

# The Catholic Record.

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

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### A CLEVER CRITIC.

David Creedon's criticism of books is delightful reading. He has a nice taste of discrimination and any book that receives his approval is worthy of perusal. He has a terse and vigorous English style. We always look for him now in *The Western Watchman*.

### THE TRUE TEST.

Crispien says that the decadence of Spain is due to the priesthood. The "impoverished condition, etc., arises from the fact that Rome has stifled the beatings of the pulse of progress." We wonder if Italy's decline must be ascribed to the same fact, or because the venerable statesman has laid his hand upon the national funds? A short time ago he was exhibited as a monster of perfidy and dishonesty and to-day he is placed on a pedestal to tell us why Spain is utterly unfit to cope with the United States. The fact that Spain is poor or wealthy is no proof that she is in a state of decadence. The true test of civilization is, as Emerson says, not the census or the size of cities, but the kind of men the country turns out. Dazzled by the glamour of material prosperity we are too apt to forget this, and hence little inclined to pay attention to the essential constituents of national life. But let us always remember that not upon armies or navies or the treasures of art and commerce, but upon the justice and impartial administration of law, and upon the honor and the virtue of the citizen, is founded civilization. A nation poor in worldly resources may attain a high place of culture, and a nation upon whose brow glitters the diadem of earthly grandeur may be trembling on the brink of ruin. "It is not," said Jules Simon, "the loss of a battle, an army annihilated or a province torn away, that begins the fall of a people. A nation dies only by abandoning its manly habits, by the effacement of its character, by the invasion of egotism and scepticism. It dies of its corruption, it does not die of its wounds."

### OUR SOCIETIES.

The problem of why our societies do not meet with permanent success is one that has for some time past engaged our attention. They commence very promisingly, flourish for a time and then disappear or become practically dead. Any impartial observer will admit this to be a true statement of the case. Now we should like to unravel the problem, and any solution will be most gratefully received by us. We are not discussing their ability, for all agree that they are a most important factor in Church work. Our pastors have always recognized their importance and have sought to found and foster them in their different parishes. But what we should like to discover is why so much energy along temperance, social or benevolent lines, is lost or misdirected. This may grate harshly on some ears, but it is a plain statement of fact. If we should give full credence to their reports or to the speeches of their orators at festive gatherings we could believe their efficiency was beyond doubt or cavil; but a little examination will convince us that the reports and speeches have, like the "war news," very little foundation. We appreciate the difficulties and obstacles that beset our young men, but making allowance for all this we have no hesitation in saying that the average Catholic society of young men leaves much to be desired.

A society is not merely a means to satisfy the gregarious instinct; but it is also a school wherein men may be taught and uplifted. It is a group of individuals banded together by rule and discipline for the attainment of some specific end. Selfish aims may obtrude themselves, for we live in the world, but they will not be permitted to stand in the way of the common good. A society, we take it, should be a well-spring of high thought and endeavor. It should try to eradicate from the minds of Catholics that they are destined by Providence to be hewers of wood and carriers of water, and to persuade them that honest, patient and persevering toil are alone

guarantees of success. It should be so compacted together that at a signal it could concentrate all its energies upon a given object.

To do this effectually the more influential members must be unremitting in their preaching by word and example. Now what do we generally find? We find societies rent into fragments by cliques. The unity depicted so forcibly by the society orator is imaginary, so much so indeed that a young man who has the ambition to get out the rut of his forefathers is oftentimes retarded by a brother member. This may not always be the case, but we venture to say that nearly every Catholic who has achieved distinction in any walk of life will tell you that he received little help, if anything, from the society founded to promote Catholic interests. One reason for this is that the aims of a society are not kept prominently before the eyes of the members. They have, of course, what they call their constitution, a jargon of times of elaborate and legally phrased sentences which are revised from time to time, and are always a thing of beauty for the individual who poses as an authority on parliamentary procedure. But what bearing has it all on the workings of the society? We have talk, flat, stale and unprofitable—nothing else.

When young men are banded together for a purpose we have a right to see it realized. You will tell us that it is realized in the temperance society. We gladly lay our tribute of respect at the feet of our total abstainers, but all the same a Catholic has not, simply because he is temperate, reached the limit of his possibilities.

Perhaps they do not get hold of the right kind of men. Catholics of leisure and education are not famed for their support of societies. It may be they are afraid of losing caste, except during election campaigns, when they are always willing to tell us that they have watched over the society like a mother over a sick child, and noted, of course, its progress with great joy.

The real reason, we believe, is the difference of the members themselves. There is too much talk and too little business. There is a flitting away of energy on card parties and picnics and dances. The serious work, that of helping Catholics to secure good positions, of animating them to put some ambition into their lives, is unnoticed and unheeded.

And is it not so? Catholics squabble over political positions of mental character, and you can count on your fingers those of our creed who hold any office of note in the gift of the Government of Canada.

We shall return to this subject again, but in the meantime let us advise our societies, from which we hope for better things, to give no quarter to the "kicker and spouter," and to get down to business.

### "ONLY ONE TRUE RELIGION."

Such was the subject of a lecture recently delivered by Rev. Father Gleeson, S. J., at the Jesuit Church, Detroit. We copy the following summary from the *Catholic Witness* of that city:

"The subject," said the lecturer, "resolved itself into two leading questions, viz. first, which is the one true religion, and secondly, is there really but one that is true. And with the second more general question they would be concerned that evening. To see the practical significance of the question, contrast Protestantism and Catholicism, the former recognizing several religions as good, the Catholics acknowledging but one as such. For where there is no church of their own denomination Protestants will not scruple, but will rather think it perfectly right to attend other places of worship. But the Catholic never acts thus; it were sin to him to visit other churches than his own, for he looks upon other religions as false and he therefore would dishonor God and act contrary to the dictates of his conscience.

"The question is of importance in the present day; for if it is a fact that there is only one true religion; if we can honor God only by following the teachings of one; if one religion alone can make man virtuous and moral and save his soul, then it is most important to know that fact and to know which religion is the only true one. If man does not belong to it, he risks the salvation of his soul and loses many valuable aids to a virtuous life; and yet there is a loose idea prevalent that one religion is as good as another.

"From this willingness to acknowledge many religions arises indifference—tolerance, as it is called, or freedom of opinion—expressions which mingle some truth with false

ideas and are attended with the worst consequences and must be guarded against.

"This is the natural outcome of 'private judgment,' the ruling principle of the sixteenth century Reformers. Everything was left to the tribunal of their own reason and the result is evident to-day. The truth as it is revealed is questioned and modified or something substituted for it until there are thousands of professedly Christian sects of every possible shade of doctrine. Now, when men see these disputes, the question arises, how can all these religions be true? And thus they are led to abandon their belief, or else indifference is the outcome.

"A special source of this is the supposition that religion is a human institution and not of divine origin. Religion is not only divine as seen in its necessity and our inclination to it, but it is definite and God Himself has determined its particular form, and that which God has determined must be the only one and true religion.

"Religion, thought out by human reason, is, some say, a development from lower ideas, and is refining, civilizing and good. From the crude worship of our forefathers we progress to more elevated religious ideas and at some future day we shall attain 'religion, pure and undefiled.' So the Evolutionists, and it is no wonder if men will consider religion of human origin, it is not important to them what its form is and that they are indifferent to it. Indifference is removed if religion is recognized as divine and not human, and that God is its author.

"But it is said even by some ministers that the present age requires a human religion. Even the religion revealed and established by God is essentially human, yet not in the sense that it is the invention of human reason: it is human in perfecting man, in rendering him happy, in penetrating his heart, comforting him in his trials and checking him in his passions, encouraging him to higher things. But it is divine in its regulations of man's obligation to God. Science and arts are from men, but religion is from God. So in the history of religion, in all ages and with all nations men have sought for knowledge and truth from some recognized higher source, the soothsayers, the prophets, the oracles. Man will not in reason believe in anything that does not come from a higher source, where truth will necessarily be found if anywhere; in religion truth is absolutely necessary, for we must be certain.

"Every religious truth imposes an obligation. Error, dangerous in its craving for liberty, will bias our minds, telling us that wrong is right. Religion checks and controls our actions, and this we cannot object from human reason. Religion, subjected to human reason, degenerates, and error after error has been introduced. It must be of divine origin. Historians tell us this. The primary revelation from God, was followed by the patriarchal and the Mosaic dispensations. Then God's own Son, by miracles, proved and set His seal on what He claimed, and each dispensation rendered but more perfect that which had preceded it.

"Religion must be and is of divine origin, and if so there can be only one that is true. Customs and practices may vary; the laws of fasting and the holy days of obligation may differ, but this does not change the religion. The patriarchal and Christian dispensations are but different states of the same religion, given in the beginning, perpetuated through the Jewish nation, revealed in the commandments, and perfected by Jesus Christ, who came not to destroy but to make perfect.

"To have different religions we must have different doctrines and different moral codes, and these must evidently be false in the one case and good and virtuous in another. God cannot be the Author of contradictions. He is infinite Truth, and religion coming from God cannot have two contradictory teachings.

"If, then, God is the Author and there is only one true religion, we owe to God our whole being. If God has revealed this, it is truth and obligatory. And how can this be if it is a matter of indifference which religion is followed? Is error as good as truth? Is evil equivalent to virtue? Indifference is an insult to God.

"Intolerance is a fine word and has caused many abusive sayings against the Catholic Church. Tolerance is a noble quality, but is bad or good. If tolerance admits error as good, then tolerance is evil; it is treason to truth. But tolerance is good, when guided by charity, the civil rights of all being respected, error is not approved of.

"There are two kinds of liberty, moral and physical. Moral liberty implies our ability to do something consistently with the moral law. Physically every man is free; whether he is morally so is another question. No man has the moral liberty to do wrong. Are you doing right in adhering to a wrong religion instead of the true?

"But, it is argued, my neighbor has no right to impose his religion on me. Is, then, one religion as good as another? Oh! There is good and bad in all. In doctrines? In the doctrines of false religions, yes. No institution

is all bad and contains no good; error clings closely to truth. But with regard to the true religion this cannot be said. If it contains anything that is false, it cannot be the true religion and founded on truth. But it is true that there are bad and good members in the true religion, and the bad are there not on account of the Church, but in spite of it. So many good members exist among the false religions, not on account of the religion but because they are persons of natural virtue and good quality.

"Hence the absurdity of indifference. If religion is from God and there is only one true religion, we cannot consistently be indifferent in finding out and following our obligations."

### QUESTION BOX.

Philadelphia Catholic Standard and Times. "American" asks if a Sister acting as an army nurse would be obliged to pay more attention to a Catholic Spaniard or a Protestant American, both being under her care?

This is best answered by a quotation from Owen Meredith's "Lucie":

Wherever man suffers, or woman may weep, There her hand! There her kindred!

Calvin W. wants to know if "Lead, Kindly Light," was not written by Newman while yet a Protestant.

Its words of themselves indicate that it was written in the transition period, when his personal views were giving place to divine faith. This hymn, like others of Catholic origin, appears in different form from the original in many Protestant hymnals, though no amount of revising removes the distinctively Catholic feeling from the one in question.

"La Sonnambula" is much exercised because in a sermon on mixed marriages the priest said: "Give up your Protestant friends; give up your Protestant company." A Protestant friend accompanied the correspondent on the occasion and feels much hurt.

The priest did not refer to Protestants as friends, but as possible husbands and wives. The time to prevent mixed marriages is at the beginning of company-keeping, and this reflection is due in charity to the Protestant who is likely to develop a stronger feeling than friendship. The right hand is a good friend, yet we are told to cut it off if it scandalizes. How much more so should we avoid a friendship which is dangerous not only to our faith, but to that of generations yet unborn.

"Inquisitive" attended a Catholic church and saw the people bow when the priest was reading the Gospel. What did it mean?

If he was reading the Gospel, it was possibly at the name of Jesus the people bowed, according to St. Paul to the Philippians ii., 10.

"Reading Circle" asks "Who were the Donatists?" They were heretics and schismatics who held that the validity of a sacrament depended on the moral character of the minister, and that sinners could not be members of the Church and could not be tolerated by it unless their sins were secret.

J. T. F. objects to a priest being called Father and bases his objection on the text "Call no man father."

Reference to II. Corinthians vi., 13, shows that St. Paul used these words: "I speak as unto my children."

### THE METHODS OF THE MASTER

It was the simple bluntness of Father Ignatius Spencer, in the fervor of his missionary enthusiasm, that awakened the great Wiseman, up to the time living aimlessly at Rome, satisfied with the mere acquisition of vast and versatile intellectual attainments, to a sense of what better use a man might put such talents in the spiritual welfare of England.

With a courage born of the pristine fervor of asceticism, Father Spencer told Wiseman that it would better be wise him to apply his mind to more practical themes than the collection of Syrian manuscripts, the planning out of geological treatises, and the heaping up of stores of antiquarian lore. It was the first seed sown in Wiseman's fertile soul, destined to take such splendid root and to develop into the one absorbing life-interest in the future career of the great Cardinal.

Many of us foolishly fancy that converts, worthy of the name, are drawn into the net of Peter by sheer force of intellect, that it is from the intellectual phase of things that we are to work miracles of conversion. Error emphatic!

Was it lack of intellectual force that caused the apostasy of De Lamenais, Rengan, and hosts of other brilliant French minds, and produced the zeal of a Lacordaire, a Montalembert?

Was it lack of intellect that urged the triumphant conversion of a Newman, a Brownson, or that deterred a Pusey from the same course?

No, intellect plays but a small role in the matter of serious conversion. It is the superb simplicity of an unflinching faith and a beautiful humility which wreaths, as it were, from Almighty God the gift of belief, and this is the work of earnest, persistent prayer, and prayer alone. The sooner we settle our minds on this score, the

safer and surer will be our onward course.

It is one of the first principles of philosophy that all knowledge in the mind has its rise in the senses. It is not equally true of religious knowledge?

The early Christians conquered their pagan persecutors by the sanctity and purity of their disinterested and devoted lives, a rebuke to the sensuality of paganism stronger by far in its influence than the most cunningly arranged and artistically delivered argument from an intellectual standpoint would have been. The non-Catholic of to-day finds the most alluring persuasion of the undying truth of Catholic doctrine in the lives of self-abnegation and utter worldliness portrayed by the true priest, the saintly religious, and the devout Catholic layman.

Here, then, is the way, the truth, and the life, that we imitate the Master in His method of winning souls by taking up the cross, denying ourselves, and following Him. In this sign shall we conquer.—Providence Visitor.

### THE DECAY OF FAITH.

New York Sun.

At this time, when the secular world is darkened with threatening clouds of war, ominous signs of approaching disaster appear in the religious world. It is not too much to say that the Presbyterian Church, holding the very citadel of Protestantism is proceeding irresistibly toward disintegration and destruction.

The seeds of decay were first sowed by Dr. Briggs and his school in their denial of the infallibility of the Scriptures, upon which alone rests the faith of orthodox Protestantism. His logical place thereafter was in Unitarianism or in agnosticism; but actually he has carried his infidelity over to the Episcopal Church, into whose ministry he is preparing to enter. Dr. Shields of Princeton, a lifelong Presbyterian, has left that communion in his old age simply because under its discipline affecting the ministry he was subject to rebprobation for assisting in procuring a liquor license; and he also has gone over to the Episcopal Church as a more agreeable branch of the 'Church Catholic.' Dr. Patton, President of Princeton University, has declined to be a delegate to the forthcoming General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, though for many years past he had been a foremost figure in its sessions. Several of the clerical members of the Princeton faculty have refused the same commission, and for the like reason that they want to avoid all shadow of responsibility for the judgments of the Presbyterian supreme ecclesiastical court.

The Cleveland Presbytery has adopted a resolution which strikes directly at Princeton, President Patton, and Dr. Shields by calling on the General Assembly "to withhold its approval of all educational institutions whose officials lend their influence to the support of the saloon." Dr. Shields left the Presbyterian Church and sought refuge in the Episcopal Church in order to be free to lend that very influence, and inferentially he has been sustained in his rejection of Presbyterian authority by President Patton and the faculty of Princeton. Meantime in New York Presbyterians of wealth are taking pews in Episcopal churches.

All this looks very ominous. It shows that the depth and earnestness of conviction upon which the Presbyterian Church rested are passing away, and in many minds have already gone. What is to be the consequence to the Episcopal Church of such an accession of cold or lukewarm faith is a question which disturbs seriously a large party in its membership. These Presbyterian rebels and deserters do not come as converts, but simply to find a convenient refuge from the consequences of conduct and teaching destructive of all ecclesiastical organization, and even of faith in the supernatural and itself. They do not fly to the Episcopal Church because of belief in the divine authority which belongs to it peculiarly, according to the conviction of the earnest faith in it, but because they are wholly indifferent to such pretensions and care nothing about the mere organization or the theories on which it is based. They are no longer Presbyterians, but neither are they Episcopalians in truth. They have lost genuine faith, and seek simply to tickle their æsthetic tastes and retain the conventional appearance of orthodoxy.

Mr. Wilfrid Ward, in his notable book on the life and times of Cardinal Wiseman says that while that distinguished convert to Rome was still in the Church of England "he foresaw that a few years later the crucial controversy would not be about the Thirty-nine Articles, but about belief in the supernatural world." "Fifty years hence," he said one day to the divines in the middle of a theological lecture, "the professors of this place will be endeavoring to prove, not transubstantiation, but the existence of God."

That describes generally the situation in the Presbyterian Church. It is going into disintegration because its foremost teachers are losing their faith

in the very essence of religion. At the bottom, to use Cardinal Wiseman's words, they are demanding that even the existence of God shall be demonstrated scientifically to their skeptical interests. They are losing "all belief in the supernatural world."

### THE DECAY OF FAITH.

To the Editor of the Sun—Sir: Your recent article on the changes and decay in the Presbyterian Church are attracting a great deal of deserved attention. Approaching my four-score year, and for many years honored by the Church as an office bearer and delegate to her higher courts, I am constrained to indorse and commend your editorials, and in the strongest manner. What is surprising is the fact that, while a prominent secular paper, the *Sun* transcends, in the writer's opinion, in its vigor of thought and clearness of expression, any of our religious periodicals. Especially would I refer to your recent article, published on the 15th, on "The Decay of Faith in the Presbyterian Church." This will attract a good deal of deserved attention in connection with the difficulties at Princeton.

To the writer, however, the main difficulty is the loss of spiritual power in the Church, its conformity to the world, together with its loss of Christian faith. To one who can look back for forty or fifty years and contrast the situation of the Church with what it was then, the changes are overwhelming. With a personal knowledge of Dr. Shields at Philadelphia and Dr. Briggs at Roselle as humble ministers of the Gospel, it is astounding to witness the changes that have been wrought in their theological beliefs.

### THE TRUE FAITH.

The true faith is the one only faith, for it alone produces works of faith wholly honorable to Him who performs them and wholly helpful to all other men. Were there in the Catholic religion nothing but the religious Orders, the fact would suffice of itself alone to prove the divinity of that religion. To consecrate one's life to God, to devote it to the neighbor for the love of God; to embrace every kind of privation and toil and fatigue, in the one hope of a heavenly reward, is an *act of faith* which no other religion has been able to produce; it is an *act of hope* which other religions are incapable of eliciting; it is an *act of charity* which they will never perform. The Catholic religion easily accomplishes all this by means of three virtues: poverty, chastity and obedience, which she alone has the right and the power to counsel. Seek where you will, try as you will, these trees and the fruit they bear are to be found only in the garden of the Church; they do not live or reproduce their kind elsewhere. Elsewhere is not to be found the sun and the dew they need. (Translated from Louis Veuillot, for the *Catholic Record*.)

### A WORLDLING'S OPINION.

"Many years ago, when a child in the far southland I love so well," says a Chicago writer in the *Iconoclast*, "yellow fever epidemics were of almost annual occurrence. Then I saw the priest come up the great river in the steamers, bound for the stricken districts. Young, bright-eyed, fresh-faced boys from France, unacquainted, strangers in a strange land, they went to their deaths as gaily as ever a bridegroom with a singing heart found his way to the chamber of his love. They nursed the sick, and gave the sacred oil to the dying, and held before their falling eyes the cross upon which Jesus suffered, and pointed ever upward to the path of light, and fondled the pitifully-clinging fingers of those deserted by family and friends, and died like the sheep and rotted unburied in the pestiferous air. I have seen the pure, patient, dove-eyed Sisters of Charity dead on the streets of those ruined cities, but never saw I yet a Protestant minister of any denomination whatsoever in the lair of the yellow King of Terrors.

"To you and me, brothers, in the world, the flesh and the devil, deeds speak more loudly than words. We look upon the wine-cup when it is red, we bet our money upon the supposed fact that one horse can run faster than any other horse, we endeavor disastrously to make three deuces bigger than four Jacks, we go to the theatre and buy oysters and bear for some of the performers when the play is ended, and we are never in a church, except when a friend marries or dies, but we take off our hats in the street when we pass one of the black-robed men or women who are the servants of the Church that embraces the world."

### How to be Another Monica.

Christian wives and mothers, behold your model! Learn of Monica the responsibility and dignity of the wife and mother, and you, too, will give Augustines to the Church of God. If women only realized the vocation to which God calls them, and would not vainly strive after that for which their nature does not fit them! If they only would appreciate the tremendous influence confided to them in the home circle! Would they be great? There is a greatness which is exclusively theirs. There is a sphere in which they have no rival—home—a short, simple word, but brimful of meaning. Those who have it not, long for it. Too many who have it, or the making of it, do not appreciate it.

Hope in God; He will support you and enable you to be useful to others, if you trust in Him and do not neglect your duty.