

**Our Weekly Sermon****INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY AND NEW-CHRISTIANITY.**

The Rev. Father Alphonsus, O.S.F.C., concluded his course of sermons before a congregation which filled the sacred edifice to the doors. Basing his sermon on the text,

"You shall find the infant wrapped in swaddling clothes."

He read the exquisite idyll of St. Luke read to many like mystery. The guiding star, the wondering shepherds, the heavens bursting open and earth catching a strain of that music, hushed since the morning stars sang together and the sons of God shouted with joy, wad to many an impossible dream, a beautiful, if fanciful, exordium, which wad to open out the unimagined splendors of that life, sublime above all lives, which unfolded itself amidst the hills and dales of Judea, and why crowned itself with inditing pathos upon the summits of the tragic hill of Calvary! But was not all life a mystery? Was not this deep-seated force, this power of self-domination and determination, this power of intellectual expanse, this activity they called life the greatest break in the whole sequence of nature, an unfathomable mystery which no scientist could explain; no ingenuity, beget, no subtle alchemy evoke? Was not this very life they lived the greatest and most inexplicable of all facts? It was. Let objectors, therefore, explain the fact of their own life before they meet us with the difficulty of miracle in the Gospel. *B. A.*

**LIFE WAS A SACRED MYSTERY.** committed by God to our keeping; stered not merely for ourselves, but for others also. Life was not given to be used as one liked. Man was a social being, and had therefore obligations to his fellows. This gift was a sacrament of Ordination, by which man was bound to his fellow-man, offering up the sacrifice of self-immolation, communicating himself to his fellows, breaking the bonds of iniquity which bound them to unkind surroundings, baptising them into a more blessed emulsion, for things more worthy, and confirming them by his sympathy in holier resolves. Yet few there were who looked upon life as a sacred gift. To the man of the world it was an activity which demanded certain satisfactions, which were attained if he succeeded in obtaining a livelihood. That was a necessary object, no doubt, for in the event of our brow must we eat our bread; but it was apt to be a very narrow measure of one's obligations, and self-concentrated enthusiasm did not beget the whitest ideal or the loftiest sense of obligation. With the Church it was otherwise. Life to her was a sacred mystery, which had to be perpetually celebrated by men with an ever-deepening consciousness of its awful significance. She gave back the infant to the bosom of its household, with the dew of baptism and

**THE RAIN OF HOLY CHRISM** still glistening on its brow, and bade it, remember its awful initiation and consecration to that wider family, even to all those who were of the household of the faith. She pursued the man through life, deepened in him the sense of sin, and at times he strayed from fidelity to duty, she recalled him by the sacrament of Penance to his obligations toward God and man. She broke upon his lips the bread of life, and by these terrible espousals of God and man she consecrated him to the lofty dignity of participating in the divinity, end of moving, not as an servant, but as an equal, a co-heir with Christ, among the glowing splendors of Paradise. What a sacred deposit is this, and yet strangely the world deal with it. The fact is, life is not sacred to men. What is the meaning of this unrest, this discontent, this fretting at circumstances, this impatience of surroundings? It must be because life has not found its object. "Thou hast made us for thyself, O God, and our hearts are restless till they repose in Thee," and the unrest of the world was caused by its divorce from God. It moved along its way wearily dragging the chain of its captivity, and its eyes are turned earthward, not heavenward. It sees not God, nor does it aspire to Him. Something is wrong. To some extent it seemed as though Christianity had not worked all the beneficence it was calculated to bestow. Had they met all the difficulties of an age that was fretting away its life in an endeavor to find a substitute for God? Had they moved with the times, spoken to each generation in its own tongue, and wisely directed good impulse which was to be found in every movement? You cannot cover earthly things from heavenly.

**MAN IS A BEING MADE FOR HEAVEN**, and he attains that only by working through present and earthly media. Let them remember, then, there was

a sacredness in earthly media, and endeavor to find out in what way Christianity could be applied thereto. The force which must save human nature must be something within as well as without that sphere. You do not regenerate it by something it cannot assimilate. Look at the Babe of Bethlehem. There was the force which had entered in among mankind, not something acting merely from without, but a re-invigorating force, which if begotten in heaven was born in this and subjected to the conditions of our human nature. What were they doing with their lives? Were they making the world better or worse? If worse, their Christianity was a sham, and he did not wonder at the large provinces of defeated endeavor which Christianity mounted as lost. Surely as they looked out at the world they could not but confess that Christianity had suffered some dark eclipse. The fault was not in the ideal or in the means which lay ready to hand, but in a supine generation, which said:

"I come," and goes not. It rested with those who had made Christianity a caricature of its true self, who arrogated to themselves an authority they had not, who dwelt with talismans and phylacteries, while hordes of parasites were eating away the seamless garment of Christ. There is plenty of arm-chair philosophy, which will acknowledge the beauty of Christianity. We are becoming emancipated with this!

**AESTHETIC APPRECIATION OF CHRISTIANITY.**

It was called religion—the religion of Jesus, the religion of the Carpenter of Nazareth, the religion which the Churches had defined, and yet this new army of Reformers, which was skillful in coining catch phrases, sat complacently by while the dark vavves of vice and sin rolled up to their very doors, while little children soaked and blackened on our highways in sense and soul, while the demon drink rehearsed his orgies in Christian England in a manner that almost put Drunkenness and Asinine to shame. With all our vaunted legislation for the emancipation of the individual our trade had nullified what else might have been a blessing. We are leaving the individuals unsatisfied, and that is why huge masses of the population are sinking more deeply into degradation and despair. Any system which does not assist the individual to be himself more truly is in danger, and hence our obligation of carrying our Christianity into our relations one with the other. That dilettante form of Christianity, which admires the eight Beatitudes and has a cryptic meaning for every other sentence in the Gospel, which makes its own religion and from its olympic heights recants dogmas and creeds, and then publishes the results of its cultured ignorance in magazines and brochures was well deserved by Coleridge as

Shaggy Pity's vision weaving tribe  
Who sigh for wretchedness, yet sham  
The wretched,  
Nursing in some delirious solitude  
Thy daily loves and slothful sym-  
pathies.

This tendency to regard  
**CHRISTIANITY FROM ITS DURELY INTELLECTUAL SIDE**

was a danger which must be met, and fought down. This was the error into which many popular writers fell. They gave us a beautiful sentimental system of ethics, but the life had gone out of it. It lacked a spiritual force, a purely intellectual Christianity was not the Christianity of Christ. Christianity is a social factor, and to the majority of men that is what it means. They are engaged in a struggle to attain a livelihood, not to acquire speculative knowledge, and what they want is a present guide to action, not beautiful sentiment about it. We need a living force which has entered in among men. We need the same force to redeem us which was potent to save our fathers. We are not different from them. We sin the same sins, break the same decalogues, hope the same hopes, suffer the same pains, and what we want is the same force to redeem us, not New Christianity, but the old Christianity which rested in the bosom of a Babe at Bethlehem and received its baptism of blood, on Calvary. Science is aggressive because it is a real power; it has knowledge and knowledge is power, and the more knowledge we lack the poorer are we in the fight. But

**KNOWLEDGE WITHOUT AN ETHICAL IMPULSE IS POWERLESS** to save. That impulse is to be found alone in the Church. She faced difficulties in the past, she remoulded civilization, she has power now to assimilate the knowledge of the present and be the richer for it. Just as she was richer and more powerful when she had captured the schools of Alexandria and Greece, so will she be the richer when, from the present, she has reconstructed her aggressiveness. Look at the past, and say does it not inspire honor for the

future. Look at the terrible difficulties which beset the Church almost at the beginning of her career. An ancient civilization was crumbling into dust before the approach of barbarous hordes. Listen! You can almost hear the tramp of the armies as they march upon the crumbling ramparts of a dying civilization. Listen! You can almost hear them battering in the gates. Rome, the only vestige of culture and knowledge which remains, is tottering to its fall, and already the barbaric hordes are waiting without, ready to destroy the wreck of what was once the grandest monument of a colossal civilization. When, lo! the gates are opened, an old man Leo by name, stands like a vision from another world facing the armies that have come to destroy him. "Who are you?" he asks. "I am Attila, the Scourge of God," is the answer. "Then

**WELCOME THE SCOURGE OF GOD.**" SAID LEO.

and in that welcome he dominated and conquered those new forces which had threatened civilization with destruction. Heroin he saw a pledge of the future. Welcome the scourge of God which has come upon us. If we have eyes to see wherein is real power, for we alone have perpetual life, all else does but contribute to it if we know how to assimilate it.

**PROVIDENTIAL INTERVENTION**

A Young Novice Falls Fifty Feet, but is neither hurt nor maimed. The moral suggested.

A clear case of preservation by supernatural power is furnished in the thrilling incident related below. Cold-hearted unbelievers, and those who may never tried such an experience, may feel inclined to doubt the supernatural feature of the occurrence, but the stubborn facts surrounding the remarkable incident are established and verified, beyond dispute, and the readers of the Catholic Register who may take the trouble to note the authenticated details will be enabled to judge for themselves as to the accuracy and truth of what is claimed for the miraculous happening. The central figure in the story is a young man, a novice of the Brothers of St. Vincent de Paul attached to the charitable and educational institution known as the Patronage, Quebec City. The roof of the chapel of said refuge had accumulated more snow than is allowed by the civil laws of the city, and as a law-abiding community the Rev. authorities had charged the young novice the task of removing the snow from the giddy heights above, which job he at once set about and was proceeding vigorously, with the work, but either through over-confidence in his own agility, lack of skill, or due appreciation of the responsibility involved in such a perilous work, his fastenings were not made secure on the high roof of the sacred edifice, and in an instant he loses his foothold, he find himself slipping from his moorings at a height of over fifty feet from the ground. He instantly realizes how rapit will be his flight through space and what the consequences of the sick, the infirm and the aged, the orphan, the deranged, an dthe incurable without allowing the danger or unpleasantness of their work or his fall may be, and yet in that trying moment he has the faith and spiritual fortitude which have saved thousands in the hour of extreme danger, quick as a flash he commands himself and his fate to the protection of St. Vincent de Paul, and in a single moment of time he lands on the street below. It was at an hour when citizens were abroad, and several passers-by noticed his rapid descent, and hurry in breathless haste to his assistance, or rather to pick up the remains as they thought of the unfortunate victim. The intentions of the would-be rescuers were of the best, but they did not arrive on time to help that young novice, who had so confidently sought supernatural assistance in his dreadful fall, or rather, he did not need aid, for he was upon his feet in an instance, and not only declared himself unharmed, but concerned himself about the recovery of his snow shovel, which he had dropped in his transit, and expressed himself as being willing to mount the roof again and finish the job he had so unmercifully quitted a minute or two before. The people who witnessed the thrilling scene and the young man's providential escape were mystified beyond measure. The few who actually saw him tumbling headlong through the air, naturally thought that instant death or at least bruised and broken limbs would be the result. Long live their astonishment when they saw him jump to his erect position with the quickness of

man who may have merely stumbled, tripped, or overbalanced himself, on the level surface. Such incidents, if seriously considered, make people think, and thinking, and pursuing the inquiry, it leads them to the conclusion that there is a dividing line between the merely human protection, which we are enabled to provide for ourselves out of our own strength and ability, and that benevolent and all-powerful help which alone can save us in the moment of sudden danger.

Had the devoted young novice, who thus put his trust in St. Vincent de Paul, depended upon himself, he surely would have suffered fatal injuries in his headlong plunge from the top of that high building; whereas, under the holy protection he had invoked, he came down unscathed and hurt.

In our darkness of intellect, and gross habit of judging things according to the light of human reason, we fail to understand the significance of Supernatural events that happen in our midst, but for all that there is a moral and a useful lesson for us in all such happenings. Had the young man in question been one of those who confide solely in their own inherent powers for their self-protection, the incident we here speak of would probably have been reported in the accident column of the daily papers; the news being chronicled that a young man had fallen from a roof over fifty feet from the ground and had sustained fatal injuries, with a cut lamination, perhaps, that the Coroner would hold an inquest over the remains as to the nature and cause of the accident, and that would end the matter as far as the public are concerned. As it has happily turned out, and the young novice is alive and well, the incident will cause only a passing thought in the minds of secular readers. The merely worldly-minded, who may desire to give it a moment's attention, may wonder how a man could fall fifty feet and yet remain unhurt. In their own mental philosophy they will likely impute his safety to his own experience or to his good luck, wondering at the same time why clumsy men have lost their lives by a fall of less than half that distance.

To sober-minded men of deep thought who Judge justly of men and things, and of results, in the light of supernatural intelligence, the incident as related above, will have a wider and more important meaning. In their estimation they will rightly conclude that we are not left alone to grope our way through life helpless and unaided, provided that we have the faith and grace to submit ourselves to the overruling and providential powers that Providence has assigned to take care of us, to direct us in the way of good, and to lead us back when we would pollute our footsteps in the fati way of evil. But right here a distinguishing line must be drawn, for those heavenly favors are only accorded to those who merit them either by good actions or good intentions, and sincere, earnest desires to do in all things what is just and right. If, in our own stubborn and perverse will, we deliberately choose our own path and ignore or despise unselfish and suppliant helps, we, in a manner, put ourselves out of court, we are spiritually non-suited, we have to pay the costs and bear the consequences.

The young novice, whose experience we are here discussing, was brought up in a different school from that since his childhood he lived under the pure influence of the Catholic Church's teachings, one of whose principles of truth is to teach that we of ourselves are not competent to provide for all our essential wants; and that we have absolute need to seek and desire a help which lies above and beyond ourselves. I am not at liberty to give the name of the young novice who figures in this story, but in order to verify the facts of the case I called yesterday at the Patronage Institution and learned from the Rev. Father Devlin that the facts as I had gathered them were substantially true in every particular.

Despite its simplicity, it is an incident that will go on record as one in which the hand of Providence was outstretched to save a young novice, whose life may have been spared for a wise purpose.

WILLIAM ELLISON.

CARDINAL GIBBONS GOING TO ROME

His Eminence, Cardinal Gibbons, is preparing for his decennial visit to Rome. The Cardinal expects to leave New York immediately after Easter and will remain abroad several months. He will go first to England, as he has accepted the invitation of his friend, Cardinal Vaughan, of Westminster, to preach at the opening of the new cathedral in London, England, early in the Spring. This magnificent church has been in the course of construction for many years, and marks the spot where John Carroll, the first Archbishop of Baltimore and Primate of the United States, was consecrated by Bishop Richard Whalen, of London.

**THE EXCELSIOR LIFE INSURANCE CO.**

OF ONTARIO, LIMITED

HEAD OFFICE, TORONTO

Incorporated 1899.

Our Annual Report for 1899 shows as the result of the year's operations the following Substantial Increases in the important items shown below:

Gross Assets..... \$26,469,92 An Increase of Premium Income, \$106,035.08 \$18,358.48 Interest Income..... 12,334.07 3,301.64 Net Assets..... 323,205.92 44,783.33 Reserve..... 273,414.20 60,555.50 Insurance in force, 3,055,913.15 472,050.00

WANTED—General District and Local Agents. EDWIN MARSHALL, Secretary. DAVID FASKEN, President.

Authorized to act as EXECUTOR, ADMINISTRATOR, TRUSTEE, RECEIVER, COMMITTEE OF LUNATIC, GUARDIAN, LIQUIDATOR, ASSIGNEE, ETC.

Deposit Sales to rent. All sizes, and at reasonable prices.

Parcels received for safe custody.

Bonds and other valuables received and Insured against loss.

Solicitors bringing Estates, Administrations, etc., to the Corporation are continued in the professional care of the same.

For further information see the Corporation's Manual.

Has the.....

**BEST SYSTEM**

for accumulating money.

Head Office—Confederation Life Building Toronto....

**THE WESTERN ASSURANCE COMPANY**

INCORPORATED 1851

CAPITAL \$2,000,000

FIRE and MARINE

HEAD OFFICE - TORONTO, ONT.

PRESIDENT HON. GEO. A. COX VICE-PRESIDENT AND MANAGING DIRECTOR J. J. KENNEDY

DIRECTORS W. R. Brock, Esq. Geo. R. Cockburn, Esq. H. N. Baird, Esq. G. G. Foster, Secretary Robert Besty, Esq.

Meers, McCarthy, Oster, Hoskin and Cicchini. Insurances effected at the lowest current rates of Buildings, Merchandise, and other property, against loss or damage by fire.

On Hull, Cargo and Freight against the perils of inland Navigation.

On Cargo Risks with the Maritime Provinces by rail or steam.

On Cargoes by steamer to British Ports.

WM. A. LEE & SON GENERAL AGENTS 10 ADELAIDE STREET EAST

TELEPHONES 592 AND 2075.

National Trust Company LIMITED.

Capital, \$1,000,000.

PRESIDENT J. W. FLAUVILLE, Vice-Presidents, A. E. AMES, H. R. WOOD, F. W. GATES, Robert D'Alger, Esq. W. E. H. Masey, Esq. Directors W. R. Brock, Esq. Geo. R. Cockburn, Esq. H. N. Baird, Esq. G. G. Foster, Secretary Elias Rogers James Crathern.

Chartered to Act as Executor, Administrator, Guardian, Assignee, Liquidator, General Agent, Etc.

HEAD OFFICE Cor. King and Victoria sts., Toronto

W. T. WHITE, Manager.

OFFICE 3: LAWLER BUILDING, 6 KING ST. WEST, TORONTO.

T. FRANK SLATTERY, Barrister, Solicitor, Notary Public, Conveyancing, Money to Loan, Collections.

PROFESSOR BARTON, Voice Specialist.

For voices trained and cultured on natural principles.

For terms apply TORONTO COLLEGE OF MUSIC, Temperance Street, or West End Branch, cor. Spadina and College.

Residence—320 Robert Street.

HENRY T. FLYNN.

MONEY TO LOAN in small or large sums on

Household Furniture, Warehouse Receipts, etc., etc.

JAMES' BUILDING, 75 YONGE ST., TORONTO.

Please mention this paper.

Dr. R. J. McCahey, (Hon. Graduate of Toronto University)

DENTIST 275 YONGE STREET, opposite Wilton Avenue.

Tel. 300.

SITUATIONS VACANT.

CLUTTING, YOUNG MAN, 21, MAKE \$600 per month and expenses, permanent position; experience unnecessary; write quick for particulars.

Clarke Co., 4th & Locust Sts., Phila.