The Catholic Journal.

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ST. PETER'S IN ROME

ITS COMPELLING POWER OF WORSHIP AND REVERENCE.

A Methodist Minister's Account of the Way the Sublime Old Catholic Cathedral Forced Him to His Knees In Prayer In Spite of Himself.

Curiously enough, in an article written for the New York Christian Advocate (Methodist) by A. H. Tuttle, D. D., we find, along with references to "thousands whose consciences are rocked to sleep in the cradle of priestly rites" and who "would never know of a vital religion except for the clear testimony of our (Methodist) people," the following fine tribute to the glorious pile that rises above the resting place of the prince of apostles:

"One day our little company went by themselves over the Ælian bridge to that most majestic building in the world, St. Peter's cathedral. Every time I enter it its power grows upon me. It is the house of God not alone in the sense that it was erected for His worship. That is true of every church. But this one impels to worship—in my mind, imperatively commands it. Here is the most perfect symbolic expression of the soul's deepest want that human genius has ever devised. Some may sneer at the idea of any vital union between symbolism and devotion, calling it aestheticism or, what is worse, idolatry. But architecture, pictures, music and ritual, which have their origin in the soul's aspiration for the divine, cannot be of the devil, as the iconoclasts believed. It is certain that here this morning they forced me to my knees.

"We walked together under these lofty arches in vast spaces where human beings seemed to shrivel to the stature of a hand's breadth. The great central dome swells out like the vault of the sky and is so perfectly illuminated that the prophets and the apostles painted there seemed to be living realities hovering over us in the air. All around us are the monuments of the heroes and saints of the Church. Incense is continually ascending. The Mass is forever being performed, helping the devotion of feeble hearts, just as a mother helps its child to say its prayers. Music from some unseen organ floats through the spaces like an invisible host singing glories. Everywhere and in everything are proclaimed the majesty and holiness of God. How insignificant I felt and how sinful before His glory and His power! I was troubled and alarmed. Who can stand before God?

"With such feelings I came to an altar over which hung a picture of the Crucified One. His bleeding hands seemed to be extended to me, and His eyes of love penetrated my heart. His lips seemed to say, 'I have redeemed thee with My blood.' My spirit bowed in adoration and was filled with an indescribable peace."

It is a common thing to hear visitors at the first sight of St. Peter's complain that it falls short of their expectations; that it seems much smaller than they had imagined. Such is, indeed, the case. But this impression arises not because the building is small, but because of its perfect proportions. Each part is so well adapted to all the rest that the gigantic dimensions of the structure are toned and mellowed into harmonious appearance. In reality it is difficult to imagine that the measurements of St. Peter's reach the following immense figures: It is 614 feet in length, 445 in breadth, 152 in height. The distance from the floor to the cross surmounting the dome is 448 feet, while the dome itself is 139 feet in diameter and 443 in circumference. All this, added to the glittering ornamentation that decks every inch of St. Peter's, fully justifies the enthusiastic language of a writer of sixty years ago: "We have before us a scene which no earthly edifice ever presented,—which no imagination can picture, no pen describe. The vastness, the solitude, the symmetry, the richness, the beauty, the grandeur, the gorgeous magnificence in a word, that surrounds us on every side enchants the eye, expands the mind, warms the heart, lifts the soul to the lofty objects of eternity and prompts us to fall down in spontaneous and grateful acknowledgment to God, who has gifted man with such sublime conceptions and enabled him to call forth such wondrous creations."—Catholic Citizen.

A Duty of the Courts.

"It is refreshing in these days of iconoclasm," says Judge Brown of the surrogate court of Rochester, N. Y., "to find people to whom their religion is of some vital moment, who earnestly believe that their children should be brought up in their religion, and we consider that it is the duty of the courts, so far as it consistently can be done, to see to it that guardians who have charge of the custody of infants should be of the same religion as the deceased parents and should be earnest in leading said infants to follow the religion of those parents." This statement was made in the course of a decision transferring to the care of its grandparents a Catholic orphan hitherto confided to its aunt, who has been married by a Protestant clergyman to an Episcopalian. On the face of it the decision is entirely conformable to equity and common sense, and it is to be hoped that the precedent it establishes may be very generally followed.—Ave Maria.

The Human Soul.

The human soul is God's highest creation and noblest organ, and His clearest revelation must be through that and through the noblest part of the human soul. Every form of genius is inferior to conscience, to the heart, to faith, sympathy and love.

IN THE PHILIPPINES.

Protestant Missionaries a Failure In the Islands.

At the recent conference of the Friends of the Indian and Other Dependent Peoples held at Lake Mohonk, N. Y., Dr. Andrew S. Draper, former president of the University of Illinois and at present commissioner of education of New York state, who presided, in speaking of the situation in the Philippine Islands said:

"The business of the hour is to develop the industrial habits and the moral sense and the political wisdom of these people, so that they may be safely admitted to exercise sovereignty and independence of their own.

"Our Protestant missionaries are assuming to contest the ground, but in comparison with the work of the Roman Catholic Church their doings are not a delight to us. It seems to be the fact that the Protestant denominations have agreed upon some division of territory so as to avoid conflicts with one another, so far as may be, but there is no possibility of avoiding rivalry with the Church of Rome in any part of our insular territory. I cannot help wondering if it is worth while.

"I have none but Puritan blood in my veins, but I no longer fear that any church will subvert American political institutions. I think that the Roman Catholic Church will be made more thoroughly American by giving it American confidence. No one can doubt its spirituality or its patriotism.

"I am in favor of Protestantism wherever it can be self sustained, but I do not fear to express my misgivings about the wisdom of the policy which taxes weak churches in America to support weak churches in our island possessions, with no prospect of those churches becoming self supporting, so long as one strong Church is on the ground, is occupying it forcefully and is evidently adapted to the situation."

Sunday Observance.

Nature exacts certain times for the functions necessary for the life of the body. Is it wrong, then, that religion demands fixed times for the care of the soul? All people have had definite days consecrated to the worship of the divinities which they adored. If, then, the Third Commandment reserves a particular day for rendering external worship to God it only determines a duty imposed by the law of nature. And when in the church Sunday is substituted for the Sabbath the existing natural and divine law is not abrogated; its observance is rather emphasized. The Sabbath reminded the Jew of the rest of God the Creator; this Sunday reminds the Christian of the Father's production of light, of the Son's triumph over death and sin, of the descent of the Holy Ghost upon the apostles. As the proper observance of the Jewish religious festivals was the gauge of the people's religious life, so may the observance of the Sunday be called the thermometer of Christian piety, the very pulse of the Christian life.—Catholic Home Companion.

Respect the Church.

Catholics should remember that the church is a sacred edifice, wherein our Lord and Saviour dwells in the Blessed Sacrament. While in church one should wear a devout and recollected composure, realizing the presence of Christ Himself; hence it is very unbecoming for any one to engage in a conversation before the Blessed Sacrament and still more so to turn the church into a bowing school, bowing to the right and bowing to the left on the way down the aisle. Catholics in attending Mass should attach much importance to being present at the commencement of the holy sacrifice. Coming late not only shows disrespect to God, disobedience to the Church, but discomforts and distracts those who have a better Catholic spirit and come in time. It may be good form to go to a theater late in order to show one's jewels and apparel, but it is bad taste, bad manners and bad Catholic spirit to come late to Mass.—Church Calendar of West Virginia.

Love.

There are few souls so base but some fond heart is ready to trust them. God sometimes sends the clinging vine up the dead trunk of the tree to teach us that even in death His grace clings green and vigorous and to remind us that the wretched life, though deformed and unsightly, can be made beautiful by ever clinging love.

Note This.

Many Catholic business men who ask why the Catholic public does not patronize them might perhaps find an answer in the fact that they do not advertise in their Catholic newspaper.—Providence Visitor.

THE ADVENT SEASON

IT MARKS THE OPENING OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL NEW YEAR.

The Four Weeks Are Dedicated by the Church to Fasting and Prayer and Preparation For the Coming of Our Saviour at Christmas Time.

Advent, which marks the opening of the ecclesiastical new year and which in the days of old was kept with almost the same strictness as Lent, is a time when we are called upon to give a little more serious consideration to the things that are above. The season of four weeks is one of prayer and preparation for the advent or coming or our blessed Saviour. And the number of weeks so set apart for preparation are supposed to represent the 4,000 years that preceded the first coming of Christ—that long period from the "fall" until the Redeemer came to bring man light and hope and salvation.

As during these long centuries the faithful prayed and hoped for the Messiah, so does the church exhort us during these four weeks to prepare for the advent of the Saviour, telling us "the night is passed, the day is at hand. Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light." It also reminds us of that second advent when Christ comes with great power and majesty to judge the living and the dead.

In words vivid and pathetic St. Luke tells how that last day will be ushered in—"Signs in the sun and in the moon and in the stars, the roaring of the sea, men withering away with fear and expectation of what will come"—the sad story of a world's wreckage, the abandonment of a planet which, cast in the great inane, moves into an eternity of silence, the sealing of every fountain, the ending of every life, the final undoing of the first "fiat" spoken by the Almighty, a dream that's over, a song that is sung, a withered planet, a falling star, and then the judgment, the final judgment of a just God on all nations that once peopled the globe.

Now, there be those that say that this description of St. Luke's is dramatic. The judgment itself is useless and meaningless, for, they say, judgment, if judgment there be, is passed on each one at death. Why, then, a general judgment? To which the holy writers give many reasons in answer, and we will take only one of these reasons, the cogency of which will, I think, appeal to you and will appeal all the more in proportion to the experiences every year brings to you.

Oftentimes it is preached to you that God is just. Sometimes you are led to doubt it, because you claim to see little evidence of it here below. Everywhere you see man's inhumanity to man. You see vice triumphant, virtue neglected. Some you see who every day struggle beneath a cross and eventually go down, hopelessly crushed beneath its shadow. Others, made rich by accident, glory in the abundance of life, surrounded by luxuries which are oftentimes acquired at cost of others' tears, sometimes even of their lives. And thus the weary world goes on until you often wonder whether the power that rules is a fate that is blind, absolutely heedless of men's rejoicing or their despair.

The mother stands by the open grave where they lay to rest the child that she loved. She asks, "Is there justice here?" The grave is silent. The young woman, innocent, too confiding, now betrayed, the rejected of men, stands by river bank where the rolling waters call her to oblivion. She may appeal to darkened skies and turgid waters for justice. They are silent.

On the other hand, the man who glories in his wealth, jeers at his victims, applauds great nature and, challenging God, may want to know if justice has any meaning except when measured in the terms of success—such success, for instance, as he has achieved—he also will find no answer. He may go on in his career applauded by his fellows and when the time comes be buried with honor.

All this is true, as your daily experience may testify. True, the ways of God are silent ways. He is merciful here below, though we may not always see His mercies. Each one can work his own way for the few evanescent hours that make up life here, but the hours pass, the day is soon over, the life is ended, and then—then the judgment.

And all these particular judgments set together make up the great accounting of the last day, where God's eternal justice will be plainly vindicated. There the child taken in its first bloom from loving parents will be given back to them, now one of the brightest flowers that bloom in the garden of God. The one unjustly wronged shall there be righted. The one who bore a cross faithfully to the end shall see the cross make way for the crown. There shall be "balm of Gilead" for broken hearts and the smile of God for those who here below met only contempt and blasphemy.

So the final judgment is that "faroff divine event toward which all creation moves," and in its alembic will be found the solution of many of life's mysteries, the undoing of all its wrongs, the coronation of every virtue and the vindication of a Saviour, merciful, patient and infinitely just.—Archbishop Glennon.

Patience.

We are so apt to be didactic with God—to say: "See here: we've had night long enough. It's time for morning, and if we don't find joy now your word is false!" My dear friends, it is borne in upon us, to some by time, to some by bitter sorrow and experience, that God's morning is not always our morning. God grant us patience to wait until His time!

SHORT SERMONS.

Every moment of time may be made to bear the burden of something which is eternal.

Since the sacred heart has no more cherished love than meekness, humility and charity we must cling to these dear virtues.

The golden moments in the stream of life rush past us, and we see nothing but sand. The angels come to visit us, and we know them only when they are gone.

To be sympathetic is to hold the key of true charity. He who is sympathetic has his entrance into all hearts and is the solver of all human problems. To him is given dominion where he thinks to serve.

As the flower is gnawed by frost, so every human heart is gnawed by faithlessness. And as surely, as irrevocably, as the fruit bud falls before the east wind, so falls the power of the kindest human heart if you meet it with poison.

Heroic Sisters.

At Valparaiso when the earthquake occurred the house of the Sisters of the Poor rang with cries for help from over a hundred old men who resided therein. The good sisters immediately began to attend to the latter and brought them out one after another into the street. They carried some of them in their arms and placed them in safety. When the last of their pensioners had been saved one of the old men was missing, and the religious immediately went in search of him, but meanwhile the building collapsed, and eight of the devoted and courageous nuns were buried in the ruins.

SHORT SERMONS.

What we want of all things is our hearts softened, and sorrow softens them sooner and more effectually than joy.

Turn away from the gloom and take up the task of helping others. The light will come again, and you will grow strong.

Do not believe that all greatness and heroism are in the past. Learn to discover princes, prophets, heroes and saints among the people about you. Be assured they are there.

Rev. John J. Wynne, S. J., of New York has resigned from the general directorship of the Apostleship of Prayer and League of the Sacred Heart and will confine his efforts to editing the Messenger and in preparation of the Catholic encyclopedia.

The Pope maintains a mosaic factory in the Vatican. Here the patient artists work in a gallery lined with 20,000 lockers, which contain sticks of silica of all the myriad varying shades required to reproduce the tints from canvas.

Happiness.

Don't ask to be happy all the time. Happiness in this life is served in slices, like cucumbers, and needs lots of pepper and vinegar to make it wholesome. An exclusive diet of bliss would make us regular dyspeptics and pampered nuisances, like overfed poodles. Be thankful if you are served with happiness, then, in the ratio of one teaspoonful to the entire lemon, or if you find as much opportunity to laugh as the robin does to eat in a garden where the scarecrows are thicker than the cherries.

Roumania's Population.

Roumania is inhabited by a bewildering variety of races, but whether of Greek, Slav or Teutonic lineage, the modern Roumanian makes it a point of honor to claim descent from the colonists whom Trajan planted in the conquered province of Dacia, A. D. 107. Calling themselves Romuni and their language Romunie, the proud citizens seldom draw out a legal document without some allusion to their founder, whom they style "the divine Trajan." The Roumanian language reflects the composition of the race, and now only faintly suggests the language which Trajan spoke.

Timbuctoo's Big Game.

Timbuctoo used to be a region of which most Europeans had heard little and knew less. But that hazy time is past now. Timbuctoo is being proclaimed to the world as a Nimrod's paradise. Quite recently a small party of sportsmen bagged five elephants in the Goune district. It is declared that in more than one district of eighteen miles square more than two hundred head of elephant may be found. Altogether, it is claimed for this part of French Africa that it is a splendid region for big game, and that the attention of sportsmen should be directed to it.

THE WHITE FATHERS

FORCED TO LEAVE FRENCH TERRITORY BY NEW LAW.

Founded by Cardinal Lavigerie to Civilize Northern Africa For France They Are Now Laboring For Germany In Her Colonies.

All the world has heard of the White Fathers of Africa. Founded about a quarter of a century ago by Cardinal Lavigerie for work in northern Africa, especially along the southern borders of Algeria, Tunis, Tripoli and Morocco, the order has recently been subjected to a surprising change of masters, according to the Marquese de Fontenoy.

For years this religious body has played a notable role in connection with the promotion of the colonial interests of France—has now, by reason of the latter's new laws aimed against the religious associations, been compelled to leave French territory, although it is hoped that the law does not apply to Algiers.

Taking advantage thereof, Emperor William has offered a refuge in his dominions to the White Fathers. He has furnished them with sites and subsidies for the construction of a seminary and of a big monastery at Altkirche, in Alsace, which is to serve as headquarters of the order, and has arranged that every facility shall be given to the fathers to pursue in the German colonies in Africa, and also in Morocco, where German influence is now paramount, the work which they have until now been doing with so much success in France's African dependencies.

The order in question may be regarded as the modern embodiment of the Knights of Malta and of the Knights Templars of the crusading days, for it is a military as well as a religious order and has sometimes been known as that of the Warrior Monks of the Sahara. The steel helmet of the Knights Templars of olden days is replaced by one made of cork, with duly patented ventilating apparatus. The visor, instead of being metal, is of cloth, similar to those worn by the Tuareg Arabs covering the entire lower portion of the face, and in lieu of the pennant lance there is a far more deadly weapon in the shape of a repeating rifle.

Their programme has been to attract sympathy and good will by the development of the productiveness of the existing oases and by the creation of new ones, where stations have been formed for the relief of the sick, for the offer of hospitality to all comers irrespective of creed and for the refuge and protection of fugitive slaves. They have endeavored to afford to the natives practical demonstration of the benefits and advantages of civilization, to preach by example the elements thereof and to thus prepare the ground for conversion to Christianity. The latter, although the principal object, is the last in order, for, instead of proselytism preparing the ground for the seeds of civilization, with the White Fathers it is the elements of civilization which prepare the ground for the seeds of Christianity.

The headquarters of the order have now been at Biskra, on the Algerian borders of the great Sahara desert, on a plantation known by the name M'Salla, which is the Arab designation for the "place of prayer," consisting almost wholly of desert land reclaimed by the monks.

The White Fathers take vows for only five years, but may renew them from period to period. There never has been any lack of volunteers or, to speak more correctly, of postulants for admission to the order, now over a thousand strong. Most of them are men of birth and education. On the roster of the order are to be found such noble names as those of Esterhazy, De Brecourt, De Polignac, De Ligne, Rohan, Ursel, La Rochefoucauld, Stolberg, De Beaumont, De Musset, De Montigny and many others, the names of the French nobility predominating. Hitherto an essentially French order, the White Fathers has now become to all intents and purposes a German one and will henceforth furnish to the German "noblesse" the same opportunities of combining military adventure with religion that attracted the knights of olden times to the formerly militant but now purely honorary orders of Malta and St. John of Jerusalem.

Mary's Influence.

If Catholic lands and Catholic homes today are beautiful in their simplicity of virtue, in their unfailing permanency, in their benediction, it is largely due to the sweet memories and special benediction of Mary, the mother of God. If the Christian mother is honored and is obtaining the obedience, love and devotion that her high and holy place entitles her to, it is because there are in the background high above the example and protection of Mary, the mother of God. She has been "our human nature's solitary boast," and it is under her benign influence that woman has emerged from the slavery of paganism to the white light of virtue, progress and happiness that today marks her life.—Catholic Home Companion.

OUR BURIAL CUSTOMS

A Plea For Simplicity, Refinement and Economy In Funerals.

The advertisement of an undertaker in an Irish newspaper announces the simplicity, refinement and economy are characteristics of his service in conducting funerals. It is an admirable combination of methods is that [illegible] or any other and worthy of imitation by funeral directors and their patrons everywhere. In no country on earth, perhaps, is there wider latitude or greater need for the introduction of these qualities in funeral arrangements than in our own or for their adoption among any class more than among Catholics. Extravagance and [illegible] display are common features of the average American funeral, more particularly among the very poor of the cities, least able to stand the expense. So prevalent, indeed, has become the custom that it amounts to a serious abuse, against which both the press and pulpit from time to time feel called upon to lift their voice. The [illegible] abolition of simplicity and refinement and economy in the burial of the dead is a fixed tradition with certain classes of indigent urban dwellers which nothing seems potent enough to eradicate.

In the interest in reform in the matter among Catholics rigid laws have been formulated in some dioceses and strictly enforced limiting the number of vehicles at church funerals and prohibiting elaborate floral displays and other extravagances, all to small purpose, as far as we can learn. When the prescribed number of mourning coaches have followed the hearse to the church door, a larger cortege, a concession to human vanity or mistaken sentiment, has awaited the conclusion of the religious ceremony around the corner. In this way the excellent intentions of Church authority have been and are thwarted by the very persons in whose interest they are exercised. The prohibition of Sunday funerals except in cases of necessity has effected something in the direction of betterment, but there is vast room for improvement [illegible] [illegible] customs, and we are [illegible] believe the best prospect of [illegible] reforms lies in the application [illegible] undertaking fraternity [illegible] educational motto of the Irish [illegible] director who boldly advertised [illegible] ity, refinement and economy [illegible] ing to the last earthly needs of [illegible] man.—Monitor.

[illegible] Schools.

Our schools and more especially [illegible] academies and colleges do [illegible] themselves prominently before [illegible] public. They are too hidden [illegible] The people seldom hear of them [illegible] they depend upon the people. [illegible] public they must rely. [illegible] for the weekly Catholic press [illegible] of them would be unknown [illegible] by even Catholics. [illegible] colleges and our parish schools [illegible] know that the Catholic paper is [illegible] best friend, their supporter [illegible] propagator. School [illegible] year books should be [illegible] —Louisville Record.

[illegible]

Prosperity [illegible] and [illegible] very [illegible] when [illegible] world [illegible] grow [illegible] This [illegible] which [illegible] good [illegible] Christian [illegible] one's [illegible] that [illegible] "shoals [illegible] may [illegible] the [illegible]

[illegible]

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[illegible]

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ITEMS OF INTEREST.

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The [illegible] Manhattan [illegible] [illegible]