

The Catholic Record

Price of Subscription—\$1.50 per annum. United States & Europe—\$2.00. Publisher and Proprietor, Thomas Coffey, LL. D.

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Advertisements for teachers, situations wanted, etc. 50 cents each insertion. Remittance to accompany the order.

Approved and recommended by Archbishops Falcioni and Sbarretti, late Apostolic Delegates to Canada, the Archbishops of Toronto, Kingston, Ottawa and St. Boniface, the Bishops of London, Hamilton, Peterborough, and Oshawa, N. Y., and the clergy throughout the Dominion.

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In St. John N. B., single copies may be purchased from Mrs. E. McGuire, 249 Mac Street, John J. Dwyer and The O'Neill Co. Pharmacy, 109 Brunsell street.

In Montreal single copies may be purchased from Mr. E. O'Grady, Newsdealer, 106 St. Viateur street, west, and J. Millor, 241 St. Catherine street, west.

LONDON, SATURDAY, JULY 29, 1916

THE STANDARD COLLEGE

Last week we noted that the Catholic Educational Association of America called attention to the regrettable fact that promotion in the elementary schools is, as a rule, too slow, with the result that capable and industrious pupils are unduly and unintelligently retarded.

We are glad to note that the same Association endorses another position taken by the CATHOLIC RECORD. We have advocated the taking up by our colleges of the regular High school course leading to Matriculation and Entrance to Normal.

Reporting the recent convention the New World says:

"One of the most interesting and important discussions at this year's meeting of the Catholic Educational Association, which closed at Baltimore last Thursday night, was that relating to the Standard College. At the closing session of the College Department there was an animated discussion on the problem of the Standard College, and it was the leading topic in every group throughout the entire meeting.

The Association accordingly formed a new section to be known as the College Department.

Here in Ontario, by taking up the regular High school course, we should attain the desired object of standardizing our colleges. And as the standard of matriculation varies but little in the different provinces the solution could well apply to all Canada.

Several considerations seem to make such action eminently desirable.

In the first place the college courses proper would all begin with matriculation. And as a great many Catholics use the High schools and Continuation classes near home they would on coming to college be properly classified with those who had taken the same examination in the college.

But there is the very distinct advantage of affording parents the opportunity of sending their boys to a Catholic college for their High school course.

Many desire their sons to take the course that leads definitely to an examination of accepted value. The reason is so obvious that the late Pope Pius X. enjoined the Catholic colleges of Italy to prepare even students who intended to go on for the priesthood for the State examinations.

The Holy Father recognized that many at such immature age could not then decide definitely and finally such an important question. And if after some years they decided they had no vocation to the priesthood they would find themselves at a great disadvantage if they had not taken the regular State examinations.

It seems very probable, also, that we lose vocations precisely because boys cannot decide finally at the age they usually go to college. If the regular High school work were done in the college boys might have the inestimable advantage of Catholic college discipline and live in an atmosphere and environment that would foster and develop vocations to the priesthood.

The more this question is studied in all its bearings on actual educational conditions, the more evident will be its importance to the colleges, the students and to general Catholic people.

SOME ENTRANCE RESULTS

For the fifth consecutive year a pupil of the London Separate schools has led the city at the Entrance examination. Frances Smith, a pupil of St. Mary's school, fourteen years and one month old, has the place of honor this year.

But an analysis of results show some things which we consider still more gratifying. The Minister's Report for 1915 contains the statistics on which the following table is based:

Table with columns: Public, Separate, Attendance 1915, Candidates, Average Age, Passed, Percentage of Passed. Data rows for Public and Separate schools.

The gratifying features are that the London Separate schools are a full year and more ahead of the Public schools in age; a higher percentage wrote and a higher percentage passed; the average attendance of the Separate schools is better than that of the Public schools.

The Sisters are to be congratulated especially on the matter of age and on the fact that they sent up for examination practically their entire fourth classes. The stupid notion that a school had a better standing if all passed after culling out the weak ones is happily disappearing.

CATHOLIC CHURCH GROWTH AND WHAT EXPLAINS IT

If there be one thing more than another that next to the welfare of his own soul should interest every thinking man in the world today, it is the growth of the Catholic Church. This growth is the most striking fact in the history of the past hundred years. The railway, the telegraph, the telephone, the automobile, are all products of the last century, but all these triumphs of science are merely concerned with material affairs.

Scientific men have invented many things that contribute to the comfort of our bodies, but they are powerless when it comes to a question of helping the soul. Material science can tell us nothing as to the ultimate end of man. Yet this is the very question to which every thinking man and woman wishes an answer. Man recognizes in his heart that he is a wanderer upon earth. His intellect strives after truth, his heart yearns after goodness. Nothing can satisfy the mind and heart of man except God. And where is man to obtain an accurate knowledge about God? Only in the Catholic Church, with its divine science. So the growth of the Catholic Church, next to the saving of a man's own soul, is the most important fact for each one of us today.

What a growth the Catholic Church has had! In Canada today she outnumbers all other religious denominations. In the United States, where in the year of the declaration of independence, the Catholic population, centred in Maryland, did not number 50,000 souls, it is estimated today there are 20,000,000 Catholics. In Great Britain the stream of converts is growing apace. The best and brightest of the Anglican clergy are either entering the Catholic Church or at any rate accepting her doctrines. Catholic missions are everywhere. The world is hearing the gospel of Christ as never before. The total Catholic population of the world today is over 300,000,000 souls.

Everywhere the progress of the Catholic Church is a theme of interest. Mr. H. G. Wells, the well known writer, not long ago stated his belief that England was on the eve of one of the greatest Catholic revivals the world had ever seen. Mgr. Benson was of the same opinion. With converts in Great Britain coming in at the rate of over eight thousand annually, including some of the brightest intellects that the old land possesses; at a time when Pasteur, one of the greatest scientific thinkers of modern times, could declare that all the researches of his science had left him with the faith of the Breton peasant, and that further researches, he doubted not, would leave him with the faith of the Breton peasant's wife; when the man in the street openly declares that if he had any religion at all it would be that of the Catholic

Church; when writers from the battlefield declare that the one great comfort, amid the hardships of war, is our Lord's Real Presence in the Holy Eucharist and the reception of their Lord by the soldiers in the trenches; surely in days like these we must feel with special vividness that there is something about this Catholic Church of ours which can only be divine.

The whole history of the Catholic Church is a miracle of the moral order. If she had been merely a human institution, she should have perished long ago. She should have perished in the days of Nero, when the Christians were thrown to wild beasts and tortured, as Tacitus tells us. She should have perished in the days of Decius, when the Christians were ordered on pain of death to offer sacrifice to the pagan gods; and in the days of Diocletian, when Christians were ordered as the price of their life to surrender the Holy Scriptures. She should have perished in the German "Reformation," when Luther arose to deny that the Mass was a sacrifice, and at countless other times of trial and persecution. But the Catholic Church survived. Today, of all institutions that existed nineteen hundred years ago, she alone remains. Human institutions change and pass. They have their day and cease to be. The Catholic Church lives forever.

Only the Catholic Church can claim a divine origin. Read the sixteenth chapter of St. Matthew's gospel, verses 18 and 19, and the divine origin of the Catholic Church is shown as clear as day: "And I say to thee," declares our Lord, "that thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build My Church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven. And whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

Only the Catholic Church can claim the above credentials. Only the Catholic Church teaches truth as our Lord taught it. All other religious denominations are forced to sacrifice a portion of truth to defend their very existence.

PLAIN REASONS FOR GOING TO CHURCH

Why should I go to Church? Such is the question which every Catholic must have heard at least once in his relations with people around him. The non-churchgoer has existed in every age. He is a feature of all times and places. Met with in all grades of society, to the zealous Catholic he is one of life's most urgent problems. As a rule, he belongs to one of three classes; the first of which has no belief in a personal God; the second of which, while believing in a personal God, declares that He is indifferent to the question of whether He is worshipped or not; while the third class declare they are satisfied with worship at home and see no need of going to church.

Now the problem of the atheist and pantheist, who compose the first class, we will leave for another time, for before we could hope to convince them of the necessity of external worship, we should have to prove to them the existence of a personal God. Men cannot be expected to worship a mere abstraction. Our task is to consider the case of those who sometimes put the question: why should I go to church?

What shall be our reply? First of all, let us take the man who says he prefers to worship God at home. We need not question his sincerity or press him with the question as to how often he actually does worship God in the privacy of his home. In dealing with this question, it would be better to employ a brief parable. "Suppose there were a great king," we might say, "who had for years been sending us gifts of the choicest quality, so that we owed to his generosity practically all we possessed in this world. Suppose this king were to send us word by an ambassador that he desired to see us in a certain place for an hour and a half each week, in order that he might confer upon us some other rich gifts which he had decided must not be sent to us in the privacy of our homes. Suppose there were people who refused to accept his invitation and who sent back word that they could not come to the place he had named, but that they would think of him in the quiet of their homes!" What would the king think of such people? Surely he would be greatly

grieved by their ingratitude, and no one would be surprised if he withdrew all future gifts from people who had treated him so shamefully.

Yet this is the way in which some people are treating God to-day, though God has treated them so well. The human race has reason for deep gratitude to God. He created our souls and bodies; all our faculties are His gift. He preserves us in being. If He ceased to sustain us for a moment, our lives would cease. The very air we breathe is a product of His power. All the pleasures of sight and sound, the beauty of earth and sea and sky, the glory of sunrise and sunset, the starlit loveliness of night, field and forest, the song of birds, happy-faced children—what are these but His creation? Have they not all a voice that speaks to us of His love and goodness? Surely the God who has so blessed us is entitled to some return? A natural sense of justice assures us it is so.

To worship God is a need of man's nature. Religion connects man with God; it satisfies the noblest cravings of his nature, viz. his desire for truth, goodness and happiness; it supplies him with a firm foundation for moral action; it elevates family life; it secures respect for duty and law; it promotes the temporal welfare of nations; it encourages intellectual progress. And apart from external worship in a church, individual religion soon fades and dies.

External religion is a primitive, universal and constant phenomenon in the life of nations. No atheistic nations exist. Plutarch tells us that cities can be found without walls, without literature, without kings, without theatres and wrestling schools, but no one, he says, has ever seen, or ever will see, a city without a sanctuary and a deity, without prayers, prophecies and sacrifices to obtain what is good and avert what is evil. "The statement," writes Tiele, "that there are nations or tribes which possess no religion, rests either on inaccurate observation or on a confusion of ideas. No tribe or nation has yet been met with destitute of a belief in a higher being, and travellers who have asserted their existence have been afterwards refuted by facts."

All the best people in history have been church-goers. When did a man ever dare to assert that his personal holiness had been derived from a habit of avoiding Church? What man of common sense would care to have written on his tombstone the words:

Here lies John Stayathome, who never went to church. Non-churchgoers usually convict themselves by their own words and actions. Take for example the man who says he likes his wife and children to go to church but sees no use in going himself. Surely any reasonable man must see that if church-going be good for his family, it must be good for him too.

This life is brief. There is a future life. Church-going is the preparation for this future life. The sacraments are God's means of fitting us for Heaven. By going to church, we correspond with the means by which God desires to bring us to the vision of Himself.

THE WAR'S TRAGEDIES AT HOME

When a ship goes down at sea and thousands are drowned, or when a battalion is slaughtered on the field of battle, it is a national tragedy. But back of that is the individual tragedy of the death of each sailor or soldier. Now and then a correspondent gives little flash-light views of these sad scenes; but he only tells of a few instances and, even then, our imagination is left to picture the struggle and the anguish in the soul during those last moments, when the little world in which the dying man moved—his home, his native village, the familiar faces—is to him no more, as he trembles on the brink of eternity. These casualty lists that sometimes fill an entire page of the paper, speak of a national tragedy; but back of the name of at least every native born son is a tragedy here at home. O yes! the war is getting very close to us. There is now scarcely a town or village in our land in which death in the trenches has not wrought its tragedy in the home.

It was our painful duty to witness recently a scene which circumstances rendered especially typical of this phase of the great world struggle. In a Canadian town there dwelt, on an unfrequented street, a little girl, the only child of her mother and she was a widow. They

were poor, in fact so poor that the Benevolent Society had to aid them till the child was old enough to go to work. Although her environments were not the best, she grew up to womanhood virtuous and religious. She was kind and patient with her mother, who possessed a much less refined nature and was "hard to get on with." In the factory in which she worked was an orphan boy of about her own age. They became acquainted and friendship ripened into love. They were married in the parish church and he hung up his hat in his mother-in-law's home. That was six years ago.

Shortly after the war broke out he answered his country's call. Soon came news that he was in the trenches. At home the young wife spent anxious days, notwithstanding the reassuring letters from the front. She attended faithfully to her domestic duties, caring for her aged mother, now almost blind, and her two little ones, a girl of five and a boy of three years. She did not squander her money, as so many soldiers' wives have done, but stinted herself that there might be something for her Vincent and the children, when the war would be over and they would all be together again.

One day a false report was brought to her that her husband was killed. She rushed out into a winter rain storm to interview the military authorities, and thus contracted a cold, which, settling upon her lungs, caused a rapid decline. At last it was decided that she should go to the hospital. On the very day that she was to leave, a message arrived from Ottawa, stating that Private—No.— was killed in action. It was impossible to keep the news from her, for in every community there are imprudent people. Two days afterwards she was dead. Thus passed out a pure, sweet life, another of the unnumbered victims of the war; and two little child hearts were crushed by a tragedy that they could not understand. The old blind mother was sent to the Home, the children to the Orphanage and the little house was boarded up; but at a window could still be seen a faded bouquet, an emblem of the blasted hopes and joys of a once happy family.

She was buried under the parish church, in which only a few years before she had worn her bridal wreath. When her husband bade her adieu, he was told by the civil and military authorities that she would be honoured in the community and given every care that gratitude could suggest. But at her funeral there was no khaki, though it was much in evidence upon the streets of the town. Only some charitably disposed persons and neighbors, poor like themselves and for that reason able to understand the poor, attended the obsequies. No soldiers were deputed to carry to their resting place the remains of the girl-wife of their dead comrade-in-arms. But then he was only Private No. 436729 and she was a poor Irish Catholic girl.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

THE MAIL and Empire thinks a French Flag Day should be as popular in Toronto as in a French city. "Even though this be a community of bigots," it says, "it can appreciate the heroism of France." This would come very near to being the truth had the Mail printed the word "bigots" without inverted commas.

DISCUSSING the reported seizure by the English police of a printed exposition of the Sermon on the Mount by the Anglican Bishop Gore of Oxford, the Toronto Star affirms that "whenever the Bible is searched for maxims applicable to modern life, the usual course is to quote what is convenient, ignoring the context." This is a truth which scarcely needs vindication. But does it not also accurately describe the unchanging attitude of Protestantism towards the Bible and the Catholic Church for nearly four centuries?

ROUMANIA, IT is said, is now almost ready to join hands with the Allies in the further prosecution of the War. The assistance of the lower Danubian kingdom would no doubt be welcome even at this stage of the conflict, but its value must necessarily be appraised by the underlying motives which have prompted its waiting attitude throughout. Not zeal for freedom or hatred of tyranny can this be said

to be, but selfish desire for territorial gain or such other advantages as may accrue to the winning side.

ROUMANIA, WHOSE prompt alignment by the side of stricken Serbia might have perceptibly shortened the War and reduced thereby the sum of human misery which it has brought upon the world, has as a nation chosen rather to adopt the attitude of waiting for the cat to jump that (if we may be pardoned a mixed metaphor) it may reap where it has not sown. It has had a keen eye to the main chance, and the nations which have borne the heat and burden of the conflict will no doubt see to it that, even should it at the eleventh hour wheel into line its reward shall be proportioned to the measure of its sacrifice. To Serbia, the martyr-nation of the Balkans, is the long account due. Roumania has now ceased to occupy the position of a deciding factor, and the War is already won without her.

A COPY of the prospectus of the Kilmarnock edition of the poems of Robert Burns, published in 1786, was sold at Sotheby's in London the other day for \$1,375, and a scrap of his hand-writing for \$1,000. Burns during his lifetime found some difficulty in getting together money sufficient for his needs, and it may be doubted if the entire proceeds of the sale of this, the first collected edition of his poems, realized what has now been paid for the single printed sheet in which he solicited subscriptions for the volume. Such is life, and such is fame.

AN EVEN more remarkable instance of what may be called posthumous prosperity is that of the American poetic genius, Edgar Allan Poe. Poe's was a life of continuous struggle with poverty which sometimes dragged him down into the very depths of misery and degradation. Ill-health and hope deferred had much to do with his unhappy downfalls, and his genius, which was really of the first order, found little practical recognition during his life. His first book of poetry "Tamerlane," was published anonymously at Boston in 1827, and probably realized to the author sufficient coin to keep him in food for a week. Some years ago a single copy was sold at auction for \$1,450—a sum sufficient to have made Poe feel actually prosperous had it been realized from the sale of an entire edition of one of his later publications. The world is sometimes slow to realize its own treasures.

INSTANCES of the kind might be multiplied indefinitely. One more occurs to us at the moment. The struggle for existence which characterized the life of Oliver Goldsmith—the much-loved author of the "Vicar of Wakefield"—is part and parcel of English literary history, and the circumstance under which his famous novel was given to the world is widely known. It will be remembered that Dr. Johnson found him sick and depressed, and, haunted by creditors in his London attic, and casting about for some means to relieve the situation, unearthed from a drawer the manuscript of the "Vicar," which he took away with him and sold presently to a bookseller for £40. A single copy of this first edition brought at Sotheby's the other day £80—just twice the proceeds realized to Goldsmith by this product of his genius. Why will not the good public anticipate fame?

THE PAPERS are making much of the Kaiser's latest spiritual adjuration to his army through the channel of their chaplains, and labelling it "blasphemy." In view of the "frightfulness" which has characterized the German campaigns through life, the usual course is to quote what is convenient, ignoring the context." This is a truth which scarcely needs vindication. But does it not also accurately describe the unchanging attitude of Protestantism towards the Bible and the Catholic Church for nearly four centuries?

out in regard to many of the past worthies of Protestantism. Dr. Martin Luther, for example, has come in for some pretty hard knocks. A few years ago, when they celebrated the four hundredth anniversary of his birth, he was elevated to the very topmost pinnacle among the world's benefactors. And now, read this from the Church Times. Referring to the harsh treatment of war-prisoners in the camp at Wittenberg, Luther's home town, this Protestant journal says:

"We are inclined, however, to think that this is no case of a fall from a great height of goodness to a depth of wickedness. Dr. Martin Luther was the spiritual progenitor of Oberstabsarzt, Dr. Aschenbach and that other criminal, Herr Kommandant General von Dassel; and it is a case of 'like father, like son.' The disregard of solemn treaties as mere scraps of paper has its analogue in Luther's broken vows; the ruins of Louvain and Reims and Ypres are of a piece with the havoc made of the Catholic Church and creed; the gross living of so many a German of today is the reflection of his table talk."

In the present day vernacular, that is "going some" for a Protestant!

ON THE BATTLE LINE

Relative calm was reported from the battlefields of Somme yesterday following the fierce fighting of Thursday. The combined advance of the French and British on that day, which had carried the British upon the north side of the wedge thrust into the German lines as far as the wood of Fouraux, to the northeast of Bazentin, and the French well passed the first line trenches of the enemy south of the Somme, was followed during the night by determined counter-attacks. The endeavor to recapture the lost German trenches and field works south of the Somme, on which the enemy had expended almost two years of labor, was fruitless. The French were on the alert, and turned such a volume of artillery and machine gun fire upon the battalion which led the assault that it was thrown back in disorder after suffering very great losses. The failure of this attack so discouraged the Germans that the French were left to consolidate their gains without further molestation. The midnight French report was one of the shortest on record, and merely stated that "there is nothing to add to this forenoon's communique."

The British battle-front, north of the river, was the scene of a more serious struggle. There the Germans, after being turned out of Fouraux Wood, directed an intense artillery fire upon the wood, using gas shells. Following this up, they secured a foothold in the northern part, and amid the shattered tree trunks a stubbornly fought engagement continued throughout the night. The report of General Haig issued late last night says there is no change in the situation. During yesterday the Germans made a bombing attack on the Leipzig salient, and succeeded at one point in entering the British front trenches. They were immediately driven out. In the aerial combats of the day the Germans lost five machines and the British only one.

The German official report makes a good deal of the engagement at Fromelles on Thursday, referred to by Sir Douglas Haig as an important raid on the enemy's trenches carried out on a front of two miles, in which Australian troops took part and about 140 Germans were captured. Berlin asserts that this attack "resulted in the loss by the attackers of more than 2,000 men killed and nearly 500 made prisoners." The statement is probably a lie. The Germans have no accurate means of knowing how many Australian dead lie in front of their positions. There is no indication that the affair was more than what Sir Douglas Haig says, an important raid intended to convince the enemy that it would be dangerous to strip his trenches of men for the reinforcement of the hard pressed Germans engaged in the battle of the Somme. Berlin also belittles the progress made in the attacks of Thursday, and tells of the capture of 1,200 prisoners during the day's operations and the repulse of 200,000 British and French troops who took part in them. The German people may begin to consult the map and see for themselves what is happening.

Another advance of General Brusiloff's army on the Styria is recorded in official despatches from Petrograd and admitted by the Austrian War Office. The battle took place on the Styria near its confluence with the Lipa, and the result was the dislodging of the Austrians from their positions at Werbene, possession of the crossings of the Styria, and the capture on another part of the field of over 1,600 prisoners, including many officers. The official statement speaks of the Austrians posted on the heights near the town of Beresteck as "beginning partially to surrender." A despatch from Rome, speaking of the effect of the Russian advance toward Brody, says that the town has been hastily evacuated, the inhabitants fleeing in confusion in the belief that the Russians would soon be in occupation. Brody is fifty-five miles from Lemberg, on the main line between that city and Rovno. The Teuton losses in the desperate battles of the past ten days on the Volhynian front have been great. A