

**Opportune Observance.**

"What We have said already is sufficient to demonstrate how opportune it is that on the occasion of this universal centenary, everyone should intensify his own zeal to preserve the Faith, which so luminously revealed itself, if anyone, in Alighieri as supporter of culture and of art. Because in him not only the vastness of genius is to be admired, but also the greatness of the argument, which holy religion offered to his song. If the acuteness of his intellect was sharpened by the meditation and study on the masterpieces of the ancient classics, it was tempered even more strongly as we have said, by the writings of Doctors and Fathers, who gave to him the powerful wings on which he soared to wander in horizons much more wide than those enclosed in the narrow ambit of nature. Therefore, although divided from us by an interval of centuries, he still preserves the freshness of a poet of our times, and certainly he is much more modern than some recent poets, who exhume that paganism, which was swept away for ever by Christ triumphant on His Cross. The same piety breathes in Alighieri, that breathes in us, the same feelings, the same faith, and the same veils shade the truth that so exalts us, and which from heaven has come down to us.

**Poet of Christian Ideals.**

"This is his chief merit; to have been a Christian poet; to have sung in divine accents those Christian ideals which he passionately admired in all the splendor of their beauty, feeling them deeply, and living them. And those who dare to deny this glory to Dante and reduce the religious substratum of the Divine Comedy to a vague ideology, without any foundation of truth, disown in Dante what is his characteristic and the inspiration of all his other merit.

"And if Dante owes so much of his fame and greatness to the Catholic Faith, let this one example suffice, passing others in silence, to show how untrue it is that the homage of mind and heart to God, clips the wings of genius, when on the contrary, it spurs and elevates it; and how wrongly opposed to the progress of culture and refinement are those who want to banish from public instruction any idea of religion.

"Very deplorable is, indeed, the method reigning to-day, of educating the studious youth as if God did not exist, and without the smallest allusion to the supernatural. Because, although in some places the 'Sacred Poem' is not kept away from the schools, and is on the contrary included among these books that must be deeply studied, it does not, however, bring usually to young people that vital nourishment it is destined to produce, as, owing to the secular direction they have received, they are not disposed, as they ought to be, towards the truths of Faith.

**Fruit of Dante's Centenary.**

Would to God that this were the fruit of Dante's centenary; that in all places where literary teaching is imparted, the sublime Poet were held in the honor due to him, and that he himself were to the pupils teacher of Christian doctrine; he who had no other object in his poem than to raise the mortals from the state of misery (that is of sin) and to lead them to the state of happiness—that is, of divine grace.

"And you, beloved sons, who have the fortune to cultivate literature under the training of the Church, love and hold dear, as you do, this sublime Poet, whom We do not hesitate to proclaim the most eloquent singer of the Christian idea. The more you will profit from his study, the more your culture will rise, irradiated by the splendors of truth, and stronger and more profound will be your defence towards the Catholic Faith.

"As a pledge of the heavenly favors and as attestation of paternal benevolence, We impart to you all, beloved sons, with the effusion of Our heart, the Apostolic Benediction.

"Given in Rome, at St. Peter's, 30th April, 1921, seventh year of Our Pontificate.

"BENEDICTUS PP. XV."

**THE END OF A BIGOT**

"The Rev. S. J. Catts, elected Governor of Florida, 'to redeem the State' in 1916, on a sectarian and prohibition platform, is a fugitive from justice. He is indicted by a State jury for granting pardons on a cash basis. A federal jury indicts him for getting negroes out of prison, then working them on his farm as slaves, under 'peonage.'"

The above item, taken from an editorial in a San Francisco paper of May 20, will be of particular interest to New Zealand because of the similarity in the political rise of this gentleman Catts and a certain calumny-monger of New Zealand.

Catts was put forward many years ago by more important citizens, who wanted to utilize a sectarian cry against Catholics as a possible means of election by the sparse white population of Florida. This State, apart from its two famous winter resorts and their tourist-population, is unusually backward and little educated for an American State.

After a time, as men of his type invariably do, the desire for power and publicity made him resolve to be one of the masters instead of being simply their agent—their tool. He contested one election after another, always using his anti-Catholic cry and attacks on Catholic schools and "nunneries," combining with it a Prohibition plank which was popular in a State where blacks were many. Finally he became Governor, the goal at which he had aimed, and is known as the father of an act of legislation that empowered his minions to search convents at their own pleasure.

This brought out a storm of protest all over the south, not from Catholics only, nor from the illiterate descendants of the carpet-baggers who helped to put Catts in power, but from southern Protestant gentlemen of the old school, whose own womenfolk and friends had been educated at convents and who knew what angels of mercy the hospital nuns had been on the battlefields of the Civil War. So the Catts Act became practically inoperative, and the name of Catts synonymous with anti-Catholic bigotry and political narrowness.

To-day he stands exposed, as men of that type do sooner or later, in their true colors.

**"WHO DO MEN SAY THAT THE SON OF MAN IS?"**

Art Thou, the friend who walks with me,  
The God who moulds the rose?  
The child who played in Nazareth,  
The weary God of Woes?

Art Thou, the helpless Christ hung high  
In shame till Thou wert dead,  
The God of Might whose power moves  
The stars above my head?

My mother always laid me down  
At eve to sleep with Thee,  
And said 'twas Thou who bade the wind  
Sing lullabies for me.

'Tis not Thy works in rose or star  
That stir to faith this clod;  
I need but learn Thy heart as Man  
To know that Thou art God.

—JOHN B. KELLY.

**"DOMINICAN STAR"**

The Past Pupils and Friends of the Dominican Nuns will be pleased to learn that the JUBILEE NUMBER OF THE "DOMINICAN STAR" is now available, and may be obtained either at the Priory, Dunedin, or at the Tablet Office.

PRICE :: 3/-; POSTED 3/6.

**Tavener & Meikle**

Provide only the Primest of choice  
Meats and excel in SMALL GOODS

**The Central Butchery, Oamaru**