

Our Contributors.

A Roman Catholic Work on "Apologetics"

M l'abbé D.M. A. Magnan, D. D. has just published an essay in Christian apologetics which is reviewed at considerable length in *Le Soleil* by Edmond de Nevers. The reviewer says: "The theological learning of M. l'abbé Magnan seems to me, a barbarian in such matters, to be simply prodigious. What has he not read and stored up in his mind? The Bible, the prophets, the Acts of the Apostles, the folios of the fathers of the Church, even the writings of the most powerful enemies of our most holy religion, there is nothing of that kind with which he is not familiar." The book we are told is divided into three parts: I. The preliminaries of faith. II. The divinity of Christianity. III. The Catholic Church. In the first part he demonstrates that man has need of revealed truth; then he treats of the spirituality and immortality of the soul; the nature and attributes of the Creator; the duties of man towards God and the visible worship that he owes to Him: revelations, miracles and prophecy. In the second part he proves the authenticity of the sacred books and the divinity of Jesus Christ. The third treats of the perfection of the ecclesiastical institution, the unity, the indefectibility, the infallibility of the Church, its apostolic and Catholic or universal character.

This is evidently a work of large scope, and as might be expected on thoroughly orthodox lines. One or two extracts may be given as specimens of the writer's style and tone. After showing the absurdities of "materialism" he takes the position that animal life is as it has always been led by "blind instinct without any care except the need of the moment without any other pre-occupation except that of the life of Sense."

"Thus animal life is in our day what it has always been: it refuses all change, all improvement, all progress in spite of Darwin's fine theories."

"There is in man something that soars above the material world, dominates him, raises him above himself to incommensurable heights. Further, a mysterious breath moves humanity as a whole and makes all its efforts courage towards progress, a bond which is not material assures unity of action to a great number of individuals living at opposite poles and bears them along to the same end."

The apologist is evidently convinced that reason can meet a proud science and shallow philosophy on their own ground, and vanquish them but that is not sufficient.

"Without visible worship natural religion would become almost impossible and could only with difficulty grow in our hearts. Besides without it the body of man which is also the work of God would be deprived of all share in the sublime functions of divine worship which ought to bind together man and his creator. Without the holy ceremonies which take place openly in the presence of wandering crowds the most perfect actions which we can accomplish here below would pass unperceived hiding themselves like criminals and could not produce the healthful action which is the fruit of good example."

In the latter position where he comes to deal with Christianity and the Church the author appeals to the patriotism as well as the piety of French Canadians.

"Irreligion cannot be acclimated on

French Canadian soil which has drunk the blood of the martyrs of Faith, and incredulity will always be ill at ease on our shores where the cross is so deeply rooted."

"The enemy will perhaps seek in a future more or less distant to invade our shores so happy and peaceable; but God be thanked we hope that we shall see a number of champions of the Christian faith rise up, who amidst the applause of all our people will be able to throw down the monster of impiety and preserve for Christ and his Church the land of the Cartiers, Champlains, Lavals, Breboeufs and of all the Christian heroes of our national history."

Our present purpose is not to criticize this work but simply to report briefly upon it; it is evident that from our own standpoint our own French Catholic neighbors train men who can present their theology and defend their church and style, clear, confident and eloquent.

J.

Pluck And Push.

BY C. H. WETTERBE.

Many a poor boy, having the qualities of sterling character, by pluck and push has gone forward amid onerous obstacles until at last he has arisen to a powerful eminence of the best type. I think that it is safe to say that the most of the men who have achieved distinction of a good sort in various callings were poor boys and had before them great difficulties to surmount. Rev. Dr. R. H. Conwell, of Philadelphia, who is pastor of a church of nearly thirty thousand members, has illustrated what pluck and push can do. Mr. George T. B. Dairs, in a recent issue of the Interior of Chicago, had the following words about this wonderful man: "Mr. Conwell's life story is a romance in real life. He has passed through as many perils as the apostle Paul; the amount of work he has accomplished in different fields of activity seems more like a fairy tale than sober fact. He was born on a farm in Worthington, Mass., in 1843, and when a poor boy, working on the farm to help eke out a meager living for the family, his one passion was to secure an education. By studying evenings, after working all day, he prepared for college, entered Yale in 1860, and for two years supported himself by tutoring. Then, the war of the rebellion having broken out and volunteers being called for, he returned to his native town, was chosen a captain and began a brilliant career in the army. He rose rapidly until he became a colonel; and one night during a fierce engagement he was severely wounded and left for dead on the battle field." Those early experiences undoubtedly did much to fit him for later tasks of the highest character and grand results. The pluck and push which characterized his youth have marked his entire career. In early life he was an infidel, but, as an honest man, ready to abandon falseness in faith and practice, he threw off his infidelity and became an energetic Christian; and from that time until the present he has persevered in doing all that his great powers could enable him to perform in behalf of saving people. His career, aside from his indulgence in infidelity, is worthy of being imitated by all young people.

•••

A crowded meeting of citizens of Dublin protested on the 29th ult. against the refusal of the Lord Mayor to accept the invitation, received by him as the representative of the city, to attend the Coronation. The High Sheriff, a Nationalist, declared that he would go and represent the city.

Boldness.

BY MRS. W. MCCLUSKY.

After the wonderful restoration of the lame man, as it is recorded in the history of the early Church, this man with the two apostles entered the temple, then he rejoicingly used his new powers, ascribing praise and glory to God. The people gathered about them, filled with astonishment, for they recognized the poor, helpless cripple that had been at the temple gate. Then Peter preached his second recorded sermon, disclaiming any credit to himself or friend, he gave all honor to Jesus. He unflinchingly recounted the scenes of the trial and crucifixion of the Christ, placing the entire responsibility of the infamous act upon the Jewish nation. But God had raised Him from the dead, and they were witnessing to the power of a living Christ. It was through faith in Him that the man was before them strong and happy. He said that the nation had done it ignorantly, unconsciously fulfilling the prophetic foreshadowings of a suffering Christ; but now they must repent if they would have a part in the blessedness of this salvation. God was sending the message to them first. At this point in the discourse the leaders of the temple services arrived and they were much displeased because the apostles were teaching the people especially about the doctrine of the resurrection of Jesus. They had them arrested and placed under guard for the night. But the good seed had been sown, and very many believed. God's word can never be bound; it may be transmitted through weak and faulty instruments, but "It is living, and active, and sharper than any two edged sword," Jesus said: "The flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I have spoken unto you are spirit and are life."

The next day the court assembled and the apostles were arraigned. In answer to the question, "By what power or in what name have ye done this?" "Filled with the Holy Spirit" they replied as fearlessly as they had spoken to the people in the temple, closing the defense with these words of familiar prophecy: "This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner; adding, "There is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." The rulers discovered three conditions in those men; they were uneducated, yet they spoke with the greatest freedom and boldness, and they had been with Jesus. Was Jesus such a bold, fearless man that this council at once recognized the quality of His marked characteristic? Studying His life with that thought in mind the fact is very apparent. Look at Him as He twice cleansed the temple, calling at His Father's House! Those rulers had seen it all, and had repeatedly heard bolder denunciations from the lips of the Master than from these men. As the life of Christ has been variously interpreted, this quality is not often emphasized, but it is there unmistakably, and there was never greater need than today to accentuate it. How can it be done? By unqualified obedience to Christ, manifested in right living and speaking under all circumstances. There are social questions to be met and answered to His glory. The Sabbath must be kept holy, in state and nation, boldly driving back the desecration that threatens it; work which belongs to the Lord's people to do. His Name must be honored where now it is horribly profaned, and many other sins met with a fearless courage. Oh that the people of God might see their opportunities and live such brave lives that the world would say, as