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Catholic Institute
Magazine.

A MONTHLY PERIODICAL.



"Hæc scripsi non otii abundantia, sed amoris erga te."—CXC.

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TO THE READER.



TWELVE MONTHS have passed away since, in hope and fear, we first discussed the prospects of our Magazine. During the year, which has swiftly left us, we have more than once stated our position and aim; devoted ourselves to the labor of love with increased industry and care, and hourly looked forward to the gratification of being enabled to procure more valuable recreation for the dear friends who were joining to cheer us on our way. Conscientious that in our inexperience and narrow resources our pages would certainly include some things which those friends might perhaps censure, and many which we would ourselves dislike further on; we determined to, at least, repay gratuitous patronage with evidence of our anxiety to please; and to keep alive kindly interest in our fortunes, with proof of gradual improvement. For this end we taxed every source within our reach either through regard for ourselves, or through friendship for our cause; brought forward our hopes wherever there seemed to us a chance of favorable notice; and cheerfully devoted many hours of exceeding value to ourselves, and much anxious care. We resolved that whatever might be the decree in our case, we should at least be, if possible, free from self-blame; and consequently closed no month's number without a sincere determination to work harder for the next.

But it may be perhaps fairly asked—we know that it is *superciliously* enquired—‘What can be the purpose for all this trouble, and where is the necessity for any such undertaking in this town? Why should we be requested to tolerate mediocrity for a time, merely

II.

to ripen a publication for which we can perceive no mission?' We have been frequently so questioned, and have turned from the questioners with pain. Are there then, we thought, many who can see nothing worthy in joining together, with the approbation of conscience and religion, in an undertaking whose every success is at one and the same time an improvement to ourselves, and a pleasure to our friends? Are there those amongst us who will slight the effort to bring more clearly before men the beautiful brotherhood of the Great Family—patronising that effort, however humble, independently of party, name, or nation? And can there be those so ignorant or thoughtless as not to perceive that while the land is inundated with publications, from which education not less than religion turns disgusted, there surely must be some merit in starting one in competition which shall, under Providence, contain nothing against God or man.

Nor is it our purpose merely to supplant the reading which some Catholics at least, feel to be a disgrace to our time; on the contrary we look forward to being enabled to include scientific matter, historical enquiry, and political discussion, of value far beyond anything we have yet attempted. Our censors no doubt see, in the ripe scholarship and wonderful erudition of the numberless hostile periodicals, ample recreation for their cultivated intellect, and no particle of danger for their Spartan virtue. Be this as it may, we will not yield to all in experience of periodical literature for some years past, and we assert that its power and beauty, in numberless instances, work for evil in Catholic minds. Shall this not catch the eye of anyone, who, after perusing some article of great ability, and very fascinating style—the former evidenced in attacking some Catholic doctrine, the other adorned with many a sneer at Catholic practice—has closed the Magazine or Review more in doubt than anger? Are there no Catholic periodical readers, who, day by day, imbibing more and more of the poisonous "information," on some topic of contemporary history, in which, verily, the arguments are not seldom built on positive falsehood respecting facts, are at last

III.

pulled up by the "information," prompting some conclusion verging on heresy, and, half frightened, are finally obliged to throw over the subject, peeping at it ever after with no very comfortable feelings? Is the feeling of annoyance against some perhaps beautiful Catholic practice—because we are blind to the bitterness of the sneer—altogether unknown to us; and is the unworthy blush of shame—because we do not see the fallacy of the reasoning—by any means strange? As for our opponents of all classes, departments, and prices, their name is legion, while the number of our brothers is ridiculously small. Can any thinking Catholic then assert that if we, even at intervals, bring forward a true historical statement, a just literary criticism, or a candid political view, our existence is still aimless, and our purpose worthless? Can the most supercilious of our censors maintain that we labor in vain, if but twice in a year we convince *one of our own* of the falsehood of his so-called information?

But with reference to another class, who, abounding in our own locality, seem to find amusement in sneering at our efforts, and some recreation in "talking us down," we would respectfully remind them that our most attentive readers are not, by any means all in Liverpool, and that some of the names on our gradually increasing staff of contributors would, if known, speedily put their strange hostility to shame. So far as their own patronage is concerned, we are not sensible of any particular anxiety regarding it; we have friends whose valued approval places us above their notice, and we seek it not from them.

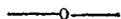
Apart from the anxiety which, as lately noticed to our subscribers, we have reason to entertain on our own account relative to the all-important sinews of war, we need scarcely urge as an additional necessity for promptitude in our favor, that receiving gratuitous contributions cannot and ought not long continue. We feel sure, from the knowledge we have of the views of many who have exerted themselves for us, that such a course would be as repugnant to their finer feelings as it is contrary to the grand rule—

'Give unto every man his own.' In short, delay from month to month in merely acting justly towards us, besides crippling ourselves, also deprives us altogether of the gratification of acting justly towards our generous contributors.

And in looking forward to gradually building up another volume, let us ask in conclusion can many of our readers truly estimate the sincerity in which we hope for health and strength to increase the respectable number of our acquaintances, and to ripen our many friendships? Can they realize our firm determination to watch over 'Maga' with more devotion than ever, and to care for no personal sacrifice in her cause? And will they believe that her very first duty is held to be the removal of enmity and the softening of bitterness—that the chastenings of mild reproof may meet unwitting error, and Charity not be a stranger at the board that is spread for brothers?'



INDEX—VOL. I.



Advance of Catholicity, 30, 63, 95.
 A few more words about Poetry, 234.
 A few last words about Poetry, 262.
 A few words from Humboldt, 342.
 Affairs of Italy,—The 307.
 A Passage from the Tales of Sainthood, 109.
 Bard Outwitted—The, a Tale, 134.
 Blind Asylum—The, 113.
 Book of Nature—The, 92, 99, 131.
 Catholic Influence a Refining Influence, 195, 260.
 Catholic Novels and Protestant Critics, 289.
 Catholic and Protestant Private Judgment, 331.
 Catacomb of Saint Callistus—The, 291.
 Charade, 311.
 Characters of Theophrastus, 299.
 Christmas Night, 128.
 Church Going in Liverpool, 33.
 Cleverness and Success, 327.
 Concert at the Institute, 29.
 Conscript of Monte Porzio—The, a Tale, 18.
 Conversions, 64.
 Correspondence, 38.
 Does the Moon Rotate or Not? 295.
 Doings of Chemists—The, 59.
 Dyrbington, a tale, 167, 201, 228, 265, 297, 321, 353.
 Editor's Address, 1.
 Ethics for Young Men, 65, 124.
 Fashion, 38.
 Five Minutes from the Life of St. Francis Xavier, 85.
 Foreign Missions—The Westminster Review, 365.
 Future of England—The, 225.
 Gossippings about Herodotus the Arch-Gossip, 164.
 Greece and the Greeks of the Present Day, 180.
 Historical Sketches, 111, 140, 173, 211, 239, 275, 305, 329, 362.
 Hopes, 288.
 Institute Lectures, &c., 5, 32, 54, 64, 77, 96, 160, 192, 224.
 Institute Christmas Plays, 157.
 Kossuth in Liverpool, 248.
 Letter from Rev. S. V. Parclose to B. Aumbrie, Esq., 103.
 Literary Items, 31, 63, 95, 127, 159, 191, 223, 253, 287, 319, 343, 371.
 London Letter, 93, 126, 158, 190, 222.
 Madame Ristori, 310.
 Maynooth the War-cry, 257.
 Medal of the Immaculate Conception, 27.
 Military Commission—The, a Tale, 68, 101.
 Moon's Rotation—The, 272.
 Muddletonians—The, a Tale, 61, 73, 135, 213, 244.
 Music or Painting, 349.
 Notices and Replies, 32, 64, 96, 128, 160, 192, 224, 256, 288, 320, 344, 372.
 Obituary, 32, 64, 96, 128, 160, 192, 288, 344, 372.
 r os pects, 193.

OBITUARY.

Death of Daniel Powell, Esq., 39.
 „ Earl of Shrewsbury, 370.
 „ Frederick Lucas, Esq., 64.
 „ Rev. W. Gillet, 94.
 „ Right Rev. Dr. Brown, 157.

Painting or Music, 324.
 Parody, 35.
 Passing Events, 192, 224, 256, 288, 320, 344, 372.

POETRY.

Ad Reginam Angelorum, 271.
 Barwell Rise, 118.
 Christmas Night, 72.
 Death, 320.
 Do the Work that Lies Before Thee, 208.
 Electric Telegraph—The, 189.
 Espousals of Joseph and Mary, 360.
 Exile—The, 40.
 Faith, 87.
 Legend of St. Germain, 27.
 Lines sent with a Twelfth Cake, 106.
 Margaret, 312.
 Never Despair, 17.
 Religion, 189.
 Right—The, 166.
 Saint Galla, 327.
 Samaritan Woman—The, 193.
 Science, 189.
 Stabat Mater—The, 254.
 Suffer the Little Children to Come to Me, 305.
 Victory—The, 142.
 Politeness, 3.
 Presentation to the Rev. James Nugent, 155.
 Presentation to the Rev. James Sheridan, 255.
 Religious Legislation, 321.

REVIEWS:—

About's Tolla, 153.
 An Account of the Opening of St. Patrick's Church, Edinburgh.
 Baptist's Ailey Moore, 338.
 Browne's Letter to the Rev. P. Bracken, 286.
 Burke's College Irish Grammar, 335.
 Cane's Williamite and Jacobite Wars in Ireland, 26.
 Crowther's Boys' Ceremonial, 24.
 Daniel's Nouvelles Morales des Faubourgs, 124.
 Dhu's Stanhope Burleigh, 88.
 Drouix's Sacred History, 187.
 Dyce's Recollections of the Table-talk of Samuel Rogers, 183.
 Furniss's Almighty God and His Perfections, 341.
 Froude's History of England, 312, 325.

Gurney's Songs of the Present, 183.
 Hecker's Questions of the Soul, 21.
 Hughes's Lays of the Crusaders, 26.
 Langdale's Memoirs of Mrs. Fitzherbert, 217.
 Life of St. Vincent of Paul, 368.
 Macaulay's History of England, 118, 150.
 Macarthy's Use of Books, 26.
 M'Corry's Church of Ireland, &c., 26.
 M'Corry's Supremacy of St. Peter, 25.
 Maclachlan's The True Religion, 26.
 Newman's Callista, 279.
 Oakley's Youthful Martyrs of Rome—a Drama, 250.
 Oliphant's Minnesota, 218.
 Patterson's Model of the Priest, 124.
 Picquot's Manual of Serving at Mass, 124.
 Power's Catechism, 285.
 Reade's Man in Paradise, 183.
 Sandwith's Siege of Kars, 220.
 Stapf's Spirit and Scope of Education, 25.
 Stothert's Physical Science, &c.,
 Stothert's Sonnets, 284.
 Wilson's Noctes Ambrosianæ, 50.
 Adventures of Jules Gerard, 252.
 Catholic Pictorial Bible, 91.
 Clifton Tales, &c. 154.
 Compendium of Modern History, 124.
 Clare Maitland, 318.
 Dublin Review, 52.
 Eastern Hospitals and English Nurses, 281.
 Englishwoman in America, 188.
 Essay on Wolsey and Fisher, 341.
 Flemish Interiors, 315.
 First Annual Report of the Dublin Young Men's
 Society, 341.
 Glance Behind the Grilles, 47.
 Lion of Flanders, 90.
 Occasional Prayers, 26.
 Romantic Tales, &c., 90.
 Sea Stories, &c., 90.
 Story of the War in La Vendee, 122.
 Surprising Adventures of Jean Paul Choppart, 340.

Tales of Humor, 90.
 The Belcaguered Hearth, 342.
 The Curse of the Village, 90.
 The Waverley Pamphlet, 340.
 The Vision of Mary, 286.
 Third Annual Report of the Cork Young Men's
 Society, 188.
 Work of the Patronage, 123.

Reformatories; their Nature, Origin, and Tendency,
 345.
 Ristori in Liverpool, 328.
 Rome and Austria, 67.
 Sabbath Question—The, 161.
 Saint Elizabeth's Institution, 129.
 Short Notices—Books received, 53, 124, 320, 344.
 Simplicity of the Creation, 106.
 Sketch of the Rev. Dr. Newman, 28.

SONNETS:—

First Day of Spring, 212.
 Spring, 247.
 The Poetry of Æschylus, 174.
 To the Memory of Napoleon, 60.
 To a Picture of the Blessed Virgin Mary, 155.
 Translations from Petrarch, 217.

Souls and Instincts of Animals, 143, 175.
 Specimens of a Patent Pocket Dictionary, 40, 72,
 112, 140.
 Temptation in Private Life, 209.
 Thoughts for the New Year, 97.
 The Moon Does not Rotate, 328.
 The Moon Must Rotate on Her Axis, 351.
 The Work of the Patronage, 115.
 To Our Subscribers, 344.
 Tom Howard, a Tale, 41.
 Washington Irving, 241.
 What is Poetry? 197.

