

The Theatre.

God's Acre in Rome.

"Health Talks"

(Written for the True Witness.) The presence in Canada of a well-known actress in a very doubtful play calls for some consideration of the stage as it is to-day. At the present time we find it offers us a great deal of very poor drama and an equal amount of vulgar, indecent vaudeville. Three or four times in a whole year we may have the opportunity of hearing a really good thing but for the most part we are supposed to be grateful for plays of similar material to that which comprises such plays as the "Test" and the "Divorce", plays recently staged at most of the leading theatres in Canada. These so-called sex problem plays are an insult to a moral, intelligent people, and the actresses who appear in them are wasting their ability and abusing a powerful gift. We gain no suitable knowledge by hearing them. Even the question of the sex problem is not discussed. Even if it were, it would not excite the altogether too realistic scenes of tragedy and love and the lack of delicacy and refinement evident through the whole play. The theatre suffers from the combine, but if the society of the land did not lend its support to these plays, the combine alone would be next to powerless. The theatre suffers chiefly from the relaxed and lowering taste of an ill-educated society, ill-educated in this sense that we consider education week and defense for want of religion and moral training. Society is sufficiently learned and cultured to grasp much better plays; but she has lost her appreciation of them for the reason that she has refused religion the place of prominence it should have in education. Society has eliminated God and the result is that the taste for the higher and aesthetic has deteriorated while her craving for the sensual and emotional has increased alarmingly. Another thing that hurts the theatre is the too strenuous life outside of it. It accounts in part for the demand for inferior plays among even the educated. The people go to the theatre worn and brain weary from a day of too great activity. They want rest; but the fact is that they have a mistaken idea of rest, and they fancy because these plays require no mental exertion to understand them, that they obtain it. Besides, these plays interest them because they appeal to the weaker side of their nature, which is easily assailed from the fact that they have little physical or mental strength for resistance. Present managers of theatres seem to forget that there are still earnest, intelligent people who are anxious to elevate the stage and who desire better plays. They prefer, however, to pander to the weak morbidly curious people who keep the financial prospect cheerful. If they persisted in giving better plays for even a short time, they would find that instead of having lost this great throng of weaklings they had educated them to appreciate the change. Our theatres, whether given to drama or vaudeville, should be something of which we can be proud. In the past, although the profligacy of the age was greater than that of our own, the theatre was a school of deep learning and high moral training. So it should be to-day. There is no place of greater educational possibilities. From the dramatic stage we do not always expect masterpieces, but we do expect something which will tend to elevate and educate. Neither do we expect people to desire to be always amused; at the same time, the people must be amused as well as instructed. Clean, wholesome amusement forms a necessary recreation and a rest for overworked nerves. Whatever we have, whether it be instructing or amusing, or both, let it be something which will not shock the refinement of grown people or the purity of innocent children. Our theatres should voice the culture and morality of the country; in fact they do. Consequently they should be conducted in such a manner and should give only such entertainments as will reflect honor on Canada and Canadian people. When we take from the theatre the dignity or the moral standard of its plays we are detracting from the renown of English literature which we should have the desire to be proud of. Our theatres should confirm the reputation we have abroad of being a cultured, earnest, God-fearing people.

(Boston Pilot.) In Santa Maria della Pietta, behind St. Peter's, Rome, on the left, on the eve of All Souls Day, there is each year, at 4.30 p. m., a solemn, followed by devotion for the Holy Souls and procession in the Campo Santo adjoining the church. The founding of the cemetery reaches back to the time of Constantine, when it was one of five God's acres round the old Basilica. The more recent traditions tell us that in the year 1448, because of the pest that raged in Rome, the German confessor in St. Peter's, one Father Johannes Goldrach from Wurzburg, established a confraternity to procure burial for his pest-stricken countrymen, pilgrims and others, and to secure prayers for their souls. The young confraternity in 1575 erected the church, which since that time has been but slightly altered; it has some beautiful stained glass windows, two presented by the Emperor of Austria and two by the Prince-Regent of Bavaria. The fine organ was given by the Emperor of Germany. There is a painting by Pinturicchio and another, the Descent from the Cross, by Caravaggio; the altar sculptures are by Achtermann and an artistic sepulchral monument by Flammingo. The old crucifix dates from the fifteenth century. During the French occupation the church and house were taken and suffered deprivations. Pope Gregory XII. raised the confraternity to the dignity of archconfraternity, and subsequent Popes conferred on it rich indulgences and privileges, amongst them the right to liberate on the 8th of December the principal feast of the archconfraternity, a prisoner condemned to death. The cemetery is even to this day the national burying place of Catholic Germans. In this instance taking the sense it has in the old folksong: "So weit die deutsche Zunge klingt," as is indicated by the inscription over the gate: "Plus VI. P. M. Toutoum et Flandror. Coemeterium in elegantiorum cultum restituit Ann. Pontif. VI. (1781). In the 18th century as the number of Germans in Rome became smaller, the confraternity declined also. It was re-erected under Pius IX., who gave it a new constitution. Among the more illustrious dead who have found their resting place here we may mention Cardinal Prince Gustav Hohenlohe, de Merode, papal war minister; Prelate Schaeppmann, the great leader of Dutch Catholics; Queen Mother of Denmark, Princess Hohenlohe; the family of the painter Overbeck, who rests himself at S. Bernardo alle Terme; the painters Kock and Kuechler, the sculptor Wagner, and the celebrated ecclesiastical historian Father Theiner.

Overfeeding—A Most Dangerous Habit. Overfeeding is the most common of all sins against the body. Practically everybody is overfed from birth to death. Most people think that the more they can eat the better for them. As a matter of fact, it is almost true to say the less they eat the better for them. By taking too much food the body is both starved and poisoned. This seems a strong statement, but it can be proved. First, how is the body starved? In this way: The fluids which digest the food are poured out in proportion to the needs of the body—much when we work hard, little when we are quiet—and not in proportion to the amount of food we take. When we take too much food it is not digested at all, and so the body gets no nourishment out of it. That is starvation. Now about poisoning. This mass of undigested food in the stomach and bowels begins at once to decompose, to putrefy, just like animal or vegetable matter in any warm, moist place outside the body, only more rapidly. In this decomposition there are formed certain poisonous products known as leukemins, ptomaines and so on. These get into the blood and there is real poisoning—"auto-intoxication," as it is called. And this absorption of poisons into the blood leads to a wide range of symptoms—varying from simple dizziness to sudden death.—The Circle.

The Supply of Fresh Air. Cultivate your noses, for they are the very best natural guides to wholesome, pure air. The educated nose may be the cause of uncomfortable moments, but it may also save hours of suffering. With the winter months, the necessity for some system of ventilating the average home is keenly felt. More often than is realized, neglect of this important duty means a lowered vitality, which leaves some member of the family the easy victim of a germ. Pure air is not free, it is true; warm air unquestionably means more heat, and there are many who declare they will not "heat air out-doors," but just as unquestionably it is a real saving in insurance against sickness and possibly death. In one hour an adult person requires 3,000 cubic feet of air. This means that a room 12 by 12 by 9 feet would furnish all the air needed, but only for one person for one hour; at the close of this period the air supply would need to be entirely changed. If the occupant of the room could not leave long enough for complete change to take place, he would be subject to a dangerous draft, so it is safer and more practical to plan for a gradual change of air. This can be accomplished, because air grows lighter in weight as it becomes heated. There is a constant tendency in any room for the cool, fresh air, as it becomes heated, to rise and pass out, if there is any opening near the ceiling, while fresh air from out-doors is sucked in through window cracks and walls by force of the current thus established. It has been common to measure "bad air" by the quantity of carbon dioxide it contained. This is not because the latter is dangerous—carbon dioxide is harmless—but because it is useless and is taking the place of the needed oxygen. Moreover, the gas is odorless and is never responsible for the Lusty smell noticeable in unaired houses and churches. This odor is always caused by organic material given off through the skin and lungs of the occupants, which makes it still more objectionable. Carbon dioxide is about twice as heavy as air, and because of this difference, even when heated, the carbon dioxide, commonly called carbonic acid, must have an appreciable current to force it out. The way a house is heated, the way it is lighted and even the way it is built, affect the ease with which it can be properly ventilated. In a tightly built house, made to withstand the storms of the North and East, more attention is required to insure good air for the inmates than in the loosely built bungalow structures of the South and Southwest. It is not necessary to make breakfast a chilly and uncomfortable meal by throwing doors and windows open the first thing in the morning unless there is a maid who can attend to it early enough for the house to become warmed for breakfast. Moreover, if the bedroom windows are opened at night, as they should be, the dining room windows may safely be kept closed until after breakfast. Then, when the family have departed for school and office, and the active work of the household is in progress, open the win-

BOOK NOTICE. The Beautiful Teachings of the Holy Catholic Church, is the name of the latest book by Rev. Father McGovern, with the approbation of Most Rev. James Edward Guigley, D.D., Archbishop of Chicago. As the title suggests, a complete treatise on all points of our faith is set forth in a concise manner, all sustained by 1500 proofs, the whole profusely illustrated with art studies. Testimonials of very highest commendation have been given by the Apostolic Delegate, the Archbishop and Bishops of the United States, as well as by our own Archbishop Brucehi. No way could this book be better organized than in his words: "A clear and inexhaustible spring out of which may drink both flock and pastor. The amount of good which your work is apt to produce is immense. Every Catholic family should have a copy." The perusal of this valuable book will prove most beneficial and instructive, and telling the old truths in the concise manner it does, it cannot but be most useful to those in search of information, making as it does clear facts plainer. The Holy Publishing Co., Chicago, are the publishers, and Mr. E. S. Ferry is Montreal agent.

WOMAN'S HOME COMPANION FOR CHRISTMAS. The Christmas Number of Woman's Home Companion is one of the most beautiful of the holiday magazines. Its cover is in blue and gold—depicting the Madonna and Child. There is a beautiful painting in color by James Montgomery Flagg, occupying a full page. Another delightful and unique feature consists of two big pages of old-fashioned Christmas Carols, with decorations by Ernest Hassell. For the Christmas Woman's Home

Companion. Edwin Markham has written a most beautiful poem, "Beggars Were" is greater than "The Story of the gathering of the materials for the gospels by the disciples after Christ's ascension. "Before the Gospels Were," is greater than "The Man With the Hoe." It is, perhaps, the greatest poem of the generation. It is seldom that a magazine—even a Christmas magazine—offers stories by such an array of great writers as will be found in the December Companion—Josephine Daskam Bacon, Anna Katherine Green, Mary Wilkins Freeman, Florence Morse Kingsley, Juliet Wilbur Truitt, and so on. Above all else, the woman reader will find here a magazine of Christmas helps—hundreds of suggestions for the making of attractive and unique gifts; ideas for the table; for making delicious candies; new neckwear; embroidery; fashions—almost bewildering array of practical Christmas suggestions.

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