

The Catholic Record

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LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION. Apostolic Delegation. Ottawa, June 13th, 1905. My Dear Sir—Since coming to Canada I have had a reader of your paper. I have noted with satisfaction that it is directed with intelligence and ability, and, above all, that it is imbued with a strong Catholic spirit.

Mr. Thomas Coffey. Dear Sir: For some time past I have read your valuable paper in the manner in which it is published. The matter and form are both good; and a truly Catholic spirit pervades all that is therein. Therefore, with pleasure, I can recommend it to the faithful. Blessings on you and wishing you success, believe me to remain, Yours faithfully in Jesus Christ, D. FALCONE, Arch. of Larissa, Apoc. Deleg.

LONDON, SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 1918

SOME SCINTILLATING SCIENTIFIC TRUTHS

The outcome of the deliberations of an ecumenical council could hardly arouse more interest in the Christian world than is manifested by the disciples of Science in the pronouncements of famous scientists at the meetings of the British Association. Last year Professor Shaffer read a paper on the Origin of Life on the Globe. Forthwith it was announced that Creation was a myth. Ex Cathedra and in terms of withering scorn our own Professor McCallum of Toronto University told theologians to readjust their views and get rid of miracles if they would keep even their present tenuous hold on the man in the street.

This year, discussing some statements on "potential living matter," not theologians but scientists at the British Association assembled, flatly stated that we know no more of the origin of life than was known a thousand years ago! We ventured to suggest to Professor McCallum last year that the readjustment of religious truth to bring it into harmony with demonstrated scientific certainties was not really so pressing as he seemed to think. Now that scientists, with as much right as Professors Schafer and McCallum to speak in the name of Science, tell us that science really knows nothing of the origin of life, the despised theologians may hope to retain, if not the respect, at least the intellectual tolerance of the man in the street.

This year the piece de resistance was the inaugural address by Sir Oliver Lodge. He noted four modern scientific tendencies: "A marked feature of the scientific era is the discovery of an interest in various kinds of atomism—so that continuity seems in danger of being lost sight of. "Another tendency is toward comprehensive negative generalizations from a limited point of view. "Another is to take refuge in rather vague forms of statement and to shrink from closer examination of the puzzling and the obscure. "Another is to deny the existence of anything which makes no appeal to organs of sense and no ready response to laboratory experiment."

Which we might sum up as the tendency of second rate scientists to dogmatize about matters on which there is no scientific certainty, or, sometimes, even probability. The Times, (London, Eng.) has this comment on Sir Oliver's address: "The whole discourse is a protest against arrogance. In recent years science has been asserting its claims against a dogmatic theology. Perhaps some over-assertion was necessary, but over-assertion there certainly was. The public awoke to find that they had only exchanged one priesthood for another. The laws of science were more sacrosanct than Holy Writ. Nothing which could not be weighed or measured was allowed any validity. In the midst of this bigotry called itself agnosticism."

Theology may smile at her ill-bred and wayward little sister, Natural Science; some of the abusive epithets that in her ill-tempered self-assertion she used to hurl at Theology are now applied with more reason to herself: "Arrogance," "dogmatism," "bigotry!" The burden of Sir Oliver's thesis was the continuity of personal existence after death. He is convinced

by strict evidence that this is a scientific truth, or at least a justifiable scientific belief.

To those who walk in the light of Christian faith, Sir Oliver's profession of scientific belief and the scientific sceptic's "comprehensive negative generalizations" are alike indifferent. The one does not add to our faith in the immortality of the soul; the others detract nothing from it.

Indeed we regard Sir Oliver as something of a glorified scientific spiritualist; but his standing in the scientific world is unquestioned, and he has done a service to dogmatic sceptics. These had rejected the immortality of the soul as a relic of superstition, a theological myth. Now that materialism is going out of fashion, they can save their faces by scientifically believing in the continuity of personal existence after death; they have thus in dignified scientific language what children learn in the Catechism about the immortality of the soul.

Another great scientific truth that was flashed over cables and wires to a waiting world was that if we could discover the real cause of the differentiation of the sex organs in plants we might have some clue to the reason why some human beings are born boys and some girls! No one will be inclined to dispute that.

The importance attached to Sir Oliver Lodge's address made the comments of the English newspapers worth cabling to the ends of the earth. We have already given the Times' impatient expression of resentment at the arrogant and bigoted dogmatizing of those who presume to speak in the name of science.

The Daily Telegraph says: "If there is a constant and identical personality running through one's experiences, we get a very fair definition of what a soul means as distinct from its material embodiment."

Well, well! Here we have, as though suddenly brought into light by modern science, an undeniable fact of universal experience that received full consideration from philosophers and theologians ages before Sir Oliver Lodge was born or the Daily Telegraph was founded. The Telegraph continues: "We are guided by the president of the association from a discussion of atoms and ether, electricity and radiation up to that final hypothesis which seems so astounding to the judgment of ordinary men of the world, that the dead can communicate with the living."

This final hypothesis has been held in theory and practice by some millions of men and women who call themselves spiritualists; a better term is spiritists. But it is only when the doctrine of spiritism follows "a discussion of atoms and ether, electricity and radiation" by a scientist addressing the British Association that it loses all traces of vulgar superstition, audacious imposture or demonic intervention, and emerges clothed with all the scholarly respectability of a demonstrated truth, or at least a profoundly scientific hypothesis.

Gentlemen scoffers at religious credulity, excuse the irreverent smile of those of us who find it hard to sit at the feet of the scientific Gamaliel of the moment and receive the latest scientific lessons with the reverent gratitude of the disciples of Science.

MIRACLES AND MIRACLES

The "man of science" does not believe in miracles. Creation of life is a miracle. Theology postulates creation. Therefore theology must be revised and brought up to date. Otherwise "the man in the street" will lose all respect for and confidence in religion.

That is a fair summary of Professor McCallum's commentary on Professor Schafer's address last year before the British Association. Why was Professor McCallum so scornfully intolerant of all theology—with the possible exception of Scotch theology? Why, because Professor McCallum believed with a joyous faith in Professor Schafer's "miracle," that is, the production of life from inorganic matter by natural forces. Last week this "scientific miracle" was utterly discredited by the scientists of the British Association. There are miraculous cures at Lourdes. If one of these reputed cures, on investigation, turned out to be so wholly baseless in fact, and so entirely attributable to religious credulity, that even the most friendly Catholic believers freely admitted that the reputed miracle was no miracle at all, we should have something very similar to the reputed scientific miracle of Professor Schafer that was so widely and triumphantly heralded less than a year ago.

If, moreover, a Canadian Catholic bishop, let us say, had made the reputed Lourdes miracle the occasion and the basis of an intemperate and contemptuous attack on the scientific department of the University of Toronto, then, as Professor McCallum would probably admit, the analogy would be fairly complete. And if this hypothetical case had actually occurred within a year we imagine Professor McCallum would get much more fun out of it than the bishop.

In such a case we should scarcely have ground for serious complaint if some sceptics should say some hard things of credulous people and priestcraft. Priestcraft is an ugly word, but, like jesuitical, another ugly word, its meaning is none the less clear even though the very term be a calumny. The psalmist said in his anger, "Every man is a liar." The London Times, in its disgust, says scientists are as bad as priests. "We have only exchanged one priesthood for another." True, the Times was thinking of the final, incontrovertible, irrevocable dogmas of scientists that become discredited, are discarded and give place to others quite absolutely final, incontrovertible and irrevocable—for the time being. But the Times' remarks have suggested to us the priestcraft of science, and the Mail and Empire furnishes an illustration of our meaning.

The Mail and Empire, Sept. 17th inst., has the following by way of headings: "Life will come from Laboratory." "Science now has apparently the Substratum for its operation." "A Great Achievement."

"When Potential Living Matter is produced, as it will be." The text does not bear out the headings; but suggestion is helped out by judicious suppression.

To realize just how jesuitical the priestcraft of science may be we give below the same news as reported in the Globe the same day. The Globe's headings are: "Scientists discuss the origin of Life."

"Problem as baffling as it was a Century Ago—Many Views Expressed in a Debate that was Marked by great Animation."

The Globe's headliner is evidently not a reverent scientific believer, who believes it incumbent on him to assert or boldly suggest that the Schafer miracle after a year's investigation is accepted with reverent awe by the hardheaded scientists of the British Association.

"Birmingham, Sept. 16.—Members of the British Association to-day pursued the question opened by Sir Edward Schafer last year regarding the origin of life. Several solutions were volunteered and many differences of opinion were revealed in the debate, but on one point there was complete agreement. It was that we are no nearer a solution of the origin of life than they were a thousand years ago."

"On one point there was complete agreement. It was that we are no nearer a solution of the origin of life than they were a thousand years ago!"

Lucky we did not revise theology last winter. It is true that Professor Bernard Moore talked learnedly of "potential living matter," but he said nothing that impressed his audience.

"Sir Oliver Lodge was the first critic. He described Prof. Moore's formaldehyde as potential living matter."

"When you have got potential living matter, life makes use of it," he remarked. "What life is I do not know. I suppose it provided parents and passed on. Formaldehyde would not be the origin of life, but the physical and chemical vehicle which can be made use of by life."

"The discussion was animated, but Sir Oliver Lodge refused to accept the title of the debate, declaring that the meeting was not discussing the origin of life at all, but a laboratory synthesis of some material that might possibly be come endowed with what we call life."

"I regard life itself," said he, "as something not of the same order as matter, but of a higher and different order. By having a molecule sufficiently complex, sufficiently unstable and supplied with the energy of sunlight you have apparently the physical and chemical substratum for the operations of life; you have potential living matter. I do not say that we have that potential living matter yet—that will be a great achievement—but I have little doubt that it may be done."

And when you have "potential living matter," (that is matter that may become alive) then something outside of it, "something of a higher and different order,"—life—may make use of it.

No wonder Sir Oliver objected to the title of the paper—the Origin of Life—as a misnomer.

"Prof. H. E. Armstrong, the famous chemist, said he was not for one moment prepared to accept Sir Edward Schafer's contention that it was probable, even possible, that they would ever arrive at the chemical production of life. The word colloid, which was so often used in these discussions, was, like so many words, only used to wrap up ignorance."

When we recall Professor McCallum's childlike scientific faith, we cannot help saying that there are miracles and miracles, credulity and credulity. And with the Mail's bold headline before us—"Life Will Come From Laboratory"—that there is priestcraft and priestcraft; also that we ought to have in the English language some unobjectionable word for jesuitical.

Just a serious word about science and scientists. What God has written in the great book of Nature, what He has inspired in Holy Scriptures, and what He teaches through His Holy Church can never be mutually contradictory. Apparent contradictions will disappear with deeper knowledge. Therefore the Catholic Church is the greatest friend and promoter of true science. Many of the greatest scientists have been and still are Catholics. Others are sincere and humble Christian believers outside God's visible Church. Only a small and noisy minority are unbelievers; but it is this small and noisy minority that furnish the newspapers with sensational headlines. Unfortunately the most arrogant and insolent sceptics get all their "science" from the newspapers; many of them get no farther than the headlines.

Natural science, which in popular language has usurped the name of Science, is dangerous in small doses. Here shallow drafts intoxicate the brain, and drinking deeply sobers us again.

HOME RULE BY CONSENT

The proposal that all parties get together in a round table conference and settle the vexed question of Home Rule by consent has called forth much editorial comment in Canada. The Montreal Star of the 15th inst. has the following: "The present Home Rule Bill is a compromise. Some of its details could easily be amended. We suggested some time ago that the post office and customs regulations might well be changed. But the principle of a local Parliament, sitting in Dublin, could not be amended out of it without destroying the life of the measure. And it is precisely that principle against which Ulster is up in arms. It is not an easy question; but it is a question which we have answered in Quebec to the eminent satisfaction of everybody concerned. Here we have a small Protestant minority living in one corner of a Catholic Province, and affiliated with a Protestant majority in the whole country, precisely as is the case in the United Kingdom. The Catholic Province has local self-government—not as extensive as is asked for Ireland, but that, again, is a matter of detail and hence open to compromise—and the Protestant minority is safeguarded by guarantees. But so general has been the treatment of the minority by the majority that we are hardly conscious of our guarantees at all."

The Star recognizes that Ulster's sole and insuperable objection to Home Rule is not political but purely religious. Singularly appropriate and reassuring is the testimony which it bears to the religious liberty and peace of the most Catholic province of Canada, a province which enjoys a measure of Home Rule greater in some respects, if more restricted in others, than that proposed to be conferred on Ireland. If the conditions in Ulster were not hopelessly abnormal, Quebec's example should have great weight with the Ulster Protestants in the consideration of the question of Home Rule. To understand Ulster's politics it is necessary to understand Ulster conditions.

Harold Begbie, a Protestant of Protestants, writes thus about Belfast: "Two principal delusions exist about this great and loyal city of Belfast. One that it is religious, the other that it is rich. I do not think I exaggerate when I say that a man would have to travel far before he found a city where the foundational principles of the Christian religion are more perfectly ignored, and where the labor of the poorest people is more inadequately rewarded."

"There are men in Belfast who are very rich; but the vast multitude of the city is horribly, wickedly, and disastrously poor."

Fully to realize the condition of Belfast, it is necessary to visit the slum quarters, to enter the kennels of the poor, to examine the wage-books of the home-workers, and to make a study of the ragged, barefoot children in the streets. No

honest man who has conducted such an investigation can doubt that the condition of Belfast is a disgrace to civilization and a frightful menace to the health and morals of the next generation. The heavy scowling faces of the poor, the stunted anemic bodies of the children, haunt the soul of an observer with a sense of horror and alarm.

"That Belfast is rich except in poverty is a delusion; it remains to consider whether the city is religious. "If Belfast did not advertise itself as the most religious city in Ireland, I should refrain from making this charge against it. If clerical politicians did not vaingloriously and most odiously trumpet from pulpit and platform the commercial prosperity of Protestantism, I should not make war on them."

"There is excessive religion in Belfast, excessive religious activity, but I declare that it bears but little resemblance to the religion of Christ. It is in some cases at least a religion of organized self-righteousness from which the ministering spirit of Christianity is lacking. It is a religion of large and comfortable churches, prosperous and well dressed congregations, cheerful and well satisfied tertiaries, Bible-classes for the saved, meetings for the elect, and gatherings for the oiled and bland."

"Penetrate to the individual soul, and you find that the religion is hard, repellent and Pharisaical. It breeds bigotry, self-esteem, and a liberal spirit of charity is wanting. Meekness and humility are excluded. Only here and there you meet a gentle and sweet-minded man who has escaped from the iron vice of this hideous ideology."

"Under the very eyes of the rich and respectable as they go to church are swarms of half-starved, ill-clothed, and barefoot children playing in the gutters of the streets. Throughout the city from one end to the other, and spreading even from the city to the villages beyond, such sweating of women and children is practiced as must wring the soul of heaven. And these religious people raise no protest."

They never ask themselves whether Christ, if he came to Belfast, would attend Protestant Churches and listen to violent denunciations of Popery, or whether he would go into the tragic streets seeking the lost, comforting the unprosperous, and blessing the neglected children. They seem to think Christ would even like Belfast."

The Ulster Guardian, commenting on Mr. Begbie's description of Belfast, says: "In one respect, Mr. Begbie has placed his finger upon a cankerous growth in the religious life of this city, the incessant preaching of politics and denunciation of Popery in our pulpits. Political sermons, Unionist Club church parades, anti-Home Rule religious conventions, what room have these left for spiritual growth or the uplifting of the masses? Are there a dozen churches left in Belfast where a Liberal can worship without having his political principles attacked."

"The exceptions, who try to be pastors instead of politicians—take their careers in their hands. Their very silence makes them marked men."

Yes, Home Rule is a religious not a political question with those poor people. God pity them. With such hawks of swine for spiritual food, this "flesh and blood sludge of sweated humanity" may riot in drunken fury over the passage of Home Rule; but the unscrupulous politicians, lay or clerical, who would represent them at any conference of all the parties know that they have aroused passions they cannot allay; and that any semblance of reasonableness in discussing Home Rule would be regarded by the ignorant, bigoted and debased rabble of Belfast as a betrayal of their interests, religious and political.

No round table conference which includes the Ulster Orange Protestant party can hope for the smallest measure of success. Though if the unfortunate rank and file could get rid of their "religion" they would probably admit that Home Rule would not seriously imperil their "prosperity."

KINGSLEY'S WATER BABIES

Some time ago we protested against the selection of Kingsley's "Water Babies" for work in public schools. If we remember aright we said that the inclusion of the work objected to must have been done without the advertisement of Nova Scotia School authorities who are fair-minded and intent upon propagating the Canadianism that stands for amity and self-development. That we were right is evident from a letter by Professor Howard Murray in the Halifax Herald. Professor Murray is an educator of acknowledged prowess and a citizen whose conduct is a source of edification and inspiration to many in the city of Halifax.

Professor Murray's letter is published in another part of this issue.

MAKE A FRIEND OF JESUS

If there is one thing we can boast of as a redeeming quality in our poor human nature it is that we are faithful and true to our friends. There never yet was a man worthy of the name who would go back on his friend.

We select for our friends those whom we believe to be good and generous and true, those who can sympathize with our sorrows and rejoice when we are glad. And how we take thought for our friends? We consult their interests in everything. We study how to make them happy. Nothing is as unselfish as friendship. Nothing helps us so to realize that it is more blessed to give than to receive. It is essential to true friendship that we think more of the person loved than we think of ourselves—that we be prepared to give up anything that interferes with our friendship—that we like the things he likes, and wish what he wishes. "Without a friend," says Kempis, "one cannot very well live," and at one time or another we all feel the need of the strong hand-clasp of a brother. We crave some ear into which we can pour our griefs and sorrows, knowing that it will be sacred as the sacramental seal. A true friend is the dearest gift of God, "and," says Stevenson, "if we can find but one to whom we can speak out our heart freely we have no ground of quarrel with the world or God" for true friendship, like everything else that is valuable, is rare.

For us it ought not to be hard to find that one friend. For there is One that always comes at our call—One Who will never go back on us—Who will never turn us down for another, Who always has time for us, and is never too busy to see us. The test of friendship is sacrifice, for love is not joy but suffering, and this Friend made a sacrifice at which all others would draw the line. Amid the horror of Calvary He sealed the covenant of His friendship. He wrote its Testament in His Blood.

We may have friends who would make sacrifices for us, but had we ever a friend who would die for us? Had we ever a friend who loved us entirely for ourselves? Had we ever a friend whose friendship would stand the test of perjury and betrayal? Just One, and this One Whom we thought less of than we did of the least of our friends. We treated Him badly and we scarcely gave it a thought. And all the time He waited our return, arms outstretched to receive us, no reproach, but a welcome, upon His lips.

Do we ever think how we have squandered the precious friendship of Jesus? Are there no tears of compunction for our forgetfulness? Behold He stands at the gate and knocks. Let us open to Him now, let us take Him in with us and give Him a place at our fireside. Let us make a friend of Him in life, so that when the time comes for us to go out across the boundary into eternity He may take us with Him up into that land where Love reigns and where Friendship is crowned with the roses of Everlasting Life.

COLUMBA

NOTES AND COMMENTS

AFTER ALL HIS PALAVER ABOUT MISSIONS, Catholic and otherwise, the editor of the Christian Guardian can find nothing better to say in answer to the array of facts and figures set before it by the CATHOLIC RECORD than to term them "Jesuitical." That is, of course, the time-honored Methodist way of backing down. The issue, in the present instance, was of the Guardian's own raising. It asked for facts and figures and we gave them. Out of the mouths of its own oracles it was condemned. Comment upon these, says the Guardian, is not necessary. Not necessary, of course, therefore not attempted. That may, in the Guardian's estimation, have been the easiest method of retreat. It is a pity it could not see that it was also the most contemptible.

AS ONE MEANS OF COMMEMORATING

the centennial years of the War of 1812-15, Mr. Barlow Cumberland of Toronto has published an interesting pamphlet on "The Battle of York." To those to whom one of the lesser events of that memorable conflict is unfamiliar under that title it may be explained that the reference is to the taking of York (Toronto) by the Americans under General Pike, on April 27th, 1813. The event was of little importance in itself, and had no effect, whatever, either one way or the other, upon the fortunes of

the war. True, York was the capital of the Province, and the half-way house between Montreal and the settlements on the Detroit River. But the country all about was a dense forest, still unsettled, and the trouble and cost of holding it would have been out of all proportion to its value to the United States at that time. But the assault was doubtless intended by the Americans as a demonstration of strength and determination to reverse the disastrous results to them of the campaign of 1812.

BE THAT AS IT MAY, York was evacuated and left to its fate, after four short days of occupation. The net result to the invaders was the capture of the Duke of Gloucester, a brig converted into a troop-ship, which had wintered in the harbor. This was burned, however, by Sir James Yeo, when he attacked the Americans in Sackett's Harbor three weeks later. So that to them the one event which makes the capture of York memorable, is that General Pike and two officers were killed, and two hundred and fifty of their soldiers killed or wounded by the premature explosion of the magazine as they were taking possession of the fort.

IN MR. CUMBERLAND'S pamphlet the story of the eight hours' skirmish which preceded the capture of Fort York is told succinctly and well. The affair scarcely merits the title of "battle," though to the few hundred inhabitants of the infant capital it was momentous enough both in its operations and its impending consequences. The troops at the disposition of General Sheaffe, who was in command at York, scarcely numbered six hundred, mostly untrained. In addition, there were a few Indians. To them was opposed the comparatively formidable array of 1,800 Americans, who are described as "trained soldiers." The latter landed at the east side of what is now known as Humber Bay, and the fighting, such as it was, took place largely on the site of the present Exhibition Park. That under such circumstances it took the Americans almost eight hours to reach the Fort, a distance of a little more than a mile, is certainly creditable to the defenders. That, moreover, the skirmish was no mere walk-over is evidenced by the fact that there was considerable loss of life on both sides. Of the Canadians at least two officers and several men were killed.

WE ARE NOT pretending to give the history of the event or to moralize upon its results. Its chief consequence to the inhabitants of York and to the embryo government of Upper Canada was that, perhaps as a reprisal for their loss at the explosion of the magazine, the invaders set fire to the Parliament buildings and Court House, and with them were destroyed what was of far greater consequence, the earliest parliamentary records of the Province of Ontario. If this was an act of reprisal it was really unmerited. The explosion was not designed to annihilate the invaders. The best proof of this is that many of the defenders who had not withdrawn from the fort were among the slain. The act, though intentional, was designed merely to prevent the large store of ammunition from falling into the enemy's hands. The explosion was premature, and the American fatalities were due altogether to falling stones.

THE PUBLICATION of such a pamphlet as this we are reviewing is timely and serviceable. We are these three years celebrating not only an important period of our history devoted to armed conflict, but also the hundred years of peace which have succeeded. Both have had their influence in the determination of our character as a nation. And, whatever the future may have in store, the effect of both will remain. The war of 1812 taught the first serious lesson of self-reliance and gave that touch of romance to our early history which is in itself an asset. The succeeding century of international harmony, with its amazing material developments, should not fail of its lesson that when all is said and done, the greater glories of a nation centre in the arts of peace.

HOWEVER THE politicians of France may regard the secularization of the hospitals, there can be no doubt that the policy has proved disagreeable and unsatisfactory to the people at large. There is, in fact, a growing