SESOLUTE INVIOLABILITY OF THE SEAL PROMOTES RATHER THAN REFARDS JUSTICE.

The confessional and the witness bor The contessional and the witness box is the subject of an interesting discussion now going on in the London press, cays the Catholic Transcript. The question was raised, apropos of the refusal of an Anglican minister to disclose the confession of a woman charged with their. On examination the clarge with theft. On examination the clergy. man stood pat and was sentenced to seven days' imprisonment for contempt

England is more drastic in this respect than certain of the commonwealth of this country. The law of several States, including New York, Missouri and Wisconsin, prescribes that "no minister of religion, or priest of any demonination whatever, shall be allowed the common of to disclose any confession made to him dn his professional character, in the course of the discipline enjoined by the cries and practices of said denomina-

It has been urged that such exemption will work to the prejudice of justice. But nothing can be wider of the mark. The fact that a confessor is privy to the guilt of a penitent add nothing to the evil done. It would be barbarous and inhuman to deprive an offender of the consolation and counsel to be found in confession. Moreover, the chief reason for making a confession. the chief reason for making a confession at all is the hope of gaining pardon; and this cannot be had without a readiness, on the part of the offender to repair, as far as possible the consequences of the wrong done. Make the confessor liable to disclose the confidences reposed in him and you put an end to con-fession. The strength of the confes-sional consists in no small measure in the absolute conviction shared by all who frequent it that there will be no disclosure and that their secret, however appaling, is sacred-as secure as If buried in midocean.

The obligation to secrecy of the Catholic confessor has been well set forth in the present controversy by the Rev. Sidney Smythe. He says: __ "Priests of the Catholic Church can-

not, with clear conscience, break the s box or elsewhere, and whether witness box or elsewhere, and whether they be asked to tell what they learnt in the confessional itself, or what they have learnt previously or subsequently but with a view to it or as a consequence of it. In short, it is the confessor's duty to keep himself altogether on the safe side, and divulge nothing which could by any chance enable a clever questioner to infer what had been said in the confessional. This is his duty, and it is our consolation to his duty, and it is our consolation to know that it would be indeed difficult to discover instances where a Catholic priest had failed in his duty. Of the cases cited in the various law reports in two only—the two already referred to, namely, the Dunboyne case and R. V. Hay—was a Catholic priest put to the test, and in both they respectfully and without any blustering refused to speak and submitted to an imprisonment for contempt. In both, it is pleasant to acknowledge, a pretext for releasing them was quickly discovered, and it may be that they foresaw that it would

"Still if the penalty had been that of life long imprisonment or death, they would have been bound in conscience to face it, and we may confidently trust, would have done so. Such cases are on record, and though I forgot where to find it there was one during the last century of a Polish priest whose house keeper was found murdered. The mur-derer, to draw off the scent from himself, had gone at once to the priest, and in a bad confession told him of his erime; on his departure, leaving behind him traces which would direct suspicion against the priest. The latter was accordingly convicted and sent into exile in Siberia, whence he only returned many years later, the muracknowledged his own guilt.

"The Catholic priesthood will have the respect, if not the sympathy, of most Englishmen for its fidelity to this conception of duty. But are there anot, it will be asked, exceptional cases un which he must feel that he really ought to betray the secrets of the penitent culprit? Ought he not when by so doing he could save an innocent punishment? No, not even then. The secret of the confessional ac-cording to the dectrine of the Catholic Church, is enjoined by a divine law from which neither judge, nor king, nor Pope has power to dispense; and hence for a confessor to dispense. ense himself from its observance, ever to save the innocent, would be to do evil that good might come. Or if it were known that such exceptious could be made, would the guilty be likely to contess their crime? And so no adrantage would accrue to the innocent from the priest's liberty to aid them in this manner. On the other hand, the present absolute inviolability of this weal does tood to afford substantial prosection to the innocent. The culprit. priest is that he may obtain the divine pardon for a sin of which he has repen-ened, may have arranged things purposely so as to cast suspicion on the innocent. In that case the confessor's duty is to tell him that he has no chance of divine pardon unless he will effectually undo this injustice to an-

There have been martyrs to the seal of the confessional. But the days have happily gone by when priests in civilized communities, are required to speak of things confided secrecy of the confessional. The social evalue of this tribunal is greater than enost men are able to realize. There a no more potent factor making for the ence I unlitting of the race than this to is a blow aimed at society itself.

W en the devil tries our faith, it is that he may crush it or diminish it : at when God tries our faith, it is to

GOOD OUT OF EVIL.

CULTIVATE YOUR SOUL STIMULANTS There are just nine rungs in the ladder reaching from earth to heaven—love, joy, peace, long suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control—and by some mysterious law of the infinite, each one is the outcome of its opposite vice; Love is a grace only because you possess the power to hate men, yet choose the better part, mercy and forgiveness. Joy is a grace only because you have the privilege of grumbling and bitterness of mind, yet prefer to retain your child heart through all life's bitter experience. Peace is a prefer to retain your child heart through all life's bitter experience. Peace is grace that comes after the storm is over and the day's work is done, leaving your heart-still in the conviction that God alone is great and true. Thus does the great silent work of eternity go on growing good out of evil, making dark days an effective background for bright living and caveing the death bright living, and causing the death valley of misfortune and disappoint-ment and sin to at length blossom as the rose. But how? What are the soul stimulants that help men to gain the Canaan liberty through Egyptian se rytude, to draw good out of evil, to use Baca as a helper to reach the hill-top where the birds are forever singing and the angels come and go and the everlasting sun shines down upon them n everlasting benediction?

Confidence in your ability to become master of your environment, whatever that may be. The world shows us three classes of people—those who "can't," those who "will." The first fail in everything they undertake, the second oppose everything and the last accomplish everything. The first two classes are men of passive intellect, the negative quantities of the earth, mere drifters, nonentities, ciphers, who take life as they find it, and instead of making they find it, and instead of making some impression on their age are en-slaved by it and lose their individual-ity in their environment. They are cowed by the very appearance of the Baca vale and fall prostrate before its dangers, like the Hebrew host encamped before Kadesh-Barnea, and as a result God turns the faces of such men back into the wilderness of life to wander aimlessly till all are dead but the tried aimlessly till all are dead but the tried and true. The other man has a creative intellect, asserts his will, insists upon realizing his ideals, endeavors "to fashion the stubborn things of nature according to the use of the soul." Before he gets through with life his section of the Baca valley could be the property and of the section of the Baca valley could be the property and of the section of the Baca valley could be the property and of the section of the Baca valley could be the property and of the section of the Baca valley could be the property and of the section of the Baca valley could be the property and of the section of the Baca valley could be the property and the section of the Baca valley could be the property and the section of the Baca valley could be the section of the Baca val say of him what Augustus said of Rome—"I found it brick; I left it marble."—G. W. Dame in Intermountain Catholic.

IS IT HONEST?

From the Paulist Calendar, New York. This question has often been asked and the answer must nearly always be in the negative: Is it honest for a young man to monopolize the time of a young girl for one or two years without any definite matrimonial object in view. No, decidedly it is not honest; but, on the contrary, it is very dishonest and will eventually bring its own reward on the offender.

So many young men think they are perfectly justified in their butterfly perfectly justified in their butterny acts—jumping from one flower to another at will—that their sense of duty, their conscience, seems to have left them. It is true that every young man who intends to wed has the right to a certain amount of time during which he man index whather the cirl whom he may judge whether the girl whom he visits will be for him a worthy partner in life. But the average young man can settle that question in less time than it takes his employer to increase his salary, if he is honest, noble and manly and, above all, if he is in earnest.

But the truth is that so many are not in earnest. They keep company, so to speak, just as long as it suits them-selves, and then discover some other girl in order to waste her time and spoil her chances of a better man. If again, find out just how your young man treated his last girl: it's a good test, and may be of service to you in sizing up his character.

A TRIBUTE TO A NOBLE PAIR.

Irish speakers are notably eloquent, and St. Patrick's day is an occasion to inspire them to the highest flights of genuine oratory; but we are inclined to doubt whether the recent celebration brought forth any more thoroughthan this page ly eloquent utterance than this page from the book of a Frenchman. The late Cardinal Perraud spent two years in Ireland, studying at first-hand the conditions of the country; and then, returning to France, wrote his splendid work, L'Irlande Contempor-

aine. We quote from its conclusion:
"I remember one day in the Basilica of St. Peter what a great emotion took possession of me when I read on the humble door of the con-fessional these simple words, Gens Hibernica; and on another, Gens Polona. Thus, I said, conquerors have been able to blot out from the map of world the very name of Poland, the glorious Catholic nation of Central Europe. Politicians and worldly sages take but little interest in the misfortunes of Ireland, because she suffered the cause of Catholicity. But the Holy, Catholic, Apostolic and Roman Church has neither admitted this suppression nor shared in this indifference. Near the Tombs of the Holy Apostles. Peter and Paul, in the centre of Catholicity, she guards these great names, immortal souvenirs, watchwords of holy

and invincible hope.
"Ireland and Poland, noble sisters who have suffered so much, and who suffer still for our holy faith, hold firm in your hands the standards of St. Patrick and St. Casimir! You have to your account no dishonest triumphs, no guilty successes. During the long which Providence has led you, it is for noble causes that you have done battle, for justice that you have struggled to the last drop of your blood. In the eyes of those who measure all things

ceeded. But for those who look to the morality of history, far different is their judgment. To them your defeat is only apparent, as is the victory of your persecutors; for, besides the fact that God, the Master of the future, can, when and how He pleases, give you back what the violence of politic-ians has wrested from you, you have kept, in spite of your enemies, the ians has wrested from you, you have kept, in spite of your enemies, the treasure of which they wished above all things to despoil you. You have kept it, and it has increased and fructified in your hands. Like the Church, your mother, you have grown great under persecution, and whilst the triumphant nations are going to sleep in indifference, and are growing sluggish and material in the abundance of their gain, you, the illustrious victims of the past and the present, hold up to the eyes of the world the inextinguishable torch of faith and hope and love. Have courage! Your trials will not last forever. The works of iniquity crumble and perish. 'I have seen the wicked highly exalted, and lifted up

Noble words. There are indications that the prophecy which they contain is nearing fulfilment; though at the time when the great Cardinal spoke, the burdens under which the Polish nation has groaned for so long a time were still unrelieved .- Ave Maria.

wicked highly exalted, and lifted up like the cedars of Libanus: and I passed by, and, lo, he was not." (Ps.

THE POPE AND THE COMET.

In the current number of the Month, of England, the editor, Father Gerard, S. J., has an amnsing article entitled "Of a Bull and a Comet." And it is "Of a Bull and a Comet." And it is hardly necessary to add that, unlike our contemporary, the Smart Set, it furnishes us with instruction as well as amusement. "That a Pope," says Father Gerard, "did once solemnly ban and anathematise a comet, bidding it begone from the sky, is an old story, most in favor with certain writers w love to descant on the ignorance and ineptitude of our pre scientific ances-tors, as contrasted with our own en lightened age, when no one speaks of what he does not know, or makes statements which he is not ready to support by conclusive evidence.' It is certainly an old story, and as such it comes to us with all the weight and it comes to us with all the weight and authority of a venerable tradition. And the critic has little difficulty in citing a host of highly respectable writers, among them being eminent men of science, who have told it with satisfaction, and taken it as a typical case of Popish superstition and credulity. But when he comes to ask for the conclusive evidence, it is conspicuous clusive evidence, it is conspicuous only by its absence. And the reader is left with the painful impression that these respectable writers have given currency to the tale without taking roper care to inquire into its truth. twould seem that, after all, this tale of a Comet and a bull must be classed in the same doubtful category as the celebrated "story of a Cock and a Bull." celebrated "story of a Cock and a Bull."

After exposing the curious mistakes that have been made in this matter, Father Gerard very naturally has a word to say on the strangely unscientific methods of those who repeated and used the story as evidence without first inquiring into its accuracy. "On the whole, therefore, it can hardly be said that in regard to the famous legend of the Bull and the Comet the vaunted excellence of scientific training, as securing accuracy and caution in adopt ecuring accuracy and caution in adopt-

ing with certain subjects, men of science may be no safer guides than any There can be little question that this conclusion is well warranted by the evidence. At the same time it is obvious that it casts no slur on modern cientific methods of historical research. For the point is that in this instance the professors of science have not put their own principles into practice. In dealng with certain subjects they been, perhaps unconsciously, swayed by religious or inherited prejudices and prepossessions, and in consequence they have failed to conduct the inquiry on those strictly scientific principles which might have preserved them from these unfortunate blunders.

ing conclusions, is very conspicuous. It would rather appear that when deal-

It may not be amiss to add that errors of this kind may often be due to other causes than the influence of religious or party prejudice. And for our part we are disposed to believe that, in some respects, an expertin any branch of science is often peculiarly liable to err when he is dealing with matters outside his own special province. Non omnia possumus omnes.
And though it may be that there are certain general methods and habits of must be borne in mind that the concenmust be borne in mind that the concen-tration of attention on any one point is apt to lead to some neglect of others which may possibly be of equal impor-tance. If some scientific rules might suggest a careful examination of every fact adduced in argument it must not be forgotten that a conspicuous feature in recent science is an increased ten dency to specialization and division of labor. In these days it is scarcely permissible to aspire to the broad scientific culture of Leibnitz. One must fain be content with proficiency in some one field, and outside its limits much must needs be taken on trust from those who are specialists and experts in other branches of science. Another admirable piece of destruc-

tive criticism is supplied by Father Thurston's paper in the "Flotsam and letsam' on "The Assumption as Festival of Demeter and Dionysus.' But whereas Father Gerard ha lemolished a venerable legend, his colleague, on the other hand, may colleague, on the other hand, may be said to have done the same service for a myth in the making. There is, however, a curious similarity in the mistakes made by the eminent scholars concerned in both cases, and the credulous and highly unscientific acceptance of the old story is matched by the uncritical haste with which the others have adopted a new familed the last drop of your blood. In the others have adopted a new-fangled eyes of those who measure all things by success, you were wrong to fight, since you have been conquered, your are more to blame than the scientists

criticised by Father Gerard, for the former are dealing with matters that may be said to belong to their own

WHY NOT?

Rev. I. A. Lambert, LL.D.,
Dear Sir-French Catholics go into pagan
lands to convert infidels and others; why not
try to convert the infidels in France! What
has become of their Catholic spirit. Why not
rise up and assert and maintain their rights in
spite of the libte handtul of infidels now disgracing the libte old country, and elect as President the son of Marshal McMahon!
Yours respectfully.
SPECTATOR.

We will answer the first question o our correspondence by asking another. Why do not the religious societies in the United States convert all the criminals of the country, that we might abolish our criminal courts and prisons, instead of sending missionaries abroad to convert the heathen?

abroad to convert the heathen?
The reason they do not convert them
is we think to be found in the fact that
they do not want to be converted.
There are plenty of priests in France
to convert all the atheists, infidels and
other miscreants there. But you must

remember the old saying that you can lead a horse to the water but you can not make him drink. Like criminals elsewhere they do not want to be dis-turbed in their evil ways. The aposturbed in their evil ways. The apostate who spurns the grace of conversion and repentance is more difficult to convert than is the pagan who never knew anything of the Christian religion. Why neglect or abandon him to make the unwilling horse drink?

What has become of the Catholic spirit in France? We believe it is not dead, but sleeps, and needs some per-secution to awaken it to a true sense of the situation. The Catholic spirit was the situation. The Catholic spirit was somewhat dormant in Germany until Bismarck began his persecuting May Laws. Then it waked up and sent the Iron Chancellor to Canossa. He could not rule without the help of what is known as the Centre, that is, the re-presentatives in the Reichstag of the Catholics of Germany. When he appealed to the Centre Herr Windhorst called his attention to the May Laws. Then Bis-marck went to Canossa, and the Cath-olics of Germany are to-day incomparably better than they were before the persecuting May Laws were en acted. When the Catholic spirit of France is awakened, as it will be by the band of miscreants now misruling, Clemenceau, Briand, et al, will go to Canossa or to innocuous obscurity by the vote of an awakened people. Then why not a McMahon, a son of the great Irish Frenchman to the Presi dential chair, and a Catholic Parliament representative of a Catholic people?—N. Y. Freeman's Journal.

PROTESTANT MINISTERS WHO SURPRISE US.

PAY ASTONISHING TRIBUTES TO THE CHURCH, YET REMAIN OUTSIDE THE FOLD.

Savs the Sacred Heart Review: We presses surprise at the following words from a Protestant minister—the Rev. O. J. Nelson of the First Unitarian

Church, Bellingham, Wash:
'Strictly speaking, none but the Catholic can be rightly called an orthodox Christian. Theoretically, all other Christians assume the right to exercise private judgment but in fact what they really have done ever since the Reformation has been to select a council, which is but a poor imitation of the Catholic council to decide what is orthodox.

There is only one Christian Church of real and consistent authority, and that is the Catholic Church, so I appreciated the chuckle of amusement from a friend of mine, a Catholic priest when he commented on the Dr. sey trial. Said the priest, eral heretics trying another heretic!'
And so it was. * * The Catholic
Church commands my intellectual re--a church of authority, orthodox in fact as well as in name; and their priests occupy a logical and consistent position in that they teach in unmis-takable terms what they are authorized to teach and preach—the doctrines of

the Church.' Such astonishing statements re-ported as coming from the lips of a Protestant minister caused our esteem ed contemporary to wonder if the clergyman were not the victim of some inaccurate newspaper man. The Ave Maria's editor wrote to Mr. Nel son, who assured him that the repor son, who assured him that the report was true, and added: "I have heard all my life so much cheap and ignorant criticism of the Catholic Church it is not unusual for me to defend it."

But, after all, Mr. Nelson's case surprising as it is, does not compare with that of another Protestant minister, the Rev. C. C. Starbuck, of Andover, who, with a keen and scholarly pen, for the past half a dozen years, in the Sacred Heart Review, has been de fending the Catholic Church from the same cheap and ignorant criticism to which Mr. Nelson alludes.

IN THE CATHEDRAL OF PISA.

A beautiful incident is told by traveller of his visit to the Cathedral of Pisa. He stood beneath its wonderful Pisa. He stood beneath its wonderful dome, spacious and symmetrical, and gazed with awe upon its beauties. Suddenly the air became instinct with melody. The great dome seemed full of harmony. The waves of music vibrated to and fro, loudly beating against the walls, swelling into full chords like the roll of a great organ, and then dying away into soft, longand then dying away into soft, long-drawn, far-reaching echoes, melting to silence in the distance. It was only the guide, who lingering behind a moment, has softly murmured a triple chord. But beneath that magic dome every sound resolves into harmony.
No discord can reach the summit of
that dome and live. Every voice in
the building, the slamming of seats, the trampling of feet, the murmur and bustle of the crowd, are caught up, softened, harmonized, blended and echood sback in music. — Christian

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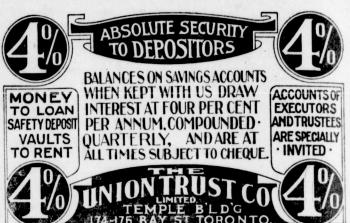
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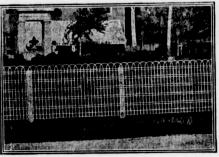
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Postponed.

Postponed.

The Trenton Bazaar which was to open on April 1st has been postponed till April 29. The object of this enterprise is to pay off a debt, which has been for many years on the Separate school and also to make very necessary repairs. The congregation is smaller than it was some years ago, hence, the pastor, Rev. M, J. Spratt, deemed it advisable to adopt this means of securing the amount required. We sincerely hope the undertaking will prove a success, as it is a matter that should appeal forcibly to all who know the value of the proper instruction of youth.

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