

# The Catholic Record.

"Christianus nihil a se habet, Catholicus vero Cognomen."—(Christian is my Name, but Catholic my Surname.)—St. Pacian, 4th Century.

VOLUME XXII.

LONDON, ONTARIO, SATURDAY, AUGUST 11, 1900.

NO. 1,138.

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London, Saturday, August 11, 1900.

### A BLOEMFONTEIN HOSPITAL

The reading of Mr. Burdett Coutts' description of one of the field hospitals near Bloemfontein would cool the ardor of the most enthusiastic Jingo. He intimates that, through lack of accommodation and stretchers, hundreds of men stricken down with typhoid, exposed to the cold of the evening and to the mid-day heat, huddled against one another, tormented by flies and sickening odors, were dying in abject misery. And for what? Justice and civilization?

### THE NEW IRISH PARTY.

Mr. Wm. O'Brien, M. P., is very optimistic in his remarks anent the reconstructed Irish Party. He believes—and we hope he is not mistaken—that in the next Parliament there will be eighty men with the fire of Irish nationality in their hearts, and the soldier's instinct for standing shoulder to shoulder together, through sun or storm, on pain of martial law.

Mr. Redmond's message is also decidedly conciliatory and hopeful. He pays his respects to the unrivalled parliamentary abilities of Mr. Healy, who, according to him, will not lend himself to any effort to revive faction in Ireland.

### CREED-MAKERS.

In watching the efforts of the creed-makers one must perforce believe that they have not the most elementary notion of what is faith. Their possible ignorance cannot condone their appalling ignorance. Their methods would lead one to believe that the fascination of notoriety such as falls to the lot of the prize fighter lures them into vain and at times blasphemous speculation. But it is not strange that a man encompassed by mysteries which he cannot fathom will construct his own religious platform and essay to give an authoritative solution to the questions of the soul?

Again, anyone who has read the New Testament must admit that faith is an obedience. Our religious programme has been drawn up for us by God and we must through God's mercy accept it with lowly submission. There is no place for doubt or speculation. It checks the wanderings of the intellect and places a restraint upon our action. It points out the regions wherein lie darkness and danger. But it gives no man the privilege to accept or reject the doctrines that may be pleasing or repugnant to him.

### CATHOLICS THE WORLD'S SCHOLARS.

One of the most amusing things in current journalism is the discussion of the question: "Can a Catholic be an independent scholar?" It is hard to convince some people that Catholics have been in every department of knowledge the scholars of the world. It is more difficult to make them recognize the fact that the Church has encouraged every effort that was made for the development of human learning and that a Catholic when loyal to his faith can be, because he stands on firm ground, a better scholar than a non-Catholic.

### BEHAVIOR IN CHURCH.

Will some one kindly tell us why some individuals deposit their spittle in the house of God? Disgusting as is the habit, nauseating to others and indicative of either ignorance or irreverence, it is none the less very much in honor. It makes a man long to be able to clap them into a dungeon and to keep them there until they realized that a church is not exactly the place for expectoration feasts. The Catholics of to day are in comparison with those of preceding ages under a very benign rule.

To preserve, for example, the Cathedral of Trentina in its original beauty, Pius II., its founder, published a decree in 1362 pronouncing the severest censure on anyone

who should violate the whiteness of the walls and columns."—Digby.

Speaking unnecessarily in the church was visited with severe penalties. Kneeling on one knee was denounced as having an indecorous resemblance with the act of the Jews who mocked our Lord. And the Catholics of those days appreciated the wisdom of these regulations and obeyed them. For them the church was a terrible place and not an edifice for grunting, exhibitions, labial and guttural, and conversation.

### DE WET.

London papers are beginning to recognize the fact that De Wet, the Boer leader, is eligible for competition with the best British generals in South Africa. He is responsible for some of the "I regret to report" despatches. He has a wonderful knack of bagging bands of Highlanders, etc., and making mysterious exits into some unknown country that is not on British charts. If he is not captured it will certainly not be the fault of Roberts, Buller, Methuen, Hunter, Clements, Brabant and Rundle.

### A LONG PROMISED "MISSION."

We suppose that onerous ministerial duties and the Chinese question have prevented our separated brethren from giving us that long promised mission. At the time the Paulist mission to non-Catholics was in progress, our Presbyterian friends relapsed from their habitual calm, and said many and sundry things about themselves and about us. With a generosity that did more honor to their heart than to their head, they volunteered to give us the advantages of the "open Bible" plus the new creed. Now we are all impatient to hear them.

Make haste, reverend gentlemen, for the fields are white with the harvest. We bespeak you a courteous hearing and a well filled "question box."

### A PERILOUS THRONE.

The King of Italy's death has given a severe shock to the public. Cut down by an Anarchist—one of the breed that fattens on blasphemy, and that seeks in the conduct of Christians who say one thing and do another, or who adopt a severely critical attitude towards revelation—a proof of their righteousness, is surely sad reading in these days of superior enlightenment. The English newspapers have many things to say of the late king's admirable qualities. When we remember that the same prints did yeoman service not so many years ago, in depicting the virtues of Garibaldi, we must say they are consistent.

### CONVERTS

Who have Recently Entered the Church in Other Countries.

We continue to hear of distinguished converts to the Church in other lands. Some who have come over recently are: Rev. C. R. Chase, late vicar of All Saints' Church, Plymouth, Eng.; Mrs. M. E. Curry, of Milton House, Swindon; Mrs. Alma Peterson, of Copenhagen, a Lutheran; and C. Meenaeshaya, of Bangalore, an ex Judge and one of the most prominent Brahmins of the Mysore Province. Mr. Meenaeshaya for some years has been devoting his attention and study to religion, and his recent conversion has been the fruit of his labors. He belongs to one of the oldest, priestly and most respected Brahmin families of Madras. His father served with distinction in several districts of the Madras Presidency as principal Sudder Amin of the older times, and his grandfather, his namesake, as first interpreter in the old supreme court of Madras. This is perhaps the first instance in modern times of a highly educated Brahmin of an ancient family being received into our holy faith, and it is to be hoped that many similar instances may follow his example.

Who has not listened to a lovely strain of music, practiced over and over, until it lost all melody and significance to the ear, and became only a monotony of sound? Yet the melody was still there. It is so with old precepts. Their truth is indestructible, though we have heard them so often they become trite and stupid to our minds.—Ella Wheeler Wilcox.

the Italian government for the purpose of deceiving the Catholic world was another mockery.

The Roman Pontiff has never acknowledged in any way the usurpation of the present dynasty. There can be no *modus vivendi*—no truce—no compromise. Restitution must be made. When? We do not know, but it will come.

Napoleon I. played his part with Pius VII. and the curtain rang down for him at St. Helena. Years after another Napoleon, who was but the shadow of a great name, deserted Pius IX. and he found his Canossa in the tent of Bismarck.

We detest from our heart of hearts the atrocious act that has closed the earthly career of the King of Italy. But we can say nothing to his successor save that a throne built up by rapine, bloodshed and falsehood is a very perilous seat.

### CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE.

We think that some Catholics regard marriage as something on a par with the state of the farmer, the mason and the shoemaker. We would, however, fain believe that they do not entertain this opinion, which was fathered by Calvin, but their conduct betimes justifies us in declaring that they have an inadequate idea of the sacredness of matrimony. The holiness of Christian matrimony is, we are told by the Second Council of Baltimore, connected with our own most sacred associations and duties; and it cannot be lost sight of, in however small a degree, without entailing the most serious consequences. Such being the case the contracting parties should prepare themselves for it in the way prescribed by the Church. In reading the accounts of marriages in the daily prints, where elaborate trousseaus and the glare and glitter of wealth absorb everything, of marriages performed by civil magistrates, of the laws of marriage mocked at by every passing caprice—one is forced to believe that the dignity of matrimony has indeed fallen on evil days. But we know that the Church has stood a patient and watchful sentinel at the Christian hearth, guarding it from defilement and destruction. This is a fact so plainly written on the pages of history that non-Catholics have ascribed to her conduct whatever good there is in our present civilization. She would also have her children receive that holy sacrament in the Church. It has been always a matter of wonder to us why some Catholics will persist in doing otherwise. Without commenting on the spurning of sacred laws, it certainly betokens a thoroughly un-Catholic spirit. It is a pledge of future unhappiness. On the other hand, who asks Tertullian, can express the happiness of that marriage which the Church approves, which sacrifice confirms and which blessing seals—angels announce it, and the Father ratifies?

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### PROGRESSION IN KNOWLEDGE BEYOND THE GRAVE.

New York Freeman's Journal.

A correspondent asks: First, is the doctrine of endless progression in Heaven compatible with Catholic philosophy?

Second, Will the saved ever advance in knowledge of the Infinite throughout eternity?

1. We assume that by "progression" you mean here an advance or increase in the soul's knowledge, and with that increase in knowledge an increase in the power of the knowing faculty to know more and know better what it knows already to a limited degree; and with this increase in knowledge and in the power of knowing, a corresponding increase in the power of joyful admiration and love.

In this progression you will observe that the soul always remains its individual self, never loses its conscious identity in passing from one state of knowledge and consequent happiness to a higher state of knowledge and happiness. The soul changes not in nature or essence in this progress; just as a man who passes from a state of ignorance and becomes learned is always the same conscious self. His increase in knowledge and in the power of knowing makes no essential change in him, as man. In the first case he was an ignorant man; in the second he is a learned man, but in this change he has always remained the same man, and conscious of his self-sameness.

This continuity of conscious self is necessarily implied in personal continuance in happiness, as well as in the increase of knowledge and happiness.

This explanation is necessary in order to dissociate the word "progress" from the atheistic or pantheistic sense given to it by modern agnostic evolution. In this pantheistic sense "progress," in its last analysis, is a movement from individual, personal, conscious self toward utter absorption into the all-god fiction of pantheism. This process of absorption is nothing less than the annihilation of the individual, the person and personal consciousness.

It is needless to observe that Catholic philosophy never uses the word "progress" in this pantheistic sense which denies the existence of a free personal God and Creator.

Individual progress in the sense of Catholic philosophy is a movement from a less perfect to a more perfect state. Every step in this movement brings the individual nearer to that ultimate end which his Creator had in view when He created him. The catechism tells us that God created man that he might know, love and serve Him in this life and be happy with Him forever in the next. This answer of the catechism throws its luminous rays on the line of true progress. Any movement of man deviating from this line is vagrant or retrogressive. In the light of those rays we may venture to answer our correspondent's first question. There is nothing in Catholic philosophy, so far as we understand it, to militate against the hypothesis of endless progress, in the sense we have explained that term. On the contrary, in view of the revealed truth that God created man to know and love Him forever, it would seem that a soul that has gained eternal happiness in the next phase of existence by faithfully serving God in this, will continue endlessly to increase in knowledge, admiration and love of God, and in happiness as a consequence.

Father Rickaby, S. J., in his "Moral Philosophy," says:

"The object of happiness—the objective last end of man—will be that which the soul contemplating in the life to come will be perfectly happy in so doing. The soul will contemplate all intellectual beauty that she finds about her, all heights of truth, all the expanse of goodness and the mystery of love. She will see herself: A vast and curious sight is one pure spirit; but that will not be enough for her—her eye travels beyond. She must be in company, live with myriads of pure spirits like herself—see them, study them, admire them, and converse with them in closest intimacy. Together they must explore the secrets of all creation even to the most distant star; they must read the laws of the Universe, which science laboriously spells out here below. They must range from science to art, and from facts to possibilities, till even their pure intellects are baffled by the vast intricacy of things that might be and are not; but yet they are not satisfied. A point of convergence is wanted for all these vistas of being, whence they may go forth, and whither they may return and meet; otherwise the soul is distracted and lost in a maze of incoherent wandering, crying out, Whence is all this, and what is it for? And above all, Whose is it? These are the questions that the human mind asks in her present condition. Much more will she ask them, when wonders are multiplied before her eyes; for it is the same soul there and here. Here men are tormented in mind if they find no answer to these questions. They will not be happy there without an answer. Their contemplation will still desiderate something beyond all finite being, actual or possible. Is that God? It is nothing else."

The soul in her journey through the vistas of being comes at last to the source from which all existences proceed, the Creator, the infinite Being, Whom, by the beatific vision, she sees face to face.

Now comes the important question; Does the saved soul, coming thus in the presence of God face to face, know, that is, comprehend Him as He is, or as He knows and comprehends Him self? The knowledge which the soul receives is measured by her capacity to receive. This capacity of the soul

or mind is finite, and hence can know at any given time only what is proportionate to her capacity to receive at that time. The saved soul is finite when she comes face to face with God, and her capacity of knowing is finite, and will remain so forever. This does not exclude the hypothesis that the soul's capacity of knowing may increase forever, and her knowledge increase forever, since the object of her knowledge is the Infinite. By the beatific vision the soul receives an indescribable and unimaguable increase of power of perceiving, knowing, comprehending, but she is still finite and potential to still quarter knowledge if her power of knowing be enlarged. We know no reason that bars the possibility of such an increase of this power, which may be said to stand in relation to the Infinite as the asymptote of the hyperbola stands related to the hyperbolic curve; that is to say, the finite capacity or power to know may be increased forever and yet never be able to know, comprehend the Infinite, just as the asymptote and the curve, though extended forever, can never meet.

The saved soul coming face to face with God does not lose her activity, and rest forever in the paralysis of inertia. Such inaction is contrary to her nature, contrary to the nature of happiness. The soul is not like a mirror that reflects an object without consciousness of the presence of the object it reflects, and without pleasure in reflecting it. Her happiness is not in passivity in presence of the Infinite before her, nor in the latent or quiescent ability to see and contemplate the Infinite present to her, but in the exercise of that ability in the act of seeing, contemplating the Infinite. When heaven is spoken of as a place of rest it does not mean that the soul will fall into a state of inaction or become inert, but that its actions lose the nature of toil, are freed from weariness, pain, and anxiety from uncertainty of result. She finds her highest happiness in this act of contemplating, knowing, admiring and loving God, the Supreme, True, Beautiful and Good.

Now since the soul's knowledge of God is finite and God is infinite, and since the soul's happiness consists in knowing God, at every instant of her post-mundane existence, to the full extent of her capacity of knowing, what is there to bar the hypothesis that her knowledge of God may increase forever, and that every increase in knowledge increases still further the capacity to know more; and with this increase of knowing-power and knowledge the soul's happiness and capacity to receive happiness increase and all forever reach out in all directions toward the infinite, until the soul of the saved man becomes in knowledge and power greater than pagan minds ever conceived their gods of Olympus to be.

2. The second question is answered, so far as we can answer it, in what we have said.

### MEDALS OR BOOKS

Rev. Dr. McSweeney of Mt. St. Mary's, Md., has started a crusade against the awarding of medals at school commencements.

The poor literary quality and the high prices of most of the books produced by Catholic publishers from ten to twenty five years ago for the school premium trade, induced many of our institutions of late years to give to students deserving of distinction certificates, wreaths, cash prizes and medals instead of them.

As a consequence of this change, many fewer books have been sold within the past decade of years and medals, etc., have become so common as to have lost their value in esteem.

Moreover Catholic literature has been deprived of an enormous circulation and the money spent for their premiums has been practically wasted. Now, good editions of fine volumes can be had at fair prices and they should once more be the guerdon of diligence in study.

In books there is an infinite variety, an imperishable value, a perpetual interest, a force for good making an ever-widening circle of influence. What is a gold medal costing \$50 to a library of fifty well selected volumes? Dross, dead metal, a useless bauble that always finds its way to the dusty trinket box. What is it in worth, in power, in stimulating and ennobling impressions to the high thought and deathless beauty of the works of master-minds of Catholic literature? Nothing—a gawdaw exciting only vanity.

Down with the dead medal! Up with the living book!—Catholic Columbian.

### GENERAL GRANT AND THE POPE.

The widow of Gen. Grant once told an incident of Grant's visit to Rome, which shows the interest taken by the Pope in American affairs. When Grant was presented at the Vatican, the Pope said, "I have especially to thank you for the religious privileges which you granted to Catholic soldiers in your armies." The General considered for a moment and could not recollect any special privileges bestowed upon Catholics. Perceiving this, the Pope said, "I refer to the fact that be-

fore every battle you kindly notified the officers to allow the Catholic soldiers an opportunity to make their confession." With his usual directness Grant replied: "I did that as a military measure, because my soldiers fought better when they felt that their conscience was clear. But I had no idea that Your Holiness was aware of this custom." "Ah, my friend," said the Pope, "there is nothing which afflicts my children in any part of the world which is not known to me, and every such benefit is cordially remembered."

### SOME SECRET SOCIETIES.

In casual conversation a short time since, the fact was learned that there is a considerable number of Catholic men who still retain membership in the Knights of Pythias.

This is not as it should be. Pythianism is as much under the ban of the Church as Masonry. No Catholic can under any circumstances whatever, hold office in this society, nor can he in any way take an active part in its affairs, ritual or executive work. Catholics who do hold such office, and who interest themselves in Pythianism, cease by that fact to be Catholics. There is no priest, confessor or Bishop who can permit such membership, and whoever alleges permission received for such active membership asserts an evident falsehood. True in the years long since passed, the Church looked upon this society with indifference and Catholics were permitted to become members of it. Reports as to the dangerous nature of the society were sent so frequently to Rome that in the year 1895 it was decided to place the society under the same ban as Masonry.

The prohibition of membership in the societies of the Knights of Pythias, the Old Fellows and the Sons of Temperance was absolute. Catholics were forbidden to join them under pain of excommunication and such as were already members were enjoined to sever at once all connection with them under pain of being refused participation in the sacraments of the Church.

There was positively no exception made in behalf of any person or locality.

The universality of the prohibition was represented to Rome as rigorous in the extreme, owing to the fact that many Catholic men who had acquired membership in these societies had done so in good faith and had already in virtue of moneys paid, acquired a right to financial aid in sickness or in the event of death. It was represented that to deprive such men of these acquired rights would be inflicting upon them too great a financial loss. In view of such representation Rome decided to make an exception to the universal law and to allow them through their continuance of membership to retain a purely financial membership in the societies in question.

The permission thus accorded gave to long standing members the right to continue in these societies for the benefits that would accrue from such membership, but continued the universal prohibition as to active membership. The permission in question could not be enjoyed save by those who, through their pastors, had obtained the right to make use of it. This right must be applied for and obtained from the Apostolic Delegate at Washington. Catholics who have joined these societies since the decree in question cannot obtain such privilege. With our explanation it becomes evident that no Catholic can hold office in any of the condemned societies. They cannot attend their meetings nor assist at their degree work. Continuance to do so stamps them as apostates and debars them from all claim to practical Catholicity. Further, it prevents them from remaining or becoming members of such Catholic societies as the Knights of Columbus or Hibernians, which demand practical Catholicity as an essential to membership.

It is to be hoped that many of those to whom this advice is addressed will at once sever their connection with the societies in question, and be, in fact, what they are in profession—practical Catholics.—Providence Visitor.

### MARRIAGES AT MASS.

In accordance with a decree issued by Bishop Thomas D. Bayard at the retreat of the Catholic clergy of Springfield diocese in Holy Cross college last week, all marriages hereafter performed in the diocese must be at a nuptial Mass, except under certain conditions.

In the cases where the marriage is not at a nuptial Mass the priests who perform the ceremony are directed to send to the Bishop, within three months from the date of the marriage, the names of the contracting parties and the reasons why the Mass was omitted.

In the order which has been issued to the priests of the diocese they are instructed to urge their people who have not been married with a Mass to return for a special Mass, no matter how long they have been married, so that they may be given the nuptial blessing.

How pleasing to the Heart of the Saviour is a soul that loves humiliation! It becomes the very Heart of Jesus Christ.