

MORNING STAR AND CATHOLIC MESSENGER.

NEW ORLEANS, SUNDAY, AUGUST 16, 1868.

THE PICTORIAL PRAYER-BOOK.

It was many a long year ago, and the scene of my story is the office of one of the most respectable notaries in Paris, Monsieur Dubois—a man of the old school, universally respected for his good sense, probity, and benevolence. There were present (beside the notary himself) a lady of middle age, richly dressed; she could never have been handsome, but perhaps, had her countenance been less proud and disdainful, she would not have appeared as she did—positively ugly; an insignificant-looking little man; and a woman, very shabbily dressed, who sat at some distance from the others, holding the hand of a beautiful little boy.

"Her death was rather sudden," said Madame Moranville, the richly-clad lady, to the little man in black.

"Yes," replied he, coolly; "but, no doubt, she was well prepared."

"Have you any idea of the contents of the will?"

"Not the slightest; but we shall soon know. Dubois will open it directly."

"Pray, who is that shabby-looking woman?" What business can she have here?"

"Oh, don't you know her? It is the runaway niece, Marie, who made such a disgraceful match some years ago, with a lion's head—a man of low birth."

"I wonder she has the assurance to come into our presence."

"So do I; the more so, because our deceased relative, good, pious woman as she was, must have looked upon her disobedience and ingratitude with horror."

At that moment Marie approached the speakers; she was yet scarcely in middle age, but sorrow had been beforehand with time in robbing her cheek of its bloom and eyes of their lustre.

"Pray, what brings you here?" said Madame Moranville, haughtily.

"Madame," replied the poor widow, "I am not come to interfere with your rights; I know I have deserved nothing from my aunt but her pardon, and I hope to hear that she has left me that."

"What?" cried Madame Moranville, "pardon to you, the disgrace of your family, who fled from the protection of your aunt—the best of aunts—with a low fellow?"

"Madame, I acknowledge my fault; I have been ungrateful and disobedient—I know it; but my sufferings have been so great that I hope Heaven has pardoned me, for I have looked upon the loss of my husband, and the poverty and sorrow attendant upon it, as a punishment from above."

"And you deserved?"

"Cease these reproaches, madame," said the notary in a stern tone; "your cousin's fault is not so very grievous as to call for them."

"But why should she insult us with her presence?"

"She has a right to be here," replied the notary. "She comes at my desire."

He then proceeded to read the will, in which after the usual preamble, the deceased divided her property into three parts. The first was composed of a sum of £8000 in the hands of the notary; the second of a furnished country seat of the same value and some family jewels; the third of an illustrated prayer-book. The will then proceeded as follows:

"I desire that my property may be divided into three lots; the first, to be the £8000, the second, the chateau, furniture and jewels; the third my prayer-book, which is still in the same state as when I took it with me in the emigration, during the Reign of Terror. I pardon my niece, Marie, for the sorrow she has caused me; and, as a proof of my sincerity, I mention her in my will. My beloved cousin, Madame Moranville, will have the first choice; my brother-in-law, Monsieur D'Arlemont, the second, and Marie, the last."

"Ah, my sister-in-law was a sensible woman," cried Monsieur D'Arlemont.

"Yes," said Madame Moranville, tittering; "she has given a proof of it; Marie will only have the prayer-book."

The notary, who seemed scarcely able to contain his indignation, interrupted the tittering. "What lot do you choose, Madame?"

"The £8000."

"You are determined on that?"

"Most undoubtedly."

"Madame Moranville you are rich, and your cousin is very—very poor; cannot you leave this lot, and take the prayer-book that this—this—" he seemed for a moment at a loss for an expression—"this strange will has put in the balance with the other lots?"

"Are you joking, Monsieur Dubois?" cried Madame Moranville; "or don't you see that my honored cousin has made her will in the express intention that the prayer-book should fall to Marie, who was to have the last choice?"

"And what do you conclude from that?"

"I conclude that she desired her niece should understand that prayer and repentance were the only succors she ought to expect in this life. Ah, she was a saint, that dear woman!"

"Saint, quotha!" cried the notary, indignantly; "may heaven defend me from such saints! An unforgetting, unnatural woman! I am wrong; I do her injustice. Her intention, I am sure, was to give you and Monsieur D'Arlemont an opportunity of doing a good, a noble action, by dividing the property equally with her poor niece."

"Monsieur D'Arlemont will do as he pleases; I repeat that my choice is made."

"And so it is mine," said D'Arlemont; "I shall take the chateau and all it contains."

"Pause one moment, Monsieur D'Arlemont," cried the notary. "Even if it was the intention of the deceased to punish her niece, ought you, a millionaire, to take advantage of her unchristian conduct to leave one of your own family languishing in poverty? Will you not at least give up a part of your lot, even a small part, to this poor widow?"

"Many thanks for your kind advice, my dear Dubois," said D'Arlemont, sneeringly; "the chateau is close to one of my estates, and will suit me admirably—particularly as it is furnished. As for the family jewels,

it is impossible for me to think of parting with them."

"In that case," said the notary, addressing Marie, "I can only give you, my poor Madame Le Fevre, the prayer-book."

She took the book, and pressing it to her lips, she held it to her son, who cried out with childish delight at the sight of its richly-gilt cover: "Oh, mamma, let me have it!"

"Yes, my boy, you shall have it; it will be the only legacy I can leave you. But never—never will I part with it. I thank Heaven she has pardoned me! She has said it, and I know she was truth itself!"

The notary turned away his head.

"Don't go, Madame Le Fevre," said he, "I must speak to you, by-and-by."

At that moment the boy, in playing with the book, unclasped it, and cried out: "Oh, mamma, look at the pretty pictures! But why are they all covered over with this nice thin paper?"

"It is to keep them from being soiled."

"But why put six papers to each picture?"

His mother looked—she uttered a piercing cry, and fell, fainting, into the arms of Monsieur Dubois, who said to those present: "Let her alone, it is nothing; she will not die this time. Give me that book, child; you may do mischief to it."

The two rich legatees went away, commenting not very charitably on Marie's swoon, and the evident interest the notary took in her.

About a month afterward they met Madame Le Fevre and her son, both well dressed, riding in a very pretty carriage with two horses. This unexpected sight led them to make inquiry after her, and they found that she had purchased a handsome house, and was living in a quiet but very good style. Thunderstruck at this intelligence, they went together to question the notary. They found him at his desk.

"Do we interrupt you?" said the lady.

"I am not particularly busy; only making out an account of bank stock I have just bought for Madame Le Fevre."

"And for Heaven's sake, where does it come from?"

"Why, don't you know?"

"No; how should I?"

"Did not you see what was in the book when she fainted?"

"No."

"Well, then, I must tell you that the prayer-book contained sixty engravings, and each was covered by six bank notes of fifty pounds each!"

"Good heavens!" cried the gentleman.

"Oh! if I had but known!" said the lady.

"You had each a choice," said the notary; "and I tried all I could to prevail upon you both to take the prayer-book, but in vain."

"But who could expect to find a fortune in a prayer-book?"

"It is easily explained; its owner had suffered great distress in the emigration in England; she always lived in fear of being obliged to fly a second time, and as her prayer-book was the only thing she had not been robbed of in her first flight, she concealed the handsome fortune of eighteen thousand pounds in it, to prevent herself being a second time reduced to poverty."

The legatees slunk away in silent rage. The good notary chuckled and rubbed his hands.

"She was a saint," cried he. "Ah! you will neither of you say that, now; though you might say it with truth. Heaven rest her soul! I shall honor her memory to my dying day."

DR. MCGLYNN.—It would not be an easy matter to supply the vacancy occasioned by the death of Dr. Cummings, late of St. Stephen's, New York. According to the following sketch, published by the New York Sunday News, it would appear that a worthy successor has been found in Dr. McGlynn.

FASHION AND RELIGION IN PARIS.

Putnam's Magazine takes rank after Harper in the rôle of pandering to anti-Catholic prejudice. In a late number it has an article on "Fashion and Religion in Paris," which is a droll compound of sense and nonsense. With the first, the subjoined may be classed:

Another of the arts of living—dress—is thoroughly exploited in Paris. It must be borne in mind, that no creature of God's creating, except man, is born naked, and continues so. The energies of man, therefore, are taxed (now to the utmost) to provide food and clothes. The supreme desire of man is for food; of woman, for clothes. She may endure the privation of food; but, without clothes, she dies. The clothes one absolutely needs are such as will protect one from the inclemency of the weather; what one wants, pen cannot tell. Fashion means business in Paris, and it means nothing else. It is thoroughly systematized, it is powerful, and it has its finger in the pocket of every woman of the civilized world. A little story will illustrate this: In the days of Louis Philippe, a most earnest and gifted preacher appeared in Paris. He waked people from their worldliness, and inspired a sense of duty; but, more than that, he became the fashion; so that women of the first rank hung upon his words and tried to follow his teachings. They took the jewels from their hands and laid them at his feet; they dressed simply and plainly, and poured the money into his treasury, or devoted it to works of charity; they wished to be humane, and they ceased to be vain and barbaric. Mark the sequel. The traders and jewel-makers and fashion-makers took an alarm; they appeared before the Minister of State, and told him "the thing must be stopped! This preacher must be silenced, or the people would suffer for food, and would rise in mutiny—for it was by these gods of fashion the city prospered." It was stopped; the eloquent preacher was permitted to leave the city.

That Louis Philippe was king of the bourgeoisie, and that he interfered unjustifiably in matters of education, is unquestioned, therefore, the foregoing statement is not at all improbable. So much for the sensible part—now for the reverse. If by any chance merited praise is awarded to anything Catholic, in this periodical, the writer hastens to make his peace with the bigots by a mixture of atrocious misrepresentations, having just enough truth to give the whole a semblance of good faith. The reader will find corroboration in the following extract:

There is one religion in Paris, and it is called Roman Catholic. It is a curious fact that in this city, where the Calvinists once drove out the Catholics, there exist to-day but two Calvinistic houses of worship. There is one religion, but, according to Guizot, there is not a faith, or almost none. Faith in the unseen, faith in virtue, faith in an after-life, of which this is the mere beginning, is rare, if it is to be found at all in the Church. This religion, through two thousand years, has become thoroughly systematized into a Church. This Church is a perfect machine, which is indeed a power in the State, but is controlled and managed by the State. This perfect machine is in the hands of able men, and is an integral part of the social life of the city. The worship at Notre-Dame is a superb spectacle; the dresses are rich, the lights fine, the music delightful, the audiences well-behaved. Here, too, is applied that wonderful system and thoroughness which marks everything in Paris. A high mass costs from fifty to three hundred francs; a grand marriage, with carpets, chairs, choir, etc., costs some three hundred francs; and blessed candles for the poor to burn before the shrine of "Our Lady" can be had for a few sous. Death, too, pays. The business of burying is in the hands of the great company (Pompes Funèbres) chartered by the State, who furnishes funerals at prices ranging from nineteen francs to seven thousand one hundred and eighty-four francs—of which the Church has its share. We must not forget, however, that in the bosom of this wonderful Church lives and acts a body of women who save it from perdition—the Sisters of Charity. Some of them are old, many young, but all devoted. They spend their lives in relieving distress and allaying suffering. They do this not for money, but for the love of God and man. In the Church, too, are to-day, as there always have been, honest, sincere, devoted men, who work at the problem of human life, and labor to raise the souls of men from the temporal to the spiritual. Just now the most conspicuous of these are Father Felix and Father Hyacinth. The first is a Jesuit, and a most finished and cultivated preacher, but he fails to impress one with the earnestness and intensity of feeling which inspires Father Hyacinth. This last always attracts crowds, and they are not only women. Grave men, ministers, artists, writers, hang upon his fiery words in rapt attention. The Church is crowded hours before he speaks; carriages stop the way. It is a new, a startling, a novel sensation—this man preaching, as though he believed it, the gospel of the poor and the suffering—the gospel spoken by Jesus of Nazareth two thousand years ago on the banks of the Sea of Galilee.

What is the result? It were impossible to tell. The brilliant correspondent of the Evangelist confesses herself perplexed. She sees the crowd, she knows they are impressed, moved, electrified; but they turn away talking as they would after hearing an opera or seeing a performer. They have had a sensation—they go away. She says: "Never has preaching in the church been more followed. Never was there more talent put into requisition to satisfy this mercenary population, mad for excitement of every kind—whether in the church or the theatre; yet never, perhaps, was there more of demoralization in society, or even vice, more unblushingly displayed in the amusements and literature of the people." What, then, has religion come to be, and where is the home of faith?

Sunday is in no sense a holy day. The Church discourages business labors, and most of the public works are suspended; but private enterprises go forward, and for a part of the day labors go on, and the small shops are kept open. The people through the museums and gardens; the shows of the Champs Elysees are vivacious, and the theatres are in full blast. Such is the holiday of the people.

JOHN BRIGHT IN LIMERICK.

John Bright, M.P., who had been on a visit to Mr. Peabody, at Castleconnell, was entertained at a public dinner, on the 13th ult., by the leading personages of Limerick city and county. A large number of distinguished Catholic clergymen participated in this demonstration. We subjoin some extracts from Mr. Bright's speech on this occasion, which was deferred from our last edition:

I have stated in the House of Commons that I think the Irish census gives the number of nearly seven hundred thousand Protestants in connection with the Established Church, and that, making the deductions which are necessary in England—and far similar deductions than is necessary in Ireland—I may say certainly that the number of those who attend places of worship in connection with the Established Church, and who are now paying every outward deference to religion, will not be more than five hundred thousand persons, and these five hundred thousand persons have provided for them by State—I will put it, I think, at below the real amount—certainly more than £600,000 per annum. At the time of the Church Temporalities Act, in 1834, the whole revenues of the Irish Church were estimated by Lord Althorpe as at not less than £300,000 a year. Some of them must have been increased in amount since that, but there has been a diminution which is caused by the concession of about twenty-five per cent. out of the tithes of the landlords to get them to agree to the arrangement with regard to the tithes which took place afterward. I think it may be reckoned at below the mark when I say that the income of the Established Church is £600,000 a year, but if the State were to provide with equal profuseness for the religious teaching and services of the people of the United Kingdom, it would take an annual sum of at least £36,000,000 sterling to provide for the religious services of the families of the three kingdoms with the same degree of profuse generosity which has been exercised, and is now exercised, in Ireland. These five hundred thousand are not more than the population of Glasgow or Liverpool. What would we say to a government which would provide Glasgow or Liverpool with ten or twelve bishops and from fifteen to twenty thousand clergymen, some of them profusely, generally all of them well paid? It would be quite clear to every man that such a proposition could only spring from the brain of a man who was in that state of excitement that would be akin to lunacy. There is one way in which the Established Church has been a link of union with I'm afraid—precisely the way in which the army and the police have. It has helped, no doubt, to link a nation always ready to rebel with a nation which did not intend it to rebel successfully, but I believe, if it were possible to write honestly the history of that Church as a political institution, it would be found that it had as much to do with the tendency to rebellion in Ireland as any other circumstance that has been connected with the history of the country. I should ask, gentlemen, one other question: Whether, looking over history as long back as you like, almost, and looking over the whole of the civilized and Christian countries of the globe, it is possible to find another example of the same state of things which has existed in Ireland in reference to the Ecclesiastical Establishment? Let me tell you I should not put these questions to mere partisans, because they are not likely to be influenced by argument; nor would I put them to Orangemen, whose blood seems always to be at boiling point, and who are not capable of taking a rational view of this question; nor would I put them to any minister of the Established Church, who cares little for his office, little for his people, and, if possible, still less for his country, though I hope there is not such a man—I would put them to the thoughtful and Christian man, who has the same interest in right and the same wish to discover it and to promote it as you have—or as we have at this moment. Is it possible that they could return any but one answer to the case which I have laid before you? It is clear beyond all dispute, beyond all contest, and every man in Ireland, whatever his religion may be, must admit it, that the Established Church in Ireland exists, not by the will and love of the people, but by the influence of a power which does not reside within the limits of this island. I regard it as you regard it, as all men regard it who are outside the United Kingdom, in all the countries of Europe, in all the States of America, as an institution more than all other institutions which have existed, that it is against the actual order of things, because it seems to shake the sense of justice in every man outside of it. It repulses and revolts every man who is not connected with its creed, and at the same time stimulates the hostility of those whom it insults against the power of England, the power by which it was established and is promoted: They say they are afraid the Church will fall away, and that the Church of Rome will get what they call the upper hand. As far as the upper hand goes, in a great majority of the population, there is not much on the part of the Church of Rome to be gained. But they seem to think this further—and as you are mostly, I presume, of the Church of Rome, I will not hesitate to say it here—that the Catholics and the Catholic priest will manifest something of arrogance, and that they will begin, of course, not a legal, but something like a social, persecution. We need not be much surprised at these alarms. Their fears are not absolutely unnatural. You know perfectly well that people who have always

gone upon crutches have very little faith in walking; and, further, that persons who have been long connected, though not with evil intentions, with unjust institutions, may easily imagine that they may become the victims of the injustice of others. My own impression is, that these fears, though not unnatural, are absolutely groundless. Those who hitherto despaired are beginning, in some matters, at least, to entertain hope that they had feared had been forever banished from their minds. I believe it, and I believe more, which is greatly to the purpose, the people of England and Scotland are at this moment preparing to tender to you a great offer of justice at the general election in November next; but the Irish people must help them with a will and with a heart. No great matter of this kind can be accomplished unless all concerned work with a willing hand; and there can be no great act of national and historic reconciliation unless all the parties are willing to be reconciled. We are met—your address has referred to it—in "the city of the violated treaty." Violated during nearly three centuries of truce. Let us make a new treaty—not on parchment—not with an oath. The conditions shall be these: "Justice on the part of Great Britain—forgiveness on the part of Ireland." It shall be written in the hearts of the three nations, and we will pray Him who is the Common Father of all people, and in whose hands are the destinies of all states, that it may stand forever and be forever inviolate.

BLESSING THE SEA AT OSTEND.—To see this truly old Catholic ceremony, I made up my mind, and so after hearing an early mass at Bruges, I set out on my journey. As I drew near to Ostend, I descried gay steamers floating from the masts of ships, from tops of houses, and from high embankments, outward manifestations of a Catholic devotion. Having entered the town, what a spectacle it presented! The streets were converted into avenues, strewn with fragrant flowers, the houses into gorgeous mansions, whose windows were one blaze of light. It being twelve o'clock, the procession had already commenced, and benediction of the most holy sacrament was being given on the esplanade facing the sea. With difficulty I made my way through the dense crowd to a mound near the sea-shore, where I had a good view of the whole scene. It was an extraordinary scene—full of majesty, full of grandeur. To look upon that great Catholic assemblage, and, under the open canopy of heaven, kneeling in hushed reverence, as the bugle signaled the elevation of the blessed sacrament, was a sight truly overpowering. The ships and boats which lay at anchor near the shore were also manned with devout worshippers, and from the sturdy mariners arose the ardent prayers to Him in whose glorious presence the seraphim veil their faces: "Miserere Domine," "Gloria tibi Domine." With their prayers were also mingled those of the helpless widows and orphans who, resigned to the Divine will, cried out with Christian fortitude: "Miserere Domine," "Gloria tibi Domine!" It would even seem as if the gentle rocking of the ships and boats bowed a significant thanksgiving to Him who had come on that day to bless for them their home—the angry sea. Truly, it was an affecting scene. Even Protestants, many of whom had come there out of curiosity, were touched by this Christian outburst of supplication. At the conclusion of the blessing of the sea, the procession began to wend its way back to the church. To enumerate the different religious orders of men and women, the different confraternities, etc., who took a part in the procession, would take up too much space; suffice it to say that the procession was more than a mile in length. Benediction of the most holy sacrament was again given at the different altars that were tastefully erected in the various streets en route to the church. The procession having entered the church, which was magnificently decorated for the occasion, there was grand benediction, and thus ended a ceremony which will live forever in my memory. And now one word about that crowd of people assembled on Sunday at Ostend to witness this ceremony. For the most part they belonged to the humbler class of life, and, therefore, you would naturally expect, not of the enlightened race of mankind. But religion had corrected and humbled those constitutional vices which are rather difficult to entirely subdue. It had given softness and sensibility to their hearts; but, above all, it had given them an universal charity and love for one another. This was seen by their general good conduct and manners. They were educated in that Catholic knowledge which teaches man to love God above all things and our neighbors as ourselves.—Weekly Register.

PROTESTANT PROGRESS.—Protestants boast constantly that they are always equal to the exigencies of the times. According to a correspondent of the New York Independent, writing from Brunswick, Germany, the land of Lutifer is far in the rear. Here is the extract:

It is a fact worthy of mention, that, though the city is much larger than formerly, no new churches have been built within the last three hundred years. We must believe, therefore, that the fathers built for their children, or that the children have departed from the pious customs of their fathers. The latter is doubtless the fact; for the Germans of to-day are not a church-going people. Though there is only a morning service in the churches, the attendance, except on festival days, is very small. I have sat in one of these old churches, during the hour of service, when it seemed as if the walls alone must receive the preacher's words, if they be received at all, so empty were the pews. And yet this is the land of Luther and of the Reformation. Is not a second reformation needed?

SLANDER AND DETRACTION.—The true Christian never indulges in evil-speaking. It is mean and cowardly, and the sure indication of a low and vulgar mind. A woman given to this vice is generally little less than a monster.