

CATHOLICS in Non-Catholic Colleges.

Rev. Thomas J. Campbell, S. J., President of St. John's College, Fordham, N. Y., delivered the following able and remarkable address, on Nov. 21, before the Alumni of Holy Cross College, Worcester, Mass., the report of which we take from the New York "Freeman's Journal":—

Mr. Chairman: As you have intimated in your letter to me, there is a danger confronting the Catholic colleges at the present moment which is causing considerable anxiety, but which it is hoped the zeal and energy, especially of their devoted alumni, may diminish in part, or possibly cause to pass away altogether. It is the neglect or desertion of Catholic colleges by Catholic students in favor of their more richly endowed competitors in the work of education.

I am under the impression, though perhaps a mistaken one, that the number of these deserters is exaggerated, but the matter is serious enough to call for our earnest consideration.

The explanation of these defections is, first of all, the splendor and magnificence and apparently boundless wealth of these non-Catholic institutions. It is doubtful if even in the times when colleges and universities were backed by the munificence of kings, such limitless generosity was displayed in the cause of learning as by private individuals to-day, many of whom have had little, if any, educational advantages themselves. Millions are but trifles in the open hands of these benefactors, and it is not surprising that many of our people are dazzled by the display, and hasten to gather up the treasures which are thrown so lavishly before them.

The second is the sometimes unblushingly expressed desire of a civil advancement, which is supposed to be attainable by means of these colleges. They are regarded as the open doors by which one may be ushered into what is assumed to be the best society, and as affording a half guarantee of future business and professional success through acquaintances formed in the lecture halls or on the football field of these institutions. In other words, it is a business venture, coupled with a humiliating admission of inferiority.

The third originates in a growing spirit of insubordination, and a desire of freedom from the discipline and restraint which Catholic colleges impose. On the part of the boys, it is the great change in their moral standard; on the part of the parents, it is the first great abdication of their authority. There are few of us who have not felt pity for the weak-willed and almost weak-minded grey-haired father and mother dictated to by an ignorant, silly, and sometimes stupid boy as to where he shall go to receive what is amusingly called his education.

The main pretext, however, which is alleged, and which sometimes serves as a cloak for these we have just referred to, is that Catholic education is not calculated to fit a man for the work which the world expects him to perform. These self-constituted censors are not qualified to judge, but they have no hesitation in expressing that opinion.

We shall make short shrift of these unworthy objections. The first originates in a vulgar admiration, not to say adoration, of wealth, and it is questionable if any education whatever would affect a mind so constitutionally sordid and malformed.

As a business speculation it is on a most unsubstantial basis, for sentimental college associations do but count for much in hard-hearted commerce, and social recognition is likely to be withheld, for the reason that our better class, being new-risen themselves, have a fine scorn for a parvenu. We have seen it achieved sometimes, but at the price of spiritual shipwreck.

With regard to the third, viz., leaving to a raw and undisciplined lad the option of choosing his course and place of studies, it ought to be sufficient to say to the boy that defiance of one's obligations by doing as one wishes, is not manhood, nor manly; and to the parents that the remission of their sacred rights by the commission of such an unchristian and unnatural assumption on the part of their offspring is inviting a curse on themselves and their children alike. Nothing can ever repair a wasted youth.

As to the allegation that Catholic education is not in touch with the times, I will, with your permission, speak more at length, stating, however, as a preliminary, the motives which prompt us to condemn the attitude of some of our fellow Catholics in this grave matter.

For clearness' sake, let us premise that in education there are two stages—one, which we shall characterize as that of formation; the other, more especially that of information. The latter is chiefly the time given to special or technical studies, whereas the college course aims primarily at the work of formation, or laying the general foundation in the boy's character and habit of thought for the after business of life.

As regards the period of special and technical studies we have at present

nothing to say, as it begins only after the completion of the college course. It may be remarked, however, that if any harm results from the anti-Catholic or sometimes anti-Christian atmosphere which the student is obliged to breathe in some of the institutions where such studies are made, it is to be ascribed to his neglect in applying the principles which he has been taught, and not to the college from which he comes.

What we are considering now is the period of formation, which is specifically the work of college education, and we condemn the course of Catholic students and their parents for setting aside Catholic colleges for non-Catholic ones for the following reasons:—

We condemn it for justice's sake, for we fail to see why the law which compels the humbler and poorer classes to send their children to the Catholic schools which their hard-earned pennies support is to be relaxed for their richer neighbors where there is infinitely greater danger of perversion. The possession of wealth does not dispense with, but imposes a much more serious obligation in this matter.

We condemn it because we detest a coward and a traitor. The man that in the midst of the fray will leave his own kith and kin while they are struggling and weak, will desert his country in her hour of peril when it is conducive to his worldly advantage.

We deplore their desertion indeed, but we feel that we should say to them as Gideon did to his soldiers:—"Those of you who are afraid, go," and even if our instruments are as yet but as pots of cracked earthenware in comparison with silver and gold of our adversaries, we have the torch of truth that will flare out in the darkness around us, and be more potent than material weapons to win the victory. The pity is that like Gideon we don't use our trumpets more to tell the world what we are and where we stand; but as Voltaire said, "The trouble with men fighting in a good cause is, they are timid, sont des lâches."

We condemn it because it shatters a boy's family and racial traditions. A native born American myself, I yield to no one in the love of my country, and would prevent with all my power any sectional or national division from any source; but as the New Yorker points with commendable pride to his Holland ancestry, some of it humble enough, and the New Englander to his descent from the Pilgrims, why should we be debarred from our own glorious retrospect? The boy that will blush for his Celtic origin and be ashamed of the race that has made the most splendid fight in the history of the world against oppression; that has kept, at least in the land of its origin, a vigor of faith, a transcendent purity of intellect, in spite of the dark centuries in which all education was denied them, is inflicting an irreparable injury upon his character as a man. To lose those splendid memories is a calamity for any man whose mind should be stored with glorious and inspiring thoughts, while to cherish them will not only make him less a patriot, but on the contrary, will fill his soul with enthusiasm to emulate in his own land the heroic deeds of those from whom he sprung. In ungenerous surroundings the boy will not only forget, but repudiate this splendid heritage, and he and his fellow men will be the sufferers.

We condemn it because we see in that assertion an almost certain danger to the boy's religious faith. Jas. Russell Lowell said if he had a son who was a blockhead he would send him to college anyhow, for he could not help feeling the influences of the surroundings in which he lived. So for a Catholic youth entering a Protestant college in the apologetic, half-thankful, or perhaps defiant attitude which he would be compelled to assume, it is impossible for him not to feel a change in his views and conclusions about his Church and faith. He is not at home.

In presence of a venerable teaching body which possesses all the appearance and no doubt the reality of learning, with limitless resources back of them for the prosecution of their researches; in splendid surroundings which bear the stamp of approval of the world of wealth and refinement, amid throngs of students generally better conditioned than he is financially, and among whom he is a sort of curiosity, he will be a strong boy if he does not begin to minimize Catholic faith and practice, and explain away or conceal what might shock the ears or eyes of his associates. He will be a marvel if he bears unmoved the insidious or open attacks on his faith which are too sure to meet him in history, or the side slings that are made at it even in literary studies.

Deprived of that sacramental life which is essential for him to maintain his faith and morals; removed from

whose morals they have no chance, and whose aims are deplorably against them, that he will abandon the practices of his religion and perhaps openly deny his faith. The consequences of that are far-reaching. A bad Catholic will go further than an ordinary man when once he starts on the way of vice. He has broken stronger ties, and is more conscious of the grievousness of his revolt. It may be looking a little further than the subject warrants, but we cannot conceal the fact that it is among apostate Catholic nations that some of the worst types of the anarchist are to be found to-day. It is the result of education without religion.

It is a most unwise, as well as unpatriotic, thing for Protestants to weaken the faith of a Catholic in his Church and creed. With it he is a most ardent and devoted patriot, but in the apostate there are the elements of a traitor to his country.

Lastly, to say that the education of Catholic colleges is not suited for the present day, is to confess one's self ignorant of the actual trend which things educational are taking.

The Hon. William Torrey Harris, United States Commissioner of Education, in an address delivered at the Quarter Centennial of Boston University, May 3, 1893, and subsequently in an address at Washington, declares that "our numerous self-educated men of whom we are so proud" (and who, I may add, are continually quoted against us), "have never advanced beyond elementary methods. Very often," he says, "they are men of great accumulations in the way of isolated scraps of information. They have memory pouches unduly developed." They have become conspicuous chiefly because they are narrow and have forced their way along that narrow pathway into prominence. "It is absurd to suppose," he continues, "that those men can solve the problems that are now before us, especially since territorial expansion has widened our national horizon. The America of the future must be fashioned by men of higher education, and the glory of higher education is that it makes philosophy its leading discipline, and gives an ethical bent to all its branches of study. Higher education must direct the student in history and psychology, in the understanding of deep national principles and the aspirations which mould and govern men in their individual and social actions. The really educated man must be a philosopher, and is by that fact the spiritual monitor of the community of which he is a part."

There we have it. With Oxford and Cambridge insisting upon Latin, Greek, modern languages, elementary mathematics and some science as the proper college course, with Edward Everett Hale pleading for systematic teaching in morality, and the United States Commissioner, whose word is accepted as law by public school educators throughout the land, decreeing that philosophy is an essential in higher education what have we but the actual lines of our own curriculum? Surely with such authorities as these it cannot be said that Catholic teaching is out of touch with the times we live in. Nay, with one of these classical languages used among us as a living medium of speech, with moral teaching and moral sacramental helps not obtainable elsewhere; with the philosophy, which is not a mere historical knowledge of exploded systems, as in most non-Catholic colleges, but a scientific reasoned course through the whole range of metaphysical and ethical research, which always concludes our course, and which is pursued six or seven years by all the professors a preparation for teaching even grammar, we can safely say that we are not only out of touch with the times, but better equipped than most men to meet the exigencies which are indicated by these great authorities in the matter of education.

Our attitude on this matter calls to mind a notable utterance made on the battlefield at Gettysburg, at a moment when many in our army were already despairing of the issue.

Behind the dense woods to the west the war-scarred legions of Lee had hurried to the fray. North of the town the heroic Reynolds fell and the first blood was spilled. In the town and south of it the retreating Federals made a stand on the second day; and the third found them ranged behind the deadly line of cannon on which the troops of Pickett broke, and fortified on that fierce hill which nature reared for them as an impregnable fortress. "We have been hammered into a position," said Newton Meade, "from which we cannot be dislodged." Round that fortress the fury of the battle spent itself; down in the bloody wheat field and in the Devil's Den until at last shattered and defeated, the great army turned and fled, and the country was saved.

So, if we may compare little things with great, has the battle of education been going on. Beginning in poverty and debt, oppressed and harassed with a thousand occupations to keep the sheriff from the door, gathering what hurried resources we could

for our present needs, we have been in the way of life and education, deserted by many wealthy Catholics, with little sympathy and plenty of coldness and criticism, and condemnation, tainted for our failures and flouted for being out of joint with the times, we have struggled on year after year through good and evil report, until at last we have edifices which we can look at with pride, facilities for literary and scientific education in libraries and laboratories which are equal if not superior to those of many much-talked of institutions, with representatives of our training not only in the sombre black or princely purple of the ecclesiastical state, but in all the learned professions—in business life, in the halls of legislature, on the bench, in the army and in establishments of the higher or the highest education, with an ever increasing number of students in our upper courses, and what is most amazing, with precisely that course of studies which we have been clinging to through the dark and gloomy days of what we may characterize as the scientific rebellion, recognized and endorsed as the only one that can fit men to be leaders in the battle of life.

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY.

FROM THE BOSTON REPUBLIC.

The latest issue of the St. Vincent de Paul Quarterly gives us the annual report for 1897, rendered by the New York superior council, of the various councils and conferences under its jurisdiction, to the council general in Paris, and in that report we get a summary of the charitable work which the aforesaid councils and conferences accomplished during the year this report embraces. The number of conferences reporting to the New York superior council were 393, representing an active membership of 6,485. This is a membership gain of 111 over the preceding year; and yet the average attendance at the weekly meetings, which was 3,778 in 1896, fell to 3,766 the following year, a very slight diminution, however. The number of families relieved by these conferences in 1897 was 24,239, as against 21,981 the previous twelve months. The visits made aggregated 174,818, an increase of 18,930 over the figures of 1896; but in the number of situations procured there is a falling off of 58, which may perhaps, be interpreted as indicating that work was easier to obtain by applicants themselves last year. The figures of this detail of Vincentian work stand 1,271 for 1897, against 1,329 for 1896. The financial report shows that the receipts of the 393 conferences reporting during 1897 were \$215,593. That is a gain over the 1896 figures, \$198,148. The collections at the meetings showed a decline last year, \$24,347 against \$25,040 in 1896; the expenditures exhibit an increase, \$200,579 against \$183,428 in 1896. The superior council comments as follows on these comparative showings of the conferences and councils in its jurisdiction:—"While the number of conferences remains the same, there is an increase in membership, and a very noticeable increase in visits to the poor, in moneys expended and in receipts, which go to show that our members are paying attention to the principal work of our society, the visiting of the poor at their homes."

Sixty-five years ago, last May, the first conference of St. Vincent de Paul was organized at Paris, in a back room of the offices of the Tribune Catholique, with eight members, at the instigation of Frederick Ozanam, who is justly regarded by all Vincentians as the father and founder of their charitable organization. To-day there is hardly a country in the whole Catholic world which has not its conference of St. Vincent de Paul, the members of which bodies are to be found prosecuting their truly philanthropic undertaking in faraway China and Egypt, in India, Africa and Australia, as zealously and unostentatiously as they are doing their work here in our own cities and villages. It was estimated a couple of years ago—and the figures then given hold good yet, though they should, doubtless, be increased somewhat—that from the first conference which was organized at Paris sixty-five years ago, with so small a membership, there have since sprung into existence more than 5,000 similar organizations whose present strength represents about 100,000 active, with many more honorary members. The special work of this Catholic charitable organization is the relief of the poor and needy; and at the formation of the first conference, M. Bailly, who presided, said to his colleagues:—"Be not content to dole out alms; that is a very cheap and unwise charity, even if you had wealth; as it is, you have none. Give to each family what personal help you own better training enables you to give. In one place it will be legal, in another medical advice; to some you may judiciously give practical counsel; for others you may procure work. In all cases help them to help themselves, and consider this your primary duty, whether you take them to your homes or not, to render some personal service."

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul spread rapidly once it was organized in

Paris. In France it reached out from the capital into the provinces; from the provinces it crossed the national boundaries into adjoining lands, whence it was carried across the seas, north and south, east and west, into every country in which the Catholic Church whose spiritual teachings prompted and inspired its work, was represented. France to-day possesses about 1,200 conferences; Italy boasts of 300; Ireland counts 150 in her parishes; England has 133; Canada shows 101; Scotland rejoices in 55; while the active membership of the German and Austrian conferences is computed at 12,000, and that of the Belgian bodies at 11,000. Here in our own land, according to a recent statement made by one of our leading Vincentian officials, there are about 500 conferences, aggregating in all a membership of 7,000, which meet week after week through out the year in the interests of the poor and for the furtherance of the works that the society regards as its especial labors. In the jurisdiction of the central council of Boston there are included at the present time, affiliated and isolated conferences together, nearly, if not fully, 80 conferences; and the good work which these bodies accomplish has been repeatedly acknowledged in public.

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul secured its first foothold in the United States in the City of New York, where a conference, the initial one to be established in this country, was organized in February, 1846, at the old St. Patrick's Cathedral in Mott St. For ten years or thereabouts that conference appears to have been the only American one; but in the closing years of the fifties similar organizations came into being in various parts of the land. Archbishop Williams, when he was pastor of the old St. James' Church on Albany street, brought the St. Vincent de Paul Society to this city. The date of the aggregation of the St. James' conference to the New York council was April 1st, 1852; and speaking of its organization seven years ago, the venerable archbishop said that the society's work then covered thirty-one years, and he added that when he set about its formation he knew of but one conference in the country, that of St. Peter's Parish New York, the rector of which, the late Monsignor William Quinn, he personally visited, in order to get from him a full explanation of the workings of the society. Outside of this archdiocese the St. Vincent de Paul Society is found at work in Bishop Harkins' jurisdiction, where the first conference, founded in the cathedral parish, was aggregated on All Saints' day, 1856; in the Manchester diocese, in St. Joseph's, St. Ann's and St. Patrick's parishes, Manchester; in Bishop Beven's episcopate, at Springfield and Chelope Falls; and there are isolated conferences in St. Patrick's and St. Dominic's parishes, Portland, in Lynn, Fitchburg, Pittsfield, Fall River, Monson, Worcester, Lawrence, Lowell, Valley Falls, Westley, Brockton; and perhaps some few other places. It may be, too, that some of these isolated societies have become aggregated with particular or general councils since the issuance of the report from which their standing as isolated conferences is taken. The report of the New York superior council, the statistical exhibit of whose work is given at the beginning of this paper, includes the reports of 79 councils in the circumscription of the Boston central council; 42 of the Baltimore jurisdiction; 80 of Chicago; 79 of Philadelphia and 18 of St. Paul. These are all aggregated societies, but the report also includes the year's work of 145 other conferences that are unaggregated as yet. During 1897 two New England conferences received letters of aggregation to wit, the Holy Name, Worcester, and St. Patrick's Stoneham.

The highest authority in this worldwide Catholic charitable organization

Mr. Jos. Henderson Dirblin, of 54 Josephine Street, New Orleans, La., writes: "I was ailing for some two years, suffering from dyspepsia, a tired feeling, and loss of energy and appetite. I tried one bottle of Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery and found great relief. I took two more bottles, three in all, and one or two vials of the 'Pellets,' when I was a gentle health again. I recommend Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery to do all that it is claimed to do."

The Council of the Society, "is aggregated on the entire society. It aggregates conferences; institutes the councils of different degrees, fixes their limits, pronounces, if there be occasion, and in serious cases, the dissolution of conferences and of councils, adopts general decisions which extend to the whole society, interprets or modifies the general rule, as occasions arise, and directs all the conferences by its correspondence, its circulars and its bulletins. Its existence goes back to the origin of the society itself, so soon as there were several conferences; and its action has been successfully developed according as the general interests of the work have increased and become of greater importance." The president at present of this central body is M. Fages, the president-general as he is called, and the headquarters of the society are at 8 Rue Furstenberg, Paris. At the outset the societies in this country were all subject to the superior council in New York; but as the number of the conferences increased, it was found that the work of supervising their efforts was too large for one body, and hence central councils were established at Boston, Baltimore, Philadelphia, Chicago and St. Paul. There is also an upper council, as it is called, at St. Louis, and a superior council at New Orleans, and the council of Brooklyn also appears to be an independent body. The New York council says in its latest report: "The information of central councils has been of great advantage to the society in the location in which they were instituted, and we hope soon to have them in existence over all parts of the circumscription. The business of the country has been very poor for the past few years, and this condition of affairs has had its effect on the progress of the society; for while it made the demands upon us greater, it has also kept out of the ranks of the active workers men who ordinarily would give much of their time to the task of looking after God's poor, but who were unexpectedly confronted with business difficulties which left them in no frame of mind to think of any other subject than keeping their own homes intact. Despite all those difficulties we have made some progress, and with the dawn of prosperity in the business world we may also look to an era of equal prosperity for the society."

One of the best features of this Catholic charitable organization is the quiet and unostentatious manner wherein its members acquit themselves of the duties which they assume when they join the conferences. There is very little, if any, publicity to their work. They meet once each week to consider what is to be done for the relief of their particular charges; listen to reports, put their hands in their pockets for contributions to the society's funds, and thus week after week, the whole year around, they go on visiting the poor, inquiring into their needs, and relieving their wants as far as it is in their power to do so. Once a year, perhaps, the parish is asked to unite in their work by contributing, at the masses, to the funds of the society, or it may be that a picnic for the benefit of the society's treasury is proposed to the parish. But the bulk of the funds of each society comes from its own members and the gifts of charitably disposed persons, and upon the active members devolve the duty, not always a pleasant one, of carrying out the society's efforts in behalf of God's

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Moralists may prate, and doctors prate, and science shrout from the housetop, but just so long as the birds sing and the flowers bloom, and a man's lips are cherry-red, and a young man's eyes look love, just so long the kisses—and kisses—will kiss—and kiss again.

And where, good men, is the harm if the kisses and kisses be healthy, and true love stands sponsor. It is only when ill-health has blasted the sweet cleanliness of youth that death lurks upon its lips, and deadly germs of dread contamination are as harmless as June-time butterfies to the young man or woman who is thoroughly clean, sweet and healthy in every fiber and tissue. The germs of disease only attack that which is already partly decayed. There is a great medicine in a sure and certain protection against all germs and a speedy cure for all germ diseases. It is Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery. It gives youthful zest to the appetite. It corrects all faults of the digestion. It aids assimilation. It fills the blood with the vital, life-giving elements of the food. It builds sweet, clean, healthy tissues in every part of the body. It drives out all disease germs. It cures 98 per cent of all cases of bronchial, throat and lung affections if taken in time. All good medicine dealers sell it, and have nothing "just as good."

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