

"THE PASSING OF THE SAINT."

A REPLY TO AN ATTACK ON THE CHURCH'S POSITION ON SAINTHOOD

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Written for the Press Bulletins of the Central Bureau by F. H.

II.

Mr. Meeklin most stoutly affirms that the early Christians had no fighting faith, that intellectual virtues were of little value, that there were no scientific interpretations of the teachings of the Church.

We ask ourselves in astonishment, whether he has ever read the Acts of the Martyrs with their overwhelming examples of fortitude, and the writings of the early Fathers and Apologists who exhibited an intellectual superiority both in speech and writings which would do honor to our present age?

From the persecution and suppression of the early Christians he gathers a theory of morality that has been styled by Nietzsche "Sklaven-Moral" and the modern professor stoops so low as implicitly to subscribe to the discarded philosophy of the German degenerate.

What seems to vex the professor most is the attitude of "otherworldliness." He has not understood the very principle of Christianity expressed by Our Lord: "If any man will follow me, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow me." (Mark 8, 34. Mattha. 10, 38; 16, 24.)

It happened, so the professor asserts, that small groups of early Christians emerging from persecution under Constantine with their ideals could not meet the demands of the rapidly expanding faith. Social activities were entirely neglected by the early Saint.

"There was still the sharp distinction between the worldly and the otherworldly, the natural and supernatural." But the Church of the Middle Ages adopted secularizing tendencies and she managed that "no saintly ideals flourished that did not receive the sanction and enjoy the sympathy and support of ecclesiastical authority." Here for once the author expresses what is evident to every Catholic and fair-minded student of history, viz. that the striving after Christian sanctity is a work of the individual under the direction of the Church. "The otherworldly ideals of Peter Damiani, of St. Bernard, of St. Francis of Assisi never soared beyond the authority of the Pope; but this was only in the secularized Church." We must give Mr. Meeklin credit for this acknowledgement of the Pope's authority. In this he is unlike Sabatier, who, in his life of St. Francis, has so reflected the fact on his concave mirror as to make the great Saint act against the authority of the Pope. But the "secularized Church" is another fanciful dream of the would-be historian.

Mistaken Conception of the Saint.

The position of the mediæval Saint, so the professor continues, was cast in the spiritual solidarity with the world, and this is to him "an interesting paradox." But this again is a conclusion of a distorted mind which he bolsters up with a queer quotation from the entirely unreliable Froude. "The patriarchal regime of the Middle Ages, he asserts further, brought the Saint nearer socializing than at any other period of history. His sufferings and intercessions and also his superior mind were looked upon as most valuable assets by other members of the community." Their love of the contemplative life is not to the liking of the professor.

This passage allows us to look at the misconception in the author's mind. He views the Saint, as it were, in the making, a man who makes a profession of being a Saint. This is not the Saint in the eyes of the Church. The one honored as a Saint is one who has finished his mortal career, who after his holy life has been carefully examined and his intercession and miracles attested has been pronounced as worthy of the honors of a Saint by the Church. It is well known that as a rule 50 years must elapse before the process of beatification is taken up.

Evidently Mr. Meeklin has in mind a monk or religious of the Middle Ages, who lives apart from the world and makes the striving after religious perfection the aim of his life. It is true that many of the Saints have obtained their Sainthood as members of a religious order. But any one acquainted with the calendar of Saints has ready before his mind any number of men and women who have not been members of a religious order. The confusion arising from setting up his own arbitrary and obscure definition of a Saint and considering him as one who is a Saint during his life time, adds to the gloomy confusion of the paper.

It is, no doubt, apparent to the people when men like St. Stephen suffer and die for the faith. Examples of holiness of life as that of St. Francis of Assisi were not all hidden, but often excited admiration and veneration for the man during his life time. The vox populi may often have been the vox Dei. But, we repeat that the Saint in the acceptance of the Catholic Church is one who after his death has been declared a Saint and worthy of the honor of the Saint by the Church.

Legends and Lives of the Saints.

Mr. Meeklin's bad humor regarding the Catholic Church is in evidence all through the essay; this notwithstanding the fact that he refers with apparent respect to standard Catholic works, like St. Augustine's "The City of God," St. Thomas' Summa, the Bollandists, Gregory the Great: "Lives of the Saints," Benedict XIV. But the intelligent reader is forced to doubt whether the professor has really seen and read any of these great publications. At any rate unbiased readers, even Protestants, have obtained different views of the Church and her Saints from such masterpieces of history and literature. To be concluded next week.



From a painting by P. Deschanden

He Is Risen

Late News of Ireland

Cork

Messrs. J. C. Dowdall and Augustine O'Connor have been nominated for the vacancy on Cork Harbor Board caused by the resignation of C. F. Furlong.

Brother Bernard Dunlevy, O. P., died at St. Mary's, Cork, in the 78 year of his age.

Daniel J. O'Sullivan, 563 West street, New York city, died of pneumonia. He was a son of D. J. Sullivan, a native of County Cork, and grandson of the late Professor John W. Glover, of Dublin, well known as a composer and physician. Deceased was brought up in the lace business, but preferred the theatrical life.

The Schull Guardians by a majority of 12 to 6 rescinded a resolution in favor of amalgamating the union. The L. G. Board intimated unofficially that the union would be amalgamated on the 31st of March next.

Married—At St. Michael's Church, Kingstown, County Dublin, by the Rev. Patrick O'Byrne, C.C., assisted by the Rev. Jerome O'Callaghan, C.C., Dublin, cousin to the bride, and Rev. Daniel Byrne, C.C., Booterstown, William F. Murphy, Cork, to Annie M. Donovan, daughter of the late Mathias Donovan, Rockhill House, Grenagh, Blarney.

Dublin

Much regret was felt at the death of Robert Keely, P. L. G. Dublin, which occurred at his residence, North Circular road. The deceased for many years had been a member of the North Dublin Board of Guardians.

The death of George Cooke, a former well known citizen of Dublin, occurred at Hampstead, London, at the age of 76. He was chief publisher of the pioneer halfpenny paper "The Echo," and subsequently filled a similar position on "The Star," under T. P. O'Connor, M.P., and later proprietors. He was also identified with Catholic journalism, and at one time owned the well known monthly, "The Lamp," and other Catholic publications.

Kerry

Very Rev. D. Flynn, P. P., V. F., presided at the obsequies of the late Sister Mary Angela Kelleher, a native of Dingle, whose funeral took place from the Mercy Convent, Drogheda. There was a large attendance of clergy. The chief mourners were: Maurice Kelleher, Dingle, brother; Mrs. T. O'Donnell, Dingle, sister, and Mrs. D. Galvin, Mallow, sister.

Limerick

Most Rev. Dr. Hallinan has appointed Very Rev. John Ryan, P. P., Ballingarry, to the Prebend of Ardcanney, and Rev. John Conway, C.C., Bulgaden, to be P. P., Castlemahan and Feenagh.

Mayo

Patrick J. Mulligan has been duly admitted a member of the solicitors' profession and intends practicing in Ballina. He is a son of P. A. Mulligan of Charlestown and first cousin of the Most Rev. Dr. Morrison, Bishop of Achonry.

The death took place in the Mercy Convent, Ballinrobe, of Mother Peter Daly, Mistress of Novices, at the age of 61 years, over forty of which had been spent in the community. A grand-niece of the late Archbishop MacHale, she was very popular.

Tipperary

Rev. M. P. Dobill, brother of Father Dobill, Mount Mellary, and brother-in-law of Mrs. Dobill, Mile Tree, Cloamell, died suddenly at Somerset Strand, S. Africa, while driving in a pony trap to say Mass. He was born near Clonmel in 1863.

Loretto Circle Reception.

The sixth annual reception and card party of Loretto Circle is to be held on Friday afternoon, April 26th, at 2:30 o'clock, at St. Patrick's Orphan Asylum, Clifton street. Mrs. Frank McAnarney is general chairman of the arrangements committee, assisted by Mrs. C. M. Danford, Mrs. M. E. Fitzgerald, Mrs. John McGraw, Mrs. E. A. Keenan, Mrs. J. J. Mason, Mrs. Frank Sweeney, Mrs. J. J. Kavanaugh and Mrs. W. F. Predmore. The reception

committee is composed of Mrs. W. A. Grainger, Mrs. G. B. Ellis, Mrs. J. H. Lambert, Mrs. Charles Mayer, Mrs. L. W. Maier, Mrs. James O'Hara Love, Mrs. J. A. Krog, Miss Margaret Barrett, Mrs. P. H. Murray, Mrs. D. Sullivan, Mrs. B. McKenna, Mrs. F. J. O'Connor, Mrs. B. Duffy, Mrs. D. Curran, Mrs. Fred Beiler, Mrs. C. H. Kelly, Mrs. Fred Sweet, Mrs. P. J. Burke.

Death of Sister M. Vincent Joseph

The death of Sister M. Vincent Joseph Hanley, of the Sisters of St. Joseph occurred at Nazareth Convent Sunday morning, April 13th, 1919, after a short illness.

For the past five years Sister Vincent Joseph was engaged in teaching in the Cathedral School of this city, where she labored with much success and endeared herself to the little ones confided to her care. In the death of this devoted religious and efficient teacher, the sisterhood of which she was a member sustains a great loss. Sister Vincent Joseph was a graduate of the Ursuline Convent, Sligo, Ireland.

She leaves a mother, Mrs. M. Hanley of Elphin, Ireland, five sisters, Sister M. Britta of the Sisters of St. Joseph, Rochester, N. Y., Sister Josephine of Mt. Rath, Ireland; Mrs. J. Cannon, Mrs. Duigan and Mrs. K. Hanley, all of Ireland; two brothers, M. Hanley of Ireland and the Rev. Joseph Hanley, S.S.J., president of the Epiphany College, Baltimore, Md.

The funeral was held Tuesday morning at 9:30 o'clock from Lady Chapel of St. Patrick's Cathedral. Solemn high mass of requiem was sung by her brother the Rev. Joseph Hanley, of Baltimore, Md., assisted by the Rev. J. F. O'Hern, pastor of the Cathedral, as deacon, and the Rev. T. Sharkey of Syracuse as sub-deacon. The final blessing was given by Bishop Thomas F. Healy. Many priests were in the sanctuary, including the Rev. J. B. Albert, vice-president of the Epiphany College of Baltimore. Many children, including the present and former pupils of Sister Vincent attended the mass. Interment was made in Holy Sepulcher cemetery, the final blessing at the grave being given by Rev. Joseph Hanley.

Capes for Easter Wear.

50 sample capes, manufacturers models, no two alike, stunning styles, wonderful bargains. Nassbaum, 29 North Clinton.—Adv.

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Buttons that were 24c; buttons for coats, suits and dresses. Nassbaum, 29 North Clinton.—Adv.