."—New York Herald.

A Sensation Spoiled.

Another canard has been exploded. Some time ago we read of the sensational clause in the last will and testament of the cardinal bishop of Valencia, in Spain, who had bequeathed 50,000 pesetas to the first Spanish general that would land an invading army on the island of Cuba. Now comes the former secretary of the deceased cardinal declaring the story positively fictitious. While we have all read the report of the bequest in our dailies, we are straining our eyes to find the denial in any of these "hurry up" sheets. It's "hurry up" when there is question of slandering the memory of some Catholic dignitary, but there is no haste in correcting erroneous statements of this order.—Catholic Tribune.

Watch Your Own Faults.

There are no absolutely perfect persons in this world. There are very many in it, however, who make capital associates, friends and neighbors—if you are not all the while in search of their faults. The one who is ever on the watch for them would not half so well stand a keen scrutiny as some of those in whom he discovers flaws.

The Philippine Fund.

The secular press is worrying a good deal about what the Philippine friars will do with that \$7,000,000. It is just possible they may use the fund to buy dynamite. An examination of church basements reveals the fact that the stock is getting low.—Catholic Union and Times.

GERMANY AND THE JESUITS

The End of the Campaign Against the Catholic Clergy.

After a long and persistent fight for the right by the Catholics of Germany the Bundesrath (federal council) assented a few days ago to the bill passed by the reichstag repealing the anti-Jesuit paragraph of the law of July 4, 1872, prohibiting Jesuits from settling in Germany.

This action of the Bundesrath wipes out the last vestige of Bismarck's campaign against the Roman clergy and gives Catholics an equal position before the law with Protestants.

Since Emperor William's gift to the Catholics in Jerusalem, in 1893, of that bit of land in Palestine known as "L'Adoration de la Sainte Vierge," it has been certain that Catholic disabilities would be removed.

The government had to rely greatly on the Center (Catholic) party. That party passed the naval bills, and when the reichstag and the government were deadlocked over the tariff bill a year ago the Center party leaders reached an understanding with the government to permit the Jesuits to return. The delay in the Bundesrath's acting on the reichstag resolution of last June was due to Protestant opposition in the smaller German states, which prevented the sovereigns of those states from instructing their representatives in the Bundesrath to agree to readmit the Jesuits. Some delicate negotiations since carried on by Chancellor von Bulow resulted finally in the action recorded above and the triumph of militant Catholicity.

Charity in All Things.

The knowledge that a woman is or a jealous, narrow disposition immediately lowers her in the estimation of others. Such a disposition is both unlovely and unhappy, and its influence is baneful. Nothing could possibly be more ignoble or contemptible than jealousy. It is the daughter of pride and shows how miserably handicapped one is. How different is the woman who cultivates a spirit of charity and who contents herself by being a comfort to herself and to others. She is God's own angel diffusing light and sweetness, and those who are fortunate enough to know her hail her presence a blessing. If you would be happy and lovable, then, learn the value of charity in all things. Make it a rule to say something kind each day and try to see others at their best. Those who are the givers of happiness are the receivers of God's choicest blessing.

Captain Sartoris a Convert.

One of the most noted acquisitions to the Catholic Church in St. Louis recently is the conversion of Captain Algernon Sartoris, General Grant's grandson. He was baptized in the chapel connected with the St. Louis university by the Rev. Father Conway, S. J. The Most Rev. J. J. Glennon, archbishop of St. Louis, acted as sponsor. Captain Sartoris was a former member of the Episcopal church. He came to St. Louis about two months ago. Captain Sartoris won his title during the Spanish-American war. Since his coming to St. Louis he has been living with his mother, Mrs. Nellie Grant Sartoris, at the Grand Avenue hotel. The other members of the family are non-Catholics. Captain Sartoris is twenty-four years old and unmarried.—St. Louis Dispatch.

Rev. Father Thomas E. Cox.

Rev. Father Thomas E. Cox, a member of the subcommittee of the citizens' committee which is investigating the administration of justice in the criminal court, Chicago, has been a student for years of sociological subjects and prominently identified with the total abstinence movement in the Roman Catholic Church. For a number of years he was associated with Rev. Thomas F. Cashman at St. Jarlath's church, and upon the appointment of Bishop Quigley to the archbishopric of the Chicago diocese he was made assistant pastor of the Holy Name cathedral. He is about sixty years old and was selected by Judge Tutill as a member of the committee now investigating criminal court procedure on testimonials asserting his fitness.

The Abbe Loisy.

The Giornale D'Italia declares that the Holy Office, whose members are bound to the strictest secrecy, has decided upon the excommunication of the Abbe Loisy, who has refused to renounce his methods of Biblical research. Public announcement of the excommunication is left to the discretion of Cardinal Richard, who has jurisdiction over the abbe. The works of Abbe Loisy, the Roman Catholic Biblical critic, were not acceptable to the Vatican, and five of his best known books were recently placed upon the Index Expurgatorius. The abbe was reported to have submitted to this suspension of his writings.

SHORT SERMONS.

Penance is the daughter of hope, the renouncement of infidelity and despair.

The way of the cross is the path of the predestinate, the way of the saints, the royal road, the king's highway.

Let a man but have an aim, a purpose, and opportunities to attain his end shall start forth like buds at the kiss of spring.

Let us be men with men, and always children before God, for in his eyes we are but children. Old age itself, in presence of eternity, is but the first moment of morning.

We attain to heaven by using this world well, though it is to pass away; we perfect our nature, not by undoing it, but by adding to it what is more than nature, and directing it toward a higher than its own.

CATHOLICS IN KOREA

THEIR NUMBERS ARE NOW NEARING THE FIFTY THOUSAND MARK.

The Hardships and Persecutions Suffered by the Early Missionaries to the Hermit Kingdom—The Great Massacre of Christians in 1868.

Persecution and martyrdom may, indeed, be said to be almost the normal condition of the Church in Korea, where sanguinary edicts penalized the adoption of Christianity. The peninsula, surrounded by the sea on three sides and on the fourth separated from the mainland by an uninhabited wilderness 10,000 square miles in extent, maintained its rigorous isolation down to a comparative recent date. No communication was permitted with foreign ships except in Korean boats, and even shipwrecked crews were thrown into prison. Access from the land was cut off by frontier guards, whose task was rendered easy by the desolation of the country and the absence of roads through it. It was not until 1876 that a commercial treaty was signed even with Japan, and the opening of treaty ports to Europeans came later still.

Yet these difficulties did not daunt heroic missionaries, of whom the pioneer was a Chinese priest. This harlinger of the Gospel succeeded in the year 1795 in his daring attempt to pass the frontier in disguise and on Easter Sunday celebrated Mass for the first time in the pagan kingdom. He lived and taught for six years, but in 1801 suffered martyrdom, with 300 of his disciples. His fate did not deter others from following in his footsteps, and many other missionaries shared his crown. The first vicar apostolic and two priests fell victims to a persecution in 1839, and with them 127 natives died for the faith. Catholicism for the time seemed stamped out in blood, and it was not until 1845 that the next vicar apostolic succeeded in making his way once more into the midst of the lost or scattered flock.

The courage and perseverance required to reach them may be measured by the fact that one of his priests spent ten years in a series of attempts to penetrate the barriers, in which he at last succeeded in 1862. Yet, few and insufficient as were the missionaries, under these circumstances their labors were crowned with an abundant harvest. In 1868 the Catholics numbered 25,000, among whom were several native candidates for the priesthood. The enthusiastic piety of many of the converts seemed to open the vista of a future full of promise, and it might have appeared as though the nascent Church had survived the most perilous stage of its existence. But its progress no doubt alarmed the jealous timorousness of paganism and in the year 1866 the storm of persecution burst in full force on pastor and flock. On March 8 the vicar apostolic was beheaded with three companions and before the end of the month five other priests had suffered martyrdom.

These executions were the prelude to a general massacre of native Christians in which some 10,000 perished, including those who died of the hardships and sufferings endured in seeking escape. For ten years Korea remained inaccessible to Catholic missionaries. Deprived of priests and teachers, the surviving remnant of the Christian population had but the memory of what they had once learned to keep alive the spark of faith in their hearts. But it was ready to revive under favoring circumstances, and these came with the return of the missionaries in May, 1876. "On their return," writes Bishop Mutel, vicar apostolic, summarizing the history of the mission in his report for the year 1900, "the Christians had been so persecuted and harried that at first the missionaries could find but a few thousands scattered here and there among the pagans. Only the most urgent work could be undertaken."

"At first no regular ministrations, still less the keeping of registries, was to be thought of. Not till later on was it possible to reckon up our losses. The victims of the persecution may be estimated at 10,000, including both those who perished at the hands of the executioner and those who succumbed to misery and every kind of privation. Of the 15,000 survivors, two-thirds remained faithful and awaited but the return of the missionaries to approach the sacraments. The others fell into a state of tepidity and returned but by degrees." The number of apostates was very small, consisting either of neophytes imperfectly grounded in the faith or of rich people concerned to save their temporal goods.

Of many of the martyrs who died in this wholesale persecution the names and story will never be known, but all will be honored comprehensively as Korean martyrs. The subsequent growth of the Church in Korea is due rather to adult baptisms than to natural increase, for though the birth rate is high it is counteracted by a correspondingly high figure of infant mortality. The Catholic population was estimated in 1900 at 42,441, but owing to inevitable omissions the vicar apostolic believes the real figure would have been nearer 45,000.—London Tablet.

Papal Appointments.

By recent action of His Holiness, Vicar General Mgr. Mooney of New York becomes a prothonotary apostolic, with the right to wear the miter. Vicar General Michael J. Lavelle, rector of St. Patrick's cathedral, New York, becomes domestic prelate to the Pope. The Right Rev. Thomas F. Kennedy, rector of the American college at Washington, is made prothonotary apostolic, thus ranking with the highest national rectors of Rome. Mgr. Kennedy is a native of Conshohocken, Pa., where he was born in 1857.

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