

## The Catholic Record.

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## LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION.

UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA,  
Ottawa, Canada March 7th 1900.  
To the Editor of THE CATHOLIC RECORD,  
London, Ont.

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.

The matter and form are both good; and a truly Catholic spirit pervades the whole. Therefore, with pleasure, I can recommend it to the faithful.

Blessing you, and wishing you success.  
Believe me, to remain,  
Yours faithfully in Jesus Christ,  
D. FALCONIO, Arch. of Larissa,  
Apost. Deleg.

London, Saturday, May 3, 1902.

## UNITY OF FAITH VERSUS DENOMINATIONAL RIVALRY.

The Western Massachusetts Bible Society held its annual meeting in Springfield, Massachusetts, in the month of February, at which the report of the society's work for the past year was read and distributed.

If we bear in mind the fact that great pains have been taken during recent years to make it appear that all the Protestant sects are in reality of one faith, being agreed upon the essential doctrines of Christianity, the report gives some interesting statements which can hardly be reconciled with such claims.

In the Philippine Islands, particularly, he seems to have come to an arrangement by which they pose as one Church, which they call the Evangelical Protestant Church, the purpose of which is to deceive the Filipinos, and especially those who are Catholics, into the belief that Protestantism is one great Church with a self-consistent teaching, spread throughout the world, almost to the same extent as the Catholic Church. It is thought that this stroke of deceptive strategy will be more successful in weaning the natives from the Catholic Church, than if it appeared in all its deformity of an endless diversity of contending sects teaching irreconcilable doctrines.

To effect their purpose, the missionaries must keep in the background their distinctive doctrines, and this they are endeavoring for the present to do.

In order to deceive the Filipinos the more effectually, they put forward chiefly that very doctrine which the American revisers of the Westminster Confession of Faith have determined upon eliminating from their creed as a teaching not justified by Scripture, namely, that the Pope is anti-Christ and the great Man of Sin condemned by St. Paul as the chief adversary of the Christian religion.

In fact, the sole distinctive teaching of the new Protestant Church of the Philippines, besides the existence of God, is that the authority of the Pope as head of the Church of Christ is to be rejected, these being the only points on which Protestantism is in accord with itself.

It is easy to see that such a creed is not Christian, as the article of God's existence is held equally by Mahomedans and Jews; while, as to the second, it cannot belong to Christianity at all, for the simple reason that it is purely negative; and if we maintain it at all it must be on the ground that no head of the universal Church was appointed by Christ. If this be the case, Christianity must have ignored the Pope entirely, and the vigorous denunciation of him in which Protestants indulge could be no part of Christ's teaching, inasmuch as, under the Protestant hypothesis, there was no Pope to denounce when Christ established His Church.

But in America, where the divisions of Protestantism are so well known, it would be useless to set up the pretence of homogeneity, and so the Bible Society does not mince the matter, but declares that "our visitors among the unchurched especially in farming districts, are confronted by the terrible fruit of that monumental curse of the Christian Church, denominational rivalry."

Thus the rivalry of sects, and inferentially the diversity of doctrines and interests, is honestly admitted. The report continues the subject by giving a pointed illustration in the case of a small town visited during the year.

It says:

"We found 211 families: 107 of these seldom attend any church; 163 were Protestants: 24 of these, or every

seventh family, were destitute of the Bible: 64 children were found not attending any Sunday School. In this beautiful little town of 811 population we found five church buildings, and four pastors, and none of them had an average attendance of forty persons."

It is certain that Catholics are not indicated in this last sentence, for nowhere are Catholics so negligent of assisting at Mass on Sundays. It would appear that there were about 48 Catholic families, and there can be no doubt that these were, almost without exception, church-goers; and the reason for the non-attendance of the Protestants at church is plainly stated to be "denominational rivalry."

No other result could be expected when the Church authority so evidently established by Christ is set aside in order to assert the individual mind to be the authority of last resort in settling all controversies regarding faith.

According to St. Paul, Christ instituted the various grades of the Church hierarchy, Apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, etc., purposely to ensure "unity of faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God that we be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, in the wickedness of men, in craftiness by which they lie in wait to deceive." (Eph. iv., 14.) The Protestant principle of private interpretation of Scripture saps the foundation of Christian faith, destroys the characteristic unity of that faith, as established by Christ, and opens the door to every error. It is inconsistent with the command given by Christ to His Apostles to preach a gospel which all are bound to receive: "Go ye into the whole world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be condemned." (St. Mark xvi., 15-16.)

It has been frequently admitted by missionaries that the diversity of sects is a serious drawback to the propagation of the gospel among the heathen. Those pagans who are gifted even with a small amount of logical acumen say to the jarring missionaries:

"How can you pretend to teach us religious truth while the doctrines you teach are contradictory to each other? Agree first among yourselves what is Christian truth and you will then perhaps be able to tell us something about the truth; but until you do this we can only regard what you say as lies not authorized by a good and perfect God to be taught to men."

It is because such talk as this has been experienced that the missionaries in the Philippine Islands have agreed to teach for the time being along similar lines; but the cloven foot of error must soon appear notwithstanding the present pretence of unity of faith, whereas that unity has only been attained by putting all doctrinal teaching out of sight.

## THE SOCIALISTIC RIOTS IN BELGIUM.

The Montreal Witness of April 17, treating of the recent deplorable riots in Belgium, says:

"The clerical of Belgium, like the same party in all other countries, are in desperation resisting the popular claims for equal rights. The cardinal principle in their creed is that the people are not to be trusted. Mr. Smet de Nayer, the Premier, warns Parliament against the rumors of government concessions to the industrial classes, avert the danger that now threatens the peace of the kingdom and the stability of the throne."

The causes and circumstances of the present regrettable trouble in Belgium are known only by means of cable despatches which are necessarily short and incomplete in detail, and we cannot assume that they are in every respect correct. However, the reports which are given certainly do not justify the sneering remarks of the Witness in reference to the clerical or Catholic party which at present is in the ascendant there, and which has been in power for eighteen years, that is to say, since 1884.

Previously to this date, the so-called Liberals, largely under the influence of the Freemasons, had succeeded in obtaining power, and had held the reins of government for some years, but during that time they brought upon themselves much indignation by anti-Catholic legislation in that very Catholic country. One of the principal measures by which they incurred the indignation of the majority of the people was one by which the schools were secularized, the teaching of religion being tabooed therein. In other matters, also, the anti-Catholic principles by which the rulers were dominated were made manifest by their imitation of the French revolutionary methods. Another issue was the total secularization of institutions of charity.

In 1884 the Catholic feeling of the people was specially roused by the god-

less school system which had been foisted upon them, and the Catholic party swept the country in the general elections which then took place. They have had the government in their hands ever since; and as a matter of course those who have been so long in the cool shades of opposition are very anxious for a change. In this respect, politics in Belgium greatly resemble politics in Canada.

The franchise in Belgium is not high, being an ownership or rental of 40 francs. This is, in fact, almost a universal suffrage, but it is somewhat modified by provisions giving a second vote to large property holders, and a vote also to those who have obtained university degrees.

The Socialists, who have become strong in Belgium as well as in other European countries, demand a revision of the constitution and the establishment of absolutely universal suffrage on the basis of one man one vote.

We cannot think that the representation given to wealth and learning under the Belgian law is a serious evil, if it be an evil at all; but at all events it does not justify the threats of revolution indulged in by the Socialists. It is merely a party excuse for the adoption of violent methods in order to obtain power. We are familiar enough with the unjustifiable flaunting of very dubious party cries even in Canada for a similar purpose not to say at once that the Socialists must have right on their side, and the Government party wrong.

It is quite an open question whether absolute universal suffrage is the best for a country, and the Witness by its readiness to sneer at the Catholic administration in Belgium because they do not at once accept the Socialistic programme, proves rather that the Witness is still somewhat dominated by the anti-Catholic traditions of that journal, than that the Belgian Government is in the wrong in being slow to act upon the demands of the Socialists. At all events, there is not a necessary connection, nor is there necessarily any opposition, between religion and universal suffrage. It is not a question of religion at all, but of political wisdom and prudence, which is to be settled on grounds altogether apart from religious considerations.

The Witness lays it down as a certain thing that absolutely universal suffrage, based on the principle of one man one vote, is the only principle on which a progressive country should establish the franchise. We shall not debate this point, but we may point out that we have not adopted this principle as yet even in our own Canada. Why, then, should we be so energetic in denouncing as behind the age a foreign Government which has not reached the conclusion that this is the only reasonable basis for the franchise?

In the present troubles the Belgian Government has shown a prudence and a firmness which cannot but raise it in the esteem of all lovers of law and order. At Brussels, the Socialistic demonstration was most violent and riotous, though there were also similar demonstrations in other towns. On April 9, King Leopold, who is well beloved by the bulk of his people, was mobbed by bands of Socialists who accidentally encountered him on the streets after his arrival from Biarritz, when he was on his way from the railway station. The mob shouted "Long live the Republic! Long live universal suffrage." On the 12th and 13th there was serious disturbance and considerable destruction of property, public and private, the object of the Socialistic spleen being chiefly the houses of the Catholic deputies. It is even stated that there was a Socialistic plot discovered to murder the King at Biarritz, simultaneously with the rising at Brussels, but that it was frustrated by the rapidity of his movements, as he did not remain at Biarritz so long as was expected. Of course, in the absence of an investigation into the truth of these rumors, it may be supposed that they have been exaggerated; but there is no exaggeration in the fact that the mob used much violence, and on April 12 another mob attacked the police with butchers' knives and threw at them balls filled with sulphuric acid. The riots are said to have been frightful, and much worse than similar riots which took place in 1893 and 1899.

It is to be deplored that there was loss of life in suppressing such disorders; but the Government showed proper spirit in their suppression, notwithstanding the reproaches to which they were subjected in the Chamber of Deputies by the Socialistic party who had threatened a revolution in case their wishes were not complied with.

At last reports order had been restored, and those workmen who had left their work in order to create disturbance had returned to their work. According to the theory of the Witness, the Government should have acceded to the demands of the Socialistic Deputies backed by the rioters; but all friends of order will admit that they

acted with proper dignity and firmness. King Leopold is evidently not so much the friend of the Socialists as the Witness would have us believe, for in his reply to the petition of the Chamber of Commerce which asked that he should intervene to put an end to disorder, though speaking in a conciliatory manner, he declared that the Government will carefully consider the condition of affairs, and "may be depended upon loyally to maintain the constitution, and to fulfill its duty by adopting the policy which it deems most useful for the well being and tranquility of the country."

We might suppose from the article of the Witness that Catholic Belgium is the only country which is threatened by Socialistic violence; but Socialism is regarded even in the Lutheran monarchies of Germany, Holland, and Sweden as the greatest danger which threatens their peace and prosperity. Even so lately as April 22nd there have been serious disorders at Stockholm, Sweden, arising out of a Socialistic demand for universal suffrage. Several participants in the rioting of an unruly mob were wounded, and arrests were made of rioters while they were on their way to attack the palace of King Oscar, which is now carefully guarded by troops as a protection against mob violence.

One mob at Malmoe in Sweden was composed of 15,000 persons, whereas it is said that the disorders in Brussels were not caused by more than 1,000 Socialists participating at any one time.

The question of the culpability of the Government in suppressing the revolt by force was settled in the Chamber of Deputies on April 22, when it was declared by a vote of 75 to 30 that the military has acted in self-defence in firing upon the rioters. M. Van Sangen-donck, a Socialist member, had said that the action of the guards was a "cold blooded murder" for which he held the Government responsible. Eight members abstained from voting.

Whatever view may be taken of the advisability of adopting universal suffrage, it is clear that it is a piece of wrongheadedness to represent it as a religious question, with Catholics on one side and Protestants as friends of progress on the other.

## CATHOLIC DISABILITIES TO BE REMOVED.

So accustomed have we grown to consider the German empire as a unit under one Imperial government that we are apt to overlook the fact that it is made up of a number of small sovereign States having their own laws, with which the Imperial government does not interfere. Under these circumstances, there are certain German States in which Catholics labor under civil disabilities. It has been announced for some time that the Imperial Government is desirous that these disabilities should be removed so that there may be full freedom of worship in all parts of the empire. Negotiations have been going on for some time between the Imperial Chancellor and the princes who are at the head of affairs in the various States to secure uniformity of law in this matter, without any direct interference on the part of the Federal Government. Mecklenburg, which is under the sovereignty of a Grand-Duke, and the Duchy of Brunswick, are preparing laws to meet the views of the Imperial government, and it is expected that the other States will soon follow their example. The status of Catholics throughout the Empire will undoubtedly be very greatly improved by the contemplated changes.

## THE REVISION OF THE WESTMINSTER CONFESSIO.

The announcement has been made officially that the Presbyterian Revision Committee has completed its labors. The report has been unanimously adopted, and will be laid before the next General Assembly which will meet in New York on May 12.

There are differences of opinions on matters of minor importance which have regard to questions of phraseology, but which, it is said, do not affect principles or doctrine. On these the members of the Committee will be permitted freedom of opinion.

The new Creed, or brief statement, concerning which it has been frequently stated that it will have unaltered the doctrines of the Westminster Confession, will explain by way of a declaratory statement, the meaning of chapters 3 and 10 of the Confession referring to the eternal decrees of God and the salvation of infants, and also the chapter relating to the effect of good works. These teachings of the Westminster, it is understood, will be laid aside.

There will be one very decided improvement in the new Confession, namely the recommendations of the Revision Committee be adopted: that is, the cause of the Westminster Confession which declares the Pope to be the

Antichrist and the Man of Sin foretold by the Apostle St. Paul is to be left out. We wonder whether this departure from the traditions of John Knox and Praise God Barebones will not make these worthies turn in their graves in agony at the iniquity of their descendants who have given up the faith which is called in the Confession the truth revealed to mankind by God Himself.

It is true the Rev Philip Schaff, one of the most learned of modern American Presbyterian divines, and one of the Bible revisers of 1886, declared that this clause was founded upon a misconception of the Sacred text, but most stalwart Presbyterians will say that one of the most fundamental teachings of their faith has been swept away without leaving any more trace than a pebble which has skipped a long distance over the surface of the water.

## PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT AND THE POPE.

President Roosevelt has taken the wise step of appointing a commission to treat with the Holy Father Leo XIII. or his representative in regard to the affairs of the Philippine Islands. It is not merely to determine on what terms the property of the friars on the islands, which amount to some thousands of acres, may be purchased that this step has been taken, but that the whole question of the status of the Catholic Church on the islands may be satisfactorily settled, and that the islanders themselves may make peace by agreeing to the sovereignty of the United States on such terms as may make them a free people with their own territorial government, and having the right to practice their religion as freely as do the Catholics of the United States.

President Roosevelt has recognized that the authority of the Holy Father will be a powerful influence towards the pacification of the Philippines, and will save both to the Filipinos and to the people of the United States many valuable lives; but there is a significance even beyond this in the step taken by the President.

The French minister at Washington saw its importance as opening a mode of procedure which European powers might wisely adopt in dealing with questions which affect religion, and hence, in sending to his government a full report of what had been done by the President of the United States, he added significantly: "This is a precedent."

If Waldeck-Rousseau had had the good sense of President Roosevelt, he would also have consulted with the Pope before giving himself up to the Socialists on their demand for a policy of aggression against the Religious Orders avowedly as a prelude to a war upon religion.

The Socialists are the greatest danger which menaces France at the present moment, and only the teaching of the Catholic Church in regard to the rights and duties of man can save the country from a repetition of such disorders as have plunged it into misery and Anarchy before now on two occasions. It would have been far more wise to have made peace with the religious sentiment of the country than to have given the Socialists such encouragement as much tend to ruin and enshroud, as has been the situation before.

The Catholic spirit of France has not yet been roused to take a serious part in the politics of the country, as has been the case in Germany; but the day must come when the conflict shall take place; and that day may be even now at hand on occasion of the coming elections which are to be held only a few days hence. We doubt not that the power of the Catholic sentiment will be made manifest when the day of polling comes; but whether our presentiment prove correct or not, the action of President Roosevelt must mean that the great powers shall deal in future with the Pope in all cases where intended legislation will affect seriously the interests of the Catholic Church.

We fully believe that a satisfactory solution will be found for the critical state of affairs in the Philippines when the American commission shall have conferred with the Holy Father, or his delegate, on the matter. It is stated, indeed, that Monsignor Sharetti, the Papal Delegate to the Philippine Islands, has full authority from the Pope to make a settlement with the commission. If this be the case a satisfactory arrangement will not be difficult to be arrived at.

## CONVERSIONS.

We are very much pleased to be informed by the rev. clergy that in less than three years, through the influence of the CATHOLIC RECORD and the book entitled "Catholic Belief," thirteen Protestants of Calgary have become members of our holy Faith.

## LEO'S TESTAMENT TO MANKIND.

Apostolic Letter of the Holy Father on the Dangers Which Threaten the Church and Society, and the Remedy Therefor.

N. Y. Freeman's Journal.

CONCLUDED FROM LAST WEEK.

What wonder, then, that the Church, which continues His divine mission and is the inextinguishable depositary of His truths, should meet the same fate? The world is always true to itself; side by side with the children of God are even to be found the satellites of that great enemy of the human race, who, rebel as he was from the beginning to the Most High, has been designated in the Gospel as the Prince of this World; and hence it is that the world in the presence of the law, and of Her who presents the law to it in the name of God, feels centred within itself with unmeasured pride the spirit of an independence to which it has no right. Ah! how often, in more stormy times, have the enemy banded together, with unspeakable cruelty and with the most ardent injustice, for the mad enterprise of nullifying the Divine work. When one form of persecution failed others were resorted to. The Roman Empire, for three long centuries abusing the brute force it possessed, multiplied martyrs throughout every one of its provinces, and bathed in their blood every sod of the soil of this sacred Rome; and the united forces of heresy, now masked brazenly by sophistry and by treachery, endeavored to destroy by least harmony and unity. Next came, like a devastating storm, the hordes of barbarians from the North and Islamism from the South, leaving ruin and desert in their tracks. So, too, while the sad legacy of hatred toward the Spouse of Christ continues to pass on from age to age, a Caesarism follows, suspicious and tyrannical, even though of another's greatness, even though that greatness enhanced its own, and this Caesarism unrelentingly renews the assaults to oppress her liberty and to usurp her rights. It is enough to make the heart bleed to see her thus often hemmed around with difficulties and untold sufferings. Yet, triumphing over all obstacles, violence and oppression, spreading her peaceful tents ever wider, saving the glorious patrimony of the arts, of history, science and letters, infusing the whole organization of human society with the spirit of the Gospel, who has formed that civilization which has been called Christian and which has endowed the nations which have come under its benign influence with equity in their laws, gentleness in their customs, the protection of the weak, compassion for the poor and the unhappy, respect for the right and the dignity of all, and consent upon all this, as far as is possible in the midst of human turmoils, that peacefulness of civil life which flows from the best harmony between liberty and justice.

And yet, even in the face of all these proofs, so patent, prolonged and sublime, of her intrinsic goodness, we behold the Church, in periods nearer to our own, not less than in the middle ages and in ancient times, involved in conflicts which in one respect have been more difficult and painful still. Through a series of well-known historical causes the so-called Reformation of the sixteenth century, raising the banner of revolt, sought to wound her to the heart by waging a fierce war on the Papacy, and, having her the object upon a shifting ground of jurisdiction and faith, which gathered the nations together under maternal wings in one fold, and which often through the harmony of aims it insured, doubled their strength, their prestige and their glory, this so-called Reformation introduced into the ranks of Christianity a deplorable and disastrous division. By this we do not mean that it was at first intended to banish from the world the sway of the supernatural truths—but, with the rejection on the one hand of the prerogative of the Roman See (the effective and preserving cause of unity), and with the establishment on the other of the principle of private judgment, the whole structure of the Divine edifice was shaken to its foundations, and the way paved for infinite variations, doubts and denials, even in matters of capital importance, so as to surpass even the expectations of the innovators themselves.

The way thus opened, the proud and swelling philosophy of the eighteenth century makes its appearance, and goes still further. It ridicules the sacred codes of the scriptures and repudiates the entire body of divinely revealed truths with the ultimate aim of extinguishing in the conscience of the nations all religious belief, of eradicating all traces of the Christian spirit. From these sources flowed the fatal and disastrous systems of rationalism and pantheism, naturalism and materialism, which revived under other forms ancient errors long since triumphantly refuted by the fathers and the apologists of Christian times; in such wise that the proud spirits of modern times, growing purblind through their passion for seeing too much in themselves, have come to err as foolishly as even paganism itself about the attributes of the human soul and the immortal destinies for which it is privileged.

In this way the war on the Church assumed an aspect of greater gravity than in past time, owing both to the fury and the universality of the assault. For modern disbelief does not stop at doubting or denying this or that truth of faith, but impugns the whole body of the principles consecrated by revelation and supported by sound philosophy—those sacred and fundamental principles which teach man the supreme end of his existence, keep him within bounds of duty, inspire him with courage and resignation, and by promising him incorruptible justice and perfect happiness beyond the tomb, inculcate upon him the necessity of subordinating time to eternity, earth to heaven. And what is substituted in these dictates, for these incompatible consolations of faith? A frigidity of reason, a frozen heart, and stiles every magnanimous aspiration of the conscience.

Unhappily these fatal doctrines have, as you see, Venerable Brothers, passed from the domain of philosophy into the domain of life and the domain of the Great and powerful nations, putting under the impression of the progress. The public they were not to reflect in is soundest in itself, absorbed of publicly honor too often happen their indifference oppose the only The system of bound to produce deep disturbance for as even the foundation of When the ties of the absolute a and judge, are left but the morality purely scribed independence as it does from divine precepts a natural desire and fatal consequence man a law unrendered incapable of hope to seek but an enormous of the enjoyment of life, sharpening its cupidities for quick without any regard to his ambition gratify it even finally generating law and public licentiousness real decadence Are we exasperated consequences of it? No; for lends only too too deductions, and the evil be the rep of civil society very principles morality are be of the social system family, have For the lay State either the limit of its power, hand upon the ing it of its rel invaded so far rights of parents their children, has destroyed by affording licentiousness sees the kind of There is a vast of marriages law, passions, and either dissolves tragic strife or—We say nothing of the son administrator lay State.

With the fam social and polit ing to the new just conception falsifying it, the that the autho formally from tude, and not and Eternal Pri loses in the sig its most argust rates into an ar upon a shifting as is men's vi we see the effe public laws, w being written merical force a political parta licentious appa are flattered, popular passion laborious peaceo treme cases t by violent and In like mann of Christian in virtue for uniti the good and be in one family, jealousy has g in the intern which the natu other if not w jealous distrusts detakings be come oblivio tion of moralit duty of prote pressed. They only the desir wealth withou ness and the u the alluring g in the securi any one to sh Fatal criteria material force the world; h measureless in ation, or arme respects may most disastrou The plora been the sec masses of disc timony, follow and disorders, still greater condition of a which certain relief, serves designs of th those of the through the m to the people, ward the acca atrocious desi He who thr cline inevit In the same the safety of the principles a veritable a with absolute very first as most serious and with inte in a positio everywhere, recoiling hel ciates, breaki world, with la taken the nar at the utter that a blind suggest, of