MAY 15, 1800

THE CATHOLIC RECORD

in some one of the editions of last

in some one of the editions of last week's paper; in order to have had it circulated before the delivery of the Infidel lecture last Sunday. It is now published, hoping that it may catch the eye and attention of some of our good Christian citizens, patriots, and legislators, who may be moved to inaugurate such legislative moved to inaugurate such legislative action and machinery, as will soon give us the necessary Law, suitable to the present time and emergency, whereby we can stop, forthwith and forever, this blasphemous Infidel, who both the enemy of God and man and for whom, however, we still pray -May God have mercy on his soul. Amen.

view.

THE MAY DEVOTIONS.

generally to the faithful than the May devotions. So popular, in sooth, have these devotions become in this country that it is now practically a universal custom to hold them in our churches daily during May; and each year sees a larger attendance of people at these May services. Popular as these devotions are, how

ever, in this country and throughout all Catholic Christendom, their origin ever, is not at all certain. In fact, one may say of them what the learned and pious Cardinal Bona once said of the devo tion which the Church has always rendered the Mother of God: "Its rendered the Mother of God : commencement can not be shown ; it was introduced by ro decree of a pontiff, no sanction of a council, no custom of known origin, but in every age and and in all time the faithful have been wont to honor and venerate in the highest degree the Queen of Heaven. The very name of the present month would suggest the May devotions to the truly Catholic heart, and in all probability it was from such a source that the devotions first had their origin. And once the practice of con-secrating May to the honor of the Immaculate Maid and Mother of God was instituted, its subsequent growth and attested by the rich favors and grace vouchsafed to those who complied with its requirements.

While it is uncertain, however, when this appropriate and beautiful practice first began-though it is probable that it is of ancient institution - we can find traces or indications of it as far back as the fifteenth century. There are even those who attribute its populariz ation to Blessed Henry Suso, the Dom-inican friar who died in the cdor of sanctity at Ulm in 1365; and mention is made by contemporary writers of a pious custom which prevailed in Man-tua as early as the year 1442 of light-ing a candle on the aitar of the Blessed Virgin daily during the month of May. Martin V., who occupied the PapalSee in the early part of the fifteenth century, granted Plenary Indulgences to all who fulfilled the prescribed conditions on the Sundays of May. Others attribute the propagation of the devotions, if not their institution as they are now prac-ticed, to St. Philip Neri, the Oratorian their institution as they are now prac-ticed, to St. Philip Neri, the Oratorian founder of the sixteenth century, while others still name Father Lalomia, a Roman Jesuit, as their originator, be-cause of the fact that in 1748 he pub-lished an Italian work entitled "The Month of Mary." As some one, how-nor the section of the section lished an Italian work entitied in the ortegation of old titles, digni-Month of Mary." As some one, how-ever, has remarked, the appearance of that book was of itself evidence that the devotions which it commended and the methods of which it set forth were already in existence. It seems to be generally acknow ledged that this work, Father Lalomia's "Month of Mary," gave a great im-petus to the Mary devotions in Italy. The book was soon translated into other languages, and the piety it sought to promote crossed the Alps and spread through France and other European lands. In France the devotion was propagated very widely through the zeal of Madame Louise de France, a pious Carmelite at St. Dédis, who caused Father Lalomia's book to be translated into French and otherwise urged the consecration of May to the Mother of God. As a consequence of her efforts and those of the many zealous souls who co-operated with her, "altars were everywhere built for the month of May," says a writer on the stones. subject, "in cathedrals as well as in humble village chapels; and at the bindity, start the objective of present day it would be hard to find a

for by rescripts dated Match 21, 1815, she was no dead branch, but did always and June 18, 1822, Pius VII., of treasured memory, wishing to en-courage the faithful to the practice of this beautiful piety, granted special Indugences, which are applicable to the sould in purgetory to all who abide in the Vine. We can respect the high ideals and the earnestness of these men, but at the same time we cannot blind ourselves to the fact that their contention rests on a basis airy as the fabric of a vision. They are what a the souls in purgatory, to all who, during the month of May, say some member of the Orthodox Greek Church pointedly styled them, "apostates prayer or perform some act of piety, pointedly styled them, "apostates from an apostate church."-Providence either publicly or privately, in honor of the Blessed Virgin, to whom the Visitor. month is dedicated. - Sacred Heart Re-

PSEUDO CATHOLICISM.

An odd feature of this proverbially critical and practical age is the growth of pseudo-Catholicism. This movement is from the point of view of familiar facts one of the most curious delusions in the whole range of history. The prophets thereof calmly repudiating the traditional views held by their own Church concerning herself, and ignoring the avowed purposes and actual achievements of the worthies who out-lawed the ancient faith and desecrated the ancient altars of England have propounded a new theory about the Eug-lish Reformation. The old Church was not rooted out as was the case of Germany. Papal supremacy (which was a profane novelty born of Papal arro-gance) was abolished, but every essential point of Catholic doctrine was conecientiously preserved. Some little taint of 1 rotestantism was absorbed, but not enough to destroy the vitality of the Church. A great deal of nonsense has been written and spoken about the genesis of the Establishment. The truth is, as the new school is dillgent in asserting, that what was ignorantly supposed to be a new Church is really as old as English Christianity. The whole contention of the pseudo Catholics is apt to bewilder people who fancy themselves familiar with Tuder period of Eaglish history. One is reminded, somehow, of Archbishop Whately's "Historic Doubts." In the name of logic he invites his readers to believe that no such person as Napoleon Bonaparte ever existed. In the name of romantic Anglicanism the world is invited to believe that the English Reformation as its leaders knew it and as popularity were assured; for the beauty of the practice was self appar ent, and its efficaciousness was speedily Principal Fairbairn in his recently Principal Fairbairn in his recently published book of essays, " there is no more splendid example anywhere of how completely a professedly historical movement can be independent of his-torical truth." And yet unhistorical, as it is, pseudo-Catholicism has its large and earnest following, its consciously picturesque array of confessors and even its petty martyrs. Black is white, new is old, and theory prevails

over inconvenient history. "Continuity" is the shibboleth of the new school. England broke with the Pope. She did not break with the Catholic past as was done by Germany. The "Ecclesia Anglicana" retained the old doctrines, sacraments and orders. She was shackled by the secular power, and infected, not enough, however, to impair her vitality, with the virus of Protestantism. Just now she is shaking off her fetters and purging herself of Protestant errors, to the scandal of Anglicans who believe that the Establishment is essentially Pro- and of the seven sacraments, except

CHURCH DOCTRINE AND CHURCH DISCIPLINE.

Matters in Which She Cannot Pecree a Change and Those in Which She Can.

From the Monitor.

The Pope's letter raises a question which often puzzles portions of the laity. There are doctrines and praclaity. tices in the Church which cannot be changed or abrogated by the highest ecclesiastical authority ; again, there are other practices which the Pope or the Bishop may alter. Why this d's tinction? The reason is simple. The tinction? Church has no authority to change or abolish whatever is of divine origin. An inferior cannot dispense in abrogate the laws of a superior, and the Church is subject to God. But the Church may, if she sees fit, dispense or alter whatever she herself has instituted. For example, a Bishop may enact laws for his diocese and abolish them. The Pope may legislate for the Universal Church and may in the course of time change his own laws. But the Bishop, being inferior and subject to the Pope, cannot dispense with the general laws of the Church except in so far as he has been granted power. Father Rickaby goes into details in

the following explanation : There are in the Church "credenda" and "agenda," things to believe and things to do-in other words, doctrine and discipline. With regard to doc-trine, the Church has only the power of a herald to proclaim. She cannot alter the matter of the proclamation put in her mouth by Christ and His Holy Spirit. She has nothing to ussay. She can only say more fully and com-pletely what she has always said. It is otherwise with her discipline. The foundations of her discipline are the natural moral law, and over that she has no power, except to proclaim it in her pulpits and enforce it in her spiritual tribunals ; also certain enactments of Christ Himself touching the sacraments, their matter and form, and touching the hierarchical constitution of the Church-these enactments she can but stand by and obey. Over and above these foundations is superimposed a vast body of laws and customs, making up what is commonly understood by the discipline of the Church. Here the Church is no longer herald, she is lawgiver. She made these laws and she can abolish them. It is the discipline, not the doctrine of the Church, that can be altered to meet local and temporal exigencies. And it may be said with a fair measure of truth that no one system of discipline

can be adapted to the requirements of all men. The following are some matters of

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Lloyd Osborne, the friend and fellowpenman of Stevenson, has written a etter in which he, too, bears witness that the London Missionary Society's antagonism to Mataafa because he is a Catholic is "the whole cause of the The officious quarrel" in Samoa. The officious American Chief-Justice, Mr. Chambers, he characterizes as "a man of the ne characterizes as "a man of the on narrowest evangelical views," and the on policy of our country in the Mataafa of affair as "brutally wrong." Mr. Oster borne was once U. S. Consul in Samoa, or and knows the situation thoroughly .-Ave Maria.

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he writer, appeared done in England in the sixteenth cen-tury is the words and works of the men who took part in the tragedy of the English Reformation. And one won-ders what the three worthies whose "Memorial," with its significant in-scription is to be seen at Oxford and whose views on the subject of religion whose views on the subject of religion admit of no misconception, would say to all this babble about "continuity." to all this babble about "continuity." Up to a certain period England was Catholic-Roman Catholic. Then came the national apostasy, to advance which the whole might of the civil power was put forth. The old faith was outlawed, the Mass, the central and distinctive act of the Catholic religion was proscribed and the consecrated

altar-slabs were turned into paving A new scheme of doctrine and situal was concocted and imposed upon the country, and the dignities, revenues and possessions of the Old Church were made over to the apostles of the new

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