

been doing much-needed work in the accumulation of information respecting municipal administration and in promoting legislation in the interest of the health, comfort, and safety of the community.

The Boards of Trade in Cleveland, Minneapolis, and Grand Rapids, Mich., which have taken steps to arouse interest in municipal affairs, are active, aggressive, and vigilant in all things pertaining to their respective cities.

Tacoma, Seattle, and Oakland, on the Pacific coast, have their Leagues, and San Francisco and Los Angeles are preparing to take the first steps towards organizing some municipal reform body. Denver and Pueblo, Colo., are agitated over the subject, and their more prominent citizens are inquiring as to the best means to attain their objects. Coming East, we find a meeting called in Cincinnati to consider the advisability of forming a municipal organization, and a similar meeting in Pittsburg. Knoxville, Tenn., and a number of Kentucky towns, are debating the question and seeking information. Other Southern cities, which for the present prefer not to be named, are awaiting the proper moment to launch a movement. The New Orleans Jefferson Club appointed delegates to the Philadelphia Conference. Coming North, we find Good Government Clubs in Montclair and New Brunswick, N. J., and Yonkers, N. Y.; a City Club in Hartford, an Advance Club in Providence, a Citizens' League in New Rochelle, Municipal Leagues in Schenectady and Bridge-ton, a Citizens' League in Camden.

In Albany there are a Citizens' Association and a Citizens' Committee of Fifty, and a Municipal League is talked about. The Citizens' Association of Buffalo is very like a New England town-meeting, and its methods, because in some respects unique, are worthy of careful study. And so we could prolong the list, there being scarcely a town of any size in the country but has its municipal reform organization, or is on the road to form one.

Nor, as we have already seen in the case of the Chicago Municipal Order League, are the men alone in their desire and effort to secure better city government. The Women's Health Protective Associations in the various cities are doing a praiseworthy work, but the Civic Club of Philadelphia may perhaps be called the model of its kind. This Club, composed entirely of women, is laboring to promote, "by education and active co-operation, a higher public spirit and a better social order." The Civic Club, although born with the opening of the new year, has, with an energy and persistence to be imitated by all engaged in similar work, aroused and animated among the women a public spirit that is bound to bear early and abundant fruit. Its co-operation with the Municipal League has been valued and effective.

In this hasty sketch we have seen that the municipal spirit has manifested and organized itself in all parts of the country, among men and women alike. It would require a stout volume to chronicle all the good it has succeeded in accomplishing, but it would take a stouter volume or series of volumes to enumerate the things yet to be done. Although much has thus far been wrought, our American cities are, as a rule, badly governed, and until the citizens arouse themselves and take that interest in civic affairs that it is both their duty and privilege to take, we shall make but little substantial progress. The change must be consciously made; no spasmodic reform can have lasting results; and we cannot have a conscious demand for better city government until the people know what has been and can be done along these lines, and are educated up to the point of demanding the best, and being satisfied with nothing but a full compliance with their demands.

The National Municipal League, the first meeting of whose Board of Delegates will be held in New York, May 28 and 29, is another direct result of the Philadelphia Conference. Its purpose, as stated in the Constitution, is: First, To multiply the numbers, harmonize the methods, and combine the forces of all who realize that it is only by united action and organization that good citizens can secure the adoption of good laws and the selection of men of trained ability and proved integrity for all municipal positions, or prevent the success of incompetent or corrupt

candidates for public office. Second, To promote the thorough investigation and discussion of the conditions and details of civic administration, and of the methods for selecting and appointing officials in American cities, and of laws and ordinances relating to such subjects. Third, To provide for such meetings and conferences, and for the preparation and circulation of such addresses and other literature, as may seem likely to advance the cause of good city government.



## Roman Catholic Loss

By the Rev. Joshua Coit

There are certain indications that the Roman Catholic Church has passed the point of greatest progress in this country, that its curve has reached its summit. The note of alarm sounded by Miss Elder at the Catholic Congress in Chicago was well warranted. Without indorsing her sharp criticism as to the quality of her people or repeating her lament that so few Catholics are engaged in honestly tilling the soil and so many are engaged in the liquor traffic, it may be worth while to notice:

That by her own figures the Roman Catholic Church is falling behind in the race for numbers. Her "Sadlier's Almanac and Ordo" for 1880 gives the total Catholic population in this country as 5,884,222; in 1892, 8,618,135; in 1893, 8,632,521; in 1894, 8,806,648. For the twelve years from 1880 to 1892 a gain of 204,745 a year; in the last two years, a gain of 94,231 a year. Now, there has been so large a gain in all these years by immigration that the smaller gain of the later years is fully accounted for by it. Nay, more, it would seem plain that there is a loss large enough to overbalance the natural increase by birth and draw upon the gain by immigration. We get an intimation of the nature of this loss if we scan the congregation streaming from a Roman Catholic church. It is composed chiefly of women, boys, girls, and old men; there are usually very few men of from twenty-five years of age to sixty.

Notice, again, that for a period of ten years or more the changing policy of the Roman Catholic Church in regard to the public schools has been such as would tally well with a consciousness of loss through these schools. Mark the sequence. First, complaint that her children were made to read from a Protestant version of the Bible. Proper recognition of some reasonableness in this complaint led to the banishment of the reading of the Bible in our schools. Then, complaint that the schools were Godless, since no religious instruction was or could be given in them. Then, extreme pressure, even to the serious threat of excommunication, to keep her children in the parochial schools. Then, endeavor to secure a proportionate share of the public-school money. And, finally, a relaxation of the pressure, with Monsignor Satolli's decision in favor of the liberal wing of the Romish Church in this country; a relaxation, by the way, well fitted to dovetail in with a greater effort to obtain a share of public funds for private schools. The cost of the parochial system is very great, and would not be imposed upon a people whose financial resources are heavily drawn upon by their Church unless the necessity was urgent.

During the last ten years there has been much done in New England among the French-Canadians in the way of preaching to them a pure Gospel in their own language. And while the apparent results so far as statistics go are not large, though by no means insignificant, the attitude of the priests and their people towards each other is very significant. The denunciations of the priests against those who listen to the missionaries are more severe than ever, in some cases extremely bitter, yet there is manifestly an increasing desire and purpose on the part of the people to "search the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so." A few years ago Bibles given to Roman Catholics, when discovered by the priest and demanded by him, were given up. Now it has come to be understood that there is liberty in this matter, and priests are called upon

sharply by one and another of the people to show in the Word of God warrant for Romish practices as well as doctrines.

There is still another indication. Rome is never in a hurry. She can afford to wait till the plum is ripe. During the years of her growth in numbers and power so little was done by her, or rather so little was openly done in a political way, that, outside of a few large cities, it attracted little attention. But now people, East and West, are alarmed by the political action of the Romish Church, which is, as never before, openly exercised. Whereupon some inconsequent persons, horrified at Rome as a secret political body, proceed to organize another secret political body. Rome, with her scant nine millions, would not, by open political work, bring such reproach and danger upon herself if she thought she was still gaining proportionately to the increase of population in our land. She seems to think the plum as ripe as it will be.

It should be remembered that the great loss of the Roman Catholic Church does not imply a corresponding gain to Protestant Churches. Would that it were so! Because it is not so, this loss is to be regretted on many accounts by all Christian people. The danger of our land to-day is not from the Roman Catholic Church, but rather from those who have lapsed from this and from other Churches. Let the Protestant Church, with united front, oppose, not the Romish Church, but rather the wickedness and worldliness of the millions who are outside all Churches, that we may become a Christian people in truth as well as in name.



## A Poet of Aspiration

There are few names in this century which have had, for young men especially, greater attractive power than that of Arthur Hugh Clough. This power has never been widely, but in many cases it has been deeply, felt. It has its source more in the nature of the man and in the conditions of his life than in his work, although the latter is full of the elevation, the aspiration, and the beauty of a very noble mind. But it is not as a finished artist, as a singer whose message is clear and whose note is resonant, that Clough attracts; it is rather as a child of his time, as one in whom the stir and change of the century were most distinctly reflected. There was an intense sympathy with his age in the heart of Clough, a sensitiveness to the tidal influences of thought and emotion, which made his impressionable nature, for a time at least, a prey to agitation and turmoil; and there is no more delicate registry of the tempestuous weather of the second quarter of the century than that which is found in his work.

It was in November, 1836, that Clough, a boy of seventeen, exchanged school life at Rugby for college life at Oxford. He had always been in advance of his opportunities; he had led each form successively; he was the best swimmer and the first runner in the school; he was so manly, genuine, and wholly lovable that when he left for Oxford every boy in the school waited to shake hands with him; his scholarly prominence was so marked that in his last year Dr. Arnold broke the silence which he invariably preserved in awarding prizes, and publicly congratulated him on having secured every prize and won every honor which Rugby offered, and crowned his achievements by gaining the Balliol scholarship, then and now the highest honor open to the English school-boy. With such a record of fidelity and ability behind him, Clough entered upon his career at Oxford. He had not won the heart and enjoyed the teaching of Arnold without some comprehension of the largeness of thought and the noble intellectual sympathy which made his master the ideal teacher of his time; his mind was already playing, with a boy's eager and buoyant expectancy, about the problems of the age. He had learned already that loyalty to truth, whatever it costs and wherever it leads, is the only basis of a life of intellectual integrity. At Rugby he left one of the largest, freest, and most progressive of minds of a generation rich in men of commanding ability; at Oxford he met

those persuasive, subtle, and eloquent teachers who were to lead the greatest reactionary movement of the time. John Henry Newman, luminous in thought, fervent in spirit, winning in speech, was steadily drawing away from modern life to the repose and authority of the Middle Ages. The very air throbbed with the stir of a conflict which drew all sensitive minds within the circle of its agitation, and the eager expectancy which filled the hearts of the leaders seemed to promise a new day of spiritual impulse and ecclesiastical splendor. Then, if ever, was realized that beautiful vision of Oxford which Dr. Arnold's son has given to the world, when she lay "spreading her gardens to the moonlight and whispering from her towers the last enchantments of the middle age."

Clough, in the fullness of his early intellectual awakening, had already passed beyond the spell even of an enchantment so alluring and magical as that which Newman's eloquence was throwing around many an eager spirit; he had gone too far on the road to a free and noble mental life ever to turn back and sit once more in the shadows that fell from cathedral towers, and leave to others the guidance and direction of his thought. But no young man could live in that seething vortex and not be driven hither and thither by the mere force of the currents of thought; for two years, he says, "I was like a straw drawn up the draught of a chimney." He had passed from the influence of one of the freest to the influence of one of the most reactionary minds of the day, and the tumult of conflicting opinion compelled him to examine and re-examine questions the consideration of which belongs to maturer years. Amid the conflict which went on about and within him, he carried himself with such a steady resolution and with such a calmness of faith in the victory of truth that among his contemporaries he was soon felt as an independent force, preserving amid the agitation the quietude of soul which is the possession of the true thinker. Clough was not long overwhelmed and tossed helplessly from one side to the other of the whirling vortex of discussion; he was stimulated by the agitation into larger and freer play of mind upon the great questions of life, and he was filled—as an open mind cannot but be filled when all the elements are in motion—with the hope of a nobler world of faith some day to roll out of the cloud and darkness. In this eager expectancy, this pure and breathless aspiration, he may well stand in our thought for a whole group of men upon whom the questioning of this century has come, not to paralyze, but to inspire. Let him speak for himself:

'Tis but the cloudy darkness dense;  
Though blank the tale it tells,  
No God, no Truth! yet He, in sooth,  
Within the skeptic darkness deep  
He dwells that none may see,  
Till idol forms and idol thoughts  
Have passed and ceased to be:  
No God, no truth! ah, though, in sooth,  
So stand the doctrine's half;  
On Egypt's track return not back,  
Nor own the Golden Calf.  
Take better part, with manlier heart,  
Thine adult spirit can;  
No God, no Truth! receive it ne'er—  
Believe it ne'er—O man!

No God, it saith; ah, wait in faith  
God's self-completing plan;  
Receive it not, but leave it not,  
And wait it out, O man!

Defective as poetry, these verses express, nevertheless, the spirit and attitude of a free, religious nature, and they have the charm of Clough's habitual veracity. And where shall we find a truer expression of the feeling which lies deepest in the heart of this century than that contained in these striking verses:

Go from the East to the West, as the sun and the stars direct thee,  
Go with the girdle of man, go and encompass the earth.  
Not for the gain of the gold—for the getting, the hoarding, the having,  
But for the joy of the deed; but for the Duty to do.