

ing." he pleaded for more reality in religion, and referred to Huxley's remarks that on reading Cardinal Newman he lost the power of distinguishing between right and wrong.

THE 'NECESSITY OF REVELATION

Most of us are well acquainted with the principles of Modernism which lays it down that, when man reaches the stage of self-consciousness, or, if you like, the age of reason, God reveals Himself directly to each individual.

Father Sharpe, M. A., the eminent convert from Anglicanism, deals with the question of Revelation in a brochure entitled "The Principles of Christianity." Revelation, he tells, is direct communication made by God to man in regard to facts which are beyond the scope of human reason.

Now, with one exception, all religions claiming to hold the deposit of true revelation, have (says Father Sharpe) all contradicted more or less the infallible conclusions of reason.

In regard to the claims of the Christian Church to be the depository of divine revelation, Father Sharpe argues that there are certain facts in its history which have no parallel or analogy in the experience of mankind.

The reason of all this is that the Christian religion deals with essential humanity, not with its accidents; it applies and appeals all round to all and everything which is essentially and unalterably human.

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which can be adapted to mankind as we know mankind. Therefore, the intelligence which has so adapted Christianity to all times and to all possible circumstances and characters, can only be that of its Creator.

Taking the evidence of the Scriptures and the Holy Books, the unanimity of acceptance given to doctrines and tenets which were (in many respects) the reverse of acceptable to human nature, the lessons of its vast meritorious and the fact that its endurance and capacity of endurance seem to increase as the Church itself grows in age, and (says Father Sharpe) we are forced to conclude that the Church's account of its own origin and early history must be accepted as the true one.

A NON-CATHOLIC IN CATHOLIC SCHOOL

IMPRESSIONS OF AN ENGLISH JOURNALIST AT CATECHISM CLASS

One of the most prominent of contemporary English journalists gives his impressions of the Catholic schools in this remarkable article. As you pass within Catholic walls from the common streets you may understand the curious surprise with which a Greek of the second century, or a savage whorlper of Thor, came upon some early Christian home in the midst of a cultured city or haunted wilderness.

It is the same in the Catholic school. From morning till evening the children are surrounded by the plain and beautiful symbolism of profane and merciful powers. The crucifix hangs upon the wall, the Virgin, with flowers round her feet, watches them like a mother more beautiful and considerate than their own.

There were only 150 boys in that school and of these 40 were Protestants (if the Anglicans will allow me to use that unfashionable word just to distinguish other Christians from the Roman Catholics).

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The teacher referred to a sufficient summary of biblical history to guide him when it was necessary to emphasize a point of Old Testament teaching or example, but the children did not read the text verse by verse as in the board and ordinary church schools.

The subject naturally led to the doctrine of purgatory and hell, confession and penance, with special insistence on the doctrine that for forgiveness after confession the contrition for sin must be heartfelt. The meaning of prayer was then explained, and, perhaps for the benefit of a poor ignorant Protestant like myself, the clause in the catechism was brought, teaching that "we do not pray for relics or images, for help can neither see, nor hear, nor help us."

In the girls' class—there were 74 girls in one small room—the prayers included a touching petition "for all who will die to-day," but as I was trying to realize the vast significance of the prayer—the innumerable souls who were going to purgatory that day from China, Central Africa and among the Esquimaux—we receive the order, "One—two—sit," and proceed with a lesson on the commandment against false witness.

In the other subjects, such as science and history, the teaching seemed to me on a level with the board schools, or rather better. That depended not on the subject but on the teacher. But in the religious instruction the difference was so wide that community or compromise is evidently impossible.

He flings back the charge that France is decadent: "France to-day proudly points out these heroes to a world that thought her decadent and degenerate."

THE MOST REAL Telling of his experiences among wounded soldiers returning from the great war, Rev. P. T. Browning in a sermon recently in the Protestant Cathedral, Southwark (England), mentioned a particular case which had come before his notice.

It is to be hoped that that soldier did "want to be devout" and acted accordingly. A like hope might well be expressed regarding Rev. Mr. Browning, judging from his observation on the same occasion that: "At the present time they thought of those devoted priests in the past who were ready to suffer patiently for the truth's sake, some of them in prison persecuted by the order of irate and narrow Protestants through the weakness of Bishops who were feebly sorry."

acted or abandoned. In the catechism, which is the base of the teaching, the children are given not only the doctrines of sin and prayer and forgiveness; they are given a rule of life and a form of daily exercise. They are taught, for instance, not only that the sacrament of matrimony gives a special grace to enable those who enter into it to bear the difficulties of their state, but that it is their duty after their night prayers to observe modesty in going to bed, and to begin the day by making the sign of the cross and saying some short prayer, such as "O my God, I offer my heart and soul to Thee."

FRANCE'S CATHOLIC REBIRTH

Much has been written about the spiritual regeneration of France by the war. The passing through a baptism of blood to be consecrated again to the Church of Christ. Thirty thousand of her privates are in the ranks and in the trenches and in the battle fronts.

War correspondents are noting the change in the heroic abandon to patriotism under the influence of a new born religion. The spirit of old-time faith is conquering the rebellious reign of infidelity and indifference. Religious life in the camps is expanding, and those who were estranged from the Church are returning to the fold.

Recently a wonderful book on this subject was issued by three French priests—the Abbots Georges Andant, Theillier de Ponchoville and Joan Desgranges—who made a tour of observation in hospital trains and field hospitals and in the districts behind the front. They present a marvelous picture of the moral strength of the French nation during this war.

It is worth while to select some passages from the book. The Abbe Theillier writes: "Rarely has the soul of France risen higher than to-day. Rarely has the soul of France proved more beautiful and worthy of love than while its flesh was being martyred during the awful battles of the past year, just as the infinite love that was in the heart of Christ was never revealed more beautifully than while He hung nailed to the cross. Our men have given without reservation their youth, their health and strength. The mothers and wives of France have given even more. I have heard a mother say: 'I have two children. God in heaven only knows how I love them, but if He needs them that France may be victorious and once again become a truly Christian nation, I give their lives gladly.' The voice of the fathers of France has spoken most clearly in the words of the general who, when suddenly informed of the death of his son, said: 'I can do nothing for him, but I can do something for France. Let us work for her.'"

He flings back the charge that France is decadent: "France to-day proudly points out these heroes to a world that thought her decadent and degenerate. You thought me decadent and you already prophesied my death—the disappearance of a once great nation. Severe in your judgment of my errors, unable to understand the complex mysteries of my soul, do now be just to the strength of my regeneration, which God has prodigiously given me! Look at my sons, in whom I have come back to new life! These are the reasons I pay for my sins, as they are the justification of my hopes. Through them I have broken and crushed the peril of servitude which had come over my soul and my nation. Through them I shall soon break the shackles which have temporarily paralyzed my soaring flight upward. Their faith shall lead me back into the higher regions from where I shed my light upon the world when I was surrounded by the brightness of Christ."

God punishes nations. Or let us say that nations punish themselves when they go astray from God—in whom we live and move and have our being. But punishment often brings with it repentance for the past and restoration of the public conscience.—Intermountain Catholic.

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"ECONOMIC PROGRESS" AND CONFESSION

An editorial in one of the October magazines heralds the advent of a new morality which is not based according to the writer on Revelation but on the "evolution of civilization" and on "economic progress." Of course this statement is absurd, for it is not a new morality, but immorality, which is substituted in certain quarters for Revelation, and it may be questioned whether there is any disposition on the part of the moral portion of our population to desert from the laws of conduct laid down by the prophets and Jesus Christ.

Passing over the implication that society at present is exercising through its courts so strong a restraining power over vice that it cannot afford to dispense with the notion of sin and the menace of an angry God an implication that is known to be false by every one who has talked with the judges of our courts, one wonders where the writer got his impression that the confessional is passing from the American scheme of life. To say so is altogether to misread the times, and to show a surprising ignorance of the vigor of Catholic life to-day and its constantly increasing power on a steadily growing proportion of our population.

Sincere, well-informed sociologists have no inclination to minimize the beneficial effects of confession. Non-Catholics, who themselves are farthest from any disposition to avail themselves of its salutary restraints, are united in admitting that it does exercise a very marked influence on all those who practice it; and so, are far from advocating its elimination from the present scheme of life.

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YOU CANNOT HAVE ONE WITHOUT THE OTHER

We had an interesting conversation recently with a well read and cultivated Protestant gentleman. It was one of those friendly interchanges of opinion that we Catholics are bound to have from time to time with our brethren outside the fold. The talk veered about to mixed marriages and we delivered ourselves forcibly upon the subject. Our Protestant friend could not agree with us. "If," he said, "you mean that a man and a woman who expect to be married should both have a religion of some kind, I concur with your statement; but if, when you say they should both have the same religion, you mean they should both hold the same doctrine, I disagree. Religion and doctrine are two different things."

But why should a rule be applicable to every department of life save that which is the most fundamentally important? The rules that govern the same conduct of business enterprises; the invariable postulates that form the a b c of scientific research; (water boils at a temperature of 212 degrees, it freezes at 32 degrees, there are 3 dimensions, 7 primary colors, 26 letters in the English alphabet, etc., etc.), the mechanics of writing that must be observed by the literary aspirant—what are all these but doctrines, dogmas? And at what goal would the man arrive who ridiculed or neglected them?

We believe the argument to be a convincing one.—Chicago New World

LESS A SACRAMENT?

"Marriage," says a Modernist writer for the magazines, "is much more a contract than a Sacrament." Then he writes from his heavy intellectual labor; his work is done; he has spent an institution of Christ by one short crisp sentence. So he thinks at least. Fortunately the Sacraments are not so easily destroyed; they rest on Christ's unchanging word and stand firm despite the vagaries of lawless minds and the high winds of many doctrines. What Christ has joined together, no man may put asunder. Enactments, legal or otherwise, can no more separate the contract from the Sacrament in the case of marriages between baptized persons, than they can grant divorce between husband and wife.

The writer would have us believe that progress has repudiated the sacred character of the union between man and woman and thrown it aside as a thing that has outlived its usefulness. Such is not the case; marriage now is what it has been ever since the days of Jesus Christ. Between infidels it never was a Sacrament, although of its nature it is something holier and more binding than a mere agreement, such as the sale of a horse or the lease of a house. The infidel marriage is a contract, but a contract of a peculiar kind. It cannot be rescinded at the will of the participants. Once contracted it is indissoluble, not less so in fact, with one exception, than if it were a Sacrament. There is, however, this grain of truth in what the Modernist says: the number of infidels is growing. Fewer are being baptized. And as baptism, at least in one of the persons married, is a prerequisite for the reception of the Sacrament of matrimony, the number of those who do not receive this Sacrament and with it the graces to fulfill the arduous duties of married life, is constantly on the increase. No wonder, then, that violations of the rights and obligations implied in the contract are also on the increase. But the greater wonder is that there should be found persons to rejoice in this fact. Marriages between baptized persons and infidels are also becoming more numerous. If it be true that such marriages, although the greater weight of theological opinion is against this view, are in no wise sacramental, even when dispensations are granted, then it is also true that in this sense also the number of non-sacramental marriages is still more on the increase. This great danger should be a warning to those who look lightly on the intimacy that their sons and daughters are contracting with folk outside the Faith. If parents wish to be absolutely sure that their children will receive God's blessing on their marriage, and get the graces so necessary for the sanctity of married life, they must be careful to safeguard their young hearts from entanglement in affections for those who reject Christ.—America.

A CALAMITY UPON YOUR OLD AGE

Above all things, dear fathers and mothers, do not put any obstacles in the way of your sons' and daughters' vocation. By opposing their sacred calling you are liable to endanger your salvation and to force them in a way of life for which they have not the necessary graces. When you reflect on the result of a man's priest-hood, viz., hundreds, yes, sometimes thousands, of souls converted to God and to the Faith, would you dare to face the responsibility of the loss entailed by keeping your son from becoming a priest? You know the good our sisterhoods are doing in our hospitals, asylums, Catholic schools, etc., do you not tremble at the thought of being held to account for the loss of faith of hundreds of children, for the neglect of scores of sick and dying, by preventing your daughter from going to the convent to which she is called? Besides, reflect on the fact: many a young man has gone astray in a parent's life, who would have become a zealous and apostolic priest if they had not stood stubbornly in the way of his vocation. Are you prepared to deliberately invite such a calamity upon your old age?—Right Rev. Bishop of Covington, Ky.

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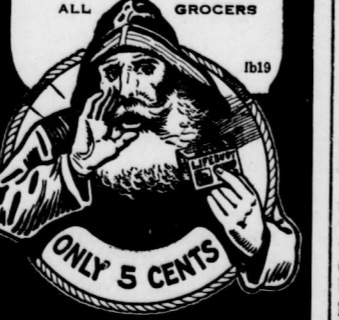
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