

religionists where hard blows were to be given and borne is still a live reality; that the creed which took so relatively large a share in winning American independence, and did 'the height of the fighting' to maintain the Union in the sixties, is still, in greater strength than ever, to the fore ready to defend both if the hour of trial should come. Nearly a third of the personnel of the American navy is composed of Catholics—in fact, this first and second and third and last and chiefest post of danger is now 'stuffed' with our co-religionists to an extent that surpasses even that which obtained during the struggle for Independence, or when 'the handsomest thing in the war' of the sixties was done in the terrible charges of Meagher's Irish Brigade up Marye's Heights.

The proportion of Catholics in the American fleet is, in its way, typical of the religious predominance of the Old Faith under the Stars and Stripes. There are at present some 21,000,000 of our spiritual kith and kin under the star-spangled banner—about 15,000,000 of these (or near it)—being, according to latest and most probable estimates, on the American mainland. In no part of American territory has the progress of Catholicism been, in all its circumstances, so striking as in the New England States. There, for long generations, the practice of the Catholic faith was as rigorously penalised as it was in England or Ireland in the days of Queen Anne or the Second George. Even within living memory a state of active persecution still existed in some of the States; Catholic men are still in the prime of life who were flogged in a Boston public school for refusing to read the Authorised Version of the Bible; and in districts where Catholics are in numerically inferior strength in Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, the profession of the Old Faith is to this hour a rigorous bar to employment as a teacher in 'the little red schoolhouse.' The Puritans who settled New England were a sturdy and virile, if rather dour, race. The authors of the *History of the Catholic Church in the New England States* say of them:—

'Three virtues are never denied them—a rare gift of extracting values from land and sea, unrivalled genius for orderly government, and the high, evenly distributed intelligence of middle-class Englishmen. They were also, individually, virile, scrupulous, and pure. They were not, however, a simple, blameless people, like the Acadians, whom they afterwards dispossessed, or the Tyrolese, or the ancient Galileans, or any other of those gentle tribes, content with a bounded plot of the earth's surface for sustenance and a perpetual succession of ways and callings, from father to son, through many centuries. On the contrary, they were keen, restless, ambitious, and complex. Though they forbade much, the forbidden things were done among them. Though the Bible lay in each man's hand; the ledger was never far out of reach. Not even the poets have ventured to represent their lives as idyllic. Their loves were too deep, their hatreds too fierce, for the shepherd lays of pastoral romance.'

For over a century this strong, forceful, deeply passionate race held New England, gave it their stamp, developed it along the lines of their own individuality, and—convinced that their competitors were the enemies of God—excluded other faiths (especially the Catholic) from their field.

There came, with time, more gentle thoughts even to New England. There came, too, the great tide of Irish Catholic immigration that spread itself—deep here, a trickle there, a pool yonder—over Puritan New England. The same authors last quoted say of the new immigrants:—

'They were a forceful people, though their forces lacked discipline. They put their children to school with a passionate hope of repairing the prescribed ignorance of centuries and developing a mental facility comparable to that of the Puritans, with the generations of reading and writing ancestors. They believed deeply, and at great cost set up the emblem of their faith, braving contempt in its exercise, and walking miles, if need be, to practise its consoling devotions.'

'The people lived crowded in the large rooms of discarded mansions, amid conditions which, we are told, forbid decency. But they were decent. They had imported the virtues as well as the failings of their stock—its loyalty and purity on the one hand; its pugnacity and dreaminess on the other.'

A wall of separation long shut out Irish Catholics from human fellowship with native New England. For public and private positions 'no Irish need apply'; land was restricted to Irish purchasers; and as late as from 1888 to 1895, even in Boston, the A.P.A. ('American Protective Association')—a society on Orange lines—was able to interfere with the rights of Catholics in education, and to corrupt the course of justice in the notorious case of the murder of the 'Papist,' John W. Wills, by a fervent Ulsterman named John Ross.

These things, however, were only what the old physicians would term 'growing pains.' Partly owing to race-suicide on the part of the once virile Puritan stock, partly to the solid reverence of the Catholic body for the sanctity of marriage and the law of God, and partly to the great and later influx of population from central Europe, New England is now rapidly becoming a great Catholic land. The preservation of infant life, and the protection of its sacred rights, are the special care of the Church in every land. And in New England it is one of the factors that have contributed to make Catholics 'sit in the gates.' In these days of race-suicide, young countries owe an immeasurable debt to the agency that ensures, within its jurisdiction, regard for the God-given law of life.

## Notes

### A Happy Toast

One of the prettiest incidents in connection with the visit of the American fleet to Auckland was that which greeted the close of a dinner given by the Auckland Non-commissioned Officers' Club on Wednesday of last week. 'The gathering,' says our local morning contemporary, 'was just about to disperse, when Chief Turret-captain Miller, of the United States warship Vermont, rose and said: "Men, there is but one toast more—a toast which is not on the list—that of 'Our Mothers.'"' The words seemed to have a magical effect, and as the proposer repeated the lines,—"God bless our mothers, whereso'er they be, the women who gave their sons to fight upon the sea," one could have heard a pin drop, and the silence did not cease until the 500 men present had again placed their glasses on the table. Then many handkerchiefs were produced, and it was evident that the proposer of the toast had touched a tender chord.'

### Rough on the Libellers

Our columns have for some time past been amply demonstrating that there are more risks than red meat in the campaign of defamation that the atheist and Freemason press have for a long time past been carrying on against the parochial clergy and the religious Orders in France and Italy. One result of the large number of successful actions taken by the slandered parties was this: that the editors and proprietors of the journals aforesaid found it prudent to fall back on invented or exaggerated tales of alleged clerical chuckleheadedness of a vague or general nature—naming no names of person or of place. One defamer, however, has found, to his cost, that even in anonymous accusation there is not necessarily safety. The individual in question conducts an anti-religious paper, the *Avenir des Alpes*—a local organ of the Radical-Socialist bloc—at Moutier. Some time ago he published, in his four-page news-sheet, a libellous charge reflecting upon the conduct of some parish priest in the Canton of Rozel. The *Avenir* editor—warned, no doubt, by the disastrous experience of many other bloc newspapers—carefully abstained from mentioning the name of the parish priest that it attacked, gave no clue which would fix the accusation upon him, went to bed in fancied security, and slept the sleep of the good *blocard* who feels that he has served the cause of irreligion with the weapon of Voltaire.

Now, it so happens that there are eleven curés (parish priests) in the Canton of Rozel. They discovered that—by an admirable provision of French law which might advantageously be extended to English-speaking countries—they were enabled to institute a joint process against the *gérant* or responsible head of the *Avenir des Alpes*. The case went to the Court of Appeal at Chambéry in Savoy. The Paris *Univers* of July 3 records the result. The *Avenir* was mulcted in a fine, had to pay the entire of the rather heavy expenses of the suit, and, in addition, to hand over a small sum in damages to each of the eleven curés of the Canton. The judgment of the court contained another clause that must have been 'one of the most unkindest cuts of all' to the proprietary of the *Avenir des Alpes*. 'The judgment,' says the *Univers*, 'had to be published in the *Avenir des Alpes*, and in another newspaper of the Department to be chosen by the parish priests.'

### A Hilarious Hoax

Josh Billings was not (as he declared) 'edzackly disposed to swallow, without stirring,' all that he heard; and he had a prudent habit of 'smellin' things before he swallowed them.'

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