

appeared the drudgery of desk work that morning. His conscience was at peace indeed, but the voice of the tempter was not stilled. Bravely he struggled and applied himself strenuously to his work, as the best antidote for the despondency he felt so difficult to shake off. It was at a moment of lowest gloom that he heard steps approaching. The next instant Briggs threw open the door and ushered in no less a person than Mr. Hardfert himself, the head of the firm.

"Good morning, Mr. Wendover," he began, accepting the seat Philip hastily brought forward. Then, in his "to the point at once" tones he continued:

"You got my wire yesterday?"

"Yes, sir," answered Philip rather curtly.

"And you understood, of course?"

"Oh, yes, I understood," returned the other, his feelings getting the better of him. "I understood that there is no forgetting my lapse of years ago; no remembering how I made up for it."

Mr. Hardfert frowned. He was not accustomed to be spoken to in this fashion by his subordinates. Then glancing sharply at his clerk, he noted the lines of keen suffering on his face and his own relaxed.

"Hum," he said slowly, "so that was how you read my wire?"

"What other way could I read it? Didn't it say clearly, 'Personal reasons'?"

"Thomas Wendover, cashier at Easton is your cousin isn't he?" asked Mr. Hardfert, abruptly.

"Yes, my first cousin," replied Philip, wondering.

"And you forgot the first rule of the firm, which lays down that no blood relations shall be employed in the same banking house! Yes, you may well start. Well, 'twas only yesterday I learned you were relations. So there was nothing to be done but cancel your appointment at Easton at once, and give you what I originally destined for you—Reading—the pick of the lot. For I've been watching you these years back, and let me tell you, Wendover," he continued, leaning forward and speaking very impressively, "I am not a Catholic, as you know, but if ever I become one it would be, I think, mainly out of veneration for a religion which can strengthen its members to conquer their failings as you have done."

It would be useless to describe the crowding emotions with which Philip listened to the chief's words. Yes, it was true, he had completely overlooked the initial rule of the firm. His mind, riveted on the one supposed cause of his disappointment, had never adverted to any other. And what if he had acted on that first mad impulse—and gone contrary to his conscience and rejected the grace given him that morning by the mighty efficacy of the Adorable Sacrifice? Lost forever would have been his own self respect; lost the chance of bringing a soul to the knowledge of the true Faith; lost, perhaps—for he knew the dangers of that gambling den—his own soul! Lost, also, the aim of his highest hopes, the position at Reading, with all that it meant to him.

"Oh, Mr. Hardfert," he almost stammered. "I thank you with all my heart, and I must apologize for my hasty words a while ago. I went through a good deal since yesterday. No, I don't know how to thank you properly."

"There, there," interrupted the old gentleman in his brusque, but far from unkindly way. "I know all you want to say. Besides, I'm in a hurry now. You know," he added, with a twinkle in his eyes, "the rule won't prevent you and Tom Wendover having a good time together now and then. Well, I'm off. By the way, before coming to you I telephoned to Mrs. Wendover so that she could come and congratulate you. Ah, here she is!"

And without waiting for any more expressions of gratitude the kindhearted old gentleman shook hands warmly with Mrs. Wendover and her husband and hurried away.

"Oh, Mary," said Philip to his wife when they had discussed the providential event of that morning, "through all the bewilderment of my brain while Mr. Hardfert was speaking to me, one thing stood out clearly in my mind. 'Twas those words of our Lord, 'O thou of little faith, why dost thou doubt?'"

"Ah, Phil," she answered, looking up at him with that brave, loving smile, which had brightened many a dark day for him. "'Twas nearly as great a test of trust for myself as for you. But one lesson it taught me, which I never can forget—that the only thing impossible to the loving Heart of Jesus is to be without pity for those who call on it with faith and humble trust."—Irish Catholic.

THE LIGHT

No mariner ever depended more implicitly on beacons to lead him safely into port, than those outside our Church look to individual Catholics to light the way, through fogs of prejudice, to the anchorage of truth. We are firm believers in the principle that truth must prevail. This position, however, premises that the truth be known. This is accomplished by preaching and by example. A comparative few are commissioned to preach, but all may teach the faith that is in them by example. Teaching without a tongue is, admittedly, the most far-reaching of all instruction. Many Protestants and infidels

never meet a priest, never hear a sermon, never read a Catholic newspaper. How can truth reach them except through a Catholic acquaintance? For many, the individual Catholic is the Catholic Church. His practical faith and conduct are the lights which, burning brightly, guide; or vacillating, flickering or half extinguished, confuse the searching mind.

The sailor lays aside his reckoning and compass, and seeks the shore lights before he enters the harbor. So those outside our Church, even when they do read and study, look to the lives of Catholics whom they know for signal flashes leading to the harbor of truth. We cannot escape the fact that your lives are the only religious books which the majority of our fellow-citizens read. Good or bad, they mark our conception of individual responsibility as Catholics.

SUBCONSCIOUS MIND MAY REVEAL ALL OUR SECRET SINS ON JUDGMENT DAY

The author of the article which follows is a former member of the British Society for Psychological Research and an authority on psychic philosophy whose judgments are sought by psychologists of standing here and abroad. His writings explanatory of the Catholic attitude toward Spiritism and kindred subjects and his able exposition of the deceptions and dangers which encompass those who seek, without knowledge and without authority, to investigate these subjects, have won for him a Knighthood of St. Gregory. He has just completed a work entitled "Human Destiny and the New Psychology" which will be published by Peter Reilly, 133 North 13th Street, Philadelphia, who will accept pre-publication orders at \$1.25 a copy although this price may be advanced when the book is issued. The work is an able elaboration of the arguments advanced in the article appended.

By J. Godfrey Haupert, K. S. G. (Written for the N. C. W. C. Editorial Sheet)

It is an instructive and significant circumstance that the very science which, not so very long ago, was believed by many to have dealt the death-blow to some of the most fundamental doctrines of that Christian religion, is, in the present age, becoming an emphatic witness to the truth of those doctrines. We have in this circumstance, surely, a striking illustration of the fallibility of all human knowledge and of the manifold errors to which the human intellect is subject.

It was not so much the acceptance of the principle of organic evolution itself, but rather the rash and wholly illegitimate inferences drawn from it, that brought about the revival and influence of the old materialistic philosophy. The record of its learned-sounding but erroneous teaching makes painful and humiliating reading for us today. The disciples of that school went so far as to assert that matter could well be conceived to have evolved even the most complex manifestations of the mental life and that belief in the existence in men of a soul, independent of and apart from, physical organization, and of a spirit-world, would most certainly have to be abandoned. In the course of time dissent from this view came to be so widely regarded as an evidence of ignorance and of imperfect scientific training that there were few persons of note at that time who had the courage to resist the stream of tendencies and to sound the voice of common sense and of reason.

The non-Catholic religious world made many concessions and compromises and labored hard to accommodate itself to the supposed newly discovered scientific truths. The Catholic Church alone which stood firm and unmoved in the midst of this intellectual convulsion and which never hesitated to proclaim the falseness of the teachings which were being promulgated.

A NEW PHILOSOPHY

Our own days are witnessing a complete transformation of ideas respecting these matters and the birth of a psychic or spiritualistic philosophy which is utterly destructive of the materialistic one. And most of the propounders of the philosophy are not men lacking the scientific temper of mind, but eminent physicists who have arrived at their conclusions by the scientific method and who can scarcely be said to have been promoted by personal preference and predilection. It is to incontrovertible facts and to phenomena, formerly ignored, but now carefully studied and again and again verified, that the reaction of thought is due. Any person in the least skeptical on this point can easily convince himself by a visit to some of our leading book-stores in the larger cities of the country. He will find entire departments set aside for the exhibition of books dealing with a psychic and spiritualistic science, and he will, on the title-page of many of those volumes, discover the names of men of world-wide reputation and distinguished in one or another of the many branches of scientific research.

We have cause, of course, to be thankful for this transformation in the world of ideas, since it is already evident that it has been instrumental in removing from many minds seemingly impossible barriers

to an intelligent acceptance of the Christian Faith. But we cannot, on the other hand, warn too earnestly against some of the pronouncements of this new school of thought since here, too, such pronouncements are often but exaggerations and distortions of observed phenomena, or wholly unwarranted and untenable conclusions drawn from them.

FACT AND SPECULATION

The ordinary and necessarily imperfectly informed mind is only too apt to confound theory and speculation with indubitable fact, and we have only too abundant evidence already that the errors resulting from such a confusion of principles are often of a peculiarly grave and far-reaching character. They may undermine the entire religious life and all belief in the Supernatural. It is, for instance, one thing to admit that scientific research has, by a method of elimination, demonstrated the existence of a spirit-world and of beings of an immaterial nature; it is quite another thing to subscribe to the contentions of one or other of the many exponents of this truth who claim to be able to tell us who these spirits are and how we can place ourselves in communication with them. The first may be regarded as a demonstrated fact, in keeping with the universal belief of mankind. The second is, at best, a mere theory and speculation—in its inferences often productive of grave religious error.

The same applies, and with perhaps still greater force, to the most recent scientific utterances respecting the human mind and its complex operations. It is admitted, and indeed demonstrated, today that there are processes of thought infinitely subtle in their nature, and independent apparently of the ordinary normal operations of the mind, of which our materialistic philosophers were painfully ignorant and of which they would not in any case be able to offer any intelligent explanation. The study of these operations, comprehended under the term "the subconscious," has created the keenest possible interest, and at the present moment a vast amount of literature is in circulation in which there are attributed to the subconscious mind the most incredible powers and potentialities.

Here, too, it is evident that inadequately informed minds are in danger of confounding fact with theory and speculation and of falling into errors which are apt to defy all efforts at correction. With great truth writes a well-informed psychologist (E. M. Caillard) in the June issue of the English National Review:

"The discovery of the unresting activity going on in a region of the human mind, till comparatively recently almost ignored, has awakened so much scientific and unscientific curiosity and experiment that the uninitiated may be pardoned if they fail to perceive limits to what can be accomplished by the jack-of-all-trades who is said to be resident within them."

AN INTRICATE SUBJECT

The subject is, beyond doubt, a most difficult and intricate one and there is still a great deal about it that is very imperfectly understood even by expert investigators. The best of them are cautious in their utterances and are holding their judgment in suspense. They do not, for instance, endorse all the wild statements that are being made respecting the unlimited suggestibility of the subconscious mind. One fact and one alone, would seem to be fully and clearly established and to be endorsed by all accurately informed students of the subject. The subconscious mind of man is a kind of vast storehouse of registry, in which all the knowledge, accumulated during life is preserved, and in which all its events and experiences are minutely and permanently recorded. Careful and systematic experiments have demonstrated that nothing is lost, nothing is blotted out, even though the conscious working mind may be wholly unable to recall it. It can be made to rise into consciousness or to descend close itself to another by well-known processes such as the association of ideas, or the induction of hypnotic or passive states.

This fact is now so well established and so fully accepted that no modern psychologist of note can be found to dissent from it. The curious thing, however, is that while speculation is rife respecting the yet-to-be-discovered powers of the subconscious and while the wildest theories as to its possibilities are being propounded, the one safe and almost self-evident inference from the simple fact itself is being overlooked and lost sight of. It seems so far to have escaped the attention of our scientific thinkers and to have attracted that of but few of our philosophers. A yet very direct bearing upon some of the most mysterious doctrines of our religion and to be throwing upon them a very clear and unexpected light.

STORED IN THE SUBCONSCIOUS MIND

It is not possible, in a brief article of this kind, to give more than a brief outline of what is contended for. We are told, as has been shown, that all of life's accumulated knowledge is preserved in the subconscious mind and is subjected to its peculiar and subtle operations. But it is equally certain that not a millionth part of it can

be made to come into practical use throughout this present life. While we know that it is there, we do not know how to get at it, only parts and detached fragments of it rising into consciousness under known conditions, such as dream states, in hypnosis or trance-states, by the association of ideas. But since it is preserved and since neither disease nor the decay incidental to old age can destroy it, it is surely reasonable to maintain that it will come into use in another life and that the fact of its preservation is an additional argument in favor of the survival of the soul and of the existence of a future state. It is difficult to conceive of any other intelligent end or purpose which it could be destined to serve.

Again we have our difficulties respecting the events and happenings of the Judgment Day. We believe what has been revealed respecting it and know that there will be a Judgment Day. But when we contemplate the multiplicity and complexity of human lives, our minds are bewildered and we experience a difficulty in conceiving of the mode and the "how" of the great disclosure. The ascertained facts respecting the subconscious mind and its extraordinarily accurate memory clearly go a long way towards solving the difficulty. We can well believe that, quite apart from what God's infinite knowledge may disclose to us on that day, we ourselves shall have to be the revealers of our lives, the subconscious mind, no longer hampered by union with the body, automatically and fully, and perhaps in a moment of time, disclosing all its contents. The same, it will be seen, applies to the other doctrines of the Last Things—to Heaven and Hell and Purgatory. If the subconscious mind records, as experimental study has shown, not merely the thoughts and acts of a lifetime, but also the circumstances, emotions, and intentions attending them, we can well understand what an inevitable Heaven or Hell or Purgatory a man may be preparing for himself and what an immense responsibility attaches to human life and to its seemingly most indifferent acts and events. In the light of the truth how significant become those words of Our Lord: "For every idle word that men shall speak they shall give account of on the day of Judgment!" Let but the imagination picture to itself a state or condition from which the veiling and diverting influences of life have been removed and in which the soul stands face to face with the true and ineffaceable records of its life in the flesh, and many of the difficulties urged against these doctrines will be seen to vanish away. The plausible reasonings of the sceptic and the scoffer will be deprived of most of their force.

It can scarcely be doubted, therefore, that when once the deep significance of this great psychological truth—in all its bearings and implications—has been fully recognized it will be found to be a vital factor in the defence of some of the most difficult and most widely challenged doctrines of our Faith.

THE TROUBLED CONSCIENCE

By Very Rev. George M. Scarce, C. S. V.

It is not my purpose to discuss the misery of the scrupulous soul—a dreary task, though it be so meritorious, for no charity is so sweet as pouring the balm of sympathy upon the distraught soul of a doubting penitent and reaching him the right hand of guidance. But I have some thoughts on the mental condition of one whose confession is troubled, and who is followed by early relapse into grave sinfulness and troubled very reasonably. It looks really as if these confessions, on which so much time and trouble have been spent, both by priest and penitent, were simply bad ones. As far as the confessions themselves are concerned, they may have sufficed, though of course they are unable to recall it. The penitent did not mean to conceal anything. But it seems that the contrition and purpose of amendment really were not there at all. If they were, how could they disappear so soon? If they were not there, of course the whole performance was useless.

Still, it may not, after all, be so bad as that. Perhaps the sins really were forgiven, for God is good, and is satisfied with less than any one of us, if offended, would be satisfied with.

Let us suppose then that not only the confession, but the contrition as well, were all that was absolutely needed, so that the sinner, when he made his Communion, really in the state of grace, and would have saved his soul, if he had died then. Let us see if our Lord's words in the Gospel may not give some reason for the relapse which so soon followed. "When the unclean spirit," He says, "is gone out of a man" (Matt. xii, 43) "it tries to come back to its old house from which it came out." That is to say, the temptations which were yielded to before, return; why should they not? The sinner's mind naturally entered without difficulty, they occur as easily as they did before; what is to keep them from entering?

Let us see again what our Lord tells us. He says "That when the unclean spirit comes back he finds the house swept and

garnished." That is all, "swept and garnished." It was full of all sorts of evil before; now it is cleaned out, swept and tidied up; but there is nothing in it. It is empty. That is the trouble.

There is an old proverb that "nature abhors a vacuum for empty space." There is some truth in it, in the material world, but a great deal more in the mental and spiritual. We cannot get our minds empty if we try; indeed the more we try, the harder it will be. We have got to think of something.

What follows from this is very plain. It is that if bad thoughts are to be kept out, some other thoughts must be brought in to fill up the empty space. And what shall these other thoughts be? Of course, anything that is not bad will do. And here is one advantage in education, in cultivating one's mind, in acquiring knowledge, that it gives one plenty to think of. And plenty of things that are not of any harm, even if they are not of much good. But after all, every one, especially if living in a city, can find plenty to think about that is not bad. There is plenty, for example, that is right enough in the papers, though there is also plenty that never should be read at all.

But there is a better line to follow than this; and one that must be followed during a good part of the time, if the sinner is going to make a success of his conversion. What this is, is also plain enough. It is to think not merely of things that are not bad, but of what is positively good.

To speak still more plainly. One, who, after a confession ending a long course of mortal sin, expects or hopes to persevere, has got to pray, and pray a good deal. Of course, he has to pray when he is tempted, and that may be very often; but that will not be enough. This kind of prayer is merely to drive the enemy away when he makes his attack; but he needs to be kept away, so that he will not attack so easily.

Nothing will suffice for this except forming a habit of prayer (a habit in the usual sense of the word) to take the place of the old habit of sin. The sinner who wants or hopes to persevere must make up his mind to lead a pious life, to take the place of his former impious one.

If more women are saved than men, one at any rate, that they realize this better. Women, if they wish to lead a good Christian life, are usually willing to pray a good deal, and to approach the Sacraments frequently. If a man who has led a life of sin, was willing to do this, his perseverance and final salvation would be assured. But a man seems to think he can get along without it. This idea is really an awful, a fatal mistake.

And it is especially so because there is another matter to be thought of, which we have not considered yet. It is that there is not only an old habit of sin to be overcome; beside this, there are real, personal, and inveterate enemies of ours, who are interested in keeping up this habit. There is really an unclean spirit, a devil, perhaps several of them, who have not exactly possessed the sinner in the way properly so called, but still have had much control over him, and led him into innumerable sins. He has got to fight these devils, as well as his own vices; and his own strength is far from being equal to it.

There is really no way out of it except frequent prayer, frequent confession, frequent Communion. But if, in spite of all that has been said, the penitent is not willing to begin at once with this, the least he can do is to pray regularly morning and night, and go to confession once a month.

There can hardly be any reason sufficient to excuse one who really wishes to persevere, from this practice of monthly confession and Holy Communion as a minimum, especially in a city parish, and in most others, where the conveniences for it are ample, and where societies are established in which monthly confession is the rule. If you have not yet joined such a society, do so at once. If one is really prevented from coming on a Saturday afternoon or evening, or any time when

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confessions are regularly heard, it makes no difference for men; at any rate, as men can be heard in the priest's parlor at any time. To confess once a month may be enough; if it is not, one must go oftener. The unclean spirit, the interior vice, and the devil outside who makes use of it for the sinner's ruin, must be driven away for good, if the penitent is to have a really solid hope of perseverance and final salvation. Matters must improve, or they will go from bad to worse. Otherwise the evil will not only himself return, but will bring others with him, and the last state of that man, as our Lord tells us, will become worse than the first.

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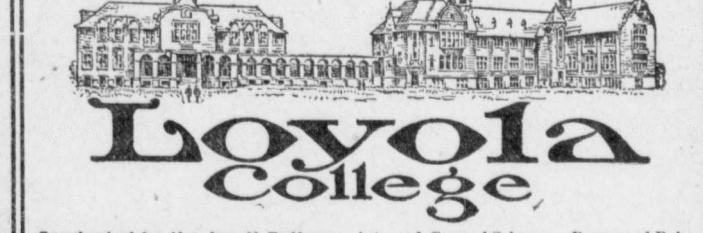


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