

went home and informed his fellow-citizens that the arm in which they had taken so much pride had never belonged to St. AGATHA, and was an utterly unknown and presumably worthless arm.

Cremona has yielded to the force of evidence, and no longer pretends to be in possession of any part of St. AGATHA. A commission of clerical experts is to meet at an early day and endeavor to ascertain if the arm now in the cathedral of Cremona is a sacred or secular arm, and if it should be decided to be sacred, to what saint it originally belonged. What will be the result arrived at by the commission no one can foresee, but, in any event, Cremona has definitely broken with St. AGATHA, and desires to have nothing more to do with her. The general feeling is that the city should choose St. AGNES as its future patron, and should petition the Pope for a small section of that blameless and beautiful martyr.

CREMONA'S SAINT

Protestants sometimes find fault with the distribution of saints in Italy, but the system is really a wise and commendable one. We have found out that in the practice of medicine it is better to give a small dose of the active principle of the drug than a large dose of the drug in its crude state. The Italians long ago found out that part of a saint's body would work as successful miracles as the whole of it, and that hence a single saint might be beneficially distributed over a large area of country. For example, let us suppose that the body of a first-class saint is discovered in a Roman catacomb. It may be preserved entire at Rome, or it may be distributed among other cities. Would it not be the part of wisdom to give Milan an arm, Venice a leg, Florence an ear, and to distribute the teeth among a dozen deserving towns, rather than to selfishly retain the entire saint at Rome? Experience has proved that a saint's arm will cure as many diseases and avert as many disasters as the whole saint, and there is abundant evidence to show that even a single tooth can do an immense deal of good in a devout community. Of course, any city will take a certain amount of pride in the possession of an entire saint, but surely saints were not intended to foster pride on the part of anybody. We cannot deny, if we look at the matter in an unprejudiced way, that the Italian system of the distribution of saints is thoroughly commendable, although, like all other systems, it may sometimes become the occasion of error and even of scandal. The recent trouble in Cremona concerning St. AGATHA is a case in point, but it cannot be honestly quoted as a proof that saints ought not to be distributed.

There is no better saint in the calendar than St. AGATHA. She was a combined saint, virgin, and martyr, and in each capacity has always given entire satisfaction. She was a native of the city of Palermo, and, having fallen under the displeasure of the pagan Roman Governor, was put to tortures of great variety and ingenuity, and finally died in prison from the effects of her cruel treatment. Her body has been preserved in Palermo ever since the third century, and has done an immense deal of good in a quiet and unostentatious way. The Palermitans are naturally warmly attached to St. AGATHA, not merely because they regard it as a duty to encourage home saints, but because of her admitted merit. While they are not guilty of the bad taste of attacking other saints, they feel at liberty to remark that though St. AGATHA does not force herself upon public attention by permitting her blood to be annually liquefied, or by allowing her pictures to wink, she takes better care of Palermo than other saints who are more demonstrative have taken of Naples or other cities which might be named.

Though the body of St. AGATHA is notoriously at Palermo, the cathedral of Cremona has long boasted the possession of one of the saint's arms. This arm has been as useful to Cremona as the rest of the saint's body has been to Palermo. War and pestilence have been waved away from Cremona by this powerful and beneficent arm, and the city has enjoyed and still enjoys such signal peace that the grass grows in her principal streets, and her inhabitants have full leisure to manufacture ancient Cremona violins. Although the railway has reached Cremona, that peaceful city has little to do with her neighbors, and takes small interest in the affairs of the outside world. Now and then an enterprising citizen journeys as far as Milan or Piacenza, and brings back word that there are rumors that Count CAVOUR is becoming quite a prominent man in Sardinia, and that the Emperor NAPOLEON is thinking of war with the Austrians, but, as a rule, little news that is less than twenty-five years old reaches Cremona.

Hitherto, Cremona has celebrated St. Agatha's Day with great enthusiasm, and on that day the whole population has visited the shrine which incloses the saint's arm. Eloquent priests have preached sermons showing that Cremona is blessed above all the cities of the peninsula by the possession of an entire arm of so able a saint, and that even Palermo, which owns the rest of her body, is thereby only raised to a level with the high-towered city of the Lombard plains. But it is doubtful if the saint's festival will ever be celebrated in Cremona again, and it is certain that henceforth the city desires to hear nothing more concerning its hitherto priceless arm.

A few months ago a daring and pious Cremonese made a pilgrimage to Palermo to pray at the shrine of the greater part of St. AGATHA. To his horror he found, in looking at the saint's body, that she had two entire arms. He sought counsel with the attendant priests, who mocked at the idea that Cremona had any of their beloved saint, and permitted him to thoroughly inspect the body in order to convince himself that it had not been subjected to "restoration." They even showed him photographs of the saint as she appeared before and immediately after her martyrdom, in which she was represented with the usual amount of arms. The evidence was overwhelming, and the unhappy Cremonese, having become convinced that St. AGATHA never had three arms, and that the Palermitans were in possession of the two genuine arms,