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Modern Questions

IN THE LIGHT OF CHRISTIAN
PRINCIPLES AND THE TEACHING
OF THE PAPAL ENCYCLICALS

A DISCUSSION CLUB MANUAL
FOR YOUNG PEOPLE'S GROUPS

BY Rev. RUDOLPH G. BANDAS

SERIES ONE



Modern Questions

In the light of Christian Principles and the
teaching of the Papal Encyclicals

A Discussion Club Manual for
Young People's Groups

by

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SERIES I

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Nihil Obstat

Right Rev. H. Moynihan, S.T.D.,

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FOREWORD

Forward by His Eminence, Joseph Cardinal Pizzardo, Prefect of the Sacred Congregation of Seminaries and Universities. The Most. Rev. Carlo Confalonieri, D.D., Tit. Archbishop of Nicopolis ad Nestum, sec.

Rome, May 22, 1957

Sacred Congregation
of
Seminaries and Universities

Right reverend and dear Monsignor,

We have learned with deep satisfaction that the apologetical tracts which you have written with such keen awareness of actual needs under the titles of "Biblical Questions" and "Modern Questions", are being circulated more and more widely among English-speaking readers as well as among those peoples into whose tongues they have now been translated.

We are acquainted with and esteem highly these writings of yours, permeated as they are by rare theological and pastoral knowledge as well as by a wise and laboriously watchful apostolic zeal. We desire, therefore, that they be read and studied as widely as possible by the clergy and by all those who intellectually and spiritually preceive the need of gathering and radiating the immutable Light which leads to true Life.

We hope to see the tracts mentioned above, authored by your illustrious and reverend person, appear soon also in the Italian language. As you know we are taking an interest in this matter in order that your wish might be transformed into reality as soon as possible.

In the meantime, we invoke the choicest divine blessings upon these very useful and solid works of yours, destined to spread the "word of salvation, in order that they may extend on an increasingly vast scale their influential rays, germinating and fructifying abundantly for the redemption of souls and for the strengthening of Catholic unity under the Supreme Pastor, in faith, in hope, and in charity.

While I express to you once more my sentiments of most affectionate esteem and of appreciation for your extensive works of corporal and spiritual mercies which you carry on with such untiring perseverance, with all my heart I ask to remain.

Most devotedly yours in Christ Jesus,

J. Card. Pizzardo

✠ C. Confalonieri, sec.

The Right Rev. Msgr.
Rudolph G. Bandas, Rector
of the St. Paul Seminary

Acknowledgement

The chapters in this book are brief explanations of topics which have proved interesting to young people's open forums and discussion clubs. The chapters do not pretend to be exhaustive explanations of the subjects but serve rather as an introduction to the question. They contain basic principles which are indispensable for the proper evaluation of any modern problem.

We wish hereby to express our gratitude to Benziger Brothers for permission to quote from their copyrighted publication, "The Four Great Encyclicals of Leo XIII" edited by the Rev. John J. Wynne, S. J., and to the Paulist Press for permission to quote from the "Four Great Encyclicals."

Chapter I

RELIGIOUS INDIFFERENCE AND UNBELIEF

The religious indifference and practical atheism prevalent in the world today are due to several causes. In the first place, most modern philosophies minimize the native ability of the mind and contend that the intellect cannot transcend the domain of sense. The mind comes to a halt when it reaches the confines of the senses. It cannot rise from created things to a Creator. From this view, that the mind cannot pass beyond the world of sense there gradually arose the belief that there is nothing beyond it—that God does not exist.

The Protestant principle of the private interpretation of religious truths tended inevitably to produce the same result. The original Reformers forgot that man's judgment in interpreting religious truths is influenced by his own conduct, temperament and passions. When man came face to face with such truths as the malice of sin, judgment, hell, eternity, and when he found a radical opposition between his creed and his deeds, he proceeded to whittle down religious truths so that they would fit his own life and so that his conscience might be more at ease. But once the downward process began, what was to stop it? Men threw overboard one truth after another until today the majority of Protestant sects have utterly disintegrated and sunk into a state of refined paganism.

The old Lutheran theology considered man as essentially corrupted in mind and will by the Fall. It looked upon man as totally depraved, as entirely



worthless, as a mere worm crawling in the dust, as a subject fit to be condemned by a righteous and inexorable God to eternal torments. In reacting against these doctrines modern thought, unfortunately, went to the opposite extreme. It exalted man to the extent of setting him in the place of God. In the philosophical system known as Humanism religion means our duties toward and our worship of man. For the kingdom of God it substitutes the kingdom of man—for the service of God, the service of man. Humanism and all kindred philosophies clearly assert that there is no supreme personal being outside of the universe.

This process of religious deterioration and decay has been occurring gradually, quietly, and imperceptibly. In 1925, however, with the rise of Lenin in Russia, atheism adopted new methods and tactics. Atheism is now violently militant and strives by force to uproot men's belief in God. It rejects the compromising spirit of Western free thinkers: It is not enough to instill atheism into books and laws but God must be driven from the universe, and, as Stalin is wont to say, utterly "liquidated." "We have done away with the kings of earth," the two Russian atheistic periodicals "Bezbojnik" and "Antireligioznik" frequently tell us, "We shall now do away with the kings of heaven." It finds its best recruits among the young because youth is uncritical, impulsive, dogmatic, impatient of careful reasoning but bent upon quick action. Every method of propaganda is enlisted in this campaign against God. The schools, the movies, the press, the radio, exhibits, conferences with lantern slides, science, even forced starvation are used as means of carrying on the anti-religious of-

fensive of the godless. As formely Russia was dotted with theological seminaries so now it is dotted with atheistic seminaries which are training apostles of atheism for all walks of life, especially for the schools, the army, and the navy. And all the while the Union of the Militant Godless is carrying on a fierce campaign of defamation against the churches and the clergy, and staging sacrilegious parodies of ceremonies and worship.

Despite their noisy and violent propaganda, atheistic groups have frequently been forced to admit that their efforts are met with coolness and indifference on the part of the people and that the movement on the whole is on the decline. And it can hardly be otherwise, for a movement which is so radically opposed to man's fundamental inclinations as atheism, cannot long endure. There are several questions to which the mind imperiously demands an answer and which atheism leaves without a solution.

First of all, the mind of man is continually asking: "Whence did I and the world come from?" Atheists may tell us that all things came from a primitive jelly or gas or energy. But the mind continues to ask: From where did this primitive substance come in turn? They may tell us that the world is billions of years old. But the mind persists in inquiring: How did it begin? It is said that the astronomer, Athanasius Kirchner, possessed a beautiful globe. One day an unbeliever asked Kirchner where he got the globe. The astronomer answered: "Oh, it just came on my desk of itself." The unbeliever laughed scornfully at him and said: "You know very well that such a thing is impossible." Kirchner then said: "If this small globe could not

come here of itself, how could the earth and those immense globes in the sky come here of themselves?"

Some atheists argue as follows: "The son depends on the father, who depends on his father, and so on. The oak comes from an acorn, which in turn comes from an oak. In each case the series goes back for all eternity." This statement may best be answered by an illustration: Take the links of a chain dangling in the air. The last link is connected to the one above it, which in turn is attached to the one above it, and so on. But no matter how many links are added, the chain will not hang by itself. Ultimately we must come to a firm support from which the chain is suspended—something which is not hanging but is independent, firm, first.

The atheist insists: The world arose out of blind and blundering processes haphazardly shifting the molecules into various combinations over a very long period of time. Again we answer by an illustration. Take the automobile which stands in front of my door. How did the machine arise and how did it get here? If I told you that from various parts of the world the wind picked up the nuts, bolts, screws, steel, rubber, and glass, blew them together and made the car, you would sneer at my explanation as ridiculous. You would say that an intelligent being outside of the car planned and supervised the making of the car. But what is an automobile, intricate though its construction may be, compared to this vast universe of ours? How much more does the latter demand an intelligent First Cause?

Let us take another example: If I mixed haphazardly in a bowl the wheels and screws and various parts that make up your wrist watch, I would

never fashion an instrument which would produce motion—much less motion that is so accurately regulated as to point out the hour and minute of the day. The watch demands an intelligent maker who understands the intricate construction of a watch. How much more, then, does this vast and intricate universe of ours demand an intelligent maker! How wonderful is the construction of the atom, molecule, ice crystal, snow flake, sea shell, petal of a flower, the fruit tree, the human body! How orderly the movement of the sun, moon, earth and stars! How regular the succession of spring, summer, autumn and winter, of night and day! How much more intricate is all this than the watch!

Another question which the mind persistently asks is this: Why am I here? To this query the atheist again has a ready answer: I am here to enjoy myself. And by happiness the materialist usually means bodily pleasure, self indulgence, a pandering to our primitive instincts. His path to supermanhood is through unrestrained self-expression and self-assertion.

The vanity and emptiness of these substitutes for man's true purpose on earth were exposed with an incisive logic by St. Thomas long ago. The Angelic Doctor lays down the following principles concerning man's purpose on earth:

a) *Man's happiness does not consist in external goods* such as wealth, honor, fame, and power. These goods are of their very nature only means to an end and not an end in themselves. They are intended to procure for us something higher and better. They do not satisfy man's aspirations. Often the richer a man is, the more greedy and covetous he becomes. Riches cannot produce wisdom, peace and

health. Frequently the rich are very unhappy, after having procured their wealth with great sacrifice; they cling to it with great anxiety and fear of losing it, and finally must be separated from it forever at death. The divorces, murders and suicides among the rich testify to the fact that earthly goods do not bring an abiding happiness. "Whatever my eyes desired," says Ecclesiastes, "I refused them not, and I withheld not my heart from enjoying every pleasure, and delighting itself in the things which I had prepared, and esteemed this my portion, to make use of my own labor. And when I turned myself to all the works which my hands had wrought, and to the labors wherein I had labored in vain, I saw in all things vanity, and vexation of mind, and that nothing was lasting under the sun" ⁽¹⁾

b) *Man's happiness does not consist in bodily goods* such as health, strength, physical beauty, and sensual pleasure. The body is really the instrument of the soul and is of little value to us unless the mind is sound and the will virtuous and strong. Moreover, bodily pleasures are common to man and to the brute, and if man makes an end of them, he degrades himself to the level of a brute and leaves his nobler faculties unsatisfied. Bodily pleasures weaken a man, and leave him dissatisfied, disgusted, and discontented. The soul within a sensuous and lustful man whispers to him in the midst of his pleasures that he was made for something higher or better.

c) *Man's happiness does not consist in the knowledge and love of finite things.* The field of knowledge has in recent years expanded immensely as is evidenced, for example, by the countless faculties and departments at our universities. No one

⁽¹⁾ Ecclesiastes II, 10-11

today would presume to claim that he is versed in all the secular branches of knowledge. In fact, who can assert that he is thoroughly acquainted with the special field of investigation of his choice? Who can claim that he is fully acquainted with the contents of only a few of the thousands of volumes in a university library? And even if the mind knew all finite things, it would still be dissatisfied and restless. The eye may be blinded by a bright light, the ear may be deafened by a strong noise, but the soul is not exhausted but rather strengthened by the intensity of knowledge. And what is true of knowledge is also true of love. The will may momentarily acquiesce in love and friendship, but it soon becomes restless because of the knowledge that all earthly affections are ephemeral and uncertain. The will persistently strives after a love which does not change or fail.

Man's happiness consists in the attainment of his last end or in the perfect knowledge and love of God in the Beatific Vision. "Thou hast made us, O Lord, for thyself," says St. Augustine ⁽¹⁾ "and our heart is restless until it rests in thee." "Vanity of vanities," says the author of the Imitation, ⁽²⁾ "and all is vanity except to love Thee and serve Thee alone." "It is impossible," says St. Thomas, ⁽³⁾ "for any created good to constitute man's happiness. For happiness is the perfect good, which lulls the appetite altogether; else it would not be the last end, if something yet remained to be desired. Now the object of the will, that is, of man's appetite, is the universal good; just as the object of the intellect is the universal true. Hence it is evident that

(1) "Confessions" Bk. I. No. 1, P. L. XXXII, 661

(2) Bk. I, ch. I. n. 3

(3) I a II ae., q. 2, a. 8

nought can lull man's will, save the universal good. This is to be found, not in any creature, but in God alone, because every creature has goodness only by participation. Wherefore God alone can satisfy the will of man—God alone constitutes man's happiness." Man's constant looking forward toward the future, to a day when he will be happier than now—a day, alas, which will never come in this world—is merely a stirring in man of that desire after perfect happiness which will be found in God alone.

Discussion Aids

1. Show how each one of the following factors has contributed to create the practical atheism of our day.
 - a) modern anti-intellectualist philosophies
 - b) Protestant principle of private interpretation
 - c) Lutheran theology of the essential corruption of man
2. What new methods has atheism adopted in recent years?
3. How would you prove that the world demands a
 - a) First Cause
 - b) An Intelligent Mind
4. Show how man cannot find true happiness in
 - a) external goods
 - b) bodily goods
 - c) Knowledge and love of finite things
5. What alone can constitute man's perfect happiness? Why?

Religious Practices

1. I shall always recite with great fervor and devotion the words of the Creed "I believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and earth."
2. I shall frequently recall the words of the Psalmist: "The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament the work of His hands."
3. In my search for happiness I shall be guided by the words of St. Augustine: "Thou hast made us for thyself and our hearts are restless until they rest in thee."

Chapter II

MATERIALISM

Another question which the mind persistently asks is this: What am I? According to the atheist, man is merely a highly developed animal, a soulless brute, a cosmic accident, a miscarriage of the ape, a chemical mechanism. Life is merely matter assuming a special complexity and organization. An idea is merely a chemical change in the brain. Man's actions are the necessary outcome of chemical processes in the brain and in the body. Man is neither responsible nor reprehensible for his actions.

A little reflection, however, will show that these statements are arbitrary and devoid of all foundation. In the first place, consciousness and thought are not qualities of matter as such. Otherwise, we should have to predicate these qualities of the stone, or of the turnip or of the tree.

Science clearly shows that there is no necessary connection between the chemical elements of the brain and thought. Thus the brain develops very rapidly during the years of infancy, reaches its highest point of development at the end of adolescence, and then remains stationary for a few years. Yet during all these years intellectual progress is at first insignificant and afterwards extremely slow. When the brain sets out on its regressive evolution, when it is being fed by blood which becomes gradually more impoverished, mental activity enters on a period of richest development. Again, a diminution of the volume and weight of the brain does not always entail any appreciable trouble in psychic activ-

ity. Accidents—such as those which happened during the world war—may lead to a removal of a considerable part of the brain and yet the intellectual functions remain substantially intact. The brain, then, is not a cause but only a condition of thought; just as the eye cannot see without light, so the soul in this life does not function without the brain.

Man is conscious of various mental states—of thinking, reasoning, reflecting, willing, striving, etc. Now thought and volition do not hover in mid air, coming from nowhere, going nowhere, and inhering in nothing. Where there is thought there must be some one who thinks. This substance, this thinking subject, which is the fountain and centre of all mental activity, we call the soul.

The soul is simple, that is, not composed of quantitative parts. Let us illustrate this point by the following consideration: We perceive that we are the same person throughout all of our changing, varying, and often contradictory experiences. Our consciousness testifies that amid all our fleeting and successive experiences we remain and persist the same identical persons. You are absolutely certain, for example, that for several years you attended a high school, and that you have remained the same from day to day. You are certain that you are the same person who for eight years followed the classes in the grade school. You can go even further back and affirm you are the same person who played in the yard about your house.

Now this personal identity cannot be explained if there is not within us a soul—distinct from the changing body—which is the source and center of all our experiences. For our body is in a state of continual change, and the matter of the body is ac-

ording to scientists, completely changed during each seven years. The brain itself changes from day to day so that it is not identical either with the brain of seven years ago or with the brain of yesterday. If then there is nothing but matter within us, and if thinking is merely a new juxta-position of some chemical elements in the grey matter of my brain, and if the matter of my body is being continually changed and replaced, how could I possibly perceive year after year to be identically the same person?

I have only *one* soul. Experience and consciousness testify that my sensations are undivided. But how could they be undivided unless the soul itself is simple and undivided? The sense organs in which the sensation takes place imply composition and multiplicity: Molecules are composed of atoms which in turn are composed of ions and electrons. One hundred and eight nerve fibres are said to converge in the sense of touch, and yet the sensations of touch are not composed of parts. Again, take the statement: John is a lawyer. This assertion implies the comparison of two ideas. But if these two ideas were located in two separate molecules of the brain, how—apart from the soul—could they ever be brought together? They could not compare themselves one with another any more than the ideas in the minds of different people could compare themselves one with the other.

The *soul is spiritual*, that is, it is intrinsically—in its nature—independent of the body. How do we establish this fact?

a) The human soul has *spiritual operations*. Let us illustrate this by a concrete example. We seem to stand again and again at the threshold of another world war. Through our minds there run such ideas

as honor, duty, justice, honesty, truth, right, morality, virtue. At the same time there arises in our mind the idea of an American soldier—not of this or that particular soldier, but of that ideal soldier who transcends all particular qualities and determinations. Now these objects of our thoughts are wholly immaterial. They have neither height nor width nor depth, neither volume nor weight, neither shape nor color. They cannot be divided into halves or thirds.

b) These abstract and universal ideas cannot be formed by the senses which can never pass beyond the picture of concrete things with their definite shape, color, extension, hardness, etc. These mental operations are above the reach of bodily organs, above the activities of the body. Now if the operations are immaterial so also is the agent which produces them. The activities of an agent reflect the perfections of that agent. There can never be more perfection in the effect than there is in the cause. Whatever is in the stream must be contained in the source. Since its highest activities are in no sense bodily functions, the soul itself—though at present united to the body—is by its nature capable of existing and continuing its life apart from the body.

c) The power of perfect psychological reflexion is another evidence of the spirituality of the soul. Suppose I am reasoning out in my mind a theorem in plane geometry. I start now to make an introspective study, to reflect. I can go so far as making the self thinking on and reasoning out the mathematical proposition the object of observation of *one and the same* self. In other words, the reasoning self and the reflecting self are identical. Now an activity of this kind can in no wise be predicated of matter.

For matter is composed of parts, and while one part may communicate motion to another part, it is against the properties of matter for any part or atom to act upon itself. Those who make the chemical elements of the brain the source of thought cannot explain perfect psychological reflection. It can be explained only if the agent of thought is in itself independent of material bodily organs.

d) The soul is spiritual because man is free. Matter cannot modify its state, it cannot put itself in motion, it cannot change its direction once it is set in motion. Matter moves only when it is moved by another; it receives its motion and the direction of its motion from without. The soul, however, moves and directs itself. It chooses one thing in preference to another. In spite of his prejudices, passions, temperaments, habits, etc., man at a given moment determines himself and is not determined. Notwithstanding the routine association of ideas, we react against them when there is question of our dignity, happiness, morality and eternal salvation. On this point the verdict of consciousness and of mankind is unanimous and final. The spirit can dominate the flesh, mortify it, and even sacrifice it, if a higher motive demands it. All this shows that there is in man an immaterial principle, superior to and independent of matter—a spiritual soul.

A final question to which man's mind demands an answer is the following: What will become of me after death? On this point the answer of the atheists is less categorical. Some, consistently with their principles, maintain that man is born, grows and dies like any other animal. They contend that cremation should be substituted for burial and that the social pressure supporting funeral ceremonies should

be reduced. Others are wont to speak of an ideal immortality—an immortality constituted by the souvenir among men of our good life and good works.

Such explanations can hardly bring any satisfaction to man. The fact is that man, whatever his age may be, desires to live—live in his body forever. When disease begins to encroach upon him, he fights against it with all the medical aid at his command and stops at no sacrifice in this struggle against death. And when death finally overcomes him, man finds death no more natural than he did when it first occurred on earth—thousands of years ago. Man is no more accustomed to it now than he was then, he continues to find in it the same occasion for grief and sorrow.

According to sound philosophy and revelation the soul is immortal and will live forever. The body, it is true, must pass through the portals of death and the process of dissolution only to rise to an everlasting life on the last day. Since the soul is simple, it cannot be broken down into parts and undergo corruption. Since it is spiritual, since in its nature and operations it is independent of the body, it does not perish with the body but continues in its life even apart from the body.

Since the truth of the immortality of the soul is so profoundly anchored in reason, we should naturally expect to find traces of it among all peoples. And such in fact is the case. Men of all ages, places and races have held the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. The literature of the Egyptians and Assyrians, of the Greeks and the Romans, bears witness to this truth. Homer and Virgil give us vivid descriptions of the world of spirits in their epics. The universality of this truth is all the more remark-

able when one recalls that it goes counter to men's passions.

There is in man a deepseated, persistent and insatiable desire for happiness. Whatever we choose to do in this life, we do because we think it will make us happy. But nothing in this life brings us perfect happiness. We are always looking to the future when we hope to be more happy—completely happy. Now nature does nothing in vain. If God has impressed this aspiration on the human heart, He will also fulfill it. Man's desire for perfect happiness demands immortality for its fulfillment.

The moral law likewise demands immortality. In this life the wicked frequently prosper while the good and virtuous suffer. Justice demands that there be a continued existence where virtue will be rewarded and sin punished.

Discussion Aids

1. Is there any connection between the chemical elements of the brain and thought? Explain.
2. Show that our mental states demand a thinking substance, a soul.
3. How would you prove that the soul is *simple* and one?
4. Prove the spirituality of the soul from
 - a) its operations,
 - b) perfect psychological reflection,
 - c) freedom of the will.
5. Prove the immortality of the soul from
 - a) its simplicity and spirituality,
 - b) the universal consent of mankind.

- c) man's innate desire for perfect happiness,
- d) the demands of the moral law.

Religious Practices

1. I shall not dishonor by sin the image of God in my soul or in the soul of my neighbor.
2. In my quest for earthly things I shall always remember that it profits a man nothing if he gain the whole world and yet loses his immortal soul.
3. I shall not sell for any earthly pleasure my soul which was redeemed by the blood of the God-Man.

Chapter III

EVOLUTION

Evolution is the theory that the various highly organized and specialized types of plants and animals have all originated from a very few simple organisms, the differentiating characters being due to modifications which occurred at successive steps of the process. Evolution may be atheistic and materialistic, or it may be theistic; the former is absolutely unacceptable to a believer; the latter may with certain explanations be held by Catholics and all Christians. We shall briefly explain both systems.

Materialistic Evolution

Materialistic evolution subscribes to the following doctrines:

1) The Universe has no Creator or First Cause; there is no Supreme Being apart from and distinct from this universe; man has not a spiritual soul but is only a highly developed animal.

These doctrines, which are contradicted by reason and common sense, are propagated especially by the Union of Militant Godless of Russia and by all Communists. We have refuted them in the preceding chapters.

2) Life arose out of dead matter without any preexisting germ or seed or without the need of any divine intervention.

When we point out to the materialist that there is no case on record where life was produced out of

dead chemical elements in the laboratory, his answer usually is: "True, we have not produced life in the laboratory as yet, but wait and see. We shall do so some day in the future." To such a statement the Christian philosopher has a peremptory answer. It is a principle of sound reason and of common sense that there cannot be more perfection in the effect than in the totality of its causes. If dead matter ever produced life, it would be a miracle.

3) The universe is the result of chance. It arose out of blind and blundering processes haphazardly shifting atoms into various combinations over a very long period of time.

This tenet of modern materialism is no less repugnant to reason than the preceding one. Chance cannot explain the marvellous order of coordination and subordination prevailing in the universe—an order which prevailed in prehistoric times, as is evident from the fossils. Again, chance cannot explain the perfect coordination of all organs within a species to a determined end. Behold, for example, one of our majestic Catholic Cathedrals, admire its massiveness, lines, symmetry and beauty. Immediately you will conclude that it must have had an architect and a plan. Or, examine our complicated and yet highly perfected railroad systems in the United States, and you will soon come to realize the immense intelligence required to plan, order and keep running such an elaborate contrivance. How much more does this vast and orderly universe of ours, with its complicated planetary system, demand a Supreme Intelligence?

4) Matter is eternal and consequently needs no cause or Creator. Everything finds an explanation in something that precedes it, and so on indefinitely.

This is like saying that if we unite together an indefinite number of cars a train will run without an engine, or that if we hook together an indefinite number of links the chain will hang by itself, or that a brush, if its handle be long enough, will paint of itself. Scripture clearly states that the universe did not exist from all eternity but was created by God in time: "*In the beginning* God created heaven and earth" ⁽¹⁾. Modern science is in accord with this infallibly defined truth of revelation: it tells us that the amount of unavailable energy, or entropy, is constantly on the increase in the universe. When all of the world's energy will have passed under this form, the temperature in the universe will be uniform, all activity will cease, and the world will come to an end. Had our universe existed from eternity complete entropy would have been reached a long time ago, and the world would have come to an end.

Any evolutionary hypothesis which postulates these four materialistic and atheistic principles—or any one of the four—may not be accepted by a Christian and a Catholic.

Theistic Evolution

By theistic evolution we mean the gradual and continuous transformation from the simple to the complex, *under the Providence of God*, until the present stage of the universe has been reached. In order to avoid confusion, we shall speak separately of the origin of the inorganic world, of plants and animals, and of man.

I By the inorganic world we mean not merely the earth which we inhabit but the entire planetary system. Science tells us, for example, that the

(1) Genesis I, 1.

earth's radius is about 4000 miles. The moon, which is about 240,000 miles from us, is one eighteenth of the size of the earth. The sun, which is about 93 million miles distant, has a radius of about 433,000 miles, and its volume is about 1,300,000 times that of the earth. Apart from the sun and moon, there are other countless planets, stars, comets, etc. Scientists claim that the universe is millions, nay, billions of years old. Some derive its origin from primitive "energy-packets," others from a primordial fiery mass, etc.

A Catholic may accept these explanations of the scientists provided he holds: a) that God created the world out of nothing, and that, b) the world was not from everlasting but was created in time.

A Catholic may also accept the high figures of scientists in regard to the age of the universe and of man provided these figures are supported by solid scientific arguments. The Bible nowhere states the precise age of the universe or of the human race and the Church has not defined either infallibly. Hence there can be no conflict between faith and science on this point. The 4000 years, which spiritual books and popular treatises place before the coming^s of the Redeemer, are to be taken as a round number. Like the four weeks of Advent they symbolize the long period between Adam and Christ. Contemporary Catholic anthropologists reckon the age of man to be from 35,000 to 50,000 years. When some scientists, however, claim that man is millions of years old, we have reason to suspect that they do not make an essential distinction between man and the animal.

In examining the composition of plants and the formations and fossils in the strata of the earth scientists conclude that it took millions of years for

the universe to attain its present form—and not 6 Genesis days or 144 hours. Yet science is not necessarily in conflict with the Book of Genesis on this point. In the first place the Church has not defined the meaning of “day” in the Mosaic account of creation. Secondly, most Catholic exegetes maintain that the term denotes an “indefinite period of time.” A natural day of twenty-four hours is constituted by a complete revolution of the earth on its axis toward the sun. But according to the first chapter of Genesis the sun was not created until the fourth “day.” Hence, the first three “days,” at least, could not have been natural days of twenty four hours each.

The fact that the Mosaic order and sequence of the things created does not correspond with the scientific account of the order of the origin of things, likewise creates no difficulty. Moses was not writing a scientific but a popular account of creation. His one aim was to impress on the minds of his contemporaries the great truth that God created all things. He then chose some of God’s creatures, with which men were best acquainted, and assigned a certain number of these to each “day,” without paying much attention to the sequence of origin or to the intrinsic relation of things.

II Modern textbooks of science have marshalled an imposing array of arguments to prove the truth of evolution in the plant and animal kingdom. The principal argument is that of paleontology: the remains of various species of plants and animals found in the layers of the earth follow one another in such orderly fashion that we are justified in concluding that the more perfect originated from the less perfect. The validity of these arguments must ultimately be verified by science itself. Should sci-

ence supply convincing proofs for the evolution of plants and animals, the Church will offer no objections to its conclusions. She will merely demand that we hold that the whole process took place under the Providence of a Creator and a Supreme Intelligence.

III In speaking of the origin of man we must immediately make a clear distinction between man's soul and man's body. The human *soul*—being simple, spiritual and immortal—cannot possibly evolve from any lower form. Since it is simple it cannot possibly disengage itself from the bodies or souls of its parents. Since it is spiritual, it cannot be produced by a material substance. Since it is rational and intellectual, it cannot evolve out of an animal soul—the perfections of the effect cannot exceed the perfections of the cause. The soul is created out of nothing directly by God and united to the body at the moment of conception, about nine months before birth. Souls are infused into the body and by being infused are at the same time actually created. From this it is clear that no Catholic may accept the materialistic explanations of Spencer and Haeckel who maintain that entire man—soul and body—evolved from the monkey or from some animal ancestor. Man thinks and reasons; he forms universal and abstract ideas; he has ideas of religion and morality; he is progressive, and is endowed with the faculty of speech. The ape has none of these qualities.

But what about man's body? Is this derived from the ape; from some animal? Strictly speaking, it is not impossible that an ape body should develop—under natural laws established by God—to a point where it would be capable of receiving a rational soul. But if that were the case, why isn't the process still going on? As far backward as the

memory of civilized man extends, monkeys have been monkeys, and man has been man. Others say that at a certain point the evolution of the ape took a sudden leap or "jump," and that the result was the appearance of a human body. But what proof can be advanced for such an assertion? To affirm, as some theologians do, that God intervened directly in order to humanize an animal body and make it a fit abode for a human soul is to advance in a round about way an explanation which is equivalent to the Scriptural account of the direct creation of man's body by God.

The so-called "missing links," which would connect the ape kingdom with the human kingdom, are still missing. Besides, the conception of the "missing link" as a being partly animal and partly human is an absurdity from the viewpoint of reason and Catholic philosophy. For once a body has received a human soul, the resultant is a human being and not a being only partly human. It is the soul which differentiates us essentially from the brute. Anthropology, it is true, has supplied us with the fossils of the Neanderthal Man, of the Pithecanthropus, of Eoanthropus, of the Heidelberg Man, and of Sinanthropus. But these fossils have been shown to belong either to the strictly animal or to the strictly human kingdoms.

"The earliest human fossil remains," says H. Obermaier: "are represented only by scanty and very fragmentary isolated discoveries, and are also limited to a very small portion of the earth's surface, namely, to Europe. It would, therefore be rather premature to attempt the determination of a detailed evolutionary series or an ancestral tree for humanity in the insufficient light of our present

knowledge" ⁽¹⁾. T. Graham Kerr, Professor of Zoology at the University of Glasgow, expresses much the same view. H. F. Osborn, President of the American Museum of Natural History in New York, calls the Ape-Man a myth.

In view of these uncertainties and hesitations of modern science the Church prefers to abide by the obvious meaning of Genesis II, 8, namely, that God created man's body directly out of the chemical elements of the earth. While she has made no infallible pronouncement concerning the origin of man's body, she forbids any Catholic to teach officially the ape-origin of the human body. Should science at some future date prove conclusively the animal origin of man's body, the scientific truth would point out to us how we are to interpret Genesis II, 8; the chemical elements were incorporated first into an animal body before being animated by a human soul.

Discussion Aids

1. Define Evolution.
2. What are the four principal tenets of materialistic evolution? Refute each briefly.
3. What is meant by theistic evolution?
4. May a Catholic accept the scientists' description of the origin of the universe? Explain.
5. May a Catholic accept the scientists' figures in regard to the age of the universe and of the human race?
6. Is the Genesiac description of the origin of the world in conflict with science? Explain.

(1) "Fossil Man in Spain" (London, 1924), p. 321

7. May a Catholic apply the evolutionary theory to plants and animals?
8. Can man's soul evolve from the monkey or from an animal? Why?
9. Did man's body evolve from an ape or animal body?
10. What is the Church's present stand on the question of the origin of man's body?

Religious Practices

1. I shall always praise the great power and wisdom of God as manifest in the creation and development of the universe.
2. I shall mortify all the desires of the flesh which are opposed to my higher nature, the soul.
3. I shall always have a great respect for the body which is the Temple of the Holy Ghost, is sanctified by the Eucharist, and is destined for a glorious resurrection.

Chapter IV

RELIGIOUS BROADMINDEDNESS

Of the one hundred and thirty million people in the United States, twenty-two million are Catholic, thirty million are Protestant, and about seventy million are not affiliated with any church whatsoever. This means that out of every six people that we meet in daily life, one is a Catholic, fewer than two are Protestant, and four are non-believers. A situation such as this makes men less conscious of the one true faith and gradually develops an attitude such as the following: one religion may be as good as another; it does not matter what one believes as long as he is a good fellow. This spirit of so-called religious broadmindedness is intensified by mixed marriages, by Catholic membership in non-Catholic societies such as the two Y's, by brotherhood weeks, tolerance meetings, etc. Now, what stand must we take in regard to this attitude when we examine it in the light of Christian revelation and of sound reason?

1) If one religion is as good as another, why did God become Incarnate? Why did he dwell thirty-three years in the midst of sinful men? Why did He bother bringing a religious message to us? Why could not the Jewish or Roman or Greek religion have sufficed?

2) Christ came into the world to teach truth: "For this was I born, and for this I am come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth"⁽¹⁾. Truth is intolerant of error, just as "light can

⁽¹⁾ John XVIII, 37

have no fellowship with darkness" (1). Christ's truth cannot tolerate any contradictory doctrines, precepts, and forms of worship. Christ Himself showed Himself intolerant on several occasions: He condemned the hypocritical religion of the Scribes and Pharisees and threatened divine punishment upon those who deliberately closed their eyes to the truth. When many found His doctrine on the Eucharist a "hard saying" and abandoned Him, He did not say that they might attach a metaphorical significance to His words but insisted absolutely on the literal meaning of His discourse.

3) When God speaks we must accept all that He says. To accept a part of His message and to reject the rest would be to commit an insult against God; would be to deny that God is supreme Truth, Omniscience, and Holiness. God then did not leave us free to formulate our own creeds and religious systems.

4) Christ commanded His apostles to preach His entire Gospel to all men: "Going, therefore, teach ye ALL nations, teaching them to observe ALL things whatsoever I have commanded you" (2). Hence the apostles were not left free to choose their creed but were obliged to teach each and every truth revealed to them by Christ—nothing less and nothing more.

5) Christ intended His religion to be the one universal religion of the world: "Go ye into the WHOLE world and preach the Gospel to EVERY creature" (3). Christ did not intend that there should

(1) II Cor. VI, 14

(2) Mtt. XXVIII, 19, 20

(3) Mk. XVI, 15

be several different large religious bodies in the world. The idea of several diverse "branches" constituting one church, of "fundamentalists" and "non-fundamentalists," of "modernists," and "conservatives," was entirely foreign to His mind.

6) Christ frequently emphasized the fact that His Church is one: "Holy Father, keep them in Thy name whom Thou hast given me, that they may be ONE as we also are" ⁽¹⁾. St. Paul echoes faithfully this doctrine of his Master: "(Be) careful to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. One body and one Spirit, as you are called in one hope of your calling. One Lord, one faith, one baptism. One God and Father of all" ⁽²⁾. Hence the several hundred Protestant sects in the world today can hardly all claim to be the one true Church of Christ. The thirteen kinds of Baptists, the twelve kinds of Presbyterians, the seventeen kinds of Methodists, and the twenty-two kinds of Lutherans cannot all be the one true Church of the Gospels.

7) Christ placed upon all His followers the obligation to accept His entire Gospel preached to them by His Apostles and their successors: "Going, therefore, teach ye all nations, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you" ⁽³⁾. Whosoever will despise these messengers of Christ will dishonor Christ Himself: "He who heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me; and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me" ⁽⁴⁾. The Apostles are to show in emphatic manner their disapproval of those who

(1) John XVII, 11-20

(2) Eph. IV, 3-6

(3) Mtt. XXVIII, 19, 20

(4) Lk. X, 16

spurn Christ's Gospel: "Whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, going forth out of that house or city, shake off the dust from your feet" (1). In fact, to reject Christ's truths is to place oneself in the danger of eternal damnation: "Go ye into the whole world and preach the gospel to every creature—He that believeth not, shall be condemned" (2). From these passages it is clear that we must not only accept Christ's Gospel but that we must accept each and every part of it. Hence any sect which denies the divinity of Christ, or the Trinity, or the Eucharist, or the primacy of Peter, or the existence of hell, cannot claim to be the one true Church of Christ.

8) Christ and the Apostles frequently warn us against the exponents of new, or different, or false religions: "Beware of false prophets," says our Lord (3), "who come to you in the clothing of sheep, but inwardly they are ravening wolves." "Though we, or an angel from heaven," writes St. Paul (4), "preach a gospel to you besides that which we have preached to you, let him be anathema." The Apostle thanks God because when the Thessalonians "received of us the word of the hearing of God, they received it not as the word of men but (as it is indeed) the word of God" (5). St. John exhorts us to have no communications with those who do not profess the true religion: "If any man come to you, and brings not this doctrine, receive him not into the house nor say to him, God speed you" (6).

(1) John XIV, 16-26

(2) Mtt. XXVIII, 18, 20; Mk. XVI, 15, 16

(3) John XXI, 16

(4) Mtt. XXVIII, 20

(5) I Cor. XV, 33

(6) II Tim. II 16, 17

9) Christ established a definite religious organization, the Church, which was to be the exponent and custodian of His teachings. He founded this Church upon the twelve Apostles under the headship of Peter. In order that His divine and immutable truths might suffer no change or alteration in the course of their transmission down through the ages, and so give rise to conflicting and contradictory churches, Christ endowed His Church with the prerogative of infallibility. He promised that "the gates of hell" and the storms of erroneous teachings would not prevail against this Church which was built upon a rock ⁽¹⁾. He bade Peter, the head of His Church, to feed (not to poison with erroneous doctrines) His lambs and His sheep ⁽²⁾. He promised that He Himself, the Source of all truth would be with His Church "all days, even to the consummation of the world" ⁽³⁾.

10) The principle of religious indifferentism is opposed to sound reason. To say that one religion is as good as another is to affirm that God regards with equal favor right and wrong, truth and falsehood, good and evil, virtue and vice, true worship and idolatry. Since Christ is God, He cannot possibly be pleased with those religions which regard His as mere man. If two plus two are four, then hundreds of propositions, affirming that two and two makes less or more than four, are all false. When we buy a dozen eggs, we should not expect to receive more or less than twelve. If one religion is true, then all the religions contradicting it are necessarily false.

(1) Mtt. XVI, 18

(2) John XXI, 15-17

(3) Mtt. XXVIII, 20

The statement that it does not matter much what one believes as long as he is a good fellow, is equally opposed to sound reason. Actions presuppose convictions, conduct is shaped by our intellectual beliefs. No definite course of action is possible as long as man is tossed to and fro on the sea of error and doubt. Man's mind was made for the truth, just as man's will was made for the good. But man's will tends only to those objects set before it by the mind.

11) The principle of religious broadmindedness is contradicted by Christian history. a) Cornelius, the centurion, was a naturally good Gentile, "a religious man, and fearing God with all his house, giving much alms to the people, and always praying to God" ⁽¹⁾. And yet God sent St. Peter to convert Cornelius to Christianity. b) When certain Judaizers contended that Christians must be circumcized and observe the Mosaic law in order to be saved, the Apostles quickly convened in council at Jerusalem, and solemnly declared that Christians are not bound by the precepts of Judaism ⁽²⁾. c) The Apostles suffered imprisonment, stripes, persecutions, and death rather than surrender one iota of the Christian teaching. d) The martyrs in the Roman amphitheatre suffered the scourges, vats of boiling oil, the teeth of wild animals, rather than compromise with error. e) The Church preferred to lose the whole of England rather than relinquish her teaching on the indissolubility of marriage. f) Christians in Russia, Germany, Spain and Mexico are today resisting tyrants unto death rather than surrender their Catholic faith. g) If Catholics in the United States are supporting at an enormous sacrifice and

(1) Acts, X, 2

(2) Acts XV

cost their parochial schools, it is because they do not believe that one religion is as good as another.

In conclusion, let us note that the Church is intolerant of false and contradictory *doctrines*—not of *persons* who adhere sincerely to their erroneous doctrines and are in good faith. While Catholics cannot approve either outwardly or inwardly erroneous doctrines, they always aim to practice that universal charity which Christ so beautifully exemplified in His own life.

Practical Applications

The truths which we established in this chapter have given rise to certain well-defined principles in moral theology and canon law:

Catholics may not take part in Protestant and non-Catholic worship, sacred functions, ceremonies, singing, and praying. Such a participation would be a profession (at least external) of a false religion and a denial of the true religion. "What part," says St. Paul, "hath the faithful with the unbeliever" ⁽¹⁾?

Catholics may attend non-Catholic weddings and funerals, if friendship or necessity or courtesy demands it. But assistance at these religious services must be passive, not active. An active assistance means internal and voluntary adherence to the non-Catholic rites. Passive assistance means mere external and bodily presence.

To visit Protestant churches out of mere curiosity is not a sin provided there is no scandal or danger of personal perversion. To enter a non-Catholic church is of itself an indifferent act; it may become evil because of the intention or by reason of the circumstances.

⁽¹⁾ I Cor. VI, 15

Protestants may not serve as sponsors at a Catholic baptism or confirmation or as best man or maid of honor at a Catholic wedding. In like manner, Catholics cannot serve as sponsors at a Protestant baptism or serve as best man, maid of honor, ushers, or bridesmaids at a Protestant wedding. Participation in a religious rite is a sign of union and agreement in religious worship. It gives the impression that there is no essential difference between Catholic and heretical worship.

If before or after a mixed marriage before a Catholic priest, the two parties go through a second ceremony before the Protestant minister, the Catholic party not only commits serious sin but incurs excommunication. An excommunicated person is barred from the sacraments, the prayers of the Church, and Catholic burial, and can be absolved only by a priest who has obtained special faculties from the bishop.

A Catholic may not be an organist in a Protestant church or a member of Protestant choirs. Such actions imply participation in the false worship of non-Catholics. For the same reason Catholic members of a public high school glee club may not sing at exercises which form a part of a non-Catholic service. So, too, Catholics may not take part in religious exercises at a Protestant church or in the "Y" chapel.

It is not permissible to take part in bazaars and chicken dinners when it is known that the funds will be used to promote non-Catholic missions or to build synagogues and non-Catholic churches. It would be allowable only when circumstances would make it clear that the Catholic does not wish to promote a

Protestant sect but only to show courtesy and kindness.

It is permissible to pray privately with non-Catholics if there is no danger of misunderstanding or scandal.

What about those Orthodox and schismatic churches where the ministers have the power of validly consecrating the Eucharist? What attitude should a Catholic assume towards these? It is not permitted for a Catholic to hear Mass in such a church, even if there is no Catholic church in the neighborhood. If a Catholic visited such a church privately, apart from the times of public worship, it would be permissible to genuflect before the Eucharist and venerate the images of saints. If a Catholic assists at a wedding or funeral in such a church, he should render internal worship to the Eucharistic Christ at consecration.

Discussion Aids

1. What is meant by religious broadmindedness? How is it fostered?
2. Show how religious broadmindedness is contradicted by:

The Incarnation

God's omniscience and holiness

Christ's teachings

Christ's institution of a Church

Unity and infallibility of the Church

Preaching of the Apostles

Sound reason

Facts of history

3. Is the Church intolerant of doctrines or of persons? Explain.
4. Point out at least six practical applications of the doctrinal principle established in this chapter.

Religious Practices

1. I shall recite with profound conviction the words of the act of faith: "I believe all the truths which the Holy Catholic Church teaches, because thou hast revealed them who canst neither deceive nor be deceived."
2. I shall never compromise the teachings of the Catholic Church because of human respect or because of earthly advantage.
3. I shall be intolerant of error but not of persons.

Chapter V

INDEX OF FORBIDDEN BOOKS

The Index is a list of books which the Holy See has branded as being harmful in some way to faith or morals. Without the proper permission of their spiritual superiors, Catholics are forbidden to retain or read such literature. The list is called an *Index* because its purpose is to *indicate* literature which is objectionable from the view point of Catholic faith and morals.

The Index and History

The examination of the doctrinal contents of books is the duty of the Holy Office, a Congregation of which the Pope himself is the head and which is entrusted with the sacred task of preserving the purity of faith and morals. The Holy Office was established in 1542. However, in 1572 an additional body known as the Congregation of the Index of Forbidden Books was established by Pope Gregory XIII. The former was to deal with the most serious attacks upon faith and morals, the latter was to do the rest of the work. In 1917 Pope Benedict XV merged the Congregation of the Index with that of the Holy Office.

The prohibition of objectionable books flows from the Church's Divine commission to teach the truth to all men. Christ told Peter that he was the rock on which He would build His Church ⁽¹⁾; He promised that the gates of hell would not prevail against the Church ⁽²⁾; He promised to send the

(1) Mtt. XVI, 18

(2) Mtt. XVI, 18

Holy Spirit upon the Apostles Who would enlighten them and enable them to grasp fully and teach correctly the doctrines of the Master ⁽¹⁾; He bade His Apostles to preach the Gospel to every creature and to bind their hearers to its acceptance under pain of eternal damnation ⁽²⁾; He bade Peter to feed His lambs and sheep ⁽³⁾; and promised to be with His Church "even to the consummation of the world" ⁽⁴⁾. Now all these statements of Our Lord imply not only that the Apostles and their successors enjoy the prerogative of immunity from error in propounding Christ's teaching, but also the correlative duty of proscribing any doctrine opposed to Christ's truth.

Being a solicitous Mother the Church refuses to feed poisonous food to her children. She snatches dangerous weapons from their hands. Being the infallible exponent and guardian of truth, she cannot resign herself to a half-hearted scepticism, to a religious and moral indifference. She cannot deny the existence of truth and the dignity of virtue. She cannot identify the good and evil, reality and a lie.

St. Paul frequently warns us against contacts and associations which corrupt good morals: "Be not seduced: evil communications corrupt good manners" ⁽⁵⁾. "Shun profane and vain babblings, for they grow much toward ungodliness, and their speech spreadeth like a canker" ⁽⁶⁾. If such are the results of unwholesome contacts, what greater evils will result from the quiet and deliberate cultivation of those other companions, namely unwholesome

(1) Mtt. X, 14

(2) Mk. XVI, 15, 16

(3) Mtt. VII, 15

(4) Gal. I, 8

(5) I Thess. II, 13

(6) II John, 10

books. The inhabitants of Ephesus spontaneously burnt the books which supplied the ideas that had been moulding their life: "And many of them who had followed curious arts, brought together their books, and burnt them before all: and counting the price of them, they found the money to be fifty thousand pieces of silver" ⁽¹⁾.

The prohibition of objectionable books goes back to very ancient times. Thus the Jews forbade their boys and girls who were under twenty-one to read the book of Genesis and the Canticle of Canticles and certain sections of Ezechiel, for fear that they might not grasp the real meaning of these books or that their imagination might be unduly affected. In the first years of her existence the Church was constantly engaged in determining what books were to be labelled as apocryphal and what books were to be considered as divinely inspired and as forming a part of the Bible. The so-called Muratorian Fragment, a writing which dates back to about 196 A.D., after listing books which were divinely inspired or at least approved, calls attention to certain books with heretical tendencies. In 496 Pope Gelasius published a list of books condemned by the Church.

When paper supplemented the parchment and the printing press the scribe, the need of designating certain books as objectionable became all the greater. The popes were gradually constrained to decree that henceforth no work could be published without the permission of the local bishop or his vicar general. With the rise of Protestantism Pope Leo X and Clement VII were obliged to issue special

⁽¹⁾ Acts. XIX, 19

condemnations of Luther's works. Lists of forbidden books began to appear in various provinces and dioceses. Finally, Paul IV issued in 1557 and again in 1559 a list of prohibited books. Here we have the first beginnings of the Index. The methods of proscribing objectionable books and literature was further perfected and developed by the Council of Trent and by the succeeding Popes, especially by the recent Popes, Leo XIII, Pius X, and Benedict XV, whose prescriptions were incorporated into the general legislation of the Church.

The Index and General Laws

Some are under the impression that only those books are forbidden which are found in the Index. This is a serious misconception. The contents of some writings is such that the work is forbidden as soon as it leaves the press—it is as much forbidden as if the author's name and the title of the book were forthwith formally inserted into the Index. The books which are forbidden by the general laws are enumerated in Canon 1399. We shall quote this canon as it is translated in S. Woywood's "New Canon Law" ⁽¹⁾: "By the very law are forbidden: 1. editions of the original text, or of ancient Catholic versions, of the Sacred Scriptures, also of the Oriental Church, published by non-Catholics; likewise any translations in any language made or published by them; 2. books of any writers defending heresy or schism, or tending in any way to undermine the foundations of religion; 3. books which purposely fight against religion and good morals; 4. books of any non-Catholic treating professedly of religion unless it is certain that nothing contained

⁽¹⁾ pp. 288-289

therein is against the Catholic faith; 5. books on the holy Scriptures or on religious subjects which have been published without previous ecclesiastical permission (Canon 1385, 1391); books and leaflets which bring an account of new apparitions, revelations, visions, prophecies, miracles, or introduce new devotions even though under the pretext that they are private; 6. books which attack or ridicule any of the Catholic dogmas, books which defend errors condemned by the Holy See, or which disparage Divine worship, or tend to undermine ecclesiastical discipline, or which purposely insult the ecclesiastical hierarchy, or the clerical or religious states; 7. books which teach or approve of any kind of superstition, fortune-telling, sorcery, magic, communications with spirits and such like affairs; 8. books which declare duels, suicide, divorce as licit; books which treat of Masonic and other sects of the same kind, and contend that they are not pernicious, but rather useful to the Church and civil society; 9. books which professedly treat of impure and obscene subjects, narrate or teach them; 10. editions of liturgical books approved by the Holy See, but which have been unlawfully changed in some things so that they no longer agree with the editions authorized by the Holy See; 11. books which publish apocryphal indulgences, or those condemned or recalled by the Holy See; 12. images of our Lord, of the Blessed Virgin, angels, saints, and other servants of God, which are not in accord with the mind and the decrees of the Church." The canon law regulations apply to books, to daily papers, periodicals, and any other publications, unless the contrary is clear from the canons ⁽¹⁾.

(1) Canon 1384

Works, then, which are injurious to our spiritual welfare are forbidden from the outset by the natural law, and Catholics are forbidden to read them even though they are not on the Index. Even when we obtain permission to read such a book, we must read it with great prudence and rely on God's grace to protect us against all contamination. "By the permission to read forbidden books no one is exempted from the prohibition of the natural law not to read books which are to the reader a proximate occasion of sin." (1)

Purpose of Index

But you may ask: If the general laws cover the field so well, what, then, is the purpose of the Index? The Index serves a double purpose: It emphasizes the application of the natural law in a particular instance, and thereby enlightens the mind and strengthens the will of the unsuspecting reader. Secondly, a book finds its place on the Index in some manner like this: a doubt arises in regard to the religious orthodoxy of a book; some claim that it is sound; others, that it contains erroneous teachings. An appeal is made to the Holy Office, which examines the book. If the book is found objectionable, it is placed on the Index. Books are placed on the Index only as necessity or occasion demands. The Church must not be considered as bent upon condemning as many books as possible. In fact, the Holy Office takes up the examination of a book only after a complaint or an appeal has been made. The Index is not necessarily complete or systematic. Secondly, only those books are subject to censure which deal with faith, morals, Scripture, or Church History. The Church is not concerned with works

(1) Canon 1405

that deal with purely secular or scientific matters, unless the author deliberately goes out of his way to attack religion or the doctrines of the Church. If she condemns a book which otherwise contains much solid and useful material, it is because in her mind the harm caused by the errors in the book will outweigh the good of the rest of the book.

In order to assure the doctrinal accuracy of books, Canon Law orders bishops to appoint official censors of books who will thoroughly examine each manuscript before it is consigned to the printers. Censors must be men of mature age, of tried learning and prudence. If the manuscript is found doctrinally sound, the censor renders a verdict of "nihil obstat" (there is no objection). The bishop then grants the "Imprimatur" (let it be published)—the permission that the manuscript be published. The "Imprimatur" is printed either at the beginning or the end of the book, magazine, or on pictures, together with the bishop's name, and the date and place of the permission.

The law of the Church in regard to the reading of the Bible may seem particularly severe. The faithful may read versions in the vernacular only if the translation is made or edited by Catholics, is approved by the Holy See, or published under the supervision of the Bishop, and supplied with notes taken from the Fathers or from learned and orthodox exegetes.

These precautions of the Church are fully justified. Certain parts of both the Old and New Testament are difficult and obscure. Certain parts are not adapted to all persons. Then we must remember the characteristic tendency of Protestantism to substitute the Bible for the Church, the letter inter-

preted by one's own judgment for the living magisterium of the Church. On the other hand the Church has always recommended the reading and study of Sacred Scripture. In 1906 Pius X gave approbation to the society of St. Jerome which was to popularize the Gospels in Italy among the people.

Discussion Aids

1. What is meant by the Index of Forbidden Books?
2. What Sacred Congregation examines the doctrinal contents of books?
3. On what Scriptural and doctrinal grounds is based the prohibition of objectionable books?
4. Give a brief history of the Index.
5. What books are forbidden by the general laws of the Church?
6. What two additional purposes does the Index serve?
7. Is every forbidden book mentioned by the Index?
8. What is meant by a "censor of books"? The "nihil obstat"? The "Imprimatur"?
9. Why does the Church take special precautions in regard to the reading of the Bible?

Religious Practices

1. I shall not use my God-given gift of mind to read literature dangerous to my faith and morals.
2. I shall gladly subject my fallible and imperfect judgment to the infallible teachings of the Church.
3. In all doubts about faith I shall seek the advice of a priest or consult works written by qualified Catholic writers.

Chapter VI

SECRET AND FORBIDDEN SOCIETIES

Freemasonry and all other sects which adopt Masonic doctrines and principles are forbidden to Catholics under pain of excommunication. The attitude of the Church is expressed in the following canons of the Code of Canon Law ⁽¹⁾: (a) Those who enlist in Masonic sects or other associations of the same kind, which plot against the Church or lawful civil authority, by that very fact incur the excommunication simply reserved to the Apostolic See (Canon 2335). (b) Unless they have given signs of repentance before death, the following are deprived of ecclesiastical burial: notorious apostates from the Christian faith, and persons who notoriously belonged to a heretical or schismatical sect, or to the Masons, or to other sects of the same kind, and contend that they are not pernicious but rather useful to the Church and civil society. (Canon 1399). (d) The faithful should be discouraged from contracting marriage with those who belong to societies condemned by the Church (Canon 1065).

The Code makes it clear that excommunication is incurred not only by Freemasons but also by members of the affiliated organizations. "There are several organized bodies," says Leo XIII ⁽²⁾, "which though differing in name, in ceremonial, in form and origin, are nevertheless so bound together by community of purpose and by the similarity of their

(1) Woywod's translation.

(2) Leo XIII, Encyclical Letter on Freemasonry, "Humanum Genus," April 20, 1884, in Benziger's "The Great Encyclical Letters of Pope Leo XIII (N. Y., 1903), p.87.

main opinions, as to make in fact one thing with the sect of the Freemasons, which is a kind of centre whence they all go forth, and whither they will return." The following are some of the organizations which belong to the Masonic federation: Knights Templars; Modern Society of Rosicrucians; The Sovereign College of Allied Masonic and Christian Degrees for America; The Ancient Arabic Order of Nobles of the Mystic Shrine; The Mystic Order of the Veiled Prophets of the Enchanted Realm; The Independent International Order of Owls; Ancient Arabic Order of Nobles of the Mystic Shrine of North and South America; Ancient Egyptians Order of Sciots; Acacia Fraternity, etc.

The penalties and prohibitions of the Church apply to both male and female, senior and junior groups. The Order of the Eastern Star and the order of the White Shrine of Jerusalem are intended primarily for wives of Masons. Job's Daughters comprise the Daughters, granddaughters, sisters and nieces of Master Masons, while the Order of Rainbow consists of the daughters of Freemasons and of members of the Eastern Star. The Order of de Molay was founded for sons of Masons and their chums between the ages of 16 and 21.

The four marks of forbidden and secret societies are verified in a special manner in Freemasonry and consequently draw down upon the sect the Church's severe censure. We shall now enumerate these notes, show how they are exemplified in Freemasonry, and indicate how they are opposed to both reason and revelation. 1) *Absolute Secrecy*. Freemasonry demands of its members an oath of secrecy which is so absolute that it must be maintained even in the face of legitimate religious and

civil authorities. "Candidates," says Leo XIII ⁽¹⁾ "are generally commanded to promise—nay, with a special oath to swear—that they will never, to any person, at any time or in any way, make known the members, the passes, or the subjects discussed." Freemasonry would lose its force and effectiveness if it operated in broad daylight. Men would perceive its tactics, detect its objectionable features and impede its action. Secrecy, on the other hand, frustrates surveillance, prevents suspicion and forestalls attacks. Notwithstanding its equalitarian claims, Freemasonry has created a system of degrees, the primary purpose of which is to conceal the secrets of the organization. The light, which emanates from the anonymous international chief, descends in ever reduced fragments to the various subordinate groups, each one of which accepts unquestionably the infallible truths coming from on high and stands in readiness to carry out the bidding of the occult dictator.

The Masonic oath of absolute secrecy is opposed to right reason and distorts the order between the soul and its Creator. Man's mind is as it were a spark of the divine intellectuality enshrined in the human temple. Like the divinely created soul of which it is a faculty, man's intellect can be subject in an absolute manner to God alone. To enslave man's mind to human agents is to do violence to the soul and to inflict an injury upon the Creator.

2) *Blind obedience.* The Masonic oath of blind obedience exacted of prospective members is described in the following words by Leo XIII: "To be enrolled, it is necessary that the candidates promise and undertake to be thenceforward strictly obedient

(1) o. c. p. 87

to their leaders and masters with the utmost submission and fidelity, and to be in readiness to do their bidding upon the slightest expression of their will; or, if, disobedient, to submit to the direst penalties and death itself. As a matter of fact, if any are judged to have betrayed the doing of the sect or to have resisted commands given, punishment is inflicted on them not infrequently, and with so much audacity and dexterity that the assassin very often escapes the detection and penalty of his crime" (1).

The same Pontiff immediately shows how such a practice is opposed to justice and natural uprightness: "To simulate and wish to lie hid; to bind men like slaves in the very tightest bonds, and without giving any sufficient reason; to make use of men enslaved to the will of another for any arbitrary act; to arm men's right hands for bloodshed after securing impunity for the crime—all this is an enormity from which nature recoils" (2).

3) *Religious organization.* Masonry has its own chaplains, altars, highpriests, rituals, order of worship, and funeral ceremonies. To join the order and participate in its religious ceremonies is equivalent to joining a non-Catholic sect and taking part in its religious ceremonies.

4) *Conspiring against Church and State.* Freemasonry rejects all supernatural revelation as contained in the Bible and Tradition. And since the Catholic Church is the custodian and exponent of this revelation, Freemasonry concentrates its severest attacks upon her. Pope Leo XIII explains in his Encyclical how the Freemasons were bent upon de-

(1) o.c.p. 88

(2) *ibid.* p. 88

priving the Pope of his temporal sovereignty and upon destroying the Pontificate itself. In order to destroy the Church's influence upon society, Freemasons advocate a total separation of Church and state and the abolition of all Catholic schools. It has been shown from official Masonic documents that the anti-clerical measures put into effect in France had been decreed beforehand in the Masonic lodges. In a work recently published in Paris ⁽¹⁾ Freemasonry is held directly responsible for the massacres of Catholics and the destruction of churches in Spain.

Freemasonry started out by propounding a religion of naturalism. Man was to accept only those religious truths which his reason could prove and demonstrate. This religion of humanity was to embrace the following three truths: existence of God, free will, and immortality of the soul. Under the pressure of free-thought and communistic atheism, however, these doctrines are becoming more and more vague. God is described as the Great Architect, as a cosmic law, etc. A quest of earthly satisfactions is replacing the struggle for a blessed immortality. A "civil," "free," and "independent" morality, divorced from religion, is replacing traditional ethics. Since religious truths are represented by means of signs and symbols, and since symbols are susceptible of a variety of interpretations according to the tastes and opinions of the individual, Freemasonry allows the greatest latitude in religious opinions, ranging all the way from a natural religion to pure atheism.

In the beginning Freemasonry declared its desire to serve disinterestedly the state—without in

⁽¹⁾ P. d' Altora Colonna di Stigliano. "Responsibilities macconiques" (Paris, 1938)

any way interfering in politics. But events soon showed that its intentions were different. To escape the distrust of powers, Freemasonry always sought the favor and protection of the state. It recruited its leaders from among men influential in politics and from among the wielders of authority. The Grand Master was often the ruler of a country. In this way Freemasonry strove to make politics serve its own purpose. Slowly and imperceptibly it engrafted itself as a new power on the legislative, executive, and judiciary branches of government.

Freemasonry aims at a universal fraternity, in which each nation of the world would only be a family, and over which Freemasonry would rule as supreme head. All countries must gradually fuse with this universal humanity. And thus **Freemasonry and Communism may gradually become one.** Both have a materialistic ideology, both have a revolutionary spirit, both aim at the International of all peoples.

The Masonic methods of propaganda likewise resemble those of Communism. Freemasons believe that the social transformation at which they are aiming will be brought about by a small and determined minority. Small cells of select members are to be established at strategic points who will insinuate themselves—without fully revealing themselves—into cultural centers and into social and political organisms. These cells are to exercise a special vigilance over the press of the country and watch over the recruiting of candidates for public office. Nor are they to neglect worker's organizations, but are to stand ready with a plan of social reorganization which would replace present defunct capitalism. The Masonic method of self-examination and self-

criticism is identical with that of Communism ⁽¹⁾. At the end of each day every Mason is to examine his conscience as to what he accomplished for his Order during the day and how he did it.

What method is to be followed in the absolution of one who wishes sincerely to withdraw from Freemasonry? The reconciliation usually comprises the following steps: **The priest obtains from the bishop the necessary faculties for absolving from the excommunication; the penitent must renounce the sect; he must repair the scandal in the same way he caused it; he must hand over the Masonic emblems and manuscripts to be transmitted to the bishop or to be burnt; he is assigned a salutary penance, and enjoined to receive the sacraments frequently.**

B. On May 10, 1884 the Congregation of the Holy Office declared that apart from the Masonic sects which are forbidden under excommunication "there are other prohibited societies, to be avoided under grave sin." Now what organizations are to be considered as coming under the second prohibition? The Independent Order of Good Templars was condemned on August 3, 1893. On August 20, 1894, the Congregation of the Holy Office added by name the Odd Fellows, the Sons of Temperance, and the Knights of Pythias. Let us say a word of explanation about each one of the organizations.

The Independent Order of Good Templars is a secret Total Abstinence Society founded in New York in 1851. The Templars seem to have much in common with Freemasons. The Order makes use

(1) cf. Lewis Miller. "Young Communists in Action" (Washington, 1935), p. 33.

of a ritual and of religious ceremonies, but its creed is deistic and un-Christian.

The Independent Order of Odd Fellows was founded in England in 1812 and introduced into America in 1819. It is an international beneficiary society. It is a secret organization, and has its own prayers, altars, priests, and religious ceremonies. The Daughters of Rebekah are the female branch of the Order, while the Loyal Sons constitute the junior section of the Order.

The Sons of Temperance were founded in New York in 1842. The organization is fraternal, beneficiary and religious in character. Its original purpose was to render permanent the temperance movement of the time. The Daughters of Temperance constitute the female auxiliary and the Cadets of Temperance the junior branch.

The Knights of Pythias of the World, founded in Washington, D. C., in 1864 by Freemasons, constitute a benevolent charitable organization. Their religious ritual is based on the ancient story of Damon and Pythias. Its creed is un-Christian.

These four societies are forbidden because of their oath of absolute secrecy and because each one of them constitutes in reality a distinct religious sect. Suppose, now, that a Protestant, who is a member of one of these societies, becomes a convert to the Catholic Church. Suppose, in addition, that complete severance of all connections with the society would entail a grave temporal injury, as, for example, the loss of an insurance policy of long standing. What procedure is to be followed? In a decree addressed to the Apostolic delegate, Cardinal Satolli, January 18, 1896, nominal membership in these societies is allowed provided the following

conditions are fulfilled: the person must not attend the meetings or frequent the lodge rooms; the dues are to be sent in by mail or by a third party; there must be no scandal or danger of loss of faith; the person must not arrange to have the society conduct the funeral ceremonies.

What about persons belonging to various societies not nominally condemned by the Church? The first question to determine is whether the society in question has any of the four marks of forbidden societies. Thus the Loyal Order of Moose of the World is not nominally condemned but since it has its own altar, chaplains, and burial service, a Catholic should not join its ranks. The Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks, though free from the marks of a forbidden society, is not recommended to Catholics.

Discussion Aids

1. Under what penalty is Freemasonry forbidden to Catholics? Give four reasons for your answer.
2. What groups belong to the Masonic Federation?
3. In what way does Freemasonry resemble Communism?
4. How is a Mason absolved?
5. What societies are forbidden to Catholics under pain of serious sin? Why?
6. When is nominal membership in this organization permitted?
7. How would you determine whether any particular society is forbidden?

Religious Practices

1. I shall try to realize my great privilege as a member of the noblest society on earth—the Catholic Church.
2. I shall not sacrifice any portion of my Catholic heritage for some social or material advantage which I might obtain by belonging to a non-Catholic organization.
3. I shall never lend my support to any organization which directly or indirectly impugns the divinity of the Catholic Church.

Chapter VII

THE TWO "Y's" - ORGANIZATION AND AIMS

The Y. M. C. A.

The Young Men's Christian Association was founded by George Williams in London in 1844. It grew out of an organization whose original purpose was Bible study and prayer, but which gradually expanded so as to include intellectual, physical and social activities. The emblem of the Y. M. C. A. is a red triangle; the color signifies sacrifice, the three sides signify body, mind, and spirit which must be consecrated to God. That the Y. M. C. A. is a Protestant organization is evident from several facts which we shall briefly explain.

a) In 1869 the Portland convention determined that only those could be voting and office-holding members (*active* members) in the Y. M. C. A. who were members of Evangelical churches, that is, of churches which believe in Christ and accept Scripture as the sole rule of faith. During recent years it has often been asserted that this test of active membership has been abolished and that a Catholic may now vote and hold office in the organization. Let us read the Article on Membership as formulated, for example, in the constitution of the St. Paul Young Men's Christian Association:

"Voting membership in this Association shall be open to any male at least sixteen years of age who complies with the requirements of this Association—and who conforms to one or more of the following requirements:

1. Is a member of an evangelical church.

2. Who subscribes in writing to the following: "I hereby declare my faith in God, and my acceptance of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. I desire to serve Him and to be His disciple in accordance with the teachings of the New Testament, and to unite with others in the extension of the Kingdom of God.

"I am in full accord with the following purpose of the Young Men's Christian Association of the United States and of Canada and commit myself to its voluntary service and support:

"Purpose of the Young Men's Christian Association:

"To lead young men to faith in God through Jesus Christ; to promote their growth into fullness of Christian character; to lead them into active membership in the church of their choice; and to make the extension of the Kingdom of God throughout the world the governing purpose of their lives."

The Constitution, it is true, does not say that one must fulfill both conditions 1. and 2. in order to be an active member. But who does not see that if a Catholic subscribes to requirements 2., he has already embraced the principle of religious indifferentism and has surrendered the truth that the Church is the only qualified guide and teacher of faith and morals?

b) The essentially Protestant character of the Y. M. C. A. is also evident from the following fact: When in 1916 the Pan-Protestant Congress in Panama decided to Protestantize South America, the Y. M. C. A. made the fourth largest contribution for this purpose and followed up the project with a good deal of interest.

c) The Protestant character of the Y. M. C. A. is further apparent from the number of Protestant divines and clergymen on its boards and from the thousands of ordained Protestant clergymen serving as its secretaries. During the World War the Y. M. C. A. sent over two thousand Evangelical ministers to Europe to minister to the needs of the soldiers, and distributed over five million copies of the New Testament to the allied armies. After the war the leaders of the two "Y's" launched out on a campaign of proselytizing in the Catholic countries of Europe. Their activities became such a menace to the Catholic Church that in November 1920, the Congregation of the Holy Office found it necessary to warn the bishops against these organizations whose primary purpose was to create religious indifferentism and ultimate defection from the faith.

THE HI-Y

In a mimeographed dodger put out by the St. Paul Y. M. C. A. and entitled, "HI-Y, What Is the Ideal Behind It," we read: "A Hi-Y group is an association of high school fellows who believe in living according to the teachings of Jesus. It is united with more than 500 similar groups in a National HI-Y Fellowship, which is affiliated with the world wide association of the Y. M. C. A. Their purpose (is) to create, maintain and extend, throughout the school and community, high standards of Christian character. What HI-Y groups attempt to do: Represent the Christian viewpoint; seek, for ourselves and others, better living by development of Christian personality . . . prepare for an abundant life by facing its more vital, im-

mediate realities, and making Christian decisions about them."

An important source of information in this regard is the booklet entitled "The HI-Y Tool Chest, a Manual of Method for Leaders of HI-Y Clubs," and published in 1936 by the Associated Press of New York. "The HI-Y Clubs," we are told, "is one of the best manifestations of the basic principles of the Young Men's Christian Association" ⁽¹⁾. The National HI-Y Fellowship was conceived in order to bring the scattered parts of a growing older-boy movement into closer working relations with all parts of the Y. M. C. A. ⁽²⁾. In Art. II of a sample HI-Y Constitution the purpose is enunciated in the following words: "The purpose of this organization is to create, maintain and extend throughout the school and community high standards of Christian character." And a note adds: "This usually is required for affiliation. Some organizations add the following: "by bringing boys into personal relationship with Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, by seeking their growth in faith and conduct, by leading them into loyal membership and service in the Church of Christ, and by enlisting and training them for lives of Christian Service at home and abroad" ⁽³⁾.

No group is deserving of the title HI-Y club unless it strives to attain the purpose of the HI-Y club: "It is clear that the purpose of the HI-Y Club, which is an amazingly progressive religious statement, with action requirement bristling out of each of its verbs,—'create,' 'maintain,' and 'extend'—

(1) p. 5

(2) p. 16

(3) p. 77

must be constantly reviewed and used as a drastic check against easy-going types of program making. The purpose can be accomplished but it requires social action—not parties and dances—but action in terms of bettering the attitudes and conduct of high school boys and girls in the social problem listed above" (1). The HI-Y pin is also given a strictly religious meaning: "The pin stands for sacrificial service, for Christ, and the other fellows" (2).

Worthy of all attention in this connection is the booklet entitled, "The HI-Y Movement, Objectives and Methods" published in New York in 1931 by the National Council of Young Men's Christian Association. In answer to the question—What does a HI-Y Club do at its regular meeting—we read (3): "Often it has been found that a division of the time of the weekly meetings on some such plan as follows brings best results: Social fellowship, including supper or luncheon—40 minutes. When no meal is served, the meeting usually starts at once with the following included in the program: Opening period of devotion, worship or song—10 minutes. Life problem discussion, or Bible History, including an occasional outside speaker—40 minutes," etc. A minimum requirement is a "regular meeting in which the boy members discuss their everyday life problems, seeking a solution based upon the application of Christian principles" (4).

THE Y. W. C. A.

The Young Women's Christian Association—

(1) p. 8

(2) p. 75

(3) p. 12

(4) p. 19

though similar to the Y. M. C. A. in character and scope in its work for young women—is not officially connected with the Y. M. C. A. nor historically sprung from it. It arose in 1906 out of a union of several independent units. This body also adopted the resolution that the active membership, that is, the voting and office-holding membership, must be restricted to members of the Protestant Evangelical churches. Here, too, it has been repeatedly asserted in recent years that this membership test has been removed and that Catholics may now hold office in the Y. W. C. A. Is this claim correct? In the constitution of the Young Women's Christian Association of the United States of America we read:

"Section 2. Any Young Women's Christian Association other than student may be a member of the National organization upon application to the National Board and upon filing with it a copy of its constitution, showing:

"A. That its voting and office-holding membership is limited to women who are members of Protestant Evangelical churches,

OR

B. That its constitution embodies the following:
We, the Young Women's Christian Association of, a member of the Young Women's Christian Association of the United States of America, declare our purpose to be:

"To build a fellowship of women and girls devoted to the task of realizing in our common life those ideals of personal and social living to which we are committed by our faith as Christians.

"In this endeavor we seek to understand Jesus,

to share his love for all people, and to grow in the knowledged and love of God" (1).

As we already pointed out, a Catholic who believes that his Church is the divinely established teacher and exponent of truth, cannot at the same time agree to carry out a religious program proposed to him by a mere human agency, a Protestant organization. To do so would be to subscribe to the principle that one religion is as good as another.

In a book entitled "A Study of the World's Y. W. C. A.," published by the Young Women's Christian Association in Geneva in 1932, we read: "The society grew out of the efforts of women in different countries to find the living Christ for themselves, to say to others: 'Come and see'" (2). And again: "The central reality of the Young Women's Christian Association has always been not only Christianity, but Christ Himself; and therefore the Scriptures, as the means to the knowledge of Him" (3). The "basis" of the world's Y. M. C. A. is described in Art. II of the Constitution as follows: "Faith in God the Father as Creator and in Jesus Christ His only Son as Lord and Savior, and in the Holy Ghost as Revealer of Truth and Source of power for life and service, according to the teaching of Holy Scripture" The aims of the organization is stated in Art. III: "The world's Y. W. C. A. seeks to organize, develop and unite national associations which, accepting its basis or one in conformity with it, endeavor to extend the Kingdom of God

(1) From "Guide to Membership Practice and Policies in the Y. W. C. A." distributed by the National Services Division, National Board, Y. W. C. A. 600 Lexington Ave. New York City.

(2) *Int.* p. 8.

(3) *ibid.* p. 9

according to its principles, and to bring young women to such knowledge of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior as shall manifest itself in character and conduct" (1).

"Our purpose," says a pamphlet entitled "Y. W. C. A. in Minneapolis," "is to associate young women in personal loyalty to Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord; to promote growth in Christian character and service through physical, social, mental and spiritual training, and to become a social force for the extension of the kingdom of God" (2). Any woman or girl who believes in the purpose of the Y. W. C. A. may become a member (3).

The application blank for membership in the Y. W. C. A. of St. Paul carried the purpose of the organization in the following words: "To build a fellowship of women and girls devoted to the task of realizing in our common life those ideals of personal and social living to which we are committed by our faith as Christians. In this endeavor we seek to understand Jesus, to share his love for all people, and to grow in the knowledge and love of God." The person signing the blank pledges that "together with other members of the St. Paul Association I desire to belong to this fellowship and to share in the responsibility for the realization of the purpose." The Association accepts all Christians and merely asks that they "meet on the great essentials of Christian faith." It "includes in the field of its activities young women without distinction of creed" and pledges itself "to assign a primary position to Bible study and prayer."

(1) p. 65

(2) p. 3

(3) p. 7

It does not consider religious training as one of its many activities but as an activity which underlies and is intimately connected with every project which the society promotes. "Religion in the Young Women's Christian Association," says the Minneapolis pamphlet mentioned above, "is not a department of work; but is rather a product resulting from all types of work carried on" ⁽¹⁾. In a pamphlet entitled "Aims and Practice of the World's Y. W. C. A." and published in Geneva, Switzerland, we read: "However much our educational work, our recreation, housing, etc., may and must be developed because they are good in themselves and are part of the fuller life we would share with all other women, there should be an intelligent relation between each specific Association undertaking and the goal of the fullest life, which must include also the experience we may each possess of Jesus Christ."

GIRL RESERVES

"Girl Reserves," says a pamphlet entitled "The Y. W. C. A. in Minneapolis," "is the name of the Y. W. C. A. movement among girls." In a very complete work published by the National Board of the Young Women's Christian Association and entitled "The Girl Reserve Movement" ⁽²⁾ we read: "The Girl Reserves are to the Young Women's Christian Association, of which they are a part, the fresh stream which feeds into the main current of the movement at its source or along its course—the very youth of its youth. They have its future in their keeping" ⁽³⁾.

(1) p. 14

(2) New York, 1921

(3) Pref. p. 3

This book considers religion as inseparable from the various activities carried on by the Girl Reserves: "Its program of religious education is not a part of its whole plan of activities, 'for religion touches all of life,' and therefore religious education becomes an underlying principle which cannot be separated from the whole fabric of a girl's living" (1).

Speaking specifically of the purpose of High School Girl Reserve Clubs the book says: "(Their) purpose should necessarily be in accord with the spirit of the purpose of the Young Women's Christian Association which is promoting the club. Any purpose should be a growing one: the wording of it, as it is reconsidered and probably rewritten every year should show a steady growth toward the principles underlying all Association work, a Christian fellowship both individual and social which finds its highest expression in a personal loyalty to Jesus Christ and His principles for every day living" (2).

(1) *ibid.* p. 295

(2) *ibid.* p. 86.

Discussion Aids

1. Describe the origin of the Y. M. C. A. What is its emblem?
2. What facts show that the Y. M. C. A. and Y. W. C. A. are Protestant Organizations?
3. What is the relation of the Y. M. C. A. to the HI-Y? Of the Y. W. C. A. to the Girl Reserves?
4. Show that the HI-Y and Girl Reserves are religious organizations.
5. May a Catholic vote and hold office in the Y. M. C. A. and Y. W. C. A.?

Religious Practices

1. I shall always consider the Church and the Church alone as the divinely authorized teacher of all Christian Doctrine.
2. In order to become a better Christian, I shall try to become better acquainted with the Church's teachings.
3. In order to become a stronger and more virtuous Christian, I shall receive the sacraments more frequently.

Chapter VIII

THE TWO Y'S - AN APPRECIATION

We have quoted numerous passages from the Y publications in order to make it clear that our criticisms are founded on fact. We have noticed, first of all, that active membership in the two Y's requires either membership in the Evangelical church or an agreement to carry out the so-called "purpose." The purpose implies an acceptance of the "Christian faith," a promise to extend the "Kingdom of God," and a resolution to form one's character according to the teachings of Christ.

But who will determine the contents of the Christian faith? Who will determine the meaning of the "Kingdom of God" which for the Catholic is indissolubly connected with the Church? Who will determine the meaning of Christ's teaching? Everything about the two Y's is suggestive of Protestantism, and surely it is not Catholic teaching that the Y's will propose to the Catholic young man and woman. Furthermore, does the Catholic need to join the Y in order to become a more active member of his own Church? Is not the Catholic Church "the pillar and ground of truth"—a Church which not only points out the way but through the Sacraments supplies the necessary graces for the performance of that which it commands? Of what assistance can a mere human organization be to a Catholic?

Furthermore, a Catholic who becomes a full-fledged member of the Y has already in principle accepted the doctrine that one religion is as good as another. And since modern non-Catholic religions

have abandoned the essentials of divine revelation, a Catholic who moves in this evangelical atmosphere of religious indifferentism will soon lapse into naturalism and religious indifference.

It is our firm opinion that no Catholic may serve as an officer in the Y. If the officers promote all the activities of the Association, therefore, also its religious work, the Catholic would be promoting the spread of heresy and would himself become suspected of heresy ⁽¹⁾. May a Catholic be in charge at least of the social and athletic activities? We do not think so. Social and athletic activities easily lead Catholics to participate in the Y's religious work. Secondly, the presence of a prominent Catholic on the local board of directors, the presence of popular and outstanding Catholic young men on the board of the HI-Y, will influence their coreligionists—especially unwary Catholics—who will be blinded to the real situation and moved to join an organization which is not without danger to their faith.

It is also our opinion that no Catholic may pay regular dues to the Y, for by his contributions he is supporting all the activities which the Y conducts. But what sincere Catholic would in conscience lend his support to the Y's anti-Catholic propaganda in Latin America and in the Catholic countries of Europe?

Many Catholics claim that by their membership they are seeking merely the athletic and recreational facilities offered by the Y. Catholics should remember, however, that for no temporal or bodily advantage whatsoever should they compromise their high dignity as members of the mystical Body of Christ. As we pointed out before, a Catholic as a non-

(1) Canon 2316

evangelical may not be a voting or office holding member of the Y. As a Catholic he may not become such a member by subscribing to the "purpose." Hence he could at best become an inferior member of the Y. But what Catholic, who belongs to an organization almost two thousand years old, and whose ancestors gladly died for the faith, would trample under foot his dignity, and for the sake of bodily benefits become a secondary member of a Protestant organization?

Finally, within recent months the Y has frequently been accused of harboring Communistic cells and of promoting forums and lectures favorable to Russian Communists and Spanish Loyalists, and so has merited the just criticism of all lovers of American liberties.

What should be the Catholic's attitude toward the HI-Y? One may be genuinely sympathetic with its desire to withdraw the boy from evil influences and place him in a clean, healthy, moral environment. But the Christianization of the boy which the HI-Y proposes as its main objective raises certain serious difficulties which make it impossible for a Catholic to indorse the HI-Y movement.

1) In the first place, the HI-Y boys "believe in living according to the teaching of Jesus." But whence is this teaching derived? From the Catholic Church? Not very likely. From one of the Protestants sects? If so, from which one of the 700 mutually contradicting groups? If only those elements of religious doctrine are chosen on which all sects agree, a nondogmatic and colorless Christianity is the inevitable result.

2) If it be urged that Christian principles of conduct may be gathered from a mere reading of

the Bible, we are again face to face with Protestant Bible Christianity which strives to replace the Catholic Church with a book. Besides, which Bible will the boys read?

3) The HI-Y insists on the formation of Christian character. But character presupposes virtuous habits. And virtuous habits are formed by a repetition of acts. Actions presuppose intellectual convictions—moral conduct presupposes religious beliefs. But here again the question arises: Who is to supply these religious doctrines for the HI-Y boys? In addition, it makes a world of difference for conduct if one accepts such doctrines as the Divinity of Christ, existence of hell, resurrection of the body, etc.

4) The HI-Y insists on evaluating life problems in the light of Christian principles. But what will be the HI-Y's attitude on such problems as the following: marriage, divorce, birth control, right to private property, mercy-killings, atheistic Communism, Fascism, etc.? Have not certain groups of the Y. M. C. A. in recent times taken a stand on some of these problems which has left misgivings in the minds of many?

5) The HI-Y has definitely affiliated itself with Protestant churches. At a regional HI-Y Conference, held in St. Paul, November 25 and 26, 1938, under the auspices of the North Central area of the Y. M. C. A., the meetings were held at the Olivet Congregational Church and Methodist ministers were the principal speakers. The HI-Y clubs of the Central High School of St. Paul hold their regular meetings at Protestant churches where they are addressed by Protestant clergymen.

Much the same criticisms apply to the Y. W. C. A. and its Junior branch, the Girl Reserves. From the principles enunciated by the leaders of the Y. W. C. A. the following conclusions seem logically to follow:

(1) The Y. W. C. A. is clearly a religious organization or a religious sect. It has its own religious doctrines and practices, its own worship chapel service and ceremonials. "The opening club ceremonial and the installation and recognition services offer great opportunity for the expression of the element of worship." ⁽¹⁾

(2) The organization retains only certain essentials of Christian faith on which "all members can meet." What these basic doctrines are, is clear from what we have said above. That they do not include but rather exclude the great Catholic dogmas on the Church, the primacy of St. Peter, the Sacraments, purgatory, etc. needs no proof. In order to find a common denominator acceptable to all sects, the Y. W. C. A. is forced to adopt a non-dogmatic and colorless Christianity.

(3) The Y. W. C. A. advocates a thinly veiled Bible Christianity. As we well know, Protestantism makes the Bible, as interpreted by one's own judgment, the sole and supreme rule of faith and morality. Bible Christianity is a formal denial of the Catholic Church, of her divine authority and mission to teach all men. It strives to abrogate the Catholic Church which Christ instituted, and in its place it seeks to substitute a book.

(4) The religion advocated by the Y. W. C. A. is a spiritual experience in which man directly ex-

⁽¹⁾ "The Girl Reserves" (New York, 1921) p. 297.

periences God without the help or need of a Church, priesthood, or sacraments. It is a religious experience of the William James type and is apparently destined to pass through the same vicissitudes until it reaches the equilibrium of a gross naturalism and complete agnosticism.

A Catholic girl who becomes a member of the Y. W. C. A. or the Girl Reserves with a full understanding of their ultimate aims and purposes, commits the same kind of sin as if she joined a Protestant sect. She aids in the spread of heresy and herself becomes suspect of heresy (can. 2316). By her membership and dues she abets an organization which aims at discarding what is basic in Catholicism. May she at least take part in the athletic, social, and recreational activities of the Girl Reserves? We do not think so, for even these are fostered with the ultimate aim of developing a religious consciousness which disregards the fundamental doctrines of Catholicism.

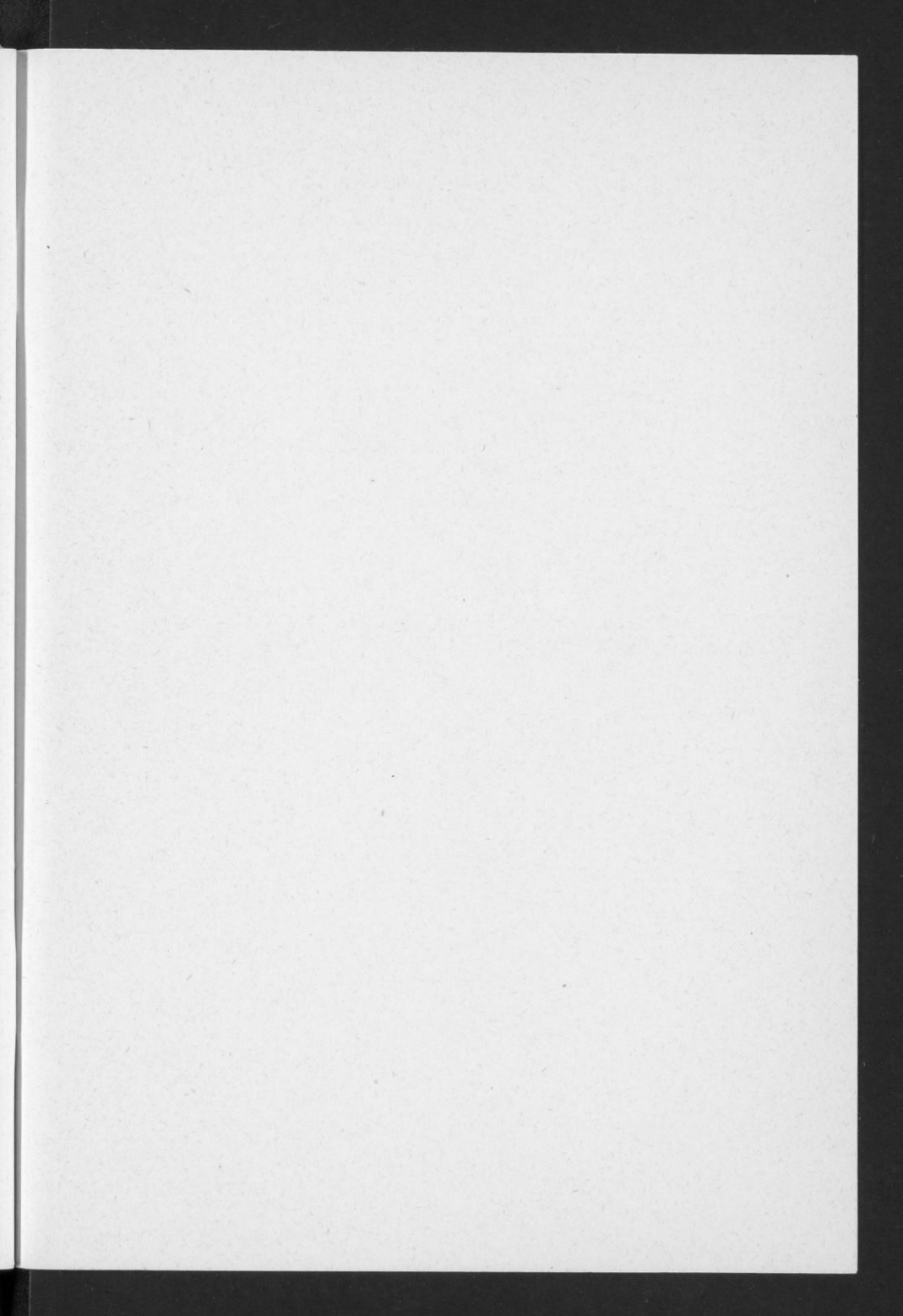
Discussion Aids

1. Show how the two "Ys" foster religious indifference.
2. Does a Catholic need to join the Y in order to become a better member of his own Church? Explain.
3. May a Catholic hold office in the Y? Pay dues?
4. Should a Catholic seek the recreational facilities of the Y's?
5. Show how both the HI-Y and the Girl Reserves foster the so-called Bible Christianity.

6. Can the HI-Y and Girl Reserves really form Christian character and evaluate contemporary events in the light of Biblical teaching? Explain.

Religious Practices

1. I shall frequently devote some time to a devout reading of the Scriptures. When I am in doubt as to the meaning of a passage, I shall turn to the Church for an explanation.
2. I shall try to evaluate current events in the light of Christ's teachings as infallibly proposed to me by the Church.
3. I shall be grateful to God for belonging to a Church which has preserved for me the whole and entire Gospel of Christ.



1. The first part of the report deals with the general situation of the country and the position of the various groups of the population. It is a very interesting and well-written part of the report.

2. The second part of the report deals with the economic situation of the country. It is a very interesting and well-written part of the report.

3. The third part of the report deals with the social situation of the country. It is a very interesting and well-written part of the report.

4. The fourth part of the report deals with the political situation of the country. It is a very interesting and well-written part of the report.

5. The fifth part of the report deals with the cultural situation of the country. It is a very interesting and well-written part of the report.

6. The sixth part of the report deals with the international situation of the country. It is a very interesting and well-written part of the report.

7. The seventh part of the report deals with the future of the country. It is a very interesting and well-written part of the report.



