



CURRENT COMMENT

Last Monday evening was a memorable date for the Catholics present at Miss Sutherland's recital of "Everyman". Never before did the Y. M. C. A. auditorium echo so many Catholic ideas. Confession, Extreme Unction, contrition, the "holy sacrament and ointment," purgatory, "thou moder and mayde, Holy Mary," were all highly praised, and yet that large and most select Protestant audience listened with tense and eager silence. We Catholics, however, were the only ones to realize the full import of that great moral play of the fifteenth century. Miss Sutherland herself, finished artist though she is, could not feel, with the inimitable realization of experience, that "Confession" is truly "that clensynge ryvere," the best she could do was to reach the plane of ideal realization, which Longfellow reached when he wrote of Evangeline:—
 "A celestial brightness—a more ethereal beauty—
 Shone on her and encircled her form,
 when, after confession,
 Homeward serenely she walked with
 God's benediction upon her.
 When she had passed, it seemed like
 the ceasing of exquisite music."

Through lack of what we call the realization of experience, that is to say, the personal experience of sacramental absolution, Miss Sutherland skipped Everyman's apostrophe to Confession, which we here give in modern spelling. "O glorious fountain that all uncleanness doth clarify,
 Wash from me the spots of vice unclean,
 That on me no sin may be seen;
 I come with Knowledge for my redemption,
 Redeemed with hearty and full contrition,
 For I am commanded a pilgrimage to make,
 And great accounts before God to make.
 Now I pray you, Shrift (confession),
 Mother of salvation,
 Help my good deeds for my piteous exclamation."

For the same reason, or perhaps for fear of rubbing it in too deep into the non-Catholic epidermis, Miss Sutherland omitted several other important passages, such as, the prayer to the Blessed Virgin before confession, "O Mary, pray to the Maker of all things, Me for to help at my ending," Everyman's last will and testament, the fine passage on the dignity of the priesthood, and the beautiful end of Everyman's last prayer, "In manus tuas—of myghtes moost (of greatest might)

Forever—commendo spiritum meum." Many other omissions there were too, prompted no doubt by the wish to avoid prosy or unintelligible passages or by the difficulties of a dialogue carried on by one speaker. This may perhaps explain the cutting down of Adonai's opening speech to one quarter of its original length. Of course, the strain on the memory to hold almost 900 lines is very great. Still, we cannot help regretting these omissions, for they affect the dramatic verisimilitude of the play. Without the apostrophe to Confession, and especially without the insistence on the supernatural power vouchsafed to priests, the conversion of Everyman is too sudden to be realistic. In order to show the importance of this omitted passage on the priesthood we quote it here.

EVERYMAN
 Fain would I receive that Holy Body;
 And meekly to my ghostly father I will go.

FIVE WITS
 Everyman, that is the best that ye can do;
 God will you to salvation bring,
 For priesthood exceedeth all other thing;
 To us holy scripture they do teach,
 And converteth man from sin heaven to reach.

KNOWLEDGE
 If priests be good it is so surely,
 But when Jesu hanged on the cross
 with great smart,
 There He gave out of His blessed heart,
 The same sacrament in great torment,

He sold them not to us, that Lord omnipotent,
 Therefore St. Peter the apostle doth say
 That Jesu curse hath all they
 Which God their Saviour do buy or sell,
 Or they for any money do take or tell.
 Sinful priests giveth the sinner example bad,
 Their children sitteth by other men's fires, I have heard,
 These be with sin made blind.

FIVE WITS
 I trust to God, no such may we find.
 Therefore, let us priesthood honor,
 And follow their doctrine for our soul's succor;
 We be their sheep, and they shepherds be,
 By whom we all be kept in surety.

STRENGTH
 There is no emperor, king, duke, nor baron,
 That of God hath commission,
 As hath the least priest in the world being;
 For of the blessed sacraments pure and benign,
 He beareth the keys, and thereof hath the cure (redemption)
 For man's redemption, it is ever sure,
 Which God for our soul's medicine
 Gave us out of his heart with great pain,
 Here in this transitory life for thee and me.

All this shows that none but practical Catholics before an audience mainly Catholic can do full justice to the play "Everyman." From beginning to end it is just a staging of Catholic life, which those who have never lived it can never understand. Now that "Everyman" has become fashionable, the explanations thereof by its admirers without the fold are infinitely amusing. Most of them try to claim kinship with it by assuming for themselves membership in a vague entity which they call "the church"; they who daily protest against most of the distinctive beliefs of "Everyman." Some of them fling a gloss of learning over their attempts at appreciation by inventing a Buddhist origin for this profoundly Catholic drama. Others say that its "ethical import, irrespective of its theology, is tremendous" (Free Press report, Oct. 25). All agree in ignoring, what is plain as a pikestaff, its internal evidence that the author of "Everyman" was just the same kind of a Catholic as Pius X. is. Ethics alone, without religion, without dogma, without theology, is cold moonshine. There is nothing cold about "Everyman"; it is all aglow with supernatural Catholic sunlight.

Having said thus much by way of desiderated improvements from the Catholic point of view, we are happy to add that Miss Sutherland's achievement was truly wonderful. We confess that having carefully studied the text of "Everyman" sometime before, we wondered how she would impersonate the sixteen characters of the play, and what she would do with the obsolete English forms. On this latter point she acted with commendable discretion, preserving those forms with which Shakespeare has made us familiar, as "and" for "if," and changing those which are not readily understood: for instance, where Death says, "hast thou thy Maker forgot?" she pronounced the last word "forget," and Everyman's answering query, "Woldest thou wete?" became "Wouldst thou know?" When Everyman returns from confession he exclaims "Now Jesu be our alder spede!" This becomes plain to one who knows that "spede" means "help" and that "alder" is the possessive plural of "all." But rather than break the illusion of her perfect acting by a word of explanation, she simply said, "Now Jesu be the help of us all!" As to the difficulty of representing so many different characters, she overcame it admirably by a change of voice and manner. Seldom was she obliged to name the speaker. And what a marvellous voice and enunciation she has! The voice is all pure vocality without an atom of useless resonance. Its penetrating quality was especially noticeable in the first thin far off plaint of Good-Deeds:
 Here I lie cold in the ground,
 Thy sins hath me sore bound,
 That I cannot stir.

This ghostly whimper reached the farthest corners of the hall, and the acute attention of the audience, always so marked as to make the turning of a leaf in the text by the few who followed the printed page a hazardous venture, passed into the stillness of a deathbed. And then the astonishing rapidity with which she changed from the heart-piercing anguish of poor forsaken Everyman to the heartless selfishness of Fellowship and Kindred or the still stonier scorn of Goods (Riches), the majestic monotone of Adonai, the dictatorial snappishness of Death, the feminine affectations of Kindred, the wise orotund of Knowledge, the contrast between Everyman's distress before Good Deeds and Knowledge turned him to God and his joy, beginning with blessed tears, "For joy I weep," and ending in gratitude and resignation, the silvery, triumphant tones of the Angel, the grave conclusions of the Doctor. Verily it was more soul-stirring than most sermons.

Quickly does this great Morality Play evolve itself. Miss Sutherland's rendering hardly fills three quarters of an hour. While it lasted the action was too rapid, the interest in each word too intense, to admit of interruption by applause. But when the end came, the gifted interpreter of such high thoughts was greeted over and over again with an outburst of long continued clapping of hands. There were only two songs, one before and one after "Everyman," but they were gems. Mr. Jean C. Landry, a singer of thirty-four years' experience, has none of the prevailing defects, no annoying tremolo, no indistinct articulation, no useless booming. Every word is clearly understood, his phrasing and manner are perfect, his voice is melodious. The accompanists, Miss Mildred Lawson, on the piano and Mr. A. H. Baly on the violoncello, worthily supported and did not smother, but echo, him. The first song was Roland's "Bright Star of Love;" the second, Gounod's "Light from Heaven" (Le ciel a visite la terre), was quite in keeping with the religious atmosphere of the play, in fact this hymn of Gounod's is a favorite at First Communion services.

His Grace the Archbishop of Montreal, before starting for the Jubilee celebration in Rome, has just issued a circular to his clergy, in which he invites his priests to exhort their flocks to remember that Christian marriage is first of all a sacrament and that Catholics should not emulate the vain ostentation of worldly weddings. No advice could be more timely. The fashionable, up-to-date wedding is becoming more and more a costly farce. Friends are, first of all, expected to congratulate any and every engaged couple. Congratulations are sometimes deserved and then only are they valuable; but in most cases condolence would be more in order. Attachments are formed without any study of character or any weighing of probabilities. When young men or women elect a priestly or a religious vocation, they have at least three and sometimes ten years of practical experience before the engagement becomes irrevocable. But young people get married without really knowing each other's defects. And very often there is no candid friend to warn them of the trials and responsibilities of wedlock. On the contrary, their worldly friends form a silent conspiracy to talk as if life were one long wedding day, and as if that day were to last for ever. And yet how often does the bright and beautiful bride die in the first twelvemonth, realizing too late the stupendous realities of motherhood. Then, think of that family bugbear, the wedding presents, nice to receive but unending to repay in other presents to all the givers. How different is the Catholic view of marriage, the view that has given Christendom whatever virtues it still possesses, the view that transformed the heathen into a Christian family and by that transformation saved the whole world from pagan dry rot. This view in a nutshell is that the union of husband and wife is a sacred, holy bond entered into under the eye of God for the multiplication of the children of God.

We are pleased to learn from the St. Louis "Western Watchman," of the 20th inst., that "the lectures of Abbot Gasquet at the Kenrick Seminary were exceedingly clever, interesting and instructive. The purpose of the Archbishop was to stimulate the study of England's ecclesiastical history amongst the students, and the aim of the Abbot was to give a living picture of the troublous times of Edward and Elizabeth. In this he succeeded admirably. President Musson and the faculty were more than pleased with the literary treat served by the learned Benedictine Abbot."

In one of our recent issues we had occasion to mention that, according to a credible report, several Catholic colleges in the United States had refused the Filipino boys offered to them for education by the U. S. government at \$500 a year. We are glad to find that this report was utterly false. The editor of the "Catholic Columbian" has taken the trouble to write to about fifty Catholic colleges in the States, inquiring if the Government had applied to them and what they answer. In his issue of the 20th inst. he prints replies from over thirty of these colleges, the remainder being too far off for their replies to reach the paper in time for that number. The replies received show that not over five or six Catholic colleges had any correspondence whatever on this subject with any government official, and that those who had, never received any reply to their letter of acceptance. Professor Sutherland, a government agent in this matter, attempting to defend himself against the charge of bigotry for not giving Catholic Filipinos a chance to attend Catholic colleges, wrote to Dr. Weber, secretary of the Philadelphia Federation of Catholic Societies: "I may state that several Catholic schools of prominence and adaptability to our needs were carefully examined, but we were unable to make use of them because of the too great expense attendance upon them would occasion." This statement will appear nothing short of astounding to those who know how much more expensive, as a rule, non-Catholic colleges are than Catholic ones. The replies in the Catholic Columbian go further, they stamp that statement as an insult added to the unjust discrimination which preferred Protestant colleges. Most of the presidents of Catholic colleges offer to educate the Filipinos at half or less than half the sum fixed as the maximum by the Government. Three of the Jesuit colleges offered tuition absolutely free of cost, and Father Gannon, S.J., President of Boston College, "sounds the keynote of the whole matter, perhaps, when he says that the boys now located in Boston, when offered free tuition by him at Boston College, told him they were not free agents." Evidently, the feeble efforts made by the U. S. Government to choose Catholic colleges were only a pretence, a vain show of non-existent impartiality. Our Columbus contemporary concludes with this telling sentence:

Without further adverting at this time to Professor Sutherland's impertinences and his misrepresentation of our college presidents, we respectfully ask the War Department if its subordinates are to be permitted to flagrantly mislead the public by false statements and the circulation of offensive letters in attempted justification of the matter under discussion and whether or not we are to receive fair and just treatment at its hands.

The compositors in the establishment of the Moore Printing Company have gone on strike because one of the members of the firm was working on a machine. The Association of Typographers sanctioned this course but the Typographical Union condemned it. This accounts for our four page issue this time. We have reason to hope that the difficulty will soon be overcome.

In the make-up of the first page of our last week's issue two lines dropped out of the fifth column, and, as generally happens in such cases, these two lines were of vital importance. We, therefore, deem it advisable to reprint here that last passage of our "Current Comment" for last week. Animadverting on the supineness of the public with regard to railway despotism, we wrote: "The

reason of all this is that public opinion in America is swayed by the plebeian upstart. Now the plebeian upstart, having exhausted all his energy in getting near the top of the ladder, has none left to claim his rights; he is so much afraid of falling off that he keeps mum. In Europe public opinion is still swayed by the gentlemanly, independent element, BORN AT THE TOP OF THE LADDER AND ACCUSTOMED TO INSIST ON ITS RIGHTS QUIETLY BUT RELENTLESSLY, in season and out of season. From the very nature of things we can never hope to regain the European level; but we might at least choose the lesser evil, i. e., the platform that gives less power to railway corporations." We have printed the omitted lines in capitals to show how vitally important they were.

Clerical News.

The Right Rev. Bertram Orth, Archbishop of Victoria in Vancouver's Island passed through the city last Saturday on his way back from the meeting of the archbishops of Canada held recently in Three Rivers, Que., to prepare questions for the forthcoming Plenary Council of all the archbishops and bishops of the Dominion. This meeting having been summoned at the time of the announcement of the general elections, a silly rumor got afloat that it had some political significance; but His Grace soon exposed the absurdity of the canard. Born in Germany, Bertram Orth immigrated to Oregon in 1872. He was ordained priest in the Pacific States, and was consecrated Bishop of Vancouver June 10th, 1900. On June 25th, 1903, the see of Vancouver having been raised to archiepiscopal rank, he was made Archbishop June 25th, 1903, and received the pallium at the hands of Mgr. Sbarretti on Oct. 4th, of the same year.

Rev. D. Plante, S. J., left on Friday the 28th inst., for Port Arthur, where he will preach a triduum in preparation for All Saints'. He will afterwards go to Oconto, Wis., for another triduum.

His Grace the Archbishop of St. Boniface is expected to return on Saturday, the 29th.

Rev. Father Zoldak has been recalled to Galicia by the Ruthenian Archbishop of Lemberg and will start next Wednesday.

Rev. Fathers Rousseau, Perisset, and Bourret were here this week.

Rev. E. Proulx, S.J., has been definitely transferred to mission duty in the east, and will no longer reside at St. Boniface College.

At the general Chapter of the Order of Reformed Cistercians (Trappists), which began at Igny, in France, on the 8th inst., the Right Rev. Dom Marre, Coadjutor to the Archbishop of Reims, was elected Superior General of the whole Order. He is 51 years of age.

Persons and Facts

A couple of months ago a broker named Waggaman, who was treasurer of the Catholic University of Washington, D.C., failed and was said to have involved in his failure large sums confided to him by that university. Friends of the university at first attempted to minimize the probable loss to that institution. But recent developments show that the Waggaman failure is really worse than the early reports said. His indebtedness is now reported as four million dollars. His own summary shows assets aggregating \$5,607,924.08; but it is thought by many who know the real situation that the properties concerned will realize a much smaller figure. The claim of the Catholic University against the Waggaman estate is the largest, and amounts to \$881,168. The list of creditors comprises several Catholic prelates and priests, and even the present Pope, to whom are due \$550 on account of a cheque not presented for payment.