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WHOLE SERIES.
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Poetry.

THE CONFLICT.

BY REV. W. C. TOLAN.

The foe is on the field,
Subtle and fierce and strong;
Nor will he weary, tho' the fight
Shall be protracted long.

A net for every foot,
With skill he hath prepared;
In every age, from every rank,
His victims he hath snared.

"How then shall I escape?"
I hear a trembler ask;
"How shall I overcome this foe,
And gain the crown at last?"

If thou would'st rout this foe,
And hope to gain the day,
Thy loins with truth well gird, keep,
And hourly watch and pray.

Down in the dust at once,
In self-abasement lie,
And look for strength alone from Him,
Who deigned for thee to die.

The cross thy center make,
Nor from it once depart;
Mid storms and sunshine to it cling,
With undivided heart.

For thus the record runs:
"Maintain the warrior's strife,
And at the close to thee I'll give,
A crown of endless life."

Religious.

REVIVAL OF THE INQUISITION IN ROME.

Rev. W. C. VanMeter writes to the *London Freeman* as follows:—
12, VICOLO D'ALIBERT, ROME,
22nd October, 1873.

"Whom the gods would destroy they first make mad" is being illustrated by the "Infallible Pio Nono."

Father Grassi who for thirty-six years performed successively the duties of the priest, confessor, curate, mitred abbot, lent-preacher, and lastly incumbent of the great Basilica Santi Maria Maggiore, has cast down robes, honour, emoluments, abandoned prospective promotion, and united with the Baptist church under the pastoral care of Rev. Mr. Wall, of England.

A few weeks ago, with Mr. Wall, he called to bid his associates farewell. It was a scene not to be forgotten. They well knew that he whom they had so long known, loved and honoured, was sincere. As a loving father he told them of the terrible conflict through which he had passed; why he had given up his home with a little company of Christians meeting in a tent, and begged them to consider well his reasons. All were deeply moved; and when he arose, they gathered around, embraced and kissed him. Six of his associates have followed him to enquire what is truth. Last week, in one day twelve priests called on Mr. Wall to ask for light. Among them was a D. D. a L. L. D. and a D. P. Another, the superior of a convent, who on Sunday sent a priest to Mr. Wall for tracts and scriptures to distribute among the inmates.

For a few days nothing was heard from "head-quarters" concerning the "apostate." But last Sunday the silence was broken. The Vatican had decided to try its strength—revive the Inquisition and make an example of Father Grassi! The "Infallible" comforted a delegation of priests with the assurance that the "apostate" would soon be swept away.

Immediately he was summoned before the Inquisition to recant or endure the penalty. He decided at once to appear, not because he acknowledged its authority, but because it gave him an opportunity to declare the truth before these men.

He applied to the Government for protection but was advised not to venture, and that if he did go, he must bear the responsibility. Rev. Messrs. Wall and Duni called on the Inquisitor General. He accompanied them but

remained outside so as to be out of danger.

During the interview, the General, learning that he was below, secretly sent an officer saying, your friends desire you to come in." Not suspecting the snare, he followed—not, as he thought, to where his friends were, but to another part of the Inquisition.

By some means the door was open and Mr. Wall caught a glimpse of him as he passed. The treachery flashed across his mind, and he called to him to instantly escape, which he did. Of course "nothing wrong was intended!"

Another interview was appointed for nine o'clock the next morning. Father Grassi assisted by Mr. Wall and a priest who is a prominent professor in a college in Rome, spent nearly the whole night in preparing his vindication.

In the morning, after bowing together and committing all to God, we started for the Inquisition. Father Grassi took my arm, and as we walked along the "Via del S. Uffizio" (street of the holy office) thinking of our brethren who had preceded us but who never returned, I reminded him of our Saviour's words "Fear not them who kill the body, &c." Matt. x. 28-32, and of the encouragement "Let not your heart, &c." John xiv. 1-2. Arrangements had been made for friends to stand in the street ready to render assistance if needed. Four of us went in. We were promised permission to be with him, but they desired to see him alone a moment first.

He had been advised not to trust himself in their hands, but now came a trial of moral courage such as Nehemiah experienced when he refused to shrink from danger, asking "Shall such a man as I flee?" and Luther when he said "I will go to Worms though the devils are as thick as the tiles on the houses." Grassi entered alone and the door was shut. We could only beg God to keep him and enable him to "open his mouth boldly" and declare the truth.

Soon loud and earnest talking was heard. Again and again admission was demanded and promised, but not granted. For nearly an hour we waited, then the door opened and our brother was with us again. Taking my hand and pressing it to his heart, he said with deep emotion "E finito! E finito!" "It is finished! It is finished!"

Significant words! The Vatican had determined to revive the most infernal institution ever devised by diabolical ingenuity, and try its power upon one who had so long been a favourite. This was its first attempt, and I greatly mistake if Grassi's words will not be found applicable to the "Most Holy Roman Universal Inquisition."

He is calm, tender, humble and modest, yet firm and fearless. Not often do we witness such moral heroism. Alone he stood before his Inquisitors, declared the truth, entered his protest, denounced their iniquities, defied their power, and scorned their anathemas. To give you a more correct idea of the man, I give a few closing sentences of his defence. Think of him, alone, unprotected and in such a place. Warming up into the holy enthusiasm of Stephen the first Christian Martyr, and turning upon his Inquisitors he said:

"O you inquisitors, pontiffs, cardinals and prelates: God speaks to you! To what have you brought the true church! She that was so pure, so beautiful, so glorious, you have betrayed, violated, despoiled, wounded and crucified by your doctrines, superstitions and immorality, and sealed her tomb by your blasphemous 'Dogma of Infallibility.' Hear what God says to his suffering children. 'The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly.' Do you not tremble at these words? Who but Satan instigated and inflicted the tortures in this place? O could these walls, within which so many have been burned speak—could this roof but echo back the cries of agony from your innocent

victims, and the vaults beneath us reveal the corpses of those who have been buried alive, no other sentence of condemnation would be required. But the breath of God has for ever extinguished the fires of the Inquisition and swept away your power; therefore I stand before you to-day and declare these truths, while you dare not touch a hair of my head! Yes, God has begun the work and soon this tribunal, these walls and instruments will be bruised under your feet and scattered as ashes to the four winds, proclaiming to the world that the 'Most Holy Universal Roman Inquisition' is dead. Dead because God has crushed it under the feet of his children. O ye obstinate ones hear me! Hear one of your own brothers who has said mass, and confessed, and preached with you. Weep not over me as 'dead.' I am not dead but among the 'living' and stand before you to announce the resurrection of that church which you have tried to drown in blood. Yes, she is rising glorious as the morning light, and ignorance, superstition, heresy and tyranny flee before her! Farewell church of my youth! Farewell companions of my ministry. Alas! alas it has been a ministry of destruction! O if my word has yet any weight with you, I beseech you to open your eyes to the light—to abandon that system of darkness in which you are groping, and accept the true light which Jesus offers to you."

Well may they gnash their teeth upon such a man. Let prayer without ceasing be offered in behalf of this dear brother.

Twice Father Grassi has preached in my Vatican Mission. We shall have preaching there every Sunday night. Mr. Wall has kindly assumed for the present the responsibility of the preaching and Bible school here three nights each week. The other nights will be occupied by my evening schools.

Last night the Bible school was opened. Not less than eighty men and women were present. Each was furnished with a New Testament. To see so many just here by the Vatican and Inquisition with the "open Bible" in their hands, reading, asking questions and listening to Father Grassi who five days ago stood before the Inquisitors, was a most impressive illustration of the progress of truth and a sight to the true Christian more interesting than a stroll through the Vatican or even all the palaces in Rome. While we thank God and take courage we are admonished to "watch and be sober," for sore trials are at hand. The old ussurer will not relinquish his spoils and slaves without a desperate struggle. I wish some friend or Sunday-school would send me ten pounds for 100 Bibles, as I have only the New Testament. The two day-schools and Sunday-school here are rapidly filling up. The "Training-school for Christian Workers" numbers thirty-three. My two day and two Sunday-schools at Frascati are doing better than ever before. Soon the night-school for adults will be re-opened there. Just now comes a call from Albano another suburb of Rome thirty minutes by rail from the city.

Seldom have I seen a more promising field.

In addition to the above we have a translation of the letter from Paolo Grassi, Roman Chevalier, Ex-Priest and Beneficed Clerk of the Patriarchal Basilica Liberiana, to his Eminence and Most Reverend Cardinal Patrizi, Vicar of the Diocese and City of Rome. We can only give a few detached portions of this able and remarkable document:—

FATHER GRASSI'S LETTER TO THE VICAR OF ROME.

Your Eminence,—Separation has always been most painful in the order of nature; but it has always been determined by an impelling power to which the old bond of connection can

oppose no valid resistance. This superior power is found in violent diseases, which, in quenching life, separates the father from the son, the husband from the wife; it is found in the impetuous wind, which severs the branch from the tree; it is found in the hand of man, which slays the wild beasts, or breaks in many pieces the rock.

That which happens in the animal and organic system is verified also in the moral; and it is not seldom that men who have even for many years followed a certain line of conduct abandon it, in order to cultivate different and often opposite maxims, discipline and ideas. In such a phase I am at present, your Eminence. I have been educated in the bosom of the Roman Church, where I was initiated into the priestly office, and received holy orders, and have always been surrounded by loving care and attention by my superiors, so that to the present I have fulfilled the charge of a beneficed clergyman of the Basilica Liberiana in this metropolis, where no one would prevent me continuing a peaceful and tranquil life. "Man doth not live by bread alone," said our Lord Jesus Christ; and the exigencies of moral life, I add, are much more powerful and irresistible than the wants of material life. In virtue of them, therefore, and by the irresistible charm which the same exercised over my soul for some time, I have at last determined to abandon the Papal Church, in order to enter and become a member of the Apostolic Church of Christ in Rome.

The secession has certainly not happened without my paying large tribute to the impulses of my heart. The inward struggles with which I have had to contend before coming to the above resolution have been tremendous and violent, but, finally, reason conquered (or became supreme); truth triumphed over error, hypocrisy, and imposition, and therefore, praising the blessed God for his special grace towards me, convinced in my mind, and with the conscience of fulfilling a sacred duty, I bid adieu to the past, to the old prejudices, to the inveterate habits, in order to advance with courage in the "new and living way" in Jesus Christ, which alone reunites us to our Redeemer Christ Jesus, the only haven of salvation, only anchor of hope, and only fount of all goodness and happiness."

After giving in detail the process by which he had become a priest of the Roman Catholic Church, Canon Grassi proceeds:

"In spite of the above enumerated obstacles by which I also have been surrounded, how did I resolve to shake off such a yoke?"

For me also the decision has not been without difficulties; and more than once have I thrown away impartial (non-party) books which convinced me that the doctrine of the Roman Curia, is not that of Christ, and I have longed to find the powerful book that might convince me to the contrary.

One book alone I could not throw away, the Book of the Holy Scriptures. This is, I have always said to myself, the Book inspired by God: in it are contained the maxims of the Redeemer, the Acts of His Apostles; it therefore must be the touchstone that teaches to discern on which side is truth, and on which is error. I have read these pages with joy and love, and in them I have found conviction, strength, light, and life.

In them I have learned to know Jesus Christ as my only Saviour and Mediator, who shed all His blood to purge us from our sins. In them I have listened to the voice of the beloved Shepherd inviting me to him for salvation; "believe in the Lord Jesus and thou shalt be saved." I felt often repeated to my heart while reading the Testament of Christ. Then I would think to myself, ought I to believe? Should I not work in order to believe? No; the Word of God would answer me: "Thou art saved by grace through faith; and that not of thyself, for it is the gift of God: not of works

est any man should boast." Then I would reflect: so the good works I have done, so many confessions, so many fastings, so many penances, so many masses, so much alms have not saved me? No; "Man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." Oh! then I comprehended what Jesus did for me, I went to Him with my sin; to Him, inviting me and calling me, saying: come unto me weary and heavy laden and I will give thee rest." I accepted Christ as the propitiation for my sins: as He who paid all for me, I believed in Him and being justified by faith I have peace with God. Your Eminence, I am already saved. I have now (or already) eternal life. I feel in my heart; I feel the witness of the Holy Spirit which says to me, I am the son of God. I feel I am saved, and this certainty of salvation within me is so strong that I am ready to seal this faith with my blood.

Who shall separate me from the love of Christ? shall tribulation? shall famine? shall persecution? shall death? No, neither death, nor life, nor height nor depth, shall be able to separate me from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

In shewing what he had learned from the Word of God he says:—

"We with the Word of God in our hand, recognise now a vicar in our church. Christ has ascended into heaven and His Vicar has remained here on earth in the midst of His church, to teach, lead, and sanctify the faithful; but, your Eminence, this Vicar I do not find in the Vatican—I do not find in Pius IX. and his predecessors. This Vicar of Christ is the Holy Ghost—when I am gone I will send you the Holy Ghost, said Christ, and He will convince the world of sin of righteousness and judgement. He will teach you all truth; He shall glorify Me; for He shall receive of Mine and shall show it unto you."

"In the Word of God I have found but two sacraments instituted by Christ—baptism and the Lord's Supper. Baptism, or immersion, when the Christian has believed, as it was instituted and ordained by Christ, was practised by the Apostles, and in the catacombs by the primitive Christians, as a witness and obedience to Christ as a figure and symbol of the death and burial to sin and resurrection to a new life. The Lord's Supper as a remembrance of the broken body of Christ, of the blood shed by Him, for the remission of sins, and as a witness left to the Church, that by those symbols of bread and wine the Church might show forth the death of the Lord till He comes."

"I have also examined the history of the Primitive Church of Rome, and I found that she had no other faith nor hope but that which I procured from the Holy Scriptures; yet how glorious was the witness of that church in Rome whose faith was spoken of throughout the whole world! How many glorious champions sealed this faith with their blood!"

Then, by the grace of God I decided to abandon all that had been added to the Church of Christ in these latter times, corrupting it and rendering it material and worldly, and I return to the Church of the Catacombs, to the Church of the Martyrs, to the Primitive Apostolic Church in Rome. It is not I, therefore, who have seceded from the Church, but you have seceded from her."

"Descend, O Pope, O Cardinals, O Bishops, from your chairs, give way to Christ and his Holy Spirit, abandon that See which you have usurped, return to the ancient glories, to the ancient witnesses of which this Rome abounds, and then I will be with you; but as long as you persist in staying far from the true faith, and that you persist in your systematic opposition to the true and only Church of Christ I leave you, I abandon you, for we ought to obey God rather than men."

"The Church of Rome only appeals to the senses by the pomps of its preparations, by elaborate music, by