

OUR ROMAN CATHOLIC BROTHERS.

SECOND PAPER—CONCLUDED.

I have alluded to the fact that last November the largest Catholic church in New York was filled to repletion every morning at five o'clock. There was a "mission" then going on in that church. We Protestants should call it a "revival," or a "protracted meeting." What ever our Roman Catholic brethren do, as I have before observed, they do by means of an organization; and that organization is made, by discipline and subordination, to work with the singleness of aim and the efficient force of one man. These Catholic revivals, or "missions," are conducted by orders of priests, specially endowed, trained, and organized for the purpose. Men gifted with a particular talent for holding large congregations, and for recalling attention to neglected obligations, and their place and work in such orders as these. At the appointed time, the priests of the church in which a mission is to be held are reinforced by a delegation from one of these orders, and the great work of reviving religious feeling begins. The first mass is celebrated at five in the morning, for the convenience of the mighty host of laboring men and women; and a moving sermon is preached to them before the kitchen fires are lighted, before the hodman's breakfast is ready. This first vast audience is dismissed about a quarter past six, and at seven another assembly; at nine, another; and, in some cases, yet another at half-past ten. In the afternoon, confessions are heard, and every confessional is occupied; for there are relays of priests for every part of the work. In the afternoon, too, classes of Protestants sometimes meet for the purpose of receiving special instruction in the faith and practice of the Church from one of the priests who, being himself a convert, is better able than his brethren to anticipate and answer their inquiries. In the evening, at the work goes on until ten; and, on the following morning, all up the evening hours, and on the rising flames of the conscience-stricken Catholic is not tortured with doubts either as to what he ought to do or as to whether he has done it. The injunction of the Church is perfectly simple: If you are truly sorry for your sins, and mean to forsake them, confess to a priest, comply with his direction, joyfully accept absolution, and keep your resolve to lead a new life. As the "mission" continues, the feeling spreads and deepens, the confessional is more and more beset, until all but the hopeless reprobates of the parish are partakers of the influence. The mission may last ten days, two weeks, or a month, according to the size and circumstances of the parish; and when it is over the mission priests retire to their own abode, to refresh themselves by rest, study, and contemplation for another mission in a remote part of the diocese. Thus, the mission, as I have already alluded to, is a formal and solemn affair, no one need be in one of these orders that Father Hecker first exercised his vocation in his native land, and he labored in it in various parts of the country. But this mission work brought him into contact chiefly with Catholics, and he felt a particular yearning to bring into the fold of the Ancient Church such persons as he had known at Brook Farm, and in the intellectual circles of Massachusetts and New York, who, he felt, could alone attain peace in the Catholic Church, and only there find a way of bringing their high moral feeling to bear upon masses of their countrymen. He remembered, also, how completely and how long he had misunderstood the Church, and that, but for the accident of his falling in with the absurd "mystical" of Babylon, he might have lived and died in ignorance of its true character. He felt that there was need of a vigorous organization for spreading abroad in the United States correct information respecting Catholic doctrine and practice. Convinced, too, that the day was near at hand when his Church was to be dominant in the United States, he desired to do something toward aiding Catholics themselves to rise to the height of their "vocation," so that they might use in the noblest way the power which was about to fall into their hands. He had a conviction, and still has it, that there is something peculiarly congenial to Republican America in the stately decorum of his Church,—its gentle doctrine, its severe exactions, its brotherly equalities, and in the grand assemblage of all the fine arts in the Supreme Act, in which man pays homage to the divinity by exhibiting his own. In church, he remembered, Protestants say, "Man is totally depraved." At the political meeting, the same Protestants assert, "Man is capable of self-government." There is no such contradiction, he maintains, in the Catholic mind. What the Catholic believes as a Catholic he can also believe as a citizen. "It is only since I have been a Catholic," says Father Hecker, "that I have been a consistent and intelligent citizen of a republic." A new order then, he believed, was called for in the New World, and the scheme was approved by his ecclesiastical superiors. When our Roman Catholic brethren have resolved upon a project of this nature, they proceed to execute it in the most sensible and business-like manner. If the world is to be moved, the first requisite is to get a fulcrum for the lever; for there is no use in having a lever unless there is a fulcrum on which to rest it. When a new order is to be founded, the first thing is to secure a man, in two weeks, forty thousand dollars toward paying for the edifice. "One man's money is as good as another's," appears to be a familiar principle with our Roman Catholic brethren; and, accordingly, some of our New York city office-holders are frequently called upon to disgorge a trifling portion of their booty,—a check for five hundred dollars, or some smaller matter of that kind. It has been discovered, also, that candidates for city offices have a tenderness for the orphan, a pride in the new cathedral, an interest in the publication of Catholic works, and a desire for the conversion of heretics, which causes them to adorn many subscription papers with their signatures. What an advantage ever as our Roman Catholic brethren have in being able to take stolen money in incalculable honesty! We poor Protestants never think of asking a gambler, a city politician, or thief to subscribe money for the promulgation of principles which, if universally accepted, would ruin his trade. We place nearly the whole burden of sustaining virtue upon the virtuous!

reported himself and is to the Archbishop of New York. Immediately his special enterprise was made to co-operate with the general work of the diocese in such a way that each should aid the other directly, powerfully, constantly, and forever. On the east side of the city, between the ground now occupied by the Central Park and the Hudson River, a region then dotted with abutments and cultivated by goats, the archbishop laid out a new parish, and appointed Father Hecker pastor of it; who forthwith bought the best block of ground in the neighborhood for the site of the church and for the home of the new community. All gathered round a church—parochial school, parsonage, convent, college, seminary—in the Catholic world; this alliance, therefore, was nothing new, but in strict accordance with the system. Thus, a movement, designed to convert Mr. Emerson and his friends, and the educated people of America, was made, first of all, to minister to the spiritual wants of the poorest and most ignorant people living in the Northern States! It is this exquisite feature of the system,—this care for the very poorest and forlornest of human kind,—this caring for them first, just as we help children first at the table because they are the hungriest and least patient,—this sweet blending of the two extremes of human nature in the same project,—it is this that melts the heart and gives pause to the mind. If it were possible for me to be a Catholic—which I think it is not,—it is this that would bring me to it. If, in this city of New York, there is any such thing as realized, working Christianity, it may be seen in one of its poor, densely peopled Catholic parishes, where all is dreary, dismal desolation, excepting alone in the sacred enclosure around the church, where a brighter interior cheers the leisure hours; where pictures, music, and stately ceremonial exalt the poor above their lot; and where a friend and father can ever be found. And observe: these blessings are not doled out to them as charity; these poor people have the privilege of paying for them and sustaining them. The church is their own; the spacious and elegant school-house is their own; the priest is supported and the whole expense of every part of the parish system is borne by them. And nothing else in the parish works for economical gain, but the church. The landlord gives them had lodgings for high rents; the city officials leave mountains of filth before their doors; the water will not flow in the upper stories; the grocery store is on so small a scale that its profits must be exorbitant. All in their lot, all in their surroundings, is mean, nasty, inefficient, forbidding,—except their church. Ten years have passed. Upon the ground bought by Father Hecker we now see a large and handsome church, adorned with pictures much superior to those usually found in Catholic churches here. The fashionable quarter of the city has been drawing nearer to it, so that now the congregation is composed of those who live in brown-stone houses, as well as of those who assist in building them; and the service is performed with an elegance and finish seldom seen in the United States. Adjoining the church is a spacious and commodious house for the Fathers and students belonging to the new community, who are called Paullists. The community now consists of six priests, two students, and four servants,—all but one or two of whom are "converts," i. e. Catholics who were once Protestants. The special work of this community is, to bring the steam printing-press to bear upon the spread of the Catholic religion in the United States. The matter published by the Catholic Publication Society, the new tracts, the articles of the monthly magazine called *The Catholic World*, and the smaller volumes designed for Sunday-school libraries, are chiefly written or edited by the Paullist Fathers. Every Catholic church has connected with it several voluntary societies; such as the *Altar Society*, of ladies, who take care of the altar; the *Confederacy of the Sacred Heart*, for the relief of the poor; the *Society of the Holy Rosary*, for simultaneous devotion; the *Society of the Holy Infancy*, for the promotion of missions in heathen lands; the *Father Mathew Society*, for mutual protection against the poor man's worst enemy; the *Sunday-school Society*, of teachers; all these societies are so many organizations, ready-made, for the distribution of the tracts and volumes prepared by the Paullist Fathers in their pleasant retreat near the Hudson River. This community, in one important particular, differs from other Catholic orders—it exacts no special vows of its members. Father Hecker is an American, a patriotic American, an American who believes in American principles,—in short, he is what we used to call a good Jeffersonian Democrat. Being that in politics, he desires to be it also in religion; for he is of opinion that a proposition which is true at the polls cannot be false before the altar. Jefferson says, "All men are equal." "True," says this American priest, "because they are all brothers." Jefferson says, "Man is capable of self-government." "True," adds Father Hecker, "for man is made in the image of his Creator." This Paullist community, therefore, is conducted on the American principles: "the door opens both ways"; no man remains a moment longer than he chooses; and every inmate is as free in all his works and ways as a son is in the well-ordered house of a wise father. What a powerful engine is this! Suppose the six ablest and highest Americans were living thus, freed from all worldly cares, in an agreeable, secluded abode, yet near the centre of things, with twelve zealous, gifted young men to help and cheer them, a thousand organs their writing, and in every town a spacious audience to hang upon their lips. What could they not do in a lifetime of well-directed work? Father Hecker lives so remote from the worldly anxieties, that he did not know the amount of his own salary until I told him. That is not in his department: He has nothing to think of but his work. Father Hecker and his colleagues propose to convert us by convincing our reason. There is nothing which they deny with so much emphasis and vehemence as the common assertion, that the Roman Catholic Church demands of man the submission or abdication of his reason. Father Hecker, in his spirited and eloquent little book entitled "The Aspirations of Nature," is particularly strong upon this point. "Man has no right to surrender his judgment," he tells us, "Endowed with free-will, man has the right to yield up his liberty. Reason and free-will constitute man a responsible being, and he has no right to abdicate his independence. Judgment, liberty, independence, these are divine and inalienable gifts; and man cannot renounce them if he would." Again he says: "Religion is a question between God and the soul. No human authority, therefore, has any right to enter its sacred sphere. Every man was made by his Creator to do his own thinking." And again: "There is no degradation so abject as the submission of the eternal interests of the soul to the private authority or dictation of any man, or body of men, whatever may be their titles." And again: "Reasonable religious belief does not supplant reason, nor diminish its exercise, but presupposes its activity, extends its boundaries, elevates and ennobles it by amplifying its powers to the highest order of truth." And one more: "There are several primary, independent, and authoritative sources of truth. Among other, and the first, is reason." These passages are in curious contrast to the wild denunciations of human reason

in which Luther indulges, and which Father Hecker quotes only to condemn: "Reason, you are a silly blind fool," "Reason is the devil's bride, a pretty strumpet," etc. Our Paullist friends, too, are the furthest possible from being alarmed at the discoveries of science; for they do not insist on the literal infallibility of the books composing the Bible. They would not feel that either the Church or the public morals were in danger if a biologist on the other side of the globe should catch Moses tripping in his arithmetic. With them, it is the Church that is infallible, i. e. the collected, deliberately uttered moral sense of mankind, enlightened by the Author of it, and which is therefore for individuals the supreme, unerring conscience. Galileo would be in no danger now-a-days if his discoveries should appear to cast a reflection upon the statement that Joshua commanded the sun and moon to stand still, and they obeyed him. "The geologist," observes Father Hecker in one of his most eloquent passages, "may dig down into the bowels of the earth till he reaches the intensest heat; the naturalist may decompose matter, examine with the microscope what escapes our unaided observation, and unveil to our astonished gaze the secrets of nature; the astronomer may multiply his lenses till his ken reaches the empyrean heights of heaven; the historian may consult the annals of nations, and unravel the hieroglyphics of the monuments of bygone ages; the moralist may expose the most delicate folds of the human heart, and probe it to its very core; the philosopher may, with his critical faculty, observe and define the laws which govern man's sovereign reason,—and Catholicity is not alarmed! Catholicity invokes, encourages, solicits your boldest efforts; for at the end of all your earnest searches you will find that the fruit of your labors confirm his teachings, and that your genuine discoveries add new gems to the crown of truth which encircles his heaven-inspired brow." How interesting to observe the noble heart ending with its own nobleness whatever it loves! How resistless the influence of this large and free America, which transfigures all things and persons into a likeness to itself! The question, now recurs: Will the Paullist Fathers succeed in their darling object of bringing over a majority of the people of the United States to the ancient faith? I can state some of the grounds of the unbounded confidence in the coming supremacy of their Church. First, its past progress has been startlingly rapid. In the year 1800 there were in the United States one Roman Catholic bishop, fifty-three priests, and about ninety thousand members. There are now seven archbishops, forty bishops, three hundred abbots, about three thousand one hundred priests, sixty-five Catholic colleges, fifty-six convents of men, one hundred eighty-nine convents of women, and (according to Catholic calculation) four million eight hundred thousand Catholic population. In other words, in 1800 the Catholics were something like one-seventieth of the whole population of the United States; they are now about one sixth! They have also increased faster than the general population of the country. Thus, between 1840 and 1850 the general increase was thirty-six per cent; the Catholic increase, one hundred and twenty-five per cent. Judging from the past, our Roman Catholic brethren conclude that in the year 1900 they will form one-third of the population of the country, and States of it. The property of the Church increases at a rate still more rapid; since, in addition to the new purchases, the Church shares largely in the constant increase of the value of real estate. The only class of laborers in the country who always earn much more money than they need are domestic female servants; and they spend most of their surplus either in direct contributions to the Church, or in bringing across the ocean new members. As a rule, a female servant can appropriate one half her wages to these objects if she chooses. How many of them choose to do so is known to housekeepers, and still better, to bankers who sell small direct in Ireland and Germany. Then, again (as Father Hecker falls not to notice in his recent contribution to the *Revue Generale de Bruxelles*, upon *La Situation Religieuse des Etats Unis*), our Roman Catholic brethren claim to be better propagators than we can boast of being. It is obvious, they say, that Catholic families are more numerous than Protestant. This august and holy mystery of generation the ancient Church invests with sacramental dignity, and makes the marriage tie indissoluble. Father Hecker is wrong in attaching importance to the hateful thing called free-love, and to the kindred abomination that took to itself the name of Bohemianism. Nothing ever excited a deeper or more general loathing among Protestants than those things did. They had but few adherents, and he mentions in this connection, is an exceptional and transient triumph of one vigorous Saxon who was resolved to have a harem without taking the trouble of turning Turk. But the great number of divorcees, the very frequent revolt of parents against the subtleties of their lot, the murder of unborn offspring, the dying out of the old New England families, their ancient farms occupied by healthier Europeans, mostly Catholics—these things, Father Hecker thinks, prove "the complete impotence of Protestantism to impose and make respected the rein which public morality demands," and announce the coming supremacy of a Church powerful enough to guard the issues of life. Now, the best man is he who can rear the best child; the best woman is she who can rear the best child. The whole virtue of the race—physical, moral, mental—comes into play in this most arduous, most pleasing, most difficult of all the work done by mortals in the world; if, therefore, it is true that Catholics do this work so much better than Protestants, the case is closed; we must all turn Catholics, or make our minds to see, too vast and awful a subject to be treated here. I will venture merely to express the conviction, that the first people to discover and successfully practise the art of rearing children in the new conditions of modern life will be persons who will seek for the requisite knowledge where alone it is to be found—in science. These will communicate it to others, and then, perhaps, the various churches will adopt, hal-low, and impart it. Our Roman Catholic brethren dwell much upon the enormous expense of the Protestant system, as well as upon its signal inefficiency. Upon this point we may profitably consider what they say. Take the case of any of our vigorous country towns in the Northern States, and what do we find there? Generally, six churches struggling to maintain themselves; six clergymen, all in the false position of having to instruct people upon whom their children's bread depends; six clergyman's families, in the equally false position of being nominally at the head of society upon a thousand dollars a year and a donation party; six organizations attempting, with anxious feebleness, to do the work of one. And no Catholic can discern any great difference between them. He cannot see, for example, why the Methodists and the Episcopalians would not both gain enormously by reuniting. One would gain the power and vitality of numbers, the other would gain in decorum and dignity. The Episcopal Church would no longer rest under the blighting stigma of being the rich people's Church, and the

Methodists would be restrained from the spiritual riot of the camp-meeting. Then there are the Episcopians and the Jews, why should not they come together with the same mutual advantage? The Jews would only have to give up one or two usages, the relics of a barbarous age; the Unitarians would merely be required to make their sermons shorter and simpler, and adopt part of an ancient ritual. The Calvinists, too, why should they keep apart? It looks to a reflective Catholic priest as though one grain of common sense would suffice to reduce the churches in all our villages one half in the next six months. Our Roman Catholic brethren count upon important accessions through their convent schools, conducted by Sisters of Charity and by other orders, male and female. These schools are numerous, important, increasing; and I think that one fourth, perhaps one third, of all the pupils in them are children of Protestant parents. Few persons are competent to judge of an institution who have never been inmates of it, because nothing is easier than to deceive completely all but the scintillating visitors. Still, these Catholic schools have some advantages over most of ours, which catch the eye and captivate the imagination. We are apt to undervalue decorum, etiquette, manner, demeanor, and all the minor details of discipline and subordination. We are apt to forget that children were not included in the first sentence of the Declaration of Independence. We treat them too much in some particulars, and too little in others. The teachers of Protestant private schools have seldom any vantage-ground of rank of a nature to aid them in securing respect and obedience. The principal is often an anxious and dependant man; often he is grossly ignorant and vulgar; while the subordinate teachers are poor and overworked, and without the means of gaining a proper ascendancy over their pupils. Many of them, in these commercial cities, where nothing is sincerely honored except the bank account, come out of garrets every morning to teach boys and girls who live in mock-palaces, and who have no conception of anything higher or more desirable than to live in a mock-palace. Have not I myself seen the insolent unlicked cubs of the Fifth Avenue and streets adjacent making the lives of gentlemen of learning and eminent worth bitter to them by their riotous contempt of authority and decency, and no teacher connected with the school in a position which justified his felling the young savages to the floor? Have I not seen the principal of a boarding-school running an annual "revival" as a good business operation, and forbidding the poor dyspeptics under his charge to receive the visits of their parents on Sunday afternoons? Certainly, these convent schools, which are now so popular, are free from some of the objections and difficulties that lessen the usefulness of many of our fashionable private academies. Among the "traditions" of the Catholic Church, there is one to the effect that children are children, and have a right to be kept from doing themselves irreparable harm—peaceably if they can, forcibly if they must. The teachers of the convent schools—all the resident teachers—are sufficiently independent of the goodwill of the pupils, without being too much so for their own good. The convent possesses property, guards and maintains its inmates in their own home, and yet in a great degree depends upon the income derived from the school. The Sisters of Charity, as well as the serenity and dignity of their demeanor, hold impudence in check, and teach the young victims of successful speculation that there are distinctions other than those indicated by marble fronts and rosewood stairs. There is a certain civilizing influence, too, which comes of compelling the minute observance of the etiquette of each apartment and each situation. I was present once when the young ladies attending the principal convent school upon the island of Manhattan entered their chapel, on Sunday afternoon, to see four or five of their number, who had become "converts" at the convent, baptized. It was a truly exquisite scene. No manager of a theatre ever arranged anything more effective for the stage; and yet it was well adapted at once to impress the mind and to warm the bodies of three hundred romping girls who took part in it. Perhaps in no other place can I better show the reader what our Roman Catholic brethren and sisters are doing to attract the children of wealthy Protestants into their schools, than by briefly describing what I saw on that pleasant Sunday afternoon in May. On the summit of a gentle slope, surrounded by trees and shrubbery, in a part of the island where the ancient, renowned loveliness of Manhattan has not been obliterated, and commanding a view of the Hudson, the Harlem, and the Sound—the Palisades bounding the view on the west, the arches of the High Bridge visible in the north, the Sound stretching away to the northeast, and the city of New York spreading over all the southern half of the island—stands the group of solid, but not uninviting, structures which form the establishment, chief among them the chapel. On this warm spring day all the doors stood open; and it was evident, as soon as we alighted under the covered entrance that something joyful was going forward. The parlors were full of happy parents, conversing with happy daughters, and a joyous hum pervaded all the rooms. The chapel is spacious, elegant, and very lofty; and it is adorned with the usual large altar-piece, as well as with many smaller pictures. Nearly the whole space upon the floor is covered with plain black-walnut pews, without doors or cushions. These are for the young ladies; visitors sit near the entrance, in pews raised a little from the floor; the nuns have raised seats along the sides of the chapel—each sister having a little pew to herself, and sitting with her face to the altar. At the appointed moment the pupils began to enter in procession, by the middle aisle, two by two, walking almost as slowly as it is possible to walk—just moving, more, and moving so in absolute stillness. Not an audible tread; not a whisper; not an eye upraised. All were dressed alike in pink summer dresses, with a white veil over their heads. They seemed to be softly floating in, like the tinted clouds of sunset. The young girls, who, upon reaching the middle aisle, bent one knee to the ground, and then glided slowly to the slow, soft music of the organ all down the aisle to the altar, where they divided, one line moving to the right, the other to the left, and so curled round into the first pews, which they entered at the end nearest the wall. Thus the pleasing pageant was prolonged. As the procession continued, its interest both changed and increased, because the little girls were followed by the larger, until we had the pleasure of looking upon young ladies in the bright luster of their maturing charms. In every particular, this procession was arranged just as a Kemble or a Wallack were employed, both to prolong and increase the pleasure of the spectator, which are employed upon a well conducted stage. Especially served for the last. Finally, the young ladies who were about to be baptized, all clad in white dresses, and covered with a long white veil, each of them resting an arm upon the shoulder of a sister attired in black, the venerable superior of the convent being one. Nothing was ever seen more picturesque or more affecting, nor

anything more legitimate and proper. When all the pupils were standing in their pews, and the candidates for baptism had placed themselves before the altar, a sister who was in one of the side niches made a slight, scarcely audible click with a small instrument concealed in her hand. Instantly the whole pink cloud of girls softly knelt, and remained kneeling till another click was heard, when they nestled back to their seats. The black line of kneeling young loveliness on the floor, the altar blazing with lighted candles, made up a spectacle as pleasing as it was impressive. At the conclusion of the service the girls glided out in the same silence and lowliness; and the newly baptized closed the train, leaning, as before, upon the shoulders of the sisters. Ten minutes after, the whole three hundred pupils, except those who rejoined their parents in the parlors, were on the full romp in their large sitting-room, running, shouting, in unrestrained hilarity! No Sunday gloom! No goody, nauseous looks! No forced seriousness of demeanor! The arrangements of the school seemed excellent. This best school-room I ever saw in a private school, the loftiest, airiest, most spacious, and elegant, is the one belonging to this establishment. In one wing of the building are thirty music rooms, so constructed that a girl may be practicing in every one of them without disturbing or being disturbed. The sleeping-rooms are a happy compromise between the injurious privacy of a separate apartment and the injurious publicity of a common room, and the means of ventilation appeared to be sufficient. Despite the excellent features and arrangements, the school may be very bad one; the minds of the pupils may, neither be profitably exercised nor suitably fed; yet every reader can see how such schools as this are calculated to captivate parents and allure children. Probably seven of their Protestant pupils out of ten become Catholics sooner or later. Conversions to the Catholic faith, it seems, have been more numerous since the war than before. During the "mission" recently held at St. Stephen's, in New York, the number of converts was eighty. This is nothing to boast of, considering the extent of the parish and the duration of the "mission"; nor, indeed, have converts ever yet come in with any great rapidity. It is the quality of the converts, not their numbers, of which we hear so much; the expected rush has not yet begun. I am informed that a few educated persons in most city parishes are inquiring, with more or less earnestness, into the Catholic faith, and I am further assured that these inquiries generally end in conversion. Among the most frequent causes assigned by inquirers for dissatisfaction with their hereditary belief are the following: The difficulty of believing in the literal infallibility of the whole Bible; the gloom of the Sabbatarian Sunday; the ban placed by many sectarians upon innocent pleasures, such as dancing and the drama, which tends to drive young people into guilty pleasures; the frenzies of the camp-meeting, more revolting, in some parts of the country, than the howlings and whirlings of the Derivishes of Turkey; the painful uncertainty which many persons feel, all their lives, whether their souls are "saved" or not; the dullness and barrenness of the public service, in which only one in a thousand can discharge, namely, the production of two powerful and entertaining sermons every seven days. The effect of the war in multiplying conversions is explained thus: The Catholic Church alone escaped division; since the Catholic Church alone kept itself united and entirely aloof from the political questions involved. I am told, to several educated persons, who have been assured by a distinguished Protestant general, who served in important commands during the whole war, that the only chaplains who, as soldiers, were of much utility in the field were Roman Catholic chaplains; which he attributes to the fact, that they alone were accountable to ecclesiastical superiors. It may be that the exploits of some of our Protestant chaplains in the way of "living on the country" contrasted with the strict observance, by Catholic chaplains, both of military and ecclesiastical rule, had some effect upon observant Protestant minds. Such are some of the reasons assigned for the unbounded confidence with which our Roman Catholic brethren count upon being the future and eternal Church of the United States. These reasons the reader is competent to estimate. For fifteen centuries the Christian Church has undertaken to perform for all the inhabitants of Christendom two offices having no necessary connection, and therefore capable of being separated. One of these offices I have styled in a previous page, "the office of the universe"; or, in other words, expounding the universe; or, in other words, attempting to declare with authority what people ought to think concerning the origin of things, the destiny of man, the nature of the Supreme Being, and the general government of the world. During the past three centuries or more a conviction has been gaining ground, that no man or body of men is competent to do this. On such subjects it is now agreed among those whose thoughts finally become the thoughts of mankind, that such subjects as these there can be no such thing as a *gently opinion*. This part, therefore, of the Church's service to Christendom is now plainly being abandoned. It will be quite accomplished when the greater part of the inhabitants of modern Christian countries are made partakers of the Church did a kind and needed service, perhaps, in concealing from man his own ignorance; he now knows his own ignorance; he also knows the only method which can ever exist of lessening it; and he knows, consequently, that in this matter priests cannot aid him. But the other duty of the Church remains—that of inculcating virtue, assisting regeneration, guiding, cheering, ennobling human life. This remains. This will never be needless as long as man is weak, virtue difficult, and vice alluring. Human reason is not equal to the task of forming an adequate theory of the universe; but it is equal to the task of discovering what a body of men can ever have the right to say who ought to think concerning the "Unknown"; but any man, by a life of fidelity and charity, can acquire absolute certainty respecting the duty we owe to ourselves and one another. The churches will be slow to assent to these truths, familiar as they are to men of the world; but the indifference of the public to everything "doctrinal," and its eager interest in everything "practical," will continue to have its effect. Do we not see the Pope, who began his reign by establishing a new doctrine, end it by regulating the dress of women? Do we not see a grand council of bishops rising superior to theological subtleties, to consider after midnight? Have we not seen the leading Calvinistic clergyman of New York soaring above all Calvin's gloomy crudities, and addressing himself to the nobler, higher, and more difficult work of throwing light upon the duties of employers to employed? Poor work