





nothing; and I know that sometimes the commoner folks look, the greater swells they are. So I followed them in and took a glance at the register after the man had written in a tummy little hand, "A. Mackenzie and wife, Inverness, Scotland."

"Heaven's to Betsy!" said I to myself. "I've got a whole lunatic asylum on my hands!" "But, having got a little over my scare, I started my horses and chased my passengers, catching up with them just as they got to the fisherman's house. The noise was louder than ever. 'Squawk!' it went, and with it something that sounded like the humming of a great bee.

anchor, as there was to great a depth and the sea was unusually heavy. Just about the time we were getting ready to take to the boat's oars of the sailors, who are good Catholics, knelt on the deck and prayed for help and wind. Just about that time, as though in answer to their prayers, a great light breeze sprang up, and soon every bit of canvas on her was drawing for all it was worth.

love should be so concentrated into a society visible, resplendent and easily to be seen and to be found. God had created these souls free and they must of their own choice come into this light and share in its love; nor can they be admitted into the eternal Church triumphant of heaven unless they have been brought to the Church militant here on earth; and the measure of their faith and love here below will be the measure of their bliss in the realm beyond.

themselves by other men; for they are men still, and consequently weak and frail and liable to commit sin. By virtue of the sacrament of orders which they have received, the priest, as he comes a divine artery, carrying light and grace, the blood of the redemption into the souls of their fellow men, who at any time may appeal to them for their portion, and, in case of necessity even though fallen, suspended, interdicted, apostates and degraded, that power dwells within them and in danger of death may be legitimately exercised by them.



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THE CHURCH AND HER MINISTERS.

SERMON DELIVERED BY RIGHT REV. N. C. MATZ, AT THE DEDICATION OF ANNUNCIATION CHURCH, DENVER.

At the dedication of the new Annunciation Church, Denver, Col., Bishop Matz delivered the following sermon to the assembled multitude: On this great day there is not a subject more appropriate to the occasion than the Church, which we define as a society of souls, instituted by Christ for the maintenance, development and unfolding in all their glory of the two most beautiful flowers to be found either on earth or in heaven, namely, light and love.

There is nothing more beautiful than a soul. One soul alone is worth all that stary vault with its millions of suns that illuminate the heavens. And within these souls there is nothing more transcendently beautiful than their sublime aspirations toward truth and justice and love.

From this already you may form an idea of the vastness of the Church. Every living soul at all times and in every place belongs to her domain, and she reaches even to the confines of the world. There are two doors by which you may have access to the Church; one is called baptism, by which we are incorporated into the visible body of the Church, her sacraments and sacrifices; the other is called love, which admits countless numbers of souls into her fold, coming to her from the realms of heaven and hell, and from the domains of paganism, as we shall see presently.

Right Rev. John Cheverus, first Bishop of Boston, met in his missionary travels three young Protestants, who were baptised and later ordained to the priesthood. The Bishop avers that before this stroke of grace none of them ever had any doubt about the truth of their faith, and that their lives were very innocent.

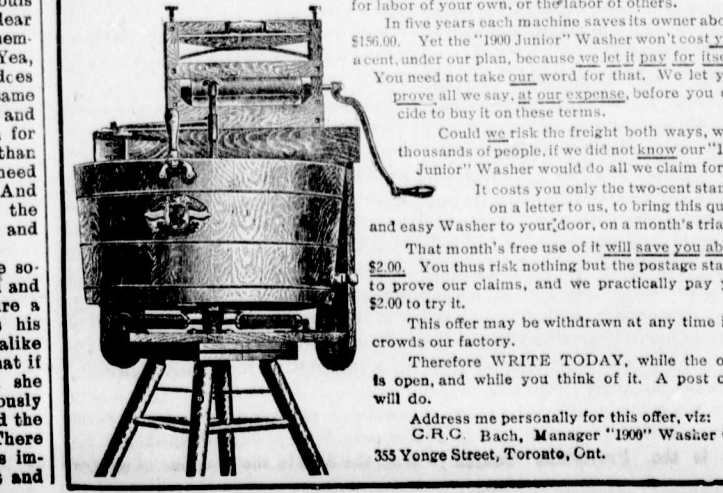
There is also the example of Cardinal Newman, who, after so many years spent in heresy, could write, in all truth of himself: "I do not believe I ever sinned against the Light. I really have the example of Cornelius, that (though a pagan) he was a religious man, and, fearing God with all his heart, giving much alms to the people and always praying God." (Acts x, 2.)

We have defined the Church, the society of souls, in the light of faith and the love of God. Man is by nature a social being; his joys as well as his sorrows, his genius and his love alike call for society. This is so true that if God had not created the Church she would have sprung up spontaneously from the heart, the conscience and the eternal aspirations of man. There were still other reasons why this immense association of souls in light and

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THE CONFESSIONAL AND THE WITNESS BOX.

ABSOLUTE INVOLABILITY OF THE REAL PROMOTES RATHER THAN REWARDS JUSTICE.

The confessional and the witness box is the subject of an interesting discussion now going on in the London press, says the Catholic Transcript.

England is more drastic in this respect than certain of the commonwealths of this country. The law of several States, including New York, Missouri and Wisconsin, prescribes that "no minister of religion, or priest of any denomination whatever, shall be allowed to disclose any confession made to him in his professional character, in the course of the discipline enjoined by the canons and practices of said denomination."

It has been urged that such exemption will work to the prejudice of justice. But no thinking man would be so narrow. The fact that a confessor is privy to the guilt of a penitent adds nothing to the evil done. It would be barbarous and inhuman to deprive an offender of the consolation and counsel to be found in confession. Moreover, the chief reason for making a confession at all is the hope of gaining pardon; and this cannot be had without a readiness, on the part of the offender to retrace, as far as possible, the consequences of the wrong done.

Make the confessor respond in him and you put an end to confession. The strength of the confessional consists in no small measure in the absolute conviction shared by all who frequent it that there will be no disclosure and that their secret, however appalling, is sacred—no more so than if buried in midocean.

The obligation to secrecy of the Catholic confessor has been well set forth in the present controversy by the Rev. Sidney Smythe. He says: "Priests of the Catholic Church cannot, with clear conscience, break the seal of the confessional whether in the witness box or elsewhere, and whether they be asked to tell what they learnt in the confessional itself, or what they have learnt previously or subsequently but with a view to it or as a consequence of it.

Still if the penalty had been that of life long imprisonment or death, they would have been bound in conscience to do so. And we may confidently trust, would have done so. Such cases are on record, and though I forget where to find it there was one during the last century of a Polish priest whose house-keeper was found murdered. The murderer, to draw off the scent from himself, had gone at once to the priest, and in a bad confession told him of his crime; on his departure, leaving behind him in the witness box, which would direct suspicion against the priest. The latter was accordingly convicted and sent into exile in Siberia, whence he only returned many years later, the murderer on his deathbed having publicly acknowledged his own guilt.

The Catholic priesthood will have the respect, if not the sympathy, of most Englishmen for its fidelity to this conception of duty. But are there not, it will be asked, exceptional cases in which he must feel that he really ought to betray the secrets of the penitent culprit? Ought he not when by so doing he could save an innocent person from an unjust conviction and punishment? No, not even then. The secret of the confessional according to the doctrine of the Catholic Church, is enjoined by a divine law from which neither judge nor king, nor Pope has power to dispense; and hence for a confessor to disclose himself from its observance, even to save the innocent, would be to do evil that good might come. Or if it were known that such exceptions could be made, would the guilty be likely to confess their crime? And so no advantage would accrue to the innocent from the priest's liberty to aid them in this manner.

On the other hand, the present absolute involability of this seal does tend to afford substantial protection to the innocent. The culprit, whose only inducement to confess to his priest is that he may obtain the divine pardon for a sin of which he has repented, may have arranged things purposefully so as to cast suspicion on the innocent. In that case the confessor's duty is to tell him that he has no chance of divine pardon unless he will voluntarily undo this injustice to another.

There have been martyrs to the seal of the confessional. But the days have happily gone by when priests in civilized communities are required to speak of things confided in the secrecy of the confessional. The social value of this tribunal is greater than most men are able to realize. There is no more potent factor making for the moral uplifting of the race than this sacred tribunal. Every blow aimed at it is a blow aimed at society itself.

On the devil tries our faith, it is that he may crush it or diminish it; but when God tries our faith, it is to establish or increase it. — Marcus Valerius

GOOD OUT OF EVIL.

CULTIVATE YOUR SOUL STIMULANTS.

There are just nine rings in the ladder reaching from earth to heaven—love, joy, peace, long suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control; and by some mysterious law of the infinite, each one is the outcome of its opposite vice; Love is a grace only because you possess the power to hate men, yet choose the better part, mercy and forgiveness. Joy is a grace only because you have the privilege of grumbling and bitterness of mind, yet prefer to retain your child heart through all life's bitter experience. Peace is a grace that comes after the storm is over and the day's work is done, leaving your heart still in the conviction that God alone is great and true.

Confidence in your ability to become master of your environment, whatever that may be. The world shows us three classes of people—those who "can't," those who "won't" and those who "will." The first fail in everything they undertake, the second oppose everything and the last accomplish everything. The first two classes are men of passive intellect, the negative quantities of the earth, mere drifters, nonentities, ciphers, who take life as they find it, and instead of making some impression on their age are enslaved by it and lose their individuality in their environment. They are cowed by the very appearance of the Bacca vale and fall prostrate before its dangers, like the Hebrew host encamped before Kadesh-Barnesa, and as a result God turns the faces of such men back into the wilderness of life to wander aimlessly till all are dead but the tried and true.

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IS IT HONEST? From the Paulist Calendar, New York. This question has often been asked, and the answer must nearly always be in the negative. Is it honest for a young man to monopolize the time of a young girl for one or two years without any definite matrimonial object in view. No, decidedly it is not honest; but, on the contrary, it is very dishonest and will eventually bring its own reward on the offender.

So many young men think they are perfectly justified in their butterfly acts—jumping from one flower to another at will—that their sense of duty, their conscience, seems to have left them. It is true that every young man who intends to wed has the right to a certain amount of time during which he may judge whether the girl whom he visits will be for him a worthy partner in life. But the average young man can settle that question in less time than it takes his employer to increase his salary, if he is honest, noble and manly and, above all, if he is in earnest.

TRIBUTE TO A NOBLE PAIR.

Irish speakers are notably eloquent, and St. Patrick's day is an occasion to inspire them to the highest flights of genuine oratory; but we are inclined to doubt whether the recent celebration brought forth any more thoroughly eloquent utterance than this page from the book of a Frenchman. The late Cardinal Perraud spent two years in Ireland, studying at first-hand the conditions of the country; and then, returning to France, wrote his splendid work, L'Irlande Contemporaine. We quote from its conclusion:

"I remember one day in the Basilica of St. Peter what a great emotion took possession of me when I read on the humble door of the confessional these simple words, Gens Hibernica; and on another, Gens Polona. Thus, I said, conquerors have been able to blot out from the map of the world the very name of Poland, the glorious Catholic nation of Central Europe. Politicians and worldly sages take but little interest in the misfortunes of Ireland, because she suffered in the cause of Catholicity. But the Holy, Catholic, Apostolic and Roman Church has neither admitted this suppression nor shared in this indifference.

Another admirable piece of destructive criticism is supplied by Father Thurston's paper in the "Frisian and Jettan" on "The Assumption as a Festival of Demeter and Dionysus." But whereas Father Gerard has demolished a venerable legend, his colleague, on the other hand, may be said to have done the same service for a myth in the making. There is, however, a curious similarity in the mistakes made by the eminent scholars concerned in both cases, and the acceptance of the old story is matched by the uncritical haste with which the others have adopted a new-fangled theory. In some respects, indeed, the scholars refuted by Father Thurston are more to blame than the scientists

enemies are right, for they have succeeded. But for those who look to the morality of history, far different is their judgment. To them your defeat is only apparent, as is the victory of your persecutors; for, besides the fact that God, the Master of the future, can, when and how He pleases, give you back what the violence of politicians has wrested from you, you have kept, in spite of your enemies, the treasure of which they wished above all things to depossit you. You have kept it, and it has increased and fructified in your hands. Like the Church, your mother, you have grown great under persecution, and whilst the triumph of nations are going to sleep in indifference, and are growing sluggish and material in the abundance of their gain, you, the illustrious victims of the past and the present, hold up to the eyes of the world the inextinguishable torch of faith and hope and love. Have courage! Your trials will not last forever. The works of iniquity crumble and perish. I have seen the wicked highly exalted, and lifted up like the cedar of Libanus; and I passed by, and, lo, he was not." (Pa. xxxv).

The Pope and the Comet. In the current number of the Month, of England, the editor, Father Gerard, S. J., has an amusing article entitled "Of a Bull and a Comet." And it is hardly necessary to add that, unlike our contemporary, the Smart Set, it furnishes us with instruction as well as amusement. "That a Pope," says Father Gerard, "did once solemnly ban and anathematise a comet, bidding it be gone from the sky, is an old story, most in favor with certain writers who love to descant on the ignorance and ineptitude of our pre-scientific ancestors, as contrasted with our own enlightened age, when no one speaks of what he does not know, or makes statements which he is not ready to support by conclusive evidence."

Protestant Ministers who Surprise Us. SAY ASTONISHING TRIBUTES TO THE CHURCH, YET REMAIN OUTSIDE THE FOLD. Says the Sacred Heart Review: We do not wonder that the Ave Maria expresses surprise at the following words from a Protestant minister—the Rev. O. J. Nelson of the First Unitarian Church, Bellingham, Wash:

"Strictly speaking, none but the Catholic can be rightly called an orthodox or a heretic. Theoretically, all other Christians assume the right to exercise private judgment but in fact what they really have done ever since the Reformation has been to select a council, which is but a poor imitation of the Catholic council to decide what is orthodox.

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