

THE READER'S CORNER

CONDUCTED BY "COLUMBA"

This is an age when empty, meaningless catch-words take the place of philosophical thinking. Persons with a little educational enameled but no real mental depth, catch hold of one or more such fallacies that pass current for truth, and straightway proceed to enlighten a world that has been sunk in the darkness of ignorance until an all-seeing providence took pity on it and raised up this new star to light its shadowy path. Liberalism is not a new cry. Neither are its apostles a new phenomena. But it seems as though this present age were especially favorable to its cult. A little learning is a dangerous thing, and people with one or two ideas, but no head to contain them, are at best but a necessary nuisance. But when we see men in high places go out of their way to demonstrate their liberalism it is altogether another question. It is time we asked ourselves where we stand and why we stand where we are.

"It is common nowadays," writes "Jem," "to hear Catholics who pride themselves on their 'liberal' ideas say, oh, we Catholics can't blame Protestants for being bigoted for we are bigoted ourselves. If we were liberal they would be liberal too." Who will say that my correspondent is one of those who are prone to seeing visions or dreaming dreams? Does he not rather put his finger on a very real danger of the present day? Liberalism in matters religious has ever been part and parcel of that strange collection of negations that is labelled Protestantism. But the pruning and trimming of Catholic dogma to make it fit in with the times "is a practice that is as deplorable as it is harmful." Those progressive (!) Catholics who would have us imitate the so-called liberality of the sects sadly need to have their ideas adjusted to facts. If to stand firmly by the truth be bigotry then we are bigots and are proud to be reckoned such. Is the mathematician who maintains that two and two make four a bigot? If a thing is so it is so, and there is no more about it. And any Catholic who is more than a nominal adherent of the Church must surely know that truth bears but one interpretation. Any amount of empty verbiage will not explain away a dogma.

Here is another important point touched upon by "Jem." "When talking about religious matters with non-Catholics, these 'liberals' never fail to say, 'we are all working for the same end and it isn't much difference what road we take.'" Now talk like that is certainly criminal.

Do these Catholics believe that one religion is as good as another? Do they hold that the doctrine of exclusive salvation in the Catholic Church is antiquated and obsolete? Do they maintain that truth and falsehood are equally pleasing before God? If these wolves in sheep's clothing really believe this then the sooner they give practical effect to it by leaving the Church the better for the Church. It reminds me of a certain journey I once made in the company of a gentleman high up in the Masonic cult. He, poor man, was not a bad sort of fellow. He would like to imagine all roads led to heaven. And seeing that, according to himself, they did so, why should we bother about what Church we belonged to. It was certainly very plausible provided his supposition was correct. But if all roads lead to heaven why do we spend millions for the conversion of the pagan? Why do the Methodists spend time and money in the attempt to proselytize the Italians? Why did the pious soupers endow the mission to the benighted Papists of Ireland? If all roads lead to heaven what need was there of Christ becoming man? Why did we need a bible? Why did Luther reform the Church? If all roads lead to heaven why did Christ tell His apostles to teach us to observe all things that He had commanded us? Why did St. Paul write though an angel from heaven were to preach another gospel than his that he should be anathema?

Either Christ gave us some definite teaching or He didn't! Every Catholic at least believes He did. Surely, then, the acceptance or non-acceptance of

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that teaching is not equally pleasing to Him. If Christ meant us to believe He was present in the Blessed Eucharist surely denial of His Sacramental Presence must make a difference? Christ came on earth to show men the way to heaven. If we are to hold that He is indifferent as to how we reach it we must pronounce Him the greatest fool that ever lived. Either He showed us the way or He didn't. If He did surely He expects us to walk that way!

"Catholics of the liberal type," continues my correspondent, "are keeping many sincere seekers of the truth out of the fold." There can be no question about it. How many a sincere inquirer is lulled into a false security by the liberal-mindedness which solves his query with, "oh, well, why should we bother about trifling differences. We all serve God, and Christ died for all men." The "liberal" Catholic will assuredly have to answer for the souls thus kept outside the fold of Christ.

If serving God according to our own sweet will were all that was necessary how do these devout Scripture readers explain the conversion of Cornelius the Centurion? He was "a religious man, and one that feared God with all his house—who gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always." Surely here were more than enough to satisfy our liberal friends. And yet God sent an angel from heaven to bid Cornelius be instructed in the faith! Does God send His angels and His apostles on useless errands? Surely Cornelius "knew" God, as our friends would put it. But there was something wanting that only His divinely commissioned teacher could supply. But, my dear "Jem," there is little use arguing with men of such liberal ideas! They would have it that God must be indifferent about religion just because they are disposed to be indifferent about it themselves. They would make God, not what He is, but as it pleases their fancy to imagine Him. It is no use trying to convince a fool, and the person who maintains that the God of Truth is indifferent whether we believe what is true or what is false is either a fool or a lunatic.

CHATS WITH YOUNG MEN

WANTED

Wanted, a stalwart man! The man who, when he knows the right, The same pursues against all might; The man who dares to stand alone For conscience's sake when hope is gone; Who dares to leave a beaten path And live within the light he hath, Nor shrinks to strike a deadly blow At error found in friend or foe— This is the stalwart man.

Wanted, an honest man! A man may live within the laws, Or 'scape their grasp through flimsy flaws, But he who scorns an action mean Is honest where he is not seen, Nor dares advance at other's cost, Counts an ill-gotten wealth as lost Nor grudges each his fullest due, Whose word, as is his oath, is true— This is the honest man.

Wanted, a noble man! Not one who from a favored place Claims kindred with a worn-out race, Whose empty titles, ancient name, Are all his wealth, are all his fame; But one whose usefulness men see, Though humble may his station be; For such will bless on every hand His friends, his home, his native land; This is the noble man.

THE "I DON'T KNOW" EMPLOYEE Some employees never seem to know anything definitely.

No matter what you ask them, unless it is something their work makes them perfectly familiar with, they will say, "I don't know."

They cannot tell you the commonest things in their own neighborhood, the names of streets or the location of well-known firms. They don't know how to do this; they don't know how to do that. They don't know because they don't observe; they don't go about the world with their eyes open. They don't see things. They don't think; they just mull.

Other employees seem to be able always to answer your question. They can tell you almost anything you ask them, because they have used their brains. They have observed; they have kept their eyes and ears open; they have reflected; they have drawn conclusions.

The "I don't know" employee is not a climber in his vocation; he is a perpetual clerk, because people who fill important positions must use their gray matter.

PUTTING UP A GOOD FRONT A little while ago I heard of a firm which through a circular letter, informed their salesmen on the road that their business was very poor, that they were falling behind, and that they depended upon them to pull the firm out of the hole they were in.

Such a letter would only dishearten men who were supposed to be doing their level best. They would say to themselves, "If my house is having such a hard time of it as that, it may go to the wall. There must be something wrong at the home office. It can't be the fault of the salesmen, for we have just as good men as there are on the road."

This firm's policy was extremely shortsighted. Very few men are so constituted that they can work without encouragement. Employees like to work for a successful concern.

TELL HIM SO When an employee does a thing unusually well, takes unusual pains with it, tell him so. It will stimulate him to do it even better next time.

When you see any one trying to do his best, who, perhaps, has no one to encourage him, give him a little lift, tell him so. It will not hurt you, and may do him a great deal of good.

Form the habit of encouraging people when they do well. Give them a lift when they are down. It costs you only a little effort and it may make a vast difference to those you encourage.

See how many people you can give a lift to this year.

DON'T KNOW THE SIMPLE LIFE One of the most unfortunate things about living in a large city is its tendency to create false ideas of what constitutes real pleasure.

Take the average New Yorker for example; he has totally incapacitated himself for simple, quiet, home-like pleasures. He must plunge into excitement. He must see exciting plays, or go to big shows with powerful scenic effects, or to light, flippant vaudeville—something that will tickle the senses for the minute—that will stimulate. There must be something exciting about it to give him any pleasure.

There are thousands of people in New York who would think it a great bore to sit down to quiet parlor games or home amusements of any kind. I know old New Yorkers who say they are homesick the moment they leave the city. They must be in the swim of excitement where they can hear the roar of the great city all the time. Their lives are set to a rapid pace in everything. The country seems dull and things are in a lull. They don't know the joys of the simple life.

New York life unfits a great many people for living anywhere else, especially in small communities. It dulls their taste for the quiet evening at home, the reading of good books, the family discussions, the home story-telling. They have become used to the New York pace, attuned to the New York life, and nothing else is stimulating enough to satisfy them. They don't know how to slow down.

What many of these people call amusement is simply a nightmare when it comes to realities. What many young men in New York call having a good time is most demoralizing in its effect. It leaves behind nothing but regret and the loss of self-respect. It stimulates for the moment, lends an exhilaration to the nervous system, only to be followed by the "blues" or disgust the next day.

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watch your footing. Compensation again. When I was a youngster I envied my foreman. One day I found that he envied the superintendent. And a little later I decided that the superintendent envied the boss. Then the boss told me he wished he was a boy again, doing what I was. I lost my envy on the spot.

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS THE USEFUL GIRL When a girl reaches thirteen, says an exchange, her weekly dime should be increased to a quarter. Many small items of attire such as gloves, stockings, stockings, collars, she will be able to buy for herself by saving up.

Now, the mother having taught her little girl to be saving, will begin to delegate some of her own work to the child. She has to learn marketing. The mother takes the girl with her for some time on her buying expeditions; then she allows her to take the reins for a week or so, checking her where she goes a little wrong.

She learns inspection of goods so that she can discriminate between good and inferior brands of groceries, meat, fish, and the like. She learns how to buy and what to buy. Market tables she studies so as to find out beforehand what things are in or out of season and what the prices are. Then she is ready to meet any over-charge with the right knowledge.

It is a treasure easily attained, because girls love this marketing and delight in doing it. And it is just as well to take a little trouble to know how to do it well. Later on some lucky man will delight in his house-keeping treasure, too, and still later another generation of boys and girls may arise to bless not only their mother, but the grandmother who was the source of all her knowledge.

AFTER HOLY COMMUNION The most solemn moment of life is that of thanksgiving. You then have at your disposal the King of heaven and earth, your Savior and your Judge to grant you whatever you ask of Him.

Consecrate, if you can, one-half hour to thanksgiving, or at least, at its very least, one quarter of an hour. It would be better, if necessity required it, to shorten the time of preparation, so that the thanksgiving might be lengthened; for could you find a moment more holy, more salutary than that in which you possess Jesus in Body and Soul?

To abridge one's thanksgiving is an ordinary temptation. The demon knows the value of it, and self-love, nature, fears its effects. Fix, then, the time of your thanksgiving, and never retrench one moment of it without a pressing reason.

after communion does not call for a very elevated state of the spiritual life. Have you a good will? Jesus will speak to you and you will understand His language.

A LESSON IN KINDNESS A man and a boy were riding together in a heavily loaded wagon when they came to the foot of a hill.

"This will be a hard pull for the horses," said the man as he saw his young passenger settling comfortably back in the seat. "Jump out, Johnny. We can't level the hill, but we can at least keep from adding our own weight to the load."

It was a lesson in kindness that will bear wider application. All about us, among our friends and in our own families are those bearing heavy burdens and traveling toilsome roads. We may be unable to change either the way or the load, but we can at least avoid adding to the weight of our own respondent or complaining moods, the recipient of our own ills and worries. We need not selfishly add our griefs to the burden of those who already have enough to bear.

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