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LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION
Apostolic Delegation
Ottawa, June 13th, 1905.

Mr. Thomas Coffey
My Dear Sir—Since coming to Canada I have been a reader of your paper. I have noted with satisfaction that it is directed with intelligence and ability, and abounds with a liberal and catholic spirit. It strenuously defends Catholic principles and rights, and stands firmly by the teachings and authority of the Church, at the same time promoting the best interests of the country. Following these lines it has done a great deal of good for the welfare of religion and country, and it will do more and more as its wholesome influence reaches more Catholic homes. I therefore, earnestly recommend it to Catholic families. With my blessing on your work, and best wishes for its continued success.

Yours very sincerely in Christ,
Donatus, Archbishop of Tobesue,
Apostolic Delegate

LONDON, SATURDAY, MARCH 8, 1913

"IN DARKNESS AND THE SHADOW OF DEATH"

Last week the Editor of Notes and Comments gave a summary of an interesting letter from Father John M. Fraser, the Canadian missionary to China. We ask our readers to give it special consideration.

There are but 2,000,000 Catholic Chinese in a population of 400,000,000. The recent mighty revolution has broken down the old superstitions and prejudices, and now the fields are white with the harvest.

Catholics of Canada have the opportunity and privilege of sharing in the great work of the conversion of China by helping spiritually and financially their fellow Canadian, Father Fraser, whose missionary work has been signally blessed by God.

The CATHOLIC RECORD gladly accedes to the request to receive subscriptions, which will be duly acknowledged and forwarded to Father Fraser.

Here is an opportunity to discharge the duty of alms-giving, participate in a great spiritual work of mercy, and help to bring the Light of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death.

Do it now, in the name of God.

BENEDICTINE MONKS

"London, Feb. 25—A remarkable conversion to the Church of Rome has occurred of a body of Anglican monks, who in 1895 founded what is called the English Benedictine Monastery, and in 1901 took up their quarters on an island off the coast of Hampshire.

"For a year past the community has been in correspondence with the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of Oxford regarding certain points on which they were unable to come to an agreement. Consequently the community decided to seek admission to the Roman Catholic Church and will join that Church's Benedictine Order."

There is something deeply significant as well as touchingly romantic in the story of these men whose genuine spirituality led them, with a zeal at once patriotic and religious, to make the effort to re-establish in England, within the Anglican Church, the monastic life according to the holy rule of St. Benedict.

But "unless the Lord build the house they labor in vain that build it."

The last chapter of the story is told in the despatch quoted above. Under that bold statement is hidden all the light and joy that flooded these earnest souls, as through the intercession of Benedict and Augustine and Gregory they were finally led into the visible Church of God and adopted into the real religious family of St. Benedict.

The Irishman reading of the apostolic zeal and unconquerable devotion of the Celtic monks who saved Christianity and civilization to Europe and founded monasteries which in various countries kept alight the lamps of learning and religion, can not help being struck with the fact that by the eighth century the rule of St. Benedict had everywhere outside of Ireland entirely supplanted the much stricter rule of St. Columbanus.

So intimately bound up with Christian civilization is the monastic life

and influence, that secular colleges make the text of the Rule of St. Benedict a matter of obligatory study. A word or two on the subject may be useful. In considering the leading characteristics of this Holy Rule the first that must strike the reader is its wonderful discretion and moderation, its extreme reasonableness, and its keen insight into the capabilities as well as the weaknesses of human nature. Here are no excesses, no extreme asceticism, no narrow-mindedness, but rather a series of sober regulations based on sound common sense.

Its enduring character is the highest testimony to its wisdom. For fourteen centuries it has been the guiding light of a numerous family of religious, men and women, and it is a living code at the present day just as it was a thousand years ago.

Though, says the non-Catholic Dudden, it was no part of St. Benedict's design that his spiritual descendants should make a figure in the world as authors or statesmen, as preservers of pagan literature, as builders of castles and cathedrals, yet circumstances brought them into all these spheres. His sole idea was the moral and spiritual training of his disciples, and yet in carrying this out he made the cloister a school of useful workers, a real refuge for society and a solid bulwark of the Church.

The wisdom and skill in forming the Rule was such that Bossuet called it an epitome of Christianity, a learned and mysterious abridgement of all the doctrines of the Gospel, all the institutions of the Fathers, and all the Counsels of Perfection.

It might be added as an item interesting and perhaps significant, that each Benedictine Monastery is independent and self-governing. Leo XIII. gave the Abbot of the International Benedictine College at Rome the title of Abbot Primate, thereby giving him precedence as first amongst equals, but no jurisdiction over other Abbots.

When St. Gregory the Great became a monk he turned his palace on Coelian Hill into a monastery according to the Benedictine Rule. When he was raised to the Chair of Peter, it was from this monastery that he sent St. Augustine with forty monks in 596 to convert England. Thus it was that England was the first country out of Italy in which the Benedictine life was firmly planted. Augustine, the Apostle of England, and his companions, were the first great Benedictine apostles and missionaries. From England, later went Boniface, the apostle of Germany and others who converted the Teutonic races.

Westminster Abbey, that enshrines so much that was sacred or great in England's history, was a Benedictine monastery.

That there are Anglicans who in all sincerity believe themselves Catholics, Anglican clergymen who believe themselves priests with the power to consecrate and absolve, there is not the slightest doubt in the world. That being so, the surprising thing is not that some pious, earnest, strong souls should endeavor to revive the monastic life according to the Rule of St. Benedict; but that the effort should not be widespread and sustained. To the Benedictines who came to her England owes her conversion to Christianity; to the Benedictines who went out from her she owes her chief glory as a missionary nation.

But within the Anglican communion are all shades of belief and unbelief, a fact which makes tasks much less difficult than that to which the Anglican Benedictines set themselves, beyond the sphere of concerted or united effort.

Good reason have we to hope and pray that experience of the English Benedictine monastery will lead many sincere Anglicans to see the only way in which the glory and influence of England's monastic past may be revived. The Anglican attempt has many lessons, the last of which is indicated in the despatch that is the occasion of our comments.

THE CREATION OF MATTER

Before us is a synopsis of a lecture delivered in London, England, by Sir James Crichton-Brown, and sent by special cable despatch to the Globe. The following is the opening paragraph:

"London, Feb. 23—In a lecture last week entitled 'The Birth of an Atom,' Sir James Crichton-Brown said that Sir William Ramsay and Prof. Collie and Patterson had announced that they had practically created matter out of nothing, or, at any rate, out of energy after the passage of electric discharges

through tubes filled with pure hydrogen. Neon and helium, two gases, had been found, and their presence was accounted for either by the transmutation of hydrogen into them—that is to say, by the transmutation of one element into another—or by their creation de novo by the electrons."

Creation de novo is good. The synopsis of the lecture is valuable to the scientist who will wait to read the text; cabling such a summary is absurd. To call the experiment, even if all that is claimed be incontrovertible, "the practical creation of matter" is an abuse of terms hard to characterize. The creation of life and the creation of matter will soon become clearly demonstrated scientific truths to the scientific sceptics who if put to the test would have to admit that their authority was the same as for most of their science, namely, they had seen it in the paper.

In the RECORD of Feb. 22nd we gave Professor Eve's appreciation of the cabled account of the experiments, of which the present lecture summary is but a rebash. Prof. Eve says: "Either the heavier atoms present were made to disintegrate or the lighter atoms of hydrogen present were built up into helium or neon atoms."

Making something else out of pre-existing matter is not creating matter, any more than making a bench out of a board is creating matter.

Talk about superstition! Is there any conceivable absurdity that would not be greedily swallowed by credulous agnostics if only it be expressed even by the newspapers in the name of Science?

THE NEW CATECHISM AND "PARISH PRIESTS" SUGGESTED LESSON

That Butler's Catechism has held its place for many successive generations is ample proof that it possesses many excellent features. Its long continued use could not fail to establish it firmly in the esteem and root it deeply in the affections of priests, parents, teachers, and children.

So long has it been considered *The Catechism* that to many it savors of sacrilege or at least of Modernism to suggest supplanting it by one more in accord with the requirements of modern pedagogy. Indeed modern pedagogy itself, because often confounded with modern tendencies in education, is not in good repute. But setting aside all exaggerated notions of the importance of modern methods of teaching, as well as all sentimental prejudices or predilections in favor of Butler, we may find sufficient common standing room on the grounds of plain common sense, the example of the Church, and above all the example of the Great Teacher Our Lord Jesus Christ to whom we wish to bring the little ones in faith and hope and love.

The RECORD does not invite criticism or controversy on the questions it may raise; indeed, in the circumstances will permit none. If our comments arouse sufficient interest to call for commendation or adverse criticism, our object will have been served when these find their way to the committee duly appointed to consider them.

Those who have year after year been engaged in the actual work of teaching the catechism to children varying in age, mental capacity and school advantages, should be able to submit very helpful suggestions and sane criticism. No one who has seriously undertaken this great work, with its difficulties and consolations, can remain indifferent while a new catechism is making; but many may be so diffident as to let slip the opportunity of making known the result of their experience. This would be a pity, and we take the liberty of urging all, whether parents, priests or teachers, who have learned from teaching, to make known their difficulties and to indicate how far the new Catechism succeeds in solving them.

In passing we might say that we believe the most urgent need is for a child's primer containing all that is necessary for First Communion in a form suited to the minds of the little ones who are now admitted to the Holy Table at so tender an age that their instruction must, in many cases, be left largely in the hands of their parents.

There are, it is true, some excellent little Catechisms, at least some with excellent features, in use in many places. But it must be remembered that there are many children not taught by religious, not taught in separate schools at all, and for these little or no provision is made

in the way of a suitable text-book for the preparation for First Communion.

Conspicuous amongst the good features of Butler's Catechism are the scriptural references. Not only are there many quotations of the very words of Scripture which are given in italics; but every single answer has its scriptural reference, a fact which makes the catechism highly useful in later life. The new Catechism is replete with Scriptural language, phrases and quotations, but the reference is rarely given, nor is there any variation in type to show when the words of Scripture are quoted.

On the other hand no one can fail to observe the immense improvement on Butler in the matter of the choice of words. For example the XII. chapter on the first commandment contains but a word or two that would require explanation to children of the second grade. In language simple and direct the child is taught the meaning of the first commandment. Compare Butler's three chapters on the same. The twenty-sixth question on what is forbidden by the first commandment brings us at length to "theatrical representations" which are "impious and highly criminal."

The most important departure in the form of the book is the addition of the Lessons. Many will welcome this break in the monotony of endless question and answer; it also gives the opportunity of treating certain points more fully than could well be done in the Catechism proper. But a mere abstract summary of what has been given in catechetical form falls far short of what these lessons could be made to accomplish. It is, we take it, this feeling that impelled "Parish Priest" to suggest a reading lesson on different lines. We entirely agree with his object, and up to a point with the story which has the merit of being interesting and well within the mental reach of the child.

The object of the story is, of course, to make children realize that man alone is rational. The priest in the story wishes to teach this lesson to Redfern, the Indian boy. This is an entirely different thing from telling Redfern that birds and animals can not learn about God. Therefore, the priest should seriously tell Redfern to teach all his little animal friends, God's creatures like himself, what he had learned about God Who made them all, leaving him to find out the truth that man alone of all God's visible creatures is capable of knowing and loving him. When the priest comes back the next day, he finds Redfern has grasped and fully realized a truth which would be more or less vague if merely told him.

Some may ask is it worth while to go to all this trouble to teach what is self-evident. A little consideration will show of what tremendous importance is the lesson that "Parish Priest" would here teach the child.

There is not an error more insidious, more pernicious, or more wide spread than that which holds that the intelligence of man is but the developed instinct of the animal.

Let the child once grasp the truth, realize it from such a story as "the Indian boy and the Priest," or from intelligent teaching, not telling, that there is a radical, an essential difference between man and the lower animals, and this truth will become so much a part of his convictions, will so grow with his growth, that it will be the most effective bar to the insidious assumptions of materialistic evolutionists, and these assumptions and assertions are scattered everywhere in English literature, even in the newspapers. They pass for scientific truths with the shallow crowd; they take some proving to impress the Catholic instructed in definite truth.

Why put such truths in the form of a story? That was Christ's way; the parables are stories embodying in concrete form some truth or truths; rarely did Our Lord teach in any other manner. Not one of His parables but is easier of understanding to a child than the abstract summing up of a chapter in the Catechism.

The parables should every one be found amongst the lessons in the Catechism; and surely the Great Teacher's parables should serve as models for other lessons.

Let all men find you compassionate. Do you love where is no love and you shall find love. Preserve your spirit in peace; and when you must speak, do so calmly and peaceably.—St. John of the Cross.

"ROMANIST"

An exchange cites the definition of "Romanist" given by Dr. Frederick George Lee, as "a vulgar word, used by the uneducated to designate a member of the venerable Church of Rome."

The trouble is that the uneducated have little interest in definitions. Still it is possible to be a gentleman without being educated, and to be educated without being a gentleman.

THE TABLET AND WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE

That there is room for difference of opinion amongst Catholics on the question of giving votes to women is apparent from the divergence of opinion on the subject. Cardinal Gibbons, whose exalted position and high character give peculiar weight to his views, is very pronounced against such an innovation, and several leading prelates share his views. On the other hand the Archbishop of Hobart, is as strongly in favor of the claims of women.

The Ave Marie, again, edited by the cultured Father Hudson, is in favor of enfranchising women. In the old country, the Tablet, the leading organ of Catholic opinion, shares the views of the Ave Marie.

The support of a journal of the standing and ability of the Tablet, is of great assistance to the advocates of the proposed change. In a recent number the Tablet says: "For ourselves we stand where we 'did. We have always believed that 'votes for women would mean the introduction of a clean and wholesome influence into public life, and that women electors would stand 'for a religious and moral element 'in the Constitution which might be 'of incalculable value to the nation. 'The words of the Archbishop of 'Hobart, recorded in these columns 'last week, should surely give heart 'to those who take this view, for 'they come to lend the sanction of 'experience to theory. For what 'better could any friend of the cause 'desire than that it should be recognized that on every great moral 'issue the votes of women are the 'pillars of Christian principle."

A REGRETTABLE EVENT

Our attention has been called to a report, published in the Evening Mail of Halifax, N.S., of Feb. 15th, of a public session held the previous evening of the Acadia Loyal Orange Lodge, No. 1586, in the Sons of Temperance Hall, Cornwallis St. Rev. W. J. Wright was in the chair. The object of the gathering, the report states, was "to bring into prominence the principles of Orangism, and emphasis was laid on their belief in equal rights for all and special privileges for none." Among the speakers were Revs. Archdeacon Armitage, R. Johnston, J. S. Donaldson and C. H. Pennoyer.

There is nothing very unusual in the report so far. But it does not stop there as the following paragraph will show:

"The feature of the evening was an address by ex-Mayor A. B. Crosby, who had a rousing reception. In his speech he told of a desire he had always had to meet the Orangemen, and expressed the hope that the time would come when the fraternal spirit between all organizations, especially those whose qualification to membership was a particular religious creed, would be demonstrated by lodge visits. He said he was in favor of one school for the education of children and declared that it was the business of the state to look after the state and the business of the clergy to look after souls."

The appearance of ex-Mayor Crosby at such a gathering is somewhat astounding. Mr. Crosby was for four years the Mayor of Halifax, and for one term he was the Dominion member for the city and county of Halifax. If we remember aright. To these positions he was elected, largely, by the support which he received from his Catholic friends. Whatever he achieved in public life he achieved because he was a Catholic of good standing. If he were not a Catholic, he would never have been elected to either position. Why he should have attended this gathering and have received a rousing reception passes the comprehension of his best friends. But strange as his attendance there was his remarks are more so. We do hope for his own sake, for the good name which he has enjoyed as a loyal Catholic, that he has been misreported in the newspaper. To say that he is in favor of one school for all children is simply to fly in the face of all the Church has taught for centuries, to say that the Church, with its bishops and clergy, have been all astray in the matter of education, in short to give

the lie to all that the Church has done in education. When we consider the sacrifices which Catholics have made for generations all over the English-speaking world, the sacrifices its members are making to-day and how they have toiled for, in some parts, the slender measure of justice which they have received, in order that their children might receive an education on sound lines, the words attributed to Mr. Crosby become all the more surprising. We can well understand, if Mr. Crosby used the language which the newspaper says, that his reception would be "rousing."

It is just such language that is welcome to Orangemen; it is the language that the enemies of the Church always applaud. But it is not the language that should proceed from the lips of a loyal Catholic. The event is a painful one to write about; if no explanation or retraction of it is forthcoming, we may be obliged to return to a discussion of the matter. Our duty as a Catholic journal obliges us to point out the danger to Catholic truth and morals of such principles as Mr. Crosby is alleged to have avowed.

OUR OLD FRIEND, Dr. Thomas O'Hagan, has severed his connection with the Chicago New World. While editor of this excellent Catholic Weekly, he gave it a tone and a prominence which brought it into the front rank of Catholic journalism. We trust a still higher field of usefulness will now be the portion of this distinguished litterateur.

CRITICS

We are not going to treat of literary critics, or dramatic critics, or art critics; our concern is with that class of people whose sole contribution to the sum of Catholic endeavor is an extraordinary talent for criticising whatsoever others attempt to accomplish. It would be but a waste of time to delay to define this class, for unfortunately they are numerous enough to attract the attention of the least observant. Not that one often meets them face to face; it is their peculiarity to be generally round the corner, but near enough to know what is going on. Their two most distinguishing characteristics are, first, the success with which they manage to keep under the surface, to remain out of sight, to be heard but not seen; and secondly, an untiring zeal towards preventing things being done, and this latter in spite of the fact that they are not particularly desirous of doing anything themselves. The whole law and the prophets, as far as they are concerned, is to prevent others from doing anything. They have something to urge against anything anybody does or suggests. They are the cold water brigade, not that they are all total abstainers, or mid-winter bathers, nor yet that they employ it in lieu of the refreshing rain, but they keep it on hand ready to turn it on at the first kindling of the fire of energy. They have never done anything that mattered, but they have often prevented things being done which might have been attended with a great measure of usefulness. Timorous people fear them as they fear the serpent lying concealed in the grass. Most people do not relish being criticised, and to escape it they think it better to do nothing. Hence it follows that the critics work untold injury to the cause they are supposed to have at heart. They never initiate anything themselves, and they refuse to co-operate with those who do. Union is strength, and they are the prime source of division. Those who can work wonders alone are few, and the critics are not prepared to hold up the hands of the many. There is much that can be achieved by the generous co-operation of all, but much more harm can be wrought by even one who stands idly by whose voice is only raised to criticize. The inaction of some dampens the ardor of others; their criticism nip sit in the bud.

Whilst everyone who is working for the good of the parish deserves the zealous assistance of all, this is especially true of the priest. He may not please everybody, but Catholics should remember that his work is to minister to their souls, not to please them. He may make mistakes, he may have his faults, but since God has appointed him to rule His people they should be loyal to him. Critics should remember that the Scripture tells them: "He that heareth you, heareth Me, and he that despiseth you, despiseth Me." St. Paul also counsels Critics: "Obey your prelates, and be subject to them, for

they watch as being to render an account of your souls."

Peace and good will are the best assets of any parish. Harmony is blessed. Critics do little to promote harmony—very much to render it impossible. Let us in God's name, if we have His interests at heart, strive, each one of us, to do our share; let us not set too high a standard for others; let us be very generous with our charity, very sparing of our criticism. Let us so act, and see if our undertakings will not be signally blessed by God. For God is Love. COLUMBA.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

REV. ARTHUR RYAN, the widely-known and respected parish priest of Tipperary, writes to the Tablet a letter of dignified and effective protest against an attack made in that journal by Mr. John Hobson Matthews upon Mr. Dillon, M. P. In that attack Mr. Dillon is called a "dangerous and sinister man," a "scourge to his co-religionists," a "political firebrand," and other choice names. His assailant, too, it should be remembered, is an English Home Ruler and a Catholic. But that he does not voice the sentiments of the best classes in Ireland is evident from Father Ryan's warm vindication of the man who has rendered such distinguished service to his country and to the cause of self-government everywhere.

"THE MANY bishops and priests who know and love John Dillon as a Catholic 'sans peur et sans reproche,'" writes Father Ryan, "might only smile at the grim caricature drawn in your columns, were it not for the open suggestion that he would be the leader of an anti-clerical wing in the Irish Parliament. This is an insult to a great Catholic public man that I cannot allow to pass without protest. And I venture to say that even that revered prelate (Bishop O'Dwyer of Limerick), whose words have been made the text of this diatribe, would resent the personalities of his English champion and prefer his own dignified way of dealing with one whom, to my deep regret, he regards as his opponent." In thus expressing himself, Father Ryan but voices the conviction of the vast majority of Irish Catholics the world over, and of innumerable others, not Irish, who can appraise a man at his true worth.

THE TRUTH is probably that Mr. Matthews has misread the Bishop of Limerick, whose knightly zeal in the cause of Catholic education has made him a conspicuous figure in the English-speaking world. John Dillon is not the only public man who has come under his criticism in this regard, but that has had no bearing upon his estimate of public men or of John Dillon in particular as a statesman and a Catholic. It is unfortunate that Mr. Matthews, whose friendship for Ireland, and championship of the Home Rule cause in unfriendly quarters is worthy of remembrance, should have undertaken to speak for one so much better qualified to speak for himself in any matter affecting Ireland or the Catholic Church.

THAT WITH Home Rule in sight, Dr. O'Dwyer, who has always been a conservative and moderating influence in Irish affairs, should utter a word of caution to his countrymen, is characteristic of the man. He has recently reminded them that the crisis through which their country is just now passing, should throw them back more than ever on God, and move them to invoke the protection of His Providence by fervent prayer, and to deserve the happy prospect that lies before them, by fidelity to His service. "We are apparently," he wrote, "on the eve of great political changes which must exercise a profound influence on every phase of our national existence. Forces, the nature and strength of which none of us can foresee, will be let loose, and God alone can tell their ultimate issue. Yet, while it is an anxious, it is also a hopeful time. It is only natural that a country on which God has stamped the individual features of a nation and in which through centuries the feelings and aspirations of nationhood have never died, should get into its own hands the management of some part at least of its own domestic concerns and the shaping of its own fortunes," and, he added, "there is no reason to think that the Irish people have ever forfeited that elementary right, or to fear that when it is vindicated they will not use it with judgment and moderation."