

There is only one of the changes that is of special interest to Catholics, but it is worth while in passing to note the general lines on which the main alterations have been carried out. In some cases while a doctrine has been nominally retained it has been watered down by 'declaratory statements' or footnotes of explanation which practically intimate that though the original words are to remain part of the creed they are not to be taken as meaning what they say. This is the course which has been adopted in connection with the famous Presbyterian doctrine of predestination and foreordination. This is the doctrine, it will be remembered, of which the Rev. J. Gibb—who is now by a strange irony of fate the official head of the whole Presbyterian Church of New Zealand—declared a few years ago that its statement 'as set forth in the standards of his Church was revolting to his very soul,'—a declaration that involved the future Moderator in a very keen and lively heresy hunt. The doctrine is thus stated in the 'Confession of Faith' in the chapter on God's Eternal Decree: 'By the decree of God, for the manifestation of His glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life, and others foreordained to everlasting death. These angels and men, thus predestinated and foreordained, are particularly and unchangeably designed; and their number is so certain and definite, that it cannot be either increased or diminished.' This is still to remain part of the Presbyterian creed but it is proposed to attach to it a foot-note which, while 'maintaining the integrity of the doctrine of foreordination' will set forth that the mercy of God is extended to all men, that the Presbyterian Church does not endorse any fatalistic doctrine. In the same way the original doctrine of the Presbyterian Church as to the fate of elect and non-elect infants has been modified by an explanatory statement to the effect that the Church does not hold that non-elect infants dying in infancy are damned. In other cases the wording of the confession is altered—sometimes so as to flatly contradict the original teaching—and in yet a third class of cases whole passages are completely struck out.

In this latter category has been placed, we are glad to say, the absurd and silly statement as to the Pope which at present disfigures the Presbyterian creed. Until some change is made every good Presbyterian is supposed to hold the following as an article of faith: 'Nor can the Pope of Rome be in any sense the head (of the Church); but is that Anti-Christ, that man of sin and son of perdition, that exalts himself in the Church against Christ, and all that is called God.' This, the Revision Committee recommend, should be expunged on the ground that it is now meaningless. It is not so much meaningless as utterly silly, and is a reflection, not on the sanely occupant of the Papacy, but on the sanity of the people who could be found to endorse it. Such a doctrine is a monument, not of faith or piety, but of narrowness and bigotry, and for the credit of the Presbyterian body the sooner it is wiped out of existence as part of their official creed the better.

An Undesirable Immigrant.

We learn from some of our Australian exchanges that one of the most infamous slanderers of the Church that America has ever seen—the notorious Margaret L. Shepherd—has somewhat suddenly and unexpectedly arrived in Sydney. She professes only to be taking a health and pleasure trip, but there are indications that should sufficient inducement offer she will be only too ready to take up her noisome business of 'exposing' the iniquities of Rome at so much per expose. In that case she is almost certain to pay New Zealand a visit, and we, therefore, take the opportunity of sounding a warning note to our readers, and of supplying them with at least sufficient material as to her career to enable them, for the benefit of the Protestant public, to paint the creature in her true colors the moment she sets foot in the country. We have before us the pamphlet published by the American Catholic Truth Society, giving full particulars of the life and doings of this notorious gaoi-bird, and if Mrs. Shepherd pollutes this country with her presence and indecent lectures we will publish the unsavory record in full. In the meantime we content ourselves with giving the testimony of three eminent and unimpeachable non-Catholics as to the character and career of this infamous woman. We need only premise that though, of course, she poses as an 'ex-nun' she has never been a nun and has never even been a Catholic.

Mrs. Shepherd claims to have been a nun in Arnos Vale Convent, Bristol, and she was for a time an inmate of that institution, but she was there as a fallen woman. Florence Booth, of the Salvation Army, writes about her: 'I have no doubt at all but that this woman is a fraud. . . . I trust you will get your money back, and I am anxious that something should be done to prevent her from deceiving any more kind-hearted people. . . . She has never been a nun. She was taken (I am not sure whether by the police or not) as a prostitute into the Roman Catholic penitentiary at Bristol. She ran away from there and was found in the streets of Bris-

tol, or rather wandered into the S.A. barracks and represented herself as homeless and anxious to come to our rescue home in London.'

Mr. W. T. Stead, editor of the 'Review of Reviews,' who obtained from Mrs. Shepherd some facts for his series of articles on fallen women, in a letter written in answer to an inquiry about her, says: 'The less you have to do with the lady you mention the better it will be for your peace of mind and the security of the contents of your pockets. . . . Introduced to me as a reclaimed prostitute. . . . Seems to have been in gaol twice for obtaining goods under false pretences.'

In confirmation of this last statement a letter, dated September 1, 1891, from Rev. C. B. Simpson, chaplain of her Majesty's Prison at Bodmin, Cornwall, England, speaks of her stay in that institution 'on two charges of forgery and one of false pretences in 1882. She then went under the name of Georgina Parkyn. . . . There is little doubt she is an accomplished swindler.'

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Such is the character, on unimpeachable Protestant testimony, of this thoroughly low woman. After the recent Slatery frost and fiasco, we hardly anticipate that this creature will make any serious attempt to go 'on tour' here, but one never knows. In any case, it is well to be prepared, and should she make her unwelcome appearance in this Colony we will take care that the full facts of her career are brought before the public with the least possible delay.

Encyclical Letter

OF

HIS HOLINESS POPE LEO XIII.

(Continued from last issue.)

LEO XIII., POPE.

TO ALL THE PATRIARCHS, PRIMATES, ARCHBISHOPS, AND
BISHOPS OF THE CATHOLIC WORLD.

Venerable Brethren, Health and Apostolic Benediction.

BUT this is not all. The return to Christianity will not be an efficacious and complete remedy if it does not imply the return in sincere love to the 'one Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church. Christianity is, in truth, incarnate in the Catholic Church; it is identified with the spiritual and perfect society which, supreme in its own order, is the Mystical Body of Jesus Christ, and has for its visible head the Roman Pontiff, the successor to the Prince of the Apostles. The Church is the perpetuation of the mission of the Saviour, the daughter and the heir of the Redemption. She has propagated the Gospel, and she has defended it at the price of her blood; and strong in the divine assistance and the immortality that have been promised her, never making compact with error, she remains faithful to the mandate laid upon her to proclaim the doctrine of Christ throughout the world to the end of the ages, and to preserve its integrity inviolable.

The Lawful Dispenser of the Teachings

of the Gospel, she does not manifest herself to us merely as the consoler and redeemer of souls; she is also the everlasting source of justice and charity, the propagator as well as the guardian of true liberty and of the only equality that is possible here below. While applying the doctrine of her divine Founder, she maintains a just balance, and traces the just limits between all the rights and all the privileges of society. The equality which she proclaims does not destroy the distinction of the different social classes; she wishes to preserve that intact, because nature itself evidently requires it. To prevent the anarchy of reason emancipated from faith and abandoned to itself, the liberty she gives injures neither the rights of truth, because they are superior to those of liberty, nor the rights of justice, because they are superior to those of number and force, nor the rights of God, because they are superior to those of humanity.

In the domestic circle the Church is no less fruitful in good results. For not only does she resist the perverse arts which unbelief employs to attack the life of the family, but she provides for and safeguards the bond of marriage and its stability, while she protects and promotes the honor of married life, its fidelity and sanctity. At the same time she sustains and cements the civil and political order, bringing on the one hand efficacious assistance to authority, and, on the other, showing favorable countenance to wise reforms and to the just aspirations of subjects: never wearying in her efforts to exact respect for princes, and the obedience that is their due, while she defends the inalienable rights of human conscience. Hence it is owing to her that peoples submitted to her influence have had nothing to fear from slavery, for she has kept princes above the inclination to tyranny.

Perfectly conscious of this divine efficiency, We have carefully endeavored since the beginning of Our Pontificate to set forth in the encyclicals, light the beneficent designs of the Church, and to extend to the utmost, with the treasure of her doctrines, the field of her salutary action.

Such has been the aim of the principal acts of Our Pontificate, notably of the Encyclicals on Christian Philosophy, on Human Liberty, on Christian Marriage, on Freemasonry, on Public Powers,