

Granny made no comment on the information. "Come close till I see you," she said.

For a long minute not a sound broke the stillness.

"You have thy mother's eyes, and thy father's curls, and the look of his honour round the mouth. Have you all your fingers?" she asked suddenly.

"No," said the stranger, "I lost a finger in my infancy."

"It was thy father's doing," said Granny, sadly, and the lost hair was found.

Quietly the visitors withdrew, leaving the aged woman to her meditations. The sudden change in his fortunes did not seem to affect the new hair. Gratitude was evidently a ruling trait in his character, as all who had shared in the search soon discovered.

Before many days the eldest of Granny's grandsons was sent for, and the three lives lease was renewed as never lease was renewed before.

They thought that Granny would be pleased when the good news was told, but she made no sign.

"My work is done," she murmured sadly, as she watched them hide the precious paper in the ancient dresser. "I held the land for our boys," she whispered to a younger Michael, who stood beside her chair.

It was harvest week, with no time for idle joy, and into the fields trooped the busy workers, with hearts filled with thankfulness that the tenure of their father's land no longer depended on an aged woman's life.

It was sunset hour when they returned, weary but happy.

In the road stood Mary, white and breathless. "Come," she gasped, and ran before them. Wondering they followed, even to Granny's door, and awe struck entered.

There in her high-backed chair she sat, her kind old eyes closed in sleep, her fingers clutching her beads, her withered cheeks pillowed on the new lease; but one glance told the children that it was the sleep that knows no earthly awakening.

NOTE.—The custom of making leases which were to last for a specified number of lives running from father to son—or, as in Granny's case, to the second child, should the tenant's eldest die during his lifetime, was common in Ireland during the last two centuries. This sort of lease is now seldom made, being looked upon as unsatisfactory by both landlord and tenant.

#### BREVITIES.

Three distinct earthquake shocks were felt at Portland, Ore., Monday morning.

Another whiskey trust has been organized and the price of sprits advanced six cents.

The Alabama legislature passed a law permitting juries to impose the death penalty for train robbing.

The California legislature has attacked the high hat nuisance in theatres and other places of amusement. A fine of \$50 will be the penalty if the law is passed.

Influenza is claiming many victims in England and on the continent. Berlin is the worst sufferer, but London is also full of it. Prime Minister Rosebery is confined to his bed by an attack.

Window-glass manufacturers, representing about 80 per cent. of that interest in the United States, at Cleveland, decided to form a new organization to be known as the National Window-glass Manufacturer's Association.

There are nearly one hundred Chinese babies in New York city. Three-quarters of them have American mothers, but the others are of full Chinese extraction, their mothers, as well as their fathers, having come over from China.

Mrs. Bourke Cockran, the wife of Congressman W. Bourke Cockran, died Feb. 20, in New York, from hemorrhages, with which she was attacked on Tuesday. She was thirty-one years old and had been married ten years.

Father Deplaye, the senior parish priest of France, has died at ninety-four. What a career of zeal, of charity, of piety, good works and arduous vicissitude, during the sixty-nine years that he was guardian of the consciences of a parish, baptizing, marrying and burying the people.

The conversion to the Catholic Church of Dr. Serrurier, the learned scientist and director of the Ethnological and Zoological Museums of Leyden, has caused quite a sensation in that city. He was a Protestant, or to be strictly accurate, a non-believer, and a man who is widely known throughout the scientific world of Europe.



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### SOME OF OUR NEW BOOKS.

#### WALTER LECKY ON AMERICAN CATHOLIC WRITERS OF TO-DAY.

VOLUMES THAT DO NOT SUIT THE JUVENILE CRITIC, BUT THAT ARE APPRECIATED BY MEN OF BRAINS—FATHER YOUNG'S BOOK OF PERMANENT VALUE—BISHOP SPALDING, EGAN AND MISS GUINEY.

I remember reading some time since, an old French letter, wherein the scholarly writer trusted "that the day would come when American Catholics would write their own books." A few moments ago I was looking out of my library window at the scurrying snow, and wishing that M. le Cure, long since dead, in his far off Norman land, could cheat the tomb for a day and revisit America. How lovingly I should hand him a list of our new books, and I know well the gracious smile and the peppery pinch from his snuff-box that would reward me. But he will not come. Peace to his ashes, his dream has been accomplished; we write our own books, and with a knowing wink to the omniscient critic, tolerably good books. They may not come up to the great American critic's idea, who will, in this science age, rate beneath his dignity books that breathe the slightest breath of religion. I will not take off my tam-o'-shanter for his friendly nod, albeit he is king

"In prose and verse, without dispute, Through all the realms of Nonsense, absolute."

My good Scotch cap will outwear a fad. One of the first books that make Winter, a cheery fire, and a capacious ingle nook (I love to stretch myself as I read), right merry company, is Lilly's "The Claims of Christianity," an imported book.

Lilly has in this volume brilliantly shown that the Christian religion is the sole and sufficient oracle of divine truth, superseding all other modes of faith, and that this religion is a polity perfect and complete in itself, counting its subjects in all lands collateral with secular States, but belonging to none of them. By Christian religion he means the Catholic Church, as it alone fulfills his conditions. The little man of the Critic quickly reviews the book, and as Mr. Lilly does not believe in the Zeitgeist and has the unbearable audacity to suppose "that the papacy is a reality," his book is dismissed in this lofty manner: "But he has never got at the psychological key of history, and of religion. Fundamentally, he is a skeptic and a pessimist, and he does not know it." One thinks of Dryden's cutting line in reading such gush:

"Such are the blindfold blows of ignorance."

I wonder if the Republic is a reality. "Psychological keys!" What a big adjective to hurl at an author's head—worse than a brick-bat, since you would be in a quandary as to what struck you. And then note that Mr. Lilly, a man of wide culture and scientific range, being a skeptic and pessimist and, here's the fun, "not knowing it." When you read these jejune, inane phrases you are ready for the grand finale: "As a philosopher, an historian, or a theologian, he is a blind guide."

These gratuitous assertions are called criticism, and the mannikin callow and

crude, with malice prepense to every Catholic book that comes under his eye, bows and fittingly retires. Such a book, however, as Mr. Lilly's, cannot be snuffed out by such juvenile methods. It speaks an earnest consideration from the scholar, and for every statement discarded the why of doing so. Mr. Lilly is in the arena with his ideas, ready to fight for them, and a cowardly slur from the "roost" will not down them. When ever I read a criticism of this kind I know the condemned book is of value. Every Catholic library should own Mr. Lilly's. With its arguments well in hand you will have no difficulty in silencing the popguns of the Agnostic younglings who, knowing nothing, strange as it seems, know all by intuition, and go up and down mumbling catchy phrases for truth.

Another book of permanent value is Father Young's "Catholic and Protestant Countries Compared," already in its second edition. It deals with a subject that was supposed to have been settled long ago in favor of Protestantism. We are slowly but surely pulverizing the myths, and this one was sacred among them. Just read this book; no skipping of pages. It is sprightly, piquant, now and then a little broncho-like, but sound, to the point, logical throughout. When it says "finis," I think this question will trot through your mind: "Does the ordinary American, so quick to prate of morality and civilization, know the meaning of these terms?" As a rule, he is supposed to know everything, and blandly told so in Fourth of July orations. This book will be a stumbling block to his alleged infallibility. It is peppered with facts, and there is a mountain saying, "that facts are hard to be resisted." It will silence the long-winded on Mexico and a few other "terrible countries," and drive Methodist editors and sensation missionaries to invent new fiction. I present to their high consideration Timbuctoo, the late French acquisition, as a great and new place for making fakes. Father Young has certainly driven them from civilization.

A modest little volume, "Things of the Mind," by Bishop Spalding is,—well, I can find no other word,—charming. It makes the reader think high and live holy. What better testimony can I give to it than by saying of the "Things" there, borrowing Hazlitt: "Sweet is the dew of their memory, and pleasant the balm of their recollection. Their beauties are not scattered like stray gifts o'er the earth, but sown thick on the page, rich and rare." What a book for Catholic youth, to provoke, to stimulate, to dispel gloom, and show that the "Kindly Light" shines for every man, if he will but seek it. The style is crisp and keen, admirably lending itself to quotations that are ever a spur to better things.

The readers of Father Young's work may thank me for suggesting the latest book on Mexico, Christian Reid's delicious "Land of the Sun." It is a book of travel, under the guise of a novel. I think that we light-headed readers won't take this amiss. Lovers of pedagogies and other dismal sciences may sneeze at its freshness and lightness. That is their joy; ours to lie under the greenwood tree, reading the pages of the merry music of birds and brooks. Mexico, peculiar and picturesque, painted by an artistic hand, guided by knowledge and rare sympathy,

makes the "Land of the Sun" a feast from cover to cover. Buy it and test the flavor. Everybody to his own taste, but this book has everybody's taste. By everybody I mean those who are sane. Sanity is not so widely diffused as one would at first think. I lift my head, and a little volume of Harper's Library of essays greets me. Somehow or other I cannot think of my books as dead. This volume is scholarly and thought-provoking. Some of the essays, notably that on Hazlitt, is a bit of word-painting that introduces you to the man just as he shuffled along the streets, speculating, sensitive, careless of dress, bold speaker, scoffer of cant, laughing at "those who strut in their self-opinion and deck themselves out in the plumes of fancied self-importance as if they were crowned with laurels by Apollo's own hand." Louis I. Guiney's little "Essays" claims a place in the niche consecrated to the best nineteenth century essayists. I put mine between Agnes Repplier's and Mr. Thompson. I recommend them to the young lady who "can find no good Catholic books." They are read by Protestants, I assure her, and that is the introduction that is satisfying.

We have been told that poetry was dead, and judging from the flood of sonnets and rondeaus that take her name in vain, the ordinary reader might assent. The "masters"—how words change their meaning—when they bore us with poetry, write an introduction to exculpate themselves from doing such childish things as Homer and Shakespeare. "Most modern men, I fancy," says Hamlin Garland in the "Foreword" to his Prairie songs, "find it rather difficult to take verse seriously." I should say so, if his huge prose collops could by any means be called poetry. How like a Scotch joke to write an apology of poetry as an introduction to a clumsy prose performance. Copeland and Day have proved that poetry artistically published can yet command attention. Their last volume, Father Tabbs' "Poems," was a great success. The first edition was exhausted the day of publication. I had warned my friends to procure a copy of the book, and elsewhere have written: "When you bring your preconceived literary canons to bear upon it (volume), they are found wanting—too clumsy to test the delicacy, fineness of touch, and the permeated spiritualism embodied therein. The second edition will soon be issued, and Catholics ought to be first in the field to buy it."

Another volume is "Songs and Sonnets," by Egan, a charming bit of book-making within and without. I pledge my faith on this poet, who has not as yet given us his best. This is a book that you may not fear to give a friend. If the friend has a soul, and it is not grimed with fin-de-siecle rust, "The Old Violin," "Night In June," above all that sonnet on Guerin, so keen and masterful, will make him either steal the book or order a new copy. Another volume that I bespeak immediate recognition for will soon be published by James Jeffrey Roche. This is a poet who has something to say. His book will not be a collection of corns and bunions, but virile manly verse, telling of deeds of valor done, of things that make the heart beat faster, the eye flash quicker, and that indefinable feeling which makes us long to procure a musket or sword and hie to the war. Roche has found in the deeds of the American army and navy something worth a poet's song. I know this will be strange news to the American bards who go to England annually to get their "matter."—Walter Lecky, in N.Y. Catholic News

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