

The Catholic Record.

"Christianus mihi nomen est, Catholicus vero Cognomen."—(Christian is my Name, but Catholic my Surname).—St. Paclan. 4th Century.

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AN EXAMPLE FOR YOUNG MEN.

The current issue of the Catholic World contains an interesting article on Frederic Ozanam by Rev. Dr. H. Braun. We note the article because Ozanam was a man who showed what Catholic energy could accomplish. True, he had genius and knowledge, but he showed—and his success ought to be an inspiration for all of us—how these could be made to subserve the interests of God. He was not an historian and philosopher, but, long after these claims to fame have passed from memory, he will be remembered as one who did his share towards uplifting an apathetic and disbelieving generation into an atmosphere of love and faith.

THE ESSENCE OF CIVILIZATION.

Doubtless many before his time mused over the apathy and aimless existences of those about them. But he bent himself to the task of directing the energy that was frittered away on trifles, to noble ends; of purging hearts of the dross of self-interest and of inflaming them with zeal for the cause of the Church. And in so doing he contributed to the progress of true civilization; for civilization is rooted in and made manifest by the love and sympathy which make the way smoother and the guarantee for its perpetuation wells from the hearts of those who still believe that "the essence of civilization consists in the spirit of a gentleman and the spirit of religion; that is, the union of all that is sacred in religion with all that is gentle and strong in humanity."

DEEDS—NOT WORDS.

Otherwise education and culture are but a veneering to veil barbarism. They can serve well enough in peace and prosperity, but they cannot but be ineffectual in days of storm. We have proofs of this round about us. Altruistic rhetoric may deceive one into believing that he is a finished product of civilization. Tito Melema in Savonara we think posed as an altruist, but that did not save him from being utterly selfish.

Ozanam, however, was one who put Christ into his social work. It entailed self-sacrifice—the spending of time and of himself, but all this mattered nothing since it expressed his love for God. And people could understand that. They had evidences that his efforts were not dictated by sordid self-interest. And men to day like to see depictions of Christianity. Words we have, and to spare, which are little heeded; actions however arrest our attention and quicken our enthusiasm and make us ashamed of our littleness and self-seeking. An unselfish deed is the price we pay for another's confidence. A man may be gifted and yet close his eyes in death without having touched a heart-string. He may be respected, but he who would lead us to higher things must gain our love. And hence it is that men who are deaf to eloquent harangues are all attention to deeds done either in the slums or among the lepers, or in places remote. They admire the one who does some work unmindful of the sarcasms and criticisms of the little folk who will not understand that seriousness and noble striving make life worth the living, and their hearts go out to the doer.

ENDURING WORK.

We think, by the way, that the young man who steps out of the rut in our own time must have the courage of the martyr. He will of course be not imperilled by either fire or the sword, but he must be prepared for attacks from a "stiff-necked generation"—sneers and jeers and ridicule from those who do not like to be reminded of their indolence and who are guided in most things by fashion and "they all do it." But let him persevere. Even if defeated humanly speaking, he will be a man. And when the day is, as was Ozanam, a good Christian, and safeguarded in his endeavors by sound philosophy and theology, his work remains.

CATHOLIC BRAVERY.

What is inspiring to young men is that Ozanam began his work soon after 1830, in face of the greatest obstacles. He was confronted by those who were

apathetic and who preferred the easy chair of the critic to the post of the combatant. They had their store of axioms and comforting reflections that could rout any disturbing scruple. The times were evil, but they would change and perhaps any move on their part would provoke a fiercer onslaught of the enemy. He was met too by the avowed enemies of religion. And these enemies held high position in the country. Distinguished by their intellectual attainments, they invented the phrases and epigrams that their followers used to discredit and to ridicule Christ and His Church. They had at their fingers ends the favorite objections, and those they tricked out in verbal millinery to take the eye of the safe lounge and of the man in the street. What could Ozanam hope to accomplish? It was surely a forlorn hope against the stronghold of infidelity. Before him, determined opponents, behind him those who had grown soft through inaction and who lived in dreams and expected miracles. What could he dare to effect?

Frederic, surrounded, says Dr. Braun, on all sides by enemies of his faith, bravely defended its doctrinal and its moral principles from constant attack. But he felt that words were not the most efficacious weapons to use in defense of truth. Deeds are better.

A NOBLE ORGANIZATION.

The infidel St. Simonias pointed particularly to the condition of the labouring classes and of the very poor, and taunted the Catholics with indifference to their welfare. "Show us your good works done for the poor," cried the new quack doctors of poverty. Under the stimulus of this taunt, Ozanam and two friends, Lallier and Lamarche, determined to organize a society under the patronage of St. Vincent de Paul. The growth of the Conferences of St. Vincent de Paul was rapid. In 1833 there were only nine of them; in 1845 they had increased to nine thousand, six of which were in London. The motive of Ozanam and his companions in founding the St. Vincent de Paul Society was derived from Christian faith and from Christian charity. There was nothing of mere humanitarianism or of mere natural philanthropy in their work. They loved the poor because they loved Jesus Christ.

A SOCIAL QUESTION.

Ozanam's diagnosis of the evils of his day is true of our own. The question which agitates the world, said Ozanam in 1836, is not a question of political forms but a social question: if it be the struggle of those who have nothing with those who have too much, if it be the violent shock of opulence and poverty which is making the ground tremble under our feet, our duty as Christians is to throw ourselves between these irreconcilable enemies, and to induce one side to give in order to fulfil the law, and the other to receive as a benefit; to make one side cease to exact—to render equality as general as it is possible amongst men; to make voluntary community of possessions replace taxation and forced loans; to make charity accomplish what justice and law alone can never do.

MORE YOUNG MEN WANTED.

We are doing something along this line here in London. We have our St. Vincent de Paul Society in prosperous condition. But why, may we ask, is not the good done by that society participated in by more of our young men? We should think that such work would appeal to the generous-hearted, and what Catholic worthy of the name does not aspire to that title. It is not showy, but a work that is real, far-reaching in its effects and of incalculable benefit to the Church. "If," wrote Ozanam, "a greater number of Christians had but occupied themselves with the working class these last ten years we should be more secure of the future." We dwell upon this phase of the question a few weeks ago.

Suffice it to say that membership in the Society of St. Vincent de Paul gives one an opportunity not to do detective work nor to put all manner of impertinent and offensive questions to the poor, but to relieve their wants and to convince them that we are brethren.

KINDNESS FILLS THE SOUL.

Doles of eal and bread bring comfort to the body, but the kind tone, the tactful manner and sincerity of the dispenser feed the soul. Every visit of the servant of St. Vincent should

make the home the better and the happier for his coming. Christ is with him, and if he be the proper instrument for Christ's work that work will be done. The crown of thorns will be there after his departure, but it will rest more easily on the brow of the wearer.

What better way to occupy some of our leisure moments! Its advantages we know from our pastor's teaching.

OUR HERITAGE.

When we read of Gordon of Khartoum finding time, despite his many and onerous military duties, to succour and to teach the poor of Gravesend—to befriend ragged boys and to start them in life; when we see non-Catholics devoting themselves unweariedly to the cause of the poor, we cannot but be astonished that more of us are not engaged in the work.

We, of course, belong to the Church of the poor. That is our boast and our glory. But men in our own neighborhood would be more open to conviction on that score if we busied ourselves more than we do about the victims of poverty. Calling the poor our brethren, and proving them, in so far as it lies with us, our brethren are not the same thing.

DEATH-TRAPS.

We should like to see some concerted move on the rookeries and dilapidated structures, mis-called residences. It is futile to our mind to talk of sanitation and of precautions against disease and to allow a considerable number of people to live in buildings into which a self-respecting citizen would not put a beast. How in the name of common sense can sickness be shut out from foul-smelling and ill-lighted tenements which medical men tell us are breeders of microbes and other things. When any disease is prevalent there is hurrying and scurrying and much spilling of chloride of lime, etc., but the rookeries still stand, not only as death-traps for those who are forced to inhabit them, but as a menace to the health of the whole population.

WANTED—SUNLIGHT AND CLEANLINESS.

We labour to beautify the city. Concededly, we might say that to an outsider it seems that a great deal of beautifying is expended on the streets whereon reside the gentlemen who are credited with having what is termed a "pull." However, let us not descend on that. But would it not be to the purpose should we devote more attention to things necessary than to things artistic. More sunlight and cleanliness, in the surroundings of those who abide without the best residential quarter, would make the town more beautiful in the eyes of God and of every right-thinking citizen than any amount of asphaltting.

THE LESSONS OF CHRISTMAS.

In the annual cycle of the great feasts of the Church we are coming again to the celebration of that most wonderful, and at the same time most joyful event, the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. Who came into the world to save sinners. The occasion naturally suggests several important practical lessons. In the first place it strikingly suggests a lesson of joy and thanksgiving. If the angels were commissioned to announce to the humble shepherds the joyful news of the birth of a Saviour in that glorious song: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will," surely, we, for whose benevolent Saviour was born into the world, fit that Saviour was born into the world, may well join in that song with heart-felt thanksgiving to Almighty God for His great and unspokeable gift to men. The heavenly messengers understood thoroughly the greatness of the blessing embodied in that lowly infant. It was not for themselves that they rejoiced, but for sinful, lost man, hitherto wandering in darkness, without God and without hope in the world.

It is, now, to the man who realizes that he is a sinner—has offended God and rendered himself liable to the Divine displeasure—that the news of a Saviour comes as a soothing balm to his troubled conscience. Are we not all sinners? Have we not offended God in numerous times and ways? If so, and we can not deny it, how can we refrain from the most heartfelt thanksgiving and praise to Almighty God that in His infinite love and compassion, He has sent His own dearly beloved Son to redeem and save us? From His lowly birth to His cruel death upon the Cross think of what that Saviour did and suffered to make atonement for our sins. Think what love must have burned in His Sacred Heart, how He longed for the salvation of all men. And now, that love is still burning in His Sacred Heart. He is daily and hourly inviting us to come to Him, and promising to bestow upon us infinitely precious graces and blessings both in this world and in that which is to come.

But we must not forget the lesson of

humility which the birth of our Saviour in a stable so impressively inculcates. The poet says that "pride is the never-falling vice of fools." If that is so we are afraid we must all be fools, for where is the man or woman in whose heart there lurks no feeling of pride? Pride is a vice—that is certain. We hate it in others, why should we not all hate it in ourselves and strive to overcome it? Think of the infinite condescension and love which brought our Saviour from heaven to earth, to be born in a stable and cradled in a manger. He came to mingle with the poor, the lowly and the distressed, and that thought is the only real consolation that thousands of His devoted followers enjoy in this world. "Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom;" these words bring to them consolation and comfort in all the troubles and trials of life, and they look forward with joyful hope, and sometimes with joyful anticipations, to the glorious rewards of eternity.

But there is also for us a lesson of charity most emphatically taught us by the birth of our Lord of which we are at this season reminded. We are not going to say a word against the beautiful custom of making presents to our friends on Christmas Day, but blessed be whose kindness and beneficence and those of his own household which he has so graciously bestowed upon us, we are reminded of the injunction of our Saviour. True charity is the very life and soul of our religion. It brings us nearer to our Saviour than all other virtues, and is the best evidence of our being true disciples of Christ. "Now there remaineth faith, hope, and charity, these three," says the great Apostle, "but the greatest of these is charity." No one can celebrate Christmas as it should be celebrated, or taste fully its holy joy unless he shall have abounding Christian charity in his heart.—Sacred Heart Review.

BLESSED AMONG WOMEN.

The second part of the angelical salutation contains the words with which St. Elizabeth greeted the Blessed Virgin when the latter visited her after the conception of the Son of God. Filled with the Holy Ghost, St. Elizabeth exclaimed: Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb.

Blessed among women, indeed. The Virgin Mary had been chosen from among all other women to be the Mother of God. Surely a blessed, divine, and special privilege—an honor and a blessing as far above that which has ever fallen to any other creature as God is above the things of creation. Blessed in being preserved immaculate from the moment her soul animated her body. Blessed beyond the inhabitants of heaven because she was to become the Mother of God. Blessed because of Him she gave the world and through and by Whom the gates of heaven were again opened to mankind.

Blessed is the fruit of thy womb. A positive and undeniable assertion of the fact, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, was her Son—Son in the truest sense of the term—the most perfect Son of the most perfect mother. Therefore in Him, and through Him the source of every blessing for us. The instrument of redemption, the fountain of blessings. As through Eve came the curse of mankind, so through Mary was it removed.

Having been so wonderfully blessed by God, how becoming in us to honor her the greatest honor. How proper for us to do so when God so highly honored her. For in honoring the Mother we also honor her Son. This we may do by endeavoring to repeat these words of the angelical salutation in the spirit which animated St. Elizabeth when she uttered them. If we do so, God, her Son, will not permit the honor we show her to go unrewarded, but will bless us here and bring us to the enjoyment of her company in a blessed eternity.—Church Progress.

THE PASSING OF THE GREAT DOUBTERS.

The last of the great agnostics has passed away. Darwin is dead; Huxley is dead; Tyndal is dead; Virchow is dead; Mommson died a few days ago; Herbert Spencer died last Tuesday. All were lonely men. All dwelt on bare, bleak heights above their human kind and moaned their desolate creed of "No hope," down to the multitude, and occasionally cried, "No hope here," "No hope here," to one another, yet patiently as they talked, not one left aught behind which will make the world brighter or better. No earnest soul will regret the passing of the six Great Doubters.

It is true Mommson did much in history, and true that Virchow did much in science, still compared with the achievements of a number of Christian workers, that which they accomplished was little, indeed. The English philosophers especially proved barren Darwin's once-popular theory of evolution is now out of date; and Tyndal is now merely a name. The cable this week compares Spencer to Plato. Yet how different the spirit of Plato from that of Spencer. Plato rayed out white hope and crystal-clear faith viewed beside the English agnostic. Great as were the limitations of the Greek pagan his work is like a draught of cool water compared to that of Spencer. No one ever waded through Spencer's "Synthetic Philosophy" without turning away feeling that his soul was full of dry sand and pebbles. How can such work be expected to live? It is not alive. It was dead before its author

died. His last book shows that he half-way realized the fact himself.

It is the ancient moral repeated. No truly excellent work can be produced without faith. It was faith which carved the lion-kings of Assyria, gave to civilization the gigantic monuments of Babylon and Egypt, the art, poetry and philosophy of the Greeks and Romans, and since the coming of Christ all that is sublime or beautiful in sculpture, art and architecture. Faith builds; doubt destroys. The one energizes and uplifts; the other results in paralysis of the soul. Had Huxley, Tyndal, Spencer faith they would have lived on down the centuries with Newman, Gladstone and Leo XIII. As it was they dwelt alone on their mountain tops, and even God was not with them.

A striking proof of the failure of their work is the burst of morning-light rising over that very England in which they lolled. Despite the dusk they wrought upon their mountain-tops it is becoming Catholic England. The piety of Faber, the energy of Manning, the intellectuality of Newman—these are gradually dispersing the shadows called up by the philosophers. The pessimism silently replaced by the snow-white optimism of the great agnostics lived to see the change taking place in the England they hoped to lead astray. Because the change did take place, we may confidently expect the doers of the future to surpass the doers of the past—The New World.

THE CURES OF LOURDES.

MIRACLES WHICH ASTONISH AND MYSTIFY UNBELIEVERS.

It may not be generally known that all the reputed miracles at Lourdes are carefully examined by a medical board (Bureau des Contestations Medicales) on the spot and on the very day of their occurrence. All other physicians of any country are invited to be present at the examination. A certificate from the physician who previously attended the patient is scrupulously exacted. Dr. Boissier has compiled and published an important medical work bearing directly on the Lourdes workers, and giving the testimony of some three hundred medical men, including many Protestant and even unbelievers, who bear witness to a healing change in their patients which no human agency known to science can explain. The author had for five years previous sat in the office where the reported cures were most carefully and even skeptically examined by experts. His reputation as a medical and scientific man beyond question and the result of his long observation was expressed in the following words: "The miracles of our hospitals, which mark the furthest limit of the power of nature and of art, are but a joke in comparison with the mysterious power that manifests itself at Lourdes. The physician who is present for the first time at this reversal of every law, stops astonished and amazed, and seeks in vain for some data on which to proceed. It took, in the year 1853, upwards of one hundred and fifty medical men went to Lourdes to study the results, so that M. Renan's gungue that "every miracle before it is accepted as such ought to be submitted to a commission of experts" is in full operation at this wonderful shrine.

An outsider, who visited Lourdes, sent his impressions to the London Spectator, a secular paper, and coming from a non-Catholic they cannot be suspected of prejudice in favor of the shrine and its marvels. "These cures at Lourdes," he says, "for merely to deny them is really idle, may be no more miraculous in the stricter sense, if all were known, than the cable of telephone. They may be merely the application of an unknown law. Then why, the caprice of them? It looks, at all events, more like the setting of known laws aside, and it is there at present that the riddle of the healing lies." Now as of old, the one is taken and the other left, if above and outside the ruthless and unrelenting forces of nature, there were some Power at work which can, and does, set those forces aside for the hour, and lend a world of meaning to the Story of the Valley of Ajalon. . . . Ridicule is powerless, too, upon a place like this; and one can only be sorry to see Lourdes written of in any flippant vein, or to read clever remarks upon the wooden figure of the Virgin, which is so entirely beside the question. It is not in the effigy that the supplicants believe. Ridicule recoils in such a case as this, and falls away. The gravity of these things is too grave."

PIUS X. AS GRAVE-DIGGER.

Rev. Alexander Robertson, a Protestant missionary residing in Venice, is best known as an inveterate and often an embittered assailant of the Papacy and the Vatican. It is, therefore, the more surprising to find in the Pall Mall Magazine an article from the pen of this writer praising the new Pope and telling some interesting anecdotes of his earlier years. One of them deals with an incident that occurred when the future Pontiff was parish priest at Salzano, a large village near Treviso. His Holiness was thirty-two years old when sent to this parish, and he labored there nine years. Here is the incident as described by the Rev. Mr. Robertson:

A son of the soil himself, the Pope in his earlier days was always willing to help his countrymen. The Sicilian tells how more than once when a body had to be brought to the church from a distance for a funeral service, and

three men only could be found to carry it, he himself would form the fourth. When in 1872, cholera broke out at Salzano, a panic seized the villagers and none could be got to dig graves or bury the dead. Don Beppi then said to his sacristan, "You and I must do it." So getting spades they set to work. Their courageous conduct was not lost upon the parishioners, who soon relieved them of their toil."

INDECENCIES REPUUDIATED BY A PROTESTANT.

THE CONFESSION OF A NON-CATHOLIC.

Since September the New York Apostolate Fathers have missioned the following places: Long Branch, N. J.; Rossville, S. I.; Pine Plains, Tivoli, Livingston Manor, and Newburg, N. Y.; All Saints' Church, New York City; and Our Lady of Good Counsel, New York City.

In one place, where the questions were very unpleasant and sometimes unclean, a consoling incident occurred. The questions—i. e., the unclean ones—had been extracted from a most scrupulous book, viz., *The Devil in the Church*, which, by the way, is widely advertised up State, and which is found in not a few places in the country parts as a dictionary of Catholicity. The audience was largely a Protestant one. They were earnest inquirers. The missionary finally requested his audience to observe that in all his remarks there was not one syllable of personal attack, but a plain defence of Catholicity. A Protestant gentleman of the audience, who was a prominent man of the town, arose and apologized for those nasty questions, and remarked that he in the name of the audience repudiated such uncharitable, lying and unclean attacks, and their author. "Truth crushed to earth will rise again." If the non-Catholics are aided, if they are approached and made feel that they too are the sheep of Jesus, if the truth of Christ is held up before them as the need of their lives, if it is turned round and round to strike their vision, then, regardless of attack, will the honest mind and heart rise up and follow it. It must be so; for it is the word of God which can open, penetrate, and illumine the minds of all.

After the lecture one evening, a Protestant woman approached the priest and requested him to hear her confession. The missionary said: "You are a Protestant?" "Yes, but I wish to make my confession. Will you please hear me? I know you cannot grant me, a Protestant, absolution, but you can hear me." This poor woman was the victim of consumption and heart disease. She felt that her end was near. She said: "I am doomed, Father; I may live a month, but I shall not live three. Please hear my confession? I feel the need of opening my heart, of unfolding it to some one. Oh, confession is a solace when one's hand rests on the gate of eternity!" "I feel," she continued, "that the hand of God is heavy on me; else why do I suffer?" After she had finished her confession the priest reminded her that Jesus Christ died for her as well as for him. "Jesus," he said, "died for all and loves all, and wishes all to follow Him. Will you kneel and pray with me?" The good woman knelt and prayed with the priest. She arose and, taking a crucifix which the priest gave her, said: "If you can tell me how a priest can forgive sin, I shall become a Catholic; for, if it is so, then this is a sacred way of approaching nearer to Christ which I have never found before." What a solace, what a security it would be, to enter the Eternal Court of God with this sacrament of pardon! The ways of God are wonderful. The healthy and pure-proud worldlings might smile at this honest, noble heart; but they some day will find the wrappings of the world, will face the Great Beyond, and they, too, will seek security, solace, and strength to meet the eternal Judge. May they find it!—The Missionary.

Things to Forget.

If you would increase your happiness and prolong your life, forget your neighbor's faults. Forget all the slander you have ever heard. Forget the temptations. Forget the fault finding and give a little thought to the cause which provokes it. Forget the peculiarities of your friends and only remember the good points which make you fond of them. Forget all the personal quarrels or stories you may have heard by accident, which if repeated, would seem a thousand times worse than they really are. But out as far as possible all the disgraces of life; they will come, but they will grow larger when you remember them, and constant thought of the acts of meanness makes you more familiar with them. Obliterate everything disagreeable from yesterday. Start out anew with a clean heart to-day so that you may write upon a clean sheet for sweet memory's sake only those things which are pure and lovely.

For Want of Energy.

Submission to what people call their "lot" is often ignoble. If your lot makes you cry and be wretched and you are not sure that it is really Providential; get rid of it and take another; strike out for your self; don't listen to the shrills of your relatives, to their jibes or their entreaties; don't let your own microscopic set prescribe your goings-out and comings-in; don't be afraid of public opinion in the shape of the neighbor in the next house when all the world is before you, new and shining and everything is possible if you will only be energetic and independent and seize the opportunity by the scruff of the neck.