AGNOSTICISM AND THE CHURCH.

BY REV. GEORGE J. LUCAS, D. D. (Delivered before the Catholic Summer School,

Aug. 15.) The three main branches of knowl

edge are God, the Universe, we our-selves. Does God exist? God, the though silently, all the way up the ages, and, despite innumerable diffi-Supreme Being, whom we conceive as the fount of all life and love; God, culties, making the world democratic and which will make it entirely democratic before the twentieth and twenty. who fashioned us, and whom we expect to see in the blessedness of an en-during life, does God exist ? or, is His name but a hollow sound, mocking all first centuries shall have been rolled on the wheel of time. For democracy alone is true liberty, and in true liberty alone can the Church of God move with full untramthe desires of my heart, and my hopes for the future? The Agnostic replies, I know not. The Universe, this arms a thousand suns, does it exist? there is humanity. She product is the arms of the second suns is the second suns in the second suns is the second suns is the second sum of the second sum were men, there were hardens, how there is humanity. She proclaims the principle of equal rights to all, and she inaugurates a new civilization. She proclaims the law of liberty, of conscience; not the State, but God, is or is it a mere creation of my fancy, having no substance outside the walls of my imagination? The Agnostic again answers, I know not. Do we ourselves exist? Are we live flesh the supreme rule of right and wrong, and blood, or are we but spectres of our own minds, mere bodily shapes, and nothing more? The Agnostic here again makes answer, I know not, and she inaugurates a new religiou civilization. Three centuries of silent prayer in the Catacombs, three centur ing to heaven, not for vengeance, but for mercy, and the triple blessing of and, what is more, I never can know. Between him and this knowledge there is an impassable chasm, which he can never hope to cross. As far as he may venture to offer an opinion, however, those three important objects are but the mind's images, pictures painted on

our own imaginings. "Strange phantoms rising as the mists arise."

WONDROUS ACHIEVEMENTS OF SCIENCE. Church implanted in modern society Physical scientists have conquered this century by the magnificence of their triumphs in the study of matter. fancy of progress, and yet it thought itself at the height of all human en-Their spectroscopes have revealed the constituent elements of suns and stars. Their geological surveys have shown is perfect, complete, stationary ; it built its temples, chiselled its statues, written clearly on the rocks the history of life from the eozoon up to man. Their telescopes have surprised, in the milky way, planets in the very process neither in philosophy, nor in poetry, Their microscopes have of creation. brought the invisible within the range of vision. They have gone abroad through the physical universe, weighing, measuring, analyzing, foretell-ing, and they have begun to feel as if nothing could be hid from the instru-ments of their research. This is de serving of our highest gratitude no less than of our unbounded admiration. But exclusive attention to any pursuit has a tendency to narrow a man's sympathies. Men who spend their entire lives in exclusive, or almost exclusive, devotion to investigating the properties of matter, are, if they breathe an irreligious atmosphere, very apt to forget that there is anything else. "We have swept the agnostic astronomers, "and have not found a God." "We have searched found a trou. If the incroscopes, "re-mark the agnostic physiologists, " and have not found a soul." "We discern in matter," wrote Prof. Tyndall, "the promise and potency of all terrestrial life." In a word, all things are mat-

ter, or the products of matter, and the existence of God is a superfluous hypo-

It is unnecessary to remark that the discoveries of science have nothing to do with such teachings as these. We find Christian, God-believing, Godtearing men in the foremost ranks of the scientists of to-day ; yet, in face of this fact, the agnostic prophets conjure up the antique and wrinkled spirit of Agnosticism from its Grecian tomb, where it lay two thousand years at rest, and arrayed it in the youthful and jewelled garments of Modern Science, and presented it to living men as the young and potent goddess which has dethroned Christianity and all forms of religious belief.

HOLLOWNESS OF MATERIALISM.

THE CATHOLIC RECORD

it, may the torch of light be dashed morally hideous. To the proud, imperious and corrupt city she proclaims the unwelcome, the "un - Roman," principle of universal brotherhood, from her hand, and may she be stricken by her enemies.

and a new political civilization is in-

Three centuries of silent

es of holocausts of martyrs' blood, cry

political, social and religious civiliza

THE GREAT AUTHOR OF PROGRESS

But this three fold civilization would

have been incomplete had not the

the mighty principle oi progress. The empire of the Cæsars was but in the in-

deavor. In the pagan civilization all

wrote its poems, and considered them as ideal. The Christian civilization,

nor in art, has anything which it con-siders conplete. "Be ye perfect as your Heavenly Father is perfect."

The ancient civilization cannot rise

above the earth, it defies its heroes, but

it cannot give them higher than earth

nothing higher than the earth to offer,

infinite aspirations, its motto is ever

excelsior ! as it passes through the vil-

The Church has impressed its image

on the modern world-or rather Jesus Christ, the great civilizer, the great

author of progress-has impressed His

THE CHURCH IMPERISHABLE.

fall around her and decay, we are

compelled to ask what has given her

able, permanent among the fleeting, unwrinkled by time? Why can you

single her out among things human, why has she alone the marks of im-

The Church is eternal and indis-

tructible because she is of God. She

stroy the Church it would be necessary

And as we contemplate this singular

image on it through her.

The

the new civilization has heaven.

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DETHRONEMENT OF UNREASON. But the lips of agnosticism have augurated-a civilization in principle been struck dumb. Those mighty doctrines that she heralded with so democratic which has been constantly, much pomp and power, with such scientific infallibility, have fallen into scientific disgrace. The anti Biblicanantiquity of our race, the Darwinian theory of evolution, and the Simian origin of man, these with the other agnostic tenets, have all receded before the search-light of the most recent investigations of science. Agnosti cism, the theory of the supreme un reason of the universe, the Goddess of unreason is dethroned : the sceptre is taken from her brow, the royal gar-ments are stripped of her shoulders,

and now we see her as she is, a miser able picture of moral and scientific poverty, a bundle of vain conjectures, wild assumptions, and empty prophe Agnosticism enters into history as a failure. Looking at the present as it emerges from the agnostic struggle, there exists the ominous fact that out-side the Church of the many millions of our population but one in ten are church goers—that is, practical Chris tians. Agnosticism is gone, but it has left this wreck behind it. Except in the Church, the Christian word is contion and liberty, which we enjoy in such full, unstinted measure to day descended from heaven and erected a perpetual dwelling place in the hearts vulsed, has lost its moorings, and al

ready is trembling

ON THE BRINK OF UNBELIEF.

And to increase the calamity we see respectable divines, who should be the pillars of the creeds they profess, sap the very foundations out of Christian-ity. The divinity of Christ, the effiity. cacy of the sacraments, the inspiration of the Bible, and all the other sacred truths, without which religion is rendered meaaingless, we find distin-guished Christian teachers denying every day. Novelty is the fashion of the hour : men wear their religion as they wear their clothes ; the latest sensation becomes the latest style, and men are tossed on every popular wind and do not know what to believe.

RELIGION OF THE FUTURE.

Mr. Holmes, in his "Professor at the Breakfast Table," remarks: "The Its demi-gods are away in the good, the true, the intelligent men around us know that the active mind Elysian fields, crowned, rewarded, but unhappy. Achilles longs to return to earth, he pines after his lost strength, of the age is tending more and more to the two poles, Rome and Reason." his ancient prowess. He is only a shade, and all the deified heroes are Mr Holmes utters half a truth. Roman Christianity snall be the religion of the only shades. Ancient civilization has future. But Rome is not the opposite pole of Reason ; Rome and Unreason pagan civilization was cloyed and sat-isfied; the Christian civilization has are the poles.

Roman Christianity shall be the re-ligion of the future, for no people, much less Americans, want creeds that change; they want the unchanging truth as Christ Himself uttered it. No people, much less Americans, want creeds that are shocked by agnosticism or the other "isms." They want the Christianity that is built on the rock-the rock that withstands the dashings of the waves and the rushings of the and unique spectacle of the church marching up the ages, ever triumph ant, ever radiant, ever beautiful, as empires and nations, creeds and kings winds of all the "isms" that may come. No people, much less Americans, want their churches to teach them politics. The calm, independent silence of the Church in the last Presidential election was an object lesson that struck every thinking man this immortal youth? Why is she alone living among the dying and the dead? Why is she alone imperish-

The universal tendency to Christian unity augurs one future Church. Amidst the changing, decaying Christian creeds the unchanging, undecay ing vitality of the Church singles her out, so that he who runs may read, as

the GLORIOUS CHURCH OF THE FUTURE. The Church is the stay of the present and the hope of the future. Some carries God in her arms, and she alone twenty-five years ago it was taken for can give Him to humanity. To de-



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Fourteenth Sunday TRUSTIN

SEPTEMBER

" Ee not arxious, th shall we eat, or what s with shall we be clothe things the heathen see Father knoweth that y things." (St. Matt. vi

We are the chil brethren. From th the sun until this C us up and His stre We are His b 118. tism we have becom brothers of Jesus been called to a su have been offered ward-nothing les God has dealt ter mercies have neve has shown indeed

Have we not eve confidence in Him in His hands with When has When has He de times-too many t been unfaithful to faithful " always. safe places wherein in peace, and He things needful for Yet we are not alv

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for so little, so at the passing hour prudence, so rich so poor in real might know a lit God gives to thos in Him, and not i deed, you must, make the having and name your en strength, your li to feel the greate from your good gives ; it is God He gives and soul's sake. Clo your minds : let hearts ; let His h something of His of the sweetness, ness, of the Son o young," sings D old, and have n saken nor his se

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meddlesome nei

girl of fourteen who had been addicted to reading these vile sheets and gloating over their atrocious illustrations, For particulars apply to left a note addressed to her mother, in which she said she was going to Jersey City to drown herself. She was in-duced to do this by seeing a new spaper picture of a young girl suicide. note, of course, caused great uneasi ness in the minds of her father and mother, who sought high and low for her. The aid of the police was also invoked, and a general alarm was sent out. The cause of all this trouble was eventally found in the cellar of the house, where she had been hiding for twelve hours. A "yellow journal printed a story a column long of her supposed suicide, in which, according to the New York Sun, it quoted her "last words to a playmate," described her as " one who had pondered on the pros and cons of existence," spoke of her "terrible resolve" and told how she wrote out "ther tragic message, and then folded it up and went out into the night." In concluded its sickening pathos with the query : "Did she go to her death ?" SOULANGES CANAL. NOTICE TO CONTRACTORS. This gave the girl just what she want SEATED TENDERS, addressed to the un-dersigned, and endorsed, "Teader for Lock Gates," will be received at this office anti sixteen o'clock on the 14th day of Sep-tember, 1897, for the construction and setting ed-notoriety, and with the account was given what purported to be a picgranted that she was an effete, mediture of the little pretender. The dime aval superstition, and men would novels, no doubt, are a great cause of sooner turn their eyes for the true demoralization among boys and girls, tember, 197, for the construction and setting up to working order of sixteen pairs of Lock Gates. Plans and specifications of the work can be seen on and after the 6th day of Septem-ber, 187, at the office of the Chief Engineer of the Department of Railways and Canals, to tawa. Printed forms of tender can also be obtained at the place named. In the cave of firms there must be attach-ed to the tender the actual signatures of the full name, the nature of the occupation and residence of each member of the same, and further, an accepted bank cheque for the sum of ten per cent. of the amoust of the sum of ten per cent. of the amoust of the sum of ten per cent. of the amoust of the sum of ten per cent. of the same, and will be forfeited if the party tendering de-clines entering into contract for the work at the rates and on the terms stated in the offer submitted. The accepted cheque thus sent in will be returned to the respective parties whose tenders are not accepted. The Department does not bind itself to accept the lowest or any tencer. By order. L K. JONES, Secretary. Department of Railways and Canals, Others, Others, Secretary. but they are no worse in their corrupt ing influences than "yellow journalism." Both should be condemned on all occasions possible, and especially by Catholics, in church, in school, and in the social circle.-Sacred Heart Review.

behest of the same voice, she marches into the future. All the good men and true are turned toward her, and she is pointing to them to come. The Divine Master said : "There shall be one fold and one shepherd." This is her magnificent future ; all peoples in her, and in unity and in harmony. Harmony of faith, harmony of science, harmony of poet's song. We can distinguish of poet's song. We can distinguish the voices of scientists as they mingle harmoniously with the voices of poets prophets, saints. The anthem as cends to the eternal throne; it is the offering of perfected, Catholic, Christ like humanity to Gcd. Yellow Journalism. The evil developed by what is called yellow journalism " is incalculable,

and Catholic parents should carefully

calm, serene, who seems to have the eyes of God, is visible in the heights of air over her, poised with outstretched wings. And from this Holy Spirit there proceeds a flood of encircling light, as from the sun. And her gar ments are white as snow, and she ap pears a Divine, a transfigured crea-ture. And, lo ! there is heard a voice: Go teach all nations. ONE SHEPHERD, ONE FOLD. The Church has fulfiled this mission

present

A PROPHETIC VIEW.

What is written on the brow of this spurious divinity? No God, no soul, no future life, no human liberty-all things are matter. Goodness and beauty have no higher pedigree than sugar and vitriol. Duty is only a form of selfishness, holiness another name for sense satisfaction; the moral law, that supreme and rigid standard o right and wrong, becomes identified with material pleasure ; and morality disappears in the quicksands of Agnos like the lost Laird of Ravens wood in the Kelpie's flow. CIVILIZED BARBARISM.

And so this, forsooth, is nineteenth century progress ! Better that this age should return to the barbarism of the historic German forests ; better the cannibalism of darkest Africa! Pro gress, what sins are committed in thy name ! Science, what degradations are proposed under the shield of thy magic power ! Were the Vandals, those gig antic intellectual barbarians, to return and pillage and wreck the literature of the world, as they burned the librar ies of mediaeval Europe, the loss would be insignificant ; but, may heaven forefend us from those moral barbar ians, who would devastate, strike out and burn out of our natures the divine seeds of morality, and leave all the dignities of our being a seared and blackened forest, the forgotten ashes of that divine being that was once called man !

THE GREAT CIVILIZER.

Agnosticism has tailed, and it be hooves us to see what spirit has van-quished her. It behooves us, it concerns us, to look at the Church and to admire the majestic vision. One fair morning, twenty centuries ago, the spirit of God descended upon a small ciety, composed of twelve poor fishermen, and bade it go and conquer the world. This baby society, clad in human infirmity, but still endued with the power of the Invisible Spirit, Rome, and it finds that august com-

to pluck God out of hearts of men. She has but a breath, and yet this breath is more vital than all the energies she has seen spring into existence around her. breath is the Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit. By this spirit she lives and moves and breathes, by this spirit she is indestructible.

THE WORLD NOT THE CHILD OF CHANCE. The Church panoplied in divine armor draws swords with agnosticism. Exultant the agnostic leaders rush to storm the religious and scientific fort-No oracle of Delphi, no heaven sent prophet, no high occupant of the chair of Peter, ever spoke with such infallible voice as those scientific popes of the nineteenth century. There is no religion, no God but science ! is the cry ; and the religious and scientific world stands aghast at the awfulness of the crisis. She hears the strange doctrine preached and paraded everywhere that the world came into existence by chance, the sport of an accident. And she knows full well, and she teaches in reply to agnosticism, that if the world be the work of chance all science must perish, science and chance are two irreconcil ables, and that the devotees of science when they blindly preach such a doctrine as this, while they think they confer a boon on science, only bring to

science her own destruction. The Church on its human side has made mistakes in the past; on its

human side it very likely will make mistakes in the future. The agnostic writers have laid such errors on the shoulders of the Church. This to Catholics seems a pitiful display of weak Why should ecclesiastical abuses ness and corruptions, which certainly have had a parallel in the apostolic twelve. be taken from the human side of the Church, where they rightly belong. and be transferred to her divine side Why should opinions of individual, bodies in the Church, but not speak goes forth to re-create and re-civilize ing in her name, be arrayed against humanity. It presents itself before the her, as if she were responsible for ity of travel, democratic liberty of walls of the greatness of imperial them? But if the Church of God has speech and opinion—with these what a ever taught a wrong doctrine from the glorious future for the Church of monwealth politically, socially and beginning, and agnosticism can prove Christ !

faith to Constantinople than to Rome. The Church was distrusted, as the embodiment of grossest ignorance, and a Catholic would now and then hear from a non-Catholic friend such a remark as this : "I am surprised that a man of your intelligence should belong to the Romish Communion." Happily all this is changing ; the eminent non Catholic universities will now welcome a Catholic scholar to their halls. The press, secular and religious, itself deeply conversant with Catholic teaching. And no one who has a reputation to lose, unless he be a backwoodsman or a bigot, will arraign the Church as wanting in any form of progress.

SHE LEADS, NOT FOLLOWS.

The future battles of Christianity shall have to be fought and won by We already see the two great her. armies massing their forces and moving toward the two poles of human thought. Here stands the Church, the visible society founded by Jesus Christ; toward her are moving all those Christian bodies now so much longing for unity and certainty. The invention of printing has accelerated the march of the Church a thousand years, though up to now, unfortunate ly, she has not made good enough use The advance of democracy and f it. of democratic form of Government are bringing a corresponding increase of civil and religious liberty, which means the proportionate spread of Catholicism. Already Japan has opened herself to democratic ideas ; and, as time moves on, the curses of despotism and social caste will be lifted from the necks of those vast Eastern peoples, and they shall rise to enjoy the incomparable gifts of civil and relig ious freedom. The rapid facilities of modern locomotion and travel are more and more bringing men together and nearer to one another. Democratic freedom of the press, democratic facil-

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