

VALUE OF MEMBERSHIP IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

There are but few Catholics who do not appreciate the value of membership in the grand old Church. Sentiment, reason, faith combine to sustain and increase this appreciation.

All Catholics recognize that the Church is the ark of safety amidst the waves. It is the institution established by the Son of God to conduct men to heaven. In and through the Church has our Divine Lord ordained that men would be saved.

It is the mission of the Church to preach the gospel of Christ and to teach the nations. We Catholics accept the teaching of the Church with absolute confidence. We never doubt; we never deny; we never seek elsewhere. It is our inalienable privilege to rest assuredly certain and content. It is sufficient for us that the Church teaches; the Church is the representative of Christ, the pillar and ground of truth. She cannot err, for she is hedged around by divinity, guided and directed by the Holy Spirit. It is with pity that we look upon those who are "tossed hither and thither by every wind of doctrine."

It is to His Church that our Lord has confided His sacraments. Her priests are the "dispensers of the mysteries of God." From them we receive the sacraments and participate in the Precious Blood of Calvary. It is the priests of the Church who cleanse the souls of the infants who offer up the great sacrifice and feed the faithful on the Body and Blood of Christ; it is the priests who pour the balm on the wounded soul; it is the priests who bless the marriage of the young twin as they kneel before the altar of God; and it is the priests who stand by to comfort them with the last anointing and strengthen them against the hour of conflict. There is no one but has noted the love and devotion of the Catholic people for their priests. And this love, this devotion, is the best evidence of the value which Catholics place upon membership in their Church.

Every Catholic appreciates the spiritual value of membership in the Church of God, and those outside of the Church, sincere souls, envy the Catholics their confidence and their affectionate loyalty to it. They cannot help but contrast it with their own indifference to the sect to which they belong. And how their hearts yearn for an institution strong, might, lean, and which in return they might love. Alas for them! that seeing, they do not see. There is but one such institution, by necessity a divine institution, the Church of all ages?

But whilst Catholics are duly appreciative of the spiritual value of membership in the Church, have they ever realized the temporal advantages of belonging to the Catholic Church? The universal tendency of our age is toward association, combination. In every sphere this tendency is apparent. The forces of nature have almost conspired to compel men to combine. In business life, in social life, organization is feverishly progressing. There are combinations along every conceivable line. Who is there that has not noticed the extraordinary increase of societies in our country? And individual societies are all banded together into one general organization. There is scarcely a village but has some such association. And most of them are for absolutely selfish purposes—for the mutual protection, advancement, prosperity of the members. There are often secrecy and an abundance of grips and signs and pass-words.

But what society in all the world, can, even from a mere human standpoint, compare with the Catholic Church? What society so ancient; what society so centrally strong and so closely bound together; what society so universal; what society so noble in its principles and so helpful in its laws and ordinances; what society so magnificent in its history, what society so wonderful in its machinery, so powerful in its government, so resolute in its management, so ready in its help, so ubiquitous in its agencies? Mere human eyes have long since recognized it as the greatest organization the world has ever known. Beside it kingdoms and empires are as though they were not. Alone of all institutions, it thrives on blows, and waxes stronger on persecution.

The sign of this great organization is the sign of the cross. Its object is to lead men to the love of God and to love one another. Its bond is the unity of the Christian faith. Its head is the Holy Father; its officials the Bishops and priests; its members are the faithful throughout the world, men of every race, of every language, of every country, but all "one" around the altar of God. Do not Catholics appreciate what a privilege it is, even in a temporal sense, to belong to such an organization? It is the boast of the great secular organizations that their members are welcomed everywhere by fellow members. But there is no part of the world, no matter how remote, in the icy wastes of the extreme North or amidst the jungles of Africa, where a Catholic will not be welcomed by a fellow Catholic. And what a bond of sympathy is immediately forged by participation in the common faith!

There is the instantaneous realization of a community in almost everything that makes life precious. There are the same training, the same thoughts, the same opinions, the same supernatural helps, the same hopes. The current of both lives flow into one channel. How much is bridged over when we know that a stranger coming into contact with us is like ourselves, a Catholic! How quickly we become acquainted with the fellow-traveller, for instance, when we once learn that he is of the household of the faith! Men declare that they are friends because they sit side by side in the same lodge room. But how much more to kneel side by side at the same Catholic altar!

It is a sight, as strange as sad, to see Catholics abandoning their faith to enter some forbidden society. But even from a temporary and selfish point of view there is no society which they may enter which can yield a title of the

advantages which membership in the Church brings. These unworthy Catholics are as short-sighted for their world as they are blind to their eternal interests.—Monitor, Newark.

KNOWING WHAT IS NOT SO.

SECULAR PRESS BLUNDERS CONCERNING THE NEW MARRIAGE LAWS.

When secular newspaper writers undertake to treat Catholic topics the result is generally misleading and often ludicrous. Perhaps they should not be blamed too much for this. The average secular writer knows so little of Catholic usages and customs, Church laws and regulations that it is very difficult for him to comment upon them without falling into many mistakes. As a rule any information in regard to new Church regulations given out by secular papers should be accepted with great caution. An instance of misleading information turned out by the press agencies is seen in the comments of Eastern secular papers on Bishop Scannell's Lenten pastoral on the new marriage laws. The Washington Star bases its comment on the following press despatch from Omaha: "Bishop Scannell has made a formal ruling for his diocese that all marriage engagements must be made in writing, witnessed by two persons, before priests will be permitted to perform a marriage ceremony."

The above refers to one of the provisions of the new marriage laws that went into effect at Easter. It is, of course, not a diocesan regulation, but a general Church law that engagements from Easter must be in writing to be considered binding. But it is quite a different thing to say that no priest will be permitted to perform a marriage ceremony unless he is shown a written engagement duly witnessed. That was a wild guess at interpretation made by the scribe who wrote the paragraph. The editor who commented upon this bit of misinformation went wide of the mark, as might have been expected.

The Church has for centuries considered a valid engagement to marry between two persons an impediment to the marriage of either of them with another party. Since an engagement to marry was a promise binding in justice she refused to marry one engaged to any one but the person with whom the valid engagement was entered into. But since owing to the levity of society in our day it is sometimes difficult to determine whether the engagement was entered into seriously she now demands as a proof of validity a written agreement attested by witnesses. Otherwise the party who claims an engagement to marry cannot appeal to the Church for its enforcement. The Church will not consider any mere verbal engagement to be an impediment to marriage with another. For this reason Catholics should be careful for the future to put in writing their promises to marry.

It will probably take the ordinary newspaper writer some years to grasp the significance of the new marriage law. In the meantime it would be a good rule for all newspapers to quote directly the text of any Church law or diocesan regulation, rather than trust to their own interpretation of it. Many of these wise scribes know a great many things that are not so, and they are not slow about making it known.—True Voice.

A NOTABLE TRIBUTE.

A GREAT NEW YORK DAILY ON THE NATION'S DEBT TO THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

Appropos the Catholic centenary, the New York Evening Post, one of the most thoughtful and scholarly of the great dailies of the metropolis, pays the following remarkable tribute to the Church:

"Remembering the old and bitter anti-Catholic feeling, it marks a great transformation that to-day it would be true to say that the Protestant churches would look upon the extinction or withdrawal of the Catholic churches as a great calamity. This does not imply that religious or even theological contentions has broken down, but that tolerance has broadened and that eyes have been opened to see the facts. We are certain that Protestant denominations would be simply aghast and appalled if they were asked to take over the work of the Catholic Church in New York. They could not begin to do it. Even if they had the physical resources—the men and money and buildings—they would have neither the mental nor moral ability. For long years now the Catholic Church in this great port has been receiving and controlling and assimilating an influx of foreign people after another. It has held them for religion, and it has held them for citizenship. No one can soberly reflect upon this vast labor of education and restraint without becoming convinced that it has been an indispensable force in our public life. The Protestant churches have been and are now more than ever unfitted whether by temperament or methods to attack so gigantic a problem. They lack the authority—the compelling force of supernatural fears, if one insists. Nothing but a venerable and universal institution, always the same, yet always changing, could have taken her incoming children—the raw material of Americans—and done for them what the Catholic Church in this city has done during the memorable century now rolled past.

Even those who cannot pretend to speak of Catholic dogma with entire sympathy must confess that some of its moral results have been admirable and useful. The firm stand of the Church in the matter of marriage and divorce, for example, seems more and more a blessing as the laxness of law and of custom in that respect goes on increasing. Other churches have been forced, if only out of shame at the writer of marital relations into which American society seems sometimes to be falling, to imitate and approximate the rigid standards of Catholics. We would not maintain that the Catholic position is an unmixt good; it has its incidental evils; but the testimony which it has borne to the ideal of the Christian family is something which cannot be over-

looked when those who are not sons of the Church are reckoning up their debt to her.

A criticism often made is that the Catholic Church in this country, particularly in New York city, has been too much given to going into politics, and that it has accepted without question gifts from sources that a prophet could not have looked at with unbandaged eyes. But we know of no Protestant church that is entitled to cast a stone on this account. The truth is that all churches, under the free system have to take their own wherever they find it, devoutly hoping that the Lord will sanctify the gift. And as for a church in politics, we would back the Methodists against the Catholics any day."

NINE EPISCOPALIANS.

AT OVERBROOK SEMINARY—SIX RECENT CONVERTS AMONG NUMBER.

Six of the Protestant Episcopal ministers recently received into the Church, says the Catholic Standard and Times, of Philadelphia will enter the Seminary of St. Charles Borromeo, Overbrook, in September, where Messrs. Henkell, Hawkes and Bourne have already preceded them. Those who will enter at the beginning of the school year are Dr. William McGarvey, Maurice L. Cowi and William L. Hayward, late of St. Elizabeth's P. E. Church, this city, Charles E. Bowles and Otto W. Gromoll, late of the Protestant Episcopal Diocese of Chicago, and Edgar N. Cowan, formerly of the Protestant Episcopal Diocese of Milwaukee.

William H. McClellan, formerly of St. Elizabeth's P. E. Church, will become an instructor in a Jesuit college in September, and may later enter that order.

One member of the Protestant Episcopal Sisters of St. Mary, whose convent is at Peekskill, N. Y., has been received into the Church at St. Elizabeth's Convent, Cornwells, of which Mother Katharine Drexel is superior, and two other members of the same community are under instruction there, all three being at present guests of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament.

The one who has already entered the Church is Sister Eliza, whose submission was made to Archbishop Ryan on Sunday last, on occasion of His Grace's visit to Cornwells to lay the corner stone of the Holy Ghost Fathers' Apostolic College. The two who are under instruction are Mother Edith, former superior of the Sisters of St. Mary and Sister Marina.

The three Sisters come of well-known families. Mother Edith was a Miss Pardee, of New England, and is a woman of great intellectual and administrative ability. Sister Eliza was a Miss Montgomery of St. Louis, and her father was a prominent citizen. Her paternal grandfather was Governor Phelps, of Missouri. The lay converts in the various parts of the city include members of other Protestant Episcopal churches than St. Elizabeth's, two of the recent converts being from St. Clement's.

CHRISTIAN CHARITY.

The question frequently asked by unbelievers is, Why so much wrangling, hostility, bitter denunciation and misrepresentation among professing Christians? The answer lies, because they are professional and not real Christians. Charity is the embodiment of Christianity. He who does not love God for his own sake and his neighbor for God's sake, is not a Christian and worthy of heaven. So Christ declared when asked: "Which is the great commandment in the law?" His answer was: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind." And the second is like to this: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." This prohibits all kinds of gossip, wrangling and hostility. The very laws which govern society demand it. The primary object of all law is to insure man's happiness, by protecting individuals in their duly acquired rights. A law of universal love, such as Christ demanded, attains this object. It blends together the whole human race and makes all equally interested in laws enacted for the common good of all. Men, bound by universal love and desirous that any offense against individuals or society should be punished, will lend their aid for the suppression of crime. This would be simply practicing Christian charity.

All mankind are members of the same family, having descended from one common father. All are pressed by the same wants in order to move smoothly in society. To attain a certain purpose one depends on his neighbor to a certain extent. To be successful, confidence and brotherly love must prevail. One is not a true Christian until he is always ready to do or act toward his fellow man only as he would have his fellow man do or act toward him. If this rule should govern the actions of men how different would the state of society be from what we now have it. Man would not cheat fellow man when an opportunity offered itself. Man would not swindle a fellow man who happened to place confidence in him, and if he did society, bound together by fraternal love, would repudiate such persons, and scorn their very presence, which tended to disrupt society. It is because faith is dead, and charity is a lost virtue that men forget their duties to fellow men, and do to others what they would not wish done to themselves. He who cheats, swindles and bears false testimony against his neighbor would not want to be treated in a similar manner. Therefore, he is not a Christian.

Christ is the great model and guide of a true Christian. His example in every instance was one of sublime charity.

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ity. During his public life no one appealed to Him in vain. With Him there was no distinction of persons. Pagan, Jew and Gentile shared in His good works. His enemies shared in His mercy. "Father!" He exclaimed, when dying on the cross, "forgive them, for they know not what they do."

Yet whilst the teaching and example of Christ obliges His followers to forgive the faults even of an enemy and closes the mouth of the detractor, Christian charity does not require one to shield those who violate the law which govern society. On the contrary, it demands that one should publish such violations and aid the law in the punishment of crime; for upon the observance of the law rests the security of society. It is the great barrier against anarchy and lawlessness of all kinds. It would be a false principle to suppose that Christian charity demands the shielding of crime, since Christ has said: "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's," and all violations of civil law come under Caesar's jurisdiction.—Intermountain Catholic.

CATHOLICS AND PROTESTANT SERVICES.

The question may sometimes be asked, "Why do Catholics give missions to non-Catholics and especially invite Protestants to hear Catholic doctrine expounded by Catholic priests, when at the same time Catholics refuse to attempt to get Catholics to attend a Protestant service?"

The answer is simply this: Protestants are invited by Catholics to listen to explanations of Catholic doctrine. The answer is simply this: Protestants can attend without violating any principle of Protestantism, which is a religion of private opinion. Disclaiming infallibility both for himself and for the denomination to which he may at present be giving his allegiance, a logical Protestant must necessarily be in the attitude of a seeker after truth.

On the other hand, a Catholic, not resting his faith on varying and fallible beliefs, but on the infallible Church, believes that he possesses an absolute certainty that this Church is the one Church and the only Church that Jesus Christ established. This fact is as clear and unshaken in his mind as the mathematical proposition that two and two make four. It admits of no question, no shadow of a doubt. The logical Protestant is and must be a seeker after truth; the Catholic believes that he has already found it. The Protestant, therefore, can take part in any religious service, for he knows not at what turn he may receive more light to cause him to change his present denomination for another, but the Catholic because of the facts stated, cannot, without violating the essential principles of his faith, take part in the religious service of any Church but that which he believes to have been instituted by Christ. Participation, therefore, in a Protestant service is, to the Catholic mind, not merely a question of liberality or toleration or broad-mindedness; it is a question simply of right and wrong.—Catholic Standard and Times Almanac.

THE STRENGTH OF THE CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES.

It is generally conceded by judicious men who know conditions and who at the same time have an outlook over the country at large, that there are at least 15,000,000 Catholics within the borders of the United States. They say that this figure is a conservative statement. The directory puts the figure at 13,887,426, but we know that this figure is obtained by compilation from reports that minimize the actual numbers and it includes some estimates that have been repeated for many years. However, this figure shows an increase of 788,073 over the figures of last year.

Including the Catholic population of the United States, the figures amount to 7,106,452, and adding the 1,000,000 Catholic population of Porto Rico and 85,000 Catholics of the Sandwich Islands, the entire Catholic population under the United States flag amounts to 22,018,808. As the Christian communicants of the United States are estimated to be about 33,000,000 it is seen that we Catholics are more than one-third of the Church-connected people of the country. The largest of the Protestant denominations in this country is the Methodist Episcopal Church, whose members number 3,036,037.

The statistics of the Catholic Directory reveal a number of interesting facts. In this country there are 15,565 Catholic clergymen, 11,190 being secular priests and 4,375 being members of religious orders, such as the Jesuits, Benedictines, Redemptorists, Dominicans and forty-five other communities. The total number of Catholic Churches in the United States is 12,513, of which, 8,408 have resident pastors, 4,105 being supplied from neighboring parishes. There are 81 seminaries, 5,009 students, 200 colleges for boys and 107 academies for girls. There are 4,443 parochial schools with an average attendance of 1,113,006, including the children at parochial schools, high schools, colleges, academies, orphan asylums and other charitable institutions, the grand total number of children in Catholic educational institutions is 1,310,300. There are 57,463 nuns in the United States, all of whom are engaged in educational or charitable work. There are 272 orphan asylums, in which 42,597 orphans are cared for. All told, there are 1,054 charitable institutions under Catholic supervision in this country.

The United States at present is governed by one Apostolic Delegate, one Cardinal, thirteen Archbishops, ninety-four Bishops, two Archbishops, seventeen Abbots, two Vicars Apostolic, one Prior and one Prefect Apostolic—the hierarchy of the country consisting of 132 prelates. In addition to these, Archbishop Seton, an American, is at present residing in Rome. In point of service the four oldest American prelates are Cardinal Gibbons, of Baltimore; Bishop McCloskey, of Louisville; Bishop McQuaid, of Rochester, and Bishop Hogan, of Kansas City, all of whom were consecrated in 1838.

According to the directory, New York leads the forty-six States with a Catholic population of 2,650,000. Illi-

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nois is second with 1,468,644 Catholics; Pennsylvania third, the Catholics numbering 1,404,604; Massachusetts fourth, with a population of 1,213,121; Ohio follows with 619,029 and Wisconsin is next with 518,450. Michigan has 471,890 Catholics; Missouri follows with 447,703; Minnesota ninth, with 425,885; California tenth, with 368,875; Texas, 276,917; Iowa, 240,555 and Indiana, 201,438.

The figures given in the Catholic Directory in many cases are merely estimates, and as such, of course, are not as accurate as they might be. In a short time, however, it will be possible to quote definite statistics regarding the Catholic Church in the United States, for under the supervision of Archbishop Glennon, of St. Louis, a governmental census has been taken.—The Missionary.

Scandal of Mass-missing.

The Catholic who neglects to attend Mass is a scandal to the young and to many sincere unbelievers. Children have a right to good example from their elders, and without it the best instruction is to a great extent nullified. As for those outside the Church, nothing makes a deeper impression on them than fidelity in attending religious services. Of profession they have enough; what they are always looking for, often when they appear to be least concerned about religion, is "practical Christianity," as they call it—the exemplification of Christian beliefs. If negligent Catholics could only know how much scandal they give to those outside the Church, and the effect of their bad example on the rising generation of the faithful!—Ave Maria.

WESTERN FAIR.

The Western Fair of London, Ontario, will be held this year Sept. 11-19. Those who have been in the habit of attending this exhibition in the past will scarcely recognize the grounds and buildings this year. Over Seven Thousand Dollars have been expended on new buildings and additions, and the whole of them have been painted white, making a very beautiful appearance, being a complete "White City." More accommodation has been provided for Horses; Grand Stands have been built and other buildings extended and enlarged, so that although it is expected this coming Exhibition will eclipse all others in entries there will be ample room for all Exhibits.

All information regarding the Exhibition may be obtained from the Secretary, A. M. Hunt, London Ontario.

DIED.

FINKMAN.—In Syracuse, N. Y., July 13, 1908, James Finkman, contractor, aged sixty nine years. May his rest be peaceful!

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WANTED TEACHER FOR THE R. C. S. S. No. 15, St. Raphael's West, Ont. A second class professional teacher, capable of teaching English and French. Duties to commence Aug. 17th. State salary for the balance of the year, and for all information apply to F. Dupuis, Sec. Treas., St. Raphael's, Ont. 1513-2

WANTED A CATHOLIC TEACHER FOR PUBLIC S. S. No. 1, Arthur. Duties to commence August 17. Address: F. J. O'Connell, Sec. Treas., P. O. Box 1514-1

TEACHERS WANTED—A LADY TEACHER as principal, holding at least a second class professional certificate and knowing both French and English languages. State experience and salary expected. Also two female teachers, holding second or third class professional certificates, and capable of speaking and teaching both French and English. Salary \$175 a year. Duties to commence Sept. 1st. Address: F. J. O'Connell, Sec. Treas., P. O. Box 1514-2

A MALE QUALIFIED TEACHER WANTED Able to teach French and English. Time to begin after summer vacation. Salary \$475 per year. Apply to D. A. Chénier, Cache Bay, Ont. 1514-1

A TEACHER WANTED FOR R. C. SEPARATE school, No. 6, Preston, holding second or third class certificate. To commence after summer holidays. State salary and experience. Please contact via Mount Forest. Apply to Thomas Begley, Sec. Treas., P. O. Box, 1514-2

WANTED FOR R. C. S. S. NO. 4 BROMLEY. A female teacher holding a second class professional certificate and knowing both French and English. Duties to commence in August. Apply to J. J. Sheehy, Sec. Treas., 1514-2

SEVERAL TEACHERS HOLDING FIRST OR SECOND class (professional) certificates are wanted for the Windsor R. C. S. schools. In answering please state salary and qualifications. The applications should be sent on or before the 15th of August to M. A. Bran, Esq., Sec. Windsor, Ont. 1513-2

TEACHER WANTED, LADY, CATHOLIC with a second class certificate for school No. 2, Gard and Humberwood. Salary commensurate with experience. Please contact via Mount Forest. Apply to Thomas Begley, Sec. Treas., P. O. Box, 1514-2

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TEACHER WANTED FOR S. S. NO. 1, GLOUCESTER. Female teacher holding second or third class certificate, with good records. Apply to T. Meagher or Martin Cahill, South Gloucester, Ont. 1513-2

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