

"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 Bulletin of the Central Bureau by F. H.

III.

Continued from last week.

But the holiness of these individuals of the several churches is not due to the sect to which they belong, but to the Catholic Church. Many of those teachings and principles their sect still retains. In the light of this doctrine we are able to feel rather than to express the cynical and frivolous spirit contained in the sentence of Mr. Meeklin: "The Monk of Wittenberg finally broke away from the charmed circle of the Holy Catholic Church." It seems as if the professor had not heard of Denifle's or Grisar's Life of Martin Luther.

Saints Not Out of Date.

The contention then of this curious article "The Passing of the Saint" is that the Saint, and the ideal of the Saint as still upheld by the Roman Catholic Church is woefully out of date, useless and without socializing influence. And the proof for this scathing condemnation? None whatever, except the writer's bold and insolent "ipse dixit." Facts are ignored, biographies set aside, great works not read and consulted, views are manufactured and all this thrown before a gullible public under the auspices of the American Journal of Sociology. The oft criticized infallibility of the Church and the Pope are simply like a light of 20th magnitude compared with this immense self-asserting infallibility of the professor of the University of Pittsburgh.

Which poisoned sources may have infected so injuriously the views of the writer? May not the much-lauded sources of writers like Gibbon, Draper, Andrew White, Paul Monroe, Froude, James and their class with their historical misrepresentation and narrow bigotry have from early boyhood fed the mind of the Pittsburgh professor with anti-Catholic prejudice? Has he ever turned to the books of the accomplished Cardinal Newman and allowed himself to come under the charm of his style? Would it be too much to ask him to read Discourse V. of Discourses to Mixed Congregations: Saintliness the Standard of Christian Principle?

The Catholic Church, spread all over the world, with her more than 300 millions adherents, honors the Saints with reasonable, but enthusiastic devotion. There are some 20 millions of Catholics in the U. S. Their conviction and practice ought to command the respect of every American, who loves liberty of conscience and religion. It appears to be entirely un-American and utterly impolite for a writer and a Journal, that has subscribers among the Catholics, to outrage the feeling and convictions of their numerous fellow citizens.

The Title Itself Offensive.

The very title "The Passing of the Saint" is an insult to the Catholic body. Has the writer ever heard of the famous book, entitled "The Holiness of the Church in the 19th Century," translated from the German of Rev. Constantine Kempf, S. J. by Father Francis Breyman, S. J.? The reading of this remarkable book will convince the unprejudiced that the Saint is not passing away. He is a reality in our modern age; Saints are found among all classes of people; their works have been of unparalleled social influence of the best kind; their lives were heroic and their power was substantiated by miracles which the Church examined most critically and approved with her authority. Nay, strange to say, canonization processes are being worked out at present. Let no professor of the University of Pittsburgh or in the State of Pennsylvania be frightened—in Philadelphia, the great city of the State of Penn., in 1860, died a holy Bishop, R. Rev. John H. Neumann, whose acts of beatification are well under way. This extraordinary man was for some time superior of the Redemptorists in Pittsburgh, he walked the very streets of the city where professor Meeklin is setting forth his attacks on the Catholic Church.

A real American Bishop is to be enrolled in the catalogue of Saints, not to mention many other men and women whose holy lives have been honored by God in such a way as to accord them the honors of the altars on earth.

Modern Saints and Martyrs.

The number of Martyrs in the 19th century is remarkable beyond expectation. We give expression to our full conviction when we say that, not ignoring the merit and influence of our Lincolns, Florence Nightingales, our Booker T. Washingtons, who as Mr. Meeklin says, "seem after all to have caught and interpreted the universal human values of the age," and in spite of Mr. Meeklin's bold assertion that in these men and women, not identified with institutional Christianity rather than in Anselm, Bernard or Damiani, we must seek our modern Saints, — we give expression to our full conviction that the real Saints, such as are produced by the Catholic Church and honored by her are the real and greatest and most influential benefactors of mankind. No greater blessing can be given to an age and to a country than a Saint. And the beatification and canonization of the Saint is more beneficial to the age and the race than the invention of the steam engine and electric power and wireless and any and all of these natural forces and inventions combined. Such Saints may not be acceptable to the world in which they live, they may not be highly regarded by a subsequent worldly nation that witnesses their canonization, but like the sunshine, pure air and the beneficial rain, they influence the age in a degree that immeasurably surpasses any conceivable factor of material progress.

The Passing of the Saints: The title is insulting to the Church. For, as we have proved, the true Church of Christ must produce Saints and must manifest the power of extraordinary signs because her Founder has given this promise.

"The Passing of the Saint" is to the Catholic equivalent to the "Passing of the Church" and in saying this, Professor; you touch the very heart of the believing Catholic. For the Church can not pass away. She is built upon the rock of Peter and the powers of hell shall not prevail against her. The Church Indestructible.

Thus to the Catholic the attempt of professor Meeklin is like the prank of a naughty boy who looks up to the mighty rock of Gibraltar, is displeased with some stain or crack that his colored spectacles report to him and in his boyish petulance throws a handful of mud against the rock. Now! There!

Pace Mr. Meeklin, the rain and the sunshine will soon take away the mud and the rock will stand unshaken in its overwhelming majesty and on the top the rock there is built the holy city, the Holy Catholic Church. It is of her that the Vatican Council declared what is so consoling and inspiring to her children and what makes a strong impression on so many who are not yet in the fold: "The Church of herself, by reason of her wonderful propagation, her extraordinary holiness, and inexhaustible fertility in all good works—by reason of her Catholic unity and invincible steadfastness, is a great and perpetual witness to her own divine mission. Hence it is, that like a standard set up unto the nations, she both invites those who have not yet received the faith to come to her and assures her sons that the faith which they profess is fixed upon the firmest foundation."

In bidding farewell to the professor of the University of Pittsburgh we deprecate most emphatically the condescending compassion which he repeatedly offers to the Catholic Church for being woefully out of harmony with the modern age. We glory in the possession of an extraordinary light and extend our sentiments of sincere commiseration to the modern professor. His attack has not shaken us in the least. It has been to us, much as we all regret the foul onslaught on the Saints, an opportunity to speak on the Saints, their veneration and relics and the Catholic Church, the fruitful mother of Saints. We feel proud of our Saints and we sincerely pity men and, above all Americans, who like Meeklin rail with prejudice and disrespect against the higher, purer and nobler outlook on life, shining forth in the lives of the Saints, in the veneration accorded to them by the Church.

Cardinal Newman On Those Walking In Darkness.

Cardinal Newman in his Discourse "Saintliness the Standard" (Discourses to Mixed Congregations) pictures a set of worldly men as living in underground caverns who never see the light of day; they live in pits and ravines and there they work, there they take their pleasures, there perhaps they die. Alas! alas! he says of the English people—and his words are applicable to the American people of to-day, perhaps with greater significance, — "those great and noble people, born to aspire, born for reverence, behold them walking to and fro by the torch light of the cavern, or pursuing the wild fire of

the marsh, not understanding themselves, their destinies, their defilements, their needs, because they have not the glorious luminaries of heaven to see, to consult and to admire."

"But O, what a change, when the good hand of God brings them by some marvellous providence to the pit's mouth, and then out into the blessed light of day! What a change for them when they first begin to see with the eyes of the soul, with the intuition which grace gives; Jesus, the Sun of Justice, and the heaven of Angels and Archangels in which He dwells, and the Bright Morning Star, which is His Blessed Mother, and the continued flood of light falling and striking against the earth, and transformed, as it falls, into an infinity of hues, which are His Saints; and the boundless sea which is the image of His divine immensity; and then again the calm, placid moon by night, which images His Church, and the silent stars, like good, holy men, traveling on in lonely pilgrimage to their eternal rest."

The Light Of Sainthood.

We Catholics feel humbly proud and deeply grateful for seeing this wonderful heaven of lights in all its radiance and brilliancy: We feel distressed that any one should be foolish enough to rail at these sublime and benevolent stars of the Firmament, which he refuses to see, and which a modern French infidel official boasted of having extinguished. But we have learned from the first cross-bearer, the Crucified Lord, and from the numerous Saints to pray for those who attack all that is beautiful and sublime in the Holy Church and repeat the Lord's pleading: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do," and we address our ardent supplication to the Saints, our patrons or helpers, that by their intercession and merits those who live in the caverns of materialism and infidelity may be brought up from their dungeons and with us enjoy the grace of seeing the light, the wonderful light of the Sun of Justice and the Stars of Heaven which are His Saints.

As a last word we beg to offer to all professors in our modern universities a friendly advice that comes from the pen of the famous Professor George Trumbull Ladd of Yale University. His words are deserving of great consideration. Especially to matters of morals and religion, a vast multitude of men WILL NOT take their reasonableness into serious consideration; either because they do not wish certain beliefs to be true, or because they have already established their beliefs according to opposing tendencies. (George Trumbull Ladd, L. L. D. "What should I believe?" p. 55.)

Federation of Catholic Societies Will Hold Convention in Elmira.

The Rochester Diocesan Federation of Catholic Societies at its monthly meeting held last Sunday evening at St. Joseph's Hall, elected the following delegates and alternates to the State Federation convention in Elmira, which will open on May 30th and continue until June 3rd.

Delegates, William J. Berdel, Francis X. Iselhardt, Frank Hehlein; alternates, George Licht, R. May, Patrick Gaffney.

The following committee was appointed to draft resolutions on labor and economics to be presented to the convention: Rev. J. F. Staub, Rev. Paul John Miller, Francis J. Poppen, Jacob LeFrois, H. T. Stellwagen and William J. Berdel.

Rochester Boy Lies Buried in Hallowed Soil

The last resting place of a Rochester boy, Charles Samuel McGinnis, was viewed by Lieutenant Courtney Ryley Cooper of the Marine Corps, while he was paying a visit to the battlefields of France. Lieutenant Cooper writes from the little village of Lucy le Bocage:

Just outside this battered, roofless, shell-torn little town is a tiny cemetery. It rears its crosses beside a laughing, tinkling little stream which flows from Belleau Wood—where Germany met the shock of the United States Marines in June, 1918, and recoiled in a retreat that ended only with her surrender.

It is in this little graveyard, with its shelter of trees, its smooth kept graves, its American flag insignia on every cross, that Private Charles Samuel McGinnis was killed in the taking of Belleau Wood early in June, 1918. Private Charles Samuel McGinnis is the son of Mrs. Hannah McGinnis, 181 Caledonia Avenue.

ARCHBISHOP HANNA VISITS CITY

Archbishop Edward J. Hanna, of San Francisco, stopped off here Monday to visit his sister, Mrs. William T. Bassett, of No. 55 Prince street, on his way to New York, to take part in the ceremonies of the formal investiture of the new archbishops of New York and Philadelphia, which will be held in those cities early this month. It is expected that Archbishop Hanna will return to Rochester for another visit with his sister after the ceremonies have taken place.

Archbishop Hayes, of New York, was elevated in Lent to enable him to exercise his archiepiscopal duties in Holy Week, and Bishop Dougherty, formerly of Buffalo, was placed at the head of the Philadelphia archdiocese. However, these ceremonies are not complete.

Newly Elected Officers of St. Mary's Club All Army Men.

On Monday evening, April 22, St. Mary's Club elected the following officers for the coming year, every man elected having been recently mustered out of the service with the single exception of the first vice-president, who is still in the army: President, Sergeant-Major George J. Spillane; first vice-president, Sergeant Francis S. Hayden; second vice-president, Martin FitzSimons; third vice-president, Eugene J. Rossi; fourth vice-president, Sergeant Thomas F. Vogt; secretary, Sergeant Senior Grade M. T. C. George H. Perrin; treasurer, Vincent Wisner.

Charles McCracken was appointed by the president to fill the temporary vacancy in the office of the first vice-president caused by Sergeant Hayden still being away.

Plans for the coming year have been carefully made up and work will be begun at once, the plans including a "double the membership" campaign and the installation of a swimming pool. Since the signing of the armistice more than 60 members have returned and more are expected shortly.

For the past week rehearsals for the fifth annual minstrel show have been going on and very good progress has been made. The show is to be given on the nights of May 20, 21 and 22 in the parish hall.

Of the population of Cincinnati, about forty per cent is Catholic.

Late News of Ireland

Carlow

Married—At the Church of the Assumption, Castledermot, by the Rev. Father Duggan, P. P., Stephen, son of the late James Maher, Killeck, Leighlinbridge, to Margaret Elizabeth, daughter of the late Edward Maher, Sunday's Well, Ballyhackett, Gullow.—At St. Joseph's, Dublin, by the Rev. Father Dempsey, C. C., George P. Keating, second son of John T. Keating, jeweler, Edenderry, to Rose O'Neill, widow of the late James O'Neill, accountant, Carlow County Council.

Died—At Bridge street, Tullow, Christina, daughter of James and Catherine Mansor.

Cork

Sister M. Teresa Leach has died at the Good Shepherd Convent, Sunday's Well, Cork, aged 67.

D. Hayes, chairman Cork Guardians, has been co-opted a member of the Cork County Council.

Youghal Board of Guardians and Urban Council passed votes of sympathy with the Christian Brothers on the death of the late Rev. Brother Harold, for many years Superior of the Youghal House.

Dublin

The Rev. J. L. Byrne, B. A., whose death from septic pneumonia after a few days' illness took place at Upper Beochwood avenue, Ranelagh, in his 31st year and on the seventh anniversary of his ordination, was a son of Mr. and Mrs. P. Byrne, 180 N. C. Road.

The death occurred in London of Colonel James Miley, formerly Military Accountant-General of India, and son of the late James Miley, Blackrock, County Dublin. The deceased was a brother of Mr. O'Connell Miley, the well-known Dublin solicitor.

Kerry

A mass meeting in the chapel yard, St. John's Church, Tralee, was presided over by Very Rev. Dean O'Leary. Amongst those present were three Australian soldiers. The reverend chairman in a lengthy address said they knew the prisoners to be amongst the most intelligent and most respectable and most religious in the whole community. Their own representative, Austin Stack, was amongst those subjected to such treatment, and yet he received pledges from the Government in Mountjoy and in Belfast that he, and the rest of the political prisoners would receive special, and what was called ameliorative treatment.

Limerick

The Pope has bestowed the Papal Blessing on the members of St. Michael's Women's Total Abstinence Sodality, Limerick.

At Limerick John Cronin, president Trades Council, presided at a meeting of workers in St. Michael's Temperance Hall. Rev. Father Thomas, O. S. F. C., Cork, delivered an address on the functions of trade unionism. Rev. Father Dwane, Adm., proposed a resolution of protest against the treatment of political prisoners, which was seconded by Mr. Walsh, supported by Rev. Father Hackett, S. J., and passed.

Tipperary

Rev. P. Gaynor has been elected president N. Tipperary S. F. Executive, in room of Rev. C. Culligan, C. C., Silverminee, a resolution of regret at whose transfer to a Clare parish was passed.

Mayo

The appointments of M. J. Egan, as Secretary of Mayo County Council, and of J. Daly, as Accountant, have been sanctioned by the L. G. Board.