

making new ruts." And again, "Even to touch things lightly we need something like a test. It is necessary to have in hand a truth to judge modern philosophies rapidly, and it is necessary to judge them very rapidly to judge them before they disappear."

OF CHESTERTON himself Mr. G. A. Gardener in a book which attracted much attention on its appearance some years ago said: "He is a wayfarer from the ages, stopping at the inn of life, warming himself at the fire, and making the rafters ring with his jolly laughter. Time and place are accidents; he is elemental and primitive. He is not of our time, but of all times." And more recently another has said of him: "They are called wise who put things in their right order." Judged by this standard Mr. Chesterton is one of the wisest men and sanest critics of our day, although to judge him at all seems rather presumptuous, and after attempting it, we are, to borrow a phrase, left feeling very humble, twirling our hat in our hands."

THERE is an interesting reference to the author of "Paradise Lost" in Cardinal Gasquet's "History of the Venerable English College, Rome," published by Longmans in 1920. The College was built upon the foundation of the ancient English Hospice which had so long afforded a generous hospitality to pilgrims from Britain sojourning the Eternal City. Among those to whom this hospitality was extended were the two poets, John Milton and Richard Crashaw. It was in the year 1638 that Milton arrived at the Hospice, he having begun his tour of Italy the year before. He was received in Rome with the honor due his genius as a poet. Among other courtesies shown to him he was dined by the Jesuits, and Cardinal Barberini, "with truly Roman magnificence" gave a musical entertainment in his honor. Writing to a Roman friend in 1639 he spoke of the Cardinal's "great kindness," who, at the entertainment in question, was "himself waiting at the doors, and seeking me out in so great a crowd, nay almost laying hold of me by the hand, admitted me within in a truly most honorable manner." We are inclined to wonder if Milton remembered this in after years when penning some of his ill-natured remarks about Rome. We know that the story of his ultimate conversion to the Catholic Faith, however improbable it may seem, does not entirely lack evidence.

RICHARD CRASHAW, on the other hand, was undoubtedly a Catholic, having embraced the Faith after his expulsion from Cambridge for refusing to sign the "Solemn League and Covenant." In proceeding to Italy he had letters of introduction from Queen Henrietta Maria, then an exile in Paris. On arrival in Rome, in the pilgrim's habit, he was received at the Hospice on November 28th, 1646, and remained fifteen days. That he was both a good Catholic and a great poet history testifies. His famous "Steps to the Temple" is simply an epitome of Catholic devotion.

#### A NOTED CONVERT

Rev. John Abani, head of a notorious movement against the Catholic Church in Germany, has become a convert to the faith which he formerly reviled. He has published a book in which he explains the course of his conversion and the following paragraph is worthy of notice: "The outbreak of the War," he writes, "caused me to make a still more earnest examination of the condition of affairs and a thorough self-examination. How self-reliant the Catholic priest seemed at their Mass, in comparison with the Protestant soldiers depending on the sermon and measuring, according to it, the value of their ecclesiastical community. Also in the sphere of war superstitions and their suppression, the Catholic Church showed to advantage. When I gave the Lord's Supper from morning to night to an entire infantry regiment shortly before the march of my division toward Verdun, I was forced to look into many hundreds of downcast faces and but few cheerful ones. I must confess that there were not two out of two thousand men who had a positive and satisfactory conception of what they celebrated. It was then that I formed a firm resolution that if God showed me the way, I would not restrain myself from going beyond the limits of my Church, if need be, in order to acknowledge the Divine Revelation without restriction."—Catholic Transcript.

### IMMORAL BOOKS DENOUNCED

#### SUPREME COURT JUSTICE URGES CENSORSHIP LAW

Supreme Court Justice John Ford, of New York, is continuing his campaign for the enactment of a State law to suppress obscene literature, as proposed by the Clean Books League. Justice Ford contends that the number of vile books has increased to an alarming extent in the past two or three years and that their brazen dissemination has resulted in incalculable harm and great moral depravity. His efforts to stamp out the flood of perverting literature are being supported by the Bishops of the New York Province and numerous religious, civic and social organizations.

Addressing the members of the Jewish Young Folks' League of New York recently, Justice Ford explained the purpose of the Clean Books League and the need of a State law to suppress immoral publications. For the text of his address he quoted the verses in the xix. chapter of Genesis which describe the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. In the course of his stirring appeal for decency on the stage and in the printed word Justice Ford said:

"No country in the world has so high a standard of personal conduct in sexual matters as our own. The foundation stones of America's greatness were laid on the bedrock of sound morality. Nowhere in all the world has womanhood been so exalted and revered as in the United States. Our country has won for itself abroad the proud title of 'The Paradise of Women.'"

#### GROWING MORAL LAXITY

"It needs but cursory examination of existing conditions to realize that we have begun to drift away from our old moral ideals within the past few years. Whether this is due to an essential drop in moral tone or comes as one of the incidents of the World War may be a moot question. My own view is that it is one of the countless evils which the war monster scattered over the whole earth."

"But it is a waste of time to argue over what brought the change. Enough that it is here. That fact is a challenge to every moral teacher in the land to every parent, and patriot, to do battle against the immoral influence whose tendencies are to corrupt private morals and undermine our American social structure."

"In the theatres debasing plays are exhibited. These are not merely tolerated. They are greeted with acclaim by crowded houses. But after all the theatrical phase of the propaganda of immorality is not nearly so insidious and difficult to combat as that which is carried on by means of depraving publications. The theatre is open to everyone and may be kept within reasonable bounds by public sentiment. A more dangerous evil is the general circulation of degrading prints. The theatres are few, the plays are public."

"Printed obscenity has countless distributing agencies and it preys upon the souls and bodies of millions in secret and forever. Once put the immoral publication into print and it becomes a permanent source of evil influence from generation to generation. The price of admission for a single evening to an indecent show limits the scope of its influence. Parents can keep a check upon the attendance of their children at the theatres. Not so with printed immorality. It can be had by young and old at newsstands, at stationery stores, from circulating libraries at a nominal cost, and the fact is that bad as some shows are their promoters would not dare to produce the hideous depravity that is hidden from public knowledge between the covers of many books, magazines and pamphlets now on free circulation."

"Our greatest difficulty is to bring home to the minds of the people the utter depravity of many of the books which you see in shop windows, not to speak of the cheap pamphlets and pictures, teeming with violence, which you never see but which circulate freely within reach of the young."

"I might exhaust the vocabulary of its denunciatory adjectives without conveying more than a faint idea of their wickedness. Invariably when I have shown a passage from any of these foul books to others they have confessed that they then for the first time gained an adequate comprehension of the evil I had been talking about."

#### UNDERMINING MORALITY

Justice Ford stated that the vile literature circulated most among the young and that it was undoing the work of the churches and undermining the moral foundations laid by parents and teachers. Continuing, he said:

"During the dangerous years from ten to twelve, to manhood and womanhood, when all the wholesome influences that can be marshalled are thrown around our children to keep them clean and pure, it is awful to have them subjected to the baleful influence of this printed immorality. At that susceptible age it needs but the slightest impulse to turn their plastic minds toward or away from evil ways. The mature in years with settled principles of moral conduct are largely immune from immorality of stage and story. But it is for the

rising and future generations that I plead.

"When the moral elements of this State combine nothing can stop them. Our adversaries are numerically insignificant. It was moral sentiment effectively expressed which put the existing law on the statute books originally. It was moral sentiment which kept it there. The same moral sentiment must rebuild and make it once more the effective guardian of our youth against physical and spiritual contamination and corruption."

### THE VIRGIN BIRTH CONTROVERSY

#### HAS HISTORY ALMOST AS OLD AS CHRISTIANITY ITSELF

Discussion of the virgin birth of Christ which has aroused the so-called fundamentalists and modernists of the Episcopalian Church as well as those of divergent views in the Presbyterian and Baptist denominations has led those conversant with the history of religious controversy to point out that the styling of the more radical wing of the controversialists as "modernists" is a decided misnomer.

Questioning of the virgin birth of Christ, which has been held as a fundamental doctrine since the earliest days of the Christian Church and is insisted upon as an integral part of Catholic doctrine, it is pointed out, has occurred from time to time for more than fifteen centuries. Nor is the discussion a new one within a Protestant denomination, having arisen several times within the memory of the present generation to say nothing of its frequent debate since the time of the Reformation.

The fact that the virginity of the Blessed Virgin was defined in the Lateran Council in the year 649 indicates the belief then existing that attacks previously made on the virgin birth of Christ made a definition necessary. This and other pronouncements have set down the Catholic doctrine as being that the Blessed Mother of Jesus Christ was a virgin before, during and after the conception and birth of her Divine Son.

Historians point to various of the older heresies which involved directly the virgin birth of Christ. There were the Ebionites, who comprised an early Christian sect which clung to Judaistic errors and denied the divinity of Christ and His virgin birth. The heretic Jovinian, who opposed Christian asceticism in the fourth century, and who was condemned in 390 A. D., at a synod at Rome held under Pope Siricius and subsequently at a synod convened at Milan by St. Ambrose, is declared one of the chief of the older opponents of the doctrine of the virgin birth. Jovinian denied among other teachings of Christianity the perpetual virginity of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

#### DEFENDED BY ST. JEROME

The virgin birth was the subject of various learned treatises by the early fathers of the Church. St. Jerome defended it against Helvidius and Jovinian in the fourth century. St. Augustine and other writers treated of it in the early centuries and severely censured those who questioned this truth of Christianity. This further indicates the antiquity of the attempts to cast a doubt on the virgin birth. St. Justin in the year 138 told his pagan readers that the virgin birth of Jesus Christ should not seem incredible to them since many of the pagan writers spoke of a number of sons of Zeus. The virgin birth was ridiculed by the Platonic philosopher Celsus.

The doctrine also was opposed by the Lollards, followers of John Wyclif, who were numerous in England during the latter part of the fourteenth century and the early part of the fifteenth century according to further historical data ascribed to show the controversy an ancient one.

The fact that the controversy decidedly is not modern is recognized by an Episcopalian Bishop who writes on "The Virgin Birth," in a recent issue of The Living Church, an Episcopalian publication.

#### DOCTRINE OF EBIONITES

The author of this article, the Right Rev. William A. Guerry, D. D., Bishop of South Carolina, delves into early Christian history and states: "Perhaps the most dangerous heresy Christianity has ever known, certainly the oldest, was Ebionism. The Ebionites fiercely attacked the virgin birth because they denied the essential divinity of Christ." By way of contrast with the most recent raisings of the question, the Bishop goes on to say: "The Ebionites clearly saw if some modernists do not, that the virgin birth was really the key to a proper defence of the Church's teaching concerning the Incarnation. If that fact could be gotten out of the way, the rest was easy."

In sharp contrast to the views of the radical doctrinaires of his denomination Bishop Guerry writes: "Those early heretics had enough insight into the heart of the Gospel to see that the virgin birth was the one incontrovertible, historic fact in the record of the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Luke, that stood most in the way of the general acceptance of their views. But, so far from the virgin birth having no essential connection with the central truth of the Incar-

nation, I think a careful and reverent study of the New Testament and the history of the doctrine from the very beginning will convince any open-minded and conscientious critic that the Virgin Birth rests upon a secure foundation. My studies have led me to believe that it would be difficult to exaggerate its importance."

#### PROVED BY SCRIPTURE

The Rev. Alfred Fletcher, another Episcopalian churchman, who writes in the same issue of The Living Church, on "Scriptural Evidence of the Virgin Birth of Our Lord," adduces arguments against the possibility of questioning the doctrine from the Old and New Testaments, and in conclusion, states, that "there is ample evidence in the Old Testament and in the Gospels of the Infancy, those of St. Matthew and St. Luke, that the article of the Creed, 'Born of the Virgin Mary,' is abundantly proved by Holy Scripture."

A note of warning is sounded by the Rev. William Pierson Merrill, pastor of the Brick Presbyterian Church in Fifth Avenue, New York, in an article written for one of the large secular monthly magazines.

"Protestantism is at the crossroads," is the cry of Dr. Merrill. This clergyman recognizes the Catholicity of the doctrine which the so-called modernists are attacking and he declares, "a vociferous determined party in the Protestant ranks is attempting by threats, by arguments, by any and every means to keep it marching along the old way, parallel to the old Roman road although at a distance from it, and alleged to be utterly unlike it. Tell a fundamentalist that he is a Romanist and he would be shocked. Yet Fundamentalism is diluted Romanism or denatured Protestantism."

#### DR. MERRILL'S VIEW

Dr. Merrill describes the maintaining the freedom of individual conscience as the historic mission of Protestantism. He takes the view that fundamentalism is endeavoring to impose an inflexible Bible on the Protestant Churches, and that by so doing is substituting a literally interpreted textbook for the ecclesiastical authority of the Catholic Church as centered in the Pope. These fundamentalists so-called, according to Dr. Merrill, would have the Protestant denominations accept the philosophy of the Catholic Church bereft of its charm with which it is invested through the Catholic ritual and other material aids to spiritual life. It is Dr. Merrill's contention that the liberalists who base their faith on the Bible re-interpreted continuously in the light of unfolding knowledge can Protestantism continue to perform its historic function and preserve its difference from the Catholic Church.

The most recent controversy over the virgin birth of Christ which arose within the ranks of the Episcopalian owes its origin to the pastoral letter of the House of Bishops of that denomination, adopted at a special meeting in Dallas, Tex., Nov. 14 last, by a unanimous vote. Every pastor was asked to read the letter to his congregation on a Sunday within a month after its receipt. The letter lays stress on the importance of the Apostles' Creed as the basis for doctrine, and refers in particular to the virgin birth of Christ in the following words:

#### AN ABUSE OF LANGUAGE

"To explain away the statement 'Conceived by the Holy Ghost and born of the Virgin Mary,' as if it referred to a birth in the ordinary way, of two human parents, under perhaps exceptionally holy conditions, is plainly an abuse of language. An ordinary birth could not have been so described, nor can the words of the Creed fairly be so understood."

The pastoral letter of the Episcopal bishops goes on to say: "Objections to the doctrine of the Virgin Birth, or to the bodily resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, are not only contrary to the Christian tradition, but have been abundantly dealt with by the best scholarship of the day," and in a categorical manner declares: "The creed witnesses to the deliberate and determined purpose of the Church not to explain but to proclaim the fact that the Jesus of history is none other than God and Saviour, on Whom and on faith in Whom depends the whole world's hope of redemption and salvation." The letter asserts that "It is not the fact of the virgin birth that makes us believe in our Lord as God; but our belief in Him as God makes reasonable and natural our acceptance of the fact of the virgin birth as declared in the Scriptures and as confessed in the creed from the earliest times."

The more immediate issue which brought into the open the discussion over the doctrine of the virgin birth was the projected trial for heresy in Fort Worth, Tex., of the Rev. Leo W. Heaton, who had expressed a doubt as to the doctrinal necessity of the virgin birth to believe in it.

Mr. Heaton's view was that Christ was the incarnation of God and the son of Joseph, which was expressed shortly before the meeting of the Episcopalian House of Bishops, and is in evident contradiction to the doctrine as outlined by that body in the pastoral letter it framed.—N. C. W. C.

### THE CATHOLIC CHURCH EXTENSION SOCIETY OF CANADA

#### CHRISTIAN BUSINESS

The world belongs to the Catholic Church: "As the Father hath sent Me so I also send you—All power is given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go and teach all nations and baptize them." How beautiful is the conception of the world! An endless chain of tabernacles encircling the world and every voice proclaiming "His Kingdom shall have no end." But as Christ before the completion of the Redemption of the world suffered, bled and sacrificed, so too must His mystical body suffer, bleed and sacrifice before all men are brought to the knowledge of the Truth.

For more than nineteen hundred years, missionaries have sacrificed home, health, and life itself, and still, two-thirds of the human race are not even conscious that there is a Kingdom of God; two-thirds do not even know the name of the King in Whom alone there is salvation. When will the words of Eccles., Chap. 36, be fulfilled!

"Have mercy upon us, O God of all and behold us, and show us the light of Thy mercies!"

"And send Thy fear upon the nations, that have not sought after Thee: that they may know that there is no God beside Thee."

"Lift up Thy hands over the strange nations, that they may see Thy power."

"That they may know Thee, that there is no God beside Thee, O Lord."

"Take away the adversary and crush the enemy."

To every Catholic is given a place in the army of God, and every Catholic is ordained to have a share in the conflict. This is true; we all accept it and proclaim our position, every time we pray,—"I believe in the Holy Catholic Church." But to say is one thing; to do is another. And because we have said too much and done too little today after nineteen hundred years of Catholicity, there are 168,000,000 of Protestants, 100,000,000 of schismatic Christians, and 1,000,000,000 of two-thirds of the entire world, either pagans or Mohammedans. Since the days of Christ at least fifty generations have passed over the stage of life without a knowledge of Christ Jesus Our Lord. How many billions lost forever!

Active service in the Catholic Church or in mission work—the same thing—ought to appeal to the best in a man. The very hugeness and hardness of the task should be the most eloquent appeal to the men of the Catholic Church; and more so because founded on a solid reasonable foundation. "Go forth," and "I will be with you all days," and "The gates of hell will never prevail against you."

The conversion of the world calls for large measures. It cannot be maintained on petty, pathetic, or heroic stories adapted to arouse the interest and sympathy of the emotionally sensitive. One is made indignant at the two-penny-half-penny methods so often made use of by so-called Catholics, soldiers of Christ, in missionary work. Not to speak a word about the thousands upon thousands who never stir a finger to aid the missions; a large number of those in whom a spark of Catholic enthusiasm exists think they do their full duty when they send a dollar or two each year for support of missions in the West and North of Canada; some others will send a couple of packages of old stamps; and cast-off clothing is considered good enough as a donation for the propagation of the Faith. We once heard Catholics divided into three classes according to their respective means of getting to heaven. The first group were First-class passengers; they gave most generously to every work of charity and gave for the love of God and the salvation of souls; the next were only Second-class passengers; they paid only as little as possible, no sacrifice, no special effort for the glory of God. The last group tried to evade all responsibility and expected to steal into heaven; they like tramps, rode the "bumbers" and were thrown off the train before it reached its destination.

How many are riding the "bumbers" when classed according to their mission sacrifices? Their name is legion.

The success attending our non-Catholic brethren in their mission collections has been reached by this method—"Pray, study and give." In twenty-one years the "Young People's Forward Movement" in the Methodist Church in Canada has contributed \$1,614,594.02. During the past year the contributions from the Sunday Schools, Young People's Societies and the Juvenile Offerings are \$117,502.88.

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May we suggest that the above be considered seriously by Parents, the Pastors of souls, Nuns, Christian Brothers and Teachers of Catholic children during this year of grace! At the commencement of this holy year a resolution in favor of Catholic missions is truly in order. We shall never know in this life how much we may do for God and His cause, but in the life to

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### CARDINAL BOURNE ON CATHOLIC EDUCATION

#### ENGLISH CARDINAL STRESSES THE NEED OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

His Eminence Cardinal Bourne was the guest of honor recently at a Dinner of the "Old Boys" of St. Joseph's College, Beulah Hill, South London, under the direction of the Brothers of the Christian Schools and one of the largest Catholic schools in England. The chair was occupied by Sir John Gilbert, K.B.E., K.C.S.G., K.S.S., President of the Club and one of the most distinguished of the Christian Brothers' "Old Boys." In replying to the toast "Our Guest," the Cardinal spoke of the pressing need for more Catholic secondary schools, and said that the one complaint he had to make against the Brothers was that they would not come to the Westminster Diocese. He knew that their only reason against such a step was that the compelling difficulty of fewness of numbers prevented their acceding to his request, but he hoped the day would not be long coming when they would open a school in his Diocese. He trusted that the Old Boys of St. Joseph's would be the means of consolidating a sound Catholic opinion in the matter of the need for more Catholic secondary schools. Not only was it necessary that we should have more Catholic schools, but also that they should be schools alive to the opportunities afforded them today by Government recognition; quick to take advantage of the gain offered them, for instance, in such a matter as the award of scholarships. "If we looked," said His Eminence, "at the men holding high political and social positions in the land today, we find that many of them have attained those positions through the help afforded them by scholarships which they had long been barred from these privileges which were today within the reach of others."

His Eminence emphasized that Catholics have little to complain about in these days of the treatment they received in England, and that therefore it was all the more important we should do our best to improve the opportunities for our Catholic boys to make their way in the world.

Rev. Brother Christian, President of the College, replying to the toast "Our School," said in part: "I feel that, in presence of so many Old Boys, a few words as to what a Catholic school should be will not be inappropriate. First and foremost, its aim must be to bring up youth in a Christian spirit; to give the means, natural and supernatural, to obtain the ultimate end of every man: happiness with God in Heaven. But between the day of leaving school and the day of leaving this world lies 'Life,' and a school must aim at making a success of life here that life hereafter may be assured. The whole school organization should lead up to this. Sports, games, studies, lessons, lectures, must all aim at the development of a child's character and personality that they may stand the test of the battle of life. This is the aim of a Brother of the Christian Schools. He believes that every Catholic school should be a nursery of great men, second to none in sending out into the world men of character and principle."

In his concluding remarks, the Chairman, Sir John Gilbert, paid an eloquent tribute to the work of religious teachers and declared

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those who depart—a time of tears, a time of sadness and solitude; but, that over, we go to rejoin them and to enjoy with them the society of the blessed. Oh, how sweetly the heart rests in this immortal hope! how it hushes its sob to listen to the voice that says, "I am in heaven."—Eugenie de Guerin.

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