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LONDON, SATURDAY, AUG. 11, 1928

AN ANTIDOTE TO RENAN

A generation ago a high master of style, an artist in words wrote the Life of Jesus. It created a tremendous sensation and was widely read in the original and in many translations. "Renan," writes Canon Barry, "seemed to have a supreme deference for facts, but he was always subject to his own mood, he delighted in giving forth his volatile impressions and found that these supplied him with dramatic interest which, in a long life of study and writing, he never exhausted. In short, that which had been taught him as dogma became literature, and for such a one as he literature was always touched with a Celtic glow shining on the mists of uncertain history. By the time that this mood had become to him habitual he discovered the secret of a golden style which has fascinated the world, and applied its descriptive and dissolving power to the Central Figure of religion and humanity, Jesus Christ."

Renan was educated for the priesthood, but never ordained. In his "Heralds of Revolt" Dr. Barry thus writes of the ex-Seminarist: "When the Romans besieged an enemy city they called on the tutelary gods to leave it and follow them to the Roman Capitol. This unhappy fugitive from the Christian altar was busy with a like incantation. He had decided to make the Prophet of Nazareth an idealist who had set him the example—a free spirit in revolt against the Hierarchy. The cause of Jesus was to be severed from that of the Church and to be identified with revolution. Who should seize this flag was now the question. A merely human Jesus would be ruin to all possible creeds that rested on faith on God. That was undoubtedly the stake at issue. The supernatural would be vanquished if Jesus was left in the enemy's camp."

And in the current "Dublin" the veteran English author continues on the same subject: "I am far from denying that Renan has bent the knee to Jesus, but in so doing he has struck Him on the face with a reed. That astonishing epilogue which crowns the 'Life of Jesus' cannot soon be forgotten; it will do both good and harm for many an age in store: 'Thou,' he exclaims, 'art destined to become the corner-stone of humanity in such wise that to tear Thy name from this world be to shake it to its foundations. What-ever be the unexpected events of the future Jesus will never be surpassed. His worship will renew its youth unceasingly. His legend will call forth tears without end. His suffering will touch the best of hearts; all ages will proclaim that among the sons of men a greater was never born than Jesus.' The incantation is now complete, and victory seems sure. The God subdued follows his captor to the new temple, where he will be worshipped as a man who never was a God."

It is a little over thirty years since Renan died. No longer do his honeyed blasphemies excite horror or even surprise. They have become commonplace. From "Christian" pulpits and congresses of Modern Churchmen the same praise of Jesus as the greatest of men contains the same denial, now oftener open than implied, that Jesus is the Eternal Son of God.

Comes Giovanni Papini "who always from his childhood felt a repulsion for all recognized forms of religious faith, and for all churches, and for all forms of spiritual vassalage and who . . . drew near to Christ" and loved Him with a great and passionate love. He feels impelled irresistibly to make known to the world the Truth, the Beauty and the Peace that have come to him. "Some years ago," he tells us himself, "the author of this book wrote another to describe the melancholy life of a man who wished for a moment to become God. Now in the maturity of his years and of his consciousness he has tried to write the life of a God who made Himself man. . . .

"In those proud and feverish days he who writes affronted Christ as few men before him have ever done. And yet scarcely six years afterwards (but six years of great travail and devastation without and within his heart), after long months of agitated meditations, he suddenly ignited another work begun many years ago, and almost as if urged and forced by a power stronger than himself, he began to write this book about Christ which seems to him insufficient expiation of his guilt." All this Papini tells us of himself in the Introduction to the Life of Christ. And he adds, "It has often happened to Christ that He has been more tenaciously loved by the very men who hated Him at first. Hate is sometimes only imperfect and unconscious love; and in any case it is a better foundation for love than indifference."

Like Renan, Papini is a great master of style, and artist in language, and, fortunately for the world, is as eagerly read. The English edition before us is the seventh. The first, second and third printings came from the press in March, 1923, the fourth, fifth and sixth in April and the seventh in May, 1928.

A correspondent, charmed with the Life and fired with new love for Christ by the reading, writes to urge us to continue to keep it before the attention of Catholics, who, he sadly admits, have shown themselves slower than non-Catholics in appreciation of this remarkable book.

As we pointed out before some of reviews of the work might rebel Catholics. We therefore subjoin these paragraphs from the author's own Introduction:

"Just as he has tried to avoid the thorns of erudite criticism on the one hand, he has no pretensions, on the other, of going too deeply into the mysteries of theology. He has approached Jesus with the simple-heartedness of longing and of love, just as during His life-time He was approached by the fishermen of Capernaum, who were, fortunately for them, even more ignorant than the author. Holding loyally to the words of the orthodox Gospels and to the dogmas of the Catholic Church, he has tried to represent the usual dogmas and those words in unusual ways, in a style violent with contrasts and with foreshortening, colored with crude and vividly felt words, to see if he could startle modern souls used to highly colored error, into seeing the truth."

To answer fully a criticism already called to our attention it will be sufficient to quote this paragraph. (In the Introduction the author speaks in the third person.)

"He must warn the reader that he refrained from developing the episodes where the Virgin Mother appears, in order not to lengthen too greatly a book already long, and especially because of the difficulty of showing by passing allusions all the rich wealth of religious beauty which is in the figure of Mary. Another volume would be necessary for that, and the writer is tempted to try if God grants him life and sight to say of her what was never said of any woman."

It would be grave reproach to our Catholic readers if they failed to read and to extend the influence of this epoch-making "Life of Christ." Renan has had his day—and his harvest. Unbelievers hailed him as a prophet and spread his fame. Shall we of the household of the faith show that fatal indifference—which Papini whips with scorn—when a greater than Renan uses his gifts of eloquence and artistry not on the side of revolt and treason, but in the sacred cause of Christ the Son of

the living God who was made man for our sake.

Here is the ideal Life of Christ that Papini pictured to himself:

"The book we need is a living book to make Christ more living, to set Christ the Ever-Living with loving vividness before the eyes of living men, to make us feel Him as actually and eternally present in our lives. . . . We need a book which would show in that tragic epic, written by both Heaven and earth, the many teachings suited to us, suited to our time and to our life. . . . A book written by a layman for laymen who are not Christians or who are only superficially Christians, a book without the affectations of professional piety and without the insipidity of scientific literature, called 'scientific' only because it perpetually fears to make the slightest affirmation. A book, in short, written by a modern writer who respects and understands his art, and knows how to hold the attention even of the hostile."

The verdict of the world's readers in many languages is that Giovanni Papini has succeeded in drawing near the ideal he set for himself. Are you interested?

SAUCE FOR THE GANDER

In the Six-County area of Ulster the Education Act of the new Parliament proved quite unsatisfactory to Catholics. It places the management of the schools and the appointment of teachers in the hands of regional committees and stipulates that the religious denomination of the teacher is not to be taken into account in the appointment of teachers. The matter of religious instruction is also under the control of these regional education authorities. If the schools are transferred to the regional committees they enjoy to the full all the financial advantages of the Act, including the payment of the teachers from a Parliamentary Education Fund. To refuse to transfer is to forfeit all or almost all these advantages. Moreover, Catholics who built their own schools and paid for them, may be taxed for the building of other schools when needed in the area under the control of a regional committee.

The Irish Presbyterian General Assembly, meeting recently in Belfast, seems to have discovered that the hot sauce intended for the Catholic goose may be served also to the Protestant gander.

In a resolution which, with others, was passed, the Assembly asserted "that the objection to have the appointment of teachers and the management of schools in the hands of education and regional committees is greatly accentuated when the population of regional areas is predominantly Roman Catholic, especially in view of the declared intention of the authorities of the Roman Catholic Church not to transfer schools under Roman Catholic management, and also because the religious denomination of the teacher is not to be taken into account in making the appointment."

"In the judgment of the Assembly the safeguards provided in the Act are entirely inadequate to secure the appointment of suitable teachers in schools now under Protestant management in predominantly Roman Catholic areas should they be transferred to the management of regional committees."

The general effect of the resolutions adopted was that there should be no transfer of schools until the present owners and managers were convinced that such transfer would promote the best interests of the children; and that an amending Bill should give the power to appoint the teachers and manage the schools.

The debate was quite warm and the staunch Presbyterians expressed themselves in very much the same terms as those used by the Most Rev. Dr. McRory when he voiced the Catholic objections to the Education Act.

Rev. Dr. Strahan, ex-Moderator of Assembly, declared that, so far as he could judge, the great boon for which they had so longed had come to them vitiated. It was like a ring which contained a secret poison that might be fatal to the very best life of the community. The whole benefit of the Bill was made to hinge on the transfer of the schools, which would mean the surrender of control. They did not object to that so long as the trust

was safe. To him the trust was the spiritual welfare of the child. No man had a right to be appointed to a school in whom the parents of the child had no confidence.

Now in all this the Catholic bishop and the Presbyterian ex-Moderator would agree perfectly. The most precious thing in education is "the spiritual welfare of the child." That the Catholic Church has always maintained and ever will maintain. Seeing the possibility of a Catholic being appointed to teach Presbyterian children the ex-moderator makes the eminently reasonable statement that "no man had a right to be appointed to a school in whom the parents of the child have no confidence."

The difference is just this; Catholics, while conceding the right and duty of the State in matters educational, assert as a principle based on natural right, the paramount right, duty and responsibility of the parents to determine what is in the best interest of "the spiritual welfare of the child." The Church has ever resisted the encroachment of the State on this natural right of parents. The ex-Moderator and his associates, apparently, assert this principle because of particular concrete conditions. A principle should be of universal application. And the Catholic position in the Six Counties should have had the support of all who believe in the principle asserted or implied by the Irish Presbyterian Assembly.

Dr. Strahan, the ex-Moderator, is further reported as saying: The teacher sent down might be a Jew, a secularist, or a Roman Catholic, or something else, and religious instruction would have to go.

Not only in the border areas, but in South Down, Armagh, Fermanagh, and Tyrone, the regional committees would be predominantly Roman Catholics, who would have the arrangement of schools.

Was it fair that the Northern Government should place the Protestant people in the mixed areas in such a position—under a harrow that would tear their flesh? ("No, no.") They had expected better of the Northern Government. In face of that they could not transfer their schools—which meant the turning over of their property to another Church. It was a great wrong that had been perpetrated to compel men to pay a rate, and to get the benefit of that rate, to place their children under a different authority.

He wanted to be loyal, and the people for whom he spoke along the border wanted to be loyal, and if they were not to be greatly abused this pact must be very much altered, and the poison taken out of it.

It is not clear that the eminent Presbyterian divine in his indignation at the prospect of Protestant schools being placed under Catholic control had any sympathy for Catholics similarly placed, nor any indignation over the fact that in many parts of the Six Counties just such "a great wrong was perpetrated" on Catholics.

Referring to Archbishop Hughes Brownson wrote: "He asked only justice and equality, and justice and equality to Catholics mean, in the minds of non-Catholics, the political ascendancy of Catholics. These non-Catholic countrymen of ours cannot believe that they stand on a footing of equality with Catholics unless they have the power to govern and oppress them. They are equal only when they are superior."

The governing consideration with powers that be in Northeast Ulster seems to be to destroy the religious character of the schools, to make them, theoretically at least, non-denominational. This would seem unobjectionable, even praiseworthy, if it resulted in bringing Catholic schools under Protestant control. But it is monstrous when it brings Protestant schools under Catholic control. The secularization of education, of which Lord Londonderry and his colleagues are enamoured, is something that in Canada and the United States has been weighed in the balance of experience and found wanting. The more thoughtful amongst educationists openly condemn the divorce of religion and education, and are seeking some means more adequate than the church and the Sunday school to supplement the education of the schools on the religious side. Protestants and Catholics of Northeast Ulster might well get together and devise some plan by which religion would retain its place in their new school system.

CHARITY THE WORLD'S GREAT NEED

BY THE OBSERVER

The love of our neighbor which is commanded by God is something more than a mere feeling of affection for our neighbor. We have heard a great deal in recent years about service. Writers have filled books and papers with it; and it has been the main stock-in-trade of speakers who have no clear theory or doctrine to set forth and who are therefore driven to glittering and often meaningless generalities. Teachers have talked to uncomprehending school children of "service," without emphasizing the principles of obedience to law, moral and civil, and have therefore done but little to strengthen the characters of those they sought to instruct.

Usually this "service" that is so much talked of, turns out, when examined, to be no more than mere physical or material help of one sort or another; material betterment which has in it little or nothing to improve the morals or the chances of saving the soul. Many of those who have given most heavily of their means to build or endow colleges or hospitals have little or no charity in them; a fact which is proved by their conduct towards their fellow men in everyday life. Charity is the love of the neighbor for God's sake and according to His Law. Charity is always subject to God's Law. Charity is to be exercised by rules and is not a matter in which every man is free to pick and choose a course entirely for himself and by himself.

When a commercial or financial robber extorts a great fortune from his neighbors by sharp practice and fraud he may imagine he is a charitable man because he chooses to give a part of that ill-gotten fortune to the uses of mercy and relief of the poor, and would no doubt be surprised if told that he has positively no Christian Charity in him. But where is the Charity of Christ in a man who robs from the public the huge fortune of which he gives a part to relief or education? Human pity is not necessarily meritorious. The bandit who murders an express messenger and takes the money of others away from him and afterwards gives that money or some of it to those who are in need of relief under an emotion of human pity for their misery, has merited nothing from God. Whether a man merits a reward for having relieved the miseries of others or not, depends on what his motive was. Also on what his intentions were. Does he remain a robber at heart? Is he going to rob another train? Is he going to loot another bank? Is he resolved to form a fraudulent company and to induce unsuspecting people to put their money into some fake scheme to their certain or very probable loss? If so, where is his Charity? In what manner is he in accord with the Charity of Christ?

Only a Charity exercised in His name and for His sake and under His law can have any claim on Him for a reward. He does not allow us to keep the books of Heaven and to enter up our own credits at our own prices. We must submit to His will and lay our offerings at His feet. We have a natural love for those who are bound to us by ties of blood. Parents love their children; brothers their sisters; near relatives those who are closely related to them. We love our friends and our benefactors, sometimes at least, and we ought always to do so. We are inclined to love those who are admirable for their good qualities; who are brave or generous or kind hearted or wise. All this affection is good and runs in the direction of obeying God's commandment to love one another; for it disposes us towards the Charity He has commanded and makes it easy for us to practice that Charity. But it must not be forgotten that these natural feelings are entertained by people who have never heard the Name of God, much less of His commandment to love one another. That fact is in itself enough to show that something more is required to mark and distinguish a Christian. Service in the sense in which it is so much talked of today as a cure-all, and an off-set or contra-balance to all the evil that a man may do, was practiced by the ancient pagans, and is practiced by the savages of the darkest regions of the world; not so freely or so fully as we practice it, but practiced nevertheless; and what more than that

fact can be required to prove that Christ required something besides mere human pity when He bade us all to love one another?

When Christ said: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," He meant a great deal more than is covered by mere donations and mere relieving of human misery through mere human motives and emotions. He made it plain that if we love only those who love us, we have no right to look for any reward, since those who do not pretend to be His followers do that much. "Do not even the publicans this?" We may possess human affection to a very high degree, and yet be little better than the pagans. Human affection is not wholly the possession of Christians. There is nothing in mere human love or in mere human pity that deserves an everlasting reward. We love people with human love, especially if they be our kinsfolk and friends; we feel, if we are kindly, a good deal of sympathy for those who are in hard luck and suffer. But in such cases we love them or sympathize with them either for their sakes or for our own sake. To love people for God's sake is another thing and a better and higher thing! That is Christian Charity.

We have not Charity unless we love for God's sake; we are not true Christians. "By this shall men know that you are My disciples, if you love one another."

Everyone is dear to God. We treat the bodies of the dead with respect not merely because they are all that is left of the forms we knew, but because they were the receptacles for immortal souls. Graves are treated with respect forever, not only because the dead bodies of our friends are mouldering into dust there, but because the bodies that are there mouldering into dust once contained immortal souls. We love God in those whom He has created or else we love Him not at all; and this is why we must forgive even the most terrible injuries that are done to us. The love of God and the love of our neighbor cannot be separated. We are bound to love God in those whom He has created and redeemed.

It follows that our love for the neighbor must be universal; it does not depend on our choice of persons to love; it is a duty imposed by God and binds us the same in regard to all God's creatures. We exercise our love for God as much in the case of any one of His creatures as in the case of any other. There is not any exceptions of persons. God made them all and wills that they all be saved. He sent His only Son to die on the Cross for them all. Kinsfolk and strangers are all the same to us in the discharge of this duty; we are bound to love them all. God loves all mankind without any exception of persons and we are bound to do the same. If we except one person from our Charity our Charity avails us not.

We are not expected to take the same amount of pleasure in the company or the conversation of all persons, or to feel for all persons those warm sentiments which are commonly spoken of as love. But we must be just and merciful and forgiving to all and we must wish well to all, and pray for all, and keep our hearts free from any feelings of hatred and dislike, and keep free of prejudice and do unto all as we would wish that they should do to us; and so we carry out the injunction of Christ to let the world see that we are His disciples, proving that we are such because we love one another.

We have said that we must be just to one another. This is the point at which the doctrine of Charity as taught by Christ and the doctrine of service as taught by the worldlings of the present day, separate and go apart. Charity includes all that they mean by service; but the service they speak of does not amount to Charity, as taught by Christ.

The worldling who talks of service conceives of a human relationship in which a man may do pretty much as he likes if he does some big things for the relief or the material betterment of humanity or for education. He may do all that and not have Charity. He might deliver his body to be burned and not have Charity.

When the day of death comes, we are still only the poor little grain of wheat, ready to be buried that all the potencies of its being may at last reach their fruition.—Archbishop Keane.

CATHOLIC ACTIVITY IN AUSTRIA

VITALITY OF CHURCH SHOWN AT GREAT GATHERING OF 400,000 CATHOLICS

By Dr. Frederick Funder
 Vienna Correspondent N. C. W. C.

Vienna, July 16.—Proselytizing activities of Protestant sects in Austria under the pretence of rendering material assistance to the needy, were denounced in a letter from Pope Pius XI., read at the great "Catholic Day" meeting attended by more than 400,000 persons here. Specific mention was made of the activities of sectaries of American nationality.

Referring to sectarian activities of the past few years in Austria, the Holy Father's letter read in part: "These people are endeavoring with all their might to destroy by their false doctrines the Faith of their fellow-citizens. They try, by all sorts of terrorist measures to force the latter to desert the Church. Their sole object is to implant Socialistic doctrines, with all its pernicious influence, in all public institutions, particularly in the school system."

"Not less dangerous to the faithful are the heretical teachers, chiefly of American nationality, who, deceiving by the simple and inexperienced by subtle means, take advantage of the distressful conditions of the people to draw them over into their own ranks through the bestowal of material relief. We deeply regret that the nation, having lost its wealth in consequence of late political events, should run the risk of losing a much more precious possession, the old Faith of its forefathers. We adjure our dear sons in Austria always to remember that the harm already done would be much greater, if, through the efforts of these sects, they could be betrayed into renouncing their Faith."

LARGEST DEMONSTRATION OF ITS KIND

The Austrian "Catholic Day" this year, the first one held since before the War, was the largest demonstration of its kind ever witnessed in Austria. The meeting, culminated in a monster procession in which more than 400,000 persons marched around the Ringstrasse and then assembled in the historic plaza in front of the old Imperial Palace where an address was delivered by Cardinal Piff, Archbishop of Vienna. His Eminence made a stirring appeal to the Catholics of Austria to guard their original Catholic faith as the greatest treasure of all time. His appeal was greeted with enthusiastic shouts of approval.

Those who attended the demonstration this year and saw the immense throngs, listened to the recital of statistics showing the progress of Catholic organization work in Austria, and noted the manifestations of enthusiasm, were astonished that such things could have been brought about in a country which has been plagued with destitution, hunger, and a Socialistic terrorism. The progress which has been made can be noted in all aspects of religious life, in matters of organization, Catholic charity, social welfare work, and general education.

For the meeting this year a clearly defined program was outlined for discussion, the topics including: the family, the school, the problems of modern ministry, and charity. The Christian family was recognized as the nucleus around which the restoration of human society must be built up. The future of the people is being determined today in the school rooms where the Socialists—where ever they are able to do so—are attempting to extirpate every trace of Christian education. It is now recognized that one of the problems facing the Church, more important now than ever before, is that of establishing contacts with the working classes and preventing their further estrangement and of preserving connection with the intellectual classes in the great towns and industrial centers. There was also a discussion concerning new methods by means of which the apostolate may be extended to combat the new paganism of modern times. Finally it was pointed out that Christian works of charity comprise a duty that cannot be dispensed with in the great mission of love to which the Catholic Church is called. All of these topics were thoroughly discussed by the most distinguished Catholic leaders of Austria headed by members of the hierarchy.

CATHOLIC GROWTH IN TEN YEARS

Ten years ago the Catholics of Austria had just started to build up organizations among their young people. Today there are in the secondary schools of the nation alone, 80 organizations with, in all, more than 4,000 members and the "Association of Catholic Young People" has a membership in excess of 10,000, most of them drawn from the ranks of young workmen and clerks. There are more than twenty Catholic students' organizations at the University of Vienna, their number having been multiplied by ten in the past thirty years, while during the same period their total membership has increased fifty fold. At other universities where formerly a Catholic student hardly dared to profess his religion openly, there are many Catholic students associations today. At the University of Graz where, formerly, there