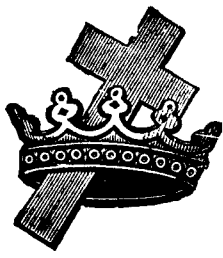


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# Northwest Review.



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## CURRENT COMMENT

The "Catholic World" for February, is a decidedly strong number. It opens with a biographical sketch of the late Paulist Superior General by the Very Rev. George M. Searle, of the same congregation. We get a glimpse of Father Deshon's deep spirituality. Father Searle knew him as his novice-master, and he says "it was to the interior life of love of God and union with Him that he constantly directed our thoughts and efforts; detachment from the world, poverty, obedience and mutual charity were favorite subjects with him for conferences. Indeed his words to us were very much the same as might have been addressed to Carthusians or the hermits or coenobites of the desert, who were certainly his favorite saints. . . . Perhaps he may have gone too far in this direction; but if it was a mistake, it was a mistake on the right side. The actual and unavoidable practice of the exterior life will show to the well disposed the virtues necessary for it; but the interior life and that of the community as such may easily be forgotten, or at any rate undervalued, in the rush and pressure of external affairs."

The Rev. Dr. James J. Fox's paper on "Herbert Spencer" is the most comprehensive and illuminating analysis of the late philosopher's work we have yet seen, and would of itself mark this number of the "Catholic World," as particularly valuable. Thirty years ago the writer reminds us, "the people who dubbed themselves the Party of Advanced Thought—some of whom did think, most of whom had their advanced thinking done for them, if asked for a profession of their philosophical and religious faith might have expressed their creed with Mohammedan simplicity in the formula, 'Great is Evolution and Herbert Spencer is its prophet.' . . . The endless quarrel between religion and science was closed at last, never to be revived; for the Supreme Pontiff of knowledge had divided the universe of being impartially between them; science receiving as her proper domain everything about which anything could be known; religion, everything about which nothing could ever be known." But all this is now changed. "The comparative study of religions has demonstrated that, even from the purely Positivistic point of view, Spencer's theory" that all religions were a growth from the savage's belief in dreams and his fear of ancestral ghosts "was a piece of solemn nonsense; and evolutionists themselves soon had come to recognize that religion has its roots in human reason and has played a predominant part in the promotion of human progress." Elsewhere Dr. Fox truly says: "Evolution, even if accepted without reservation, is now seen to be but a process, that no more accounts for the primal origin of things than a railroad time-table constructs the locomotive. Not alone does it leave untouched the proof which the universe proclaims of an intelligent Creator, but it sets forth order and design in the world with far more impressive grandeur than they received in the argument of Paley and the Bridgewater Treatises."

"What has brought about this reevaluation of Spencer's works?" asks Dr. Fox. "The chief cause," he replies, "was the defects in the system itself. These are of three kinds: in the first place, some of its most fundamental principles are not only false but are in glaring contradiction with one another; secondly, in the development of his theories, Spencer's logic exhibits

fatal flaws—gratuitous assumptions, unwarranted inferences, an inveterate trick of turning a 'may-have-been' in the next, and an 'a priori' method of treating facts, ignoring all the inconvenient ones, and considering only those which squared with or could be twisted to fit into his preconceived theories. Thirdly, and especially, his philosophy, as a practical scheme for the guidance of life, is the negation of all moral values. Instead of justifying the dignity of life, the importance of conduct, the immeasurable gulf between virtue and vice, its logical conclusion is that good and bad are equally the manifestation of the irresistible energy which determines the conduct of every individual as inexorably as it does the movements of the stars; that the saint and the profligate are equally the result of forces over which they have no control. Assailed on all sides by metaphysicians and biologists, by independent freethinkers, and by theologians of every school, by moralists and physicists, by Martineau and Ward, by Mivart and Westermarck, by evolutionists and anti-evolutionists, the structural weaknesses, as well as the innumerable defects of detail, which exist in the system, stand palpably exposed to its discredit."

The latest issue (Feb. 6,) of the "Ave Maria" supplies strong confirmation of this view by quoting the testimony of Dr. Edward von Hartmann, an anti-Christian philosopher, to the effect that Darwinism is dead. Dr. von Hartmann writes:

In the sixties of the past century the opposition of the older group of savants to the Darwinian hypothesis was still supreme. In the seventies the new idea began to gain ground rapidly in all cultured countries. In the eighties Darwin's influence was at its height, and exercised an almost absolute control over technical research. In the nineties for the first time a few timid expressions of doubt and opposition were heard, and these gradually swelled to a great chorus of voices aiming at the overthrow of the Darwinian theory. In the first decade of the twentieth century it has become apparent that the days of Darwinism are numbered. Among its latest opponents are such savants as Eimer, Gustav Wolf, De Vries, Hoocke, Von Wellstein, Fleischman, Reinke and many others.

Father Cuthbert, O.S.F.C., continues in the February "Catholic World" his able study of "Professor Harnack and the Gospels," in which he proves that the learned Professor overlooks all that does not square with his specious but faulty generalization, misunderstands the gospels because of his ignorance of Catholic asceticism, takes little or no account of our eternal destiny, and, in one word, teaches "a mere shadowy Theism."

Dr. James J. Walsh's article, in the same number, on "Parsifal and a Great Literary Century" is a splendid vindication of that culmination of the Middle Ages, the really glorious thirteenth century. "Very few people realize," he says, "that the great Meistersinger Wolfram" Von Eschenbach, the inspirer of Wagner's Parsifal, which is the watchword of the hour, "far from being a solitary poetic personality in the midst of a period arid in literary growth, was only one of a series of supreme poets—makers or creators in the true sense of the Greek original (poietes) whose work has had more influence on mankind, with the exception, of course of the great Greek poets, than those of any other period in history." Strong as this assertion

is, Dr. Walsh proves it up to the hilt. He reviews the Spanish poem of the Cid, the Arthurian legends of Britain, the legendary epic poetry of Northern France and the Trouveres of Picardy, the Master songs of South Germany, with the Minnesingers of the time, the Troubadours of southern France, the Italian poetry of the thirteenth century, culminating in Dante, and the Latin hymns of that epoch. With regard to these last he shows that these "Latin hymn writers did two very wonderful things. One was that for the first time in its history they made the Latin language an original vehicle for the expression of poetic thought according to its own genius." For the so-called classic Latin poetry was an echo of Greek both in substance and form. It did not spring from the people, and it never moved the people. But the Christian hymns were proper folk poetry, the Bible of the People, their true Homeric poems. "Second, the hymn writers brought rhyme to such perfection," the rhyme they had themselves created, "that the developing modern languages, which during this century for the first time began to be used in literary fashion took up this mode of expression in a way that followed the sublimely beautiful models so often resounding in their ears in the Church services of the time." He illustrates the beauty of these hymns by the "Dies Irae," which Professor Saintsbury, "perhaps the greatest living critic of European literature" calls "the greatest of all hymns and one of the greatest of all poems. . . . nearly or quite the most perfect wedding of sound to sense." Dr. Walsh concludes his beautiful article with these words: "It is a matter for never ending felicitation that at last these Middle Ages are coming to their deserved meed of appreciation. We shall get away from the conventionality that has wrapped us round, binding minds as well as hands, just to the extent that we come into admiration and emulation of our wonderful Christian forefathers."

An article of altogether a different type, albeit a very suggestive one, is Mr. Albert Reynaud's "Thoughts on Philosophy" (Eternity and Heaven). Here we have, no longer what Dr. Walsh showed us in Dante, a philosopher wielding masterful poetry, but a poet venturing into philosophy. The result is not quite satisfactory. There is a haziness about Mr. Reynaud's philosophic dreams which recalls certain passages in Father Hecker's books. "Life implies act," this is true; but when the writer goes on to identify act with motion, he fails to understand life as it is in God. God is substantial life, the plenitude of life, but He is Himself blissfully immovable, not "Motus primus," as Mr. Reynaud, by an astonishing blunder, calls Him, but "Motor Primus." Mr. Reynaud does not realize that the true definition of life is "immanent action;" the more immanent is the act, the more perfect is the life. His views of space and time smack of Kant's error about the limitlessness of both. However, many of Mr. Reynaud's ideas are ingenious and thought provoking.

The visit which our Archbishop lately made to ten French Canadian parishes in and near Chicago will probably attract a considerable number of immigrants. His Grace noticed that well-to-do Canadian farmers in that region were looking for farms for their numerous offspring. Now, in several of those thickly settled districts farms are worth more than a hundred dollars an acre. How much easier for the sons of Illinois farmers to settle in Manitoba than in the

neighborhood of their father's farms. Mgr. Langevin, with his usual eloquence, made the most of this golden opportunity. He would not, of course, depopulate those flourishing parishes; but, since the fledglings must leave the paternal nest, what better place to fly to than this our matchless Canadian land, where thirty or forty acres can be had for the price of one over there?

Another result of His Grace's visit to Illinois is one that more nearly concerns this journal. The editor of the "Victorian," the journal of the celebrated Catholic College at Bourbonnais, Ill., where the Archbishop of St. Boniface was right royally welcomed, has kindly sent us several copies of that interesting publication, with the request that we should exchange. We do so with pleasure and profit to ourselves. Nothing, for instance, could be more graceful than the Rev. President's address (published in the January number) to the students of St. Viator's College on the eve of their departure for the Christmas holidays. The same distinguished Father Marsile contributes to another number a dainty little French poem. Only, how queer the beautiful French words look, stripped, as they are, of all their proper clothing of accents!

On Thursday of last week at the skating carnival in the Auditorium rink some of the masqueraders appeared dressed as nuns. Our great dailies seem to have enjoyed this insulting feature. One says: "The horrors of the Inquisition, represented by dusky dominoes, were offset by sweet-faced nuns;" another speaks of "monks in their hooded stoles (sic!) skating arm in arm with gypsies brandishing tambourines; the meek-faced and quiet garbed nun swinging swiftly round the corners with a court jester, saying most unclerical things in her ear." The names of the monk or monks do not appear in the list of skaters in costume, but one man and one woman are named as wearing the dress of nuns. The less said about their lack of taste and tact, the better. How would these fashionable fools enjoy a Catholic masquerading in the apron and gaiters of an Anglican bishop? They seem to have no more consideration for the feelings of Catholics than that widower who sang a song deriding celibacy in the presence of the guest of the hour, the Delegate Apostolic, the Archbishop and a numerous gathering of the Catholic clergy. But perhaps the most scandalous aspect of the whole performance was the hearty co-operation of a few well known Catholics in a distinctly Protestant church festival under the auspices of the Ladies' Aid of All Saints.

## Persons and Facts

The Milwaukee "Catholic Citizen" announces that the Marquette statue, placed in Statuary Hall, Washington, D.C., by the State of Wisconsin, has finally been accepted by a vote of the United States Senate. A delay of eight years was due "to a large amount of latent, or active bigotry and cowardice in the makeup of politicians and office holders."

Mrs. John McBride, better known as Maud Goune, is the mother of a bouncing boy, who has been christened "Sagan," which is equivalent to "Shaun" or "John."

Apropos of a donation to a London church by Lady French, the San Francisco "Leader," an unimpeachable authority on all things Irish, says the name of this noble Irish family is properly printed with a small initial, in printing

phraseology, with a 'lower case f.' The present Lord French is descended from a gentleman who represented Wexford in the English parliament in the days of Edward III., (1327-1377).

Mrs. Wright, the wife of the new Governor-General of the Philippines is a Catholic. She is the daughter of Admiral Semmes, of the Confederate navy. Her children are all being brought up in the Catholic Church.

Our venerable contemporary, the "Catholic Mirror" of Baltimore, was recently in financial straits; but when last Sunday's appalling conflagration destroyed most of Baltimore's great newspaper offices the Herald of that city was only too glad to be set by hand in the office of the "Catholic Mirror."

At the Gesu Church in Milwaukee on Jan. 31, in presence of a large congregation, Mr. Charles H. Schultz, late rector of St. Stephen's Episcopal parish, was baptized by the Rev. Henry W. Otting, S. J. Mr. Schultz is in his 48th year.

Mr. Green, Vice-Council for Sweden and Norway, who has been seriously ill, is now, we are happy to state, improving.

Mr. James Jeffrey Roche, editor of the Boston "Pilot," and author of that immortal skit "The V-A-S-E," has taken to himself a second wife, in the person of Mrs. Elizabeth Vaughan Okie, a recent convert. Mr. Roche lost his first wife 21 years ago.

Mutsu-Hito, the Emperor of Japan, is fifty-two years old.

Captain Colin MacRae, of the famous Scottish regiment, known as the Black Watch, was recently received into the Church by the Jesuit Fathers of Glasgow.

The Scotch Catholic directory for 1904 gives the Catholic population of Scotland as 513,400.

Mr. Marchand, the Montreal architect, who came here a fortnight ago to prepare plans for the new wing to St. Boniface hospital, has now completed them and will return to Montreal on Saturday, the 13th inst. The portion to be built this year will be 200 feet long and four stories high added on to the south of the present building. This addition will cost over \$150,000.

Mother Francis, an Ursuline nun from Grand Forks, is dying at St. Boniface hospital, whither she was brought lately by Nurse O'Rourke.

Nurse Brennan, who came from Ireland some eighteen months ago, to St. Boniface hospital, is dangerously ill there.

Thorvaldur Thorvaldson, a former student of Wesley College, who was second in the last Previous competitive order-of-merit award of scholarships in Manitoba University, in 1900, Adonias Sabourin, of St. Boniface College, coming out first with the medal, died on February 10, last Wednesday, as a first year student in the Harvard Graduate school at Cambridge, Mass. He was taking a course in physics and mathematics and was 25 years of age.

Mr. E. McCarthy of Regina, who is winning laurels in the Bonspeil, is accompanied by Mrs. McCarthy in his visit to Winnipeg. Their daughter Blanche, is at St. Mary's Academy.

Not content with cheating the people of St. Boniface out of a direct car service to Winnipeg throughout this unusually severe