

Church is, both absolutely and by comparison with other creeds, moving forward as if shod with the shoes of swiftness. Some two years ago an attempt was made in a prominent New Zealand daily paper to minimise the significance of the growth and position of the Catholic Church in the homeland of Uncle Sam. It failed. Such failures add to the piquancy of life. As was the case with 'the genial showman,' 'heavy figgerin' was not a berthrite' of the well-meaning writer who made the attempt. He serenely lumped together twenty-two sorts of Lutherans, seventeen varieties of Methodists, thirteen stripes of Baptists, twelve kinds of Presbyterians, and an endless number of brands of other rival denominations, labelled them 'the Protestant Church,' and set them triumphantly over against the one, solid, and undivided Catholic corporate body. It was only by adopting this or some equally unfair and misleading basis of comparison that it was possible to conceal the fact that the Catholic Church in the United States comes easily first in numerical strength and that any other single religious body falls hopelessly behind it.

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Estimates for the year 1901 have just been published. They, too, tell a tale of unrivalled progress. They were compiled by the Rev. Dr. H. K. CARROLL, a non-Catholic clergyman, who was in charge of the religious statistics of the United States census of 1890. In order to establish something approaching as nearly as practicable to a common ground of comparison, Dr. CARROLL gives the number of 'communicants' in the case of the Catholic Church and of 'members' in the case of other creeds. The numerical strength of communicants and members and their growth during 1901 is shown in the following table:—

Religious Body.	Membership, etc., at present.	Growth, 1901.
Catholic	9,158,741	468,803
Protestant Episcopal ...	750,799	31,341
Disciples of Christ ...	1,179,541	29,559
Southern Baptist ...	1,674,108	26,112
African Methodist ...	698,354	22,892
Colored Baptist ...	1,590,802	18,146
Methodist North... ..	2,762,691	16,500
Presbyterian North ...	999,815	16,382
Christian Scientist ...	48,930	13,980
Lutheran General Synod	204,098	4,500
Congregationalist ...	634,835	3,475
Baptist North	1,005,613	3,039

Dr. CARROLL's figures give a total membership of all Churches in the United States, at the close of 1901, as 28,090,637. 'This represents,' says the New York *Free-man's Journal*, 'a gain of 730,027, or 2.67 per cent., or greater than the gain in population, 2.18 per cent., the annual increase in population from 1890 to 1900.' In relative, as well as in absolute, numerical increase the Catholic body easily led the way. The Protestant Episcopal Church came next with an increase of four per cent.

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Here is another interesting table prepared and published by Dr. CARROLL, showing the number of communicants and members and the rank of the various denominations in 1890 and 1901:—

Religious Body.	Rank, 1901	Communi-cants, 1901	Rank, 1890	Comuni-cants, 1890
Roman Catholic	1	9,158,741	1	6,231,417
Methodist Episcopal	2	2,762,291	2	2,240,354
Regular Baptist, South	3	1,664,108	4	1,280,000
Regular Baptist, col'd	4	1,610,801	3	1,348,989
Meth-Episc., South	5	1,477,180	5	1,209,976
Disciples of Christ	6	1,179,541	8	641,051
Regular Baptist, North	7	1,005,613	6	800,450
Presbyterian, North	8	999,815	7	788,221
Prot. Episcopal	9	750,799	9	532,051
African Methodist	10	698,354	11	452,725
Congregationalist	11	634,835	10	512,771
Lutheran Synod, Con.	12	566,375	12	357,153
African Meth., Zion	13	537,337	13	349,788
Lutheran Gen. Council	14	316,563	14	324,847
Latter Day Saints	15	300,000	19	144,532
Reformed German	16	248,929	15	204,108
United Brethren	17	240,007	16	202,474
Presbyterian, South	18	227,991	18	179,721
Colored Methodist	19	204,972	20	129,384
Lutheran Gen. Synod	20	204,098	17	187,432

As far back as 1890, Dr. ELLENWOOD (a Protestant writer) said in the *Missionary Review* that 'from 1800 to 1850 the population of the country increased nine-fold; the membership of all Evangelistic Churches twenty-seven fold; the Roman Catholic sixty-three fold. From 1850 to 1880 the population increased 116 per cent., the communicants of Protestant churches 185 per cent., and the Roman Catholics 294 per cent.' Tables given by MULHALL in his Sydney Congress paper showed that 'in forty years (1850-1890) the Roman churches [in the United States] multiplied seven-fold and the church property thirteen-fold, while Methodists, Baptists, and Presbyterians showed a much lower rate of progress.' Some time ago we showed that the full numerical strength of the Catholic body in the United States must stand between 12,000,000 and 15,000,000. In some great cities half the population is Catholic. Catholics, for instance, constitute about the half of San Francisco's population of 342,752 souls. In New York city (according to the *Catholic Directory* figures for 1900) there are 1,852,000 Catholics—at least fifty per cent. of the population—and in the 'old city' 825,000. An estimate made by a prominent architect in 1899 showed that there were at that time in course of construction in the New York ecclesiastical province churches, chapels, convents, schools, and hospitals which, when completed, would involve an expenditure of £2,000,000. Dean HOLK, in his *Little Tour in America* (published in 1895) speaks of the deep impression made on his mind by the omnipresent activity of the Catholic Church in America. After dwelling on the 'enthusiastic zeal' of the United States Catholics, he continues: 'Not only are their buildings the most beautiful—there is no church in New York to compare with the cathedral of St. Patrick—but they are used more frequently for their sacred purposes than any other places of worship.' This statement is fully borne out by RENE BACHE, whose elaborate figures, published a few years ago, show that one-third of all the church-goers of the United States are children of the Catholic Church. As far back as 1890 Dr. ELLENWOOD, a Protestant writer, described the Catholic Church in America, in the course of an article in the *Missionary Review*, as a 'strong-stranded, hard-twisted agency which no one can ignore.' And Rev. Dr. LAYMAN ABBOTT (a Puritan of the Puritans) said a few years ago in the *North American Review*: 'The most stalwart anti-Romanist, in his calmer and more candid moments, can hardly question that, were the Roman Catholic Church abolished by instantaneous decree, its priests banished and churches closed, and the restraining influence of that form of the Christian religion taken away from its adherents, the disaster to American communities would be simply awful in its proportions, if not irretrievable in its results.' Catholics in these young countries can look with high hopefulness to their own future when they contemplate the marvellous advance which, in little more than a hundred years, has placed the Catholic Church in the United States absolutely without a rival in point of numbers, in rapidity of growth, in church attendance, in material prosperity, and, above all, in spiritual advancement and in its marvellous energy in doing all manner of good.

Notes

The Red Rag.

The name of Jesuit is to a number of organised intolerants what the sight of the scarlet mantle in the hands of a *chulo* is to an Andalusian bull when surrounded by his tormentors in the ring. And thus it has come about that the Protestant Alliance of Great Britain recently addressed an impassioned request to the Salisbury Government to prevent England, by special Act of Parliament, from being 'invaded' by expelled Jesuits from France, who, to a dead certainty, would demoralise the country and bring it to speedy and irreparable ruin. Lord Salisbury—who, by the way, has freely admitted numbers of Anarchists and other undesirable foreigners without protest from the Protestant Alliance—did not smell the Empire's crack o' doom in the landing of a few French Jesuits, and sent his petitioners the following curt reply:—

'Dear Sir,—I am desired by the Marquis of Salisbury to acknowledge your letter of 19th inst. I am to say in reply his lordship is not aware that any legislation is likely to be introduced in regard to the subjects you mention.—Yours faithfully,

'R. T. GUNTON.'

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