

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor of the Northwest Review:

Dear Sir,  
Would you kindly tell me through the medium of your paper whether the Church at any time opposed Harvey's theory of the circulation of the blood through the body.

Also, if we (Catholics) are obliged to believe the whole of the Bible?

Please recommend to me a veracious history of Europe in the Middle Ages.

Your paper is eagerly looked for weekly in our household, and the articles in it are found of great benefit in arguments with outsiders.

These answers would greatly oblige

FEDELINA.

Winnipeg, Aug. 18.

ANSWER.

1. We are not aware that the Church at any time opposed Harvey's theory. Certainly there never was any infallible utterance against it. What individual churchmen may have said against it does not implicate the Church, which is responsible only for what an ecumenical council or a Pope speaking 'ex cathedra' on a question of faith and morals has defined. The experience of Andrea Caesalpino shows that the Popes of his day did not condemn the theory of the circulation of the blood. For, half a century before Harvey he wrote: "In animals we see that the nutriment is carried through the veins to the heart as to a laboratory, and its last perfection being there attained, it is driven by the spirit which is begotten in the heart through the arteries and distributed to the whole body." The system accepted since the time of Harvey could hardly be more definitely or accurately stated. And yet Caesalpino was called from Pisa to Rome by Clement VIII., to be chief physician to the Pope and professor of medicine in the Sapienza college, and he retained these positions till his death.

2. Undoubtedly Catholics are obliged to believe the whole of the Bible. If our correspondent has any difficulty in accepting any part of the Bible, let her state the difficulty and we shall be happy to remove it. Catholics have always realized with St. Peter (2nd Epistle chap. 3, verse 16) that there are difficulties in the Bible, but none insoluble.

3. We know of no thoroughly veracious history of the Middle Ages, with that title in English; but there are many more comprehensive works that tell the truth about that period. One of the handiest is Fredet's Modern History, which includes all the Christian era. Then there is Dartas' History of the Church in four volumes; also Alzog's History of the Catholic Church in three or four volumes, and Dr. Parsons' Studies in History, which, in the course of five volumes, handles with great learning and honesty all the disputed historical questions of the Middle Ages.

Many thanks to Fedelina for her intelligent appreciation of our efforts.—Ed. N.R.

CONSIDERATIONS ON CATHOLICISM BY A PROTESTANT THEOLOGIAN.

Sacred Heart Review.—CCCIV.

What I have said, going to show that the Jesuits have very little responsibility for Voltaire's frivolous Deism and blasphemous hatred of Christ, has the more force than the fact that the main editor of the Encyclopedie was Bayle, a Protestant, less truculent in temper than Voltaire, but of the same tenor of opinion.

As much may be said, in a general way, of the other two instances which the Witness brings up, namely, Joseph McCabe and Ernest Renan.

As concerns McCabe (whose book I have read from beginning to end) what the Witness says, is a very good illustration of a class of Protestant writers, much more respectable and less virulent than such people as Lansing, but of no great

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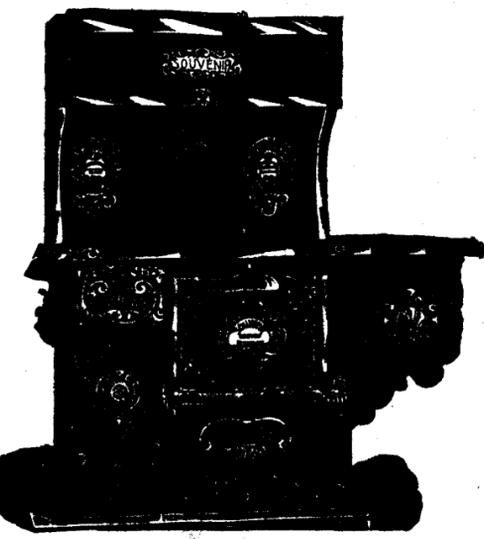
depth of research, and of censurable slouchiness in the application of the facts which they do pick up.  
After mentioning that McCabe, having been a Franciscan, has become an atheist, a disciple of Haeckel, the Witness proceeds: "Romanism in its continental form where all sorts of superstitions are developed, is apt to drive the intelligent into the dark abuses of infidelity, as in France and Italy." The natural meaning of this is that McCabe, having been brought up under the "continental Romanism," has been driven by its superstitious unreasonableness into atheism. Now McCabe is an Irishman, and his monastic life has been chiefly spent in Ireland and England. He nowhere intimates that his few years in Belgium had any particular effect on either his character or opinions, although he plainly thinks that his Belgian brethren are rather a stupid set. As to the English Franciscans, he thinks they are very much like so many Church of England clergymen, some admirably good, and highly intellectual, some very far from good; the bulk reputable and sincere, but not remarkable either in character or life, as the bulk of no human brotherhood can easily be. He thinks the monastic training of priests (except the Jesuit) rather behind the times, but he nowhere represents his own defection from God as due to any resentment over an inadequate or a superstitious education.

Of the Jesuits he has nothing disparaging to say, although he thinks it might be better if they were not quite so hard to train in line with the seculars and the other regulars. However, he does take it rather ill that the Jesuits believe that, as salvation consists in union with God, he who does not believe in God, the personal God, is not on the way to heaven.

McCabe's infidelity seems to be nothing different from infidelity in general, but to be, like other men's, a free moral choice between the two alternatives propounded by Marcus Aurelius: "God or Atoms, Which?" These two alternatives are as old as developed thought. Buddhism says: "Atoms!" Christianity says: "God!" McCabe was brought up to choose God, but

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HUGH McKELLAR Deputy Minister of Agriculture. Winnipeg, Aug. 8th, 1904

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