

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN ENGLAND

ITS APPEAL TO INTELLECTUALS.

One hundred years ago the Catholic Church was looked upon as a corpse in England. She was too hideous to be noticed, and too small to be taken seriously. Then came the great Irish famine, and the sons and daughters of Erin flocked to England, and planted the ancient faith. The Oxford Movement gave a new impetus to this new movement of Christianising England. At last oppressed and loyal Catholics went on dreaming dreams. They saw West End ladies flock to Farm Street Church, to attend Mass, and they noticed that the sweated workers of the East End of London crowded St. Mary's and St. Michael's Church.

These old Catholics were amazed. They had so often heard the solemn dirge being sung over Catholicism, and now they live to see the ancient become modern, and the much-abused become passionately loved. And as they read they heard of more striking facts of the Church's progress. Just half a century ago, there was one small church at Portsmouth (with its population of a quarter of a million people), and now that city numbers four. Just ten years ago a Catholic priest would be stoned if he dared preach Christ Crucified in Hertfordshire, and now a beautiful new church and a growing Catholic community flock around the pretty church which marks the resting-place of Monsignor Robert Hugh Benson.

Truly, Catholics have been giving away their faith: for, unless each one gives it away he cannot keep it. It was because Francis Xavier gave it to the Indians that he himself held it so firmly and enthusiastically, and it was because Mahard refused to give it away that he lost it. For, this "giving away of your faith and keeping it" is the most supreme and convincing paradox in the New Testament. Yes, look at the structures reared by the sweat of the brow, the brawn of the muscle, and say if they do not tell you something of that vivifying power of love. To have seen London, and watched the enthusiasm of its people during the memorable year of the Eucharistic procession was only to have realised that Catholicism in a land where it was supposed to have been dead, really lives—as dying, and behold she lives.

The Catholic Church, then, has made wonderful strides in modern England. There was never a time in its history when its priesthood was so sacrificing and zealous. It has had spiritual giants like Robert Hugh Benson, Croke-Robinson, and others, from within, and apologists, like Gilbert Chesterton, from without. Even but a few weeks ago a prominent English weekly said:

"It would be interesting to know the exact number of people of great intellect who were received into the Catholic Church in England in recent years. The result would cause great surprise."

The one great problem in life, which is not understood as it should be by the vast majority, is the question of the Divine Will. Of all the mistakes made by men, the failure to recognise God's will is, undoubtedly, the saddest and greatest. The keynote to happiness and peace of mind is the realisation that this Will means everything.

Charles Kingsley once said: "The men whom I have seen succeed the best in life have always been cheerful and hopeful men, who went about their business with a smile on their faces, and took the changes and chances of this mortal life like men, facing rough and smooth alike as it came." This about describes the missionaries who are always facing hard propositions.

Te Kuiti

The weather here of late has been most inclement and the roads are in a very bad condition.

The third series of the "All right socials" was held at the Town Hall on Thursday, July 19, and although the evening was very wet, still the hall was crowded. Much praise is due to Mrs. Frost, who was in charge of this social, and who left nothing undone to ensure that every one had a pleasant evening.

Last Sunday at Mass the Rev. Father Finn appealed to all to join the Catholic Federation, and in the evening after devotions a meeting of the Federation was held, which was well attended. Mr. Sheehan was appointed secretary, and Mr. Clarke treasurer. Quite a number of new members were enrolled.

Greymouth

(From our own correspondent.)

The St. Columba socials are being very well patronised this year, and the club funds should be greatly benefited as a result of the last two "evenings."

The Marist Brothers' School concert, which was held in the Opera House last week, resulted in a profit of about £50. The local brothers deserve to be congratulated upon the success of the function; and I feel sure that if a similar concert is held at no distant date, a packed house is assured. The school committee might well keep this matter in view, as funds are urgently needed for a new Brothers' School. The Hibernian sports committee, gave this very deserving object a start some twelve months ago, by making a donation of £120. This money is now on fixed deposit, but it behoves the school committee to keep this very urgent matter constantly in view.

I regret to record the death of still another very old parishioner in the person of Charles Shinkwin, who passed peacefully away fortified by all the rites of Holy Church, at his residence Chapel street, Greymouth. The deceased was one of the oldest parishioners of the Grey parish, and was well and favorably known from one end of the Coast to the other. He was connected with the Railway Dept. from the early days of the Coast and retired on superannuation some years ago. He was a most practical Catholic, and was closely associated with the progress of the parish for many years. He leaves a family of two daughters and one son, whilst he is survived by three brothers at Home, all of whom are members of the priesthood: viz., Dean Shinkwin, Dean of Cork; Canon Shinkwin, Bandon, Cork; and Rev. Father Shinkwin, Cork.—R.I.P.

At the half-yearly meeting of St. Patrick's branch of the Hibernian Society a motion, congratulating his Lordship Bishop Brodie, of Christchurch, upon the magnificent protest he made recently against the conscription of the Marist Brothers, was unanimously adopted. It was resolved to inform his Lordship that he has the entire sympathy and support of the branch and the parish generally in his fight for justice. The *Tablet* also came in for general commendation at the hands of members, it being the general opinion that it is only now that Catholics are able to fully realise the great service that a well-conducted Catholic organ is capable. It was decided to urge all Catholics in this parish to become subscribers, as only by this means can a journal such as the *Tablet* hope to carry on. A vote of condolence was passed to the relatives of the late Patrick Mullens, an ex-member of the branch, who died at Dunedin last week. The election of officers for the ensuing term resulted as follows:—President, Bro. P. Deere; vice-president, Bro. P. Dwyer; treasurer, Bro. P. Blonchfield; secretary, Bro. M. Keating; warden, Bro. D. Shannahan; guardian, Bro. J. Brennan.

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