

THE TRUE REASON.

WHAT KEEPS EDUCATED MODERN ENGLISH AND AMERICAN PROTESTANTS OUT OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH?

You quote from the 'Catholic Columbian' an article on the above question. He thinks prejudice is the cause, or chief cause. My idea is that it is money, pride, and self-love fully more than prejudice. Unless a Protestant in England, America, or our Colonies be prepared to sacrifice largely his pecuniary interests—to modify his pride and self-love—it is not likely he will ever enter the Catholic Church, and become a "practical Catholic." The sacrifice is a hard one and few are prepared to make it. It is a real martyrdom.

Thoughtful educated Protestants generally will not study the "Catholic question" will not examine fully and in a spirit of prayer the Catholic Religion and the grounds on which it rests simply because they do not care to be convinced of its truth. They would rather it were not true. If they should become convinced of its truth, they must as honest men embrace it. This would entail great sacrifices—possibly sacrifices of money and other temporal advantages; certainly sacrifices of pride and self-love. Some Protestants fence with their conscience a long time ere they can make up their mind to make the necessary sacrifices which they must do prior to entering the Church. An American Protestant bishop, Dr. Ives, has described the trials of his own mind prior to becoming a Catholic. Conscience said to him, you must: natural affection and worldly interest said, don't do it. He tried hard for years to pacify his conscience by many specious arguments. At last he found he must give in, cost what it might in a worldly sense. He was a "family man" and could not become a priest. But he entered the Church notwithstanding.

The Catholic religion is certainly not a pleasant one to flesh and blood. It is a religion of mortification and self-denial, and no wonder if the gay, licentious, and the proud and worldly-minded Protestants turn away from it in disgust as a system of "superstition." Even many of us lay Catholics love it but indifferently in practice. To fast, to pray much and often, to mourn for sins and give alms are not pleasant but necessary Catholic duties, which it is hard to perform aright; not to speak of self-examination and "contrition," hardest of all. The Catholic yoke is easy and light indeed; but only to those who bear it willingly and lovingly, for it is the yoke of Christ.

It is no doubt quite true as the 'Catholic Columbian' maintains, that prayer, fervent persevering prayer, is the chief means of converting Protestants from their errors—prayer and a good example together on the part of Catholics. Argument may do something, may much towards that end, but only where there is a willingness to be convinced and then very little argument is required. But to try to convince a Protestant of his religious errors against his will is an idle task. When a man firmly shuts his eyes against the light it is a hopeless thing to try to make him see. It just comes to this after all that faith, true faith, the Catholic faith, is the gift of God, and must be desired and asked for before it can be obtained. That faith it is true comes to us by hearing, or which is much the same thing by reading. Those who do not wish to hear the Catholic faith or read of it in a proper spirit we cannot suppose will ever get it. Many remarkable conversions to the Catholic faith of men who were once "staunch" Protestants have occurred in our time and are daily occurring. I am persuaded that if the secret history of these cases could be laid bare it would be found that their conversion was more owing to prayer, and a devout, docile, humble disposition, than to any learned disputation or great amount of book lore. Your great disputers of this world who plume themselves on being mighty in the Scriptures, like some of your Presbyterian friends in Dunedin, are seldom extricated from their heretical errors.

As to the origin and progress of Protestantism in England, put what face on it our Protestant friends may, that was assuredly an affair of money, politics, and carnal lust, rather than of Christianity. The covetousness, the licentiousness, injustice and cruelty of our leading English "reformers"—so called—in the sixteenth century, added to their hypocrisy, have brought a stain of dishonor on the English name—the English ruling classes, rather—which no lapse of time can ever entirely efface. The manner in which the nobles and a portion of the rich people wheeled about from the Catholic to the Protestant faith and back again, as worldly interests dictated, showed how completely a sense of religion and of shame had departed from the English mind at this time. Were the Court and Parliament to profess the Catholic Faith to-morrow I believe the 'London Times' and English Protestant Press would soon "go over to Rome," too, and show good cause for the step—or try to do so.

"The brilliant Frenchman," Voltaire, said, "*C'est l'intérêt qui fait parler tout le monde*,"—men speak and write as interest prompts them. The remark is cynical and often, but not always, true. In the case of the advocates of the Reformation it was true.

Money is the root of all evil, and it was emphatically the parent of the English "reformed" religion—as it is now its support. When the Evil One succeeded in detaching the imperial race of England from the Catholic Church he gained a grand, a glorious victory; for England, no matter what religion she professes, is the master-power of Christendom. For her supremacy thanks to our Catholic Alfred, who laid the foundation of her invincible navy. The triumph of the infernal spirit in bringing about the English Reformation has lasted long—for three hundred years; yet we see Providence does not intend that it should last for ever. Like the Prodigal son England now shows signs of a longing to return to her parent's home. Her children are again uniting themselves daily to the Catholic Church and she is showing in her public policy a Catholic spirit more and more;—more so even than some governments who profess and call themselves Catholic. Her pre-

sent sovereign is the most charitable and just and therefore in that sense the most Catholic ruler in Christendom. What a contrast to the state of things existing when the "Protestant" religion first arose in England! "Hope springs eternal in the human breast." The Catholic clergy from the Pope downward never lost hope of England's return to the Church—an event for which they have been devoutly praying ever since, in an evil hour and at the instigation of wicked men, she cast off her allegiance to St. Peter's chair. Now their hopes are visibly in progress of being realised. Well may all devoted Catholics throughout the world unite their prayers daily for the conversion of England. Catholic England, Ireland and France united in a just cause could keep the world in awe and make the powers of darkness tremble.

To a Catholic, one of the most gratifying things at present in England is the fact that the arch-enemy of the Catholic Church, Mr. ex-Premier Gladstone, has been discarded, and to all appearance for ever dismissed from popular favor, in spite of his abilities and past public services, which are assuredly great. He has quite lost himself and has shown that he loves his own crochets and himself better than his country or mankind. The respectable and influential portion of the Liberal party, his former friends, seem to be most against him. We thus see that the Pope's enemies in the end turn out to be the worst of public enemies—the worst of England's enemies. Gladstone, in spite of all his pretensions to liberality, may be called the English Bismarck. If the press and people of Germany were as free as those of England, Bismarck would soon share the fate of Gladstone. The two have of late been trying to play the same game. Bismarck may succeed for a time, but his success will lead to his ruin at last. The Pope and his friends in England have been too many for the "people's William." The Pope and his German friends will by and bye bring Bismarck down to his proper level, too—by moral force, not by blood and steel. It is by moral force Catholics fight and conquer. Their triumphs may be slow but they are sure and cost neither tears nor blood. In times of general wars and revolutions the good, the just, and law-abiding of the countries and creeds are fain to rally round the Catholic standard at last. The world saw this during the great French Revolution. The Catholic sovereigns of that day who turned their backs on the Holy See paid dear for their cowardice and treachery.

LAIC,

IRISH DROLLERY.

An amusing story of the late Daines Barrington is related as follows:—Having to appear for a plaintiff, in a case in Clonmel, he let into the defendant in unmeasured terms. The individual inveighed against, not being present, only heard of the invectives. After Barrington, however, had got back into Dublin, the defendant, a Tipperary man, named Foley, lost no time in paying his compliments to the counsel. He rode all day and night, and, covered with sleet, arrived before Barrington's residence in Harcourt-street, Dublin. Throwing the bridle of his smoking horse over the railing of the area, he announced his arrival by a thundering knock at the door. Barrington's valet answered the summons, and, opening the street door, beheld the apparition of the rough-coated Tipperary fire-eater, with a large stick under his arm, and the sleet sticking to his bushy whiskers. "Is your master up?" demanded the visitor, in a voice that gave some intimation of the object of his journey. "No," answered the man. "Then give him my compliments, and say Mr. Foley—he'll know the name—will be glad to see him." The valet went upstairs and told his master, who was in bed, the purport of his visit. "Then don't let Mr. Foley in for your life," said Barrington, "for it is not a hare or a brace of ducks he has come to present me with." The man was leaving the bedroom, when a rough, wet coat pushed by him, while a thick voice said, "By your leave," and at the same time Mr. Foley entered the bedroom. "You know my business, sir," said he to Barrington; "I have made it a journey to teach you manners, and it's not my purpose to return until I have broken every bone in your body," and, at the same time, he cut a figure of eight with his shillelah before the cheval glass. "You do not mean to say you would murder me in bed," exclaimed Daines, who had as much honor as cool courage. "No," replied the other, "but get up as soon as you can." "Yes," replied Daines, "that you might fell me the moment I put myself out of the blankets." "No," replied the other, "I pledge you my word not to touch you till you are out of bed." "You won't?" "No." "Upon your honor?" "Upon my honor." "That is enough," said Daines, turning over and making himself comfortable, and seeming as though he meant to fall asleep, "I have the honor of an Irish gentleman, and my rest as safe as though I were under the castle guard." The Tipperary salamander looked marvellously astonished at the pretended sleeper, but soon Daines began to snore. "Halloa," said Mr. Foley, "aren't you going to get up?" "No," said Daines, "I have the word of an Irish gentleman that he will not strike me in bed, and I am sure I am not going to get up to have my bones broken. I will never get up again. In the meantime, Mr. Foley, if you should want your breakfast, ring the bell; the best in the house is at your service. The morning paper will be here presently, but be sure and air it before reading, for there is nothing from which a man so quickly catches cold as reading a damp journal," and Daines affected to go to sleep. The Tip had fun in him as well as ferocity, he could not resist the cunning of the counsel. "Get up, Mr. Barrington, for in bed or out of bed, I have not the pluck to hurt so droll a heart." The result was, that in less than a hour afterwards Daines and his intended chaseler were sitting down to a warm breakfast, the latter only intent upon assaulting a dish of smoking chops.

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