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The Catholic Record

Christianus mihi nomen est Catholicus vero Cognomen.—(Christian is my Name, but Catholic my Surname)—St. Paclan, 4th Century.

VOLUME XXXII.

LONDON, ONTARIO, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 1910

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The Catholic Record

LONDON, SATURDAY FEBRUARY, 26, 1910

OUR CRITICS

We wish to say to our correspondents, who do not see eye to eye with us on the liquor traffic, that we are not disquieted in the least by their critical and somewhat abusive complacency. As a deterrent to their self-complacency and their idea of our ignorance on this matter they should not forget that the public opinion of to-day is not the public opinion of the time when they donned the bartender's apron and "set them up for the boys." If they can say any argument in their favor in the trend of the times they must be endowed with a wondrous optic nerve. Employers, as a rule, demand sobriety on the part of the employee; and not a few of them insist upon total abstinence. Again, the man who frequents the road-house is regarded as one who is making a bid for failure in life. Doubtless some of these places have the wastrels, the irresponsibles, the vicious, and their patrons, but the average citizen holds them in abhorrence and is making efforts to rid the countryside of them. The "hops" or dances that but a few years ago beguiled the unwary to their bar rooms have lost their fascination. And the proprietors rage and mutter words about "cranks" because the joyous crowds with the dollars cross no more their thresholds. It boots little to call us extremists, because, in our opinion, the bar-tender must be a man blind to the beauty and possibilities of life and dead to every noble sentiment. We may be wrong; but we cannot see how doing out liquor to young and old, year after year, can effect anything that is to be envied. Some of our Catholic societies fail to see it, for they deny him admittance to their ranks. Our pastors, though not without discernment, exhort him to give up the business and to adopt a more decent way of gaining a livelihood. The ever increasing army of those who refuse to countenance the traffic do not believe that it calls for either brown or red. Let us waste no words, says Archbishop Ireland, on the possible or ideal saloon. It will be time enough to discuss it when it will be discovered, the saloon as it exists to-day trades in and battens upon intemperance, and at its door must be laid all the dire evils which accompany or follow from intemperance.

PARENTAL DUTY

If parents would but think of their duties and responsibilities we might have sons and daughters who would be a credit to their religion and a benefit to their brethren. In the home character is fashioned. Day by day the example of parents touches impressionable souls, moulding and forming them into things of beauty or things of ugliness. And, leaving home to make their way, the children upon them by their parents. If they have learned at the family hearth to view things by the light of eternity they have acquired a knowledge more precious than gold or broad acres. That knowledge will steady them, be as a balm for every suffering, and arm them against the onrush of the world. It will give them peace and happiness and shield them against disappointments and heart-breaks. For much of our misery comes from the fact that we are striving not to be, but to have. A man may hold everything and be unhappy; but he who has been taught to keep faith's lamp burning brightly—to realize its beauty and life-sustaining powers, is rich, supremely rich, though he walk in obscure places and with an empty purse. Old talk this, but needed when men born for eternity stand with bated breath and cap in hand before the dollar.

THE MODERN PHARISEE

It, says Chesterton, there is one thing worse than the modern weakening of major morals, it is the modern strengthening of minor morals. Thus it is considered more withering to accuse a man of bad taste than of bad ethics. Cleanliness is not next to godliness nowadays, for cleanliness is made an offence, and godliness is regarded as an offence. A playwright can attack the institution of marriage so long as he does not misrepresent the manners of society; and I have met Ibsenite pessimists who thought it wrong to take beer but right to take prussic acid.

MISCHIEF MAKER

The Catholic who lives out his faith is as a ministering angel to those around him. His deeds are eloquent and compel attention. His regard for the little courtesies of life, his rever-

ence for virtue and unwavering obedience to his faith are always productive of results. But the worldly Catholic has been, and is, a mischief maker and trouble-breeder. The Church has always had to reckon with him and his works. Putting self before God, he is critical of what in his opinion encroaches upon the domain of self. When authority's rules are not in accordance with his views he is apt to be scornful, or to express his pity at the reactionary policy of authority. Above all, he poses as being broad-minded. By many a hint he lets us know that he is not like the ignorant Catholic. But he is silent when loyalty demands speech and is verbose when reticence would be more becoming. Wishing to obtain the plaudits of the non-Catholics he gets but their contempt. Not that he wishes to cut himself off from the fold, for on occasion he is a panegyrist of the things of faith. But, nevertheless, his lips distill venom here and there: he is captious to a degree, and, masquerading as a just man, stabs truth and justice as opportunity arises. Dealing with the perverse and sinful is a simple task compared with that of finding the soul of a worldly Catholic in the maze of its falsehood, ignorance and conceit.

LIGHT FOR OUR FRIEND

When we said that the French Government warred against Christianity we were told by a religious weekly that the Church alone was the object of its hostility because it was reactionary—an enemy of progress and democratic ideas. Its editor sneered and reviled us, and for arguments fell back upon the gutter newspapers. But since the French officials of Madagascar have been pricking the English Protestant missionaries, at work in that colony, with atheistic steel, some of our non-Catholic friends are beginning to see the light. For example, the Congregationalist says "the militant secularism, which has been the outstanding feature of French life at home, has even in an exaggerated and apparently malicious and bigoted form, done its best to root out Christianity among the Malagasy people altogether." Perhaps our friend may be constrained to abandon the role of champion of the revilers of Christianity.

LEST WE FORGET

Many men pride themselves on being "up to date" on every subject—to have surface but no depth, to read the latest novel portraying intrigue and passion, and to have a pitying condescension for the books written in love and enthusiasm by the saintly. They work themselves into a frenzy of indignation over wrongs of other people while those of their own city are unnoticed, and while cesspools of iniquity are at their doors. The thoughtful are alarmed at the spread of unbelief; not that reasoning infidelity has entangled them in its meshes, but rather a flippant ridicule of the joys and terrors set before us by revelation. Doctrines consecrated by the belief and veneration of past ages are target for quip and jest. When Luther sent his followers on the road to anarchy he trained the guns of scriptural argument against the Catholic; to-day the groundless assumption, the scold of the sceptic, the wit of the blasphemous are the weapons of attack. This moral poison, says an author, is corroding every stratum of society. It corrupts and wastes all healthy growth, breaks and unties the ties that unite the family, checks the birth of children, and tends to reduce the world to that condition which wrings from Lacordaire: "Show me a man among the population of our great cities and I may yet believe in the regeneration of my country."

FOR THE CATHOLIC RECORD

THE INDEX

SERMON PREACHED AT ST. JOSEPH'S CHURCH, OTTAWA, FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT, BY REV. P. W. BROWN

"He that heareth you, heareth Me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth Me; and he that despiseth Me, despiseth Him that sent Me." (Luke, x, 16)

These words, beloved brethren, are a sequel to those spoken by our Divine Lord, at Caesarea Philippi, when He conferred upon St. Peter the primacy of His Church:—"Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it; I will give to thee the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." (Matt. xvi, 18)

By virtue of this divine mandate the Catholic Church possesses the indefeasible right to legislate for her members

in whatsoever pertains to the domain of faith and morals. Hence she prescribes what they shall believe and formulate rules by which their conduct shall be governed. With purely secular affairs she does not meddle; but in all questions affecting the moral well-being of her children, her authority is paramount. Like the statutes of the natural law and the precepts of the decalogue, some enactments of the Church are prescriptive; others are prohibitory. Amongst the latter is the Index of Prohibited Books, which we speak of this evening; and I shall discuss it by answering, briefly, two questions:—What is the Index? Why does it exist?

What is the Index? The Index is a list or catalogue of books which Catholics, under severe penalties, are not permitted to read or retain in their possession. The Index is a universal law which applies to the faithful, regardless of race, language, nationality, learning or station in life. There is, perhaps, no enactment of the Catholic Church which has been so frequently assailed as the Index; and this is because the Index is not confined to heretics and unbelievers; but even Catholics are to be found who denounce it as "an echo of the Inquisition." These, evidently, are not aware that the prohibition of books is a very ancient practice, and censorship even antedates Christianity; for in the Babylonian captivity, and, according to the testimony of the pagan historian Livy, it was a prerogative of the magisterial office in the early days of the Roman Empire. It has been exercised from the earliest times of the Church. In the Acts of the Apostles (xix, 19) the Converts at Ephesus burned their books of magic at the request of St. Paul; and one of the apostles (Iv) ordered the deposition of any one in the ranks of the clergy who should publish in the Church, as holy "the falsely inscribed books of the Impious." Down through the centuries, the Council of Nicaea (325) prohibited the use of "Thalia," a book of Arius; Leo the Great suppressed and ordered to be burned the books of the heretic Marcion; in fact, the present day Index condemned the writings of Erigena and Berengar; and Leo X. ordered the early writings of Luther to be publicly burned. In fact, the present day Index of Prohibited Books was published by Pope Paul IV. in 1558; and it remained in force until the publication of the Tridentine Index in 1564. This edition of the Index is so called because it was drawn up by a commission appointed for the purpose by the Council of Trent. The Council, however, did not formulate any decrees regarding it; but the whole matter was referred to Pius V. who, in 1571 instituted the "Congregation of the Index," whose duty it was to examine all books and writings of questionable character. This congregation consists of a competent number of Cardinals, appointed by the Pope, and its secretary is chosen, invariably, from the Dominican Order. It has, moreover, a large membership of learned theologians, called "consultors," who are appointed by the Pope, and the Apostolic Palace, the primary and official Consultor of the Congregation. The principles and methods to be observed by the "Congregation of the Index" are laid down in the Pontifical Decrees; and a "Constitution" of Benedict XIV. "Societas et Mores" outlines the duties of its members which may be summarized as follows:—To receive the opinions and sentiments of any book that comes before them, with minds absolutely free from all prejudicial feelings; they must dismiss a priori all preconceptions, and the predilections of any particular school; they shall put away all zeal of party, and keep before their eyes only the decisions of Holy Church and the common sense of the Faith; which is contained in the Decrees of General Councils, the Constitutions of the Roman Pontiffs, and the consent of orthodox Fathers; and the consent of the "Congregation of the Index" has undergone some modifications; and within recent years its scope has been enlarged. This larger sphere is outlined in the Encyclical "Pastoralis Gravis," issued three years ago by Pius X. in condemnation of "Modernism."

While formerly the "Congregation of the Index" passed only on books in regard to which it was expressly appealed to, it has now become a regular Vigilance Committee for the whole Church. The Holy Father says: "For the future it shall be the province of this Congregation not only to examine the books reported to it, to prohibit them if this should seem well, and to concede dispensations; but also to officially investigate in the best available way whether any writings of any kind that should be condemned are being circulated; and to remind ordinaries how strictly they are bound to condemn pernicious writings and to denounce these to the Holy See." These prescriptions more effective, the Holy Father has commanded the Bishops of the Catholic world to establish in their respective dioceses "Committees of Vigilance" which shall take cognizance of all writings, books, periodicals, magazines, and newspapers which circulate within the diocesan limits. So that, virtually, every Catholic is an official of the Congregation of the Index; and they may prohibit, as they do, in many cases, the circulation of questionable magazines and

newspapers within their jurisdiction. Hence, the so-called "Catholic newspaper," which is published without episcopal sanction, must always be looked upon with suspicion. Now how does the "Congregation of the Index" proceed in dealing with the books reported to it? It examines them officially simply because some institution or individual considers it unorthodox? By no means. The book in question must be rigidly examined; and this examination is not made by any interested party, but by several competent judges, according to methods whose thoroughness should inspire the greatest confidence in the examiner's verdict. When a book is reported to the Congregation of the Index, the secretary tries to ascertain whether it is worth examining; and in this preliminary examination he is assisted by several consulted Catholics, under severe penalties, are not permitted to read or retain in their possession. The Index is a universal law which applies to the faithful, regardless of race, language, nationality, learning or station in life. There is, perhaps, no enactment of the Catholic Church which has been so frequently assailed as the Index; and this is because the Index is not confined to heretics and unbelievers; but even Catholics are to be found who denounce it as "an echo of the Inquisition." These, evidently, are not aware that the prohibition of books is a very ancient practice, and censorship even antedates Christianity; for in the Babylonian captivity, and, according to the testimony of the pagan historian Livy, it was a prerogative of the magisterial office in the early days of the Roman Empire. It has been exercised from the earliest times of the Church. In the Acts of the Apostles (xix, 19) the Converts at Ephesus burned their books of magic at the request of St. Paul; and one of the apostles (Iv) ordered the deposition of any one in the ranks of the clergy who should publish in the Church, as holy "the falsely inscribed books of the Impious." Down through the centuries, the Council of Nicaea (325) prohibited the use of "Thalia," a book of Arius; Leo the Great suppressed and ordered to be burned the books of the heretic Marcion; in fact, the present day Index condemned the writings of Erigena and Berengar; and Leo X. ordered the early writings of Luther to be publicly burned. In fact, the present day Index of Prohibited Books was published by Pope Paul IV. in 1558; and it remained in force until the publication of the Tridentine Index in 1564. This edition of the Index is so called because it was drawn up by a commission appointed for the purpose by the Council of Trent. The Council, however, did not formulate any decrees regarding it; but the whole matter was referred to Pius V. who, in 1571 instituted the "Congregation of the Index," whose duty it was to examine all books and writings of questionable character. This congregation consists of a competent number of Cardinals, appointed by the Pope, and its secretary is chosen, invariably, from the Dominican Order. It has, moreover, a large membership of learned theologians, called "consultors," who are appointed by the Pope, and the Apostolic Palace, the primary and official Consultor of the Congregation. The principles and methods to be observed by the "Congregation of the Index" are laid down in the Pontifical Decrees; and a "Constitution" of Benedict XIV. "Societas et Mores" outlines the duties of its members which may be summarized as follows:—To receive the opinions and sentiments of any book that comes before them, with minds absolutely free from all prejudicial feelings; they must dismiss a priori all preconceptions, and the predilections of any particular school; they shall put away all zeal of party, and keep before their eyes only the decisions of Holy Church and the common sense of the Faith; which is contained in the Decrees of General Councils, the Constitutions of the Roman Pontiffs, and the consent of orthodox Fathers; and the consent of the "Congregation of the Index" has undergone some modifications; and within recent years its scope has been enlarged. This larger sphere is outlined in the Encyclical "Pastoralis Gravis," issued three years ago by Pius X. in condemnation of "Modernism."

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sheep. . . . teaching them to observe, and to whom I have commended." As custodian of this heritage, she must safeguard it against the assaults of the enemy and the machinations of the "powers of darkness." Should she fail to do this, she would fall in one of her most solemn duties. Hence when necessity demands, she enacts salutary laws to protect "the little ones of Christ" from the evil influence of the "travelling wolves" and "false prophets." They are an expression of Supreme Power; and, consequently, demand absolute obedience on the part of every Catholic.

"He who heareth you, heareth Me; and he who despiseth you, despiseth Me; and he who despiseth Me, despiseth Him that sent Me." (Luke x, 16) Every law is, in some measure, a restriction of human liberty; or, more correctly perhaps, in former times, a restriction of license. Now, there is no domain in which license is so rampant as in the field of thought; consequently, no agency, in human economy, if it does not have the sanction of truth. There are, seemingly, no limits to the vagaries of the human intellect; and these usually find expression through the medium of unsavory or, at times, dangerous, and even, in some instances, of distorted mentality, the Church instituted the Index. Natural law enjoins a father to protect his children; the priest uses the sternest measures to protect the community against infectious disease; the State forbids the unrestricted dissemination of false news; the Church uses such means as the Index to protect her children against satanic agencies, whose weapons are cunning, murder and adultery. If you read a forbidden book, without permission, you are just as good a Catholic as one who besmirches the character of the priest, reads the obscene or immoral, the State forbids the dissemination of false news; the Church uses such means as the Index to protect her children against satanic agencies, whose weapons are cunning, murder and adultery. 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