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LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION.

UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA,
 OTTAWA, CANADA, March 7th, 1900.
 The Editor of THE CATHOLIC RECORD,
 London, Ont.

Dear Sir: For some time past I have read your estimable paper, THE CATHOLIC RECORD, and congratulate you upon the manner in which it is published.

Its matter and form are both good; and a truly Catholic spirit pervades the whole. Therefore, with pleasure, I can recommend it to the faithful.

Blessing you and wishing you success,
 Believe me, to remain,
 Yours faithfully in Jesus Christ,
 D. FALCONIO, Arch. of Ottawa,
 Apost. Deleg.

LONDON, SATURDAY, NOV. 12, 1904.

THE STAGE IRISHMAN.

The London Globe says that no race probably has ever been so maligned on the stage as the Irish. Their characteristics lend themselves of course to caricature. But there never was on sea or land such a man as the stage Irishman with his scartel hair and shillelagh, and his "Bedad" and "Begorrah." The real Irishman is a man to laugh with, not to laugh at. And yet individuals with Irish blood in their veins are not guilty of applauding the actor with a brogue that would be snubbed anywhere in the old land, and ungainly antics which are seen nowhere save in lunatic asylums and on the amateur stage.

HOME INFLUENCE.

From a home that is enveloped in a non-religious atmosphere is graduated the thoughtless and indifferent Catholic. Pagan trash on the walls in the shape of high art pictures; that printed abomination, the Sunday newspaper with its vulgar and idiotic "comic supplement" on the reading table exercise no healthful influence on the souls of children. They tend to conserve and to degrade and to deny them the keenness of vision which is the portion of the pure-hearted. We do not suppose that parents wish to emulate that character in Oliver Twist who gave his boy a bad book in order to make him a criminal, but certain it is that some of them hereabouts are strangely negligent in respect to the safeguarding of their children.

AIMLESS AMUSEMENTS.

We understand that something will be done this winter to disabuse outsiders of the notion that our sole recreational resource lies in cards and games. We hope so. It is not pleasant reading the announcements of exclusive parties for this and that object. We should be able now to slip out of the kindergarten stage. We are not spiritual. A moderate indulgence in each may pass. But oceans of it, during the winter months, leagues to play it, represent a great deal of time that could be spent to better purpose.

SOME "MANLY" MEN.

The writer of the short story is devoting just now a great deal of attention to the "manly man" who generally talks an argot of English. Sometimes he is a brakeman who is ready to expound the philosophy of driving wheels and hot boxes as to save some woman or other from death. In her safeguarding he is injured more or less badly, which demands the services of a doctor and necessitates a season of seclusion. It is touching by the way to notice how the aforesaid female hovers near her brave deliverer and how unworldly she bends herself to the task of ministering to him. We forgot to mention that during his leisure hours the brakeman is apt to be self-willed and selfish and so far as we can find out was not the remotest idea of what manliness means.

At other times his habitat is in what is or was the woolly west. A very picturesque gentleman, bronzed face—you can fill in the particulars to suit yourself. Remember that his hip pockets are adorned by "colts" which he can use quickly and effectively even "to shooting up the town."

But the manliest individual we ever read the good fortune to meet lived in

a book that was sent us a short time ago. A well-groomed gentleman this surrounded by books of the Schopenhauer type. Treasures gleaned in Paris or Berlin or Cairo betoken a taste for art and wandering. Unlike anaemic Christians he has faults, to which he makes languid reference; but he is manly—that is he can ride and shoot straight and talk wondrous nonsense.

We suppose, however, this kind of story is too stupid to do much harm to adults.

THE FORMATION OF CHARACTER.

But there can be no doubt as to it having an evil influence on the young by giving them false ideas and ideals. They must be taught that to be manly is to be gentle and submissive and true to God. Manliness means the mastery of our lower nature. It stands for courage in the face of temptation and hardship.

What patient, persevering effort is required, says Bishop Spalding, to form character, and what a little thing will poison life in its source. How quickly a boy learns to find pleasure in what is animal or brutal, but what infinite pains must be taken before he is won to the love of truth and beauty. He mistakes rudeness for strength, boastfulness for ability, disrespect for independence, profanity for manliness, brutality for courage. And to add to his misfortune he is blind to his own weakness and ignorance, and he is permitted to remain so by careless parents. Consequently there are Catholics who are ignorant of the grandeur of their faith and its usefulness, and indifferent to the kingdom of Heaven. For it means nothing to them in the way of money or position. They do not surrender the hope of entering it, but this does not deter them from giving goodly toll to pride and passion. We can understand their position. They live in a world of which they know something, of which they read in their youth, and heard about at the fireside.

GOOD READING.

With regard to the reading that will keep the things of eternity before the eyes of the mind, we cannot do better than lay before our readers the salient points of a Pastoral Letter of Right Rev. Dr. Hedley on the Lives of the Saints. He refers to the fact of there being biographies in pamphlet form, cheap and comparatively short, which are meant for those who are too busy to read longer works or too poor to buy them. Of these last we have a long and excellent series in the publication of the Catholic Truth Society.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION.

The first advantage which an earnest Catholic may gain by reading these lives is information. The common Protestant idea of religion is that a man should go to church or chapel on Sundays, try to feel "good," and be honest and kindly in dealing with others. This, as far as it goes, is excellent. But the Church has been instituted to preach to the world the doctrine of the Incarnation. The Incarnation reveals God to us; it shows what is meant by a "good life." It is the source of a wonderful variety of helps and assistances to man in his spiritual life; that is to say, first and chiefly it has given us the great sacramental system and then the great Eucharistic liturgy, with all that depends upon it. All this system, which is really Christianity, is embodied in the creeds and catechisms of the Church and in the lives of her children. Catholics, even those who are otherwise well educated, have a very limited acquaintance with this vast store of divine teaching. If they would read the lives of the Saints they would soon come to have a more personal and affectionate feeling for Christ—the true devotion which is the expression of the love of God above all things.

Another most important head of information regards the doctrines of the Church, the opposition they had to encounter from heretics and the constant labor of the great preachers.

MAKES THE SIGHT KEENER.

And there is another branch of Catholic information not less necessary and not less neglected, the principles of the spiritual and ascetic life. The saints express in their lives Christ's humility and poverty and love of obscurity and suffering. These the world rejects, as do some Catholics. The saints show forth the perfect life in operation. This is not binding upon all, in its details at least. But no one can save his soul without believing in the perfect life. We may not be called upon to practise this or that act of humility, but the aspiration after humility must have no bounds to it. A large number of Catholics have a vague desire to imitate Our Lord, but if they saw more clearly they would be much further from mortal sin, and much nearer to God. The reading of the

lives of the saints—men and women who are distinguished by their likeness to Christ—makes the sight keener.

THE LESSONS OF THE CROSS.

The lives of the Saints touch and stimulate us. A good story acts upon the heart like a noble picture. The picture of St. Francis of Assisi going about poor and rejoicing is more effective than any words on the beauty of poverty. The picture of the saint's austerities show forth in line and color the lessons of the Cross and has greater influence than sermons or mortification. The saints keep the Passion of the Christ before the world and stimulate and urge the human heart to that affection for and imitation of the Redeemer which is the only path to heaven.

EDUCATION IN CATHOLIC PRINCIPLES.

Their lives, says Bishop Hedley, should be read, not as common history or as profane stories, but as part of the Gospel message. To believe in all their legends and miracles is no part of a Christian's obligation. But to profit by them we must come with humble hearts as to heavenly teachers.

The reading of the Lives of the Saints may, therefore, be warmly recommended as an education in Catholic principles and Catholic ways. All have time to read, but we read much that is useless, and not a little that is evil. The literature of folly which weakens and debases should be driven from the book shelf. As for our boys and young men, it will always be a hard task to make them read anything beyond the newspaper. But it is certain that if we desire to bring up a generation of well-informed and intelligent Catholics there is hardly any better way of doing so than to interest them in the Lives of Saints.

ANOTHER CHURCH UNION.

Ten Presbyterian bodies which have mission Churches in India are making an effort to unite into one, and form one great Church. We have little doubt that this will be accomplished, for an exterior union is all that is aimed at in such movements. Missionary Boards in England, Ireland, Scotland, Wales, Canada and the United States control these various bodies at present; but the new Church will be self-governing and will have its own General Assembly, the first meeting of which is to be held shortly.

But it has been revealed through the recent decision of the Judicial Committee of the House of Lords that these diverse bodies adhere very loosely, as there are many serious divergences of doctrine between them which greatly affect the question, "What shall I do to be saved?" Certainly under the Calvinistic teaching which is still held in Canada, (theoretically at least,) and more strenuously by the Old Kirs in Scotland and Ireland, not forgetting the "Wee Frees" of the Highlands, the plan of salvation is something very different from what is held by those inclined to the teaching of the Arminians, such as the American Presbyterians and the English Free Church with their Revised Creeds, and the new body in Scotland which is now called "the United Free Church."

It would seem that it is enough now to unite with an indefinite creed to make all who take part in the union staunch Presbyterians. At least there is now but little stress upon purity of doctrine, whereas the retention of doctrinal truth is no longer of any account when there is question of uniting diverse denominations into one. Presbyterians are satisfied that the bodies to which they extend the right hand of fellowship agree with them in their general mode of organization or Church Government; that is, if it be only Presbyterian in form, which is the least important matter to be considered. Indeed, when we consider that a most cordial invitation to union has already been extended even to Congregationalists, and somewhat more shyly to Baptists, with their unalterable principle of a free faith and no fixed creed, it would not surprise us much if another move on the chess-board should be to form an alliance with the Unitarians. No doubt the new Hindu Presbyterian Church will follow the example of their teachers in these matters, and as the disciples are often readier than the instructors to move forward, we may soon see the new Church differ from the Presbyterian churches to which we have been accustomed, chiefly in this respect that it shall have no particular doctrine at all in its creed.

Some years ago a movement just like this took place in Japan. A union of Presbyterian Churches took place under similar circumstances with the one now proposed, and the result was, as we understand, precisely what we have indicated here, a union Presbyterian Church was organized, but it practically ceased to be Christian, for it set aside that most essential of

Christian doctrines, the divinity of our Saviour, and the infinite value of His atonement for the sins of mankind.

How different is the present attitude of Presbyterians from that to which we have been accustomed, in presence of which we were told as in the ordinance of Parliament authorizing the compilation of the Westminster Confession:

"Whereas amongst the infinite blessings of Almighty God upon this nation, none is nor can be more dear unto us than the purity of our religion, and for that, as yet, many things remain in the liturgy, discipline and government of the Church which do necessarily require a further and more perfect reformation than as yet hath been attained; and whereas that the present Church government by Archbishops, their chancellors, commissars, deans, and other ecclesiastical officers depending upon the hierarchy is evil, and justly offensive and burdensome to the kingdom, a great impediment to reformation and growth of religion, and very prejudicial to the state and government of this kingdom. . . . that such a government shall be settled in the Church as may be most agreeable to God's holy word, and most apt to procure and preserve the peace of the Church at home, and nearer agreement with the Church of Scotland and other Reformed Churches abroad, etc."

Why of late years we have even been assured that Prelacy, which was once held to be but "a rag of Popery," would no longer be a cause to prevent union, if the Prelatsists would only descend from their high horse, and admit that episcopacy is a human ordinance, not part of the essential constitution of the Church, and that it is not essential that presbyters or ministers should receive their ordination from Bishops.

We are now prepared for any departure on the part of Presbyterians from the "faith once delivered to the Saints," when they have once relaxed the faith which they once proclaimed to be "most agreeable to the Word of God" and "necessary to be approved and established as a common confession of Faith for the three kingdoms."

It is not from any carping spirit we call attention to these facts of the case, but to show how the events have proved that there can be no solid union of Christians into one Christ, except through the Faith of the Catholic Church, which has been handed down through the centuries from the days of the Apostles to the present, in union with and submission to the successor of St. Peter, who was appointed by Christ Himself to feed His lambs and sheep.

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE METHODS.

There is trouble in the Christian Science camp in Toronto over an unscientific failure of the practitioners of the so-called science to carry out an alleged agreement to teach that science to a person who paid pretty well for the instruction she was to get.

Eliza Guthrie laid an information a few days ago against Rosa Hector and Isabella Stewart, charging that these conspired together by deceit and falsehood and other fraudulent means to defraud her of the sum of \$100, on the understanding that she was to be taught the art of healing by means of Christian Science. She had paid the money and had taken lessons, but no knowledge had been imparted to her. She had been told to pray, to read the Bible and Mrs. Eddy's books—practices which she could follow without instruction from those who had undertaken to enable her to heal the sick, and she had been told that sickness does not exist. If sickness has no existence she could not understand why she should be charged a high price for driving it away. The case was deferred.

THE WEE, AND THE UNITED FREES.

The Wee Free Churches of Scotland have put into operation the decision of the House of Lords giving them full control of the Free Church property which was owned by the Free Church of Scotland at the time when the majority went over to the United Presbyterian Church, constituting the United Free Church. The Wee Frees, who are those of the Frees who refused to enter into the union, have served the general trustees of the United Free Church with a legal notice to quit and hand over all the Church property, including Assembly Hall, three colleges at Edinburgh, Glasgow and Aberdeen, all the missions abroad, and the churches and manse in Scotland, to the number of eleven hundred in each, the total value of which is \$55,000,000.

The Wee Frees made an offer some time ago to the United Free Church to permit the latter the use of the Church buildings and manse till June next on the condition that no Free Church doctrine should be attacked in the churches thus loaned during the interim, but the terms were not agreed to as reasonable. The Wee Frees, or real Free Kirkers, considered that as the property had been donated during fifty-seven years for the support of the doctrines of the Free

Kirk, they should be continued to be used for this purpose only even till the present difficulty should be completely tided over. The United Frees, on the contrary, were of opinion that they should be allowed to use their former churches without restriction as to teaching, and hence no compromise could be reached.

The cash at the disposal of the Wee Frees amounts to over \$10,000,000. There are, besides the Assembly Hall, three colleges, 1,100 churches and about the same number of manse, adjudged as belonging to the Wee Frees who number only 4,500 adherents of all ages, with 94 ministers, and about 34 small congregations, chiefly found in the Highlands and on the islands in the north of Scotland.

It has developed that between the United Frees and the Wee Frees there is a real and serious doctrinal difference, whereby it is shown that Calvinism has been practically eliminated from the United Free, and to a great extent, though not so entirely, from the Established Kirk of Scotland.

A SELF-CONSTITUTED FORGIVER OF SINS.

A curious story comes from Kansas City where a new Church belonging to one of the fanciful denominations called the Christian Church is being built under the direction of the pastor, who, together with his congregation, works every night at the building so as not to interfere with their daily occupations. Every night the members of the congregation work by torchlight with pick and shovel, after their day's work is done, and under direction of their pastor dig, wheel earth, and carry stones to be used next day by the stone masons. The women labor in this way equally with the men, and on Saturday night one young woman was so enthusiastic over her labor that she broke the Sabbath by working for an hour past midnight. For this sin she made a public confession next day before the whole congregation, and was publicly forgiven by the minister.

This minister is one who denounces Catholics for believing that to Catholic priests the power of forgiving sins has come down by lawful succession from the Apostles who received it from Christ. But he presumes to exercise this power though he has no claim to have succeeded to the Apostles. He is one of those spoken of by St. Paul who presume to take this honor of the priesthood to themselves without "being called by God as Aaron was."

A NOTED PRONOUNCEMENT.

A very remarkable pronouncement was made in Toronto about a week ago by that distinguished English statesman, John Morley. In making reference to the French-Canadians he said: "It is a feeling, a mournful feeling, in my own mind how different the case of Ireland would have been, how we should have been spared more than a century of torment, what would Ireland have been spared if the British Government, when the Act of Union was passed, had pursued the same conciliatory policy in Ireland as the British Government pursued in 1769 or 1763 in the case of French Canada."

This is, in short, the mournful history of Ireland. On the part of England we have an example of tyrannical legislation of which the world furnishes but few instances. To-day the shameful treatment of the Emerald Isle stands as a blot upon the British Empire. But the people of England, we are glad to see, are becoming more enlightened on the Irish question; and by their votes they will, we doubt not, before many years cast aside those unworthy representatives who care more for personal aggrandizement than for the honor of the country.

We regret very much to notice by a press despatch that the Rev. Dr. Benjamin F. DeCosta, the distinguished convert to the Catholic Church, died on 11th November at St. Vincent's Hospital, New York. Father DeCosta was seventy-four years of age. Before his conversion he had been thirty-eight years pastor of St. John's Protestant Episcopal Church in New York city. He was the author of more than thirty religious and historical works. Those who knew him bear testimony that he was one of the most devoted, conscientious converts which the Church has received in recent years. He was truly a man of noble mould and was most highly esteemed by the citizens of New York, irrespective of creed. May his soul rest in peace!

Very Rev. M. F. Fallon, D. D., O. M. I., Rector of Holy Angels' Church, Buffalo, has been appointed Provincial of the Order of Oblate Fathers for the United States. We publish in another column an article from a Buffalo paper with reference to the matter. It is with real pleasure we chronicle this honor paid to one of our Canadian priests. That it is entirely deserved no one will question, for Dr. Fallon is one of the most brilliant and estimable priests of the great Oblate Order.

FORBIDDEN SOCIETIES.

ASSOCIATIONS WHICH CATHOLICS ARE NOT PERMITTED TO JOIN, AND WHY.

"I would like to ask," a correspondent writes to The Catholic Union and Times, "what societies Catholics are not allowed to join. Is it only secret societies, and what secrets are they?" As the question is one which Catholics in other places frequently ask, the answer given by the Jesuit Father in charge of our contemporary's "question box" may profitably be reproduced here:

There are two kinds of societies forbidden by the Church: 1. Secret societies nominally condemned by the Church. 2. Societies, secret or otherwise, whose principles, tendencies or actions are known to be antagonistic to sound faith and the authority of the Church. The secret societies nominally forbidden by the Church are:

1. The Masonic Society of Free Masonry in all its forms, branches and degrees.
2. The Order of the Good Templars.
3. The Odd Fellows.
4. Knights of Pythias.
5. The Sons of Temperance.

With regard to Free Masonry, the first warning of danger was given by Clement XII, in the year 1738, and his constitution was confirmed and renewed by Benedict XIV. Pius VII, followed the same path, and Leo XII, by his Apostolic Constitution "Quo graviora," put together the acts and decrees of former Pontiffs on this subject and ratified and confirmed them forever. In the same sense spoke Gregory XVI, many times over Pius IX, and Leo XIII, in his renowned encyclical letter, "Humanae Genus," issued April 30, 1881.

When the Odd Fellows and Good Templars established lodges in the United States the question was raised whether these orders were included in the above condemnation by Leo XIII. To settle the controversy, the Archbishop of Philadelphia, Most Rev. F. P. Kenrick, under date of February 26, 1848, asked the Prefect of the Propaganda for a decision. After a lengthy correspondence, from different sides, and the Roman authority having obtained all available information, Cardinal J. Ph. Fransoni, under date of September 7, 1850, replied that these societies were included in the letter of Leo XII, and consequently no Catholic could join them or remain a member. When in 1894 the Roman authorities pronounced sentence against the societies of the Odd Fellows, Knights of Pythias, Good Templars and Sons of Temperance, and all similar societies, most strenuous efforts were made to have the decree changed, but to no avail. In one of the many responses given by Rome the Sacred Congregation observes: "This is not a question of mere ecclesiastical law, which does not bind under serious loss, but it is one of the natural and divine laws and of not giving scandal under that law."

The second kind of organization forbidden by the Church are societies whose principles, tendencies and actions are known to be hostile to sound faith and the authority of the Church. They are:

All societies who profess rationalism or naturalism as opposed to revealed Christianity. One of the most important religious documents of the nineteenth century, the "Dogmatic Constitution of the Catholic Faith," as promulgated by the Vatican Council, April 24, 1870, reads thus: "Then there arose and too widely overspread the world that doctrine of rationalism or naturalism which opposes itself in every way to the Christian religion as a supernatural institution, and works with the most zealous order that, after Christ our sole Lord and Saviour, has been excluded from the moral actions of men and from the life and moral actions of the nation, the reign of what they call pure reason or nature may be established. And after forsaking and rejecting the Christian religion and denying the true God and His Christ, the minds of many have sunk into the abyss of Pantheism, Materialism and Atheism, until denying rational nature itself and every sound rule of right, they labor to destroy the deepest foundation of human society." Now it is a fact that numerous societies, secret and otherwise, have written this doctrine of rationalism and naturalism upon their banners, though they differ in name, in ceremonial, in form and origin. They are "nevertheless so bound together by the community of purpose and by the similarity of their main opinions, as to make, in fact, one thing with the sect of Free Masons, which is a kind of centre whence they all go forth and whither they all return." (Leo XIII. in Encyclical "Humanae Genus.") This leads us to answer the next question of our correspondent:

What are the secrets maintained by secret societies?

1. The secrets of numerous societies are this very warfare against the Church of Christ mentioned in the above documents.

2. If any society's obligation be such as to "bind its members to secrecy, even when rightly questioned by competent authority then no one can be a member of it, and at the same time be admitted to the sacraments of the Catholic Church."

3. The same is true of any organization that "binds its members to a promise of blind obedience to accept in advance and to obey whatever orders, lawful or unlawful, that may emanate from its chief authority, because such a promise is contrary both to reason and to conscience."

4. "If a society works or plots, either openly or in secret, against the Church, or against lawful authorities; then to be a member of it is to be excluded from the membership of the Catholic Church." (Pastoral Letter Third Plenary Council of Baltimore, December 7, 1884.)

5. "If a society, besides being secret and oath-bound, has a chaplain of its own, and a ritual prescribing prayers, and religious services, then such a society becomes also heretical and schismatical, and members cannot be counted any more as Catholics."