

JANUARY 14 1911

THE CATHOLIC RECORD

3

she was go-
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the day onlow face all
the sudden
you want
things? I'm
in the roomguessed
the sudden
you want
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ion.the rib-
bons. "She said
nothing."rest!" Betty
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Mrs. Robey stoppedBetty's attention re-
Nettie Pratt next.
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"I thought maybe
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than I can. I'd give
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y Cheshire."ood, all of them.
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to forget any of the
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it must be better than
e them all droppingcried. "Come up and
tite—then you can tell
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the happiest sympathy.
me to a vase of Tiffan-
y breath. "Do they
y do—most of them,"
reluctantly. "Do you
out of Nettie's face,
her moment's happy
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doesn't seem fair that I
this, and people like
all that pain sopted her, the tired face
st-unpleasantness. "I
that knows you, knows
every bit of it, Miss
ared."

In the next week Betty Ray had a steady succession of callers. Finally one evening she went down to the library. It was a stormy night, and all the family were at home. Betty pulled a footstool to her mother's side.

"Mother," she began, coaxingly, "it's going to be my wedding, isn't it?"

"Certainly we supposed so, Bettie," Mrs. Ray replied.

Marjory clasped her hands dramatically and looked across at Allice. "Be still, my heart! I know—oh, I know that that night on the verandah—Betty and I are the same size—the mistake was natural."

"You foolish child," Allice interrupted, "do you suppose I have not read his secret whenever he looked at me? He feels himself bound in honor, but heart will speak to heart. I was going to carry the secret to the grave with me, but since you've discovered—Betty, it won't be much work to alter your gowns."

"Oh, make them keep still!" Betty begged, laughing. "I have something to talk about, really, if you'll only give me a chance."

Marjory and Allice exchanged glances of deep understanding and became instantly mute. The silence was so penetrating that Betty's only resource was to turn her back upon them. That done, she began again, "I want to do some-thing for my wedding. I'm afraid you'll think it queer, but please don't you can help it. First of all, I don't want to have a bit of sewing or trying on the last week."

"I meant that you shouldn't have," Mrs. Ray answered, wrinkling her pretty brows over the problem. "You know that was the way we planned it all along, but there were many inter-ruptions. I'm afraid that the blue gown—"

"That's part of it," Betty broke in, eagerly. "Mother, I don't want the blue gown. I have plenty without it. I want to take it in to Davenport's and exchange it and that lovely lace we bought for it."

"Exchange it?" Betty repeated, resolutely. "For a damask table cloth, and a Tiffany vase, and if there's anything left, there are plenty of other things."

"But, Betty dear, surely you have linen enough, and what can you want of another vase?" I don't understand."

"It's Emma Gains and Sabra Pratt and Nettie and Mrs. Robey and a dozen other people—people that never had all the loveliness of wedding presents and gowns and things—some like Sabra, that never can have a wedding—don't you see? It seems so dreadful for me to have so much, when just a tiny little scrap of it would make them so happy."

"You help me to have the very happiest time a girl ever had. I'm not going to a single luncheon or anything of the kind—I've given all the girls warning—but we're going to give a shower to Sabra Pratt, and Mrs. Robey is going to have a damask table cloth with her initials embroidered on it, and Cora Bowen—I don't care if you do laugh—is going to have a silk negligee. She was looking at mine, and she said she wouldn't care how hard she worked all day if she had something lovely like that to put on in her room afterward. Then there's my little Venetian pin—that's going to Emma Gains, and there are ever so many things! I have the whole list. Will you all help?"

"I suppose," said Mrs. Ray, "that that's a gentle hint for me to open my pocket-book."

Betty perched upon the arm of the chair. "Oh, will you, daddy, dear? Not for any of these things—they're all mine; but there's one thing I couldn't do. I want to send Phoebe Dale on a wedding trip all by herself—to Niagara. She'd have to take one of the children along because she never will do a thing by herself. But when you think how she has worked and worked and given them good times and never been anywhere herself—and she would have seen Niagara than anything else. O daddy, would you?"

"I throw up my hands," said Mr. Ray. "Take what you will."

Betty's small, firm hand closed upon her father's; they never moved until those two. Then Betty looked across at the girls, who were interrogating each other with lifted brows.

"I suppose," said Marjory, "we'll have to humor her."

"Yes, poor thing, it might strike in fatally if we didn't. You know when they're in that condition they're not wholly responsible."

Betty's eyes went pleadingly to her mother.

"I must say, Betty, that I think it is a very queer notion of yours—as if people should have wedding presents when they are not going to be married! And that blue foulard will have been so becoming! But, of course, if you insist—"

Betty, springing down, swept the girls and her mother into one big embrace. "Nobody ever, ever had so dear a family!" she declared.

It was a beautiful wedding; the church was crowded to the doors. Even Sabra was there, carefully brought in the carriage Betty had sent for, and that blue foulard which Betty had only her closest friends, and she clung to them to the last moment.

When finally she was gone, Marjory looked at the pile of white-ribboned packages to be distributed. "The last goodness of Betty Ray," she said.

"What do you suppose will be the queerest of Betty Edmonston?" Mabel Nelson Thurston, in The Youth's Companion.

THE GROWTH OF MATERIALISM IN ENGLAND

When the enemy of mankind sowed religious discussion in the fair fields of God, as a result of his evil cunning, the good seed was like to die in human hearts, and upon the souls of men there fell the darkness of unbelief. Once upon which spiritual gloom, there rose up the spirit of Materialism, whose influence is now making itself felt in every walk of life. Rich and poor are suffering alike from the effects of the new order, as may be seen in the growing indifference of the people regarding the things that matter.

"O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments," cried the prophet, who perchance saw as in a vision the social and moral problems of to-day—"thy peace had been as a river, and thy justice as the waves of the sea." But wise men are generally at a discount, even the prophets have spoken in the wind. And to-day no one has time to give heed. Each man is busy with his material concerns.

In the underworld of labor, where the teeming millions live, the struggle to live is so fierce as to exclude all else. The claims of the material absorb their whole being. The majority of the toilers have no idealism. Many have no belief in a future state. Some have never heard of a God. When their hour comes they creep into their lairs, like the beasts of the field, and with a curse on their lips, they pass out to judgment. Doubtless they are against the light. But of the rest, who shall speak? Verily they have lived and died in the darkness where false gods are worshipped.

Led on by these lying spirits, the inhabitants of this underworld have been induced to forsake the straight and narrow way of belief for the crooked and wide way of unbelief. And in this wilderness they wander hither and thither throughout the long night of their earthly pilgrimage. They are without knowledge and destitute of hope.

"Sufficit illis," says a modern writer, but music will not heal the wounds of the soul: *Sufficit illis gratia* music sounds equally well, and it is the sovereign salve for broken or dented humanity. To those who know the conditions of life in poor quarters, the decline of religion is to be attributed in part to the spirit of the age which is prejudicial to the interests of the poor. But in even greater measure to the social and economic disabilities which fetter the many in all our great cities.

In the present day it is an acknowledged fact that the conditions of industrial life and labor are not only un-Christian but inhuman; the sweating system is sapping the life blood of the masses just as the conditions of the housing system is undermining their morality, with the result that even those who believe, can hardly withstand the strain thus imposed upon them.

That there are in these quarters, vast numbers of our Catholic poor, who live as an example of Christian virtue is a significant testimony to the power of divine grace. There are others also, and these numbers are a few, who are of fuller and more robust constitution. They constitute that section of our poor commonly called the leakage which the Catholic Church in England has suffered from for this. And if this instability be experienced among those who are strengthened by a faith in the Promises, what must be the difficulty among those who know not God?

Leo XIII. had a clear conception of this which he wrote, "Those people of this world who are the social question is economic only, in the sense of a materialist, and not in the sense of a Christian. On the contrary, it is a question of moral and religious forces. For in truth the slum tenement is nowadays no school for saints; and to preach a standard of ethics to a people whose physical and moral environment renders it impossible of attainment is neither reasonable nor just."

Housed in dens that are a blot upon a Christian state; herded together in overcrowded areas which are a menace alike to body and soul, what wonder is that the ten commandments are in danger of becoming obsolete? To see these stricken ones huddled up in their ragged and filthy clothes, and to see them, as they are not only cold but starving; to realize that they are constrained to labor for such a pittance as to render a self-respecting life impracticable; to see these things it is inevitable that there should be a general slackening of the cords of self-restraint; the effects of which are chronicled in the unedifying news of the daily press.

But though these facts do not surprise the sociological student who is acquainted with the life of the submerged, and though the British public reads un- moved the criminal happenings of such a kind, the gravity of the position is such as to excite serious comment from those beyond our borders.

Thus a London weekly writes: "The increase of crime in London has alarmed the United States Department of Commerce and Labor, which has published a statement on the subject. 'London,' says the report of the department, 'is paying the penalty paid by all large cities. Crime is inside her gates. It is round numbers she has to pay nearly £1,600,000 to keep criminals in check, for that is the sum paid to her police, courts, prisons and prosecuting officers.' These statistics are interesting. They testify that the decline of religion has projected its shadow where few would have looked for it, namely, in the coffers of the National Exchequer. So the view from the standpoint of mere national expediency, the cult of Materialism may prove not only a moral but an increasing financial burden to the statesmen of to-morrow."

However reluctantly it be admitted, the truth must nevertheless be stated, that in this, our day, a vast number of our fellow men and women have practically ceased to believe in God. So much indeed is the case, that it seems a blinking at facts to speak any longer of England as a Christian country. Taking them all round, it is open to question whether one twentieth of the denizens of our cities are not covertly pagan. Possibly the percentage is higher, since many still retain the name of believers while they have ceased to practise any form of religion. Nor is this all. For while

the decline of religion is so marked a feature in the life of the English masses, it is unfortunately not confined to the poorer population. The cult of the Material would seem to be equally practised among the upper ranks of society.

Addressing a conference of clergy and church workers at Bisleford (Ireland) from a London daily paper, the Bishop of Salisbury said the growth of divorce and suicides, the trying controversy with regard to the education question and many other things, had made people anxious of the country, not to speak of the Church. There had been revealed, he continued, the terrible and painful fact that a great many people were giving up public worship, and that a large proportion of the people of England paid little attention to religion at all.

The above is a moderate estimate; the actual thing patent to all that Materialism is stalking in the land, and following in her wake is a multitude whom no man may count. That the generation of to-morrow will go to swell the ranks is only possible, but all too probable, for what Cardinal Manning said of his own day, applies with even greater force to ours. Speaking of the threatened unbelief of the youth, he wrote: "Satan knows well that if he can separate religion from instruction, he has cut through the roots of the Christian civilization of the world. For that reason, all the art, all the wiles, all the frauds, all the false politics of this day, are directed to what is called secular education, national education, imperial education, and so forth, you like, only not Christian education."

But apart from this very real danger of the future, it is a matter of common knowledge that the materialism of to-day is taught and held by all sections of society, each day bringing its quota of proof in the lowered standard of our social life. With the decline of religion, corruption has become rampant. The decay of imperial Rome hastened the downfall of a mighty power, the same causes now threaten to undermine the foundations of an empire more vast than Caesar's.

An interesting side-light on the cult of the Material which is now so widespread among us, let me quote in passing, an opinion expressed by a man about as broad as the average of his kind. He was a free thinker. He had traveled widely and in his wanderings East and West, had had considerable opportunities for studying the life in many of the great cities of the world. This man was without religion. He knew his London, and he belonged to more than one London club. And after discussing the comparative morality of modern countries, he declared, he was sure that London was, of all cities, the most wicked.

Do you mean that literally? I asked. He paused, then with greater deliberation, he repeated the statement. For it is my firm belief," he said, "that not even Sodom and Gomorrah rolled into one, could equal the iniquity of modern London."

As to the accuracy of this statement, the more wise must judge. As for me, my tongue is the pen of a scribe, and I can only repeat what I have seen and heard.

But taking a comprehensive view of the present-day position in England, it is evident that religion is fast losing its hold on the popular mind. In the cities the churches are crumbling; in the country districts, the churches are empty; the religious conventicles are being emptied of worshippers. Their power of appeal is either dying or dead. Practically every house of worship is feeling the pinch of the encroaching waves—of the fret and stress of those new ideas which assert not with revelation and which spurn the claims of the supernatural. Soon there will be no church left standing, save that which was built upon the Rock and against which the waves of unbelief have beaten in vain for eight thousand years: which Christ—backed by the promise of God—has destined to outlive all error and all time.

Is This Your Boy

Who at tender age must face the hard, cold world without preparation or protection

No. You could not think of such a thing. And yet, you could neglect your health and if you waited to think of your family and how they would get along without you.

You have not the old-time vigor and energy. You go home tired and out, feel cross and irritable, lack the old-time smile and good cheer which brought sunshine into your home at your arrival.

You don't sleep well, the brain is not so clear and active, little things annoy and worry you. In short, the nervous system is exhausted. You know this, but do not want to consult a doctor, and scarcely know what to do.

Use Dr. Chase's Nerve Food. It cannot fail to do you good, for it is made up of the elements of which your run-down system is most in need. Through the medium of the blood it sends new energy and vigor to every organ of the human body.

You can feel yourself getting stronger every day. You can prove it by noting your increase in weight. You will sleep better, appetite and digestion will improve, and you will feel again the courage and energy which can only exist side by side with good health and steady nerves.

You can put a stop to the wasting process to-day by beginning this treatment. You need not let delay bring you a day nearer to nervous collapse. This is not a stimulant to whip up tired nerves and brain. It cures in nature's way by filling the system with rich red blood. It will not cure in a day, but its benefits are natural, and it will work wonders.

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Perhaps it was a slowly dawning realization of this truth which, in the evening of life, was borne in upon the Sage of Chelsea, for we read of Carlyle that "in his extreme old age and when every vestige of religious creance had left him," admitted to his biographer Froide, "that the Mass was the only relic of religious faith now left in the world."

That the cult of the material is not peculiar to any one state or country, and that England is not an isolated example, is indicated by the first example of Pius X. wherein he deplores that the nations are forsaking God, their fathers and are falling away into rationalism and unbelief. Thus he writes: "For who does not know that more than in all ages past, the society of men is stricken by a growing daily graver and eating it utterly away, hurries it on to its ruin?"

Therefore, the matter being urgent he impresses upon all Christian rulers, that the order of the state must be brought back by Christian laws and customs. For assuredly, says the Supreme Pontiff, if in the cities, if in all the villages the Commandments of God are faithfully kept, if holy things were held in honor, if the use of the Sacraments were frequent, . . . there would be very little more to be done, in order to re-establish all things in Christ."—In America. M. QUINNAN

FREQUENT COMMUNION

The Bishop of Newport (the Right Rev. Dr. Hedley, O. S. B.) devotes his Advent Pastoral to a consideration of the seasons which have led the Holy Church to lay down so strongly the desirability of children communicating at an early age, and of a frequent, if not daily, reception of the Holy Eucharist by those who have made their First Communion.

In the course of his Pastoral Dr. Hedley says: "There can be no doubt that, apart from all legislation by the Church, the Holy Eucharist is the most powerful means to make use of Holy Communion. This obligation arises from the fact that, as a rule, we cannot save our souls without it. Doubtless, Almighty God can, and does give us grace in other ways. And, after all, it is not solely for the purpose of giving His grace to our souls that our Lord has instituted this Sacrament of His love. His primary motive was the burning charity of His Sacred Heart, which could not be satisfied without intimate union, even on earth, with the souls He had redeemed, and which therefore invented this Sacrament, involving both faith and sight, affecting soul and body, the spirit and the flesh. Merely to know of this loving wish and dispensation on our Lord's part might be sufficient to draw us every heart to respond to Him by approaching as often as possible the Table which so gloriously cheers the wilderness of our human life. But He has signified His intention in this union of soul to soul, heart to heart, should at the same time be a chief means and instrument of providing us with that supernatural holiness and strength without which we cannot be saved. It was natural that this should be His dispensation, for where He comes He must bring salvation, and there is no salvation save where Christ's power is. He has said, 'Who eat my flesh and drink my blood, they have life in them.' (vi. 54.) The words show that the reception of the Blessed Sacrament is necessary for eternal life, and obligatory on Christians. And the reason why He constituted the Sacrament of His loving union to be a dispensation of eating and drinking was that we might clearly understand His intention of making it the means of grace. As the food of the body is the source of natural strength, so the Blessed Sacrament was to be the source of the supernatural strength of the soul. Therefore, as no man can live, under ordinary circumstances, without food, so, no one, as a rule, can be saved without the Holy Eucharist. A precept of our Lord was hardly needed to enforce this; the institution itself created the obligation. But we have our Lord's precept as well."

That precept of Holy Communion which our Redeemer has given to men has been naturally taken up, enforced and defined by His Holy Church, whose office it is to safeguard and explain all His holy words and commands. But the Holy Church of Christ, whilst restricting her absolute commands to one reception in the year, has never ceased to urge a far more frequent approach. But the Council of Lateran and that of Trent, in prescribing one annual Communion, use the phrase "at least"—one, at least. The truth is, an individual Christian may be bound to communicate more frequently; probably this is true of every one, in view of the dangers and difficulties of ordinary life. In order to save our souls we are bound to take the suitable means that are within our reach; and, speaking generally, more than one Communion in the year is morally necessary for salvation. This should be a serious reflection to the Catholics who never receive except at Easter. It is morally certain that such Catholics will be at times in extreme danger of mortal sin, and without Communion, their souls, however Easter and Easter, will become loaded with mortal sin. To live contentedly in such a state as this, is, as it need hardly be pointed out, to live in danger of eternal damnation.

It is generally known by the flock that the standing law of the Church has always been that children are bound by the Paschal precept—that is, the law of receiving at least once a year—as soon as they have arrived at the "years of discretion." This is the phrase which is used by both the Council of Lateran and that of Trent. The law is the same for first confession as for First Communion. By the "years of discretion" is meant the same as the "use of reason" the age of responsibility, the capability of distinguishing good from evil, and of knowing what is meant by absolution and the consecration of the Eucharist. This use of reason need not be complete or perfect. It is sufficient if the child has begun to reason.

Distinctness and precision of thought are not required.

There can be no doubt, continued the Bishop, that there has been recently, in some parts of the Church, a tendency to put off First Communion later and later; to the twelfth, the thirteenth, and even the fourteenth year. It was pointed out that a child should be perfectly instructed and should have given proofs of a pious and exemplary life, before it was admitted to the great privilege of Communion. Hence the idea was to make the First Communion as it were the reward and the crown of a child's school-life; and the day of First Communion was kept as if it were a solemn feast of childhood and the entrance on the period of adolescence.

These views are admirable as far as they go. But these leave out of consideration that critical period of the life of a child which comes between the attainment of reason, and the date of a late First Communion. This period might extend for six or seven years as well as for later life. It is quite possible that a child, left without Communion during all that time, might take the wrong turn, as regards God, might stain its soul with many grievous sins, and might never be brought back to piety. For Communion is not a ceremony, or merely a privilege, or a reward for piety; it is a necessary means of salvation to all who are responsible before the judgment seat of God. And it is also a means of nearness to our Saviour which should be made use of by every soul the very moment that the soul can know its significance. This principle has a deeper application than that which concerns the care of young children. All the faithful of every age and condition have to consider that the Communion of our Lord's Body and Blood is not only a means for the very pious, the edifying, or those with plenty of time to say their prayers and make their preparation. The more piety there is the better, no doubt, and the more careful preparation the better. But the Blessed Sacrament is the condition of spiritual life; and therefore, in order to keep themselves from mortal sin and damnation, all the faithful, however busy, however tempted, must make use of it as often as they frequently fall into mortal sin (provided they make a good confession and approach with a sincere desire to profit). They are expected to make use of Holy Communion—and even every day if they can. "He that eateth Me shall live by Me," it is this great principle—that the blessed sacrament is not merely a luxury, piety, but a necessity for spiritual life, that has been impressed upon the faithful by the recent pronouncements of the Sovereign Pontiff.

A full and perfect knowledge of Christian doctrine is not necessary for First Communion. For First Communion it is enough that the child should understand according to its capacity those chief

doctrines of Faith without which there is no Christianity; that is to say that there is a God, that God loves us, that He rewards the good and punishes the wicked, that the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost are equally God, though there is only one God, and that the Son became man and died to redeem us. Add to this that there must be some recognition of what the Blessed Sacrament is; that is to say, that it is not common bread, but something holy, bringing Jesus into our soul. It is evident that it is quite possible to teach these things in an informal way to a child of seven. When the Church encourages early Communion, she is far from sanctioning any slackness or delinquency in religious instruction. It is only that this will come after First Communion instead of before it.

There are some who fear that the custom of so young an age will result in a contemptuous familiarity with that august dispensation. Let them be reassured. Experience does not warrant such an apprehension.

In conclusion his Lordship says:—Let all Christian parents, then, take occasion, from this act of the Holy See, to remind themselves of the responsibilities which they have for their children. It is their duty in conjunction with the confessor and the clergy of the parish, to decide when their child has reached the years of discretion, and in due course to prepare it, or see that it is prepared for Confession and Communion. These could not be any deeper consolation for a father or mother than to accompany their innocent child to the Holy Table of Christ's love, and to observe how, from its tenderest years, it responds to the grace of the Sacrament and to the pious training of the early years of youth. But what a terrible judgement there will be for those parents who, by neglect and bad example, cause their children either to miss their First Communion or to abandon piety and religion afterwards. The only way to make sure of life for their child and grown-up people to practise religion themselves. This is a time when the Church has loudly proclaimed the glories of the Blessed Sacrament, and solemnly called upon all the faithful to make a more and more assiduous use of that great means of life everlasting. Let us all respond to that call—and whilst the little ones in their piety learn to cling to their Saviour even before they know how good and loving He is, and all ranks of the Church's followers press around the sacred Table by day, we may face with confidence the dangers and storms of the times in which we live, remembering the words that He spoke to those whom the raging waters threatened with wreck—"Be not afraid; it is I!"

Unless there is actual want of food and raiment, poverty is more imaginary than real.

CARDINAL GIBBONS DEPLORES LACK OF TRUTH AND HONESTY

Cardinal Gibbons in an interview declared that the country would benefit greatly if the proper Christian spirit was manifested in the management of all business enterprises, great and small.

"There is to-day apparent in commercial life," he said "a distressing condition—the desire to avoid payment of honest debts by various business subterfuges. Some apply for receiverships; some transfer their property to their wives, and others adopt various other means to avoid payment of their debts."

"Justice is a virtue which prompts us to pay what we owe to our neighbors. It is the foundation of social order and of business enterprise. For if we did not believe that men had a sense of justice we would have no confidence in their integrity and without this confidence commercial life would be paralyzed."

"Truthful publicity of the conditions of big service public corporations and all corporations, is necessary before the full confidence of the people may be gained."

"Businessmen should not be Christian only when they say their prayers, but all the time. Business conditions here differ greatly from those in countries where Christianity is not obscured by commercialism. Look at Oberammergau and the people of the Tyrol mountains for instance. There the Christian spirit pervades all business and all business is honest. Each man trusts his neighbor and is trusted and nowhere are there a happier and better people."

No Cause for Alarm

It is said that the Non-conformists in England are raising very strong objections to the inclusion of a "Lady Chapel" in the new Anglican Cathedral just completed in Liverpool. These zealous Protestants against "Mariolatry" may compose themselves. There is really no cause for alarm. A chapel in which the windows are thus inscribed: "Queen Victoria and All Noble Queens," "Grace Darling and All Courageous Women," "Catharine Gladstone and All Loyal Hearted Wives," "Elizabeth Barrett Browning and All Women Who Have Seen the Infinite in Things," cannot be charged with being erected to the honor of the Mother of God. It sounds more like a meeting place for suffragettes.—Catholic Universe.

The school ought to teach above all the sacredness of hard work, which overcomes the obstacles offered by its object and which makes man a creator, an active instead of a passive being.—Dr. Hofmann.



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You are Absolutely Protected when you send your order to EATON'S, as our liberal guarantee allows you to return any article with which you are not thoroughly satisfied in every respect. In fact we ask you to return any such article, as we are perfectly willing to exchange it for you, or refund your money in full and pay all transportation charges. When you buy from EATON'S, remember that your money is not ours unless you are pleased with every phase of the transaction.

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