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CHRISTMAS

DURING THE

MONTH OF DECE...

NO. 1.

"THE TEACHER OF MEN."

"The Voice of One Crying in the Wilderness." The Church Prefigured by St. John the Baptist.

ELOQUENT SERMON OF BISHOP CONROY, THE APOSTOLIC DELEGATE IN CANADA.

The following beautiful sermon was preached in St. Michael's Cathedral, Toronto, by his Excellency, Mgr. George Conroy, Bishop of Ardagh and Clonmacnoise and Delegate of the Holy See to the Church in Canada. Our report is borrowed from the Toronto *Tribune*:

And this is the testimony of John when the Pharisees sent from Jerusalem priests and Levites to ask him, Who art thou? . . . . . They therefore said unto him, who art thou? that we may give answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself? He said I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the Prophet Isajas. —(St. John i, 19-23.)

The office discharged by the Precursor of Christ, St. John the Baptist, whose feast we celebrate to-day, is a type of the office belonging to the Catholic Church as the teacher of men. His it was to point to the Lamb of God who had come to take away the sins of the world; hers it is to continue to the end to preach the same Christ, and Him crucified. Born in mystery, brought up in desert solitudes, marvellously austere in mien and garb and speech, he came upon a luxurious generation as an apparition, perplexing it with wonder and dismay. Who is this? men asked in their astonishment; who dares thus sternly to rebuke our pleasant vices, and to disturb our cultured ease with his harsh summons to penance, and his threats of future punishment? Even so has it been with the Catholic Church. For now nineteen centuries she has traversed the earth, unearthly in her origin, in her power, in the beauty of her holiness, and in every age she has been confronted by men asking her, now in anger, now in love, now in hatred, as the Jews asked John, who art thou? what sayest thou of thyself? And, like John, she has ever answered, "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, make straight the way of the Lord." No two words are less becoming on human lips than those two words, *I am*. God alone has the right to say, "I am who am." The history of man's greatness, man's glory, must be told in other speech. *Fuit Troga, et ingens gloria.* Alone among, all institutions on earth,

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH CAN SAY "I AM;"

for the I am of her priesthood is contained in the eternal "Thou art a priest forever" spoken by God to His Son, her founder. With this simple assertion of her existence, she has triumphed over the enemies that have ever beset her path. When pagan emperors arose with sword in hand and every implement of torture to crush her for daring to dispute the tyranny, she answered, "I am;" and the successor of the pontiffs whom they slaughtered took his seat upon their vacant throne. When Arianism came forth to deny the divinity of Christ and make the only begotten Son of the Father that Father's creature, and when the entire world, seduced by its wiles, shuddered at finding itself almost enveloped by its hateful doctrine, the Church said "I am," and Arianism with its baneful power became a thing of the past. When savage nations and savage hatreds were in the ascendant, and Christian civilization was on the point of being extinguished in blood, once more the Church asserted herself, and Attila retired before Leo. And later on, when the empires she herself had raised would have laid impious hands upon her liberties, she broke their bonds by declaring that she was the spouse of Christ, and triumphantly exercised the freedom He had given her; and later still, when at the so-called Reformation the nations of Europe rose up against their mother, and when a thousand voices reechoed Luther's boast that he was the death of the papacy, once more she said "I am," and lo, she finds in the new world more children by the million than she had lost in the old. Whilst Protestantism is crumbling around her, she lives victorious and triumphant. What then if to-day the governments of the earth have broken with her; what if in their cabinets statesmen are busy weaving bonds wherewith to cripple her liberty? As wax is wont to melt before the sun, so shall their bonds disappear and they themselves perish, whilst she shall endure. Already this terrible truth is being recognized in that Germany which has taken the first rank amongst

THE PERSECUTORS OF THE CHURCH.

"This struggle must cease'" cries one of the official organs of public opinion in that country. Under the banner of Kultur Kampff, all the elements hostile to religion and to Christianity have for many years exercised their work of destruction, and the consequences are too evident, and acknowledged by the most liberal. The State, the school, the family—our whole life is falling to pieces without religion and its support. Unless we wish to fall into the evils of socialism and become the prey of revolution, it is absolutely necessary once more to establish education on the basis of religion, impose silence upon the so-called struggle for civilization, and raise the siege that has been proclaimed for so many years against the Catholic Church." They begin to see that without the Pope there is no Christianity, and without Christianity there is no hope for society. "But, where Peter is," cried out St. Ambrose some fourteen hundred years ago, "there is the Church; and where the Church is, no death shall come, but life unfailing.' *Ubi Petrus ibi ecclesia ibi nulla mors sep vita sempiterna.* And what does the Church say that she is? There lived a barbarian king who said he was

THE SCOURGE OF GOD

The impious Mohammed loved to call himself the sword of the Most High. The Catholic Church says of herself that she is but a voice. There exists on earth nothing weaker than a human voice; the summer winds scatter it, and man himself rifles it of what strength they spare, by deeds which belie his promises; and yet, as weak as it is it is by divine institution the link that unites the temporal with the eternal—man with God; "for how shall men be saved unless they believe, and how shall they believe unless they hear, and how shall they hear unless it is preached unto them?" So that it is strictly true that the means established by God for the accomplishment of His designs of mercy towards man is none other than the voice of the church's teaching; for how shall they preach unless they be sent? Nor is there any other means more worthy of man or more noble. For, as man himself is the noblest of God's creatures, so man's highest nobility resides in his reason, and language is the very flower of his rational gifts. In making, therefore, His Church a voice, God proclaims His respect for the free will He Himself has created in man, and declares that He would reach man's will only through man's intellect, His own grace aiding. And hence the Church is not, as her foes assert, the enslaver of the human intellectual force. Consult all that her voice has uttered, since the first Council at Nice, when she defended the divinity of the Eternal Word, to the last Council at the Vatican, where she defended the just liberties of human science and you will not find a syllable disrespectful to man's reason or to the right use thereof. It was this voice noble in its weakness, which speaking first through twelve poor fishermen, and ever since through a mighty army of preachers, has shaken the pagan world, brought nations to the faith, and created Christian civilization. And its power was not human; for it was the voice, not of a mere man, but of one crying in the wilderness who was both God and man. The Holy Scriptures tell us of three mysterious cries uttered by our Lord during His mortal life. These three cries we find reproduced by the Catholic Church, and in her alone. The first was the cry of healing, of which we read in St. Luke (ix. 54). when He took the dead girl's hand in His, and cried out, "Maid, arise," and her spirit returned, and she arose immediately. There is no healing for the sins and sorrows of men, whether in the individual or in the family or in the commonwealth, save in

THE LIFE-GIVING TOUCH OF CHRIST

and in the sound of His creative voice. In vain do philanthropists construct schemes of beneficence: in vain does political economy seek remedies for the ills that harass men; there is a depth in human sorrow and an unfathomable abyss of woe which no science can reach, and which demands a divine comforter. That divine comforter speaks only in the Catholic Church. Where else save in the Catholic Church do you find the tribunal of penance, in which, over heads bowed low with sin, the Redeemer's absolving words are spoken, and what is loosed on earth is loosed in heaven? Is there a single form of human suffering, of physical misery, for which the Church has not established some religious order in which the virtue of Christ's restoring touch lives and operates? The second of Christ's mysterious cries is the cry of faith with which, as we read in John (vii, 38), "Jesus stood and cried saying, if any man thirst, let him come to Me and drink." Where else save in the Catholic Church is faith to be found to-day? Faith is a belief not upon human but upon a divine authority, and is it not a simple fact that no other religious body claims to speak with divine authority? Nay, do they not repudiate for themselves and for their rivals any share in the gift of infallibility, without which there is no certainity of faith even for the inspiration of God's written Word? Except the Catholic Church, then, who can say with confidence to men thirsting after the truth, "If any man thirst let him come to Me and drink?" As a matter of history she alone has converted pagan nations, and in the great upheaving of modern thought she alone offers a rational basis for faith. Compared with the unity and harmony of her creed, how discordant the jarring sounds of the conflicting opinions that ceaselessly rend and tear other religious communions until their followers in their despair declare positive doctrines to be unnecessary and seek refuge in the weakness of an emotional religion. The third of Christ's solemn cries was the cry of sacrifice uttered upon the cross, when, crying with a loud voice, He yielded up His spirit. Is it not again a fact of history that throughout the length and breadth of the earth, from the rising of the sun to the going down thereof, no sacrifice is offered to the living and true God save in the Catholic Church? She alone dares utter the dread sacrificial words; she alone lifts up to heaven the pure Host, the true bread of life eternal, and the chalice of perpetual salvation. And as

CHRIST WAS AT ONCE PRIEST AND VICTIM

in His own sacrifice, so she and she alone would have her priests sacrifice first themselves and then the body of the Lord. Before she pours out upon the youthful Levite the unction which makes him a priest for ever, she bids him turn away from the cares and pleasures of life, and become like St. Paul, crucified to the world, as the world is to be crucified to him. She alone preached the sanctity of poverty, of chastity, and of obedience, and for her alone, St. Augustine says, "flowers forth the beauteous bloom of chaste youths and maidens whom she consecrates to the Lord." With a voice thus one with the voice of Christ, how truly does she claim as addressed to herself the words of Christ, "He that heareth you heareth Me." It is true that to-day, more, perhaps, than at any other period of her existence in the past, the Church cries in the wilderness. In the political world, the atmosphere is dark with the cloud of war, and the earth begins to tremble beneath the shock of conflicting armies, fear is seizing upon the nations, and men are uncertain whether they have more to fear the enemy that marches against them from without, or from the secret societies that darkly conspire against society in her own bosom. In the world of thought disorder has reached its highest materialism has penetrated into every avenue of every science; and free-thinking, after upsetting the fundamental truths of the natural order, now boldly denies to man the very power of thought. Men would fain blot out the eternal moral distinction between right and wrong, and cynically mock at what their fathers reverenced as virtues. Christianity is openly assailed; the divine Author of our Faith openly blasphemed; His teaching not merely set aside, but derided: the whole supernatural order impugned: and if a God be permitted to exist He must be a God unknown to and unknowable by man. The moral universe is shaken to its centre, and the Catholic Church alone stands firm in the universal dissolution of principles and of institutions. She cries out in the wilderness, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord" and her words are at once a

A PROPHECY AND AN EXHORTATION

—prophecy addressed to the enemies of religion and an exhortation addressed to us. She has lived long enough to know by experience that there is no counsel, no power, no wisdom, against the Lord; she knows that He who out of the evil of the first sin drew the priceless blessings of redemption—He who made the hands of guilty Jews open the fountains of the precious blood—He who bent the empire alike of Cæsar and of savage to the purposes of His Church, will in His all-wise Providence know how to bring salvation from out the ills that are now let loose upon the world. She sees that the destructive agencies now at work are destroying the evils of the past as well as the good, and secure in her immortal existence, confident in the power that sustains her, she can afford to wait. The future is hers, for it is God's, and God has given it to her; and therefore does she prophecy to her foes that they are but clearing the ground for her operations, and preparing the way of the Lord. But, to us, her words are words of exhortation. She would have us prepare the way of the Lord in our own hearts, and make straight His path by the holiness of our lives; and, united to Him, resting upon Him, she bids us to be without fear. (Psalm xxviii.) "What, though the waters are rising and the surges are threatening, to engulph the Church, let us not fear, for the voice of the Lord is upon the waters; what though, like cedars on Lebanon, the mighty of the world stand against us, the voice of the Lord breaketh the cedars, and reduces them to pieces; what though the flames appear and threaten death, the voice of the Lord divideth the flames of fire; what though the world become a desert, the voice of the Lord shall shake the desert of Cades: and the Lord shall sit King for ever, and will give strength to His people, and the Lord will bless His people with peace." Ages after the present danger, when the very names of her enemies shall be forgotten, the Church will be chanting her eternal I am; and, with her voice weak and noble as now, yet strong as the voice of Christ, she will speak words of healing and of faith and of sacrifice to generations to come; and, out of the desert of man's crimes and man's weaknesses, she will "prepare the way of the Lord and make straight his paths."

From time to time stories have been brought from certain tropical islands in the Pacific that there were races of men somewhere in the unknown interior who possessed veritable tails. But no trustworthy traveller has yet certified to the statement. Latterly the locality of these men with tails have been shifted in vague rumors to New Guinea. The announcements have been rarely more than a brief sentence in some of the foreign journals, and no authority has hitherto been given. But at last they take more definite form. The Rev. W. G. Lawes, of the London Missionary Society, acknowledges having received "circumstantial reports" of men "with not very flexible tails," said to live in the interior of New Guinea. The men of science must look to this. It will never do to let the missionaries discover the "missing link," and compel Messrs. Darwin and Huxley to ask odds of the patrons of Exeter Hall.

The endurance of the tramp is something marvellous, and he has a capacity for sleep that is to be envied, though the circumstances under which he sometimes takes it may not be judiciously managed. A member of that fraternity named Bowers, lay down near Troy, Penn., last week, with his legs across a railroad track, and sank into profound slumber. He didn't notice any train pass, but when he awoke from his nap he found he could not stand. One leg was severed below the knee, and the other was badly broken. Bowers hailed the next train by setting a newspaper on fire with a match and waving it to attract the attention of the engineer. He was taken to Troy, his legs amputated over again in a more workmanlike manner, and the bones of the other put in place, and he is said to be doing well, which apparently is more than he ever did before.

A DETERMINED SUICIDE.

A RESULT OF ST. JOHN'S TERRIBLE CALAMITY.

From the Quebec Chronicle, June 30.

Two very determined attempts at suicide were made in this city yesterday morning by a late resident of the ill-fated city of St. John, N. B. A week ago yesterday a gentleman, aged about forty-five years and of most respectable appearance, arrived in this city and registered at one of our hotels as "M. Masters, St. John." The name he furnished the police yesterday, however, was Ed. Masters. Shortly after nine o'clock yesterday morning an alarm was rung from the St. Bridget's Asylum for the police by the wires of the City and District Telegraph Company. On the police arriving at the asylum the man Masters was handed over to them by the nuns, in an extremely critical condition and covered with blood. His own story is that he twice attempted suicide. First he took 126 grains of chloral, which he obtained from a drug store in John street, and finding that insufficient to accomplish his purpose, repaired to St. Patrick's Cemetery, behind St. Bridget's Asylum, where he essayed self-destruction with the knife. Having bound a cord tightly around his arm so as to cause the principal vein to swell, he stabbed his arm again and again with the small blade of a pocket knife, successfully severing the blood vessel. The poor fellow lost a considerable quantity of blood, and doubtless escaped death by the blood clotting over the wound and on the sleeve of his shirt. In this feeble state he asked for a drink at the Asylum, and the nuns immediately took him in and having carefully attended to his wants, signalled for police assistance. He was driven to No. 1 police station, where Dr. Colin Sewell was called in to attend him. The doctor ordered his removal to the Marine Hospital, and says that he will probably recover. No money or private papers were found upon Masters' body. The cause of his attempted suicide may probably be found in his statement that he has lost his all in the St. John fire. He says that he came to Quebec from Cornwallis, Nova Scotia, and expresses remorse at the unsuccessful result of his attempted self-destruction. When the unfortunate man first came to Quebec it appears that he registered at Henchey's Hotel, where he remained for three or four days. At the time of the sad occurrence, to which we refer, he had left Mr. Henchey's for several days previously, in a most mysterious manner, and at the hotel neither the proprietor nor guests can account for such an extraordinary act on his part, as he was a most respectable, and inoffensive stranger.

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NEWS.

...St. Leger, R. N., Har...own, was found dead ...r Cottage, Kingstown, ...e had been ailing for ...ion of the brain was death.

...k Carolin, of 206 ...blin, a smith in the ...nd Great Western ... about 45 years, ...vember 18th.

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ST. PATRICK'S T. A. R. SOCIETY RALLY.

A temperance meeting was held in St. Patrick's Hall, Carleton, on Sunday evening last, under the auspices of St. Patrick's T. A. R. Society. The attendance was very large, some seven hundred people of both sexes being present. The platform was occupied by Rev. T. Connolly, V. G., Messrs. R. J. Ritchie, Esq., President of the N. B. Union, P. J. O'Keefe, President of the Society, and Thos. O'Reilly, Rec. Sec. Mr. Ritchie, the first speaker thought there was no necessity of his trying to picture to those present the many advantages to be derived from being a member of a total abstinence society, as many of them knew by their past experience more about it than he could tell them, and asked all those who had formerly been members, to ask themselves the question, had it been of any advantage to them? He was sure the answer would be a unanimous one in favor of total abstinence. He referred to the duty of young men in particular to at once renew the pledge they had formerly made, and to the many ...

... miles from Londonderry, Vt., in the town of Landgrove, is situated a large frame hotel building that has almost an historic association in those parts, it having been built nearly fifty years since by Simeon Leland, father of the Leland Brothers, the celebrated hotel-keepers, and run by him ... number of years as a hotel, under the name of "The Green Mountain Coffee House." Since the building of railroads this property as a hotel has become worthless ... still retained by the Lelands on account of its early associations, and was, a few years since repaired and repainted by them ... is at present occupied by one Paul Sears, ... whom is illustrated the old adage that ... stranger than fiction." It seems that ... Sears has had a long-standing ... on one of his legs, and a few ... turning over in bed, snapped the ... in about four inches above the knee ... successful amputation was performed ... was found denuded of all ... matter, and completly hone... Sears is now doing well, with ... of recovery.

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