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# The Catholic Record.

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

VOLUME XXV.

LONDON, ONTARIO, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 1902

1271

## The Catholic Record.

LONDON, SATURDAY, FEB. 28, 1902.

### PUBLIC LIBRARIES.

We have received a note from one of our friends criticizing us for our comment on public libraries. He terms it a narrow-minded arraignment, and wonders why the CATHOLIC RECORD ventured to publish it. We are very sorry. But blame not the RECORD. Sometimes, when the editor in chief is not looking, this particular scribe indites a few little things which, thanks to our friends of the printing department, are not thrown into the waste-paper basket.

But still we may say that our inability to see eye to eye with our friend is not a conclusive proof of our narrow-mindedness. We may of course be guilty of it, but until we are shown a more convincing argument than the mere word of our esteemed subscriber, we beg to suspend judgment. We know that distinguished men have spoken in favor of the multiplication of libraries. They have sounded the praises of the beneficent book-scattering iron-master, and called upon us obscure mortals to echo them.

And if we do not respond to their invitation, put it down, if you like, to temperament, narrow-mindedness or any other defect which may please your fancy. We are not easily offended on the matter of epithets. Our article also is hard and thick, and we have during our experience been the recipient of a miscellaneous assortment of certificates of character.

But we are by no means averse to public libraries. When erected with a decent regard for architectural proprieties, it is an ornament to the city. We can point it out to our friend from the rural districts as a testimony to our enlightenment. Among strangers we can dilate upon our worth and progress, and quash all objections by the argument of the myriad books that minister to the intellectual needs of our town. It fosters both personal and civic pride, it says nothing of the taxes. We might say something of the library as the harbinger of the millennium, and exult in the vision of the time when boys and girls will delve into scientific works, and the toiler and idler haunt its portals; but all this is the exclusive property of distinguished men.

We cannot, we must confess, grow enthusiastic on the question of libraries. We cannot view this senseless scattering of books otherwise than as the breeding of superficiality. We regard it as a menace to the intellectual growth of a community. The habit of desultory reading, which is apt to be accentuated by the public library, is a foe to thinking and concentration. We believe that if the young were debarred from every library except that which is in the school-room there would be fewer cases of mental anaemia. This, of course, is our opinion; and we never see boys and girls flocking to a library without thinking that they are thereby handicapping themselves for their struggle with the world.

They are weakening their power of attention and debarring themselves from the acquisition of a discriminating taste in books. They may become versatile and adepts at quoting all kinds of literary chatter, but these things are of little value on the mart of the world. What counts is the power to think, which takes time and toil and application; not the reading of many books, but the mastering of the few. The influence of the one-book man is as potent now as ever. He is always in demand in every department of human activity. He grasps the fact that there is as much room in the world as ever, and he is willing to pay the price for it. The dawdler and book and magazine sucker may bewail the lack of opportunities, but he knows the plain is the offspring of incompetency.

And we say again that this indiscriminate reading—this warping and befogging the mind with all manner of printed words—is the fruitful matter of incapabilities.

Says Cardinal Newman: "I will tell you what has been the practical error of the last twenty years: not to load the student with a mass of undigested knowledge, but to force upon him so much that he has rejected all. It has been the error of distracting and enfeebling the mind by an unmeaning profusion of subjects; of implying that a smattering in a dozen branches of study is not shallowness which it really is, but enlargement which it is not; of considering an acquaintance with the learned names of things and persons—that all this was not dissipation but progress."

We may be told that the public library begets a taste for good reading. We have heard this in addresses, but we do not believe it. If to our mind there is one way more than another of unfitting one to appreciate the good in literature, it is the frequentation of libraries. To be brief: if we rely on what librarians tell us, nearly all the books taken by their patrons are fiction. And by fiction we mean not the great novels, but the frothy, ephemeral kind that are given a semblance of vitality through the energetic and persistent puffery of the hireling critic. But we do not wonder at this. One cannot expect a mind debilitated by literary swill to give heed to the message of a master. He may talk about its beauty, but it is all make-believe. It is not the one who forages here and there for sustenance who can be thrilled by the words of a great author. For him they are words without meaning, because he knows not, nor does he care to know, that the words are but the receptacle of an immortal spirit. He will never understand that the book which he passes by is not a thing of pages but the blood and brain of a man who had something to say. And to understand this, and to gain his companionship, requires drudgery which makes for stability and attention and strength.

Happy the household which has a few well-thumbed books and no tickets for the public library. Happy the home whose doors are barred against the soul-stupefying stuff that is scattered broadcast. If we keep the family book-shelf clean we may have fewer specimens of both sexes whose inane chatter bore the people who have work to do. And we may be certain of seeing young men and women for whom dirt will be dirt whether it be in the sewers of the police court or in psychological studies.

Indiscriminate reading, we are told by Cardinal Vaughan, is perhaps the most insidious form under which the poison of rationalism and unbelief is injected into the soul. Without attracting attention, men, and women too, take up books or magazines that lie about, and, as it were, casually turn to the cleverly written and highly spiced articles against their faith. Their minds have no tincture of philosophical or theological training; they possess no antidote to the poisonous draught. Faith and chastity are equally gifts of God that need careful guardianship; for they that love the danger shall perish in it. To read without necessity matter calculated to create doubt or to sap faith is a sin against religion and the first commandment.

ARTIFICIAL ADVICE.

We have all seen in certain newspapers that column reserved for the purpose of answering the queries of correspondents. And the queries touch upon subjects from international law to the best way of caring for the finger nails. There are hints on etiquette and advice for the young person who is worried about home and "her young man."

Miss Mary Billecox bids us gurgle and the world will gurgle with us, or words to that effect, and entreats us to be serene, to hitch our wagon to a star, etc. At times, we have it on reputable authority, a middle-aged specimen of the male sex, who signs himself "Rachel," indites soulful suggestions for the benefit of perplexed male and female idiots.

If they really wanted advice they could get it at home without paying a cent. But they crave for gush and moonshine. Thanks to them the child-Iss woman discourses sapiently on how to bring up children: the newspaper man, whose society horizon is bounded by press functions and poker parties, writes authoritatively on etiquette; and the hard working scribe intent on getting up copy dispenses doses of sympathy to those who are misunderstood or encompassed by uncongenial surroundings.

The whole business is artificial from top to bottom. The average young man who has work to do, and a liver in working order, does not trouble with this column. The young woman with any claims to common sense receives the advice she needs from her mother. Should she desire to hitch anything to a star she ought to be sure that it is a star, and not something ignited by an overheated self-conceit.

The one trouble with the uncongenially surrounded, and not like other people, is too much time on their hands. A little work with head or hands, coupled with a spice of modesty, would reduce their swelled-headedness and make them of some use. Advice, we fear, would be wasted on them. In fact they are rather superior people, albeit addicted to practices supposed to be the sole property of children and inmates of lunatic asylums. But work of the kind done by ordinary people would save them from being dawdlers and dreamers. And, furthermore, when they acquire the habit of not taking themselves so seriously, they may begin to give us some proof that their beautiful plans are not designed either to attract attention or for self-adoration.

THE ORGANIST.

On our desk is a communication entitled "The Woes of the Organist," with a request to have it published. We cannot. There are possibly in this fair land of ours organists who have much to suffer, but we do not know them. Perhaps, after all, their woes are imaginary. For some good people fret and sigh, grumble and growl over troubles which exist, let us say, in the liver. But, to be exact, one third of their complaining is due to defective health: another third to selfishness: and the remainder to pure cussedness. They read lachrymose books, talk banalities about the hollowness of neighbors and become eventually things to be avoided. And they are always going to do something—and, bear in mind, something out of the common. But, like the trains spoken of by Mark Twain, they start from nowhere and they get nowhere. Now the organists who honor us with their acquaintance make us suffer. We lay claim to the woes. We cannot see why his life should be one grand sweep song because he and the baby are the only specimens of human kind who are allowed to gang their own gait. Watch him in the church. He makes the celebrant wait until he has finished a voluntary or until the quartette has sung about giving us the peace that we despair of ever getting. He revels in this kind of thing. We must await his good pleasure; and, therefore, if there be any white man's burden in this matter, it rests on our shoulders.

PERILOUS JOURNEY.

AN ISLAND MISSION IN WINTER—A SICK CALL UNDER DIFFICULTIES.

During the past week the people of Kelly Island were treated by their zealous pastor, Father Schoendorf, to a series of lectures for non-Catholics. While the island is delightful in summer it is equally bleak and dreary in the snow-bound winter. I shall not attempt to describe my getting to the island in a little row boat, with a small sail above to catch the helping wind and with runners beneath like a sleigh. The lake was frozen for about a mile or more out from the shore. Over this ledge of rough ice we pushed the boat, myself and Uncle Sam's two faithful mail carriers. As we came to the end of the ice ledge we piled into the little bark, and there we were, afloat in an open boat, with the heavy winter sea to plow through, the waves dashing high over our boat, which we had coasted to haul, and several miles of journey before us.

When we reached the mile of ice that hems in the island, we turned over our boat to let the water out and then pushed it over the ice home. I thought of St. Paul, but happily had humor enough to be humble. Thank God we arrived at the island safe and sound, and I hope none the worse for a wave-bath. The following description of a sick call to Put-in-Bay, made by Father Schoendorf shortly after his arrival here, was written for a Sandusky publication. It suggests that the United States is still a mission country in more ways than one: "The change of pastors fell in January. Arrived at Marblehead, the newcomer, a stranger to the lake regions, beheld in the misty distance a dark strip of land, bleak and storm-beaten, in a sea of floating ice—his parish, his home, 'The Pearl of the Lakes.' As he got into the little rowboat that January afternoon, and with pole in hand, started to make his way through those four miles of wind-tossed ice, he felt unused to the lakes, he hardly realized the meaning of the dock hands' rough salute: 'I wouldn't cross for \$10!' till it was too late to turn back.

"But heaven! how he realized it three days later when he received a sick call from Put-in-Bay—a man dying! Put-in-Bay, twelve miles up the lake and a flat-bottomed rowboat to carry him thither! It was 10 o'clock in the morning when he started. The lake is choppy; an ominous wind is rising, with grim determination he sets out, bearing the breast, fearful only that he may be too late for his mission of mercy. \* \* \* Crash! the ragged ice cakes dash against the boat. He fights the floating block with the long pole. The boat turns and circles and drifts about in the sullen wind that pierces the novice sailor. Minutes have passed into weary hours and the winter sun is already sinking in the crimson west. On a ledge of ice the priest kneels and with frozen hands bails the water from his boat, heavy, lashed full of water. An appalling picture in the waning afternoon, with the island and its dying watcher far away! \* \* \*

"The wind is increasing in force; but it has veered around, Madly it tosses the boat, frightfully; but onward now, always onward toward the island. Does the demon of the tempest obey a higher power, that it thus hurries the bark to its goal? Faster they ride in the teeth of the storm, a race with death for a soul.

"He is here! The prayer, O Lord, Thy servant in peace!" Quickly, priest of God, thy Victim to the soul that flutters on a journey more perilous than thine! Yes, none too quickly. Ere the priest had set aside his icy vestments the soul of the old Canadian had fled.

The mission was a very grateful one. The town hall the first night and the parish church for seven nights more were taxed even to their standing-room capacity; and what is more, as many as three-fourths of the four hundred present were generally non-Catholics. The last night many Catholics kindly left the church to make room for their non-Catholic friends.

There are three non-Catholic churches on the island, two of which are closed and without a pastor, while the third, a German Methodist house, held revival services all week with a dozen old men and women in attendance.

The closed churches are a congregational and a Lutheran. With sixteen hundred people on the island and six hundred of these in the Catholic Church, there remain about one thousand people, without church affiliation, largely respectable Americans. Of the six hundred Catholics of the island at least one-half are members of the great Slav family whose honest brow is conquering so many localities.

A great deal of literature was eagerly taken home by the non-Catholics; and a repetition of the mission each winter is promised by the energetic pastor, who, in answering the many questions of the box, showed himself as able as he was zealous for the cause.

Next week we shall give lectures at Put-in-Bay and North Bass Island. (REV.) C. A. MARTIN.

SOCIALISM AGAIN.

We print elsewhere in this issue another letter from our esteemed correspondent, Mr. O'Donnell, of Frontenac, Kan. We have time only for a few comments on it.

1. When the priest preached against the sin of theft he did what the Socialist Karl Marx type could not consistently do, for in philosophy there is no such thing as theft, no such thing as sin. All events in the comely or tragical of human existence are mere links in the endless chain of evolution over which men, individually or collectively, have no control whatever. When the incorrigible pigmy approved of what you would call the priest's "double-edged ethics," he showed that he was intellectually right and that he knew his life did not square with his knowledge. If the sermon failed to reform him, it was not through lack of knowledge on his part.

Now, if, as you imply, we said, "Divil a word of a lie," do you propose to let what we said rest as lightly on your conscience as the pilferer let the sermon rest on his?

(2) The heaviest burden is an intelligent free agent he is bound by the principles of ethics or the moral law, and if teaching him those principles is a fruitless task, it is much to be regretted. If he intends to disregard those principles and shuts his ears against them it would be a foolish loss of time to attempt to teach them to him. He is a free agent, and he has of self-preservation must look carefully after him and prevent him from doing it harm.

(3) You think that when a heavily burdened man is tendered assistance he is not likely to stop to ask his would-be helper what his religious belief is. True, he might not stop to ask that question. But if he knew his would-be helper's principles, and knew that if they were applied to him they would increase his burden and render him absolutely helpless and hopeless until the proper link in the endless evolutionary chain would come round, if ever, the burdened man would hesitate and say, "Why do you offer to help me while you believe all help, human or divine, is impossible?"

If the would-be helper would go a step further in Socialism and say, "My plan is this, I will put a dynamite bomb between your load and the small of your back, light the fuse, and your load and you will separate; the burdened man would prefer to seek some other method of relief, that is, if he did not contemplate suicide. Socialism is the atheistic, evolutionary type is social suicide. You fall into a sophism when you assume that the Socialist would be a helper can relieve you of your burden. You confound a promise with the execution of it. They are very different things.

(4) Had Robert Emmet proposed atheistic, evolutionary Socialism to the Irish people as the means of escaping from their yoke, they would have treated him as a lunatic, and their sympathy for him would be of an entirely different character from what it is now. The Irish people, being Catholics, would have known that any movement based on atheistic principles would be in antagonism with their Faith, and they would have none of it. You say Emmet was an infidel. That we know not; but of one thing we feel certain, had Emmet based his movement on infidelity and proposed a republic whose foundation was to be a negation of Catholic Christianity, the Irish people would not have raised a hand to help him, nor

would they have been saddened by his fall.

5. Our point concerning the ballot is this: if a people, living under a system of government that recognizes their will as the law and gives them the ballot by which their will may be expressed, cannot free themselves from undue burdens and protect themselves from invasion of unsatisfactory conditions, it is useless to appeal to them to take care of themselves under any other system of government. You admit that the ballot is a most efficient weapon, and that those who desire remedial measures are in the majority. You then ask, Why do they not exercise their rights and have their own way?

If, having the power to have their own way, they yet do not have it, the reason must be that they are not intelligent enough to use the means in their hands. And if they are not intelligent enough to use "the most efficient weapon," the ballot, what hope can you have that they will be intelligent enough to do any better with any other weapon under any other system of government? All you say on this point goes to prove the utter imbecility of the American people, because under the most favorable conditions they cannot take care of themselves. Then you should advocate a caretaker who would pay no attention to their imbecile wishes, but govern them, rule them and drive them, and compel them to be happy in spite of themselves. Suppose that is imperial reason as we may, we always come back to the conclusion that a people that cannot take care of themselves under the most favorable conditions and with the most efficient means in their hands cannot take care of themselves under any less favorable conditions, and that there is, therefore, no hope for betterment in any other way than the voter has to offer.

You say the voter has no choice, he must vote for the man set up for him, eat the dish cooked for him. So long as the voters have the employing of the cook they should dictate the dish to be set before them.

But granting for a moment all you say on this point, we ask, What hope can you have of better cooks under a Socialist regime? Under our present system, parties, conventions and platforms are necessary. They are equally necessary under any other system of free government.

Your reference to abuses and atrocities has in it a sophism, because all the time you quietly assume that none of these things would take place under a Socialist regime. Socialism has a free hand at least once. It was in France, and it led to the Reign of Terror and an emperor.—N. Y. Freeman's Journal.

THE ROYAL DECLARATION.

We are sorry to have to revive a controversy which necessarily causes the bitterness of a religious quarrel to mingle with the common unpleasantness of English public life. Unhappily it is not a matter in which we have any choice. When the late queen died the voice of English Catholicism was gagged because all men knew that it was altogether too late to act, and too late to protest.

We had to stand by in helplessness while the central tenets of Catholicism were publicly insulted from the steps of the throne. We recognized the situation and no word was spoken by The Tablet until the thing was done. There was no machinery within the constitution for altering the terms of the Declaration without the cooperation of Parliament, and the statute required that the coronation ceremony be offered to the King to the religion of millions of his people before Parliament assembled. The declaration was complete. Moreover, apart from the futility of the protest, there was another consideration which had weight, and it concerned the King. We pointed out that his Majesty might, with some show of reason, have approached his Catholic subjects in some such terms as those: "You know more than thirty years that this declaration would have to be made at the beginning of a new reign, and for sixty years you acquiesced and did nothing. Is it quite fair, when by your negligence it is too late, suddenly to turn and attack me when I cannot help myself? That plea seemed reasonable, and we felt stopped from speaking one word of reproach until the outrage had been accomplished.

With that silence, however, in our judgment the limit of concession was reached, and it would surely be to our everlasting shame if we now acquiesced in Mr. Balfour's poor plea that, the words having been spoken, there is no longer a practical question before the country. The Declaration has been made, and will not be called for again until the beginning of another reign, and so why not wait until another sovereign ascends the throne—when his ministers of the day, with equal gravity and equal grace, will explain that really there is no practical question before the country, because the Declaration can be altered only by Parliament and must be made before Parliament can meet to alter it. It comes to this: There is no practical question during the present reign, because the Declaration has already been made, and when a new reign begins there will still be no practical question, for the sufficient reason that it will then be too late to prevent a repetition of the outrage. At present the law arranges that the Catholics of the Empire should be insulted periodically, and as we were proclaimed idolaters only a few months ago there is respite for the present. The point at issue is this, and this only: are the Govern-

ment determined that the outrage shall be repeated at the earliest opportunity, that is upon the first opportunity which legally presents itself? Surely the amount has been reminded solemnly enough that the ways of Death are beyond reckoning, and that the happiest of reigns may be ended suddenly. Are the Catholics of the Empire content to fold their hands and do nothing, knowing all the while that the accession of a new Sovereign must necessarily bring a repetition of this public and mortal insult to all they hold dear? And what is it we ask? Surely a little thing enough. We live in a free country, and the will of the majority prevails. The People chooses that none but a Protestant Sovereign should rule over England. That is the law, and we as a minority acquiesce. All we ask is that Parliament, while requiring the Sovereign to belong to the Protestant faith, should keep its hands off our religion and leave the King to profess his own.

Surely it does not pass the wit of man to devise a formula which should be descriptive of Protestantism without at the same time selecting Catholic doctrines for explicit denunciation. We have not the slightest wish to dispute the right of the majority of the electors to insist that the King shall be a Protestant. Our quarrel now is not with the Protestant succession. What we object to is the picking out of the central tenets of the Catholic faith for special repudiation at the most solemn moment of the Sovereign's life.

That is a gratuitous outrage which has nothing whatever to do with the Protestant succession. Suppose the majority of the electors desired to have none but red-haired men for their Kings, surely it would be possible to embody that odd restriction in a statute without holding up all the people who happened to have black hair to public odium. We should be quite content, for instance, to see the amendment drafted by Lord Lansdowne made part of the law of the land. By that amendment the formula by which the Protestantism of the King would be secured would read: "I, A. B., by the grace of God, King of Great Britain and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, do solemnly and sincerely, in the presence of God, profess, testify and declare that I do unfeignedly believe in the doctrines of the Church as by law established in this realm, and I do reject all doctrines opposed to or inconsistent with the tenets of the Church." Why will not such a formula suffice? For our part, in the name of those principles of tolerance and religious liberty which the Catholic Church is so often led to champion in this country, we protest against the whole of this belated and foolish policy of religious tests. Why deny to the king that liberty of conscience which is not refused to the poorest of his subjects, and is freely granted to the most powerful of his ministers? If, however, the Protestant majority, using its constitutional rights, insists on tests, if inherent intolerance of the creed which interferes to rest upon the sacred right of private judgment makes it impossible to grant liberty of conscience to the Sovereign, at least let them be content to declare his belief in the creed appointed for him by Parliament, and forbear from denouncing from the steps of the throne the faith of millions of his people.

The need of the moment is that the Catholics of this country, and indeed of the whole Empire, should recognize that this question of the Royal Declaration is a pressing and practical issue which ought to be dealt with here and now. The king's illness and the trace imposed by the coronation ceremonies were a sufficient justification for inaction during the late session. With the reassembling of Parliament those reasons disappear. We earnestly invite the Catholic Peers, therefore, to take counsel together as to the best way of bringing the question to an immediate issue. We cannot help the Protestant succession, and if we acquiesce in that, as we needs must, it ought not to be impossible to devise a formula which, while satisfactory to the Protestant feeling of the country, should leave the Catholic religion alone.—London Tablet.

A PROTESTANT UNIONIST ON ORANGEISM.

Here is an illuminating extract from Mr. T. W. Russell's admirable book, "Ireland and the Empire" (page 249): "And who are these people who fight these squalid battles on the streets of Belfast in the name of Protestantism? Protestants, forsooth! If the truth be told, they rarely enter a church door; they never subscribe a sixpence for the furtherance of any form of religion; they bellow on the streets about the Pope and about the Protestant religion. The public house is their temple, the publican is their high priest. They preach a gospel of hate and of hatred that would disgrace a race of savages.

"This is the spirit which disgraces the great Northern capital, and discredits the entire province. Its grosser exhibitions are almost entirely confined to Belfast, Portadown, and one or two similar centres; but the spirit of the thing is everywhere throughout the province. It takes innumerable shapes, but hatred of Popery, and even of Papists, is everywhere."

Oblivion is the dark page whereon memory writes her light-beam characters, and makes them legible; were it all light, nothing could be read there any more than if it were all darkness.—Carlyle.