

ROMANISM IN FICTION.

BY AN OCCASIONAL CONTRIBUTOR.

Under the heading "Romanism in Fiction," the "Fortnightly Review," for April, contains a lengthy and most bewildering contribution signed "W. Sichel." The title and the fact that the article consists of a series of quotations from several romances, all purporting to prove the error of the Roman Catholic system of authority as contrasted with the Protestant one of private judgment, cause the reader—at first glance—to expect a somewhat lucid essay; but Carlyle's "Awfully Deep" is shallow in comparison. The writer complains of certain doctrines being "strangely mystified by theologians," and he immediately proceeds to mystify his own readers with a most profound set of arguments couched in language that demands a dictionary, as a companion to the essay, and bristling with expressions that convey little or no idea of the conceptions of the one who uses them. Life is too short, time is too precious, and the daily output of literary productions is too extensive to justify any ordinary individual in cracking his brain, in an attempt to master Mr. Sichel's apparently erudite introduction. The writer of the present review confesses himself incapable of a long-sustained effort of the kind. The task before the one who desires to fathom the meaning of Mr. Sichel's language is calculated to make him so weary that he is liable to finally fail in grasping the purport of the whole contribution.

In order to arrive at the all-important question, "Is man to work out his own salvation, or is it to be worked out for him?" the author of the essay under review begins by leading his readers through the Ontology of the Ancient Greeks "the sense of duality which has from the first oppressed the human mind," the deontological subjects of Hebrew study, the "metaphysical side of physical phenomena," the "ethics of mere experience," the conflict between monarchic and democratic principles, the "metaphysical and theological hostility between determinism and volitionism," Latin Christianity succeeding to pagan Caesarism, the disapproval of the "congruism" of Molina, the arbitrary predestination of Coloni, the communism of pristine Christianity, and so on through a score of byways that are all hedged in with close set lines of profound nothingness, and "words of learned length and thundering sound."

Having fairly succeeded in bewildering the reader, the author informs us that "the Roman Church for centuries engrossed the art, the thought, and the statescraft of Europe; and now that all absolutism is on the wane, it is compassing the capture of democracy."

We are at a loss to know why the author of the essay on "Romanism in Fiction" could not have made the above plain statement, without performing the unnecessary feat of solving a regular "Chinese puzzle"; unless his aim was to impress us with an idea of his extensive knowledge in matters philosophical and theological. And yet even this last quoted assertion has apparently nothing to do with the purpose of the whole article. He tells us, in the following paragraph, that "The Roman Church is superior to the Puritan, in that she does avow a principle of development . . . that a Church to be effective must have formularies is evident. . . . The position of Romanism thus resolves itself into one of inspired infallibility, just as that of Protestantism does into one of combined authority and inquiry."

So far we have followed from page

to page over anxious to know what all this has to do with fiction. Suddenly we are confronted with a number of extracts, one from each romance or story, but all devoid of any contexts, or explanations. These extracts are from "Loss and Gain," by Cardinal Newman; "L'Abbe Tigrane," by M. F. Fabre; "Lothair," by Disraeli; "John Inglesant," by J. H. Stothhouse; "Rome," by Emile Zola; "Hebeck of Barnisdale," by Mrs. H. Ward; and "Evelyn Innes," by G. Moore.

That these novels, romances, fictions, or whatever they may be called, have anything to do with the metaphysical and theological differences between Romanism and Protestantism—as enunciated by Mr. Sichel—we fail to perceive. Above all we cannot conceive how he expects his readers to accept Disraeli—in his light and fantastic fiction—or Zola—in his abominable mockeries—as authorities upon these matters affecting the all-important questions of "Justification," "Atonement," "Private Interpretation," "Papal Authority," "Infallibility," and dogmatic differences as existing between sections of Christendom. Cardinal Newman may cause Carlton—the tutor of his hero Reding—to make use of certain language and certain arguments, which are not in accord with Catholic teaching; but if Mr. Sichel sees fit to reproduce such language and such arguments, he should, in all honesty, accompany them with their refutations. Newman places statements upon the lips of some of his characters, for the purpose of having them confuted by others of his fictitious creations; but no reasonable reader will attribute to Newman the principles, the ideas, the language which he purposely gives expression to that he may the more forcibly emphasize their contraries.

Because M. Fabre, in his romance, paints the Abbe Tigrane as a priest who seeks—in his ambition—to use every possible means to reach an episcopal throne, and also would gladly become a candidate for the Papacy, it surely is not serious or fair to take an extract from that romance, to make that imaginary character express his ambitious views, and then to argue therefrom that such is the spirit, the "modus operandi," the systematic methods of the Catholic hierarchy. It is certainly true that Disraeli—in his "Lothair"—intended to paint Cardinal Manning in his leading character "Cardinal Grandison"; but how can a writer—of the profound and serious class to which we expect Mr. Sichel claims to belong—imagine that a few of Disraeli's expressions can "shed a light on Rome's attitude towards doubt; or adumbrate her secular policy?"

Worse still is the taking of two short extracts from Zola's "Rome," and striving to construct an anti-Roman argument upon such a basis. One extract is from the words of the Abbe Froment, one of Zola's fictitious characters—words that mean absolutely nothing, beyond the expression of the Abbe's disappointment on finding that the Congregation of the Index has prohibited a book which he has written; the other extract consists in a few lines that the present Holy Father is made to speak. "The words might have been spoken by Leo XIII., and yet not be at all adverse to his actual expressions on socialism and kindred subjects; but the fact remains that they were not the words of the Pope, but of the romance writer Zola. Why make use of such an author's language, or that of a person, like Mrs. Ward, who has

no fixed principles in reality, and whose knowledge of Catholic doctrine is most vague and erroneous, in order to reach a conclusion in the great struggle after eternal Truth?

We have thus followed, as best we could, this peculiar writer, from the Ontological compositions of the Greeks down to the demonological vapourings of Zola, under the constant impression that his aim is to prove that "justification by faith alone," or that "private interpretation" of the Scriptures, or that "the all-sufficing atonement, by Christ," or that some other principle of theological study is more in accord with reason, or with revelation, than the Catholic doctrine of the Church's authority and the Pope's infallibility. But we have been mistaken. No such aim has Mr. Sichel ever had. We then ask ourselves: "What on earth is he driving at?" Let us see if we can discover the conclusion or conclusions at which he seeks to arrive. He thus summarizes his own article:—"We have examined the principle of dogmatic infallibility as propounded by one of Rome's greatest doctors, and that of her administrative authority as portrayed by a shrewd observer of Provincial France. We have touched upon her profane diplomacy as interpreted by a great statesman, and on her esoteric philosophy as rendered by a master of religious thought in the seventeenth century. We have mentioned her domestic impurity. We have not neglected her solace of the senses. . . . Her devotion, her heroism, her perpetuation of spiritual courage and charity—these are immortal, as they are in all forms of Christianity. . . . But she has already ceased to be Catholic. . . . She is inflexible. She will become a sect."

"There is only one step from the sublime to the ridiculous"—or from the "Capitol to the Tarpeian Rock." Rarely have we ever been carried so far aloft in the realm of expectation to be suddenly cast down and overwhelmed with a sense of the ridiculous. We have toiled through all these pages, and all these wonderful subtleties, simply to discover that the profound Mr. Sichel has fully examined the principle of dogmatic infallibility through the reading of forty lines clipped out of a novel by Cardinal Newman, and that he has learned all about "Romanism"—dogmatically, morally, socially, historically—from a page of Disraeli, and a couple of pages by Zola and Mrs. Ward. And even after having made this marvelous discovery we are still more astonished on finding that the whole essay leads up to one conclusion—a most obviously false one—that because the Catholic Church is "inflexible," therefore "she will become a sect." In other words, the erudite author takes all this trouble to inform his readers that the Church of Rome is unbending, unchangeable, immutable, "inflexible"; and that as a consequence she is no longer Catholic, but is about to become a Protestant sect. There is a raving and raving; there is the raving of the madman, whose mind has moldered and whose faculties are forever darkened; there is also the raving of the deeply read man of shallow ideas, the exemplification of the poet's line, "a little learning is a dangerous thing." Of all the fictions—not of "Romanism," but of illogical, irrational, impotent anti-Romanism—this article is the most absurd, while being the least imaginative—that we have ever read.

DANGERS OF VULGAR SONGS AT ENTERTAINMENTS.

FROM A READER OF THE "TRUE WITNESS."

Let me have the making of the amusements of the people, and I care not who makes their laws, is an adaptation of an old saying in the present instance. There seems to be much truth in this. On the other hand, there seems to be nothing so much without direction as this very amusement of the people, as in theatricals, concerts and such. The applause of a promiscuous multitude is the criterion of success. And it would appear that no such entertainment can be given without throwing a sop to Cerberus in pandering to the vilest passions directly or by suggestion. This is too bad. Parents even are so blind that they think nothing of alluring their innocent children to appear on the stage in immodest dress, and to sing songs or dance according to the style of the lowest theatre actresses. This is not as it should be. There should be careful revision of all that is to be placed before the public. Decent people are shocked to see want of modesty in dress or man-

ner in our pure young girls; to hear them utter low sentiments in their songs, or declamations to hear songs with a catchy air, teaching blasphemous irreverence. It is too bad if we have to go to the lowest coon songs for our amusement.

There is plenty of wholesome and entertaining melody, although it does seem that there is a dearth of composers of the right kind at present. If we have nothing worth singing at present then "Let us sing the old songs." Those who undertake the entertaining of the public should understand that they assume a serious responsibility and it is a crime to put forth anything improper, because it teaches evil in a pleasant way, which is the most dangerous of all. We seek competent teachers for our children in other departments, let us do the same thing in this. Every public utterance in song or otherwise should be carefully examined by those able to judge.

We do not want to listen to vulgar

songs, or see low acting of immoral theatres and concert saloons reproduced in our select concerts, nor to have those sickening sentimental songs with the accents of despair in them which like those thrashky novels are so common.

A censorship on the mental food of our people is far more important for the public welfare than even the supervision of the staple articles of food. Both seem to be neglected, and our people are the prey to adulterations in both the mental and hygienic sphere.

King Oscar of Sweden.

The Springfield Republican tells the following very characteristic story—"King Oscar of Sweden, who takes much interest in education, dropped into a school incognito not long since, and asked some questions in history. A request for the names of the greatest kings of Sweden brought out the answers, "Gustavus Adolphus," "Charles XII.," and "Oscar II." The last answer amused the king; and, turning to the little one, he said, "Can you mention any celebrated exploit of his reign?" The

child turned red, showed signs of coming tears, and faltered forth. "I don't know any." His Majesty kindly patted her on the head, and remarked: "There is nothing to cry about, my dear, I don't know of any, either."

DEATH OF REV. FR. MORRILL.

In recording the death of the Rev. Charles W. G. Morrill—a priest, whose name is familiar in Montreal, and whose characteristics of devotion, zeal, humility and sacrifice have rendered him dear to hundreds—we feel that we are imparting to many of our readers a piece of news that will bring sorrow to their hearts. The sad event took place on Wednesday 26th April, at Hartford, Conn. Along illness preceded the loss of Father Morrill's exemplary life. He had completed his theological studies at the Grand Seminary of Montreal; and



THE LATE REV. FATHER MORRILL.

acted as professor, for some time, at St. Mary's College, Blouin Street. Appointed by His Grace the late Archbishop Fabre, he spent two years as assistant to Father Donnelly, in St. Anthony's parish. Thence he went to the diocese of Hartford, where, after laboring successfully in several parishes, he became pastor of one of the most important churches in the diocese. His friends in Montreal, as well as in Hartford, are legion, and none will miss him more than Father Donnelly of this city, whose associate he had been in the work of St. Anthony's.

On Friday 28th April, the remains of the late pastor were interred at New London, where the obsequies were held. The deceased priest had been a model of zeal and energy; he was entirely devoted to the cause of the Church—the glory of God and the salvation of souls—and the hundreds of his intimate friends, while lamenting his death, unite in fervent prayer for the eternal rest of his soul.

Pointers For Young Men in Business.

It is one thing to secure a good position, and another to hold it. The former too often requires proper address, tact, favor, friends, appearance and the good answers to many silly questions; the latter depends largely upon merit.

One of the first and most important requisites for holding a situation in business, is fidelity to an employer's interests. It is lamentably true, that nine out of ten young people, and older ones, too, for that matter, work only for the salary which they receive. Not more than one in ten work for the purpose, and with the spirit, of promoting the success of his employer's business. To put life, energy and spirit into your work, whatever it may be; to study and to think as to how you can best perform your duties, to plan and arrange in advance, so that to-morrow's work may be the most effectual; to be as diligent and as zealous when alone as when your employer is near. These are the qualities which make a person almost invaluable in a business position.

Men who receive high salaries and fill high and good positions, are seldom time servers. They are men who throw their entire energy and ability into the service of the house and work as though the success of the enterprise depended entirely upon themselves. Men of that kind are rare, so rare that they are noticeable, and are sought after by successful firms.

Fidelity to an employer's interest in the discharge of every duty, thoroughness and pains-taking care in whatever is undertaken, will perhaps do more to hold a situation than almost any other quality. Employers are, as a rule, quick to detect a want of interest in the part played as to allow the employer to so quickly, and so completely destroys the prospects of the young employee as to allow the employer to get an impression that you are a headless time-server, or working merely for the salary you get.—The Catholic Religious Youth.

—For Boys and Girls.—

CONDUCTED BY T. W.

GETTING ACQUAINTED.

I got acquainted very quick. With Teddy Brown, when he Moved in the house across the street. The nearest one, you see.

I climbed and sat upon a post To look, and so did he; I stared and stared across at him And he stared back at me.

I s'posed he wanted me to speak. I thought I'd try and see— I said, "Hello!" to Teddy Brown; He said "Hello!" to me.

St. Nicholas.

Manliness.

We exhibit our manliness in our conversation and in our actions; and in both of these the gentleman will show his manliness to be gentlemanliness. That is, the first quality of a true gentleman is gentleness; for he is a gentle man, not a rough or boisterous one. Gentleness implies the possession of a good heart, one that takes pleasure in the happiness of others, does everything that may add to their pleasure or take away from their inconvenience. A gentleman will never say a word or commit an action which can give unnecessary pain to any one—man, woman or child, high-born or low-born, rich or poor, learned or ignorant. The man possessed of a little false politeness may show himself well-mannered in presence of the accomplished, the great and the wealthy, but the real gentleman shows himself well-mannered in presence of all persons without regard to race, birth, color or fortune. If all our young readers will strive to acquire this sort of manliness they will possess one of the most important factors that form a good character.

A Dog's Devotion.

Another illustration of the devotion of animals occurred recently, the chief actors being two dogs belonging to a Mr. Pitkin, one an Irish and the other an English setter, says the Argus. The dogs are devoted to each other, and are together almost continually. Last Saturday the Irish setter went on the ice on the river behind Mr. Pitkin's residence and broke through when near the opposite side, being precipitated into the water. The animal made desperate efforts to get out, but the ice continued to break on the edge under its paws every time it attempted to climb out. In this way the dog moved too near the centre of the river, where the swift current commenced to draw it under the ice. When the dog broke into the river the English setter appeared to be greatly disturbed, and when it failed to get out rushed up and down, evidently trying to devise some means or plan for a rescue. When, however, the dog commenced to be drawn under the ice the English setter set up a heart-breaking howl and ran to the barn, where George Fitzgerald was at work, and barking and evidently trying to tell him to follow, at last got him to the river bank, where he saw what had happened and pulled out the other animal from the river. When the Irish setter reached the shore the other barked and made the most extravagant demonstrations of joy, lapping the other and plainly showing that it realized the danger from which the other had escaped and its thankfulness therefor.

Button Houses

Did you ever make button houses? If not, you might like to hear of two little girls, says the Youth's Companion who did. It was too wet to play out-of-doors, and they were tired of dolls and all other "boughten" toys. They borrowed their mamma's button-box,—such as every mamma has in her sewing room—and emptied it, contents of the table. First they selected all of the common white buttons that were of the same size, and laid them down in the form of a square about six inches across. That was the "house," and the different rooms were made by checking of this big square with smaller white buttons, thus making four rooms of equal size. The doors were easily made by removing a button wherever they thought best.

For furniture in the dining-room there was a large brown-cloak-button for a table, and three small brown cloth-covered buttons for chairs. For the parlor and sitting-room chairs there were odd fancy buttons of steel smoked pearl, and one of velvet. A square mother-of-pearl button and one of blue glass were the centre tables, and a suspender button which was found in the box was voted to be a beautiful piano, with a round brass

button for a stool to make it complete. For a couch, they put two square bone buttons together, with a red velvet button for a pillow.

In the kitchen they had four black coat buttons for chairs, and a big black coat button for a stove, "because," as they declared, "the four holes made to sew through make it look just like the holes in the top of a stove!" (They did not observe that the dining room table was made after this same plan, so no mention was made of the fact.)

No button could be found that would do for a bed, so they pretended that the family that lived there were very healthy, and never became tired or sleepy.

Who lived in the house? Why, buttons of course! Mr. Button was a black vest-button; his wife was sometimes one kind and sometimes another, for as often as she changed her dress she was an entirely different button! Their child was a tiny pearl button, like those upon the girls' dresses. This family seemed to lead a very gay life—going out riding every day in their button carriage and having balls, dinners and receptions, to which all their friends (the buttons remaining in the box) were invited.

This continued until the ten-bell rang, then the girls "made believe" to be a cyclone, and swept the house and family back into the box, there to remain until the next time they were needed.

His Grandpa Boiled the Eggs.

"It is half past eleven," said grandpa, "and the mason will not have the chimney fixed before three o'clock."

"Then, I suppose, we must go along with a cold lunch," said grandpa.

"Well," said grandpa, after a moment, "perhaps I can find some eggs. I will try it."

"But isn't it too windy to make a fire out of doors?" asked grandpa. "I shall not need a fire," said grandpa.

"That sounds like a joke," said Edith.

"No joke at all, said grandpa. "Come out and see. And bring the eggs," he added, "and a can with a tight cover."

When a few minutes after, grandpa and Edith went out in the back yard, grandpa was putting some fresh lime in an old pail.

He took the can of eggs they brought and filled it nearly full of cold water. Then fitting the lid on carefully, he set it in a hollow place he had made in the lime. Edith watched him curiously.

"Will the lime burn?" she asked. "Shall I bring some matches?"

"You forget," said grandpa; "I was not to use any fire. We'll start it cold water."

"Now I know you're joking."

"Wait a moment," said grandpa, and you'll see.

He poured in the water, and put a board over the pail.

"Oh!" cried Edith, when a very short time it began to bubble and steam as if a hot fire were burning under the pail. And "Oh!" she cried a great deal louder, when a white, creamy mass came pouring over the top and the sides of the pail.

It did not last long. In six minutes the bubbling had almost stopped. So grandpa took a long iron dipper and gently lifted out the can, all coated with lime.

He rinsed it off, then opened it and took out the nice white eggs; and, when they broke them at lunch, they found them cooked exactly right.—Catholic Messenger.

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Gardening is Unhealthy.

Gardening is generally considered one of the healthiest occupations, but the German Gardeners' Association has issued a warning to those who intend entering the industry. They cite the fact that during the year 1889 to 1897 of the 291 members of the association who died in Germany, no fewer than 142 succumbed to consumption and other affections of the lungs.

EFFECTS WERE WONDERFUL.

"I had been troubled for years with pains in my sides and kidneys and had aches in all parts of my body, owing to stomach and liver troubles. I began taking Hood's Sarsaparilla and its effects were wonderful. In a short time I was entirely cured." Mrs. Francke, 209 Ossington Avenue, Toronto, Ontario.

Hood's Pills are non-irritating and the only cathartic to take with Hood's Sarsaparilla.