

The Catholic Record.

"Christianus mihi nomen est, Catholicus vero Cognomen."—(Christian is my Name, but Catholic my Surname.)—St. Faclan, 4th Century.

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THE CHURCH AND SCIENCE.

In analyzing the imaginary antagonism between Church and Science, W. H. Mallock declared in 1900 that "if the Christian religion holds its own at all in the face of secular knowledge it is the Christian religion as embodied in the Church of Rome, and not in any form of Protestantism, that will survive in the intellectual contest." That forecast is becoming more apparent every day. We remember that when the evolutionary philosophy attracted attention some individuals predicted that it would cause the downfall of Rome. Rome, however, still stands, and the seers are more chary of utterance.

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE.

It is amusing to observe the seriousness with which Christian Science is treated by some writers. They handle it gently, and their non-committal statements lead one to imagine that, after all, there must be something in it. But Christian Science, as set forth by its venerable authoress, is merely a verbal nightmare—a medley of absurdities. Back in the eighteenth century when men were not given to the fathering of every speculative change they would have laughed it out of existence.

THE PRESENT AGE.

If there is one thing more than another trying to one's nerves, in hot weather especially, it is the fulsome laudation of present day conditions. Our age has undoubtedly many claims to our admiration, but they should not be allowed to lead us into meaningless eulogy. We have our defects, and our civilization, though bedizened with twentieth century trappings, is not the great and glorious thing described by the journalist and platform orator. And we are sure that with a little of the sturdiness of past ages in matters of faith, of their reverence for authority, of their accuracy in statement and sane views of life's duties, our everlasting repetition of superlatives might have some justification.

CHILDREN AND THE STAGE.

Sometime ago we had something to say about youngsters on the stage. They generally make their appearance at entertainments for some charity or other, and are duly hailed by an audience of delighted "mamas." It gives them self-possession and develops a talent for public speaking. And then the worthy object, you know! It never seems to strike that kind of a parent that the object could be helped just as well by the money, for instance, that is expended on the stage-dress of their precocious offspring. Of one thing, however, we are persuaded—that stage-appearances should have no place in the upbringing of children. When they come to maturity they can turn their attention to various spheres of idocy, but in their early years they ought to be safe guarded from influences that may, and oftentimes do, hurt mind and soul.

THE CHURCH AND EDUCATION.

Now that meetings of educators are being held in different sections of the country, Catholics should look up their educational record. Too often we allow the public to be beguiled into believing that we have no part in the educational progress of the day and that modern methods of pedagogy are due to Protestantism. We hear that Luther evinced the greatest respect for the school teacher and interest in the education of the young. We do not deny it; but Luther's ideas about education were gleaned from his Augustinian teachers. All that he advocated in this matter had been in vogue for centuries before him. We hear also much of Froebel, and little if anything at all of St. de la Salle. We should remember that the Catholic system has been in evidence for years and has never at any stage of the world's history been proved valueless. To it are linked the educational glories of the

past; and the future, if we are but obedient to the voice of the Church, shall give further proof of its truth and excellence. In fact it is the only system. President Hadley of Yale came very near admitting it a short time ago, and thoughtful men are beginning to see that there must be something wrong with the opposing system that turns out annually a crop of mental dyspeptics, and worse, and that presumes to teach ethics without God and psychology without the human soul.

CHRISTIAN SCIENCEISM.

N. Y. Freeman's Journal.
Elsewhere we give Mr. McCrackan's short statement of Christian Science principles, as he understands them. With all due respect, we must say that we find in it that same indefiniteness that we have found in the writings of the founder of Christian Scienceism and other exponents of its doctrines. Owing to this indefiniteness it is impossible to get a clear apprehension of the system as a whole. This makes it necessary, in criticizing, to deal with isolated statements rather than with propositions or doctrines as coherent, constituent parts of a complete system. Every branch, twig, leaf, bud, flower and fruit of a true system of philosophy or religion should be so correlated that one starting from any given point can follow from leaf to twig, from twig to branch, from branch to trunk, and from trunk to root, or ultimately truth, on which the system rests. The absence of such coherence and correlation between the constituent parts of a system is demonstrative of its fallacy. Such correlation and coherence of doctrines we find not in Christian Science as presented by its expounders. On the contrary, we find a congeries of vague, non-consistent, incompatible doctrines, sometimes as incomprehensible and obscure as Delphic oracles, and at other times as inflated and inflated manner of speech well calculated to affect those who are inclined to follow the impulses of sentiment rather than the dictates of reason.

Yielding to the necessity of dealing with isolated propositions rather than with the system as a whole, we will now make some comments on Mr. McCrackan's short exposition. We have numbered his paragraphs, for the sake of convenience or reference.

(1) "This ulterior principle (of Christian Science) is a proper understanding of the nature of God."

But who is to determine what is the proper understanding of the nature of God? You will observe that your ulterior principle begins the whole question, for it assumes that the world, with all its inspired prophets, its theologians and philosophers, had no proper understanding of the nature of God until an old lady up in New England discovered it. A principle resting on such a basis is only as strong as the authority it rests on, and that authority is not enough to determine the belief of reasoning men. This old lady does not, like Joe Smith, claim to be inspired of God with a new revelation; she claims to be the discoverer of a new or heretofore unknown truth in religion and philosophy, and thus invites comparison between her intellect and the master minds of the past. This is courageous, and, if courage were the criterion of truth, it would be a strong point in favor of Christian Science.

(2) A truth discovered by reason—as Christian Science claims to be—should be demonstrable to reason. Mr. McCrackan seems to recognize that it is not demonstrable to reason when he says: "No amount of theorizing (by which we assume he means reasoning) can make any one a Christian Scientist; only those who can bring out results from his teachings in their daily lives can say that they really understand it."

This politely bows reason out of the field of investigation. It also makes the conditions of knowledge too difficult to require that a man in order to know certain doctrines say yet unknown to him, must first put said unknown doctrines into practice before he can know them. That is certainly to acquire knowledge under difficulties. A system that involves such an absurdity has little to recommend it.

It is true, as Mr. McCrackan observes, that there is a difficulty in explaining supernatural truths when one has nothing but words to do it with. But this difficulty has not prevented Christian theologians and philosophers from stating clearly, definitely and intelligibly their understanding of those truths. Whether you agree with them or not, you may know very distinctly the points of agreement or difference. In this they differ widely from the expounders of Christian Science who seem unable or unwilling to formulate their doctrines so that the investigator can clearly determine what they mean. In this consists the greatest difficulty in dealing with them.

(3) "All men have deeply implanted in their nature a faith in some first cause or some controlling power." This appeal to the common sense and belief of mankind is valid, in our judgment, to prove the existence of a first cause. But the Christian Scientist cannot use it with recognizing the con-

vincing force of this equally true proposition: All men have deeply and irradically implanted in their nature a conviction that the external, physical world about them exists. And thus the common sense and belief of mankind contradict the teaching of Christian Science, that nothing exists but mind or spirit. If the voice of the human race is valid, as it most certainly is, to prove the existence of a first cause it is equally valid in proving, against the Christian Scientist, the real external existence of this world of matter. He must, then, either decline the use of the voice of that cause or accept the reality of the material world, and cease to be a Christian Scientist. He may not accept that voice when it affirms a truth that chimes with a doctrine held by him in common with the rest of men, and reject it when its affirmations contradict peculiar doctrines held by himself alone.

Mr. McCrackan misrepresents Christian belief when he says the Christian concept of God is that He is subject to limitations of outline and form: "In other words, a man-made God has been manufactured to satisfy a limited human concept." Those who complain so dolefully of being the victims of misrepresentation should be very careful when they attempt to state the beliefs of others. We need not stop here to give the Christian conception of God. If Mr. McCrackan does not know it—and, judging from what he has just said, he does not—we advise him to consult some Catholic theological work that treats of the subject.

(4) "Christian Science teaches that God is spirit or mind."

To be definite this statement should be: God is a spirit or mind. Without the article unity and individuality are not affirmed. If the absence of the article is intended to indicate a denial of unity and individuality, we have on this head no particular fault to find with the definition. But what does the Christian Scientist mean by "spirit or mind?" The truth of his definition of God depends on his answer to this question. Does he mean by mind what Hobbes and Huxley—who he quotes approvingly—meant by it? Huxley says: "What we call mind is nothing but a heap or collection of different perceptions united together by certain relations." If the Christian Scientist believes with Huxley that mind is a mere heap or collection of perceptions, then in defining God as mind he means that God is a mere heap or collection of perceptions. Does Mr. McCrackan mean to say that God is that and nothing more?

When he says, "God is spirit," does he mean one absolutely and infinitely perfect spirit who is the creator of all? If so, his definition is right, but it gives Christians no information they had not before Christian Science was exegecrated.

(5) "God made man by his own image and likeness, then he must be spiritual, etc."

The same Scriptures that tell us that God made man to his own image and likeness, tell us further how He made him. "And the Lord formed man of the slime of the earth, and breathed into his face the breath of life and man became a living soul." (Gen. II., 7.)

The text affirms what Christian Science denies, namely, that man's body is material and real. Man is like unto God because his soul will never cease to be, and because it is endowed with intelligence and free will.

The Christian Scientists refer to the Scriptures with muchunction, but they pay no attention to the texts that contradict them.

(6 and 7) In the first chapter of the Bible we are told that "God created the heaven and the earth." God called the dry land earth, and the gathering together of the waters He called seas, and God saw that it was good."

Your science teaches that these things, which God created and saw was good, are not real, that they are delusions, the result of mental error, and therefore not good. To prove their unreality you quote Huxley. But this same Huxley denies the reality of mind as a thinking entity. See his definition of mind, which we have quoted above. Now, if the word of this foremost of natural scientists is a strong enough argument to prove the non-existence of mind, the matter, it is equally strong to prove the non-existence of the foundation of Christian Science is gone; for it teaches that mind, and mind only, exists. And yet you boast that you are abreast with this agnostic! As for Grant Allen, he gives no reason for his dogmatic statement. If he knows no more about matter than he knows about flowers—about which he wrote a book—his opinion is of no importance.

Under the scientific hands of Father Gerard, S. J., who reviewed his "Flowers and Their Pedigrees," he became a laughing stock to the wise, and a warning to ignorant would-be authors.

Here we must adjourn to give the patient reader a rest, and leave the remaining paragraphs of Mr. McCrackan's article for future consideration.

Let us so live as to be an inspiration, strength, and blessing to those whose lives are touched by ours.—Aton.

THE SECTS AND SECRET SOCIETIES.

Of the drift toward, as manifested by the general proneness of several Protestant denominations in their attitude on important questions, on no other point possibly is there such a complete nullification of their previous position as in the view with which the sects are coming to regard secret societies.

These have been as the apple of the eye to Protestantism. Secret societies have been cherished and fostered under the wing of reformers. Ministers have joined the fraternity and invited and urged others to do so. And if their motive for doing so is not sufficiently grounded in the declarations of benevolence and the professions of brotherhood which these societies make, then it may be found in the antagonism which the Catholic Church has ever directed toward these societies and in the kindred feeling which they returned. There was no danger to be feared from the secret societies which the Church so urgently opposed as to forbid under penalty of excommunication their children from joining any of them.

The Church must fear them, and therefore to injure the Church, to make war most effectively upon her, the best way was to strengthen these societies. This has been done, and today in this country the various secret societies have a large and constantly growing membership, and it is not too much to say that in power and influence they far surpass the Protestant churches.

Those denominations which fostered and protected them in their birth stand in dread of them and fear their rivalry. And well they might, for to many men the lodge comes before and even supersedes entirely the house of worship to which he has affiliated himself or is expected by virtue of his antecedents to do so.

There is something in the composition of man, or many of him at any rate, which calls for fuss and feathers. There is less of ceremony about the untutored savage than man in a higher state, and yet even the savage is not without this propensity.

The father one goes in the scale of civilization and the higher in the social scale, the more is the longing for ceremony apparent.

Solemn and imposing ceremonies appeal to the heart of man and from the simplest and least ceremonious, there is no rooting out this attribute.

Ceremony is natural where there are different states, different degrees. The inferior feels his inferiority to the superior and must needs express it in his demeanor and actions. The superior on his part, however small his superiority, demands outward expression of the reverence due him, and insists upon having it rendered.

Thus man employed ceremonies and rites to render his homage to his Creator. The heathen and barbarian who have lost it center what little ceremony they are capable of around their material idols. Jews and Catholics of whatever rite, by command of God Himself or His Church, are faithful to the liturgy prescribed for them.

The beautiful and imposing ceremony of the Church, founded on revelation and reason, having deep and mystical meanings, have held the admiration of men and touched their hearts throughout the centuries. By the reforms however, they cast away the Romish superstitions, and the plainest liturgy has now been a brilliant success.

Men have perceived the hollowness of it all—as indeed they would perceive the hollowness of the Church's ceremonies if the true faith and right worship were not enshrined therein.

The secret societies have rituals more or less elaborate and their ceremonies invented by men lacquer over for the while the cant of the phrasing about brotherhood of men, etc., which really constitutes a sort of religion, the only one to which many yield any allegiance. Men who are addicted to the lodgeroom are lost to Protestantism. The glamour of it all entices and the attractions by which they are drawn their churches cannot equal. They have gone about as well as is possible consistent with decency and still fall of doing so. The Church's attitude toward such societies has been consistent, and calls for no regrets. To the Catholic the Church will always have the prior claim, and organizations of mere men are useful only so far as they serve the purposes for which they are organized, and around which the Church as a Mother has thrown the mantle of her protection and favor.—Baltimore Mirror.

The plants of all ages have loved gardens. Near every religious house you are sure to find some nook holding odoriferous herbs or bright blossoms. St. Francis of Assisi directed his followers to reserve a sunny spot near each convent for gay and fragrant flowers. Joan of Arc heard the "voices" in a garden; and in a garden our Blessed Lady walked, pressing under her feet a scentless weed, the odoriferous mignonne forever after.—Louisa May Dalton.

FATHER SPENCER'S PLAN.

It is related of Father Ignatius Spencer, the convert and Passionist, that he formed a plan for converting England to the true faith once more by making the Irish people saints. He believed, that is, in the force not of good example only, but of exceptional and united good example. Underneath this thought, however, lay one dearer to his heart and more intimate still,—that God shall reign absolute sovereign, visibly and without opposition, over the world He made. This is the meaning of the broken and Sacred Heart of Christ, and of His cry on the cross, "I thirst." The brave and intensely chivalric soul of Father Spencer actually believed that this result could be brought about practically, as men strive to bring to a successful and openly profess our faith, re-proclaim before the world our actual, existing bond of union with the great head of the Church at Rome. By our visits to the Blessed Sacrament, by our frequent thought of the Sacred Heart pierced by men's sins, yet still loving the sinner, by our acts of adoring love and our prayers to become in our own hearts more like to the Heart of Jesus, by our yearning desires that everybody—not only our nearest and dearest, but everybody—may be saved and may be saints, and that thus the thirst of Jesus may be satisfied, we are helping on the coming of Christ's kingdom.

But deeply under all, that coming must begin with ourselves. The natural must yield utterly by the supernatural. We may have said hopelessly, "I can not conquer this or that," but we must conquer, in the strength of Jesus Christ. If we would convert the United States or the world, or one soul, to Jesus Christ, we must join the strong weapon of believing and continuous prayer to that of saintly example. Do we Catholics often enough ask ourselves, individually, the searching questions: Am I so living that those outside the Church would wish to join her even so much as care whether they become Catholics at all? Alas again! do we care one whit whether we ourselves are saints or not and set a holy example or not, in comparison with the gaining some worldly end, some social success, some temporal pleasure? Do we know with real personal knowledge what it is to thirst for the salvation of a human soul, much less for all the world? There is much room among us, and much need, to-day, for Father Spencer's plan to be tried among Catholics in the United States.—Sacred Heart Review.

The Convert.
From "Fifty Years of Catholic Progress in England," by Percy Fitzgerald.

"The convert!" How lightly is that little word spoken, as though signifying merely the passage from one church to another! But how much it stands for! For what agonizing wrestlings and torture of mind, unseen and unknown! What rendings and bendings of the conscience! What struggles and calls long resisted and finally obeyed! What tearing of the heartstrings! How awful and almost cruel disregard of family ties and interests—the light and truth having to be purchased often at the sacrifice of all that is dearest in the world! How many a noble soul—say some vicar or curate—has had to go through the agony of witnessing the tears and miseries of wife and little children, whom he was leading away to privation and starvation! What could be finer than that martyrdom—that seeling of conviction by such sacrifice?

THE BOY MONKS.

How They Were Trained in the Middle Ages.

How did the monks civilize the rough sons of the North? They knew that the boy is father to the man, that one generation of mortal men gives place to another. When the task of trying to wean the old worshippers of Thor and Wodan from their superstitions proved too difficult even for a son of St. Benedict, he cast his eye on the little heathen children, whose gulleless souls were still easily impressible and could not but feel drawn by the teaching of Him who became a child for us and all through His life loved little children, and bade them come to Him and would have become as like unto them. We need not therefore be surprised when we read of the Boy Monks of the Middle Ages, for the step from receiving into the monasteries, and instructing the little Gobbs and Franks and Saxons and Lombards and making them full-fledged religious, with vows taken by proxy, was but a short one. Infant baptism was a precedent in point. If a sponsor could contract the solemn vows of baptism in the name of the speechless babe, why could not the same be done for the vows of religion? The practice, though not unlawful, was, of course, imprudent and therefore forbidden by the Church in later times.

How did those little monks spend their time in the cloister? We have only to turn over the pages of the old chronicles, and read the histories of such men as Walafrid Strabo, Abbot of Reichenau, who was brought to the monastery when he could just talk, or of St. Boniface, who joined the sedate ranks of the Saxon Benedictines at the age of five, or of St. Bode, who went to the school of Wearmouth at seven, or of St. Paul of Verdun, who passed from the cradle to the cloister, to see the beautiful side of that infant cloister life and, at the same time, get a glimpse at the educational system of the Benedictines.

Clothed in their tiny hooded gowns, the little Benedictines would imitate all day the actions of their elder confreres. They would sit in choir, go to the dining hall and to the recreation grounds with them, and when the hours for study came, some learned brother would teach them their letters. The first text book was not a picture book about cat and dog and bird, but the Psalter for book of the Psalms. The one hundred and fifty glorious songs of David and the other Hebrew lyrics had to be "conned by rote." This had been the common practice among the faithful from the days of Basil and Jerome. In the tenth century we read of Helvidia, the mother of St. Leo IX., exacting a daily lesson in the Psalms from her children. After the Psalter had been mastered, the curriculum of the Seven Liberal Arts was begun by a careful study of Grammar.

AN HOUR WITH GOD.

There are many so-called Catholics who complain that they are so occupied in the struggle for a livelihood that they have no time for morning or evening prayer and no time for the holy sacrifice of the Mass on Sunday. They know nothing of the uplifting still hour alone with God. And yet those who daily find time to attend the Mass or make some short visit to the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass or make some short visit to the Blessed Sacrament will assure you that it is the sweetest and best part of their day.

The young Catholic should make it a fixed rule of his life to find time for a still half hour in which to be alone with God every day of his life. It is well to let this half hour if possible be at the Holy Sacrifice, of the Mass, which is early in the day that the certain strength and helpfulness to be derived from this communion with God may carry you through the trials and duties of the day. It will be easier to fix your thoughts upon the theme you choose when both body and mind are refreshed and alert. It is not easy at all times to concentrate on's thoughts on holy objects. The human mind is a wandering, vagrant thing at best and difficult to keep in subjection. The power of the world is mighty over it and it is easier to think of things divine. But if you will do it you will fix your thoughts upon Jesus in the Sacrament for a little time every day of our lives. You can have your half hour or at least a few minutes every day alone with Jesus.

No one rises to the loftiest heights of spiritual exaltation without a little time alone with God. No great blessings or victories come to those who never have time. Meditate on Jesus, that your actual work for Him may be under His guidance. It is only through meditation upon Him that God seems real and actual to us.—Weekley Bouquet.

We never know how rotten the tree is until it falls, nor how unstable the wall until it crumbles. And so in the moral nature of men, subtle forces eat their way silently and imperceptibly to the very centre.—Charles F. G. S.