

A Tribute to Catholic Charity

Writing in the *Western Christian Advocate* of June 4, the Rev. T. Gilford Dickinson, a Methodist minister of West Pittston, Pa., scores his own denomination for its inactivity in charitable work. In the course of the article Dr. Dickinson takes occasion to commend the philanthropic activity of the Catholic Church. He mentions several incidents which are of special interest to Catholics in this vicinity (says the *Catholic Columbian*).

'In this connection,' he said, 'I must state one other sin of omission against the humanities that our church is guilty of. Dr. Hawkes was a prominent physician in Columbus, Ohio. In the evening of his life he planned the disposition of some property and decided to give a hospital, monumental to his name. He offered valuable property for this purpose to the Methodist church, that the hospital to his memory might be under Methodist auspices. A meeting was held and the offer discussed and declined on the ground that the church could not conduct a hospital. To bind broken limbs and soothe fevered brows were beyond the bounds of Methodist power. Florence Nightingale and her disciples must take our place. The doctor then offered it to United Protestantism in Columbus; after several meetings it was declined on the ground of inability to minister to suffering bodies. It was then offered to the Catholic Church and accepted with thanks, and to-day the stately Mt. Carmel with its superb equipment is monumental to the generosity of the good physician and the stupidity of the Methodist Church, and the cowardice of Protestantism in Columbus.'

Again he said:

'I have seen the growth of one orphanage. I was appointed pastor of our Church in Pomeroy, Ohio, where lived Father Jessing, the rector of the Catholic Church. Here he founded the *Ohio Waisenfreund*, a weekly paper for the support of orphan boys. This little orphanage soon outgrew its limited quarters in that parish, and he moved his whole plant to Columbus, Ohio, and opened St. Joseph's Orphan Asylum. He had no money, only largeness of heart and faith in God and human-kind. The little *Waisenfreund* had a limited circulation, but it found its way to generous hearts. His little family grew, the people learned of it, loved it, gave largely to it. To-day the Josephinum on East Main street is the monument to his labor. A few years later my parish in Columbus touched the walls of this institution. One day, while passing, I saw a woman taking leave of a little boy at the entrance of the yard. Her face wore a smile of comfort, while a few tears added radiance to her countenance. Father Jessing, a stately figure in cassock, stood on the lawn, a little boy by his side, with his hand on his head, a picture for an artist, another St. Vincent de Paul. That boy would be generously fed, clothed, always comfortable. He would be educated, he would be taught to do useful things. He would know God, Christ, His Church. He would learn obedience, reverence, devotion, charity, holiness. The logical mental query was, Why can't we do this? My answer to-day is, We can. We must.

'Our sins of omission have cost us numbers and influence. Some years ago there lived in Cincinnati a widow with two little boys. She was a Methodist (the Rev. Dr. Weakley, of the West Ohio Conference, is my authority for this). She was poor and went out for a day's work. Her problem was how to secure the safety of the boys while away from them. Near her lived a priest who one day offered her his yard as a place where the boys could play and have protection from the street. She accepted his hospitality and the boys were cared for. Time passed, the boys grew. William Rosecrans became a general in the United States Army, and Sylvester became the Bishop of Columbus diocese. When one muses over such history, he asks where was the Methodist Church in Cincinnati? She evidently was not alive to her opportunities in that city. She is not alive yet; for the West Ohio Conference has no orphanage.'

ABBOT GASQUET IN HIS WORKING ROOM

Day by day for the past five years (writes a Rome correspondent) the body known throughout the Catholic world as the Commission for the Revision of the Vulgate, which Pope Pius X. appointed under the guidance of the Right Rev. Abbot Gasquet, President of the English Benedictines, has labored diligently to fulfil the task given by the Sovereign Pontiff. Set on the summit of the Aventine Hill, the International College of the Order of St. Benedict is eminently fitted for the pursuance of a work that demands deep learning and untiring patience—it is far enough distant from Rome to be out of the noise and whirl of the city, while sufficiently near for all practical purposes. And so the body of eighteen Benedictine savants may continue their labors amid peace and tranquillity on the famous Aventine, which is now a place almost deserted except by the tourist, but which two thousand years ago was one of the busy, fashionable centres of the Eternal City.

It was, therefore, with a sense of pleasure the writer found himself in the room in which the great work is being done, on the invitation of Abbot Gasquet to hear the president's explanation of the progress made during the past year.

One must always keep before his mind, as the Abbot explained, that the end of the Commission is to get at the text of the Scriptures as it came from the pen of St. Jerome when that great churchman had translated them. How necessary this caution is came forcibly home to one as he listened to the methods adopted by the Commission in comparing antique Bibles found in libraries of Italy, France, Ireland, England, Spain, and other countries, for it was the one guiding star to one looking at the results of patient collating of time-worn manuscripts, some of which the ancient scribes had written with infinite care, and some in a manner that showed they had often suffered from distractions.

Probably the most interesting part of the explanations given the writer on the occasion by Abbot Gasquet regarded the assistance which the art of photography has been to the Vulgate Commission. For example, suppose there was a precious codex of a Bible in a library in Spain or Switzerland, which had to be examined from cover to cover, letter by letter, and which the owners would not allow to be carried over the threshold. What was the Abbot to do in order to effect his end? He should send to the library one of his lieutenants at some cost and not a little inconvenience. If he had the codex in the working-room at Rome, all would go well. But he hit upon another plan. The Abbot simply called into the library an expert photographer, had a photo taken of each page, and when the films had been developed he had the prints sent to Paris for mounting and binding. On the shelves of the Vulgate room are row after row of these photographed Bibles, bound into volumes. Not only are these photos of the Bible pages as clear and serviceable as the original manuscript, but, in many cases, they are even more so, as being more easily decipherable and less cumbersome. One can work more boldly with strongly mounted photos than with the faded leaves of manuscripts, which he must touch gingerly and treat every leaf as being worth a hundred times its weight in gold.

It is likely that the Commission over which Abbot Gasquet presides will have its work finished within two years. Then it may be the task of another Commission to find out how correct St. Jerome himself was in this translation of Holy Writ. Seeing that St. Jerome used the Hebrew, the Aramaic and the Greek languages in his translations, the task for the new Commission may be anticipated by it as a pretty big one.

WANTED KNOWN—That Bill-heads, Circulars, Memoriam Cards, Concert Tickets and Programmes, and General Printing of every description are executed at the *Tablet* Office. Moderate rates.

Photographs!

He may be Prime Minister. That is the privilege of every New Zealand boy. Photographs that preserve his boyhood will mean a lot to you; so that the little collection taken at various ages will always be a priceless treasure.

Keep to GAZE & CO., P

HAMILTON.