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LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION.

Apostolic Delegation.

Ottawa, June 18th, 1908.

Mr. Thomas Coffey:

My Dear Sir:—Since coming to Canada I have

been a reader of your paper. I have noted

with satisfaction that it is directed with in-

tellect and ability, and above all, that it is in-

fluenced by a strong Catholic spirit. It stren-

uously defends Catholic principles and rights,

and stands firmly by the teachings and au-

thority of the Church, at the same time promot-

ing the best interests of the country. I follow

these lines it has done a great deal of good for

the welfare of religion and country, and it

will do more and more as its wholesome in-

fluence reaches more Catholic homes. I

therefore, earnestly recommend it to Catho-

lic families. With my blessing on your work,

and best wishes for its continued success,

Yours very sincerely in Christ,

Donatus, Archbishop of Ephesus,

Apostolic Delegate.

UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA.

Ottawa, Canada, March 7th, 1908.

Mr. Thomas Coffey:

Dear Sir: For some time past I have read

your estimable paper, THE CATHOLIC RECORD,

and congratulate you upon the manner in

which it is published. Its matter and form

are both good, and a truly Catholic spirit

permeates the whole. Therefore, with please-

sure, I can recommend it to the faithful.

Blessing you and wishing you success, believe

me to remain,

Yours faithfully in Christ,

D. FALCONIO, A.P.S.C.

Apr. 11, 1908.

LONDON, SATURDAY, APRIL 25, 1908.

THE CHURCH AND INDIVIDUALISM.

—

Amongst the many charges brought

by outsiders against the Church is the

unfounded allegation that she is op-

posed to individuality. In few respects

is her spirit less understood. Not

being of the world, and yet being in it,

the Catholic Church is continually mis-

judged and condemned by the world.

To be sure, Catholicism represents in

religion collectivism, and Protestant-

ism exaggerated individualism. The

latter, having no bond of union, has long

felt the weakness of division. The for-

mer is so welded in its parts that both

stability for the whole and protection

for the individual are guaranteed, that

it may both endure through all ages

and preach the gospel to the little ones

of earth. No institution displays such

strength and pliability as does the

Catholic Church. It faced undaunted

the frowns of Roman emperors in the

years of its childhood. It was the only

ark of civilization when the flood of

Eastern barbarism swept over Europe.

It has outlived the terror of later revolu-

tions, and there is no reason to doubt

but that the Catholic Church will be

the only power fit to cope with Social-

ism or to find a solution for the prob-

lems which crowd more and more upon

the thought and activity of civilization.

The other proud attribute of the Church

is that she reaches down to the indi-

vidual with an efficacy unequalled and

an exalted appreciation of his worth

and destiny. Her gifts are the same

for all—king and peasant, master and

servant, rich and poor, learned and un-

learned. Her sacraments are not par-

tial, nor are her fountains closed.

Freely she has received, freely she

gives. The same waters of baptism

flow over the head of the prince as

over that of the lowliest in the land.

The words of pardon are as ready for

the repentant poor as for the softened

rich. Nor is there different food at the

holy table for celebrating priest or

faithful layman. It is the ministry

itself, they say, as if the channels had

not to be systematized. Even then

there remains the power of sanctifica-

tion possible if Christ wills it and the

good faith of some simple soul requires

it. As an ordinary dispensation the

Church with its ministry is the wonder-

ful system instituted by Christ for the

sanctification of individual souls. Then

the wind of objection shifts. It is not now

a question of justification or sacraments:

it is a question of free thought, which,

it is said, is restricted by the Church.

That the Church teaches that private

judgment, in interpreting the word

of God or articles of faith, should

yield to the Church, is freely

admitted. Every Catholic believes

that Christ has instituted a ministry

which is competent to teach authorita-

tively—competent because Christ gave

it power to teach all truth and to pro-

tect it from all error. This may be re-

striction in the sense that it is the

guide and the supreme judge; but it is

not restriction that the individual

Catholic has not perfect freedom to in-

vestigate, to study and devise plans for

purposes he may select. It is a pro-

tection against error, an economy of

thought and energy, light in darkness,

and the highest evidence of truth.

But this yielding to authority is men-

tal slavery, ruinous to all mental

vigor. This is the next objection.

From an historical standpoint we judge

the very opposite to be the case. No

teaching academy, no system of philo-

sophy has been so unrestricted in in-

vestigations as the Catholic Church. Being

divinely constituted, she is not afraid;

she leaves the human mind free to dis-

cover and defend the truth on all sub-

jects. All she insists upon are the fun-

damental principles of religion and

morals. If men run across these they

will be arrested; not because the

Church will not tolerate truth, but be-

cause she will not tolerate error; not

because the Church is despotic, but

because of her unflinching care of that

deposit of all truth which her divine

spouse entrusted to her, and because of

her maternal love for her individual

children.

MIXED MARRIAGES.

—

The Rev. J. G. Inkster, Minister of

the First Presbyterian Church of this

city, preached lately upon mixed mar-

riages—a subject not often treated in

non-Catholic pulpits. Much more

rarely is it treated so fairly and pru-

dently. There are points in the report

which are strangely out of touch with

what his hearers and all others had a

right to expect from one who regards

the sacredness of home and the indis-

solubility of marriage with the respect

so eloquently expressed by Mr. Inkster.

We refer especially to the conclusion,

in which the gentleman's stand is:

"I will not oppose mixed marriages

when I am convinced that the divine

sentiment of love has been kindled."

For our part we most candidly should

wish to be a judge in Israel if we

had to decide upon that point. Even

if the witnesses be placed under the most

strict bond of telling the truth, the whole

truth and nothing but the truth, they

are giving evidence in their own case.

And what is most usual in these cases

is that the young people are fully im-

pressed that nothing could be more

divine than their mutual affection,

whilst in reality nothing is more human

or more subject to the vicissitudes of

life. When, in speaking of matrimony

as sacred, we confuse it with the "di-

vine" element in love-making we are

too ideal to be practical and more

sentimental than real. The evil of

mixed marriages lies in the point which

Mr. Inkster justly magnifies, viz., their

threat to the sacredness of home.

This sanctity is no mere sentiment

based upon the so-called "divine"

element of the natural affection be-

tween man and wife. It is based upon

a much more solid foundation, and

looks for its guarantee and conserva-

tion in the consecration which He alone

can give, who gives to the justified

soul or the hallowed hearth their

sanctification, peace and strength.

Union is needed—and union upon that

most important question, religion, its

belief and practice. Christ came to

sanctify the world. His Blood was to

redeem the individual and to save the

home from the devastating angel of

death. In order that society might be

sanctified, the family, which is the unit

and fountain of the social stream, was

consecrated. The natural contract

was raised to a sacrament, rendered

indissoluble and made to find its type

in the union between Christ and His

Church. Bride and spouse are to seek

their perfection in the love and rever-

ence which they are to have for each

other, and in the highest sacred trust

of procreating children and educating

them. No such honor belongs to an-

other, in the fulfillment of which

task lies co-operation with God, God

the Creator, God the Redeemer and

God the Sanctifier. It needs char-

acter to do all this, as it needs char-

acter to pass through life with the

earnest conviction that we are some-

thing more than mere grains of sand

upon the shore of time, to be blown

about by wind of feeling or tossed by

the waves of restless change. A home

needs union of religious belief; for

where children see division they be-

come careless and indifferent. Dis-

putes, if each party is sincere, are the

increasing cause of trouble and the

aftermath of the exaggerated sentiment

of hopeful youth. If the Catholic

Church has a certain horror for mixed

marriages it is not without reason.

Her wide continued experience teaches

her that there is always danger to the

faith of the Catholic party—and the

Church is never able or willing to more

than tolerate that condition. That

marriage is so frequently a failure, that

families so seldom receive the blessing

of God, is due to many causes, to none

however more common than that the

sacramental character of matrimony

was ignored in the start of life and

religion minimized by the careless ex-

ample of a divided couple. What

should be a shrine of prayer and love