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# The True



# Witness

MONTREAL, THURSDAY, DECEMBER 19 1907

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## The Written and Unwritten Law of God.

The recent encyclical of Pope Pius emphasizes the peril which must inevitably arise from the perusal by Catholics of works of Modernists, most of which pretend to show that the Church has in many instances, and in all ages, changed her teaching to suit the circumstances in which she lived, a fact which, of necessity, brought her to consider anew her reading of the teachings of Christ. Apropos of this, we think that Doctor Gildea's article on the "Apostolicity of the Church," is worthy of a digest.

The Church, writes the right gentleman, is Apostolic as to her doctrine. There is not a single doctrine taught by the Apostles which the Catholic Church has not constantly advocated and insisted upon; there is not a single doctrine taught by the Catholic Church, which is not contained in the original deposit of faith which was entrusted by the Holy Spirit to the Apostles.

In other words, the Catholic Church teaches all that is contained in the Word of God, and nothing that is not contained therein. This does not mean that all doctrines of the Catholic Church are to be found formally enunciated, in the Scriptures. What is meant is that they are all contained in the Scriptures, the written Word of God, or in Divine Tradition, the unwritten Word of God.

Writing over 1500 years ago, St. Basil said: "There are many doctrines preserved and preached in the Church, derived partly from written documents, partly from Apostolical Tradition, which have equally the same force in religion, and which no one contradicts who has the least knowledge of the Christian laws. (Lib. de Spirito Sancto, c. 27.) The Protestant admits no Word of God saving the Scriptures or Written Word.

But this position of theirs is non-Scriptural. There is absolutely no warrant for it in the Scriptures. It is (b) anti-Scriptural, for we learn from the Scriptures that just as Our Lord Himself taught, not by writing, but by word of mouth, so when commissioning His Apostles to carry on, propagate and perpetuate His work, the means that He selected was preaching.

The Apostles obeyed this divine command to "preach the Gospel to every creature," not by writing, but by preaching. Indeed, several of the Apostles wrote nothing at all, when they did write, their works were called forth by special circumstances and were usually addressed to private individuals.

St. Paul wrote to the Thessalonians: "Therefore, Brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which you have learned, whether by word or by our epistle"; and again to Timothy: "And the things which thou hast heard of me by many witnesses, the same do you command to faithful men who shall be fit to teach others also."

The Protestant position is (c) inconsistent with Protestant practice, for Protestants use and are forced to use Tradition to determine the number of the Canonical Books, and to fix the sense of the principal mysteries of the faith. It is only by Tradition, again, that they can prove the obligation of sanctifying the Sunday, the lawfulness of infant baptism, the validity of baptism when conferred by heretics.

"Without Tradition," wrote Henry VIII. in his reply to Luther, "you would not know that there are Gospels. Had not the Church taught us the authenticity of St. John's Gospel, how could we have discovered it? Why, then, will you not believe the Church when she declares to hold her authority from her divine Founder?"

Then, to exclude Divine Tradition is (d) unreasonable, for this exclusion makes unity of faith impossible. How shall we know the true sense of the Scripture, if there be no Divine Tradition, no infallible living voice?

All the doctrines of the Catholic Church are contained either in the Scriptures, or in Divine Tradition, the unwritten Word of God.

The Church from the time of the first General Council till the present day, has from time to time, and as occasion required, solemnly proclaimed and explicitly defined some doctrine which was contained only implicitly in the original deposit of faith. But to that deposit she has never made an addition. On the contrary, she obliged all to believe, under pain of anathema, that the Revelation of God was given whole and entire on the day of Pentecost. - N.Y. Freeman's Journal.

## Is the World Growing Anti-Religious.

(N.Y. Freeman's Journal.)  
That accomplished Dominican, Doctor Weiss, O.P., has recently published in Germany a work entitled "The Religious Peril," the conclusions he draws from a long study of his momentous theme being that humanity is, on the whole, gradually drifting through the shoals of materialism and worldliness, on the barren rocks of infidelity and atheism. The result, not only for the Church, but for Christianity, is that humanity is destroying the only principle that has ever moved it to seek for loftier things than those of the world, and if the leaders of Catholic thought and action are not facing the worst of the crisis as yet, there is little doubt of the extreme peril in which the souls of men find themselves at this juncture in civilization.

Worst of all Doctor Weiss characterizes such movements which have been foisted upon intelligent Catholics as being orthodox and acceptable to the Holy See simply because they bore titles that carried a semblance of truth. Such, for instance, is the so-called "reform" movement which we are assured by non-Catholic papers is taking place all along the line of Catholicity and which is labeled "Liberal."

thods and results, and in all probability the Catholic Church has had her critics since the time of Cal. Have we not had our Lutherans, our Wycliffs, our Jansenists and our Gallicans?

Criticism and attempts at destroying her influence under the pretext of introduction must always be the position of an institution which works according to methods opposed to those of mere material purport, and it is a moot point whether the Church does not emerge stronger for all the criticism that is leveled against her.

In a masterly manner Doctor Weiss treats of the causes of religious decay, pointing out at the same time, the nature of those subversive theories or notions upon which all tendencies towards disruption and schism are founded. Evolution, he holds, has denaturalized all spirituality in the minds of reading men. It has de-poetized the romance of the world and thrown doubt upon those legends and ideals which men hold most sacred in their hearts.

It has uprooted the most fixed beliefs in the goodness of humanity and referred all manifestations of good or evil in the energies of mankind to a dynamic force which is to take the place of God and reign upon the new age of Reason under the name of universal causality. It has rent the spirit of the family and dethroned the power of love.

It has turned the current of men's thoughts from humanity, charity and brotherhood and given them as an alternative the principle of the survival of the fittest. Evolution and the so-called philosophy of religion are, incontrovertibly, the curses of the modern age, the sources of our discontents and miseries, the reasons of the weakening of religious ideas

ever, he attributes the decay of the religious spirit to the growing tendency to criticize, to question authority, to the too easy acquiescence in modes of Christianity as distinct from its rules; to a too passive liberalism in view which far too easily accepts the notion that God is merciful before He is just; to a spiriting away with our settled nationalities, as it is destroying or leveling our fixed tenets; in fine, to a sixth sense, a product of modern civilization, a sense of being able of ourselves and without reference to any authority, to make those laws which shall guide us on our way through life and arbitrarily define the limits of our actions and the circumscription of our will.

The simple faith and reasoning trust of our fathers are passing from the world like the last sun-gleams of a sad summer evening. Men are too intent on gain, too prone to seek the new, too heedless of the real gold that lies in their pathway as they rush to catch the glittering bubbles that lure them from afar. Religion is the only remedy that can stay this onward rush of spiritual and moral bankruptcy.

## The Christmas Bells.

The joy bells are ringing, their glad message bringing.  
Out, out, through the wide world, in many a clime  
From tower and steeple, proclaim to the people,  
Rejoice and be glad, 'tis the great Christmas time.  
Like voices of angels, their psalmody singing,  
Like children that tuneful, their



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THERE WAS NO PLACE IN THE INN.

The object of that movement is an attempt to co-ordinate the principles of modern ethical thinkers and those of the Church, "to bring Catholicism into the universal march of progress," as the stock phrase has it. An example of the tendency is again shown in the arrival of a new band of Italian publicists whose avowed object is to force the Catholic Church to throw off her conservatism and bow her head to the advances of unopposable Liberalism.

The notion that the Church is in need of reform is by no means a new one, however. As Dr. Weiss tells us, opposing forces have always criticized each other's me-

and forces and, without doubt, the second origins of atheism and vice.

Religion, according to this new Illuminism, is but a natural emanation of the mind that is within us and consequently its truths are ever empirical and always reversible. Like the State, the Church has been constituted by men's energies, and like the State, the Church has been constituted by men's energies, and like the State, it must mould its principles to the requirements of each age.

It is impossible in the small space at our command to do anything like adequate justice to this work of Doctor Weiss. On broad lines, how-

glad carols sing,  
Out, out through the night clouds,  
their melody winging,  
To honor show the birth of the King  
Like voices of friends that long are  
departed,  
They waken the old memories of joy  
and pain.  
They bring back our springtime, its  
dreams that have vanished,  
The joy bells of Christmas, that ring  
once again.  
Then, out in the starlight, their  
music is floating,  
Far over the mountains, the valley  
and plain,

Like heralds acclaiming, from hour  
to hour,  
The glad feast of Christmas, that  
comes once again.  
To the monk in his cell and the king  
in his palace,  
The peasant in cot and the lord in  
his hall,  
Their voices forever this message  
repeating,  
They cry, "Merry Christmas," to  
one and to all.  
J. A. S.

## THE ANGELS' MESSAGE.

We are reminded that though this life must ever be a life of toil and effort, yet that, properly speaking, we have not to seek our highest good. It is found, it is brought near us, in the descent of the Son of God from His Father's bosom to this world. It is stored up among us on earth. No longer need men of ardent minds wear themselves in the pursuit of what they fancy may be chief goods; no longer have they to wander about and encounter peril in quest of that unknown blessedness to which their hearts naturally aspire, as they did in heathen times. The text speaks to them and to all. "Unto you," it says, "is born this day in the city of David a Savior which is Christ the Lord." So that we have on the Feast of the Nativity two lessons—instead of anxiety within and despondence without, instead of a weary search after great things—to be cheerful and joyful; and, again, to be so in the midst of those obscure and ordinary circumstances of life which the world passes over and thinks scorn of.—Cardinal Newman.

## A Purse for Cardinal Richard.

At the height of the trouble between the French Government and the Church last winter, a number of the old French aristocracy of St. Louis, desiring to give tangible expression to their sympathy for the venerable Cardinal Richard of Paris, decided to make up a purse to assist him in the real hardships which had come to him and to his clergy.

The movers in the plan were Mrs. Robert Bakewell and Mme. Armand Peugnet, the latter of whom was entrusted with the purse on her trip to Europe in the Spring.

Mme. Peugnet and her party just recently reached Paris in the course of their journey, and she had the pleasure of personally presenting to the venerable Cardinal the gift of the St. Louis well-wishers, amounting to \$800.

The Cardinal, who is in his 89th year, was deeply touched at the evidence of such substantial sympathy. He gave Mme. Peugnet a large portrait of himself, to which he added in his own hand, beneath his own motto, "In all things let God be most loved," a sentiment adopted by a great queen of Brittany, whose autobiography His Eminence, who is a native of Brittany, has written.

His Eminence also sent to each of the signers of the petition as a souvenir a card representing the statue of the Blessed Virgin given by the sainted King Louis of France, for whom St. Louis is named, to the city of Paris.

## PELLETAN IN THE CATACOMBS.

A story of the Catacombs, which if not true is certainly ben trovato, has just seen the light in the columns of the Gaulois. One day recently the Trappist monk who guides French visitors through those impressive subterranean galleries of St. Gallixus, still so fragrant with the memories of the struggles and triumphs of the primitive Church, was asked to accompany a French tourist. Imagine his surprise on recognizing in the visitor no other than the famous Pelletan, ex-Minister of Marine, ex-colleague of Combes, and steeped to the lips in the anti-clericalism which has brought ruin on the Christian religion in France. But the Trappist hid his astonishment and led the way down into the bowels of the earth, holding up the taper so that the anticlerical might see where he was going. After a little while they came to one of those parts, where the bones show through the dust in the tiers and rows of niches. Pelletan was very interested, and as the white-robed Trappist held the taper over one of the niches, he asked an explanation of the meaning of it all. "These," said the monk, "are the remains of the first Christians who perished victims of the persecutions. They refused to accept the law that was imposed upon them—just as the Catholics of France have refused to accept another irreligious law, and you see what they had to suffer." "Oh!" replied Pelletan, "we shall not go so far as that, you may be sure." - N.Y. Freeman's Journal.