

THE HOME CIRCLE

ACCEPT MY PRAYER.

I say I love thee, Lord, but do I act
As if my love were real, strong and true?
Alas! at times, I think that less of fact
And more of fancy tints my words
I know not why it is, so oft, that I,
With quickened sense of tenderness
Within,
To spare Thee one slight pang would
gladly die,
And yet, turn I aside, and yield, and
sigh!

Accept, dear Lord, the words that seem
so vain,
I do not mean to grieve Thy gentle
Heart;
Full well I understand the depth of
pain
Inflicted by ingratitude's keen dart;
I would each daily thought, and deed,
and breath
Were centered in Thy Sacred Heart,
alone,
That so—in union sweet in life and
death—
Eternity might prove me more Thine
own.
—Amadeus, in St. Anthony's Messenger

A LETTER TO POPE LEO XIII.
FROM A NON-CATHOLIC.

The following letter from a prominent non-Catholic, is eminently significant. We give it here, suppressing, for the time being, the writer's name.

To the Holy Father Pope Leo XIII.,
Rome, Italy:

Most Reverend and Holy Father:
I take the liberty of addressing you because I am much interested in the success and growth of the Roman Catholic Church in the United States, for the following reasons—

First—That the Catholic Church trains its young in a way to secure good morals, good citizenship, a respect for property rights and the rights of others.

Second—Because of the firm faith of the Catholic Church in God, Christ, the Holy Bible, and a firm acceptance of the religion of the Saviour, without which civilization must eventually disappear.

I believe it is almost necessary for the future of my country that the Catholic Church shall grow to be a strong power here. The Protestant Church in the United States is fast drifting into infidelity. In many of the great theological seminaries of that church open disbelief in some parts of the Bible is taught. Thousands of the ministers of the Protestant denominations are men who believe that certain parts and books of the Bible need not be accepted. Their position and work have hastened the disbelief in all religion.

Because of my position before the public I feel that I may be forgiven by you for writing you this letter. Many thousands of the strongest men in the United States, made apprehensive by the spreading of Socialism, are turning their eyes towards the Church of which you are the Reverend Head. The greatest banker in the world, Mr. J. Pierpont Morgan, of this city, and one of the greatest men of our country, told me very recently that he believed the Roman Catholic Church was a necessity for the preservation of our society.

I have talked with a very large number of our ablest and best men, who believe as he does on that question, but there is a feeling among the masses of our people that the great authorities of the Catholic Church have feelings of antagonism against the United States of America. If this feeling could be removed, I believe the next ten years would see a very large movement of our best people into your Church. There are at least twelve millions of Catholics in the United States. The Church buildings and edifices are among the finest here.

The attendance at Church on Sunday is very great; nearly as many men as women are at religious services. The Catholics are taught last year eight hundred and fifty-three thousand scholars, at a cost of at least forty million francs. The other expenses of the Roman Catholic Church must have been, at a very low estimate, sixty million francs more, making a total of one hundred and ten million francs which the Roman Catholics of the United States paid for the support of their religion last year without any state aid whatever.

When our people see this sort of devotion to faith, and see Roman Catholics men in large numbers attending Church service on Sunday, and then look about to see what Roman Catholics of the United States receive from the United States Government, they think that Roman Catholics in the United States are not encouraged in such a way as they should be by the authorities in Rome, and this leads to the conclusion that there is an antagonism between the authorities at Rome and the American people and nation.

American people think that their country is a very great one, and is destined to become one of the great factors in shaping the policies of the world.

Yours has been one of the most wonderful lives the world ever saw. During it greater changes have taken place than in the same number of years of any other age. You have seen Napoleon destroyed and exiled, Bismarck and Victoria live and die. Down into the new century, you have brought great purity, learning, and love of God and humanity. If you could do some things before you shall be removed from this earth to the feet of the Saviour that would aid in adding millions to your Church in this great, energetic, and growing nation, you will do that which strengthens civilization, and will help to bring into the true faith millions who are now in danger of being disbelievers in all religion.

With prayers for your continued health, I am, most respectfully and sincerely,
Your most respectful servant,
HOME MATTERS.

To a married woman making her home in a new place the problem often presents itself of how she may retain the interest of her new ac-

quaintances, writes Mrs. Frank Learned in the Delineator. In all probability she has left a large circle of friends in her old home, she misses their companionship and finds it difficult to adjust herself to changed conditions. After a certain time her husband's friends who have received her wedding cards have called, and she has returned their visits; and it may be that she has been the recipient of hospitalities from a few people, yet has never returned their civilities, and there follows a long period of social inactivity when she begins to realize that an effort on her own part is needed. It is certain that no young married woman can afford to believe that she can have all the attention of society without doing anything in return.

A homemaker in a city frequently engages in some kind of charitable work which throws her among congenial associates. This does not necessarily mean insincere effort. There is no reason why the labor may not be one of love and at the same time bring one in touch with pleasant people in work on committees.

It requires really much tact, cleverness and energy for a new resident in a city, or even in a country town or neighborhood, to make or keep up a position, especially if she has not large means at command, yet much success may be attained in a quiet way and much pleasure given by simple, unostentatious entertainments. The new resident cannot, of course, make advances to those who have neither called nor invited her to their homes, even if they are neighbors. It would seem polite for the people whom she may meet at the houses of acquaintances to say they will give themselves the pleasure of calling, that is, if they know a stranger. One may be cordial in meeting the advances of others, yet never persistent, and one have a manner which is far from indifferent yet entirely dignified.

In regard to a novice to attempt to give something very original. It is in better taste to keep to the usual conventional forms until one becomes an experienced hostess. Carls for an afternoon tea may be sent to one's general acquaintances, and there are various inexpensive ways of entertaining those who have extended special hospitalities. Evening card parties are much in fashion; luncheons for one's women friends; small dinners of six or eight congenial people are not difficult. In all cases husbands must be invited with their wives unless a party is exclusively for women.

In the country or in a country town where there are ample grounds, nothing is pleasanter on a summer afternoon than a garden party, to which general acquaintances may be invited. The hostess usually receives in the house. After the guests have greeted her, they may wander about the grounds, returning to the house for refreshments. Ices, berries and cream cake, lead tea, lemonade, etc., may be served.

THE CHEERFUL FACE.

How many souls with grief distressed
We meet along the way!
How many hearts with wrong oppressed
Passed by us through the day!
Yet we may ease our neighbor's care,
And with kind words, will also wear
A bright and cheerful face.

It is the mirror of the heart,
Reflecting what is good;
It is no hollowiness of art,
Nor a deceptive mood.
Oh, what a beautiful and sweet,
And what so in its place,
So winning, gladness and complete,
As woman's cheerful face!

It has its charm in young and old,
The gentle and the brave,
And lives in grateful story told,
When they are in the grave;
For hearts that gladdened at their sight,
Still keep for them a place
And speak in tender sweet delight,
Of each bright, cheerful face!

THE CATHOLIC PAPER.

For a succinct summary of the worth of a Catholic paper to the community for which it is published, we have seen nothing to surpass the following paragraphs clipped from the Milwaukee Catholic Citizen.

1. Some time ago forty Catholic gentlemen of Louisville, Ky., put up \$50 each to strengthen a Catholic paper in that city. Besides which they worked to get it advertising. What had they to gain? Nothing. They were public-spirited gentlemen who believed that a Catholic paper in the community was a necessity.

2. "It's worth at least \$5 a year to me," says a priest, "to have information every week during the session of the Legislature as to whether any measures hostile to the Church are pending."

3. The Catholic paper, entering all the daily and weekly newspaper offices, is an enlightenment in those influential quarters against anti-Catholic misrepresentation. If it were not for the Catholic paper the dailies would pay very little attention to Catholic news.

4. "The power above and behind all thrones is public opinion." Under modern conditions, no racial or religious element is strong unless it possesses an able, vigorous and well-equipped journal devoted to its interests and pledged to the beliefs, causes and opinions that it holds dear.

5. "In a social and business way, disrespect to my creed is disrespect to me personally. Consequently, the public respect for my creed, defends its good name and champions its fair claims is fighting my personal battle. I am going to stand by it at least to the extent of my subscription, \$2.00."

6. "No doubt the Catholic paper will live without my \$2," says a thoughtful reader. "But will it keep the flag flying? My sub-

scription may not be necessary; but then, again, it may enable the Catholic paper to pay for more contributions and better special features. Every subscription strengthens the cause."

THE THREE PORTRAITS.

By Rev. G. M. Guds, C. S. S. R.
A girl receives her birthday gifts
While sitting at a convent school.
But she was a girl and very proud,
And would not allow out the rule
The girl's face was blushed all red
In each a portrait was concealed

She opened the first with childish glee,
To each a looking glass was seen,
How great her joy and happiness
To contemplate her own fair mien.
These words were written in the
As thou art now, a pretty lass!

Her smiles and joy were changed to
When she the second box untied
An ugly skull, with empty eyes,
The world's bright promises belied
Beneath these cruel words were
"As thou shalt be; think well of
it!"

The maiden sighed and wept to think
Her beautiful form would one day lie
A prey to worms within the tomb,
"How sad for me so young to die!"
All earthly beauty fades when death
Exhales o'er it his icy breath!

With trembling hand she opened the
third,
And thrilled with pleasure and delight:
On her blessed Lady smiled,
Surrounded by a heavenly light
These words were written on the
frame:
"As thou shouldst be; love Mary's
name!"

She cried: "Dear Mary, Queen of Heaven,
Confiding in thy mother's love,
I promise thee henceforth to live
That I may live with thee above,
Bright mirror where the Deity
Is truly imaged, pray for me!"

STORIES OF CONFESSION.

By Rev. G. M. Guds, C. S. S. R.
Some edifying facts may be related concerning the secrecy of confession. St. John of Nepomuc, in Bohemia, died a martyr of this secrecy in the year 1393. He was a canon of the Cathedral of Prague and the confessor of the Queen, King Wenceslaus was a brutal and hasty man. As he was not doing right, he could not endure the kind advice and gentle reproof of his pious wife. In a fit of jealousy he wanted to know something about the Queen's confession. He questioned the canon about it, but all in vain. He had the priest imprisoned, but on account of the indignation of the people he thought it more prudent to release him. He had recourse to other means, presents, offers of alms, all in vain. The answer of the priest was unchangeable:

"A priest hears confessions of people, but to speak a word about what he heard of a person in particular, never!"

At last the King had him thrown into the river Moldau, where he drowned. And God glorified the martyr; his body was seen floating brilliantly on the waves and twelve shining lights surrounded his ear, that ear with which he used to hear confessions.

In 1854 a murder was committed in Oratoff, near Kiev, in Podolia, and the murderer went very early in the morning to the vestry of the Catholic Church, where he made his confession to the parish priest, Kabylowicz. Going out he left behind him in the vestry, which was brought forth in justice. The priest was accused, condemned and deported to Siberia. The priest had only to speak to clear himself. He was silent, silent even to his Bishop. He remained sixteen years in humiliation, shame and suffering. After that time the guilty man on his death-bed declared himself the murderer. The innocence of the priest was attested and the authorities telegraphed to Siberia to release him. When the order came Kabylowicz had just died, burying the secret along with himself through sixteen long years of bodily and mental torture faithful to his God, to his priestly duty, his honor, his disputation of every priest; rather die than betray his seal.

"I believe ye the Holy Ghost," Christ said, and in His words conferring the power of forgiveness is not all divine?
Think over the words; evidently they are divine, for who can forgive sins but God?
Who can give the Holy Ghost but God?

What power can make use of men to purify souls but Omnipotence? Who can transmit the divine life of grace by secondary causes but the primary cause?

What a scenery this divine breathing diffused, these pierced hands, glorified, stretched out, this word moreover: "As my Father hath sent me, even so I send you." Receive ye the Holy Ghost, whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained."

But if all this is divine, if these words are divine, one thing again is more divine yet, it is their accomplishment.

Open your eyes, then, rationalists and sectarians of all sorts, and behold Catholicity, see it in all centuries since Jesus Christ looking for remission of sins as God alone could make people do it, man kneeling before man, man expiating by the truth of his avowals the truth of his delinquencies, man opening his conscience and discovering the stains of his soul in this world in order not to carry them into the next, man humbling himself to be raised, the chief of the universal Church as well as the lowliest Christian!

Is it not manifest that if God alone could impose this explanation of mind and heart, God alone could obtain it?

Once more open your eyes, poor blind rationalists and sectarians, and see at last what is as clear as daylight—that the Gospel in this prodigious passage is fully intelligible

only by the living fact of sacramental penance, that the written monument of the New Testament is in need of the living monument of the Church in order not to appear like a riddle and which when placed face to face mutually explain themselves.

It is in this point as with all other practices of religion. How many would see all delusions fall away if they would take the necessary steps and pray for strength to do so? If only they take a right notion of the true doctrine and put it into practice, all their prejudices would at once vanish. How many who have done so were thankful before it and felt delightful afterwards!

A young man born a Protestant used to frequent a Catholic church close to his home. His four sisters and his mother one after another had become converts to the Catholic Church. One of the priests, having noticed that this young man liked to hear the sermons, sent for him. As the young man was well acquainted with him he came, supposing it was for some business. "My dear sir," said the priest, "I see you frequenting our church; why do you never join it?"

The answer was frank: "That is impossible just now."
"And why? Do you believe in it; is it on account of your friends, by human respect?"

"No," said the young man; "I know what these kind of friends are like."
"Are you afraid of confession?"

"Here the young man smiled and said nothing."
"My dear sir," said the priest, "don't you know that we priests know more about sins than you do? If you just try, I will question you and you will have more time to say 'No father, than yes.'"

This seemed very strange to the unacquainted young man. The priest insisted: "Don't you think we ought to know what sins a young man of twenty-two might have committed; do you believe in the Church?"
"Father, if I believe in any, it is in the Catholic Church."

"Now, will you try? Let us say a good prayer first."
The two knelt down in prayer, then the priest sat down and began to question. When all was over, "Well, my friend," said the priest, "tell me now that you sincerely repent and wish to be a Catholic."

"Is that all?" said the young man, quite surprised.
"Well, I did not know; it was not worth while to be afraid of confession."

Another convert after confession said: "I was afraid, but now I am very glad."

How many keep away, put off; one day it will be too late!
Will it be easier to burn in hell than be converted? Give up sin and therefore pray and make a good confession.

Could so many, again, but experience the sweet consolation, the peace it leaves in the soul. It is worth while trying. How many would be enlightened as to true faith, how many lukewarm would return to the practice of a lively, saving faith by making a good confession and doing so frequently.

The sainted parish priest of Ars, who died in 1859, rather than argue in vain, succeeded with many to dispel the cloud of unbelief from their eyes after their heart was purified. He knew that "God resisteth the proud, but to the humble giveth grace."

One day, for instance, he saw a fashionable man entering his sacristy; people of high rank were so attracted by the sweet odor of his virtues and holiness. The priest simply pointed out the kneeling stool used for confession. "Excuse me, Monsignor," said the gentleman, "I don't come to confession; I wish to reason with you."

"Oh! my friend, you mistake me very much; I cannot reason, but if you need any consolation, kneel there (pointing again to the kneeling stool) and believe me, many more kneel down there and did not repent of it."

"But, reverend sir, I have already had the honor to tell you I did not come to confess, and this for a very simple reason—that I have no faith. I believe no more in confession than in all the rest."

"You have no faith, my friend? Oh, how much I pity you! You live in a fog. A child of eight with his catechism knows more about it than you. I thought myself very ignorant, but you are still more than I, as you ignore the first things one ought to know. You have no faith? Well! know, it is a reason for me to prove you; I would not have dared to do so otherwise; it is for your good. Put yourself there; I am going to hear your confession. After you have made your confession you will believe."

Persuasion, sweetness, authority tempered by grace made the man yield; he made the sign of the cross, what he had said at once for a long time, and humbly avowed his faults. He stood up not only consoled, but perfectly believing, having experienced that in order to come to faith the shortest and surest way is to perform the works of faith according to the eternal word of the Master of men, word far too little understood: "He that doth truth cometh to the light." Jo. III, 21.

The celebrated Cardinal Choverus, who was formerly Bishop of Boston, was much believed by Protestants and by Catholics. It often happened that even Protestant ladies of the most respectable families in Boston came to consult him. They told him their family troubles, their anxieties, their loss of conscience, and asked his advice precisely as Catholics do in confession.

One day a lady told the Bishop that there was one doctrine of the Catholic Church which she disliked exceedingly and which prevented her from becoming a Catholic, and this was the doctrine of confession; she could not prevail on herself to confess her sins.

"Madam," answered the Bishop, smiling, "you say you dislike confession, but your dislike is not so great as you imagine, for, to tell you the truth, you have been really confessing to me this long time. You must

know that confession is nothing else than the confiding of your troubles and faults to a priest in order to obtain his advice, and to receive through him the forgiveness of your sins."

Indeed, what was the difference? This lady had told him all, how she lived, as a girl, before and in marriage—this was in the Bishop's parlour, strictly speaking, he was not bound by the secret of confession, but only by natural secret. However, all what was needed yet was to ascertain from the lady if there was anything more and if she said really repent and purpose to amend? Probably she was leading a good life then and perhaps always had done so. As a matter of fact, the lady was very much astonished; the new horizon opened before her; the mist cleared off and she became a Catholic.

Almost the same thing occurred to Blessed Clement Mary Hofbauer, the Redemptorist missionary, a worthy son of St. Alphonsus Liguori. While he was in Vienna, Austria, a noble military man, later on a famous painter, a Protestant, was on the point of joining the Church, when he was suddenly called under arms with his brother-in-law. The two sisters remained together and began to be also instructed in the Catholic doctrine. They saw clearly the truth, but nevertheless expressed their terror and apprehension of making a confession.

The missionary whilst conversing skillfully inquired into all the events of their life, then he said: "Your confession? Well, it is done. It will be sufficient to enter a little more precisely on a few points and to make an act of contrition and of good purpose."

Surprised as much as relieved, they made their abjuration, to the great satisfaction of their husbands also, who became good Catholics also.

Why do so many not go to confession? It is easier not to do so, they say, and they stifle the voice of their conscience. Poor friend, will this self-delusion or obstinacy avail anything at the judgment of Christ? You have your soul to save.

Why deny God's mercies? Why rather not thank him for this great benefit than discuss it? Oh! the easy way for a guilty soul, David exclaims from the bottom of his heart, he tells the prophet: "Pecavi, I have sinned," the prodigal son humbly tells his father: "I have sinned. How many would see clearly the ways of God after seeing clearly into their own evil ways? Do not argue so much; your reason is persuaded enough. Come to peace with your God, because the hindrance will be taken away between you and your God."

"A broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise." Ps. li, 17. "The Lord is good * * * to the soul that seeketh him." Lament, iii, 25. "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me." Ps. li, 10. Be propitious, O Lord, to our applications and heal the languor of our souls, that after obtaining remission we may always rejoice in Thy blessing, through Christ our Lord!

Refuge of Sinners, pray for us!

A PRETTY FASHION.

We had the flichi last summer, but it is prettier this year. As the fashion authority of the New York Sun says, the flichi is deliciously feminine; why, more feminine than other toilet details one hardly knows, but the fact remains, and if other proof were wanting, the unqualified approval with which its return is hailed by men would be ample testimony. The man creature endures masculinity and eccentricity and artificiality in the garb of his wife and women folk, but in spite of his own lurid taste, his hose and ties and waistcoats, his heart goes out to the woman who wears fluffs and frills and creamy laces and all the things that look sweetly simple.

So when the girls come out in their muslins and swisses and organdies this summer, with their short sleeves ending in dainty frills, and the demurest of fluffs crossing on the breasts and frou-frouing down the fronts of their bodices, and with their soft sashes floating on the breezes and their Watteau leghorns wreathed, a la Langtry, with simple blossoms, the summer man will be exceeding glad.

Many of these flichis are not in surplus form. They are often folded around a low-cut bodice, falling off the shoulders and knotted at the middle of the front or at the left side. Charming gowns of muslin on other sheer goods are made with this simple flichi as the only bodice trimming, and are worn décolleté, or with a glimpse of lace and insertion. Other flichis are folded across the low-cut back of the bodice and the shoulders, but end in knots just in front of the arms and fall in cascades of frills down either side of the bodice, whose front may be drawn into a high collar or may be cut square and finished with beading and a lace frill.

Then again, the flichi is close around the neck at the back, folded down either side of a square, slightly low-cut bodice front and tucked under the girdle at the waist.

UNEQUALLED—Mr. Thos. Brunt, Tverdinga, Ont., writes:—"I have to thank you for recommending Dr. Thomas' Electric Oil for rheumatic piles. I was troubled with them for nearly fifteen years, and tried almost everything I could hear or think of. Some of them would give me temporary relief, but none would effect a cure. I have now been free from the distressing complaint for nearly eighteen months. I hope you will continue to recommend it."

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