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"I would make any sacrifice, even to the pouring of my blood, for the cross and justice, in order to support a Catholic newspaper."—Pope Pius X.

Editorials

BIBLE CRITICS

Can anyone honestly say that the criticism to which the Bible is now being and has been subjected since the Reformation has really been for the spiritual profit of Christendom? Let us face the facts honestly and fearlessly.

In the first place, "the open Bible" with absolute freedom and untrammelled interpretation of it by all, educated and uneducated alike, is unquestionably the cause of our "present unhappy divisions." Is there a religious sect today which does not base its claims on the Bible despite the fact that many Protestants hold contrary and contradictory doctrines? Some men have rejected the immortality of the soul because it is not expressly and directly stated in the Scriptures. The doctrine of original sin and belief in the necessity of baptism is openly flouted by non-Catholics beyond number. In the New Testament we have Our Lord's positive words about an eternal Hell, and outside of the Catholic Church how many accept this dogma?

And what are we to make of the modern mind which calmly assures us that we are all the better for this confusion of thought and conflicting beliefs? That by some manner or means which no one ever explains, we have secured "a larger comprehension" of the Divine message?

The fallacy underlying all this insistent demand for the unrestrained reading of the Bible is that reading the Bible is necessary for salvation. When we reflect that until the invention of the printing press in the fifteenth century, none but handwritten Bibles were to be had, we have the very best proof that Christ never meant men of all classes, rich and poor, educated and uneducated alike, had to read the Bible, still less, to find in it alone, the way of salvation. As a matter of fact the very notion of such a thing is contradicted by the Bible itself. Many centuries elapsed before the Law of Moses, which was given in a few hours, was committed to writing. If the Bible alone was to be men's guide, what was to be done in the interval of years. It is the same with the New Testament. Christ taught three years but seventy more had to elapse before the record of that revelation was fully committed to writing.

Nowhere in the Bible is the study of Sacred Scripture urged upon Christians as the necessary means of salvation. No man can seriously defend the proposition that the Bible is the only source of information on God's design for us men. Such a position has led to the steady and persistent disintegration of the Bible, with the consequent disbelief in the truths of the Holy Book.

There is a certain irony in the Protestant attitude towards Catholics and the Bible. The fundamentalist says the Catholic Church suppresses the Bible. Anathema to her. The modernist says the Catholic Church defends the Bible. Anathema to her. What does the Church know about the Bible? Catholics do not know the Bible. Besides they are so fettered that they cannot think freely on points of criticism.

Our non-Catholic friends should bear in mind that without the Catholic Church, there would be no Bible in existence. They should remember that when the various sects demand "the Bible and the Bible only" as the basis of all Christianity, they are forgetting that it is only from the Catholic Church they learn what are the contents of that very Bible whose claims they are urging. On the other hand, the Protestant while claiming absolute freedom in his reading and interpretation of the Bible, forgets that he always has to make an act of faith in the scholar who translated from the original manuscripts. Moreover such a scholar depends on the authority of the so-called Reformation churches for his knowledge of the contents of the Canon (the list of inspired books in the Old and New Testament).

We Catholics depend on the Church for the preservation of the Bible and a knowledge of what books legitimately form part of the Scriptures. We look to her for certitude regarding the inspiration of the Sacred Books and also for definitive interpretation of the same.

When Christendom was united, there were two authorities put forward as the bases of belief. The first was that of a living traditional authority, that of the existent and continuous Church; the other was the Canon of the Holy Scriptures.

THE CHRISTMAS CANDLE

The Holy Scriptures frequently refers to our Lord as the Light of the World. He came to bring the Light to enlighten every man. He came to bring the Light to enlighten every man. He came to bring the Light to enlighten every man.

and so uses candles and lamps to diffuse light in her services. They remind us of Him Who came to enlighten us. At Mass, at Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, at Communion, whether in the Church or at the homes of the sick, the candles are lighted. In the lamp before the Tabernacle, olive oil is burning always. Its flame tells us of the Divine Light upon that Altar.

And so, too, the people at their homes have the beautiful custom of lighting a candle on Christmas Eve and at various times until Epiphany or "Little Christmas," as it is sometimes called. Thus they honor the coming of the Light from Heaven, and seek that His grace may shine within their souls, and guide them into the paths of right living.

The brightness of God shone about the shepherds to whom the Angel of the Lord announced on the first Christmas night the tidings of great joy. A star appeared in the heavens to guide the Wise Men of the East to the Light of Heaven and of earth Who was born of Mary on that blessed night of the long ago, and who was to be found in the manger of Bethlehem. So, this custom of lighting the Christmas candle is beautiful in its meaning, and is in itself a profession of the old and simple faith that brings to the brightness of divine happiness into the Christian home.

MOCK MARRIAGE

"The perfect romance" has gone on the rocks. "Miss" Pickford tearfully admits that she is about to seek a divorce. Another illicit liaison (there was no marriage from our standpoint) has terminated. What did "Miss" Pickford expect? She had a husband living and Fairbanks already had a wife, when they went through their "mock marriage" ceremony. What right had either to expect that the other would be faithful, after both had deserted their lawfully-wedded mates?

Divorce with right to remarry has done more to wreck marriages than all the difficulties and differences of married life. Little misunderstandings which would vanish or be overcome, if marriage held till death, assume larger and larger proportions where there is a hope of a new union. Hence the profound wisdom of the Catholic Church in legislating on Matrimony.

In the eyes of the Church "marriage is a legitimate union between man and woman constituting them husband and wife. By legitimate union is meant a union sanctioned by law, whether that law be national, civil or ecclesiastical. The term man and wife signifies mutual rights of sexual intercourse, life in common, and permanent union. Sexual intercourse, which does not imply life in common and permanence, is not marriage but concubinage or fornication." (Catholic Encyclopedia).

The nature of matrimony is such that temporary union is incompatible with its purpose. The good of the human race demands its permanence. Children are the natural consequence of married life. A child has a natural right to the care, protection and love of father and mother. Unless the marriage is permanent, the child is deprived of this natural right. Hence for a man to deprive his offspring of what it is entitled to, is violating nature's ordinance.

What of the mother? By marriage she gave her maidenhood to her husband. That can never be restored to her. In yielding it she surrendered what is most precious to woman. In return the man promised to be her support and protector. Even civil law recognizes this indirectly, because it grants alimony to the wife when she obtains a separation or a divorce. No normal man contracts marriage except with the intention of forming a lasting union. No decent man denies that the nature of marriage demands permanence. The status of wife, mother and children cry out for the tie that binds "until death do us part."

Divorce breeds divorce and degrades the marriage tie which Christ raised to the dignity of a Sacrament, thus making it something especially holy. The Church did not make marriage indissoluble. God did that. The Church simply upholds the standard of marriage ordained by the Creator. Hence she will never allow to passion or wealth or power any lowering of the holy state of matrimony established by her Divine Founder. In this, as in all matters of doctrine, she exhibits that uncompromising common sense which proves that the Holy Spirit abides with her and directs her according to the promise of Him Who is the Light of the World.

Current Comment

MEXICO WITHOUT RACKETEERS

While it is true that there is no racketeering amongst the ordinary run of Mexico, that certainly is not true about those who have come into power. The whole governmental system in Mexico is one huge and deeply organized racket. For after all what is racketeering but the creation of some sort of government not answerable to the people? Call it what you will, that process by which a few enrich themselves at the cost of the many, and not by the sweat of their brow, may escape the odium of being called a racket, but the substance of one remains.—The New World.

There is not the slightest evidence that the masses of Russia believe in Communism. Nor is there less doubt that the rulers do. What is evident is that all endeavors, apart from state interference, tend to confirm the opinion that the Russian people are no different from others living under the capitalistic system.—The New World (Chicago).

Psychologists have found that, after one month, children's recollection of things learned from books was only 30 per cent but six weeks after attending a motion picture they remembered from 83 to 91 per cent of what they saw.

What a laudable occasion for six one innocent movie can be. What a grave responsibility parents assume in allowing children to attend movies.

Diocesan Recordings

Lindbergh will have only himself to blame if he gets Mrs. Lindbergh home in time for Christmas shopping.

If a law were passed making it compulsory to drink the new beverages the prohibition crowd might find nothing left for them to do.

Ember Days are Wednesday, Friday and Saturday, December 20, 22 and 23. A little self-denial before the Holy Season of Christmas will make the Feast that much more enjoyable. Those under age, of course, are not expected to fast, but they must abstain from meat in practicing control of the appetite it might be well to turn our thoughts toward the great event commemorating the Divine Infant's birth.

With all types and kinds of churches to record in the daily press it is not to be wondered that a slip-up occurs such as happened this week in announcing the appointment of the Rev. Joseph A. Balcerak as pastor of St. Casimir's Church, Rochester. Of course, Father Balcerak was appointed pastor of St. Stanislaus Church, Rochester. There are but two English Churches in the city adhering to Rome, St. Stanislaus and St. Theresa's. The church mentioned in the daily news item is not affiliated with the Roman Catholic Church.

Psychologists, declares Dr. Donald A. Laird, Director of Colgate University Psychological Laboratory, Hamilton, N. Y., in a copyrighted article in the American Weekly, recognize the spreading vogue of nudism which is creeping over the world, as a form of showing off. In their desire to show off, these misguided human beings are deadening their consciences to the virtue of modesty and are placing themselves on a plane with the animals.

In the sport pages have been recorded time and again the success of the Aljo Club athletic teams. Possessed of a team loyalty and spirit these boys enter a contest with a determination to play fair and win. Now they are in another kind of struggle in which they are engaged with the same spirit of determination to win. Recently a disastrous fire visited their club-quarters at 938 Clifford Avenue and destroyed in hours what has taken the Club eleven years to build up. Undaunted the members of the Club which is composed of Catholics, Protestant and Jew and which is conducted under the wise guidance of the Rev. Albert J. Geiger, director and founder, set about to rehabilitate the club rooms which have meant so much socially, physically and morally for the boys of the neighborhood. The boys need assistance in this commendable undertaking and as many "cheerers" as possible who want to show their appreciation of this center of ideal social betterment may send contributions to Father Geiger or Mr. Harster, the manager at 938 Clifford Avenue.

Besides expounding the Church's principles on social justice in his nationwide radio broadcast, Father Coughlin of Detroit has changed the attitude of those outside the Church to one of respect, we have learned from several sources. This is especially true in the rural districts according to information given us. "One pastor has found a decidedly different feeling among the non-Catholics in his parish due to the Sunday talks by Father Coughlin. Of course, we also find some of our own Church taking exception to the manner in which the crusading priest enters into personalities, but many are more concerned with what they believe are his weaknesses than they are with what he is accomplishing in bringing before the country the age old principles as set forth by Pope Leo XII and our present Pontiff. Our weak human natures do not want to accept those mandates which regulate material progress and if we can talk ourselves out of doing those things our conscience dictates it is natural to try. However, with whatever faults Father Coughlin has manifested in his addresses, he has been sincere in his attempt to reveal to a distressed world the Church's principles of social justice and in so doing is bringing to those outside the Church an entirely new light which cannot fail to bring consolation and solace to many in the hope of bettered conditions for all.

The fellow who called up a Bartlett Street woman in the middle of the night to ask her if she "wanna buy a duck?" probably couldn't tell anyone what product the radio broadcast he set his queer idea of humor from, ad- vertises.

Archbishop Mooney in his Christmas message to the Catholic Women's Club presents a cause for which all may strive: "To give to Christ's poor out of our abundance is grainless; to give to them at the cost of sacrifices is enabling; to give them something of ourselves in service is Christlike. To do all this in commemoration of the mystery of divine love which gave us the Christ-Child in the poverty of a stable is a sure way to bring into our own hearts and homes at Christmas the peace which at Christ's coming was promised to men of good will."

STRANGE BUT TRUE

Catholic Facts But Little Known

By M. J. MURRAY

The marvellous painting in the VENICE ACADEMY OF ARTS

BY PAOLO VERONESE DEPICTING THE FEAST IN THE HOUSE OF LEVI CAUSED A CONTROVERSY WHEN IT WAS COMPLETED (A. D. 1573) BECAUSE OF THE MANY SECULAR INCIDENTS INTRODUCED

One of the most striking works in the world is the painting of St. Nicholas, Paris in the Church, by the sound of the last trumpet. This picture is life-size.

The popularly termed TWIN CHURCHES of Rome are built exactly alike and stand at the end of the Corso facing the People's Square.

MILLIONS OF LONDON TRAMCAR AND OMNIBUS TICKETS HAVE TEXTS FROM THE BIBLE PRINTED ON THE SIDE RESERVED FOR ADVERTISEMENTS.

Following the Star

By GEORGE BARNARD
(Written for N. C. W. C.)

The trouble with this drifting world is that there are too many leaders who do not lead; too many straying after the wrong things, insufficient appreciation of real values. That is why there is so much work and so little progress; so much pleasure seeking and so little happiness; so much wealth side by side with so much poverty. In all the feverish rush to get things done there is so little purpose, in all the efforts to put wrong things right there is so much conflict. The world's compass is out of action. It is not pointing to the Star, because the greater part of the world has not seen the Star which the Wise Men saw, and following which they found Christ. "Where is He that is born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and are come to adore Him." I think that if men today could see the star in the East, and if they knew it led to God, they would follow it.

The Star has been foretold. And the Cross was foretold. "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all things to Myself."

Cross Over Vatican
The Cross, in this Holy Year which commemorates the nineteenth century of Christ's death on Calvary, turns the minds of men also to Christ's birth at Bethlehem.

As the Star told where Our Lord was, so the Cross tells where Christ's Vicar is. And the Cross is over the Vatican.

Now we are a year farther away from His birth: a year nearer the Judgment.

And that should not be a cause of sadness—but of joy, for we are a year nearer to meeting the Babe of Bethlehem, whose birthday will be celebrated with domestic joy wherever Christians gather.

It is the Cross today that marks the center of unity.

It was to turn the eyes of the world to Christ and His Church that Pope Pius XI, Christ's Vicar, and St. Peter's successor, declared this year a year of special grace and called all Christendom to his feet.

No other king or emperor, or other religious leader, would have dared to fling that call and that challenge to the four ends of the earth. For the answer to the call would have shown his weakness.

But the world has flocked to Rome and has shown once again the strength of Catholic faith, the depth of Catholic loyalty, and the universality of the acceptance of

Catholic belief.

After all the center of unity must be somewhere. Yet no one else claims it.

Over Rome today hangs the Cross of the Crucified Christ and it is upon this Cross that the eyes of the world must be turned. It is the job of every Catholic to do his bit to see that the world turns to it.

At Mass one morning, so they say the Pope was inspired to issue a call to all the people of the earth to pay a penitential visit to Rome. Changed Millions of Lives

That thought became a proclamation. It went out through the press and over the ether, it set in motion the machinery of travel, it induced people to alter their plans; it changed millions of lives in the five continents.

On the roads in France and in Italy there are at this moment pilgrims who are walking from their remote homes with their faces towards the Eternal City. Some are walking barefoot.

From India pilgrims have gone, from Africa and Australasia. Very many have gone from America. Forty separate groups, some of them more than 400 strong, have gone from Great Britain.

In Rome the ancient streets, which speak of the age of the Church, are filled with strange people who speak of the Church's universality. Prelates, priests, peers and peasants mingle in the basilicas and on the sidewalks. All visit, the Pope; all go away refreshed by his blessing and by the grace obtained by their faith and obedience.

If this is not the center of Christendom, where is it? Civilization, must have a center.

I was recently in Rome with a big party of unemployed men whose expenses had been paid by the readers of a Catholic newspaper in England.

These were men who had excuse for despair if ever anyone had excuse for it. An Italian newspaper wrote bitterly of them that they looked like an ordinary tourist party. But that paper did not know that if a man had a good suit it was because some charitable person had given it to him; if his shirt was whole it was because it was bought for him.

Many of these men had nothing in the world; not even hope. Some of them had been out of work for four, five and six years. Able men. Good workers. Willing workers. Unable to get a job, while all around them were signs not only of prosperity but wanton extravagance to launt them. Not a hand had, up till then, been held out to help them.

They were becoming, not men, but a social problem. They were the "unemployed," a class apart. Then they were becoming a new class called "unemployables." Still, not because they could not work; still not because they would not work. But just because their demand for work interfered with the

Back Through the Years

(A Glimpse through the files of the Catholic Courier and Journal)

April 27, 1895

An editorial commended the Rev. J. G. Van Ness for his efforts in establishing a Catholic library for the children of Holy Rosary School. The editorial stated: "There is no reason why we should not provide our boys with well selected reading matter suitable to their tastes and to let them follow their own bent and waste their time reading trashy novels and, perhaps, more harmful literature."

Active work was started in the formation of the new Children's Aid Society of Rochester. The committee appointed to frame a constitution and by-laws was announced as follows: the Rev. T. A. Hendrick, J. B. Y. Warner, the Rev. J. H. Dennis, Miss Alice Bacon, Miss Bertha Hooker and Mrs. E. V. Stoddard.

The funeral of Col. Richard H. Schooley, well known layman, took place from St. Mary's Church.

comfort of people who are comfortable.

Changed on Journey Home
That is why some people call for what they term birth-control (meaning birth prevention), and sterilization. Not for their class but for the new race called the Unemployed.

All these men, who have intelligence and sensibilities, resent that. Bitterness had eaten pretty deeply into the souls of many of the jobless men with whom I travelled to Rome, following the Star and the Cross to the feet of Christ's Vicar. But when I came back with them along the same road they were different.

"Behold the star which they had seen in the East went before them until it came and stood over where the Child was."

... and what good has it done them, anyway? Why not spend the money on food?" some of my friends have asked.

Well the jobless men who went to Rome are not, as a class, much richer. Some of them found jobs in rather wonderful ways. Maybe it was an answer to their prayers; but that is God's secret.

What I do know is that very many of the men have told me that they now have a purpose in life. Life to them will never be meaningless again. Whatever the future holds for them of disappointment, hardship, hunger and grief, they (they told me) will not flinch.

It comes to this: they have set their compass by the Star. If the world will set its compass by the star, civilization will avoid the shoals upon which its wreck, otherwise, may be imminent.