

The Catholic Record

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Approved and recommended by the Archbishops of Toronto, Kingston, Ottawa and St. Boniface...

LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION... Mr. Thomas Coffey

Mr. Thomas Coffey: 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...

LONDON, SATURDAY, AUGUST 31, 1912

SOME PROTESTANT TESTIMONY

There is a revival of the Ulster scare in press despatches, and the Hon. Walter Long is now in Canada in the interests of the Unionists...

Mr. H. C. Carleton, another of the speakers, said: "Under the peaceful rule of Britain Ireland could govern her internal affairs under a Home Rule Parliament, just as England could do..."

Decent Englishmen were likely to be disgusted with loyal Orange ruffianism so they must be provided with instances of Romish oppression. But the purveyors of this sort of stuff fell into the altogether unusual indiscretion of giving definite information as to names and places...

Thereupon Mr. Stephen Gwynn, Protestant Home Rule member of Parliament, investigated. Here is his letter to the Yorkshire Herald:

"On seeing this paragraph I at once made inquiries of the county councillor for the district, Mr. Algernon Briscoe, who is himself a Protestant, and of the Protestant rector of the parish, the Rev. E. S. Radcliffe, D. D., who is an entire stranger to me. I am happy to say that the result of these inquiries justifies the view which Mr. Biscoe expresses that there is no such thing as

religious persecution or intolerance in Westmeath."

After quoting Mr. Radcliffe's letter, Mr. Gwynn adds: "Will you allow me to add that I have had brought to my notice many similar charges. In every case where specific reference was made to place and name the story proved to be, as in this case, a malignant fabrication, but in the majority of cases detailed refutation was impossible, because the authors of the calumnies had been careful not to mention names."

Very imprudent to mention details of name and place; but "malignant fabrications" without any details have a hollow sound, so the malignant fabricators succumb to the temptation to give a local habitation and a name, trusting to the certain impression created in the first instance, and to the uncertainty of the refutation ever catching up with the calumny.

There is religious intolerance and persecution in Ireland, but not in Catholic Ireland.

WHEN WOMEN HAVE THE FRANCHISE

The manifold activities of our religious orders of women bring almost every Catholic at some time or other into the sweet and wholesome atmosphere of religious life; while a large proportion owe their mental and spiritual direction and development to the teaching sisterhoods. Thus the tenderest memories of childhood and the most touching instances of Christian charity are associated with the quiet, unobtrusive, but with heroic women whose lives are consecrated to Christ, to the poor, the sick, the unfortunate, and to the lambs of the Good Shepherd's flock. Quite as a matter of course, then, are the esteem and love in which Catholics hold the good sisters.

The Protestant view, based on ignorance and prejudice, is familiar enough to Catholics and excites only their pitying contempt. Protestants better informed, and able to choose amongst educational institutions, continue to prefer a convent training for their daughters. And various Protestant sects have shown their sincere admiration for the Catholic sisterhoods in their not very successful efforts to imitate them.

An intelligent and educated non-Catholic, in the Montreal Standard, gives an interesting account of the impressions formed during a sojourn in an Ontario convent. The fact that the community had just elected a Mother Superior suggested to the writer a comparison between this body of six thousand self-supporting and self-governing women and the militant suffragettes. The clamor, the violence and the lawlessness of the suffragettes contrast strangely with the peace, quiet and orderly activity of the nuns. So quiet, indeed, is the work of the sisters carried on that the writer avers that half the world scarcely realizes, while the other half strangely misunderstands its true character and importance in the social scheme.

"The system which includes all the religious orders of women in the Roman Catholic Church constitutes in itself a remarkable republic, an ideal democracy, a striking illustration of the right application of the popular principles of liberty, equality and fraternity, of co-operative effort and community of goods."

The reason that the almost absolute authority of the Mother Superior is seldom or never abused is explained by the fact that one of the necessary qualifications of a Mother Superior is holiness of life and fidelity to the highest traditions of the Order. "Thus in reality she is but 'the Rule' incarnate, and as she herself is a most punctilious observer of the rule, the sisters, pledged to the same duties and obligations, can but take pride and pleasure in emulating her example."

"Each one is actuated by the purest of motives—service to humanity for love of the Creator—without wish or hope for other reward than divine approval; thus the individual sense of responsibility is never lost sight of for a moment though the close surveillance and checking systems necessary in other institutions are practically unknown. The results are magnificent, a complete world, hidden but happy, where all are at peace with one another and with God—in which, though no one has personal property or possessions of any kind, all are housed, clothed and fed with a scrupulous regard to cleanliness, health and comfort, without luxury or self-indulgence."

To Catholics "vocation" to a religious life is not only something very real but so much a matter of course that it becomes a commonplace matter-of-fact sort of thing. To the Protestant it is something mysterious, even uncanny, or something to be explained away by imputing motives or suggesting influences that the worldling can understand:

"How do the gray walls of the monastery, the sombre religious habit, the unrelaxing discipline, the absence of remuneration, the complete self-effacement—so many forbidding influences—beckon so strongly to young girls in the very threshold of adult life that they feel compelled to free themselves from all other ties to enter that—humanly speaking—thankless servitude? How such a prospect, for a lifetime, can seem to them above all others sweet and satisfying—this is the mystery of what is called 'vocation,' the call of some supernatural power which, be it understood that

not, must be recognized, since its concrete fruits are so rich, abundant and indispensable to society."

"The popular idea of a nun is of a young girl who has been lured into the convent by representations which, at an impressionable age, are bound to affect sensitive, aspiring natures in the desired direction, or sometimes the theory is advanced that selfish relatives for interested motives have conspired to rid themselves, by this easy means, of an irksome responsibility."

"No one who has the least experience of institutional life can regard either of these allegations seriously."

To recognize that the sisters do not take advantage of the transient fervor of an emotional girl to lure her into a convent, requires only a little common sense; and our writer has that and sympathy and intuition as well:

"No," she concludes, "it is emphatically not the policy of the Sisterhoods, who love peace above all things, to embarrass the community life by the presence of a single refractory member, or one who lacks the qualifications which would ensure her personal happiness in the cloister."

That such a woman as the writer should recognize the great utility, and even appreciate the beauty and joy of religious life in many of its aspects, is not hard to understand; but that she should be able to grasp the Catholic idea of the vow of obedience shows that she made good use of the opportunities that her contact with religious life afforded:

"The vow of obedience is not, as many persons imagine, the blind abdication of reason and personal liberty, the reduction of the human being to the condition of a machine. It is the highly intelligent recognition of regularly constituted authority, long tried and proved, of the great practical value of cumulative wisdom and experience, of consistent united action. It is also a courageous confession of individual weakness and unreliability, a prudent removal of the master-temptation, which so few are powerless to resist, the temptation to consider oneself better and wiser than one's elders. It is the aspiring soul's free election to walk in the straight, clean paths of duty, of virtue, of industry, untrammelled by trivial and sinful distractions, interruptions, perplexities. This complete joyous surrender is not made to a human individual nor organization, but to the Supreme Authority, represented on earth by the duly elected head of the order."

To the objection that nuns lead an unnatural life and shirk the more onerous duties of womanhood our writer says that "while so many women willing to marry are left unmarried this argument lacks force. And who will say that it is a greater thing to become a mother than to perform the duties of motherhood to helpless infancy? For the rest the Sisters are, as a matter of fact, the most efficient and devoted nurses, teachers, mothers' helps, in the world."

For the benefit of the much advertised King's Daughters, Epworth League, Ladies' Aids, Social Reformers, Settlement Workers and others, we cannot forbear one last quotation:

"Often one hears the remark that Roman Catholic women are less public-spirited than their sisters of the Protestant denominations. This sounds strangely in the ears of those who are familiar with the real situation, who know with what passion of devotion the public-spirited women of the Catholic Church—more numerous than those of any other—are giving their whole lives to the service of the community in which they live. But they give it quietly, anonymously. The Recording Angel is the only reporter of the good deeds of Sister Mary or Sister Martha and their kind."

AN INTERESTING VOLUME

That clever Englishman, Gilbert Chesterton, published some time ago a book entitled "Orthodoxy" which has attracted considerable attention. The author's admiration for Catholic ideals has led to the surmise that he is a Catholic which, however, is untrue. It is not very likely that a non-Catholic would arrive at an intellectual conviction of the truth of Catholicity, much less be converted by a perusal of the work. The reason is that the author has not a comprehensive grasp of the truth himself, and consequently his reasoning at times is a little tenuous and hazy. But to one possessing the truth it is a consolation and an exquisite pleasure to have revealed to him unseen beauties of that truth by a mighty intellect and a poetic soul who as yet sees but dimly through the obscuring haze of the philosophy of the materialistic schools. To undertake a critical analysis of the work would be a weighty and perhaps useless task. We will content ourselves with gleaming from the abundance of paradox and epigram a few passages that may be of interest to the ordinary reader.

happy mixture of security, mysticism and romance that makes life worth living. He likens the materialist to the maniac who is not a man who has lost his reason, but the man who has lost everything else except his reason. He points out that it is not mysticism and poetry that drive men mad but logic. "The poet only asks to get his head into the heavens. It is the logician who seeks to get the heavens into his head, and it is his head that splits. Copper was driven mad by the ugly logic of predestination. Poetry was not the disease but the medicine. He was damned by John Calvin. He was almost saved by John Gilpin."

"The morbid logic seeks to make everything lucid and succeeds in making everything mysterious. The mystic allows one thing (original sin for example) to be mysterious and everything else becomes lucid."

Speaking of the suicide of thought these striking passages occur: "When a religious scheme is shattered (as Christianity was shattered at the Reformation) it is not merely the voices that are let loose. The voices are indeed let loose and they wander and do damage. But the virtues are let loose also and the virtues wander more wildly and the virtues do more terrible damage. The modern world is full of old Christian virtues gone mad."

"The old humility made a man doubtful about his efforts, which might make him work harder. But the new humility makes a man doubtful about his aims, which will make him stop working altogether."

"In so far as religion is gone, reason is going." "There is a huge and heroic sanity of which moderns can only collect the fragments. They have torn the soul of Christ into silly strips labelled egoism and altruism, and they are equally puzzled by His insane magnificence and His insane meekness. They have parted His garments among them and for His vesture they have cast lots; though the coat was without seam woven from the top throughout."

These are some of the paradoxes he finds in Christianity. "The very people who reproached Christianity with the meekness and non-resistance of the monasteries were the very people who reproached it also with the violence and valour of the crusades."

"Certain phrases in the Epistles to the marriage service were said by the anti-Christian to show contempt for woman's intellect. But I found that the anti-Christians themselves had a contempt for woman's intellect; for it was their great sneer at the Church on the Continent that 'only women went to it.' 'Perhaps, after all, it is Christianity that is sane and all its critics that are mad. The fact that Swinburne was irritated at the unhappiness of Christians and yet more irritated at their happiness was easily explained. It was no longer a complication of diseases in Swinburne; it was a complication of diseases in Swinburne."

"If some small mistake were made in doctrine huge blunders might be made in human happiness. Doctrines had to be defined within strict limits, even in order that man might enjoy general human liberties. The Church had to be careful if only that the world might be careless. This explains what is so inexplicable to all the modern critics of Christianity—I mean the monstrous wars about small points of theology, the earthquake of emotion about a gesture or a word—it was only the matter of an inch but an inch is everything when you are balancing."

"The orthodox Church never took the same course or accepted the conventions; the orthodox Church was never respectable. It would have been easier to have accepted the earthly power of the Ariens. It is easy to be a heretic. It is always easy to let the age have its head; the difficult thing is to keep one's own. It was always easy to be a modernist as it is easy to be a snob. To have fallen into any of those open traps of error and exaggeration which fashion after fashion and sect after sect set along the historic path of Christendom that would indeed have been simple. It is always simple to fall. There are an infinity of angles at which one falls, only one at which one stands. To have fallen into any of the fads from Gnosticism to Christian Science would indeed have been obvious and tame. But to have avoided them all has been one whirling adventure; and in my vision the heavenly chariot flies thundering through the ages, the dull heresies sprawling and prostrate, the wild truth reeling, but erect."

In the closing chapter he pays a glowing tribute to Catholicity in which these striking passages occur: "I read a little history. And in history I found that Christianity, so far from belonging to the Dark Ages, was the only path across the Dark Ages, that was not dark." "The Christian church was the last life of the old society and was also the first life of the new. She took the people who were forgetting how to make an arch and she taught them to invent the Gothic arch."

peasants are the only poor men in these islands who have forced their masters to disgorge. These people whom we call priest-ridden are the only Britons who will not be squire-ridden—and this because of their undying faith in a sense of justice."

"The ordinary Agnostic has got his facts all wrong. He doubts because the Middle Ages were barbaric, but they were not; because Darwinism is demonstrated, but it isn't; because miracles do not happen, but they do; because monks are lazy, but they were very industrious; because nuns are unhappy, but they are particularly cheerful; because modern science is moving away from the supernatural, but it isn't; it is moving towards the supernatural with the rapidity of a railway train."

"This therefore is, in conclusion, my reason for accepting the religion and not merely the scattered and secular truths out of the religion. I do it because the thing has not merely told this truth or that truth but has revealed itself as a truth telling thing. All other philosophies say the things that plainly seem to be true; only this philosophy has again and again said the thing that does not seem to be true but is true."

EUGENICS

The vagaries of Eugenists have become a common-place newspaper item. Crude and disgusting as are these proposals for the regeneration of mankind, and familiar as the reading public have become with their advocacy, the following press despatch will be somewhat startling to many:

Jena, Germany, Aug. 20.—That polygamy alone can check a falling birth rate and regenerate a decadent nation, was formally resolved by the Mitgar Society in convention here to-day. The organization has considerable influence among German sociologists, eugenists and certain class of scientific fraternity and socialist members of Reichstag.

The society announced its intention of establishing a colony where polygamy will be practiced as a means of proving its contention.

It becomes more evident day by day that Christian principles, nay, even Christian decency, can be conserved only by the Church which Christ founded to teach all nations.

BONAR LAW—REBEL

Wise men are beginning to think that the only course open to Mr. Aquilith is to put a pair of handcuffs on Mr. Bonar Law, the leader of the Opposition, Sir Edward Carson and Lord Londonderry, and march them between police officers to the nearest prison. They are becoming out and out rebels. The London Times reports Mr. Law as saying, referring to the Ulster contingent: "These men enjoy no ascendancy. They ask no ascendancy, but they will submit to no ascendancy." If under Home Rule such a thing were possible—and it is ridiculous to so imagine—does he not know that the army and navy of England is ever present to put it down and defend the rights of Protestants? But the claim put forth by the Unionist leader is both hypocritical and insincere. He knows that under Home Rule there will be no such thing as ascendancy on the part of the Catholics. They would be the veriest simpletons were they to make such an attempt. They have no such thought, and, under the new conditions, had they the power they would not exercise it. In proof of this we have but to look at conditions in the South of Ireland where Protestants, few and far between, are treated not only with justice, but with prodigal liberality and kindness. In discussing the Home Rule question Mr. Bonar Law has given utterance to sentiments by far more war-like and rebellious than could ever have been charged to O'Connell or Charles Stuart Parnell. Yet these men were tried and convicted of treason felony and subjected to ignominious treatment in Irish prisons. Upon this statement alone, as reported by the Times, Mr. Bonar Law could be convicted of treason felony.

"While I had still in the party a position of less responsibility than that which I have now I said that in my opinion if an attempt were made without the clearly expressed will of the people of this country, and as part of a corrupt Parliamentary bargain, to deprive these men of their birthright, they would be justified in relating by all means in their power including force. I said so then, and I say so now, with a full sense of the responsibility which attaches to my position, that if the attempt be made under present conditions I can imagine no length or resistance to which Ulster will go in which I shall not be ready to support them and in which they will not be supported by the overwhelming majority of the British people."

And so after all those gentlemen, who have for long been superlatively loyal, have all at once become rebels because there is a prospect of their not being able to continue in the enjoyment of all the fat offices in Ireland. The Unionists of Ulster have placed themselves in a most contemptible position. When Home Rule comes they must make choice of one of two things: either to behave themselves like decent people or move out. Late occurrences in Belfast give

us the impression that it would be difficult for them to adopt the first named course. Allowance must be made, however, for the extravagances of yellow journalism. The contents of press despatches sent to this country is oftentimes news indeed to the people across the ocean. War and rumors of war sell papers and also create an increased demand for those outputs of Captains of Industry which are destined to wipe out human life on the shortest possible notice. There is a business side to all these rumors of disturbing conditions in the old land. Readers of newspapers should deduct a liberal percentage of chaff when glancing over press despatches.

THE CATHOLIC IMMIGRATION ASSOCIATION OF CANADA is doing a splendid work and deserves the warm-hearted support of the faithful throughout the Dominion. Few realize to the full extent the importance of giving a helping hand to Catholics from foreign countries who come to us with the desire to acquire better and happier homes than was their lot in their native lands. Branches of this association have now been established in Halifax, St. John, Antigonish, Montreal, Toronto, Winnipeg, Brandon, Regina, Lethbridge, Moose Jaw, Saskatoon, Calgary and Edmonton. We publish in this issue, taken from the London Tablet, a most interesting letter written by Rev. P. H. D. Cagrain, an energetic priest of Quebec city, on this subject, to which we would draw the special attention of our readers.

HORSE RACING

Like many other things in our modern life, the noble sport of horse racing has been subjected to more than its share of degeneracy. Time was when none but gentlemen managed the races and few but honest and enthusiastic sports attended them. We have still some honorable men who own "stables" and who make it a business to bring the finest class of horses into the racing ground. But there has grown up about horse racing a crookedness, a debauchery, a system of sharp practice, a seasoned hypocrisy, a gambling spirit reduced to a science, operated by parasites of the raffish class who deem the moral law a joke and give it but a smile of contempt, which has brought the sport into disrepute in the minds of the great majority of our best citizens. A horse race in itself, as we have said, is a noble sport, but the attachments which now follow it give us abundant evidence that a "meet" is a very undesirable thing in the community for the reason that a horde of graceless scamps follow it. The gambling spirit which horse racing engenders in many of our bright young people has become a veritable curse. They swing into the madness of the sport regardless of consequences. Thoughts of family connections, their prospects for the future, their place in society, are postponed for the moment in the terrible fever to acquire unearned wealth. They take tips from characterless scoundrels hardened in duplicity and when the racing day is over Remorse comes in to play its part. We refer to these remarks by reports from Toronto telling us that two young bank clerks had defaulted to the extent of \$50,000 and that playing the races brought upon them this terrible disgrace. The doors of the penitentiary will now open to them, and two blasted lives have been sacrificed upon the altar of gambling.

What helps promote this ignoble condition in society is the spirit of Godlessness abroad. The boy goes to a Godless school, is advanced to a Godless college, graduates from a Godless university, and, as might be expected, no break is placed upon his reckless career by thought of accountability to God or fear of punishment hereafter. The question will be asked, can horse-racing be carried on successfully if the blackleg be kept without the gates? Will a long term of imprisonment eradicate the book-maker? If the abuses cannot be corrected would it not be advisable to wipe out the sport altogether? There are many sides to this question. Good men will be found arguing pro and con. It has been threshed out to a considerable extent in many places in the American republic. In some large centres horse racing has been abolished and the race promoters have moved into Canada. What should we do about this? What say our Parliamentarians?

LET THEM COME

Some newspaper correspondents have circulated the report that there is ground for believing that in case an Irish parliament is established at Dublin the Orangemen of the North will emigrate to Canada. More unlikely things have happened. They will be welcome here if they give up that Orange foolishness and behave themselves. It is to be hoped they will not bring with them those ideas of civil and religious liberty that have made them but a laughing stock. By all means let them come to Canada. We have plenty of room for them in New Ontario or the North West. In our great Dominion there will be around and about them a civilizing influence wanting in

A MOMENTOUS QUESTION

"What was a living wage?" is the subject of an article supplied the press by Rev. J. A. Ryan, D. D. The opening paragraph states the case so well that we give it place:

"A living wage is not an amount merely sufficient to keep an individual alive; it is not a sum based upon the necessity of keeping the workman productive, nor is it an amount with which the individual may be maintained according to convention, which is a variable condition. The living wage is that which enables the worker to live a decent, reasonable life, for the individual is the one factor to be considered in the problem. The individual should have enough for food, shelter, for insurance, and for emergencies; in fact, enough to enable him to live in health and contentment and with opportunities for physical, mental, moral, and spiritual development to a reasonable degree."

One great factor which has disturbed the body politic and has brought misery to the homes of the poor is the mad rush for wealth by a certain class of middlemen. Time was when the housewife could go to the market and purchase food for her little ones at a reasonable price. The necessities of life coming from mother earth were brought to market and their charges fixed by the law of supply and demand. Not so now, however. The middleman and his agents scour the country, pay the lowest possible price to the producers and exact an unreasonable if not exorbitant figure from the consumer. The cold storage is his handmaiden. This modern condition of our commercial life enabled him to put away the people's provisions and distribute them as he wills. He is a law unto himself as regards prices. A generation ago a working man could live comfortably on \$10 a week. Nowadays a third added to that amount is not sufficient to supply the reasonable requirements of his family. What would be considered a fair wage to-day may not be a fair wage to-morrow, chiefly because of the inordinate greed of the army of forestallers who are continuously scouring the country. The farmers and the consumers are alike fleeced by them. How to bring back the old conditions once again is the problem. It is worthy the close study of political economists. When will we have a Federal government and Provincial governments strong enough and willing to grapple with the forestallers and the trust magnates? The real power, however, rests with the people at the polls. When will they have sense enough to exercise it and cast ballots only for those who are pledged to put a term to the escapades of those who conspire to inflict injury upon the mass of the people? We should send men to Ottawa, and the capitals of the Provinces, whose button-holes are not familiar to the lobbyists.

BEWARE OF SHARKS

Some of the newspapers continue to publish rosy propositions, to all who have a little money saved up, by which they may become owners of real estate in prospective cities in the West and elsewhere. We do not wish to throw discredit upon all these enterprises. Some may be good, some bad and some indifferent. We would advise all, before purchasing, to become acquainted with the exact conditions. The writer-up of advertisements of this character—and this has become a profession—is given to exaggeration if not downright, deliberate misrepresentation. It would be well in all cases to get in touch with some clergyman or well-known public man before one takes the risk of losing his little savings. In addition we would advise the reading of "Nicholas Nickleby," by Charles Dickens. Herein is shown to perfection, by the great novelist, the tricks of men of sharp practice, who have town lots in "Edens" for sale. A good hint is conveyed in the following paragraph from the Detroit Free Press: "Pa, what is an inheritance tax?" "An inheritance tax, my boy, is the crowd of promoters, real estate agents, mining stock sharks that take up a man's time just as soon as they learn that he has fallen heir to a little money."