

to captivate the hearts and minds of his listeners. He forms into the inquiry class those who have been, as it were, half convinced that the Catholic Church is the Church of Christ. "Inquirers" have come to that state of mind in which they say "I want to know more of the teachings of the Church." To learn the doctrines of the Church thoroughly requires both time and attention. The missionary's call to other fields cuts short his time, and his multifarious duties prevent him from giving the attention to the inquiry class that it demands; and yet the work of the inquiry class is in a sense more important than platform preaching. Who is there, therefore, that will step into the breach and consecrate time and attention to this evangelical work? In the economy of all divine work the Holy Spirit provides the supply or the demand. May we not hope, then, that devoted souls who are fitted by their special knowledge and earnest zeal will be inspired to offer themselves for this work? A convert thoroughly instructed in his religion often makes the best catechist. Such a one is generally very intelligent, and he is one who has been over the road and knows the landmarks, and, therefore, can ordinarily answer the difficulties and meet the objections of his catechumens. The ancient discipline of the Church provides for a class of lay helpers that took on themselves these special duties. Why in our modern work should not this urgent need be supplied? We believe that it is only necessary to voice the want, and the ones adapted for this special want will volunteer for the service. Already we find a number of the very best young men and women giving their time in Sunday schools for the instruction of children. The art of the Sunday school teacher carried to a still greater perfection will make the competent catechist.

In the course of his paper on "The Masses, and the Future of Religion," at the young Men's Societies Conference, Glasgow, Mr. D. J. Quinn said that if such a subject were being treated at any but a Catholic conference, or by other than Catholics, the treatment would be objective. Catholics need not approach the subject that way. They cannot change their doctrines to suit the changing whim of the religious public. Temporising as a religious policy is foredoomed to failure. But though Catholics were precluded from considering the subject this way, there still remained the question which might be profitably discussed of how those outside the Catholic Church might be best disposed towards it. History gave a lesson on the subject, and current events also deserve cognisance. There was at the moment the great danger of the Catholic Church becoming an object of antipathy to the labouring class, commonly called the masses, because of the attitude of certain Catholics towards certain economic changes for which the masses were clamouring. Reformers who advocate many things permissible and some things not permissible were denounced indiscriminately, with the result that the masses regarded the authors of such denunciation as enemies of the worker. It would be well to have subjects of this kind thoroughly discussed at the Young Men's Society meetings where the chaplain would be present to reprehend any unwarranted advocacy. The course of events in France, on the other hand, had also their lesson. Catholics should be careful not to allow the Church to be regarded by non-Catholics as a mere appendage of any political system or any form of government. They should not allow it to be thought that the Catholic Church was or could become the creature of any class or nation. Preceding the paper discussed the prejudices of non-Catholics towards the Catholic Church and recommended that subjects like these should be studied by the Young Men's Society, and that the truth regarding them and the Church should be disseminated by members amongst those whom they daily come in contact with. The publications of the Catholic Truth Society in this connection were commended. Finally, the paper considered whether the masses had any decided antagonism to Catholicity as a ceremonial system of religion, and concluded that this was not so, instancing the ceremonial developments in the Anglican and Presbyterian Churches, which were regarded by the masses with no indifferent or unfriendly eye.

PROGRESS OF THE CHURCH.

THE present situation of Catholicism in the world, and the progress of its conquests during the past 20 years, may be summarised as follows, according to the *Vita Nuova*:-

Previously no Catholic hierarchy existed in the India, Japan, Scotland, or the Danubian principalities. Today the number of Catholics has increased, and the hierarchy has been established in these countries. The Catholic Church in these regions is in the most prosperous condition. Moreover, Leo XIII. has recently founded the hierarchy among the Copts.

In Africa apostolic men are penetrating farther and farther every day into the interior of the Continent. Loanda, the Congo, and Zambesi are evangelised. Australia now reckons 24 bishoprics and 600,000 Catholics; formerly there were only a few missionaries. In South America and Oceania missionaries continue to display their zeal. In the United States, under the Pontificate of Leo XIII., 23 new dioceses have been created and 3000 churches built. Baltimore has had a national council, and Washington has become the seat of

a university canonically erected. We are witnesses of an increase in conversions, of the abolition of the Kultur Kampf in Germany, of the erection of a Catholic-spirited Government in Belgium, and of the nomination, for the first time, of a Russian representative of the Holy See.

The Catholic Church lives in a perpetual battle, in which every day she gains fresh victories. Many powerful influences may persecute her and combine for her destruction, but she comes forth more glorious from the conflict, and all persecutions serve but to make her more faithful.

According to an estimate unfavourable to the Catholic Church, since it was made by a German Protestant, her increase from century to century has been as follows:-

First century, 500,000 Catholics.
Second century, 2,000,000 Catholics.
Third century, 5,000,000 Catholics.
Fourth century, 10,000,000 Catholics.
Fifth century, 15,000,000 Catholics.
Sixth century, 20,000,000 Catholics.
Seventh century, 25,000,000 Catholics.
Eighth century, 40,000,000 Catholics.
Ninth century, 50,000,000 Catholics.
Tenth century 56,000,000 Catholics.
Eleventh century, 70,000,000 Catholics.
Twelfth century, 80,000,000 Catholics.
Thirteenth century, 85,000,000 Catholics.
Fourteenth century, 90,000,000 Catholics.
Fifteenth century, 100,000,000 Catholics.
Sixteenth century, 125,000,000 Catholics.
Seventeenth century, 175,000,000 Catholics.
Eighteenth century, 250,000,000 Catholics.
Nineteenth century (up to 1894), 280,000,000 Catholics.

The estimate admits, it must be observed, first, that the Catholic Church has made progress in every age, and, second, that in times of most violent persecution she has made most progress. Why should we be astonished at this? Is not God Himself the founder of the Catholic Church? God almighty, whom none can resist?

This estimate will show our readers how little importance is to be attached to the nonsense uttered every day by rationalists:-

"Catholicism is dying. The Catholic Church is an edifice which crumbles before modern civilisation. The Catholic's day is over, and now begins the era of progress!"

These doleful prophets, so ready to take part in the obsequies of the Catholic Church and to dig her grave, will be terribly disillusioned if they look this moribund Church in the face and see her as she is, more full of youth and more abounding in vitality every step she takes in the future.

Grave and Gay.

TRAVELLING IN THE TRANSVAAL.

In the current number of the *South African Catholic Magazine*, the Rev. Father F. C. Kolbe, gives the following entertaining incident of his travels in the Transvaal:- The title of these little sketches is "Through the Transvaal," which implies that I went a'so beyond it; and I did. I was most anxious to study the Portuguese aspect of Africa, and though one cannot do much in a day and a half, yet a single glimpse will often reveal a good deal, if you reflect upon it. Straws sometimes show the way the wind is blowing.

For example, I came across a station-master—not at Lourenço Marques—full of uniformed pomposity, swaggering about as if he were drum-major at the trooping of the colours, and ordering me about as if I were as black as himself. Well, I eventually persuaded him that I had the important business of taking my ticket, and that that train was not going or waiting for me, long as he had kept me and it waiting already. The price of the ticket was 33s 6d, but I handed him a document entitling me to the privilege of half-fare. The abstruse problem of dividing 33s 6d by 2 a piece took all the starch out of his uniform. He worked the problem about ten different times, apparently by a different method each time, with no satisfactory results. I thought of trying to explain to him my dodge of Skew-division, but the train was waiting. At last, to put him out of his agony, I suggested by way of a round sum that I had paid 17s when coming the other way. This solution at once restored his dignity. Affecting not to notice my meek suggestion, he tackled the difficulty once more, by a perfectly new method this time, and after two minutes further wrestling produced the following calculation:-

$$2 \mid 33 \cdot 6$$

17.

I did not dare even to smile, lest I might never be allowed to leave Portuguese territory. I saw that the man had determined to do that sum or die, and it I had shaken his confidence in myself, the whole proceeding would have begun again *de capo*.

MIXED METAPHORS

"Scrutator," in the *New Zealand Mail*, gives a couple of mixed metaphors, which are delightful. An insurance journal, speaking on the greed of the insurance companies for new business, says, "This is the grain of mustard seed from which has grown the upas tree of robbery." The second one is even better. A Chicago paper reports a number of Congressmen to have failed in discussing the proposed tariff on wool. "You will keep on clipping the sheep that lays the golden eggs until you milk it dry." Alongside of which may be given the following, placed by the *Edinburg* to the credit of a New Zealand legislator some years ago: "The honourable gentleman let the cat out of the bag, and made it a stalking-horse, which he afterwards manfully cast overboard to lighten the ship."

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