

turned up to dinner. I could not understand it. My confidence in him remained absolutely unshaken; something untoward must have happened. I would make inquiries in the morning, first thing.

At the hotel I met with the answer that the gentleman had stayed the night and taken breakfast, then had left, promising to be in for lunch; but he had not returned and his bill was still unpaid. I settled it, of course, to prevent gossip. At the tailor's I found the young gentleman had made several purchases, and had been measured for one or two suits. I nodded satisfaction, and proceeded on my way to business somewhat subdued in mind. Yet I was still unconvinced of anything like fraud. "That boy is honest as the day!" I kept reminding myself; but I made no one my confidant.

During the week that followed temptations to own myself bluffed by an unusually smart swindler were constant. Yet the lad's honest eyes, his assured air of quiet, undemonstrative gratitude, always came to my relief. There must be some explanation of his mysterious disappearance! I shrank from inquiry through the police, with an instinctive reluctance to even an appearance of distrust.

Relief came at last in the shape of a message from the Town Hospital. A patient was asking eagerly for me; would I come without delay, as the matter was gravely serious?

There I found both the reward of my undiminished confidence in Tom's genuineness, and the justification of large-mindedness in the practice of charity towards those in need. The lad had been the victim of a careless cyclist, who had rung no warning bell, and had crashed into him when he stepped aside from a puddle on the road in the town's outskirts. The ingenious youth who had caused the mishap thought it more prudent to leave others to investigate the harm done; with a mere glance over his shoulder he scurried for safety.

More charitable bystanders took in hand the conveyance of the unconscious lad to the sheltering care of the hospital. When he recovered consciousness the poor boy was distressed at this apparent discourtesy in my regard; but in his weak state he was unable to recall my name, which he had only learned from the card I had given him on the night of his arrival. His anxiety preyed upon his health and gave cause for alarm to doctor and nurses. But, fortunately, he mentioned the fact of the card being at the tailor's—whose name he could not recall either. Inquiries were therefore possible, and my identity was revealed.

The lad's joy at seeing me was so great that it actually helped towards his recovery. It was not long before I was able to get him moved to my digs, and with care and attention he soon regained strength.

Tom is my welcome housemate now, and further acquaintance does but strengthen the bonds of friendship between us, in spite of the disparity in our eyes. He has developed quite an exceptional gift for writing short stories, and is easily able to maintain himself until such time as his old curmudgeon of a father acquires some common sense and invites him back. With his mother and sister he constantly corresponds, and he told me only the other day that they have shrewd suspicions that his father knows well enough that they are in touch with him.

I have good reason to think that Tom's prayers—which are undoubtedly fervent as well as constant—will work something akin to a miracle in due time. For my part, I thank God often that my trust in the boy's sincerity never really wavered through those terrible days of stress. I have been strengthened, too, in my previous conviction that to show real charity we must now and again be ready to risk failure. And yet—even in a practical sense—"Charity never faileth." For the reward of true Christian charity does not depend for its realization upon the worthiness of the object.

THE AMBROSIAN LIBRARY

Among the noteworthy tributes of Pope Pius XI, that have appeared from non-Catholic writers is one from the pen of Alexander Robertson, a well known Presbyterian minister of Scotland. Writing in the Scotsman, Dr. Robertson reviews with singular insight, and a graceful style, the Holy Father's early life and labors, and applauds the felicitous choice of Pope Pius XI by the Sacred College to the exalted dignity of the Papacy.

Referring to the present Sovereign Pontiff's work in the Ambrosian Library at Milan, the writer furnishes a description of this famous library and of the herculean labors accomplished there by the then Dr. Ratti in classifying and cataloguing the priceless treasures of one of the world's greatest collections of books.

"All travellers to Milan," writes Dr. Robertson, "know the Biblioteca Ambrosiana. It is one of the sights of the city. It was founded by Cardinal Borromeo in 1609; so it has existed over three hundred years and each year new books are added to it. At present its twenty rooms contain nearly 200,000

volumes, some 8,500 manuscripts, a collection of classic pictures, many rare engravings and a small museum of antiquities. Among the manuscripts are fragments of a fourth century illustrated Homer, the precious Teshito, second century Bible in Syriac, and Syro-Hexapla, the Bible in six versions, a palimpsest of the fifth century of the Epistles of St. Paul, a Josephus on papyrus of the same century, fragments of the same century, fragments of the Bible, the works of Virgil with Petrarch's notes, the Libro d'Oro of Milan, and letters by Borromeo, Ariosto, Tasso Galileo and others."

When the then Dr. Ratti was appointed librarian he set to work to house these treasures in durable cases and to make them accessible to the scholars of the world. "Securing the services of some able and scholarly librarians," writes Dr. Robertson, "in a few years the stupendous work was accomplished which confers a benefit today on all who frequent the library."

"The books in the various rooms are now well catalogued, so that any book asked for, is forthcoming without delay. In the Sala Antica, the central and original hall of the library, there are rows of mahogany cases with glass covers. In these all the rare manuscripts are exposed to the view of the visitors, who can also obtain permission to examine them."

"Rare books, historical letters, and so forth, are arranged in other cases. The examination and classification of the books afforded Dr. Ratti the opportunity of doing good work also as an annotator and commentator. Accordingly articles appeared from time to time in the Rendiconto del Istituto Lombardo, in the Giornale Storico della Letteratura Italiana, and the Archivio Storico Lombardo. He also in conjunction with Msgr. Magistretti published a volume entitled 'Missale Ambrosianum.'"

A mass of literature is rapidly accumulating about the life and works of Pope Pius XI. It all serves to confirm even more strongly the wisdom and providential guidance of the Sacred Conclave on selecting for Sovereign Pontiff, a scholar of profound erudition, a priest of exalted spirituality, and a diplomat and administrator of tried and tested experience.—The Pilot.

ATHEIST AUTHOR 'CONVERTED'

EGON FRIEDEL PROCLAIMS DIVINITY OF CHRIST

By Dr. Frederick Funder

Vienna.—The liberal literary world of Central Europe has been stunned by news of the conversion of Egon Friedell, one of the most powerful and talented of the younger writers of the atheistic school.

Marking as it does the third recent notable defection from the ranks of artists who regarded it as one of the greatest reproaches that could be cast upon them that they be termed "clericals," the sudden religious profession of this noted literary man may be said to be another indication of a mighty movement that is leading some of the most brilliant European minds back to the foot of the cross.

Especially is this movement being felt in the literary world. In Austria, Hermann Bahr, the former managing director of the famous state theatre, led the way. Josef August Lux, the celebrated art critic, followed his lead. Now comes Friedell, to join men who owe their prominence to the atheistic press and who have renounced their former philosophies to give evidence of Christian truth.

FRIEDEL'S FORTHCOMING BOOK

"Announcement has been made that Egon Friedell is publishing a new book under the title of 'The Jesus Problem,' in which he undertakes to prove the historical existence and divinity of Christ. It is interesting to read the arguments he brings forth when addressing the intellectual people. Christians by name, who refuse to believe in the historical truths of Christianity and the divinity of the Saviour.

"The life, the sufferings and the death of Our Saviour," he writes, "were the sense and the spiritual substance of the last nineteen centuries. If these events are eliminated, nothing worth while remains, because everything centres around His holy presence. He is the sun shedding light and all are moving in its magnetic sphere, seeking for it or avoiding it. All, consciously, or unconsciously, are receiving from it light and warmth and motive power."

"All over the world people there are who live with a special talent for complicating all things. Every human undertaking they come in contact with immediately becomes entangled in insurmountable difficulties. The simple man of the street knows this type well and fears its representatives. Behind the simplest facts these people are ready to discover something that is hidden and that should be revealed and explained. This pointing out of the pretended 'higher thought,' this explaining of the 'second meaning' leaves the mind hopelessly entangled. And that is just what a certain school of thought wants. Its exponents then convey the idea that they are filled with a certain sacred fire or special originality that permits them to view things from the sane and normal way of viewing them."

It is the characteristic sophistry of the rationalist not to believe in the existence and divinity of Christ, says Friedell, and to proclaim the Christian religion to be but a combination of old myths. But, argues the converted writer, a transformation of such gigantic and universal proportions as Christianity cannot be the result of old myths. Some great supernatural personality must needs mark the cradle of Christianity, he avers, and with this emphasis he gives the historical proofs of the existence of Christ.

The confession is extremely valuable because through it this brilliant writer, brought up in a world of prejudice and flattery, a modern mocker himself, has made a new start and stands up to defend Catholic faith.

HERMANN BAHR'S PREFACE

The preface of Egon Friedell's book is written by Hermann Bahr, former idol of the Viennese liberal press. His lines are in keeping with the book. Addressing the author, Bahr says:

"People will listen to you because you were clever enough to gain for yourself the reputation of a mocker. As a poet of the cabaret you have won the confidence of a shrewd public with your jokes and your bag of tricks. You can now make people believe in the historical existence of Christ. And those who really believe that Christ existed must needs perceive the Eucharistic wonder."

Friedell's conversion therefore has had a profound effect on the whole liberal literary world.

THE LATEST COMER

A striking incident in connection with the formal opening of the new catholic University of Milan, was the generous offering of 20,000 lire from the writer Papini, who styled himself "the latest comer into the House of God." Few Catholics in this country are familiar with the story of the remarkable conversion of Papini, which has been one of the sensations in literary circles on the continent. In a recent number of the Catholic World, Charles Phillips has an appreciative and illuminating article on Papini, that introduced him to the readers of this magazine.

Giovanni Papini's entrance into the Catholic Church really took place two years ago, but has only recently attracted wide attention by reason of the publication of his Life of Christ, which today is the most widely read book in Italy. No literary work of any kind, not even effusions of D'Annunzio's perverted genius, has had such a remarkable success. It is for sale in every bookstore in Italy; the demand is far in excess of the supply. Already the first edition of twenty thousand copies—which in Europe is exceptionally large—has been exhausted, and translations into foreign language including English have already begun.

Papini is only forty years of age, yet he has produced twenty-three volumes. He is a Florentine, the son of a father who was an ardent anti-clerical, a Garibaldian soldier, and a follower of Mazzini. His mother had to have Papini secretly baptized. Temperamentally an anarchist and iconoclast, Papini devoted his youth to rationalistic studies and fell into scepticism and pessimism. Deeply interested in philosophy, he founded a philosophic and literary review at the age of twenty-one, and attracted the attention of Bergson and William James. The busiest and most brilliant European intellectualists were Papini's intimates. At the age of thirty he came to see the value of the writings of Mazzini, the author of I Promessi Sposi, especially of his great religious work, Catholic Morals.

A yearning for truth possessed him. As he searched through the dim crowded galleries of human thought "throwing down one idol after another, overruling every impediment to examine its foundation, impatient with half-lights, and multitudinous shadows of the labyrinth, but still going ahead, never resting long, always thrusting forward, determined to find the way out to daylight, the red glare of war blazing across the world, finally swept him into the open air of certitude." His journey through many philosophies, through schools of literature, religion, and thought, convinced him of one thing—the weakness and insufficiency of human opinions. The war with its ferocity, its misery, its falsehoods, and its death precipitated his conversion. He turned to the Gospels to find the answer to why civilized men could have fallen to such degradation.

"And in the light of that study," Papini confessed to his interviewer, "I soon discovered that the same terrible things had always been happening for the same old reasons." To stop them, he realized that external systems of politics and economics were useless, unless the spirit of man were changed. How was this change to be achieved? Papini answers in his own words: "What was the doctrine that most perfectly revealed such a transformation—the actual changing of the instincts of man? That of the Gospels. Coming to this conclusion, I rested for a little while, having laid hand on the moral system of the Evangelists. I was convinced now of my immortal soul. But, of course, that was not enough. There was one step more—from the law of the Absolute to the Absolute itself. Logically I passed from the moral system of the Gospels to

Christ. And Christ led me into the Church—that is, the only true Church, the Catholic Church, the Church of Rome."

This was in 1917. He passed through evangelical Christianity in 1918, and in 1919, with the beginning of his work on The Story of Christ, Papini entered the Church. His voice today is one of the leading voices of Italy. He is part of the great renaissance spiritual and political that is raising the better elements in Italian life to control. His code is simple. "Social disorders," he claims, "are simply the consequences of our moral and intellectual disorders; the making of Christians will automatically cure all that." His outlook is optimistic. "A great renaissance of the Faith is coming. It will be felt everywhere, in the Latin countries as well as in those less traditionally Catholic. This is the intense and vibrant personality, who has arisen as a brilliant Catholic apologist in Italy, and who subscribes himself significantly, 'the latest comer into the House of God.'—The Pilot.

A PRESBYTERIAN TRIBUTE

TO POPE BENEDICT XV.

It would doubtless fill many columns to print all the eloquent tributes paid the world over to the memory of Benedict XV. by the non-Catholic press. The note of bigotry was but seldom and faintly heard in the secular papers of the United States, while the appreciation for the services rendered by the great Pope of the World War was deep and genuine. From the pulpit of the Throop Avenue Presbyterian Church in Brooklyn, Dr. William Carter preached a formal sermon upon the subject: "A Protestant Estimate of Pope Benedict XV." "No wonder that the world is mourning so deeply now," he said. "No wonder that the chariots of the Church of God are dragging heavily." Praising the dead Pontiff as a great executive, a great friend of the public, and above all a great churchman, a great Christian, he continued:

"Three hundred million Catholics mourn his loss today because of the close and tender relationship they had with him, through the faith he so faithfully and consistently exemplified, and three hundred million Protestants send their sympathy, as from heart to heart, and join their sorrow with their Christian brethren. I trust, therefore, that it will not be deemed presumptuous for a fellow Christian, though of the Protestant faith, in genuine sympathy and sorrow to give, in this public way, a Protestant estimate and eulogy of Pope Benedict XV."

Benedict XV. had the gentle sanctity of Pius X. mixed with the keen executive ability and brilliant statesmanship of Leo XIII. No smirch, or spot, or stain ever rested on his life, either public or private. No bar sinister can ever be placed on his escutcheon even by the most malignant of his enemies. In him was combined the manhood of the Master and the culture of the Cross. He lived in the quiet of the cloister but his ear was ever attuned to the cries of a needy and a suffering world. He knew his Lord and Master but he also knew men and ever insisted that he might know them better that he might the better minister to their needs. With one hand he grasped the hand of God, as he walked with Him day by day, with the other he reached out to needy men that he might lift them up to higher and to nobler things."

Enumerating the long list of the Pontiff's accomplishments in the cause of peace Dr. Carter thus summed up all the criticisms that were made against him in the past:

"The best answer to all these criticisms is the fact that Benedict, throughout the War, won the confidence of the world at large enough to join eleven more nations in formal recognition of the Vatican and representation there than it had had before. The nations represented by formal diplomatic relations with the Vatican at the beginning of the War numbered twenty at the end of the War, the number had increased to thirty-one. Let this be the answer to all his critics."

Against those in fine who censured the Pope for his fight against Protestant propaganda in Rome Dr. Carter nobly replies: "Is there anything derogatory in a man fighting back for his faith?"—America.

ENDORSE PRESIDENT'S CENSURE OF BIG DRY

New York, April 10.—More than 4,000 policemen, members of the Holy Name Society of New York, following their annual Communion at St. Patrick's Cathedral, adopted by rising vote a resolution endorsing the sentiments expressed by President Warren G. Harding in Washington, when he deplored the spread of religious bigotry and the disrespect into which regard for the law has fallen.

"What we need is an old-fashioned restoration of respect for authority," said Justice Victor J. Dowling in addressing the men. "Our President perhaps faces more than any other President the danger that lies ahead from the little respect in which citizens today hold our law."

Martin Conboy, Police Commissioner Richard E. Enright and Judge Harry Tiernan were among the other speakers. "It is inspiring," said Mr. Conboy, "to hear the voice of the President lifted

against those religious bigots and narrow-minded reformers who have brought about that present disrespect for the law that is making the work of you men so hard today."

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