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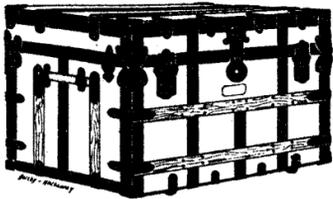
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## AN EARNEST CONVERT

"Whilst I travelled between St. Paul and St. Louis in a Pullman car," says the Right Rev. Abbot Gasquet, anent his recent visit to the United States "my attention was attracted to the conductor, a bright, intelligent youth. As there were only three passengers in the carriage, he had soon finished checking our ticket; and seeing that all was right for our journey of some five hundred miles, he at once fetched his 'grip,' from which he took a few books and soon became absorbed in some work.

"After a time my curiosity was aroused, and going over to where he sat I got into conversation with him and found that he was engaged in teaching himself French, and that he had already profited greatly by the spare time he could secure on these journeys to further his education. In the course of our conversation he told me that he had recently become a Catholic, having been led to inquire by some Catholic book which had been left behind in the car by some one. He was an enthusiastic convert, and had been kept long under instruction by a priest who understood how important it was to make a neophyte practice the obligations of religion before admitting him to the membership of the Church. It was a pleasure to find how keen the young man was, thoroughly to master the 'reasons of the faith' which was in him. He produced a book of instructions on the Catholic religion which he had studied to some purpose and in the margin of which he had set down his difficulties and marked the points on which he needed further information. During a couple of hours on that journey we went through these notes together, and it was difficult to say, what I admired most in my Pullman car conductor—the delight he manifested in having found in the Catholic Church a religion which fully satisfied his aspirations, the way in which he was able to set forth the points on which he wanted to be further instructed, or his keen desire to have to the fullest extent possible an intelligent appreciation of his religion."

### The Industrious Italian

In The Outlook of February 24, Mr. John Foster Carr presents an interesting study of the Italian in New York. He submits some striking figures which show the industry and frugality of a people now coming to us in such numbers that they are by many regarded as a menace to American institutions.

Mr. Carr gives the total number of Italians in Greater New York as nearly 450,000 or more than ten per cent. of the whole population. "Yet," he says, "by a visit to the great almshouse on Blackwell's Island and an examination of the unpublished record for 1904, I found that during that year only sixteen Italians had been admitted." He quotes Mr. James Forbes, the chief of the mendicancy department of the Charity Organization society, who says he has never seen or heard of an Italian tramp. He states that between July 1, 1904, and September 30, 1905, the mendicancy police took into custody only ninety-two Italians. He finds these people honest, saving, industrious and temperate. This is undoubtedly a correct estimate of that side of their character, and while, in common with all the rest of us, they have their easily "besetting sins," the worst side appears only at comparatively rare intervals. We hear of the man with the quick temper and the flashing knife, and pass unnoticed the ten thousand toilers who go quietly and peacefully about their business.

The illiterate Italian takes to the pick and shovel or some other implement requiring little skill in its manipulation, but his boy, educated in our schools, goes into trade. Our supply of day laborers is drawn from the new arrivals. Mr. Carr says: "The names of Italians engaged in business in the United States fill a special directory of more than five hundred pages. Their real estate buildings and bank deposits aggregate enormous totals. The second generation is already crowding into all the professions, and we have Italian teachers, dentists, architects, engineers, doctors, lawyers and judges."

An American, who is an American in everything except a name which leaves no doubt of his Irish extraction was asked what had become of all the Irish men and boys who only a few years ago were doing the work now so largely done by the sons of Italy. He replied: "They have moved up." Some day the same question may be put and the same answer given regarding the Italians.—New York Sun.

Troubles are necessary to the development of character. No man ever learned on smooth water to be a skillful sailor.

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