

The Great Catholic Encyclopedia.

A Notice of its Value as a Missionary Force.—An Example of American Thoroughness.

ALL over the English-speaking world every periodical which conducts a book review department gives extensive notice to the sixth volume of the Catholic Encyclopedia. Some of the aggressively Protestant Church organs refer to certain doctrinal features in the various articles as "traditional Catholic views" or "differing from our position in this matter," but, with these exceptions, the universal verdict is one of praise and most respectful congratulation. Even the exceptions do not go beyond mild remonstrance and in the same breath acknowledge the scholarly fairness of the authors and compilers of the encyclopedia.

Now this statement of fact heralds one of the greatest events in the progress of the conversion of the English-speaking people. For how many decades have all who love souls deplored the inadequacy of Catholic apologetic literature in the English language? Considering what faithful sons and daughters of the Church have done for her in the continental tongues, considering, too, the enormous product of non-Catholic and anti-Catholic literature in the English, nothing could be more deplorable than the naked and undone condition of Catholic truth in the dominant speech of the whole world.

Those who hoped at all dared hope for nothing better than a painfully slow accumulation of a literature in two or three generations, and they asked themselves where would be our glorious opportunity for getting a hearing after such long delay in preparing ourselves to speak?

As volume after volume of this great encyclopedia comes out, with the regularity of a railway schedule, and the quiet assurance of perfect organization and immense resources in reserve, the world of reviewers, Catholic and non-Catholic, friendly and hostile, is gradually awakening the anxious souls of Catholics to the amazing realization that the sorely needed and long despaired of literature has