

The Catholic Record.

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

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THE CATHOLIC SOCIETY.

We have more than once chronicled the demise of a Catholic society. On these occasions we are chary of sympathy to those interested. An organization may, of course, wilt and die and be entitled to a dose of commiseration. But as a rule its departure from the world of realities makes one feel joyful that it no longer cumber the ground; and this for various reasons. A society, for instance, which burdens itself with debt is more or less of a nuisance, besides being a drag on parochial progress. An edifice or a "commodious hall" contributes doubtless to the architectural beauty of the town, and may be a "show place" for our rural friends, but it is an eye-sore to those who have to pay for it. When the gentlemen who patronize it defray all expenses in connection therewith we have no comment to make, but when it is built and supported mainly by those who are not affiliated with it, it is about time to ask the members to put on their thinking caps. A big building adorned with a big mortgage is not business by any means. Also a building which contains pool and billiard rooms which are supposed to be an antidote to the poison of the streets, and a lecture hall used chiefly for dancing purposes, does not cause us to be unduly boastful. A big building wherein young and old smoke and talk and spin dreams of our progress might pass away without causing any regret. And one may further remark that some of those who haunt this building take themselves too seriously. We believe in organization that gets somewhere and stimulates Catholics to know and to do. We believe, too, that a dollar invested in a building which is the camping ground of the ambitious might be put to better purpose.

Let us not forget that the parish and its requirements must take precedence of all else. The church and the school—these are the things of primary importance. These have the first claim upon us. The beauty of God's house, and the care of the little ones, should call our energy and devotion. And they who are mindful of this prove to be the most efficient members of an organization.

The men, however, who seem to think that the parish revolves around their particular society are merely getting ready for the funeral of that society.

THE CAUSE OF DECLINE.

The apathy of Catholics of influence is always called upon to pose as one of the influences which make for the decline of any one of our organizations. We have no desire to offer any excuse for that apathy. While hoping that these individuals may come to understand that to wrap oneself up in one's comforts, in one's family and take no share in saving souls is to be a poor and contemptible Catholic, we must put the blame for decay where it belongs—on our own shoulders.

We ought to enquire, too, if we ourselves are, or have been, factors in causing the indifference of our "influential Catholic" towards our societies. They may think that an effort on our behalf may be unappreciated, and they may have reasons for so thinking. We mind us in this connection that a gentleman accepted an invitation to lecture in aid of one of our organizations, but the auditors were few. The society was represented by perhaps a score of its members, though it can make a goodly showing where there is an opportunity of enjoying the amenities of the euche party.

AN IMPEDIMENT.

We grant, of course, that sympathy and support make the way smooth for a society. But the fact of these being withheld does not mean ruin. On the contrary, it should nerve the members to merit the good will of all classes, to compel support, and to give proof of their ability to walk unaided. One thing that makes this difficult is the presence of the spouter. We have too many of him. He breeds disunion and weariness and is a menace to routine work. And a society which suffers "oratory and sentiment" to interfere with business pays for it in prestige and confidence. With cheap talk eliminated valuable time would be saved, the sessions would be better attended, and the spouter would have a chance to rest and to think of something worth saying.

WHAT THE NAME OF MARY IMPLIES.

SERMON BY FATHER DRUMMOND.

Winnipeg Tribune Sept. 12.

"And the Virgin's name was Mary," were the opening words of the sermon delivered at St. Mary's church last evening, by Rev. Father Drummond, S. J. It was the sermon of the feast of the Holy Name of Mary, the patronal feast for the parish. In the morning the feast was observed with the celebration of Solemn High Mass, with deacon and subdeacon and Rev. Father Guillet, O.M.I., former pastor of St. Mary's, preached to his old congregation, his theme being "Humility," taken from the gospel of the day: "He that exalteth himself shall be humbled, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

In his introductory passages Father Drummond referred to the inability of certain men to discover the hand of the Creator in the making of the natural universe; those had studied only superficially. "Drink deep or taste not the Pierian spring; a little knowledge is a dangerous thing." So is it with the spiritual world. Herein also there must be order and harmony. In order to discover this order and harmony men must approach the mysteries of the supernatural order with reverence and prayer. What wonder is it then that men spending six days of the seven in the search of wealth or pleasure, should be startled by some of the true revelations venerated by the Catholic faith. This is especially the case with regard to Mary.

The doctrines with regard to Mary as held by the Catholic church, are essential to all Christian belief; the revelations concerning Mary are integral to the worship of Christ. When the Father sent Christ into the world, He was to be a real man; truly God and truly man. Outside of the Catholic church this truth of the one person and the two natures in Christ is very faintly apprehended. Atonement, sanctification through the gospels, etc., are spoken of, but the fundamental dogma of the real divinity of Christ is lacking. St. John said, "the world became flesh," showing that the lowest part of man, not his spiritual nature alone, was joined to the divinity by a real personal union. God has a mother, the true mother, just as truly as our fathers can claim us. Christ's birth places Mary in a special sphere as the custodian of the true doctrine of the Incarnation. When the prophet says: "Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel," that is, "God with us," it is plain that the Virgin brings forth a God. In the fifth century Nestorius denied the divine maternity of Mary, and the Church refuted him by calling her "Mother of God." In the sixteenth century those who began by scoffing at the Mother, soon went on to deny the divinity of the Son.

If Mary had only this attribute of being the Mother of God, she would not be worthy of it. She must have virtues of her own. Purity, which is the best synonym of holiness, is the characteristic virtue of holiness from the flesh, from worldly things, from everything that is not God. Free from mortal and venial sin, Mary, the Catholic church holds, was conceived and born into this world, through the foreseen merits of her Son, free from original sin, that taint inherited in all creatures since the fall of Adam and Eve. She is the most perfect specimen of our race; the exemplar of our race, "Our tainted nature's solitary boast."

The remainder of the discourse was devoted mainly to the intercessory power of Mary. Father Drummond showed that if "the prayer of the just man availeth much," the intercession of the Mother with her divine Son must be all-powerful. Intercessory prayer is exemplified in the first days of Christianity in the case of the Gentiles who wished to speak with Jesus. They first approached Philip, who spoke to Andrew and the two disciples led the petitioners then to Jesus.

So long as there was danger of idolatry devotion to the Blessed Virgin remained in the background, though always practised in the Church, as we see by the paintings in the catacombs. But, when all the traditions of idolatry had passed away, then Mary came more and more to the forefront of the Church's life. No century has witnessed greater manifestations of her intercessory power than the nineteenth. The revelation made at Lourdes, when Mary appeared to an ignorant peasant girl and said, "I am the Immaculate Conception," is especially remarkable. The cures wrought at that celebrated shrine are among the best attested miracles ever known. Father Drummond related one case that came within his personal knowledge. Henry Bourque, son of Dr. Bourque of Montreal, wished, some seventeen years ago, to enter the Society of Jesus, but superiors would not admit him because he suffered from chronic headache, which is an obstacle to the life of contemplation. He, therefore, went to Lourdes and asked Our Lady to obtain his cure. His prayer was granted, and he became a Jesuit, his cure remaining so complete that he has felt no more headache during sixteen years of study. Several of these years were spent at St. Boniface College, where he became well known to many members of the University of Manitoba. But, his other serious ailments, first, synovitis of the knee, which made walking extremely painful, and later on, such weakness of the eyes that he could not read and

had to learn his theology by hearing others speak of it. However, owing to the brightness of his intellect, he succeeded in his studies and was ordained priest last year. On the 19th of March of this same year, being then in France, he went to Lourdes and was once more perfectly cured of his knee and eye troubles. His double, or rather, his triple cure has continued ever since. He is now at Sault-au-Rouelle, near Montreal.

Father Drummond concluded with an exhortation to Catholics to continue firm in their devotion to the Blessed Virgin, who stands in the Church as the exemplar of the highest purity among creatures. It would be well also that they should learn of the wonderful graces that have been obtained through Mary's intercession; though they are not dogmas of faith, they serve to revivify the devotion of the faithful.

MUCH ABUSED SPAIN.

A remarkable testimony to the honesty of the Spanish is given by an Englishman, Sir Hiram Maxim, who is quoted by the Glasgow Observer as saying that:

"His firm, which carried on business in Spain, never needs to lock the doors of its factories and workshops, and that thefts are entirely unknown. He also says that if they were to pursue this policy at one of their English factories the whole place would soon be carried away by thieves."

The Observer remarks upon this that: "It would seem as if the Catholic religion in Spain makes the people honest." And it asks, "Why does not the dominant religion in this country (Great Britain) have a similar effect upon the population?"

The "dominant religion" is not built that way, that is, in the way of being able to produce any moral effect or impress on the character of a nation. At least it has not done it in Great Britain.—New York Freeman's Journal.

THE CATHOLIC VIEW OF ATHEISM

BY A JESUIT FATHER.

By the term "Atheist" is understood one who lives without regard for God. We are compelled to use the word, promising, however, that nothing unpleasant or disrespectful to any individual is intended. Atheism is of two kinds, practical and theoretical. The first implies that while God is admitted to exist, His law is so disregarded as to make life a practical denial of the admission. Theoretical Atheism may be divided into species, dogmatic and sceptical. The dogmatic Atheist asserts that without any doubt there is no God. This position has already been sufficiently dealt with.

The sceptical Atheist or Agnostic maintains that nothing definite can be known concerning the First Cause of all things. It is with this contention that we shall endeavor to show that its consequences are so opposed to reason as to carry with them a condemnation of the theory.

THE AGNOSTIC "FAITH."
"Positively, the principle may be expressed: In matters of the intellect follow your reason as far as it will take you, without regard to any other consideration. And negatively: In matters of the intellect, do not pretend that conclusions are certain which are not demonstrably so. That is demonstrated or demonstrable. That is to say, the Agnostic Faith, which if a man keep whole and undefiled, he shall not be ashamed to look the universe in the face, whatever the future may have in store for him." (Nineteenth Century, Feb. 1880, p. 186, Professor Huxley.)

With respect to the positive side of the question we may note with interest how far the Professor's reason appears to have taken him: "The one act of faith in the contentment to science is the universality of order, and of the absolute validity, in all times and under all circumstances, of the law of causation. . . . such faith is not blind, but reasonable, because it is invariably confirmed by experience, and constitutes the sole trustworthy foundation for all action." (Life and Letters of Charles Darwin, by F. Darwin, in 2 vols., written by Prof. Huxley, p. 200.) Further:—"Do not really believe that any event has no cause, and could not have been predicted by anyone who had a sufficient insight into the order of Nature? If they do, it is they who are the inheritors of antique superstition and ignorance, and whose minds have never been illuminated by a ray of scientific thought." (On the reception of the Origin of Species, in "The Life of Darwin," II, p. 200, Prof. Huxley.) From this it would seem that Believer and Sceptic can both start from the same point, viz.: the absolute validity of the law of causation. Consequently the universe must owe its existence to some First Cause, however remote. If, then, the Agnostic doctrine is true, and this First Cause is not known and unknowable, the conclusion is forced upon us that it produced this marvellous universe, including the earth on which we find ourselves, endowed with man not only with life, but also with reason, set everything in motion, and having done so, retired within itself, and ceased to care for its handiwork. This idea is unworthy in the highest degree of such a supreme intelligence. Were such a course of action forced upon us that it produced this marvellous universe, including the earth on which we find ourselves, endowed with man not only with life, but also with reason, set everything in motion, and having done so, retired within itself, and ceased to care for its handiwork. 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