

ORDINATIONS IN ROME

COSMOPOLITAN CHARACTER OF THE CHURCH

We should say the Catholic never feels more happy and secure in his Church (writes the Rome correspondent of the 'Catholic Standard and Times') than on those days set apart in Rome for the ordination of students to minor and major orders. On each of these days—about thirteen in number—some three hundred Levites of all nations, colors, ages and spheres in life pass through the hands of the Pope's vicar and an assistant Bishop.

Let us go to St. John Lateran's, the Pope's Cathedral Church, at 7 a.m. on one of these mornings to view the candidates for orders. They are all ranged in pews, those for major orders wearing the long white alb, those for minors in surplice and cassock. They are a pale, ascetic-looking body on the whole—for a student's life is indeed a hard one—but they look very, very happy. But in what a different manner God has led many of these men, young and old (for some are well out of their teens, as we shall soon see), to the feet of the ordaining Bishop! To see the more interesting among the body, let us choose a vantage ground—not on top of the seats, as do some of our American and English tourists, who, with guide-books under their arms and field-glasses in their hands, deserve the name of well-dressed rowdies; however, they are but few, thank goodness!

Passing over a dozen young men, we come to a thin man, whose turn it is now to approach for the order of subdeacon. His is a curious history. He is the great Dr. —, a Lutheran or Methodist minister in America, whose gigantic ability and terrible pen kept some of the ablest Catholic theologians in the United States busy confuting his objections to the Church. He was an able and dangerous opponent, but an honest one. He was the light and prop of his sect; he believed thoroughly in his doctrines. But a day came when his sect heard with dismay of his entrance into the fold against which his youth and manhood and much of his old age were passed in battling. He became a Catholic, and now, at the age of seventy-two years,

He is Determined to become a Priest,

and undo some of the harm of which he was the author. The young fellow with the ruddy face, next the old warrior, is the son of the Protestant Archbishop of —. He got the grace of conversion, corresponded faithfully with it, despised all opposition and enticements from well-meaning, worldly minded people, and joined the Church. You will soon see him return to England, where his work as a priest will bring consolation to thousands; and you will soon read books and articles of his which will draw unstinted praise and support from England, America, Ireland and Australia.

That black giant with quick, intelligent eyes is a Zulu from South Africa, who once ran about a little naked savage on his native desert. What if his appearance is a little wild as yet, or his people degraded savages? His ambition is to convert them, and, if necessary, die for the faith. In the class hall few whites could stand his onslaughts in free questions, from his entrenchment in a syllogism, he sallied forth, got his adversary into a vicious circle, and by means of a few logical feints always came off victorious.

His Neighbor is a Brazilian Negro,

who will gravely inform you that 'the father of his father' was a white man, and point out some grayish hue in his skin (which no one but himself can see) to convince you of the fact. In point of mental ability, he is not much. His tribe have not the colossal intellect and memories of the Zulus.

Those yellow-faced young fellows who keep so much together are Chinese. The oldest is the son of a mandarin. Some day he will create a stir in the land of the Celestials, for his family is a powerful one and he received the grace of conversion in such an extraordinary manner that he will leave no stone unturned to build up the Church in China.

But we cannot go through the details of all those Protestant ministers who are getting minor orders at the ages of forty, fifty, sixty, or of those young Americans who threw up the professions of lawyer, doctor, etc., to don the cassock; the list is too long. We shall, therefore, quote one other instance only.

That Tall, Noble-looking Gentleman,

of middle age upon whom the Bishop is about to impose hands is the Duke of S—, Italy. On his wife's death, some years ago, the Duke studied for the

ministry, and has now arrived at the goal. In a short time you will recognise him as a canon in St. Peter's, receiving the vows of his daughter on her renunciation of the world.

And now we go away, after an interesting morning in Rome, saying nothing, but meditating on the truth and power and glory of the Catholic Church.

A Mournful Scene.

Readers of the serial story now appearing in our columns, and which is founded on fact (says the Philadelphia 'Catholic Standard and Times'), will be interested in the following plain history of an event which in many respects bears a striking resemblance to the plot of the tale now nearing its conclusion in these pages:—

In the year 1853 the cathedral church of Zitimir, in Russian Volhynia, was the scene of the most mournful of all Church ceremonies—the degradation of a priest. The church was filled to overflowing by persons who lamented aloud. The Bishop whose painful duty it was to perform the sad rite, Monsignor Borowski, could not restrain his grief, all the more because the priest who was subjected to it was universally known and hitherto, universally respected. His name was Kobzlowicz, and he was Catholic priest at Grатов, in the Ukraine. From the time of his ordination he was regarded as one of the most pious and zealous priests of the diocese. He had considerable reputation as a preacher, and was greatly esteemed as a confessor. He rebuilt his parish church and decorated it, and from the time he was placed in charge of the parish he seemed to redouble his zeal. All at once, to the amazement of every one who knew anything about him, he was accused of having murdered a public official of the place. The chief piece of evidence against him was a double-barrelled fowling piece, which was found hidden behind the high altar, which was proved to belong to him, and one barrel of which had been lately discharged. He was convicted of the murder, and the court sentenced him to penal servitude for life in Siberia.

Conformably to canonical rules, he was degraded from the priesthood before this sentence was carried out; and then his hair was cut off. He was clad in convict apparel, and then incorporated in the chained gang of criminals who made their march to Siberia. Years passed away, and everything about the occurrence had been forgotten, except by a few persons. Then the organist of the church of Oratov, finding himself at the point of death, sent for the principal persons of the district and in their presence confessed that he was the murderer of the official. He added that he had done so in the hope of being able to marry his widow. After committing the crime, he took the gun with which he had shot the unfortunate man and hid it where, upon his suggestion, the police found it, and he ingeniously managed to direct suspicion on the priest. But the strangest part of the story remains to be told. After the arrest of the priest, being torn with remorse, he visited him in prison and went to confession to him, disclosing that he himself was the criminal. He had then the purpose of acknowledging his guilt before the tribunal, but his courage failed him, and he allowed things to proceed on their false course.

Thus the poor priest, Kobzlowicz, knew well who was the genuine murderer, but he knew it only through the confessional. A word would have set him free from the terrible charge. But this would have broken the seal of the confessional, and he preferred to undergo degradation and penal servitude for life, and lose his good name, and be regarded as a shameless criminal. The confession of the organist was subsequently taken in regular legal form, and then the government sent directions to have the priest sought out and set at liberty, his innocence being publicly proclaimed. But he was beyond the reach of human compensation, and had gone before a tribunal where error is impossible and where ample justice will have been done to his heroic virtue. He died without ever having let the slightest sign transpire of the real condition of things.

The Oldest Irish College in the World

The oldest Irish College in the world is at Salamanca, Spain. Its rector, Very Rev. Father O'Doherty, has just visited his native land. He is quite a young man to occupy so distinguished a position. A native of County Mayo, he was educated at Maynooth, and was for a time professor in the diocesan seminary at Ballaghaderreen. Two years ago he was nominated by the Irish Bishops for his present position. He has been decorated by the King of Spain with the insignia of a com-

"A SORROWFU' heart's aye drouthy; but a cup o' genuine 'Cook o' the North' will quench ony."

"A toom haun is nae lure for a hawk," but a cup o' Hondai-Lanka's a temptation for anybody!"