THE EDUCATION QUESTION.

A REVIEW by "CRUX"--Continued.

Last week I had only space to deal with the Catholic education question, as it presents itself in England and in Ireland. It will be remembered that I took extracts from Rev. Father Brown's discourse upon the situation in England, and from Bishop Clancy's address, in the United States, upon the question of primary, intermediate and university education in Ireland. From these we learned that in England the Catholics look forward, with hope, to the next session of Parliament for some measure of justice in matters affecting their schools; we also learned that in Ireland the great barrier to Catholic advancement is the absolute lack of university facilities. I now turn to the wonderfully exhaustive address, by Rev. Father Campbell, S.J., on "The Only True American School System." I will be obliged to take copious extracts from Father Campbell's masterly study of the Catholic school question. It is preferable that I should do so, as any comments of my own could add nothing of value to what he has written, and they might simply help to confuse the reader.

Admirable as history and irrefutable as argument are the opening pages in which Father Campbell proves, by the testimony of the ages, that "what is true of individuals is true of nations—religion is indispensable," and that "in the modern dispensation the religion that is essential to the prosperity and existence of the State is Christianity." Turning to America he indicates that it is a Christian nation, despite the fact that there is not a word about Christianity in the Declaration of Independence. The intense religiousness of the original colonists, the opening of the Legislatures with prayer, the annual proclamation of Thanksgiving Day, and the Christian death of the late President, are all so many evidences that the American Republic is a Christian country. But, on the other hand, there is an evident tendency to efface that Christianity, and thereby bring the great Republic to ruin. Even as the Caesarism of Ancient Rome caused the downfall of that stupendous fabric, so must the same causes produce the same effects in our day.

The author then proceeds to detail the evidences of a fading Christianity. Amongst others he points to the acknowledged emptying of the churches; the prevalence of immoral and infidel literature; the ominous condition of American life in the matter of marriage; the record of increasing crime of every category; above all the frightful increase of homicide; the abominations of lynch laws; and the various other indications of unbridled depravity of sentiment. If the American is asked for a remedy he will suggest religion as thought out by the individual citizen. On this Father Campbell says :—

"However flattering such an assumption may be to our self-conceit, it is in flat contradiction with reason and experience. Think out his own religion! Can the mud-stained laborer who perhaps has taken his dinner in the ditch and who stumbles home after his hard day's work to a miserable tenement amid a swarm of squalling children to snatch a few hours rest for the toil of the morrow, do any independent thinking on the abstruse matters of morality or religion? Can the mechanic who slaves at his bench, or the clerk at his desk, or the merchant, engrossed in money making, or even the lawyer or physician absorbed by the anxieties of his profession, sit down and ponder the vast mysteries of the spiritual world? Taking man as he is, actuated by passion, absorbed in business pursuits, apathetic from constitutional sluggishness and averse to anything outside the domain of sense, though he may attain to some religious knowledge there are a thousand chances to one that he will not bestir himself at all, and there are more chances still that if he does, he will blunder in the most elementary truth. But above all that, there are mysteries which no man can fathom and for which instruction is indispensable. We ask a policeman or a passer-by to guide us in a strange city; can we all unaided find the path that leads over the limitless universe of the unseen? If the meanest handicraft as well as the most learned profession requires an instructor who perhaps has spent years in acquiring the knowledge he possesses, surely an acquisition of the sublime truths of religion requires similar assistance. The mere motorman, or the man with the hoe needs some one to show him how. It is in the very nature of things. We cannot or do not evolve knowledge out of our helpless ignorance. Aid must come from above, and as the beneficent sunshine beaming on the cold and lifeless earth calls up the flowers and the fruitage that delight and sustain the world, so in the realm of the intellect, the brightness of the knowledge that our fellow-men as well as the generations that have preceded us have acquired, must dispel the darkness of our mind and make it beautiful and safe with the light it imparts."

This brings us to the question of how, by whom and where is religion to be taught? The author answers all the objections to the teaching of religion in the schools. After establishing most positively that the education of Catholic schools is not below grade, and that the fact of being a Catholic makes a man a better American, which is the exact contrary of what some of the Protestant educationalists contend, he quotes a few pages of American history in support of the contention that Catholic missionaries, priests, and laymen have actually contributed the most important share to the building up of the Republic. Turning to the attitude of the Catholic Church towards the public schools, he says :—

"The Catholic Church has no designs on the public schools. It is satisfied to leave them as they are for those who wish them, but it does not want and will not have for its children, in the period of their defencelessness, an education which it is convinced will ultimately make those children a curse to their country, by robbing them of those principles of morality which are indispensable in forming them into honorable and pure men and women. It has lost too much, even here in America, by contact with irreligion; it has lived too long in the world not to know that religion is necessary to prevent the ruin of a nation, and it has too many horrible examples in the crimes of the apostate governments of to-day, to allow it to sit idly by, without attempting to prevent similar disasters here. It will not be satisfied with the odious hour after school, which in the child-mind makes religion penal, but it wants the atmosphere of its schools to be such that religion will enter as a motive and a guide of what is to be done and avoided. It wants the child to begin to be what he ought to be later on in life, honest, pure, faithful in his duty to his God and his fellow-men, as the light of his religion points out and as its sacramental helps assist him to become. It does not want the child to imagine that religion is an affair of Sunday and has nothing to do with the rest of the week. It does not comprehend the offer of a well-known president of a Protestant university to teach Catholicity by lectures. Such a pretence displays a deplorable inability to appreciate what religion really is. Faith is not truth alone but life."

Then comes the question of that homogeneity so loudly advocated by the opponents of separate schools. On this Father Campbell says :—

"To this challenge we reply that homogeneity of education is absurd; it is undemocratic; it is socialistic; it is un-American; it is often a political scheme, and it is unchristian and irreligious. You might as well try to have the trees of the forest with the same sized leaves; you might as well insist upon men belonging to the same political party, or pursuing the same occupation, living in the same kind of house, eating the same food or wearing the same style of dress, or thinking the same kind of thought and arriving at the same conclusions by the same methods. You have no more right to make me homogeneous with you than I to make you homogeneous with me. A resemblance sometimes may be very undesirable. The strength and beauty of the universe and of everything in it, whether of the natural or spiritual order, is not a unity of monotony and sameness, but a unity of variety, a unity achieved by an authority and influence that holds the infinitely divergent types together and makes them all co-operate to a common end. In that the beauty of the world consists, but our apostles of homogeneity conceive it as an asphalt road over which the educational roller has passed. It might be good to remember that streets of tar, in spite of the roller, become rivers of fire in a conflagration. Bryce, in his 'American Commonwealth,' pointed out that 'our greatest social danger lay in the production of dead levels.' Besides, who are you, my friend, that you decide off hand that your type of the homogeneous is correct? And lastly, why are you continually proclaiming that the aim of the American school is to develop individuality, while in the same breath you demand homogeneity? The two qualities are contradictory.

"Secondly, the scheme is violently undemocratic. If homogeneity of education is really and honestly essential for true Americanism, then abolish forthwith all your great institutions like Yale and Harvard, which are supposed to differentiate their pupils, socially at least, from all other Americans, and which are even differentiated from each other in tone and tradition. The 'Yale spirit' is not Harvard's, nor Harvard's Princeton's, nor Princeton's Cornell's.

"More than that. Close all your expensive private schools which are established everywhere by Americans, yet which are so many sacred and inviolable preserves for the children of the rich—for no plebeian enters there—and dismiss your private governess or be ready to let the public official knock at your door and inquire if what she teaches corresponds in time and matter with the programme of the State. Does this seem absurd? It is done in Germany now and such inspection was seriously proposed in a recent school law before the Legislature of the State of New York. If your rich man does not send his children to the public school lest they should sit side by side with the children of his servants, or of the mechanic or laborer, why should I not be allowed (not that I avoid the poor, for we are mostly poor) to withdraw mine for greater than social or sanitary reasons? Or does the scheme propose that only the children of the poor should be thus homogeneously huddled together? If so, and such is its intent, it is class legislation; it is undemocratic and unjust.

"Thirdly, homogeneity is a foreign importation. It is French and not American. It is precisely what Waldeck-Rousseau is imposing on France with an iron hand at the present moment. He uses the same shibboleth of homogeneity and is perpetrating this great crime of the century by robbery and expatriation. It is the old political scheme of Napoleon Bonaparte, who carried it out so vigorously that his Minister of Education could boast that at any hour of the day he could tell what every child in France was reciting. And the project of a national university in the United States with its centre in Washington as mooted here, is nothing but a recrudescence of that discredited foreign plan of intellectual and political slavery. We object to all this homogeneity, whether in nation, state or city, because it is absolutely un-American, because it is state socialism and because, just as Bonaparte brutally declared that the fundamental purpose of his national university was to inculcate loyalty to the Napoleonic dynasty, so in the same way, homogeneity in city, state or nation will tend infallibly to perpetuate the sway of the political party that happens to be in power. In point of fact, the declaration of the National Education Association which is furthering this project bluntly avows that its purpose is 'to lead public sentiment into legislation when necessary.' This is novel in America, but is not American. We object to it most emphatically for educational reasons also; because just as the Napoleonic university has wrecked genuine education throughout France, as official investigations have shown, the same results are sure to follow here if this scheme is carried out. No better proof of it could be given than the very Declaration which is launched by this National Association of American Education. Its framers style themselves 'educational experts,' and yet are guilty in several parts of the document of an obscurity of thought, an inconsequence of reasoning and an incorrectness of language that would disgrace a dull boy in a common school.

"Lastly, we object to it for patriotic reasons. And this position of ours ought to have especial force at this terrible moment of our country's history. We find in the 'Herald' of September 12, 1901, that the fourth article in the anarchist programme is 'unreligious schools.' Is not that reason enough to multiply our religious schools as a breakwater, and to force all men to co-operate in that federation of churches which is called for by some of the most distinguished men in New York (New York 'Sun,' September 12, 1901), 'in behalf of the spiritual, physical, educational and social interests of family life.' We have all along seen the perils which are now striking such terror into the heart of the country."

I would gladly reproduce the terrible indictment, based upon the acceptance of Rousseau's godless principles by the leading American Protestant educationalists, which Father Campbell launches; but space will not allow. However, we now come to the all-important question of taxation of Catholics for public school purposes. This splendid exposition of the subject I must give in full. It is the best that I have ever read. After showing Rousseau's idea to be a pagan one, revived in modern times, and after proving that because the Catholic loves his country he is opposed to its introduction, as being un-American and unchristian, the author closes with the following admirable exposition :—

"It is especially, we insist, because of this feature that Catholics are antagonistic not, remember, to the public schools as such, but as they are at present conducted. Am I not perfectly within my rights? Am I not wise and prudent, and sincerely and truly patriotic? At the very moment that the leading Protestant educationalists throughout the land are clamoring for religion in education as a safeguard for the Republic, I find that under the pretext of homogeneity and fictitious Americanism, there is a scheme to rob my child in the hours that he is away from me, of what I regard as his best possession; to cheat him out of what I have labored to put in his little mind, the religion, namely, for which I have paid so dearly, and on account of which I am still suffering. Meantime, I ask myself, why, if I am endeavoring to bring up my child a Christian, I should be punished for it? And why from the schools which I support should Christianity be ostracized? Are we not being de-christianized rapidly enough without having our public servants at high salaries accelerate the work.

But I am told: "You are not compelled to send your children to the public schools." "If I cannot avoid doing so except at a considerable expense, I am. Surely that is compelling me." "Do you expect the state then to pay for your schools?" "Certainly." "Never, I am answered promptly and harshly; not a penny of the public funds for sectarian purposes." "Softly, Mr. Official, if it is public money, I have a right to my share. I am of the people. You are the servant and not the proprietor, and are to distribute the public funds justly and not according to your moods and prejudices." "It is no prejudice," is the reply, "it is against the whole spirit of the country to pay for the support of any religious theory. You might as well ask us to support your churches." (New York, "Sun," Sept. 16, 1901). "As to its being against the whole spirit of the country we may disagree, but do not worry about the churches. The 'religious theory' is taught there, and nothing else. We are not asking you to help them. But in the schools it is different. I am giving all the secular training that is given in the State schools. Why should not that be paid for? As for teaching the religious theory, I'll pay for that." "But you must pay the public school tax like every one else." "Every dollar of it, only, I object to paying it twice, which no one else does. But if I teach my children the same things that are taught in the common schools and teach them better, and add, over and above, of my own expense, something which not only betters their characters as men and women, but is absolutely necessary to the country's salvation; if I make them genuine Americans and base their patriotism on a more solid foundation than you can; if while you are compelled to accept any teacher that may be foisted on you by political or other influences, whether he be a Christian or a scoffer, and about whose manner of life I have only your guarantee, whose opinion I possibly may not value, while I can select those of whose abilities and exalted character I am almost absolutely sure; if you are guided in your system by incapable men whose whole time is taken up in commercial pursuits, or political schemes; while I am enjoying the privilege of the learning and experience of those whose whole life is not only devoted but consecrated to the work; if with all that, I am perfectly willing to admit government inspectors, either of the structure or of the requirements of hygiene, and even of the studies (barring of course religion, with which the state has nothing to do) why, pray, when I am conferring such inestimable advantages on the state, which even those who are not friendly to me acknowledge, should I not get the benefit of the school tax which I pay to the state? This is what puzzles me. That I am a sectarian is none of your business; that I am an American citizen ought to ensure me my rights. As to the 'garb' of my teachers, that is as much my privilege as it is the state's to uniform its letter-carriers, or a private corporation its officials. But more than that, I am taught in American history that my country severed its connection with England because it was taxed without representation; that is to say, it was left without the power of determining how the taxes which were levied on them should be applied; but now I discover that you, who are presumably not an Englishman, not only do not permit me to say how they should be applied, but you give my money to somebody else. Is this a new phase of Americanism? If I were a criminal I could understand how I should be debarred, but I am an honest hardworking man for whom every dollar counts; who never have been before the courts, who have the interests of my country at heart, who never can get away from it like my rich friends; who have never stopped at any sacrifice to bring up my children honestly, and if I with my co-religionists have spent millions of money to give them the education which the wisest men in the land, Pratestants as well as Catholics, admit now to be not merely the best but the only safeguard of my country, because it inculcates religion, why should I not be fairly and squarely dealt with and get the benefit of what is levied on me for education?"

"It cannot be done," you say. "It is impossible to make any such division." Amazing! You had no difficulty in collecting the funds in spite of the diversity of the sources from which they are derived; and when I take up my paper in the morning I read that the Board of Apportionment regularly and without trouble assigns money to hospitals, asylums, roads, lamp-posts, schools, etc. Is there any insuperable difficulty in proceeding further with the division, or is the famous American instinct for mathematics disappearing? Can you divide by two but must you no longer be asked to divide by four? Besides you exempt these schools from taxation because of the benefits they confer on the Commonwealth. That is subsidizing them. What is to prevent you then from doing a little more and making your recognition keep pace with the good you receive. He is not a very generous man who is satisfied with not preventing me from enriching him and who takes all I give without thanks. One ought to pay for what he gets."

"We have indeed lost our senses to some extent; but the awful crisis through which we are passing has revealed to us the precipice yawning at our feet. As for ability in practical matters, we have it to a greater degree than other people, and can more easily adjust ourselves to circumstances; and lastly, though perhaps misinformed, we are not wilfully unfair. It can be safely admitted that if these truths are placed squarely before the American people, they will frankly acknowledge and honestly admit them. But this is to be done, not by underhand methods, not by dickering with politicians who will smile and smile, and promise, and then leave us on our back as helpless as before, but by reiterating our position and compelling the people to see that our demand for religious education is not prompted by any sinister design against our fellow-countrymen or their liberties, but by an ineradicable conscientious conviction which events are proving to be well founded, that religion is necessary for the preservation of our country, that it must be implanted in the hearts and the lives of the growing generation, and that there is no other way of doing it than by resorting to the national, feasible and the now widely admitted method of teaching it in the separate schools of the various denominations."

A CATHOLIC CENSUS OF LONDON.

At St. Michael's Catholic Church, Commercial Road, London, recently, Cardinal Vaughan stated that on more than one occasion he had ordered a census to be taken of the Catholic population under his jurisdiction, but for some reason this instruction had not been fully complied with. In the district of Whitechapel alone it had been almost impossible to obtain an accurate statement of the number of adherents to the Catholic faith. Certain it was that a large number of Catholic children—between 400 and 500—were being educated in non-Catholic schools, and were attending Protestant institutions and falling under the direct influence and guidance of non-Catholic leaders. Knowing and realising this serious condition of affairs he regretted to say there were a large number of Catholics who were absolutely heedless of the spiritual welfare of their co-religionists. He had ordered a census to be taken of the Catholic population in order to discover the conditions under which his co-religionists lived.

A MISSIONARY'S EXPERIENCE.

"It is some years since the events I am about to relate happened," Father Clifford said, speaking slowly. "I had just returned from Australia; and I found the work in Whitechapel, London, no less arduous than in Queensland,—indeed, of the two, the life in the colonies was the more agreeable to me."

The missionary paused, as if in thought; and the young priest to whom the words were addressed did not speak. Father Clifford was giving a "mission;" and the curate of Dhune, knowing that the time at Father Clifford's disposal was short, allowed him to tell his story without interruption of remark.

"I presume you know little of a priest's work in such places," he said, in a moment or two; "but you know enough to form an idea of the class of people a priest meets. There was among my flock one man well known for the wild, irregular life he led. His wife, poor soul! had managed to keep one faint spark of faith alive through all the events of a sinful and stormy career; and it was from her I first heard of her husband's dissolute life. James Daly was not an uneducated man, but rather the reverse; so that when I chanced to find him sober, he could talk fluently and intelligently on many subjects. During our first meetings I allowed him to lead the conversation; and, as I never mentioned religion to him, we became almost friendly. When, after a while, I broached the subject. I was shortly answered; but for all that I did not despair of reclaiming him, and managed to visit regularly the wretched rooms he called home. Mrs. Daly, at least, was glad to see me, and often spoke of Jim.'

"'He's not strong,' she would say; 'an', O Father, I sometimes fear that he will be taken sudden! All his people died without much warnin'.'

"I myself noticed that Daly's appearance had altered for the worse; and, indeed, one could hardly wonder at that; for he was seldom sober. But he only laughed at any comment or inquiries concerning his health, till one day at noon when I was fortunate enough to find him at home.

"'Are you taking a holiday,' I asked, entering the room, where he lay on an old sofa.

"'No, Father, but I have a confounded headache.'

"Well, I am glad to catch sight of you, anyhow. Do you know that the Passionist Fathers are giving a mission in our church?

"'I have heard that,' he answered sullenly.

"'Will you not attend the mission, Daly?' I began.

"'No, I won't; and there's an end of the matter—wait,' seeing I was about to speak. 'If I ever go to confession to any priest, it will be to yourself, Father Clifford.'

"'Very well,' I said gladly. 'And why not now? Mind Daly, you are worse, much worse than you suppose.'

"'Are you a doctor, too?' he inquired, with an incredulous shrug of the shoulders.

"'One doesn't require much medical knowledge to see that you are very ill. Listen, Daly: for God's sake, for your own soul's sake, make your confession.'

"'Not now, I tell you, Father,—not now.'

"When, then? Come, fix the time yourself.'

"He looked at me a moment, then with a mocking smile, replied:

"'To-morrow morning at three o'clock.' I manifested no surprise, and he added: 'At that hour exactly.'

"'All right,' I said; "and I hope you are not trying to deceive me.'

"It was an unusual and inconvenient hour to fix; but I determined to be at his side in good time. Indeed, so restless and excited was I that by half-past two I was at his door; and as I raised my hand to knock, the door was flung open, and Mrs. Daly appeared.

"'He is dead, Father,— O God have mercy, he is dead!'

"'Not James?'

"'Yes, yes. Only a few minutes ago he woke me, saying he must be away before you would came. He wanted a drink; and while I was getting it he fell back dead.'

"Yes, James Daly was dead — of heart disease, the doctor said. After a little time, sick at heart myself, I left the place

"The morning was breaking over the city, but there were no stragglers abroad. Before I had gone far I was startled by hearing some one speak my name. I turned, and quite close to me, stood a lady of most unusual beauty. She was richly dressed, and spoke in tones singularly sweet. I was too astonished to speak. At no time are women such as she to be met with in Whitechapel, and my amazement at seeing her there at that hour in the day prevented me from replying when she addressed me. She waited for no reply, however, but mentioned a certain house and street and a woman's name.

"'That woman is dying. Go at once.'

"Involuntarily I turned in the direction named; and when I turned again to speak to the lady, she had disappeared.

"'She must have gone down some alley near,' I said to myself; 'but how suddenly! In God's name I'll seek the place at once!

"So I did, and, with some difficulty, found it. Entering a room bare and dilapidated, I noticed what appeared to be a heap of rags in one corner. Approaching nearer, I saw the figure of a woman stretched on a handful of straw, and covered only by a few tattered garments.

"'My poor woman,' I said, 'you are very ill.'

"She looked at me with wild, eager eyes, but did not speak.

"'Have you been long—' I began.

"'Are you a priest?' she broke in, trying vainly to struggle to a sitting position.

"'Yes.'

"'Then, for God's sake, leave this place—this hell! Go, go!'

"'But don't you want me?'

"'No, no! Want you!' She laughed bitterly.

"'Are you a Catholic?' I asked.

"'I was,' she responded, shortly.

"'Then, poor soul, will you not make your peace with God?'

"'Peace! There is no peace for such as I. I deserve hell. Peace—'

"'There is peace and pardon for all.'

"'No, no, no! There is no pardon for me—none! Why, for thirty years I have sinned—sinned as you cannot know! In all these years I have never prayed—not once.

"'Never prayed!' I repeated mechanically.

"'Never—well, hardly at all. I did dare to say a 'Hail Mary' now and then.'

"'And Mary will pray for you now.'

"She threw up her shrivelled hands with a despairing gesture.

"'Will you go? Why do you stay here to torture me? I don't want you. I did not send for you. Oh, go away—go!'

"'But you did send for me.'

"'It is a lie,—I did not!'

"'For some priest, then,' I answered wonderingly.

"'No. Whom would I send?'

"'Are you sure?'

"'I'll swear so if you like. Will you go way?'

"'No. Listen.' And I told her in a few words of James Daly's death, and of the lady who had sent me to her.

"Who was she?' she asked.

"'God's Mother, I do believe,' I said solemnly.

"She gave a great tearless sob.

"'Say that again, Father.'

"'I do say it.—I do believe that our Blessed Lady has had the pity on you which you will not have on yourself.'

"'Oh, if I could think that, I might hope that God would forgive me if she were to ask Him.

"'God will forgive you,' I replied. 'Remeber His own promise.'

"'If I could think so!' she sobbed. 'O Father, help me! I will make my confession.'

"So she did and I had her removed to a home, where she lingered for three days. She died thoroughly penitent and hopeful; and to-day, I trust she prays for me in heaven. The messenger? I am convinced it was no mortal; and the wisdom of the heart tells me it was the Refuge of Sinners, who is never inpoked in vain."—Annals of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart.

THE SIN OF DRUNKENNESS.

To the one who, with eye and heart, studies the moral conditions of America, it must be apparent that one of the most fruitful sources of crime and misery is the sin of drunkenness. To the one again who considers the various remedies, political, social, moral, religious, that have been offered for this evil, it must be as clear as the sun at noontide that the most efficient is personal total abstinence.

There are indeed some who question the necessity of such a measure. The world of pain and grief, misery and sin, with its heart of ceaseless throbbing activity, lies before them, but they do not seem to grasp the necessity of their doing something to heal the wounds. No doubt many of you have seen the wonderful series of pictures by Tissot that tell the life-story of our blessed Lord and Saviour. If so, you remember the terrible reality with which, even upon the smallest canvas, the agony, the passion and death are depicted. When first they were exhibited I went to see them. The various effects they seemed to have upon the onlookers was as remarkable a study as that of the paintings themselves. Some looked upon them only with a critical gaze. They put the glass to the eye, examined every detail, passed some criticism and walked on. Some, who had displayed the greatest interest until they reached the pictures of the Passion, seemed to be overcome with a loathing at the terrible scenes before them, and then turned quickly away. Other some, and strong men amongst them, gazed with a different feeling in their hearts. The reality of suffering was brought home to them as never before; the thought of their own guilt filled the soul; the face grew pale, and with bowed head and tear-dimmed eye they passed from the hall to the outer world.

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We never know how rotten the tree is until it falls or how unstable the wall until it crumbles, and so in the moral nature of men subtle forces eat their way silently and imperceptibly to the very centre.