The Catholic Record

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LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION.

Apostolic Delegation,
Ottawa, June 13th, 1905.

To the Editor of the CATHOLIC RECORD,
London, Ont.

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 intelligence and ability, and, above all, that it is imbued with a strong Catholic spirit. It strenuously defends Catholic principles and rights, and stands firmly by the teachings and authority of the Church, at the same time promoting the best interests of the country.

Following 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 influence reaches more Catholic homes.

I, therefore, earnestly recommend it to Catholic 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, 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.

Its matter and form are both good; and a truly Catholic spirit pervades the whole.

Therefore, with pleasure, I can recommend 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, MAR. 9, 1907.

A PROPOSED UNION.

A union of churches has been lately proposed by an unexpected source and based upon rather novel principles. The author is not the irrepressible Mr. Stead. His cosmopolitan zeal is working just now along other lines. One might naturally have expected that it would be Mr. Stead; for this gentleman has a happy faculty of making bold strokes in ventures for the world's betterment. This time it is Mr. Shaw, Secretary of the Treasury for the United States. At an inter-denominational banquet at Chicago, Mr. Shaw expressed his opinions upon the union of churches. Coming as they do from such a source, these opinions attract more or less attention. Nor is the standing of Mr. Shaw the only recommendation his remarks contain. They bear the impress of a man serious and thoughtful, anxious for the wounds to be healed, yet not sure of the remedy to be applied. Claiming to be Catholic in spirit, he yearns for the union of all who believe in the one Saviour. No matter what severe demands the busy world makes upon us all, rich and poor, and severer upon the former than on the latter, still there is a hunger which cannot be sated with bread. There is a "Spiritual Food upon which God designed man to feed." Mr. Shaw sketches a democratic church and thinks that his Catholic friends fairly answer the outlines. A church, he claims, is a religious democracy—where "the rich and the poor, the educated and the ignorant, the cultured and all others gather to worship and commune with a being so far exalted as to make relative human conditions unmentionable, unthinkable and unnoticeable in His presence." This gentleman's last, and perhaps strongest point is that the mission is not so much to reform the world as to preach the gospel. If this be done the gospel will do the rest. All this is true enough in its way. No one doubts the levelling process of Christ's economy. The barrier that separated Jew from Gentile was broken down. The fountains were made free for all. In Christ there was neither bond or free, Greek nor barbarian. American democracy is no standard for the Christian Church. There is just as much caste amongst the plutocrats of the North and the whites of the South as in any monarchy of Europe. Equality does not exist in the United States. The schools are a case in point. Whenever we read of the boasted equality we turn to see the ghost of the parochial school contradicting the statement. As long as Catholics have to support a double system, equality and liberty of conscience are terms misapplied. Religious democracy differs very much from the type which Mr. Shaw represents. Its foundations are based upon different principles, its purposes rise higher, and its usefulness extends further. There is also this to be remembered, that Christianity is for all nations, monarchies as well as republics. However serious we may find Mr. Shaw to be, and although in other respects we commend him, we cannot comprehend why, desiring union so earnestly, seeing its concrete realization in the Catholic Church, he does not examine that Church and put this natural question: How is it that this Catholic Church, alone amongst all, has such a hold upon the masses? It is the oldest and has therefore retained its hold longest. If it were like the others it would have lost it long ago. It is the weakest socially, yet it has the strongest hold. It has passed through the severest storms of history, yet it has never lost its own spirit of simplicity and equality. There are the same sacraments for all, the same Sacrifice, the same altar—the same God to worship and love—the same creed to profess. The poor know it and find in their Church consolation. The rich know it and have to be more charitable. The untutored know it and believe. And the learned know it, and bow to the mysteries they cannot solve. Let the proposed union be based upon faith and equality. If its advocates are logical and sincere, they will enter where there is but One fold and one Shepherd, the Catholic Church.

AN EARNEST DENUNCIATION.

On more than one occasion the Rev. Mr. Ker, Rector of St. George's Anglican Church, St. Catharines, has spoken in terms which must have given his hearers ample food for thought. Nor could such discourses pass without sympathy from us for the truths they enunciated and the courage they displayed. We would expect the pastors of our own Church not to act like dumb dogs, but to warn their people of the dangers of society. It is their duty. For this are they placed on the watch towers. When in other pulpits we find clergymen speaking honestly, our hearts go out to them. When they condemn the race for wealth and the rage for pleasure, when they complain of theology being made smooth, and the way to heaven being broadened by lax platitudes, and especially when they condemn the godless education of the day, a fellow feeling makes us wondrous kind. These were the topics eloquently condemned by the Rev. Mr. Ker in his pre-lenten sermon. Referring to the notorious murder trial of New York, the preacher asks:

"Are we living among the decayed moralities of ancient Rome or in a country boasting of its education and liberty? If wealth and culture are but the convenient instruments for the destruction of purity and innocence, it is surely time to sound an alarm. Need we any further evidence of the awful effects of a purely secular and godless system of education. It is by no means difficult to see that abandonment of the moral and religious training of the young must, in the long run, end in social chaos."

We thank thee for that word. Chaos is the most appropriate term—chaos in the individual soul, chaos in the home, chaos in society. At no other point will godless education stop. In classic Greece and stoic Rome the story was the same. Chaos overturned what intellectual, artistic and political giants had built, because their temples, their art galleries and their capitols had no moral foundation. It would have been the same in Christianity, had not the very mission itself been to teach. With what patient courage and jealous watchfulness the Catholic Church has, in season and out of season, insisted upon religious education. Flattery has not seduced her nor have threats terrified her. She has warned the State away. She has drawn her children around her. To all she has said: "These are mine, I will educate them. You cannot educate them; for you will not teach them the one essential lesson they are required to know—God and Him Whom He sent." In England, France, in Canada, there is always the same uncompromising stand. Governments may pass laws and political parties quarrel: religious education remains. It is gratifying to find here and there men courageous and candid, like the Rev. Mr. Ker, who acknowledge the necessity of religion in the primative halls of education. They are few. As time goes on, and the cockle sown amongst the wheat is more evident, their number will increase. The time may come when they may sway public opinion to what is the only right view in this momentous question. Mr. Ker bewails the divisions in Christianity. This disastrous godless education is one of the worst effects of divided Christianity. However well disposed many like him might be, the practical difficulties of a truncated morality and emasculated religion face them at the start.

Another strong point which the Rev. Mr. Ker makes is his view of the French situation. If godless education leads to chaos the ignoring of the Divine sanction will surely cause the social fabric to crumble to dust. Nor are the signs of such crumbling wanting in the nations to-day. France is an example. "France," says Mr. Ker, "has never really recovered from her godless propaganda at the time of the revolution in which 'Liberty, Fraternity and Equality' were bathed in blood. To-day, infidel France is leading her forces of unbelief not against the Roman Catholic Church, as some foolishly imagine, but against Christ and Christianity."

MR. SCOTT AND INDULGENCES.

At a temperance meeting lately, Rev. E. E. Scott went out of his way to show his own ignorance, to insult all Catholics and to weaken, rather than strengthen the cause he was advocating. A passionate upholder of prohibition, he claimed that the present liquor law was an example of a government licensing crime. Then, with effrontary, he supports his high stand as follows: "Many years ago, when the Pope found himself short of money, he formed a scheme of 'granting indulgences.' This meant that to the purchaser of one of these indulgences pardon was granted for any crime he may commit within a certain period. What were the government doing? Were they not granting indulgences? Licenses were indulgences. They were granting power to men to devastate the homes and ruin the manhood of the country, and they were legitimizing this and allowing it to go unchecked." This sort of stuff resembles a prisoners' suit—double stripes, ill fitting and deeply dyed with bigotry. We must not lose our temper with Mr. Scott. Ignorance has its amusing feature even though its boldness is somewhat irritating. The funny part is that either Scotch Liberals on the one hand or Orange Tories on the other should be engaged in trading with 'indulgences.' We cannot let Mr. Scott off with a sneer or silent contempt. His ignorance, crass as it is, might pass unnoticed if he had kept silence. When, however, he volunteers a statement such as we have quoted we throw back the insolence it contains as most false and unwarranted. It is an old, old calumny which many a bigot of Mr. Scott's measure and calibre has served up in pulpit and on platform to feed the morbid appetite of mobs as prejudiced as the speakers themselves. We might have let it rot in its grave of forgetfulness if it had not been summoned this time as a witness upon a trial with which it has not the remotest connection. What is the connection between indulgences in the Church and liquor licences in Ontario? Wherein is their similarity? Everything is green to the jaundiced eye. We wonder whether Mr. Scott could or would learn a lesson on truth and history. It might serve him upon some future occasion. And if he takes it in the spirit in which it is given he will not act so foolishly, or lay himself open to the suspicion that he wishes to foment strife rather than promote temperance. Now what is an indulgence? Mr. Scott wished his audience to believe that it was an authorization to commit sin within a certain limit of time. Every Catholic knows better. We loathe such an idea. It is a foul, worn-out calumny. An indulgence, so far from being a remission for sin past, present, or future, can be of no avail until the sin shall have been previously remitted. In every sin two things must be carefully noted, the guilt and the punishment. The guilt of mortal sin and its eternal punishment must both be remitted by penance, perfect contrition with an implicit desire of the sacrament or attrition with the actual reception of the sacrament of penance. In the Christian economy of grace these two are the only ways the sinner has to be renewed to the friendship of God. An indulgence can no more be a remission of sin than can the cry of an infant be a sovereign's pardon. To gain the smallest indulgence one must be in the state of grace. By that we mean he must be free from mortal sin and its eternal punishment. But whilst a man may be so favored he may not be, nor are men in general likely to be, free from all punishment due to sin—the remains as it were of sin, so that the soul is absolutely pure and holy in God's sight. There is left some of the tarnish, a scar of the wound, a stain which will require either healing or cleansing. This is also the temporal punishment, a debt still due God's justice, and which may be paid by means of indulgences. Through the doctrine of the Communion of Saints all the saints on earth, i. e., those whose souls are free from mortal sin, are rendered sharers in the good things of Christ. As the Psalmist puts it: "I am a partaker with all them that fear thee." By the superabundant merits of Christ and His Saints the poor faithful lovers who struggle and walk in lowlier paths of virtue lay up for themselves treasures which the more heroic martyrs and generous saints acquired by their zeal and fidelity. In all this the soul never compromises with sin, or seeks in these most sacred benefits of religion an excuse or permission for unlawful freedom. The soul keeps the sorrow for sin and the humiliation as her own. With these she does not wish to part; for without the former no Indulgence would profit her, and without the latter she would not be grounded in virtue. It is the fires of God's purification she dreads. Conscious therefore of her own unworthiness she offers in atonement for her own guilt and punishment the Blood which spake louder than that of Abel and the prayer of Him who in the days of His flesh was heard for His reverence. And because in the ranks of the saints there are noble heroes and heroines whose deeds and outpoured blood have done more penance than their innocent lives demanded, the soul draws abundantly by Indulgences from this unfailing fountain and treasure. "It is utterly false," says Cardinal Newman, "then to assert that it has ever been held in the Catholic Church that the perpetration of crime could be indulged for any sum of money. Neither for sins committed, nor sins to come, has money ever been taken as an equivalent, for one no more than for the other." When in the sixteenth century Pope Leo X. granted an Indulgence to those who would give an alms toward the building of St. Peter's he granted, not the pardon of sin, but remission of temporal punishment to those who were repentant.

WHY HAVE WE NOT MORE COUNT CREIGHTON'S?

Last week, in the city of Omaha, Nebraska, took place the funeral of Count Creighton, a prominent and very wealthy Catholic layman. We are told he had won the universal esteem of his fellow-citizens by his sturdy Christian Catholic character. At the time of his death he was worth $8,000,000, and 80 per cent of this estate he has bequeathed to Catholic charitable and educational institutions. Quite true it is that we have not many Catholic laymen of like wealth, but it is to be regretted that there are very many possessed of abundance of this world's goods, who, in making their wills, seem to forget almost entirely the claims of the Church and the claims of charity upon their beneficence. It is well, of course, to make ample allowance for one's family, but we know of more than one family of wealthy Catholics who would be much better off, in almost every regard, did they not have so much money at their command, for it has enabled them to live the loud, strenuous, spendthrift life, with no thought of business or profession of any sort, simply living for the pleasures of the present, and going unhonored to early graves. Generosity towards the Church is the mark of true Catholicity. The Catholic who merely pays his pew rent and puts a little piece of silver on the plate every Sunday, and who has a bank account running into six or seven figures, all his own, is the Catholic whose heart is far away from thoughts of the eternal. He has position, he has money, he has social standing, he has a few years more to live. What then? Will his happiness in the eternal world be in proportion to the amount of happiness he has bestowed upon God's Church and God's children in the world of time? Will his heavenly Father turn His back upon him as an ingrate, who fed bountifully of His beneficence, and in return but played the miser's part? In a paper entitled Dangers of the Day, written by Right Rev. John S. Vaughan, the worldly Catholic is dealt with in the following manner, and it will be justly regarded as an eminently correct picture:

"Perhaps Dives, the rich man of the gospel narrative, may be taken as a type of many a wealthy man living at the present day. His sin, it must be remembered, was neither murder nor theft, nor blasphemy, nor anything else calculated to excite horror and indignation in good men. It seems to have consisted simply and solely in making himself his own centre. He did not abuse or murmur against God: He just ignored Him; he found no room for Him in his daily routine of pleasure and business, and lived without Him. We are told that this rich man was clothed in purple and fine linen: but that is no crime. We are also informed that he feasted sumptuously every day; but no one will have the hardihood to affirm that it is, in itself, a grievous sin, deserving of eternal damnation, to sit down to a good dinner. No: his fault, according to the view of the great commentators, was that he lived without God. The world and its vanities filled his heart and his mind. Its pleasures and its interests, its dinners and its banquets, its parties and its social duties, so possessed and occupied his thoughts that there was no place left for God and spiritual things. Observe, it was not that he went out of his way to insult or to outrage God, or to deny His authority and dominion; not at all. He simply closed his eyes to the spiritual world altogether, and took no notice of it; treated it, in fact, as though it had no objective reality. To him, in short, the invisible was not only invisible, it was non-existent. The result was he lost his soul, which could not live while cut off from all the sources of spiritual life. God rejected him, and condemned him to be cast out of His presence into the exterior darkness. As he had refused to give God any share in his temporal life and thought in this world, so God refused to give him any share in His eternal life in the next world. And thus will He act with all who wilfully exclude Him from their lives."

THE LATE SIR WM. HINGSTON.

Few men consigned to their last resting place were shown as much honor as the late Sir Wm. Hingston. The people in Montreal, of all classes, all creeds and all nationalities, vied one with the other in testifying the great regard in which he was held. We notice by the Montreal Witness that our French Canadian fellow-citizens claim his successor should be one of their nationality. The Irish are an eighth, the Witness says, of the population of the province, and have a right to three senators out of the twenty-four. Under the circumstances the appointment of a French Canadian would be most unjust to the Irish Catholics of the province. A word, however, in regard to his successor. From amongst the Irish Catholics in Montreal one can be chosen who would reflect honor upon those whom he is appointed to represent. Our sincere wish is that the distinction will fall upon some one who would be a worthy successor of the late member.

ENTERTAINMENTS OF A SORT.

A very neat pamphlet comes to us from the Rolla L. Crain Co., of Ottawa, entitled "The Irish Rebellion of 1798: Its Causes and Effects." It consists of a paper read at an open meeting of the Ottawa Council Knights of Columbus, by M. J. Gorman, K. C., LL. B., Past State Deputy of Ontario. The lecture is indeed worthy of Mr. Gorman, who stands high amongst the members of the bar at the capital. To the Irish people his subject was of absorbing interest, for Ireland, a little over a century ago, produced men like Emmett, Fitzgerald, Tone, Grattan and others, whose memories will forever remain green in the Irish heart. We compliment Mr. Gorman upon his brilliant lecture and hope to hear from him again on other topics. Entertainments of this kind amongst the members of our Catholic societies are to be commended. They furnish literary food healthful for the brain, and the members are all the better for adding to their store of knowledge. In too many parts of the country the card-playing feature is altogether too prominent in our societies.

A PERNICIOUS HABIT.

Amongst both young and old, but especially the former, there are few customs which are so execrable as the treating habit. The more it is studied the more will the conviction come that it cannot from any point of view be commended. Perhaps the priest is more fully aware of the baneful results following in its wake than any one else. He sees the havoc it creates among the young and the misery and the sin following those of older years who indulge in it. In a sermon preached on a recent occasion by Rev. Father Tobin, in St. Mary's Church, in this city, he said that "allowing the boy out at nights, where he is caught by the glare of the lights and is finally induced to enter the saloon, is one of the primary causes of intemperance." Referring to the treating habit, Father Tobin said that "if a man were to offer to buy a meal for his friend he would be insulted, but yet that same friend will accept a drink from him." Let us give another illustration. Not long ago two men met on a public thoroughfare. They had not seen each other for many years. We will call them Mr. Brown and Mr. Jones. After a few minutes conversation, Mr. Brown said, "Jones, let us come and have a drink in memory of old times." Jones replied: "I am sorry I cannot comply with your request, because I do not drink intoxicants. Were I to do so it would make me sick." Mr. Brown was not to be put off in that way, however, and still pressed Mr. Jones to take just one drink. Mr. Jones was somewhat annoyed, but still resolutely refused to comply with the request of his friend. Both were strolling along the street together, when, at last, Mr. Jones requested his old acquaintance to come into a drug store. On being asked for a reason, Mr. Jones replied, "I want to take a dose of castor oil, and I should be glad if you would take one with me in memory of old times." Mr. Brown saw the point, and never again asked his friend to take a drink. It is a habit of many young men, immediately after being paid their week's wages, to retire to the nearest saloon and have drinks all around. What a pity so many are heedless of the future. Their hard-earned wages are given to the bar-tender instead of being put in a savings bank, and, when they attain the years that bring the serious side of life, they find themselves without means, oftentimes without character, and only too frequently a disgrace to their church, their country and their families. We hope the time will come when the treating habit will be tabooed amongst all classes of the people. It is a veritable curse.

ARCHBISHOP FARLEY of New York was lately in France. On his return he declared that he learned from unimpeachable authority "that a single piece of [church] property in Paris was sold for 15,000,000 francs, and that the entire proceeds went into the pockets of a few men. This is the secret of the entire question. It is simply high-way robbery." These precious rascals who govern France are but copying Thomas Cromwell and others of the so-called "Reformation" period in England. The French Infidels who govern France may put whatever face they please upon their conduct, but the public opinion of the Christian world will hold them in the same contempt as that class who are spending their lives within prison walls.

WE ARE surprised to see published in our contemporary, The Presbyterian, a story from the pen of Mr. Joseph Hocking. Mr. Hocking, as a writer, takes rank with the authors of the dime novels and the Jesse James literature—low grades that denote the opposite of the educated gentleman. Mr. Joseph Hocking writes as he writes because it pays; but, then, we will always have with us the race of fools and the race of liars.

THE LATEST ON THE FRENCH QUESTION.

Associated Press Despatch.

Rome, Feb. 24.—The Vatican authorities consider that the negotiations for the leases of the churches have been broken by the French Government not having resumed the negotiations on the same lines where Education Minister Briand interrupted them, but having added: "Evidently at the instigation of Premier Clemenceau new conditions, offensive to the Church, which are not acceptable, especially the clause prohibiting the appointment of foreign priests as heads of parishes.

The Vatican authorities are very indignant at the conditions inserted in the leases and declare that M. Clemenceau has made a secret coalition with Deputy Munier and Deputy Allard, who are determined to push the anti-Catholic war to extremes and who hope to suppress public worship in France.

A Vatican official said to-day that the seminaries in France have been suppressed entirely, which adds greatly to the difficulty of training French clergymen. The time may come when there will not be enough French priests to meet the demand and recourse will have to be had to foreign clergmen.

The same arguments apply to the members of the religious brotherhoods, who, in addition, are no longer allowed to live as monks.

"It is too much," the official said, in conclusion, "not to permit these men to act as priests."

THROUGH THE "HAIL MARY."

At Cracow, in Poland, in 1901, a sinner lay dying. He had been a great criminal, having spent his life in terrible evil-doing, even, it was said, to the shedding of human blood. Nevertheless, though about to meet his God, and seemingly well aware of it, he persistently refused to prepare himself.

Many pious persons were praying for him; several priests had tried to gain access to him; but, calling them "a pestiferous race," he had given orders that not one of them should be allowed to enter his room. However, a member of a religious community, who had been at college with him, determined, if possible, to save the soul of his former comrade, and contrived to evade the command, on the plea of old-time friendship.

As soon as he saw the sick man, the priest was convinced that to endeavor to reason with him would avail nothing. Therefore, with a resolution born of necessity as well as piety, the priest took the easiest and, in his opinion, the most efficacious means of softening the heart of the reprobate. He fell on his knees beside the bed and began to recite aloud the "Hail Mary." He was answered by a blasphemy. He continued, however, to repeat the prayer; and the invalid, too weak for further remonstrance, resigned himself to it. After some time the dying man opened his eyes and said, in a voice weak but perfectly rational: "I would like to make my confession." The priest, though overjoyed, was much surprised. Great as had been his faith and confidence in the Mother of God, he was not prepared for so sudden a change. The sick man repeated his request, which was immediately complied with.

After his confession, he asked the priest to open a drawer in his table. There, among his papers, he directed him where to find a small picture of the Blessed Virgin.

"It is a souvenir of my mother," said the contrite sinner. "She gave it to me, enjoining me never to part with it. In order to please her, I took it from her dear hands. I have often been on the point of destroying it when sorting my papers, but could never bring myself to do so."

He took the picture, pressed it to his bosom, and then kissed it fervently, tears streaming from his eyes. He received the Viaticum with joy and fervor, and shortly went to behold the vision of her who has been so justly called the Refuge of Sinners. — Ave Maria.