

forgotten in the vivacity, chatter and fun of the crowd of hunters who thronged the lawn.

They found early that day, and the ride was a long and stiff one. Early in the course of the run, Mary forged ahead, and got separated from her father—so, luckily for herself, she saw nothing of the accident that cost her father his life. It was all over by the time she reached the spot where the vicious steed had thrown its rider. The horse lay there dead. There, too, lay the squire motionless. It was Tree who seized Mary's rein as she rode up, and tried to explain all to the dazed and stunned girl.

The next few days were days of horror for the girl and her aunt. For three days Philip Merle lay for between life and death, and Mary watched at his bed-side, alternately hoping and despairing as she listened to the quiet moaning, the heavy breathing. On the third morning the doctor told her he had given up all hope. It was a question of days, maybe hours, till death should come. Mary heard the verdict quietly, and, turning once more to the bedside, she prayed that consciousness might return before the end. Opposite her, old Father Byrne prayed for that, too, and their prayers were heard. The squire moved restlessly, opened his eyes, looked about him in a surprised way, and then smiled feebly at Mary.

"Oh, Daddy!" she cried, and bent over him.

"Sh! now, my dear. Where's Father Byrne?"

"I'm here," said the old priest, coming to the side where Mary stood.

Mary knew what her father wanted. She had all prepared, and now she quietly left the room while her father made his confession. It took but a short time, and then Mary was back again, and kneeling by her father's bed, she received Holy Communion as her father died.

With the simple faith, the simple love of a child, Philip Merle received his God for the last time, closed his eyes and lay there, telling of his love, his contrition, his hopes, and his fears to that Lord who was soon to judge him. Another hour passed in silence in the sick room before the squire spoke. At the end of that time he stretched out his hand and sought Mary's.

"Have no silly mourning and that for me, my dear, and as soon as a good man asks you to marry him, do so. God bless you, my dear, and keep you safe."

Something more he tried to say but could not. A few hours later the blinds were all drawn down. The last of the Merle squires had gone to his eternal rest.

The funeral over, Mary and her aunt were left very much to themselves, but their affairs, the squire's affairs, were thoroughly discussed among the people of the county. Curiosity was rampant throughout the district as to the state of the old man's finances. He had entertained and spent lavishly, but, at the same time, it was known he had speculated heavily, and, for that reason more than any other, all were anxious to know what he had left. They had some months to wait.

It was an evening in April some few months after the squire's death that two young gentlemen sat in two different places reading their evening papers.

Philip Tree sat before a cozy fire, his feet in the fender, studying the football results. He read them through, and just beneath them the name of Merle caught his eye. He read the paragraph. It gave the sum of the late squire's estate.

"£4,733," he read. "By Jove! Not £5,000! The old man must have made a mess of things. Poor Merle! Yes, poor Merle!" he said again to himself. "Well, now I can ask her without any fear."

Forgetting all else, he dropped his paper, and, with hopes raised, he peered into the fire, seeing there a brilliant future wherein he and Mary figured as happy husband and wife.

At much the same hour, in a certain country house, Frank Seete read the same paper and the same paragraph.

"Jove!" he, too, said. "Only four thousand odd and drakes with things. Why, it won't buy the girl frocks. Lucky I didn't propose to her and have her on my hands."

And, being a wise young man, he straightway went and proposed to Miss Daisy Deene, the richest young member of the house-party, and was straightway accepted by that romantic damsel. And, being an exceptionally wise young man, he straightway wrote an account of his engagement and sent it to various papers and many friends.

Mary, in her quiet room at Merle read the announcement a few days after. Her face went a little white, and her aunt looked up as she heard her niece's small teeth grind together and saw her tear the paper to pieces, and throw it into a wastepaper basket. But Miss Philippa Merle was a wise little woman, and she went on with her work, and said nothing.

Mary told her aunt that she was going for a walk in the grounds, and, calling her dog Sanky, she set off. She had not gone far when she met Tree, who had at last plucked up courage to come and ask the fateful question. A glance told him Mary was not about something and he could think of but one thing to account for it. She was worried about money matters. So big, blunt Philip Tree, to his own astonishment afterwards, found himself blunder-

ingly trying to tell Mary all he thought.

"I'm so sorry about it all, Mary. My dear, I've not much. Still, I've enough for us both. You'll come, won't you, and be my wife? You know I've always loved you, Mary."

And suddenly Mary realized that it was Tree, big, blunt Tree, she loved. It was he who mattered. The fascinating been caught by the fascinating Seete, but now, all in a moment, she realized the true state of affairs. She smiled up at the big man beside her, and the smile said more than any words could.

Some time later, Miss Philippa was surprised to see Mary and Philip enter her sitting room together. But she had not been blind, and she dearly loved a romance, and so it was with more joy than astonishment she heard the news. Mary left the two alone for a time, and Philip was glad, for he had still more work to do. He fidgeted and coughed, and tried to lead Miss Philippa on to the subject of the squire's will, but she chattered on blissfully unconscious of the trend of her visitor's thoughts. At last, Tree felt the time was passing, so he blurted out all he wanted to say.

"I know things will have to be different now, Miss Merle. It will be a sad change for you. I suppose you won't be able to stay on at the manor, but you'll come and stay with Mary at our place."

Miss Philippa looked surprised, but said very little. All the same, she thought a lot, and the result of her thoughts was that she spoke to Mary about it that evening.

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"I'm sure I don't know," replied her aunt, "but he certainly said that."

"That's funny," said Mary. "I'll ask him what he meant."

She did so the following day, and Tree explained that, as her father had left so little, she would never be able to keep up the manor. It would require almost her whole capital to keep it going even one year.

"And what is my whole capital?" asked Mary innocently.

"Well, you know, it said in the paper four thousand seven hundred."

"Oh!" said Mary.

Tree could get no more from her that day on the subject. But he noticed that Mary once or twice started laughing heartily without giving any reason for so doing. He laughed himself in sympathy with her, and was pleased to see her in such good spirits.

The following week, Mary produced a paper which she was returning from town.

"Read that," she commanded, "out loud."

"We regret to state that, owing to a typographical error, the gross estate of the late Mr. Philip Merle, of Merle Manor, was given as £4,723. It should have been £4,733, 308, 108, 11d."

Mary laughed loud and long as she watched Tree's face. His eyes were big with surprise. His mouth was open wide, as if he felt he ought to say something, but could get nothing out.

"Whew!" he said at last, and repeated it. "Whew! Is all that yours?"

"All mine, my dear," said Mary, "and all yours, too."

"And it might have been mine," said Frank Seete to himself the next day as he crumpled up the paper and threw it into the heart of the fire, to the no small astonishment of his fiancée who was seated opposite admiringly contemplating his handsome face.

But, if Mr. Frank Seete hated himself for his rashness and folly, the hearts of the country folk around Merle Manor were glad. It was a day of days in the whole countryside when Philip Tree and Mary Merle were made man and wife in the old church at Merle village, and since that day a new family has grown up in the manor, and old Mr. and Mrs. Philip Tree-Merle have around them a crowd of children and grandchildren who promise to be as fine and true a race as were the old squires of Merle Manor.

CANDLEMAS

Since the early centuries of Christianity, the Catholic Church has the custom of blessing candles on the feast of the Purification, February 2nd. This is not a meaningless ceremony. The lighted candle should serve to remind us of the Divinity of Our Lord. In the sacred Scriptures we find that light is frequently used as a symbol of the God-head. Thus we read in the writings of St. John: "God is light and in Him there is no darkness." Jesus Christ also calls Himself the light for the reason that He is the bearer of light, the Teacher, Revealer and Sanctifier. He says of Himself: "I am the light of the world, he that followeth Me walketh not in darkness, but shall have the light of life. And again He uses similar words of Himself: "I, the light, am come into the world, that whosoever believeth in Me may not remain in darkness." The lighted candle reminds us in particular of the words of holy Simeon in the Gospel of the Feast: "Because my eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people, a light to the revelation of all the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people, Israel." Jesus Christ is the really the light which dispels the darkness of paganism and the doubts and despair of the world. He has

taught us the true nature of God and the true worth of men. He has taught us how to worship the Father in Heaven, and how to love and esteem our fellow men upon earth. Both truths were dark and hidden before His coming; but since that event, since men have learned of His life and His doctrine, since men have witnessed His deeds and His death, they are plain for every eye to see, for every earnest mind to receive. Truly, He was the light of all, who groped in the darkness of unbelief and sin.

But there is another lesson contained in the symbolism of the lighted candle. Just as its flame ever ascends, so should our thoughts and our aspirations ever tend upward, heavenward. For that is the home, for which we are created and for which God has destined us. Our earthly life passes rapidly like the candle that is consumed, and its end should be the beginning of our true life work to do. He fidgeted and coughed, and tried to lead Miss Philippa on to the subject of the squire's will, but she chattered on blissfully unconscious of the trend of her visitor's thoughts. At last, Tree felt the time was passing, so he blurted out all he wanted to say.

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A PRECIOUS BOOK

ARCHBISHOP IRELAND TELLS WHY CATECHISM SHOULD BE READ AND KNOWN BY EVERY CATHOLIC

The Catholic Church is essentially a teacher, bearing with her a message, the Gospel of Christ. The Catholic faith is a complex of well-defined doctrines to enlighten the mind, of clearly-expressed commandments to guide the will. The Catholic faith is a life: we are the sons and soldiers of the Catholic Church. It is our solemn duty to know what the Church teaches and commands.

The Catholic Church is a teacher—necessarily so, because she is the Church of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ was the teacher—the teacher coming from Heaven to save mankind. He told what we should do in order to possess in our souls the fruits of His mission. For this He made the provision that His teaching should re-echo through the nations long after He had withdrawn from earth His visible presence. He built an organism, a society, a church, to take His place, to speak for Him. He appointed as chieftains of this Church Apostles, teachers: "Go, therefore, teach ye all nations."—"Preaching the Gospel to every creature."—"Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you."—"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be condemned."—"And behold I am with you all days even unto the consummation of the world."

THE CHURCH HAS A MESSAGE

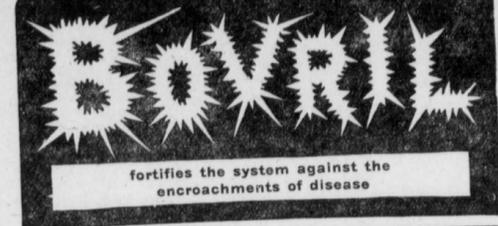
The Catholic Church has a gospel, a message, and it is the divine precept that we reverently receive and believe that message, the Gospel. Without a message the Church is a useless, meaningless entity upon earth. Without a message over and above all human learning, she were but one other of those many schools of philosophy and science with which the world of men is already burdened, and which, whatever the light they throw across our footsteps over the earth, leave us in sad ignorance of our immortal souls. The Catholic Church has a message: she teaches truths. These truths are her very principles of life, her inborn Constitution, her creed, her dogmas.

Can you think of the republic of the United States without its principles telling why it exists and what are its purposes. The republic has its Declaration of Independence, its Constitution; else it were a chaotic mass: a tribe of savages where each one is master and sovereign; where each one wanders tentatively and insecurely as his meager life, his weak will suggests or counsels. Yet, the Catholic Church has her creed, her dogmas. This is the proof that she is the Church of Christ, the Church of the Divine teacher of Galilee Who had His creed, His dogmas, Who commissioned Apostles to repeat until the end of time His creed, His dogmas.

What is the creed of the Catholic Church? What the dogmas that she teaches? To you it is, children of the Catholic Church, to know her creed, her dogmas, as to you it is citizens of the republic of the United States, to know the principles of its Declaration of Independence and of its Constitution. The authorized summary of the Church's creed and dogmas, not too long to be studied and remembered, not too brief in its embrace of the divine message, is the Catechism.

THE CATECHISM A SUMMARY OF THE CHURCH'S CREED

After Sacred Scripture, the Catechism is the most precious, the most valuable of books. The word itself, "Catechism," has a significant meaning. It is a Greek word telling of



fortifies the system against the encroachments of disease

that which is to be sounded and re-sounded—that of that which is to be constant repetition drilled into the ears of man that he may hear and know.

Under one mode of expression or another the Catechism is as old as the Church. Writing to Timothy, St. Paul says: "Hold the form of sound words which thou hast heard through me; in faith and in love which is in Christ Jesus." St. Paul taught; St. Paul had a creed; St. Paul exacted belief in his creed—"Hold the form of sound words which thou hast heard from me." The form of "sound words" Timothy was to hold and teach was his Catechism.

From earliest years of the Church there was the Apostles' Creed. A "creedless church" was never heard of in pristine days of Christianity. The Council of Nicea in the year 325 was not a creedless church. It promulgated its Nicene Creed, which was the further unfolding of truths first compressed into the Apostles' Creed, not an addition of new things into this Creed. The Church always had her creed, her form of "sound words," her Catechism. To-day in the end of time she has her creed. This creed is the Catechism which all should read and re-read, so far as possible, know in every word, in every syllable.

Read and re-read the Catechism for your own enlightenment and sanctification. Read and re-read your Catechism that you be able to defend your faith and rehearse correctly the teaching of the Church to those who are not of her fold. Three-fourths of the objections put out against the Catholic Church are misapprehensions or misstatements of her creed. The quick, effective answer to such objections is to say "Thus, and not otherwise, the Church teaches: read this Catechism."

Cardinal Newman relates that at one period of his life, when yet an Anglican, he met three of his colleagues returning from a journey through Ireland. They related to him how, having taken as their guide, across the western mountains of Ireland, a boy not fourteen years of age, they had not found the temptation to hearken to him on his Catholic faith. To each statement of theirs, however, the boy would simply say: "I tell you what my Catechism tells me, and the teaching of the Catholic Church. The travellers confessed to Newman that the quotations from the Catechism defeated their objections and opened up to them new mental visions.

So should it be, dear brethren, with yourselves. For instance you will be told that an indulgence is an anticipated pardon for sin. In answer, quote your Catechism—"An indulgence is not a pardon of sin nor a license to commit sin and one who is in the state of mortal sin cannot gain an indulgence. You will be told that Catholics worship the Blessed Virgin and the saints. Quote your Catechism—"The Church honors the saints Virgin and the saints. Quote your Catechism—"By honoring the saints who are the chosen friends of God we honor God Himself." You will be told that without sorrow, in virtue of mere priestly absolution, Catholics think their sins are forgiven. Quote your Catechism on the necessity of contrition, "a sorrow for sin, a hatred for sin, a true grief for the soul for having offended God, with a firm purpose of sinning no more." In answer to innominate or unbecoming objections arising from ignorance, vincible or invincible, quote your Catechism. The Catechism is the final response to such objections.

But you will say the Catechism is a book for children, not for grown men and women. Not for grown men and women! Not for you, my respected hearers! Were I to pass down at this moment through the aisles of the cathedral and question grown men and women on the lessons of the Catechism—"Is there a heaven? Is there a hell? Is there a God? Is there a soul? Is there a first Communion and when I was confirmed, but much of it I have since forgotten. Well you should not have forgotten it, for the Catechism gives the summary of what you should ever know, of what you should ever remember.

Buy the Catechism. Read it, and re-read it. Keep it near you where often you may see it, where often you may read it. Have a copy of the Catechism for your own personal use. Catechism for it is so that you may present one to him who is yet a searcher for divine truth, that he may know exactly the teaching of the Church. Catechisms should be judiciously distributed where instruction in the truths of the Church is desired or needed. The Catechism will be constantly held in the book-rack at the end of every Catholic home, a Catechism that read it, and not only every Catholic in the cathedral

parish, but every Catholic in the entire diocese of St. Paul. Hence my request to all pastors, that having explained to their people the importance of the Catechism, they see that all may possess copies of it.

I argue for the Catechism—the authorized summary of the teachings of your faith; not, however, that I limit your study of religion to the Catechism. The Catechism first and at all times; but all things said, it is a summary, to be later enlarged by more ample reading, a starting-point on the road of light, to give encouragement and understanding to further travel. Supplement the Catechism with the reading of Catholic books, Catholic newspapers and reviews; and in a particular manner, with the frequent hearing of sermons from the living lips of your pastors. Pour into your souls ceaseless draughts of light and knowledge.

The Catholic Church makes the urgent invitation that she be known the better, in order that she be loved and obeyed the better. The noonday light needs no argument that it be admired and loved. So it is with the truth, taught by Christ, taught by the Church. The Catholic Church is not known to our world. When powers and principalities were wrestling from peoples their Catholic faith, what did they do? They threw across the native beauty of the Church the veil of calumny, thus presenting to the beholder a hideous form which all who saw should repudiate.

Let knowledge tear away that veil; let the spouse of Christ be seen in her native beauty; and all who see her will cling to her, even to death itself. That you see lead others to embrace it, know the Church as she really is. See her queenly demeanor as she moves across the earth, scattering words of salvation wherever she sets her footsteps; see the sunlight of heaven sparkling over her brow; see her as she was when coming forth from the hand of Christ, as she is to-day under the power of Christ abiding ever with her, as she will be to the end of time. Who sees her, never afterwards forgets her claims, or turns away from the ranks of her loyal sonship.—The Monitor.

LACK OF INFORMATION CONCERNING OUR FAITH

WELL EDUCATED CATHOLICS SHOW AMAZING IGNORANCE OF DOCTRINES OF CHURCH

An old man who has had many an occasion to explain the beauties of the faith to non-Catholics and who enjoyed such opportunity wrote the following letter to one of our esteemed contemporaries:

"Will you permit me to call your attention to a subject that is of vital interest—to the lack of information among Catholic men concerning the history of the Catholic Church and the doctrines of their religion. Every day I meet intelligent, fairly well-educated and clever business men, who are ignorant of fundamental teachings of the Church. Ask them, for instance, for a simple explanation of the meaning of indulgences and see them flounder and flunk. Ask them the difference between attrition and contrition. Ask them if the Church recognizes the marriage of Protestants as valid. Ask them to name the ways in which a person may share in the guilt of another person's sin. Ask them if Copernicus was a Catholic. Ask them about the inquisition, about Gallileo, about the proclamation of religious liberty in this country by the colony of Lord Baltimore in Maryland, etc., and what will they tell you, what do many of them know?"

"It is a shame a pitiful shame. Who is responsible? What can be done in the way of remedy for those who are now out in the world and in the way of prevention of such ignorance for those boys and young men who are still at school?"

"If every Catholic man would read something besides newspapers and magazines; if he would buy a dozen good books and read them through a dozen times; if he would find out in what tip-top Catholic books are in the public library and take some of them out to read at his home, if he would learn the five-act catechism by heart all over again; if he would read some such books as 'The Faith of Our Fathers,' by Cardinal Gibbons, or 'Catholic Belief' by Fra di Bruno, 'The Question Box' by Father Conway, he would be better informed than he is today and would be able to answer some of the objections made to his religion and to his Church.

"The day of calumny is here. The day of persecution is coming. Let us all get armed with knowledge of the truth. And knowing our religion better than ever, we can live it better than ever before."—Providence Visitor.

Knowledge is the reward of one's own efforts to acquire it.

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