

POPE AND CARDINALS AT MASS



This picture, just received from Vatican City, was taken in the Papal Chapel on the occasion of the annual Mass for the Cardinals who died during the past year. His Holiness Pope Pius XII is shown on the throne. Cardinal Fumasoni-Biondi, Prefect of the Sacred Congregation of the Propagation of the Faith, was the celebrant. (N.C.W.C.)

Rev. Dr. Owen B. McGuire

The Catholic Editor of 'Punch'

The current issue of *American* (January 16) carries an article which has interested me for various reasons. If I pass some of them on to the readers of the *COURIER*, they too may be interested. The article is from the pen of Cyril Clemens. The subject of the article is Francis Burnand, the famous English playwright and humorist, one-time editor of London *"Punch."* Burnand was a convert.

A few months ago Mr. Clemens had another article in *American*, the subject of which was also a convert and humorist, but an American, Cyril Clemens, the editors of *American* tell us, is a cousin of the still more famous humorist, Mark Twain, is president of the International Mark Twain Society and has recently published a biography of his cousin under the title *Young Sam Clemens*—which was the real name of the famous humorist who, incidentally, did some of his best work here in Elmhurst where he is buried in the family plot.

WISH FULFILLED

Mark Twain's cousin would naturally be interested in humorists, but he is also clearly interested in converts; and the two articles are so Catholic in tone and substance that we must assume he is a convert himself.

Thus is fulfilled in a cousin what Mark Twain wished for his daughter. They had sent her to a convent school, and while she was there Mark wrote to her mother: "I hope they will make a good Roman Catholic of her. If I had that religion, I would not exchange it for anything in this world." Which proves again that the Faith is more than an intellectual conviction, more than seeing that Catholicism is the only form of Christianity which can claim conviction from any person who believes in a personal God and in the Incarnation. Faith requires the assent of the will and humility to ask for it in humble prayer.

As I have said often before in this column we should never cease to thank God for our Catholic Faith. To us "cradle Catholics," it has come the easy way, but is no less precious for that. By the way, let us also thank John Moody, who in his latest book, uses that name "cradle Catholics"; there is no such thing as "born Catholics."

In passing through England once many years ago, it was my good fortune to pick up at the newsstand in a railway station— they never say railroad in England—a weekly magazine which carried a long article on Francis Burnand.

Sorry I am now that I did not have it; for it gave much authentic information about him which, I believe, is not found in books by other. The article took the form of an interview which the writer had had with Burnand a few days before. Some points in it have stuck in my memory.

GOOD DEFINITION

The first question put to the humorist was: "Mr. Burnand, how

does a man come to be a humorist?" And the answer was: "Well, it comes from having a serious turn of mind and not yielding to it." Not a bad definition. If not complete, it certainly does contain a profound truth.

It certainly is true that all the great humorists have been "deep thinkers." The humorist, as distinguished from the wit, sees the foibles and weaknesses of the rational animal, and sympathizes with them. He sees the seriousness of human life. Mark Twain himself is an example. His seriousness before that problem—which is insoluble without the supernatural Revelation of the Fall and the Redemption—led even to long periods of melancholy in his private life.

There was another unforgettable passage in the interview. In his first fervor after his conversion, Burnand wished to become a priest or even a monk. With this object in view he entered the Seminary of the Oblates of St. Charles Borromeo, a religious community founded by Manning, whose admiration for the reforming Cardinal Archbishop of Milan was unaltered throughout his whole Catholic life.

Manning was then Father Superior, of Baywater, the first house of the new community. Burnand was not long there when he decided that the priesthood was not his vocation.

DELIGHTED CARDINAL
One morning the future editor of *Punch* went to the future Cardinal's room to reveal his decision. "Father," he began, "I have reluctantly come to the conclusion that the priesthood is not my vocation. I am unworthy of that high calling." Pause. "Well, what do you intend to do now?" Father, I believe my vocation is to the theater." Profound silence. The shock having abated, "A vocation to the theater! ! ! You might as well speak of a vocation to be a cobbler." "Yes, Father, there would certainly be more sole in it." "I think," said Burnand to the interviewer, "the Cardinal is still laughing."

Incidentally: Cardinal Manning when he became Archbishop insisted that his priests should be addressed as "Father," not as "Mr." or "Reverend Mr.," which had been the custom in England. He gives his reasons for this in his book *The Eternal Priesthood*.

In this country, and in the countries of English speech in general, we have become so accustomed to the title "Father" that we are liable to believe it was always so and is a universal custom and tradition. That is not so. It is in origin an Irish custom. In all other countries only the priests in Religious Orders were called "Father." The title "Father" came into England with the Irish exodus of the 40's, and up to Manning's time in England secular priests were still addressed as "Mr." or "Reverend Mr." by native Catholics.

On the continent secular priests are addressed with the title of the

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- 2—Adjust and clean burners so that flame is blue, not yellow.
- 3—Cook as many one-burner meals as possible. Don't let flames lick around edges of utensil. Don't turn on gas till it is needed. Turn it off as soon as cooking is finished.
- 4—Plan complete oven meals (we'll send menus and recipes on request). Cook vegetables in small amounts of water (this also preserves vitamins). Roast at low temperatures (this also prevents meat shrinkage).
- 5—Keep door of gas refrigerator closed when not in use. Never store warm food in refrigerator.
- 6—Don't let hot water faucets drip. Repair leaky faucets promptly. Don't use water hotter than necessary, nor hot water when cold will do. Don't let hot water run while washing dishes.
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