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Northwest Review.

TUESDAY, MARCH 15, 1898.

CURRENT COMMENT.

To judge from the editorial remarks in the latest issues that have reached us of *The Tablet*, the *Liverpool Catholic Times* and the *Preston Catholic News*, our English contemporaries are being industriously stuffed, from apparently the same source, with news on our Catholic school status which is altogether misleading. They write glibly about various arrangements that are supposed to have been made and rejoice greatly thereat. Now we are in a position to state that no such arrangements have been made, although we still cherish the hope that some mutual understanding may be arrived at ultimately.

It will be noticed from our columns how busy the grim reaper has been this last week among Catholics. Some have been gathered in the ripeness of old age, some in the prime of life. Of these latter what the world would call a particularly sad instance is that of Mr. Dupont, of Fort William East, who had scarcely settled down in a happy marriage when his days were cut short by an incurable disease. But to the eyes of faith such truly Christian deaths are really happy. We never know what dangers to the soul the prolongation of life, even in maturity, may bring. Not to insist on such appalling lapses from grace as that of Solomon in his old age, who has not known good men to go wrong in the second half century of their existence? Wealth and honor, with their attendant blandishments and idle quest of pleasure, have time and again wrought upon the once sturdy Christian a blight far worse than death. Where virtue bloomed for years in the garden of labor we now find all the springs of mature manhood dried up by the scorching blast of intemperance and lust.

One crowded hour of glorious life Is worth an age without a name.

The *Victoria Daily Colonist* devotes much of its space to a very sympathetic sketch of the late Chief Justice Davie. It notes how many of the important events in his life occurred in the month of March, on the seventh day of which he died when just forty-six years old; but it is apparently not aware that the death of his second wife also occurred in March (1896). She was always a Catholic, a Miss Yorke, sister of the famous Father Yorke, who has made the *San Francisco Monitor* a phenomenal success. Her husband's conversion to the Catholic faith, concerning which the *Colonist* and all its non-Catholic contemporaries preserve a significant silence, took place four years after they were married. Misfortunes crowded upon him since her death; he met with great financial losses, but he faced them with his indomitable bravery and saved enough for the education of his six children, and he was ever ready, as the *Colonist* observes, to give assistance to others in their need, "not ostentatiously, but with an off-handed heartiness which seemed to say that the giver was glad to do the service and did not want anything said about it." To this the NORTHWEST REVIEW can bear grateful witness. The *Victoria* paper says

of him: "In all his active political life he still kept one of the largest practices at the bar, and in spite of his many duties, so hard working was he that he never allowed either the business of the country to suffer by his law practice or his clients to suffer by stress of public affairs. Theodore Davie will be remembered as the most energetic practical statesman British Columbia has yet produced—a politician of great mental capacity, exceptional activity and inflexible determination."

And yet, despite all this well deserved praise, last Saturday evening's telegram to the *Winnipeg Free Press Bulletin* ingeniously avoided mentioning that the illustrious deceased was buried as a Catholic from the Victoria cathedral, although the Administrator of the diocese, Very Rev. Father Nicolay, was known to be the late Chief Justice's confidant and confessor.

The late Chief Justice Davie.

Since the tragic death of Sir John Thompson Catholics have sustained no greater loss than that of the Honorable Theodore Davie, Chief Justice of British Columbia. In many respects the characters and lives of these two great men were similar. Both were men of high mental development and of flawless moral integrity. Whether we view them as lawyers, judges or statesmen, they were men of "light and leading" and represented all that was purest, noblest and best in the public life of our Dominion. Both were born and bred in Protestantism; both became converts to the Catholic Church. All that made their lives great and their public careers notable was achieved after their conversion to the true faith. The secret of their transparent sincerity is found in the fact that they always remained men of prayer and therefore practical Catholics.

Chief Justice Davie was once heard to remark: "I have for a long time been of opinion that your Catholic friends are as ready to sell you as they would a suit of old clothes; but what can you expect from a non-practical Catholic? There is but a thin gauze between such a one and an apostate. Give me a decent Protestant any day, before a lukewarm Catholic. Such men are not Catholics at all, they are infidels, they are anything, they are atheists and far more dangerous than open enemies."

Nor was the late Chief Justice content with expecting the practice of religion in others, he carried it out in his own case with a thoroughness that was akin to heroism. When his gifted and beloved wife died about two years ago, he wrote to a bosom friend: "While the loss of my best and tenderest companion and friend is a severe blow to me—I cannot express how much so, for the snapping asunder of the bond which joins together those who have loved one another beyond the possibility of love for any other mortal, is indescribable—yet I am thankful to say that I have been nerved for the conflict against grief and woe with a power I could not have hoped for. I feel that her loss is my call to penance. For our thirteen years of married life have been a continual round of pleasure and delight with but little penance, and God has a perfect right in his love to call for penance and mortification, when he chooses, and I submit to his decree."

To this noble acceptance of the cross he united that humility which is the true Christian's safeguard. While asking prayers for his departed wife, he begged for special intercession for himself that he might withstand the temptations that would very likely beset him in his bereavement. And those prayers were surely heard, for the remainder of his life was one continued act of resignation to the Will of God. Less than six months after the death of her who had received the last sacraments of the Church "with avidity and joy" (to use his own expression) he was himself stricken down with a disease of the heart from which he only partially recovered. For the last sixteen months of his life he knew that it hung by a thread. When he passed through here last summer we found him a physical wreck, but mentally and morally he towered above the ruin of his bodily frame, his mind was bright as ever, his smile as fascinating, his manner as cheerful and incisive.

There are converts and converts. Some seem to cherish a sneaking regret for the flesh-pots of Egypt. Even when their conversion has been sincere, their imagination remains, in spite of them, half Protestant. Theodore Davie was none of these; he was as thorough and fearless and uncompromising a Catholic as ever breathed. Here again we find him in the same category as Sir John Thompson. In abandoning the Protestant religion they both realized very keenly that they were, to all appear-

ances, sacrificing their best chances of preferment. And in both cases God was satisfied with the intentional sacrifice; because they sought first the kingdom of God all other things were added unto them. They both died in their prime and in the high noon of professional success. Both were called away suddenly but not unpreparedly. God alone knows which of the two was the more fervent servant of his Lord, but they were both ever waiting for Christ's coming.

In brilliancy of mind, completeness of culture and energy of will the late Chief Justice had few, if any, equals in Canada. With such a rare combination of gifts devoted to the sacred cause of Catholicism, we may well imagine what a disaster his death must be to the Church in British Columbia. When his distinguished brother, A.E.B. Davie, also a convert and premier of that province, died, the advent of Theodore to take up the premiership by a fraternal succession probably unparalleled in the history of parliamentary government was hailed with rapture by the Catholics there; and now that he too is gone, they will feel that they have lost a tower of strength girt round with a thousand bucklers.

The Supernatural.

Its Claims as Against Those of Rationalism.

Catholic Columbian. The first of the Lenten series of lectures delivered by Rev. J.M. Mackey, Ph. D., at St. Peter's Cathedral, Cincinnati, is aimed at the assertions of the materialists that the existence of the supernatural is a belief of the past, not consonant with modern enlightenment. The refutation is clear and logical.

The Supernatural vs. Rationalism.

Reason accepts the supernatural, Christianity affirms the supernatural and history confirms the supernatural. Reason accepts the supernatural speculatively, Christianity affirms it as a dogma and history confirms it as a fact. Between God, Creator of man, and man, creature of God, there are the necessary relations arising from the nature of both and resulting from the act of creation. The sum of these relations constitutes this first and essential communion between God and man, natural religion. Now, why could not God, who is infinitely free and infinitely good, add to these fundamental relations other relations superior to them, if He choose to do so? God, the Creator, was before man, His creature, as the artist before his work, admiring in him the most beautiful reflection of His power. What is there to prevent God, the Creator, from placing Himself before man as a father before his child and from elevating man to the honor of the family relation and of deeper and sweeter communion with Himself?

In this hypothesis, God as father assigns to man His creature, become His son, an end superior to that which He assigned him as creator, and guarantees him an inheritance worthy of the paternity which He exercises over him. God gives man, thus elevated, as his ultimate end the vision and the possession of Himself at the close of his life, and guarantees to him the means and helps needed to arrive at this end and possess the inheritance provided for him. God gives man means proportioned to his exalted destiny. New relations now arise, new rights on the one hand and new duties on the other—an order entirely new—added communications wholly superior to all previous relations. Now the sum of these new communications and relations constitutes what we call the supernatural order. In this supernatural order God is known and seen face to face and His everlasting, eternal possession is the supernatural destiny of man. The supernatural world will be known to man better than this world is known to him now, for all his imperfections and his trials will be ended and his intellectual scope enlarged and adapted to the enjoyment of the brightness of the divine glory. To gain this destiny God sends man means adapted to it, proportioned to it, supernatural light, revelations, supernatural obligations, supernatural laws, supernatural duties, supernatural forces and supernatural impulses. Such is, in our hypothesis, the result of this free adoption of man, creature of God, into the estate of Son of God. Clearly the idea of the supernatural is reasonable as a communication of man and of God outside the exigencies of their mutual nature, the fruit of a gratuitous love and of a free adoption on the part of God; an unilateral covenant whose benefits intelligent man accepts with gladness and joy.

The Supernatural is the Divine.

The supernatural is the central and fundamental dogma of Christianity. The supernatural is the essence of Christi-

anity. Jesus Christ is the essential bond of the natural world and of the supernatural world. He is the junction of both. He is the mystery of our divine filiation. By Him and in Him the divine abides in humanity. Jesus Christ is the supernatural and He incorporates His disciples with Himself in the supernatural, and they live by His life as the branches live by the life-blood of the vine. The supernatural, which human reason accepts as possible, Christianity affirms as an actual and a real fact which the lives of myriads of Christians support, illustrate and confirm. The heroism of the martyrs, the heroic virtue of those patiently suffering the ills of life and mortifying the passions in order to conform conduct to higher law and reach the Christian's destiny—the supernatural end, infinite truth and infinite good in the transcendent immortality beyond the present life. The chaste, the humble, the charitable, the meek, the poor in spirit, the peace-makers, all who mourn in hope, the truthful and prayerful, and all this under conditions the most adverse and temptations and hindrances the most powerful, illustrate the supernatural in humanity. It is known by direct observation that the opponents of the supernatural take pride in rejecting it, styling themselves, against all reason, the children of reason. This dangerous group follow what they are pleased to call the systems of philosophy, rationalism, monism, positivism, materialism, pantheism, scepticism, sensualism, agnosticism, theosophy, dualism and Hegelianism, all of which lead to atheism,—the denial of the first cause and the rejection of the self-evident principles of human reason. This whole set glory in their snare, delude human nature and repudiate common sense. Common sense survives their puny attempts and consigns them to their little grave in the labyrinthian mazes of the absurd. They put themselves out of the court of common sense. Miracles of patience, self-denial, self-sacrifice and holiness have everywhere and always characterized the disciples of Christ. What has rationalism produced? Immorality and suicide, according to the records of the daily newspapers.

Teachings of the Schools.

The Ionic Greek school founded by Thales (632 B. C.) taught dualism by Anaxagoras and pantheism by Anaximander, Anaximenes, Pherecides and Heraclitus. The school of Pythagoras in Italy (584 B. C.) denied the reality of the senses and plunged into pantheism. The philosophers of Elea (536 B. C.), Xenophanes, Parmenides, Zeno, Leucippus and Democritus, held that human souls are fiery atoms. This set tended toward the abstract absolute of theosophy, and the ideal pantheism of Schelling and Hegel. Gorgias denied the reality of knowledge, of human cognition,—not as Zeno, by way of the senses, but absolutely. He was a true agnostic. Protagoras taught that a proposition is true if man's mind declares it true, and that the same proposition is false if man's judgment declares it false; that all truth is subjective; that there is no such thing as objective truth. Socrates, the Athenian philosopher, taught the existence of God, omnipotent, omniscient and good, a just executive of his laws, who punishes the wicked and rewards the good. He taught the simplicity, independence and immortality of the human soul, which cannot fully attain its destiny in this life and hence desires a better future state for the sanction of law. Socrates associated virtue with beatitude. Still, Socrates quaffed the fatal hemlock and taught the lesson of suicide. Pyrrho (340 B.C.) found as many reasons against every proposition as for it and was the founder of scepticism, the parent of agnosticism. Socrates, and Plato, his disciple, permitted the people to worship a plurality of gods, notwithstanding their proof of one Supreme God by rational induction from the order of the world, the structure of the human body and the aspirations of the soul. Plato taught the most revolting immorality. Aristotle, the father of logic and prince of logicians and dialectics, taught the eternity of movements and of spherical bodies and was not clear as to the being of God. Cicero, in his treatise on the nature of the gods, favors the opinions of Balbus, one of his characters who defended the doctrine of Zeno and the Stoics, that the world is animated by a universal soul, a kind of spiritual ether which penetrates all nature and produces the phenomena we behold, and that this ether is God. Seneca, Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius fell into the error of Cicero. Ancient philosophy sank to the shameful degradation of pantheism. Ernest Renan, Littré, Straus and Spencer have been led by modern rationalism into the same absurdities as the Stoics of ancient rationalism.

Where They Err.

Reasoners perish by reasoning. They have erred and do err as to the being of God, the nature of the human soul and

the conduct of life. The soul lives by truth and is nourished and developed by truth. Rationalism is a sink of monstrous errors and devoid of truth as to God, as to the soul and as to morals. Were rationalism possessed of truth, it were powerless to teach truth and cause it to reign in the souls of men and rule their lives. Disputation, interminable dissension and logical pyrotechnics is all that the influence of rationalism will ever produce among men. Hence the irritation, the fury and rage of the professors of licentiousness, suicide and all manner of immorality, against the men who profess and follow the principles of common sense and reach the truth by the application of those principles and find the sufficient reason of things by direct observation and sensible verification in scientific matters and by rational induction and credible testimony in questions of the supra-sensible metaphysical and spiritual order.

In the presence of myriads of souls illumined by the supernatural from the dawn of authentic history, from Moses to the present day, in the presence of the saints of the old and the new covenant, these rationalists of every hue cease not bawling and shouting that sound might take the place of reason: "There is no supernatural." And so sorely pressed are they by humanity and the manifestations of the supernatural in human life, that in order to rid themselves of God they have denied the existence of substances and all real being and asserted with Mr. Lane, John Stuart Mill, Schelling and Hegel that there is no reality, that nothing exists but phenomena and sensations.

Man's self-deception.

It is a well known fact that men tell stories of their own invention so often that they come to believe them themselves in the long run. These proud free thinkers, by dint of repeating the phrase "there is no supernatural," come to persuade themselves in the course of time that they have duly proven and demonstrated what they have repeated so often, and on this pure assumption they proceed to base further speculations and assumptions. Deceived by their pretensions and reputations for learning, lesser literary lights,—poets, writers of fiction and all the mass of people who take high-sounding phrases for genius,—conclude that the learned world has eliminated the supernatural by the scientific and learned processes of investigation, that this is the ultimate conclusion of the interpreters of modern thought, and henceforth an undisputed axiom of science. Naturalism and Materialism, in the absence of proof and demonstration, repeat in their journals and publications of every kind that no one now believes in what they have shown to be impossible, the existence of the supernatural. They refuse to discuss what they henceforth endeavor to condemn as absurd, chimerical and imaginary. Henceforth they ignore the supernatural. Modern criticism, modern science assumes that there is nothing outside of or above the physical world. But common sense demands reasons; and honest men, for whom the sufficient reason is enough reason, denounce this vulgar fraud of the so-called men of science. Mankind have always believed in the supernatural, reason accepts their belief and Christianity affirms it.

Let the naturalists demonstrate that the supernatural is impossible and purely imaginary, that the supernatural does not exist and that it cannot exist. This they owe to mankind, who in their myriads, have been in possession of the supernatural from the dawn of history. This immense fact is not overthrown by rash and peurile assertion. This possession imposes on them the logical and scientific obligation of demonstrating against it that the supernatural does not exist, or that there is no one, supreme, intelligent, eternal, infinite Being, whose laws control the forces of nature, and Who governs the moral world and holds it responsible to Him.

Where Truth Is.

Twenty centuries of history, tradition and science manifest the divine life of the Church of Christ. Historic certitude is the highest moral evidence. And such is the evidence that reveals to the world that the supernatural is not a fiction of the imagination, but a stern reality, a most important fact. What does the sceptic in the presence of this great fact? He shrugs his shoulders and makes a scientific and reasonable retreat from the line of battle, bawling out: "The supernatural is chimerical and imaginary, impossible. I am a scientist, a rationalist. I reject the supernatural. I am an agnostic. I hate the supernatural."

Indeed, the supernatural is not the object of science, if we understand by this term natural philosophy, chemistry, mathematics, geography and the other physical sciences. No science can logically deny that which is not its object but may be the object of another science.