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Calamity

As the days go on, it becomes more and more apparent that the Messina earthquake and its attendant horrors of flood, fire and pestilence will go down into history as the worst calamity of its kind ever known in the Christian era.

Hundreds of thousands of human beings plunged into eternity without a moment's warning constitutes a horror too great to be thought of calmly.

It should be an awful warning to us all to so live that we can face the dread angel without a tremor if he should come upon us unannounced and unheralded. Indeed, it may be one of the greatest incentives to right living that has come upon the world in centuries.

Italy, as all know, has been working toward absolute infidelity under its present government. Within a few months its infidel mayor has gone so far in contempt of Religion and Almighty God as to award to a bill-posting company permission to hang upon the church walls advertisements and placards for theatre and other amusements and forms of business.

In parts of Italy infidel governors have sought to forbid religious instruction in the private schools conducted under Catholic auspices.

While the Messina disaster may not have been sent as a warning, as in the case of Sodom and Gomorrah, still one cannot help but draw such an inference.

There is another lesson to be drawn from the Messina disaster. On all sides Science has been lauded to the skies. Devotees have gone so far as to declare that they will not accept any religious teaching that is not founded upon Science. They maintain in their puny mentality that Science is capable of solving all problems and that, hence, faith is a thing of the past.

Why, then, if Science is all infallible, did not her devotees and exponents know that the Messina earthquake was to take place and give the inhabitants of the district time and opportunity to save their lives and part of their property?

Ah, Almighty God has not lost power and such happenings as that at Messina are needed to point out to mankind in general that God and only God rules the universe and that Man's puny will never can be pitted against the Almighty.

While admitting all this, we are not to close our eyes and ears to the plaint of those who have survived the disaster and are now homeless and starving. In our charity and generosity, let us share our goods with them. Bishop McQuaid has directed that on Sunday a special collection will be taken in all the Catholic churches in the Diocese of Rochester, the proceeds will be forwarded to the Apostolic Delegate in Washington and by him cabled to Rome for proper distribution.

Let the collection be worthy of Rochester Catholicism!

Make this resolution now: I will always have a Catholic paper in my home.

Tainted

That money will not reach all quarters or be received everywhere is well proven by the following incident related by the St. Louis Church Progress:

St. Mary's College, Oakland, Cal., conducted by the Christian Brothers, in declining the proffered assistance of the Emeryville race track people for the erection of a gymnasium on the college campus.

The Rev. says: "It is narrated that Brother Velleian, the headmaster of St. Mary's College, at Oakland, absolutely refused to allow the Emeryville race track gamblers to build a gymnasium for the college boys on the college campus, if they were permitted to hold St. Mary's College Day at their gambling hell."

Annually a benefit day is given at that race track for some well known and worthy charity or institution. This time St. Mary's College was selected, but the good Brother in charge absolutely refused to have anything to do with it."

Restored

One of the institutions of the Church which non-Catholics profess inability to understand is the confessional. Many a non-Catholic is heard to say that were it not for confession they would enter the church.

Did they but know the worth, the comfort, the relief brought to the troubled soul in confession that doubt or fear would vanish like snow before the midday sun.

Many employers, many men of affairs, however much they profess ignorance of the confessional and its bearing upon Religion, testify to its worth and influence upon individual Catholics. An instance follows which tells why:

"David Madden, of 31 Beach street, Jersey City, was robbed in 1894 of a gold watch which he left on his bench in William Ames & Co.'s spike works, in Washington street, that city, while he went out to lunch. A day or two ago he was summoned to the rectory of St. Mary's Church and received from the Rev. B. Henry Ter Woert a small square package containing his long lost watch. The priest said merely that he had been instructed to return the time-piece to him.

"It is believed that the person who walked off with the watch fourteen years ago became conscience stricken and confessed to Father Ter Woert. Madden says that the watch does not show any signs of wear."

Stands Alone

In the recent Eucharistic Congress in England, Count Llandaff delivered a remarkable address upon the infamous coronation oath which the King of England is required to take upon assuming the throne and which binds the sovereign to forswear belief in the cardinal principles of the Catholic faith.

In the course of his address the Count made this significant and striking statement:

"England stands alone in this respect. In no other civilized country, neither in Protestant States such as Prussia and America, nor in Catholic States such as Austria and France, is it thought necessary to put into the mouth of the sovereign or president a controversial utterance of this kind, or to search his conscience by a religious test."

It is to be hoped that this foul blot will be removed from England's escutcheon.

It is reported that the Catholic Mirror of Baltimore, is to resume publication. A new company, including Cardinal Gibbons and prominent priests has been formed for this purpose, and the paper will be conducted under their management. Rev. C. F. Thomas, pastor of St. Ann's Church, Baltimore has been asked to assume editorial charge.

May Teach

The Supreme Court of Wisconsin, in affirming the decision of the lower court, in the case of Jacob Dornier and others against school district No. 5 of Brown County, decided that a school district has a right to rent a Roman Catholic school building for public school purposes and employ Catholic nuns to conduct the school, but the methods of conducting the school must be non-religious and according to ordinary methods followed by other public school districts in the State.

The plaintiffs asked that the school board be enjoined from renting the building for school purposes and that all money heretofore paid to the parish for the rent of the building be refunded.

The lower court simply enjoined the board from allowing religious instruction and the higher court affirmed that judgment."

Hon. Charles P. Neill, commissioner of labor, in a short time will be reappointed to his present position by President Roosevelt. Mr. Neill was made commissioner in succession to Prof. Carroll D. Wright, who accepted the presidency of Clark University at Worcester, Mass. President Roosevelt and Secretary Strauss entertain so high a regard for Mr. Neill that no other man was even considered for the position. Mr. Neill is a very practical Catholic.

"I won't be with you much longer. The doctors tell me that I may live a month, but not longer than six months." In a voice that showed no more emotion than he might exhibit in one of his regular sermons, Rev. James P. McCloskey, assistant pastor of Immaculate Conception Church, Toledo, O., told his listeners that he was suffering with cancer of the esophagus, an incurable disease. Father McCloskey is 46 years old and was ordained twenty years ago.

Says "Church Progress": "Mr. Rockefeller's Christmas gift from the Standard Oil Company arrived early. It was a check for \$4,000,000. A man ought to be able to spread some happiness among the poor at this holy season with that amount. But if it be true that the greatest portion of the sum represents tribute from the poor to the Rockefeller coffers it must be a satanic conscience that could rejoice over such a check."

According to the cable, Archbishop Glennon, in an audience with the Holy Father, made known the result of the recent Catholic census of the country taken under His Grace's supervision. The figures he placed at 18,000,000. There is every reason to believe that the cable, in this instance at least, has told the truth.

Says an exchange: "Too often the book is chosen with no concern about the reading matter which it contains. Frequently the title and the illustrations are thoroughly Catholic, and the purveyor investigates no farther. Yet the book may have come from some non-Catholic pen and is rich in non-Catholic sentiments. Such a book in the hands of the Catholic child is certainly not calculated to improve its Catholicity."

John D. Rockefeller feels like sending Theodore Roosevelt a fond farewell and best wishes for no return engagement after March 4, 1909.

In all the movements for civic betterment Bishop McQuaid has been a foremost figure. Indeed, it is not saying too much to call him the "Grand Old Man of Rochester."

Have you learned to write 1909 off-hand yet?

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