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The Difference

Those who are back of the make-believe religious Sunday afternoon exercises in the several theaters in Rochester, so we are told, feel highly elated that they are able to attract fair-sized audiences after having invoked the strong arm of the law to close up every place where the uncouth and uncultured Rochesterian had been wont to find recreation during the closing hours of the first day of the week.

These words are penned in no uncharitable spirit. We are glad to chronicle success of any movement which we think really makes for the betterment of the community at large.

But what a shabby compliment to the influence of the churches comprised in Rochester Protestantism and their eloquent pastors! Small wonder that the blush of shame mantles their brow when they acknowledge that the message they preach has so little influence that the people will not enter their churches to hear it, and in order to make the people hear, it has been found necessary to work out a hodge-podge sort of creed—a homeopathic religion as it were—and preach that in minute sections, honeyed over with orchestral music and songs akin to the operatic!

There are eloquent preachers attached to the Protestant churches in Rochester. Their choirs and organists are paid high salaries. Why, then, will the people not go to these churches? Why is it necessary to hold make-believe services in theaters?

It must be that the Gospel message brought by these Protestant preachers does not appeal to the people, because the stage settings are perfect, the social atmosphere is correct.

Conditions are different in the Catholic churches of Rochester. No great preacher announces in advance high-sounding sermon topics. No great singer or extraordinary musical programme is heralded in the papers. But beginning at five o'clock Sunday mornings, when no one is abroad to admire gowns or hats, men and women are seen on their way to Mass and not at one service but at five and six, between 5 o'clock and noon the Catholic churches of Rochester are filled to the doors by devout worshippers who come to pray and to assist at that Unbloody Sacrifice offered up daily, yes every minute of the twenty-four hours all over the world.

The Catholic belief does not vary with preacher, with city, with country. The American, the Greek, the Asiatic, the Pole, the Spaniard, the Englishman, the Irishman all recite the same Creed, all unite in one and the same Mass and they have done so for centuries.

There's the difference? The Catholic has a tangible religion imparted by authority. It is the message brought to earth by Jesus Christ and handed on down through the Ages by His Apostles and their successors. It appeals to the Reason as well as to the Heart. It is a living, breathing, tangible religion, not a hazy, hodge-podge fraud with which

the devotees of latter-day Protestantism try to fool themselves and which does not deceive the People, at least not very long.

He Is Right.

Because Cardinal Gibbons saw fit to declare that he preferred high license to the local option proposition of the Anti-Saloon League, one of the paid agitators of the latter organization—who writes like an Apaiist—rushed in to print with an attack on his Eminence.

The high esteem in which Cardinal Gibbons is held even of non-Catholics is evidenced by the following vigorous defense made by Rev. Dr. Cady before his parishioners in the First Congregational church in Dubuque, Iowa:

"I want to protest against the recent attack made on Cardinal Gibbons, as unbrotherly, un-Christian, illiberal, and even indecent. Cardinal Gibbons is a Christian gentleman, who is second to none in his desire to help humanity and to protect the weak. I have no doubt that if he could wipe the cursed stuff out of the world with a word, that word would be spoken so quick that it would reverberate over the entire land. I have no doubt that the American saloon is as disgusting and nauseating to him as it is to me—and that is enough to suit anybody I reckon.

"No one doubts that my brother and friend (and I am proud to be able to call him both) Archbishop Keane is just as eager to eliminate the saloon from our social life as I am and that he hates it for all its crimes as much as any Protestant that ever lived. He would not hesitate one moment if it were given him to stop the whole business. The utterances of the great Church to which they belong pledge them to this and they have been true to the councils of the Church. But Cardinal Gibbons does not feel that prohibition is feasible in all places—I am not sure, but I faintly recollect the Archbishop telling me that he felt thus in regard to Dubuque.

"Now do you think that after all he has done, after knowing Christian manhood and his sterling fidelity to truth that I am going to accuse him of being bribed, or intimidated, or truckling to the business he hates? Nor shall I keep quiet when men with more enthusiasm than brains rush in to traduce men who are honest, because they differ on the method but on the principle are one.

"I do not know the man who made the attack and I do not want to—the foolkiller must have been taking a lay off that day and missed a splendid opportunity! That honest and Christian men may differ on methods of attaining the same end, never occurs to some men—probably for the obvious reason as Sojourner Truth said, 'Honey, I would tell you some things but I see you hain't got nothing to carry it home in.'

"No greater tactical mistake could have been made. It has done the cause of temperance more injury than all the tirades of the liquor men. It is only another illustration that often it may be said of a reform as some historian said of Napoleon's army crossing the Alps, 'It was regarded by the number of asses it took along.'"

Says the Cleveland Leader, commenting on Catholic genius in America, with special reference to immigration: "In the large view, the Catholic church has rendered services of immense value in guiding these multitudes of immigrants, finding their way to citizenship in a strange land. It has stood for progressive conservatism, for law and order, for public and private morality. It has been a great steadying power and it has done much to render possible the easy absorption of the newspapers in the great body of American people."

Edifying

As a contrast to the avalanche of crimes and scandals chronicled in the daily press, as a contrast to the "dog dinners" and other vulgar recreations of the gilded set is the following opening paragraph of an article in the "Catholic Union and Times" descriptive of a not uncommon event in Catholic circles now-a-days:

"Over 600 young women made the retreat conducted last week at the Buffalo Academy of the Sacred Heart by Rev. Frederick W. Strerath, S. J., vice-president of Canisius College. A splendid acceptance of the invitation extended by the academy's Alumnae Association, under whose auspices it was held and if one might judge by exterior appearance, a representative gathering of our well-bred, educated Catholic young women which, in fact, it was, public and high school teachers and convent graduates who are an ornament to society and an honor to their educational training by the responsible positions they hold in the business world, composed the major portion of the large body of bright young women.

"It was an edifying example of religion and refinement. One saw it in their polite deportment, and air of recollection. A group of whispering girls ascend the stairs and at the top read upon the auditorium door, 'Silence; the blessed sacrament is here.' It was enough; from then until the street door again was reached no unnecessary word was spoken. During the lectures not the slightest sound disturbed the close attention given to every word of the speaker. Only when benediction began might be heard something like a shower of hail upon the window pane—six hundred pairs of rosaries were in use. It was surely the devotional atmosphere of the convent, where goodness and sweetness go hand in hand."

Centenaries

On Wednesday of this week occurred a notable anniversary of the Catholic Church in the United States.

It was the one hundredth anniversary of the establishment of four of the leading dioceses in America. On April 8, 1808, the Pope by a decree, raised Bishop Carroll of Baltimore to the rank of an archbishop, and also created the following four dioceses, and appointed the following bishops:

- The diocese of New York, Rt. Rev. Luke Conneally, bishop.
- The diocese of Philadelphia, Rt. Rev. John Egan, bishop.
- The diocese of Boston, Rt. Rev. John Cheverus, bishop.
- The diocese of Bardonia, Ky., Rt. Rev. Benedict J. Flaget, bishop.

These anniversaries will be observed with notable celebrations in the four sees mentioned. In New York, the celebration will take place April 26th. Two Cardinals will be present Cardinal Logue, Archbishop of Armagh, Ireland, the diocese founded by St. Patrick, and Cardinal Gibbons. In addition there will be present the most notable ecclesiastics of the Church in America, and the Apostolic Delegate, the Most Rev. Diomedo Falconio, D. D.

In Philadelphia, the celebration will open on Sunday, April 19th, and last almost the entire week, Cardinal Gibbons and Mgr. Falconio attending. Boston and Louisville will also fittingly observe the event. And finally, Baltimore will celebrate the hundredth anniversary of its being raised to the dignity of an arch-episcopal see with one of the greatest gatherings of the clergy held in America.

Professor James Charles Monaghan of its own faculty and well-known to attendants upon the Catholic Summer school has been chosen by Notre Dame University as the recipient of the Lactare Medal for 1908.

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