

SOME THEMES OF CATHOLIC MAGAZINES FOR MAY.

CATHOLIC FEDERATION. "Is unity in the work, and therefore more decided result from it? Will not the interest in it be more general? Will it not be more intelligent and constant? There is an impression among some that the chief scope of the federation is to be mere protest against certain injustices. But is there not positive work to be done within the church's horizon in our land, and work that may well be fathered and prosecuted by the united Catholic societies? Have the Catholic laity no mission in this great country? These questions almost answer themselves. But if the federation did nothing else than bind together the Catholic organizations of different nationalities into a mighty Catholic unit, a great force always at the disposal of the church authorities, what a blessing it would be! Gradually a thorough Catholic spirit would leave the whole mass, and the source of many scandals and running sores be dried up in the church. Then who can tell what great questions may arise in our country in the future?—questions that perhaps only a federation could adequately grapple with and answer.

The question which gives caption to this article is an open one, and at present a burning one in Catholic circles. Many Catholics of position and experience, both cleric and lay, oppose the movement of federation, and see in it the possibility of danger to Catholic interests throughout the country, while others of equal prominence and ability strongly support it and hope for its speedy accomplishment. Agitation of the question seems, therefore, to be proper, for by agitation and examination the arguments of both will be gradually sifted and federation taken finally from the realm of discussion.

In itself, federation certainly seems to be desirable. The same principle which brings Catholics together into societies makes toward bringing the societies themselves together. If Catholic societies are desirable—and no one doubts it—the union of these societies must also be desirable. Catholics come together into societies for religious, social, and charitable purposes. Constant experience has taught the beneficial effects of these societies. They make the Catholics of a community known to one another; they promote the cause of religion and charity by the constant stimulus of organization. They perform effective work in time of sickness and death; they develop the social side within Catholic lines; they strengthen the hands of the priest; in general, they give power and dignity to the whole Catholic body.

Now, it has been found advantageous to amalgamate Catholic societies of kindred constitution and purpose into State and National organizations, and no one has objected. In fact, it was inevitable, springing as they did from a common principle, they should seek unity and develop State and National organization. These organizations nourished and maintained different objects, aims, and purposes in their institution. With one, it was directly fraternal help; with another, it was total abstinence from intoxicants; with another, patriotism and feeding the fire of love for the "old land;" with another still, the moral and intellectual development especially of the young. But there was one common cause that all loved, and loved beyond everything else—our holy religion. All aimed at promoting its welfare and spreading its sacred influence. This common cause is the strongest bond. It makes common ground for the noblest sacrifice and effort.

We are living in an age and a country of wonderful unification. Nature has uncovered her secrets to bring men closer together. The lightning's flash has bound the ends of the earth together; nay, the wings of the wind now carry our messages. The voice that sounds in New York is heard in its very tone in San Francisco. Each morning, like a mighty snowstorm breaking over the land, the newspapers fall with their despatches and comment into the homes and hands of the people. Space is annihilated and we are all one community, throbbing with the same thoughts, the same feelings, the same impulses, energies, and ambitions. Amalgamation under such conditions becomes almost a necessity. Societies, swayed by one supreme thought, afire with one intense ambition, are bound to pour their energies into one common channel, to express their views by one common voice; in other words, to federate. The conditions of our country have already federated the Catholic societies. The force is there—dormant, pent-up, breaking out fitfully. It needs direction more than cultivation. It is clamoring for result instead of vainly wasting itself. Instead of broken ranks, confused columns, federation is the solemnity and majesty of a mighty host marching ever forward with steady tread and perfect discipline.

If there is work that Catholic societies can do for the good of religion and the welfare of the church, will not that work be more effectually done by a federation of these societies? Will there not be more

unity in the work, and therefore more decided result from it? Will not the interest in it be more general? Will it not be more intelligent and constant? There is an impression among some that the chief scope of the federation is to be mere protest against certain injustices. But is there not positive work to be done within the church's horizon in our land, and work that may well be fathered and prosecuted by the united Catholic societies? Have the Catholic laity no mission in this great country? These questions almost answer themselves. But if the federation did nothing else than bind together the Catholic organizations of different nationalities into a mighty Catholic unit, a great force always at the disposal of the church authorities, what a blessing it would be! Gradually a thorough Catholic spirit would leave the whole mass, and the source of many scandals and running sores be dried up in the church. Then who can tell what great questions may arise in our country in the future?—questions that perhaps only a federation could adequately grapple with and answer.

But the fearful ones see danger ahead in this proposed federation. They declare that it is the kindling of a conflagration which it will take years to distinguish. The birth of all great movements is surrounded by spectres. There will always be voices of fear and protest and warning. And it is well that this is so, for this conservative element constitutes a healthy restraining force. They serve to curb and steady a movement; they purify and strengthen it; they are the crucible from which the pure gold must come. They object that the federation will develop antagonism to the church, and this antagonism will find its vent in a revival of the A. P. A. or some similar agitation. They declare that the whole movement will be misunderstood—will be looked upon as an attempt at the ostracism of our fellow-citizens. The federation of Catholic societies will be the Catholic A. P. A., and as such will be condemned and repudiated by the people. In its train will follow anti-Catholic exaggerations in the thoughts and feelings of the masses, and these be expressed in the political and social banishment of Catholics.

These prophets have little trust in the good sense and faintheartedness of their fellow-citizens. There is no reason why the federation should be misunderstood. It does not burrow in the ground and avoid the light of day. It acts in the open. It trumpets forth its purposes and the means to accomplish them. To compare it with a vile association of evil-minded and secret-plotting bigots is, to say the least, uncalled for and unjust. The channels of information are aplenty; the American public is fair and discriminating. We can leave our cause in their hands and rest assured of a righteous judgment. The federation aims at making men better Catholics and better citizens. Its purpose is to give effectual aid to religion and charity and good order by Christian and constitutional means. If we must suffer in such a cause, our sufferings are our glory; but we fear no such event.

But is there not danger of this movement drifting into politics? Are there not scheming politicians always ready to take advantage and reap personal profit? We are well enough off now, and might not this federation become a storm-centre and spread disaster on every side? There is some truth in these objections, and these possibilities lie before the movement. But the lady in this case will produce its own cure. If the federation is not kept clear of politics it will droop and die. And the same objection holds good against any body of men, any society in our land. Politics with us is like a plague, and there is no telling where it will break out. We Americans carry with us everywhere our intense interest in the government of our country, always kept at burning heat by the newspapers. No matter what we start at, it may turn into politics. A man came to me with a sick-calf one day. What is the matter with the patient? I asked. Well, Father, he caught a cold, but it developed into "delirium tremens." We develop into politics just as strangely. The federation must abstain absolutely from par-

tisan politics. It has no reason to enter them as such, and when it does, it is becoming the tool of designing leaders. But there is a distinction between politics and partisan politics. The latter is a mere scramble for offices and power; the former concerns itself with principles and lies within the domain of morals. Certain political measures are unjust or immoral. A vote for them is a vote against conscience. A vote against them is a vote for truth that cast a freeman's ballot, nor will it discard this great instrument of redressing wrong. In certain grave contingencies the federation should advocate and use this great constitutional means of protecting its rights and redressing wrong. It is the American way of doing things. The ballot is the proper and legitimate expression of the people's will, as it is the bulwark of their rights. Here federation simply means courage enough to demand our rights; patriotism enough to seek them by constitutional means; honesty enough to accept the responsibility of our demands. The American people will respect the federation more for fighting for its rights than for whining over their loss.

But neither the higher ecclesiastics nor the rich laity have given support, or even countenance, to the movement for federation. Is it not rash to move without their sanction and active co-operation. The archbishops of the country are the judges of questions that arise in the church. They have displayed characteristic wisdom in refraining from active participation in the movement. The desirability of federation seems as yet to be an open question. They will neither approve nor condemn, but leave all, as is usual in doubtful matters, to the exercise of that freedom which belongs to them. Later, when the movement has ripened and taken shape, they will speak with no uncertain accent. The rich Catholics are too busy making money or spending it to take any interest in federation. Noblesse oblige; but riches, well, that is different!

Finally, what form should the federation take? Upon what lines should it organize? Perhaps its desirability may be involved in these questions. The tendency at present is to follow State boundaries—to make the federation a league of organized States. The natural and logical method is to unite the different national organizations. The "State" method will entail double work—the upbuilding of State and National organizations. Ohio alone of all the States seems to be organized, and that imperfectly. Moreover, the "State" method will arouse the antagonism of the national organizations now in existence. It makes the federation look like an entirely new organization willing to absorb all the others. If serves to break down and destroy the peculiar objects and lines of their institution. It may put the local society at variance with its national organization, and thus sow dissension and disunion. Federation on its present lines will be a national patchwork, made up of various odds and ends. Already some of the great Catholic orders are taking alarm and holding aloof from the federation. But the "State" method is hardly yet more than a suggestion; it has not even the doubtful dignity of an experiment. It will take time and much thought to launch a movement of such magnitude as the federation. But so readily have the Catholic masses taken to it, so eagerly has it been discussed, that it seems bound to come. May wise as well as willing hands guide its inception!

ANCIENT ROMANS.—Under this caption, Rev. H. G. Hughes, in Donahoe's Magazine, says:—Who does not know the old Roman student—the priest, or the bishop, who passed the days of youth and early manhood within the walls of the great "Alma Mater" in her happier days, and came away with an undying, unquenchable love for her set deep in his heart? Let not any such who may chance upon these lines be offended at the title placed above them—for to be an Ancient Roman needs not more than a ripe middle age. It is not length of days, but rather the sad and sorry changes that have come so quickly, and like

a whirlwind, have swept away so much that was lovely and pleasant to behold, that made the writer choose this heading to this theme. How full of quiet dignity are those worthy men! With how calm a visage do they look out upon the world of to-day! Others may prate of progress and of the need of keeping up with the times. They have seen, they have lived in other times, as far removed from ours by change as if centuries had lapsed between. Each is in truth a "laudator temporis acti." And who shall blame them? For the old majestic Rome has set her seal upon them, and they walk through life upon a higher level for it. Each carries with him sweet memories of the days that are past,—memories which are a fount of strength in the evil days that have succeeded. To have lived in Rome before her enemies possessed her; to have made one in her glorious religious pageants of the past; to have seen the Pope as king, his rights acknowledged and acclaimed by all; to have seen Holy Church exercising unhindered her influence in every sphere of life; to have drunk in learning at the feet of masters who were giants in their day;—is not this to have lived a life well worth the living? Is it any wonder that an almost imperceptible accent of pity should be discerned as those last representatives for us of things that have been, speaking of the days of their youth, draw a contrast between their own lot as Roman students and that of those who wax eloquent upon their own experiences of the Holy City? Readers of that charming volume by the great Cardinal Wiseman, in which, in masterly style, he records his own recollections of life in Rome will understand my meaning. Many there are still with us who lived in Rome during the days that followed upon those whose history it so vividly portrayed in that memorable book. And each has his own store of recollections; never, perhaps, written, but oft and again recounted to sympathetic ears. One will tell how it was the proud privilege of his college to walk close to the Vicar of Christ in some great annual procession, or to carry the canopy over his venerable form—a duty kings have not disdained—in the splendid ceremonies of Corpus Christi, when the great square of St. Peter's was compassed round about by the illustrious throng of the highest in God's Church. Another will tell how he was chosen to preach the sermon in St. Peter's before Pope and Cardinals which by immemorial yearly custom had been delivered by an alumnus of his own particular "Alma Mater." I well remember the enthusiasm with which a worthy priest described to me the kindly action of the kindly Pio Nono who came to him in person to present him with the commemorative medal given on such an occasion, and which had by some mischance been forgotten. Others will tell of chance meetings with the Holy Father during a ramble in the gardens of some princely villa without the walls, and of gentle condescension and fatherly kindness shown to unknown youths by the most exalted personage upon earth. Then there were the grand days of high festival, when the Pope in person graced with his august presence this or that church in the city, and perhaps himself sang the High Mass of the day. Meetings, too, are well remembered with illustrious men whose names are now a part of history. Tales are told of a kindly word of encouragement from some great one, which spurred the bearer on to great accomplishments and higher effort. Memories are there, too, of great teachers, known now only by the volumes that line the walls of college libraries, whose spoken words, more stirring than printed page, are laid up in many a heart, kindling still an enthusiasm that will last as long as life. Many a scene, too, may be recalled at will, witnessing to the deep and fervent piety of the Roman people; to their whole-hearted devotion to the Church, their love for their prelates and priests. And, above all, the Ancient Roman will live over and over again those happy moments when he knelt, perhaps for the last time, at the feet of the common Father of the Flock, to receive his blessing and to hear from his apostolic lips that "God-speed" which made his heart burn within him, and bound him closer than ever

to the cause of God, His Vicar, and His Church. Not all this is changed. Some of these privileges, if more rarely, are still to be enjoyed. But much, alas, has changed; and the Ancient Roman, revisiting the scenes of his youth, may come away indescribably saddened. Some, indeed, I have known, who refused to face the sight, willing rather to dwell upon the happy visions of the past, than to look upon so much that is sad in the present. The younger generation will not, perhaps, entirely enter into such feelings. They have not known, except by hearsay, another state of things than now exists. They count it still, and justly, as it was of old, a high privilege to call themselves by the name of 'Roman,' and they, too, when the time comes, will look back with pride, and in their turn enkindle in others love and admiration for that which is, and ever must be, undying, in the Holy City, that majesty which, for all time, as in a glorious mantle, wraps her round.

SITUATION IN BELGIUM.—In its department "Catholic Chronicle" the "Review," in referring to the situation in Belgium, says:—

Belgium, prosperous, patriotic, religious, has been shaken by a revolutionary earthquake. The cause of it was a socialistic demand for the revision of the constitution; not because there was any popular distress or crying injustice; but, apparently, judging by the character of the outbreak, and a former chapter of Belgian history give a parliamentary exhibition of irreligion such as is occurring in France. The age for voting is at present twenty-one years, and a direct annual tax of forty francs is required as a condition.

The revolutionary movement was undisguisedly international, significantly in concert with those lately excited in the other Catholic countries. The international socialistic bureau of Belgium announced its intention of appealing for aid to all the foreign brethren. The executive committee of the German socialists sent 10,000 marks to help on the cause, and appealed for assistance to all the German socialists. The anti-Catholic character of the movement was pronounced; a few illustrative incidents being an attack on the house of a Catholic deputy, on that of the Little Sisters of the Poor at Liege, the dynamiting of a Catholic club, and the assembling of a vast anti-Catholic meeting.

The trouble had been brewing in the Parliament, where the scandalous conduct of the socialist deputies led to blows, and where one of them grossly and vulgarly insulted the venerable Leo XIII. The king was subjected to outrage in the streets, while the red flag of anarchy was carried in procession. Dynamite was used here and there, and some houses were sacked. Great efforts were made to cause a general strike. Attacks were made on the police, and blood began to flow; in fact, it seemed impossible to prevent a revolution.

The ministry, however, was equal to the occasion. The soldiers were summoned to aid the police. The artillery commanded the streets and the cavalry charged with naked sabres. Brussels was the centre of the storm. A railroad bridge was blown up and the telegraph lines were cut. On Saturday night (April 12th.) it was supposed that a hundred had been wounded and a certain number killed. Thirty-five thousand troops were quickly poured into the agitated country, and the whole civic guard was mobilized. The socialists wished to make a display at the interment of their dead, but they were sternly ordered to bury them without music or emblems, and either at night or before six in the morning. The revolutionists were overawed by the quick and terrible repression, and quiet was speedily restored. The ministry declared that they would take no dictation from the streets, and the Parliament rejected the motion for a revision of the constitution. The Liberals, disconcerted by the vigor of the Government, abandoned the socialists, who are utterly disappointed. The strike is considered a complete failure, more especially as it will be impossible to keep it up until the reassembling of Parliament.

ENDLESS CHAIN PRAYER.—The "Guidon Magazine" refers to this fad of a certain class as follows:—

One of the recent follies in the line of piety is of the "endless chain" variety, and is being circulated by mail or from hand to hand. Like all such humbugs all kinds of promises of favors are made to those who say it, copy it a certain number of times, and find an equal number of foolish people to do the same. Where this prayer comes from it is impossible to say. The prayer in itself may have been at least harmless in its original shape, but being copied and recopied by all kinds of people it has become incoherent, absurd, and scandalous. If our Catholics wish to pray, there are enough authorized prayers in their prayer-book for all their needs. Prayers in the prayer-book are approved by the Church and many of them have indulgences attached. There, too, are the sacraments, especially that of Holy Communion, by which, having purified our souls, we can, with confidence, ask God for special favors for ourselves or our friends, and our demands then will be reinforced by Christ within us. This is the most powerful form of prayer. Let us use it frequently and put into the fire such foolish things as the "endless chain" prayer.

Our Photographer

We are very much indebted to the well known artist photographer, Mr. P. J. Gordon, of 2327 St. Catherine street, for a number of photographs which that gentleman has furnished us with on different occasions, and which, we have no doubt, our readers have very much appreciated. Mr. Gordon is well known in our Catholic circles, and is deserving of all support.

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Report of Superintendent of Public Instruction

The annual report of Boucher de la Bruere, of Public Instruction of Quebec, just issued of its predecessors in interest and suggestion who have at heart the welfare of our people. What strikes us on opening the initial pages, is the list of the two counties and Protestant — a thoughtful reader of educational affairs furnishes none. The generosity here evidenced are paralleled in any other province or nation in the world. After paying a tribute to the late Abbe Levesque, the principal of the Jacques Cartier School, Montreal, and pluming his success, Nazaire Dubois, D.D., tending notes the fact that the triennial Educational Association held last year under the auspices of Dr. McCabe. Among the resolutions approved were one favoring anti-alcohol in schools; one advocating the establishment of a compulsory system in making a resolution having for the formation of a League of Mothers and Daughters of the Law, an educational program.

The Catholic Committee, desirous of having given for the benefit of lay teachers not having the advantage of following the School course, decided to try the experiment of lectures which were to be given during the course of the year to the female teachers of the district of Montreal. The plan was made by His Grace Archbishop to receive in a meeting the female lay teachers to attend the lectures. It was accordingly decided that the lectures should be given at the residence of the superintendent, and should take place at the Marie Convent, graciously the purpose by the Sisters of the Congregation of Notre Dame amount required to pay of the female teachers from the funds at the disposal of the committee. The government's approval, and the lecture place in August last, gratifying success, His Grace Bishop Bruchesi being present twelve lectures given. No 530 teachers attended which will doubtless be an excellent result. Conventional to that held in Montreal take place in several districts; and it is to be that which was held in Marie Convent will not be and last organized in Montreal.

The attendance at the lectures throughout the province of a year dealt with by the satisfactory considering the fact, noted in the "True" few years ago, encountered living in rural and populated portions of the province. The superintendent states that improvements have taken place in school construction and in the establishment of school libraries in recent years, and the recommendation to the legislature to increase the salaries of teachers. He might also have recommended an increase in the salaries of teachers, which, although some improvement within a few years, are still inadequate far below the average salary to teachers in Ontario. We heartily endorse the suggestion made by the superintendent in a report made by the Legislature in December, reiterated in the present report, to call the attention of the legislature to the establishment of schools which might be working classes in our cities. On leaving the school the child who is desirous of a liberal profession has the advantage of going to a classical school, the future merchant can attend commercial academies or the farmers' son can continue farm education in one of our cultural schools. But the man's son has no special where he can learn the trade practice of the trade that