

The Catholic Record.

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LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION.

UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA, Ottawa, Canada, March 7th, 1900.

To the Editor of THE CATHOLIC RECORD, London, Ont.

Dear Sir: For some time past I have read your estimable paper, THE CATHOLIC RECORD, and congratulate you upon the manner in which it is published.

In matter and form are both good; and a truly Catholic spirit pervades the whole.

Therefore, with pleasure, I can recommend it to the faithful.

Blessing you and wishing you success. Believe me, to remain,

Yours faithfully in Jesus Christ, F. D. FALCÓNIO, Arch. of Larissa, Apud. Deloz.

LONDON, SATURDAY, MAR. 5, 1904.

MARIE CORELLI'S "TEMPORAL POWER."

"We have been asked to state on what grounds Marie Corelli's novel 'The Temporal Power' has been placed on the Index or catalogue of books prohibited to be read by Catholics.

In answer to this we have to say that we have not learned the immediate reasons which induced the congregation of the Index to condemn the book; but from the work itself ample reason for this prohibition may be found.

We do not deny the elegance of Marie Corelli's language, the ability she displays in setting forth her pet theories, and the vividness of her imagination; but none of these qualities, nor all of them together, constitute an excuse for defending Anarchy, justifying regicide and suicide, and, in fine, for endeavoring to prejudice her readers against all civil government and religion.

The more brilliant the talents of an author are the more dangerous are his or her writings, if their tendency is to propagate dangerous and wicked principles, and in this respect the book on "The Temporal Power" belongs to the very worst class of novels which have ever gained popularity.

We can only say in regard to the authoress of this book that we regret she has not applied her talents to better use than to waste her time on the writing of such a farrago of mischievous nonsense. We must add that we are surprised that it has been issued by a religious firm in Toronto, "The Methodist Book Concern."

The book is, in one respect, of a class with Eugene Sue's "Wandering Jew," and Hall Caine's "Eternal City"; that is to say, it is in form a historical novel without a particle of historical truth in it.

In defiance of all true history its sole purpose appears to be to inculcate falsehood, and, like Eugene Sue's infamous work, its chief purpose is to malign most grossly and vulgarly one of the most illustrious religious orders of the Catholic Church, the Jesuits; but Eugene Sue, notwithstanding his wicked intent, has the honesty to state in his preface that his history is purely imaginative.

This much honesty Marie Corelli lacks. She wishes her readers to believe that the Jesuits habitually inculcate murder, lying, perjury, and suicide, if these crimes will benefit their order, and all this under the hypocritical pretext that they are administering one of the most sacred of the rites of the Catholic Church, which was instituted by Christ Himself.

The Jesuits, we are told, "are bound to maintain in every particular the tenets of their order. No matter how vile, or how reprehensibly false their theories, they are compelled to carry on the work and propaganda of their union, despite all loss and sacrifice to themselves."

We shall not insult the intelligence of our readers by refuting this malicious nonsense, of which no proof is attempted further than the author's assertion. The mere fact that the assertion is made is sufficient to condemn the book as abominable.

"Dishonor waits on perfidy. The villain should blush to think a falsehood: 'Tis the crime of cowards." — C. JOHNSON.

In fact in every possible way is the Catholic Church maligned by the heroes of the tale. One of whom speaks of children, little girls who are being educated under Catholic influences, as "future traitresses of men—girls trained by priests to deceive their nearest and dearest." We have no doubt that it is because of the anti-

Catholic character of the work that it has been issued from the press of The Methodist Book Concern. This firm is willing, apparently, to propagate Atheism or any other ism, if it can only injure the Catholic faith. We say Atheism, because this novel is not merely anti-Catholic; it is Atheistic.

It is true that God is in several passages addressed as a real Being Whom we should reverence; but in the very opening of the book we are made to understand that God is but "a Power of Goodness and Beauty called by that name," and that by this "Power" the heavens and the earth were created.

This evidently means that God is no real Being, but is a necessary force to which Atheists give several names, as Nature, Force, Chance, or Evolution by the survival of the fittest. Another of these heroes speaks blasphemously of our Divine Redeemer as a "Socialist" and says that "the Christian Church itself has become a mere system of money-making and self-advancement"—this of the Church of which Christ said: "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it," and St. Paul, that it is "the pillar and ground of truth."

The chief heroine of the book, that personage whose every act is perfect, whose every word is wisdom, is the one who is suggestively explicit on this point. According to her, "God is a name merely,—but we give it to that Unseen but ever working FORCE which rules the Universe."

The heroes of the story are members of the "Revolutionary Committee," which consists one half of Anarchists, and the other half of Radicals, their most important meeting being on "the Day of Fate" when lots are drawn to decide who shall assassinate certain persons who are marked out for death because they are held to be "enemies of the people." Among them is "the king," who had himself joined the committee for the purpose of ascertaining the grievances of the people, and of redressing them. His royalty was unknown to his brother conspirators until the day of fate, when the lot of killing the king falls to himself, and he dramatically undertakes the task to which he and they were sworn. Then he reveals his identity, and finally it is decided that he is not like other Kings, but is at heart a friend of the people, and from conspirators who sought the King's life the brethren of the Revolution become ardently loyal. Thus the teaching of this book includes anarchy, murder, regicide. Is not such a book worthy of the strongest condemnation? And is not the Roman Congregation of the Index to be praised for warning the public not to expose themselves to the danger of having false principles instilled into them by such reading?

We have proved by the strictest reasoning all that we have asserted concerning the immoral tendency of this novel, except that it favors suicide. We will not throw around this crime the glamor with which Marie Corelli surrounds it by entering into details in regard to her treatment of this part of her subject. We shall only remark that two of the heroes of the book are made to commit suicide, and the third, the principal heroine, in order to save one of the others from the suspicion of a crime which has committed, so arranges the circumstances of her death as to leave it to be believed by the public that she too has committed suicide. She thus sanctifies this crime in the eyes of her readers.

A word now in regard to the force of the condemnation of a book by the Congregation of the Index. This Congregation (which may be regarded as a special standing Committee of the Church) was instituted by Pope Pius V. to guard the faithful from the danger of reading bad books, or books which may endanger faith or morals. It is the duty of our Holy Father to keep the lambs and sheep of Christ's flock committed to his care from poisonous pastures. For this purpose the Congregation was instituted, being composed of a number of Cardinals and learned theologians. The decrees of this Congregation oblige all Catholics, so that Catholics, whether lay or clerical, must not read books condemned by it, unless they have obtained permission from the same Congregation to do so. This permission is given only when the Sacred Congregation has been satisfactorily assured that the person obtaining it is so well instructed that he is not liable to perversion either in faith or morals, and also that it is needful that he should have this permission that he may be able to refute the errors and guard the faithful against the evil influences of bad literature.

Catholics should, therefore, not read such books as that of Marie Corelli on "The Temporal Power." There are plenty of useful books which may be read to advantage whether moral, historical, or scientific or even recreative, without resorting to those which en-

danger our salvation, and only such useful books should be read; for "he that loveth the danger shall perish in it."

ALTARS AND PRIESTS.

Liturgus, of Toronto, Ont., writes: "I have noticed in some English papers the statement that in the court circulars issued since King Edward VII. came to the throne, the words altar and priest are used for the first time since the Reformation, table and minister having been the words previously employed to express the same ideas. Will you kindly inform me through the columns of the CATHOLIC RECORD what is the real difference in the meaning of these words?"

Ans. The word minister is used by the Catholic Church to signify any one who takes part in the service of the altar. In this sense it may be used of the priest who celebrates the divine mysteries, or of those who assist him in this function, as the deacon, subdeacon, acolytes and others who assist in the celebration of Mass.

The word altar is derived from the Latin altare, which, in turn, comes from the two words alta ara—high altar.

In pagan times, many nations used altars placed on the summits of hills or in pleasant groves for the offering of sacrifices to the heavenly deities. The Greeks and Romans made the altars for the worship of their heavenly deities high, while the so-called infernal gods were worshipped on altars sunk in trenches. To the demigods, low altars were erected, and thus a distinction was made between the three kinds of worship.

The Hebrew equivalent of altar is mizbecha, which is derived from zebach, a slaughtered animal, and thence a sacrifice. Other words were used in this sense, but very rarely. The word mizbecha was, therefore, the usual word under the Mosaic Law to express the structure on which sacrifice was offered to God, so that an altar and a sacrifice were essentially connected with each other.

In the Greek Septuagint the Hebrew word is constantly translated thusiasterion which in turn is derived from thusia, a sacrifice. This Greek word is used for altar throughout the New Testament, and thus we see that an altar is always a structure on which sacrifice is offered, and where there is an altar there is necessarily a sacrifice. There must also be a person who offers the sacrifice. Under the Old Law this person was the priest, who alone was permitted to offer sacrifice.

Under the New Law, St. Paul shows the excellency of Christ's priesthood in these words: "We have such a High Priest who is set on the right hand of the throne of Majesty in the heavens . . . for every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices; wherefore it is of necessity that this man (Christ) have something also to offer." (Heb. viii. 1-3.)

Thus it is readily seen that the three words priest, altar, sacrifice, are co-relative and imply each other, so that where there is an altar or place of sacrifice, there is necessarily a priest who sacrifices, and a sacrifice offered by the priest, on the altar; and similarly with each of the three, where there is any one, the other two are implied to exist.

In Heb. xiii. 10 St. Paul says: "We have an altar whereof they have no right to eat who serve the tabernacle."

From this we justly infer that under the New Law there is a priesthood and a sacrifice of which the Jews who serve the tabernacle are not permitted to eat.

We have also the prophecy of Isaiah in regard to the conversion of the Gentiles to Christ: "In that day shall there be an altar of the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt. . . . And the Egyptians shall know the Lord in that day, and shall worship him with sacrifices and offerings."

With altars and sacrifices in Egypt, there must also be a priesthood. This is, therefore, a prophecy of the priesthood of the New Law.

In Isaiah xvi. 20-21 it is foretold that all nations shall serve God, and that "I will take of them to be priests and Levites saith the Lord." From this passage we may also infer that there is an altar and a sacrifice under the New Law.

The English word priest is derived from the Latin presbyter or the Greek presbiteros which signified originally a senior or elderly person, but which was afterward used to designate the Christian priesthood, equally with the Greek hieras and Latin sacerdos, all of which are used in the same sense.

In the Protestant Churches generally, as there was no sacrifice, there was neither priest nor altar, but the new clergy were called ministers, and, instead of an altar, a table was used for the so-called sacrament of "the Lord's Supper." The Church of England, however, retains the word priest in a few places of the book of Common Prayer, especially where priestly functions are claimed for the clergy, as in

the form of ordination, and in the order of visitation of the sick, where they are required to absolve the sick who confess their sins and are penitent for them. The recent adoption of the words priest and altar in the court circulars, as mentioned by our correspondent, has undoubtedly risen out of the fact that the doctrine of a Christian sacrifice has of late years been largely adopted in the Church of England.

MORE IRRELIGIOUS LEGISLATION PROPOSED IN FRANCE.

It is stated that a vigorous campaign is being carried on against a new project of law which Premier Combes has introduced into the French Chamber of Deputies whereby it is proposed to prohibit members of any religious order from giving instruction of any kind. Numerous protests have been set in to President Loubet against this measure. Nearly all the Bishops of France have sent in protests already, and in addition the people are also in great numbers signing protests to the same effect.

Cardinals Richard and Langenieux are the prime movers in this movement in favor of the religious orders, and it is said that even from many localities which have sent Deputies who support the Government of M. Combes, protests have been sent which were signed by a large majority of the people. This may be an indication that the irreligious policy of Premier Combes is distasteful to the people, but in view of the fact that the Government was so decisively sustained at the last general election we cannot feel sanguine that there is any considerable reaction against the Government's policy now, however much we may hope that this is the case.

If there is such a reaction, the people should manifest it in other ways than to protest against anti-religious legislation. They should send to the Chamber Deputies who will not pass such legislation, and this can be done only at the polls when the elections take place.

It is said that M. Combes will not be diverted from his purpose of passing the iniquitous new measure, so the issue will be distinct, and if Catholic sentiment is still really dominant in the nation, it ought to show itself unmistakably when it is thus openly set at defiance. We can hardly suppose that there will be any change for the better until a new election will take place.

On the other hand, there are rumors to the effect that there are indications of a better understanding between the rulers of France and the Holy See. It is said that the difficulty in regard to the appointment of French Bishops has been solved, though the exact terms of the agreement arrived at have not been made known to the public. It is certain also that though the extreme Socialists are endeavoring to destroy the Concordat, and also to break up the Papal nunciature at Paris, the Government have so far refused to take any steps in this direction. The reason for this may be that the Government hopes that by retaining these forms of agreement with the Vatican, which gives better enslave the Church, which gives many evidences of a spirit of independence which is not at all agreeable to the Government. The present state of affairs cannot last much longer, as the relations of the Church and State cannot endure much more the present strain which threatens to result in an irreparable rupture.

THE FILIPINO SCHISM.

Shortly after the establishment of American rule on the Island of Luzon, much stress was laid by the anti-Catholic press of the United States on the fact that a certain priest named Father Aglipay had succeeded in gathering round him a number of discontented priests and troublesome laymen who formed themselves into a Filipino Independent or National Church. It was taken for granted that this organization would wean the Filipinos from the Pope and the Catholic Church, and that in this way the population of the islands would gradually cease to become Catholics and end by becoming Protestants.

There is no doubt that there is an anti-Catholic party among the Filipinos and this party endeavored to blacken in every way the character of the Friars who for four hundred years have spent themselves in educating and civilizing the Filipinos, who are the only Malaysians who ever yet have become Christianized; and the work has been so well accomplished that the Filipinos are now nearly all Catholics. Those who have remained Pagans and Mahometans form a nucleus for an anti-Catholic party, and by joining with these politically, discontented Catholics were able to create some disturbance among the people, and the cession of the islands by Spain to the victorious Americans was a sufficient opportunity for these malcontents to raise an outcry against the clergy, and to start the movement for an independ-

ent Church, that is to say, for a Church independent of the Pope.

Father Aglipay was by no means a model priest, but was of a turbulent and rebellious disposition, and during the war carried on by the Americans to put down the Filipinos who were fighting for independence, he sided with the Filipino leader, Aguinaldo, and even laid aside his clerical robes, and became one of Aguinaldo's generals. Aguinaldo, to retain him on his side named him "military Vicar General," and by virtue of this usurped authority, after Aguinaldo's capture, was enabled to palm himself upon Governor Taft, as a friend to the Americans, and in fact he aided Governor Taft in establishing civil government among the Ilicanos.

Governor Taft recently declared in an interview with a reporter of the New Century of Washington that in taking Father Aglipay with him, he had no intention to encourage in any way the establishment of a National Independent Church, and, indeed, it was not till after the return of the Governor from Rome that the schismatic movement was undertaken by Aglipay, and it was the agitation on the part of a section of the people against the Friars which gave the National Church movement some prominence. The Governor says, further, that the Aglipay schismatic movement is, in his opinion, on the ebb, and that the efforts of the Aglipay party to obtain some of the Church property are not likely to be successful.

From other sources we learn that the Aglipay schism never had more than about six thousand adherents, and the number is rapidly diminishing. We have no doubt its fate will be like that of the Old Catholic schism, which Bismarck wished to use in order to destroy the Catholic Church in Germany. The Old Catholicism has disappeared, and the Filipino schism of Aglipay will soon disappear also, leaving not a trace behind. The appointment of Monsigneur Guidi as Apostolic Delegate to the Islands has contributed very greatly towards removing all causes of discontent, and Governor Taft said that the Catholic Church is much stronger there because of his sagacity and prudence.

THE WAR IN THE FAR EAST.

Since our last week's report of the progress of the war, the belligerents have been very secret in regard to war news. The Czar has indeed declared by a decree that the true condition of affairs will be made public without any concealment; but as a matter of fact there has been concealment. To this date, the full truthful account of the destruction of Russian vessels at Port Arthur by the Japanese fleet has not been given out by either belligerent, and it is only from what has been told from other sources that the facts as we have already stated them were gleaned. Admiral Alexief has constantly asserted that the vessels which were injured would be able to resume work within a few days, or at most within a fortnight after the injuries were inflicted; but more than three weeks have elapsed, and there is no likelihood that the damages will be repaired for many weeks, if it can be done at all. There is no dry dock at Port Arthur, and it is said that there is a plan to build one at once, but this will require time, the more especially as efficient engineers are said not to be on hand to undertake such a work at once. Engineers must therefore be brought from Vladivostok, or some other point before the work can be done.

The Japanese have made several new attacks upon Port Arthur, but not with the success of their first onslaught. The number of attacks so far have been five. On the 24th of February a desperate attempt was made to battle up the Russian fleet within the harbor by sinking heavily laden transports at the entrance. These steamers were prematurely sunk by the batteries and the guns of the Retzkyan, which even in its disabled condition was able to render good service as a battery. Other reports state that though the Japanese did not succeed in closing the harbor against small vessels, they did succeed in making it impracticable for large battleships to enter. The Russians claim that the fighting on this occasion was a decisive victory for them. It was a dubious victory in reality, and certainly it was not of such magnitude as the Japanese victories of the 8th and 9th of the month. The harbor is 500 yards at the entrance where it was hoped to sink the merchant vessels.

It is stated as an evidence of the marvellous courage displayed by the Japanese, that their officers rival each other in zeal to obtain positions on the torpedo boats which have been of so much utility in the attacks made on the Russian fleet. These torpedo boats must approach the vessel they attack within 1,000 yards to be effective, and they are so frail that at close range a rifle bullet will penetrate them; but they are capable of so great a speed that the gunners are perplexed to turn their guns rapidly enough to take aim against them, as they are able to go around the battleships at the rate of 35 miles an hour. It is, however, the most dangerous post to which a sailor can be

assigned, when the vessel is discharging a warship, largest vessel.

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