

WHAT THE LANGUAGES OWE TO THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

AS language is made up of words, and as the Catholic Church is founded by the Eternal Word, there ought naturally to be a close connection between the Church and language. Doubtless all things were created by this same Word: "The world was made by Him, and without Him was made nothing that was made." But the Church is His new, His supernatural creation, the kingdom of all regenerated in Him, His spouse "without spot or wrinkle." The creation of the universe cost Him but one word, *fiat*; that of the Church took Him thirty-three years of doing and teaching. This world and the figure thereof shall pass away, but the Church triumphant shall abide forever.

The Incarnate Word built His Church upon the rock, Peter, a new name, a word coined as it were out of Simon's faith in Our Lord's divinity, professed in these words: "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God;" by which he merited to hear, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona: because flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but my Father who is in heaven;" and again, "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and thou being once converted, confirm thy brethren." Faith, then, in Christ is the support of the Rock itself, and consequently of the whole spiritual edifice built upon the Rock, the Church. But "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Here we see language made the instrument whereby to establish, consolidate, and perpetuate that masterpiece of creation, the Church of God. Faith in the word of God is not only the foundation and support of the Church, but the very life of every member in the Church, and, therefore, of the whole Church. "Man liveth not by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God." "The just man liveth by faith." "This is the victory which overcometh the world, our faith." Thus the Word builds His Church upon the Rock imbedded in his own word adhered to by faith, and supports it by that same word, which, though "heaven and earth shall pass away, shall not pass away." Had we nothing more than this, remembering that words constitute language, we should expect to find a very remarkable relation subsisting between the Catholic Church and the languages.

But this is not all. When the promise of the Eternal Word was fulfilled, and the Paraclete, the Spirit of truth, descended upon the

Apostles with the plenitude of His gifts and power, to enable them to complete and perpetuate the work begun by the Eternal Word, He appeared in the form of fiery tongues. What did this denote? It denoted what immediately followed: "And they began to speak in divers tongues the wonderful works of God." It denoted that, as they had received the gift of faith through the words of the Uncreated Word, so they were to use the same means, words (language), for the same end, viz., that their hearers might receive the gift of faith and be incorporated into the spiritual Body of Christ, the Church. It denoted that, since human means were wanting, they were to be supernaturally supplied with the means of carrying out their most ample mission and of executing their most imperative orders, "Go, teach all nations." For it is absolutely necessary for the teacher to use the language of the taught, since language is the medium of communication between mind and mind. But the Teacher of all nations must be versed in the languages of all nations. Therefore, the Divine Enlightener and Guide of the Church came upon the Apostles in the form of tongues of fire, enabling them to communicate by language the light of truth with which He filled their minds, and to diffuse on all sides the fire of charity with which He inflamed their hearts. Nor was it alone at the birth of the Church that the miracle of tongues was witnessed. It has been repeated from time to time through all the ages since in favor of her children, her zealous missionaries, dispensers of the divine word, as is abundantly proved in the case of St. Francis Xavier, St. Paul of the Cross, and so many others.

How faithfully the Catholic Church has fulfilled her sublime office of Teacher of all nations has been repeatedly acknowledged, even by those who are not of her fold, and, indeed, holds the most prominent place on the pages of history. The Head of the Church is always mindful of the injunction given him in the person of Peter, "Feed my lambs, feed my sheep." The whole flock must be fed with "the words of eternal life." For this there is need of all the languages, for the flock is found in every country in the world. The languages must hold a prominent place, too, in the armory of the Church in her spiritual warfare against ignorance and error. Each Christian combatant is told to take unto him "the shield of faith and the sword of the Spirit (which is the word of God)." Every follower of Christ is a soldier, who must fight the good fight, and take heaven by violence.

The burning zeal with which the Apostles issued forth from the Cœnaculum, the ardor with which heroic armies of Catholic missionaries have since spread their peaceful conquests over the earth, the eagerness with which the Church now stretches out her maternal arms to the nations and tribes that are yet shrouded in igno-

rance and barbarism, were well symbolized, on the day of Pentecost, by the "cloven tongues, as it were, of fire." For fire is an active principle, ever striving to communicate its nature to all within its reach, diffusing around it light and heat, and always mounting upward. Such, too, are Charity and her eldest daughter, Zeal. They cannot remain inactive. So long as there are minds in the darkness of ignorance, hearts in the coldness of selfishness, these heaven-born virtues will go out toward them in floods of light and heat, bearing to all the knowledge and love of the true, the beautiful, and the good, thus refining, civilizing, and elevating them to the sublime sphere of their supernatural destiny. And such, again, has been pre-eminently the character of the Catholic Church; it is such to-day, and such it will be to the end of time. *Gratis* she has received, *gratis* does she desire to give of her abundance. She is the sun in the spiritual universe, enlightening, beautifying, and animating all; the reservoir of heavenly graces and benedictions, supplied to overflowing from the Eternal Fountain; the organ through which the Eternal Father communicates with his adopted children, the Mother of all the faithful, the civilizer of nations, the promoter of learning, the support of art and science, the friend of the downtrodden, the benefactress and liberator of the human race, the great central mart of all the languages, their union *dépôt*.

The Church is intensely aware of the immense importance of her high mission as teacher of nations, and of the greatness of the reward awaiting those who do and teach; and, therefore, reckons all labor sweet, all sacrifices easy, all losses gain, that she may accomplish her task and be able to render a good account to the Prince of Pastors at His coming. Accordingly we see with what alacrity and devotedness the bishops and priests of the Catholic Church, from the very days of the Apostles down through every age, set themselves to evangelizing, and by evangelizing civilizing, elevating, and refining the world. Teaching is her first and indispensable duty, since "faith is the substance of things to be hoped for," the foundation of all Christian virtues. "Without faith it is impossible to please God." But faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. And how can they hear without a teacher, a divinely sent teacher, an infallible teacher? Only the Catholic Church is such a teacher, only she is stamped with the seal of heaven, inerrancy, unity, apostolicity.

The Apostles deemed it "not fit to leave the word of God," even for corporeal works of mercy, and therefore elected deacons "to serve tables." The "Vessel of Election" says of himself, that he baptized very few, "for Christ sent me, not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel." He writes to Timothy, "Preach the word

of God; be instant in season, out of season." The Apostles were cast into prison for preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ. An angel delivered them, and they went on preaching more forcibly than ever. They were charged by the rulers of the people and the ancients, "not to speak at all, nor teach in the name of Jesus." They answered, "If it be just in the sight of God to hear you rather than God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." And they went and "spoke the word of God with confidence." Sublime *Non possumus!* so often repeated since, when "the Gentiles raged, and the people devised vain things: The kings of the earth stood up, and the princes assembled together against the Lord and against his Christ;" aye, and against His Vicar on earth, the visible Head of the Church. *Non possumus*, cried St. Gregory the Seventh to Henry the Fourth. We cannot allow you to intrude your hirelings into the places of true pastors, nor see the flock intrusted to us perish for want of seasonable spiritual food. Some three centuries ago, it was attempted, on a large scale, to substitute the religion of Luther, or of Calvin, or of Henry the Eighth, for that of Jesus Christ, and it was proposed, at least, to modify this in several particulars; but the whole Church, assembled in Council, energetically declared aloud, *Non possumus*. We cannot change or modify the sacred deposit of revealed truth committed to our safe keeping, for it is absolutely unchangeable. Let the nations that will have the variable and varying novelties of man's devising, instead of the whole unadulterated truth, be cut off as rotten branches. And behold they have withered and decayed, and are now hardly recognizable under the varied forms of descending rationalism, of putrescent sentimentalism, and the dry bones of agnosticism and evolutionism. *Non possumus*, cried More and Fisher, as they ascended the scaffold. We can die, but we cannot accept Henry the Eighth as Pope, as supreme teacher of faith and morals. *Non possumus*, repeated all Ireland, after their bishops and priests, when, hunted down like wild beasts, they sought some secluded spot behind a remote hedge, or in the bogs, or on the mountain-side, where they might offer up the Holy Sacrifice, teach their flocks and minister to their spiritual wants, at the risk of paying the penalty of death for every such act, rendered treasonable by order of Queen Elizabeth. We cannot barter our faith for any consideration. *Non possumus*, said magnanimous Pius the Ninth, when the nations called upon him by the voice of public opinion to conform his teaching to the fashion of the age, which they styled progress. Then came Bismarck, ordering every Catholic priest and bishop off the Prussian soil if they did not accept the alternative of becoming tools of the state, and teaching its doctrine instead of the gospel of Jesus Christ;

and the bishops and priests, with one voice, cried out, *Non possumus*. They cheerfully incurred fines and penalties, prison and expatriation, by nobly disregarding that mockery of law put forth in contravention to the command of God. *Non possumus*, say the hierarchy and clergy of France to the laicizing tyrants of the Republic. We cannot consent to worship Hugo, or Voltaire, or any other such deity of yours, instead of Jesus Christ. We cannot send our children to your schools, where such abominable superstitions are taught and practised. We cannot give up our Christian schools; we must have Christian teachers. *Non possumus*, say our zealous pastors, and our fervent practical Catholics at home, to the voice of a miserable petty economy. We cannot send our children to their godless public schools, nor risk their loss of faith, more precious than gold, for any paltry consideration. Of the two evils we prefer the less—the gross injustice of having to pay for schools that are a public nuisance. For the time being, we will build and support our own schools. *Non possumus*, say those vigilant and conscientious parents, who feel the weight of their responsibility, to a certain class of newspapers and periodicals. We cannot admit your worthless trash under our roof, nor allow our virtuous family to read your vile articles and foul pages, where our holy religion and venerable Mother Church are maligned and vilified, virtue ridiculed, sound principles ignored, and scenes of refined immorality and scandal presented attractively for pastime. *Non possumus*, say those courageous youths whom the syren voice of the tempter would turn aside from the high paths of rectitude and honor. We cannot descend from the peaceful and delightful road of virtue into the low and crooked ways of vice and dishonesty, nor exchange eternal joys for momentary pleasure.

What St. Paul said of himself, "Woe is me, if I preach not the Gospel," has always been the sentiment of the *Ecclesia docens*. Woe unto me if I teach not the nations. It being of the very essence of her mission to teach all nations, the Church must have made the study of languages a duty of primary importance to all aspirants to the sacred ministry. The Propaganda at Rome, of polyglot celebrity, is a specimen of the care and attention bestowed upon this important subject throughout the Church's long and grand career. Speaking of the linguistic powers displayed by the students of this distinguished seat of learning, on occasion of the late visit of the Irish bishops to Rome, the *Moniteur de Rome*, as quoted by the *Ave Maria*, says: "These literary productions, in language of every nation—from Hebrew, Chaldean, Persian, to Russian, English, and Italian—presented a remarkable proof of the cosmopolitan and civilizing work of the Propaganda. The recitations were interspersed with songs or hymns peculiar to the

country whose language was represented." It is well known that there are thirty-two languages spoken there. It is only the Catholic Church that could have given us that polyglot wonder of the world, Mezzofanti.

The Catholic missionaries were not content with knowing and speaking the languages of the countries they went to evangelize and civilize. They wrote grammars and dictionaries of those languages, had them published, and by their superior skill in the more perfect languages awakened in natives and foreigners attention to what they found good in those languages, thus attaching an importance to the subject it otherwise never would have had. "The missionaries of Central Africa," writes the *Ave Maria* a few weeks ago, "have had printed at Paris the first Ruganda grammar. This language is spoken by the people dwelling on the borders of Lake Victoria Nyanza. The missionaries, having no writings to assist them in its study, were obliged to depend solely upon conversations with the natives. The grammar is the result of three years' labor. A dictionary, containing six or seven hundred words, together with select stories and legends, was also prepared by these apostolic men, but, unfortunately, the manuscript was lost in a shipwreck. They are, however, actively at work in repairing the loss."

Thus has the Church been ever improving and refining and elevating the languages at the same time that she has been advancing the people intellectually and morally, socially and politically, individually and collectively. Take up any of the literatures of Europe; examine its origin, development and progress; study its genius, aptitudes and peculiarities, and you will invariably find that the Catholic Church has exercised by far the most powerful influence in bringing it to its present state of perfection. Bishop Ulphilas, between 360 and 379, translated almost the whole Bible into Moeso-Gothic, which is the earliest specimen extant of the Teutonic languages. He framed a new alphabet of twenty-four letters, four of which were invented by himself. The *Codex Argenteus* (rather *Aureus et Argenteus*) is still preserved at Upsal, enclosed in a silver case.

In his *History of English Literature and Language* Craik says (p. 27): "It is somewhat remarkable that, while a good many names of the natives of Gaul are recorded in connection with the last age of Roman literature, scarcely a British name of that period of any literary reputation has been preserved, if we except a few which figure in the history of the Christian Church." But the first ages of English literature are equally remarkable for the conspicuous absence of other than names immediately connected with the Catholic Church. St. Gildas the Wise, the first English historian

of whom anything remains, was of course her son. There never was a saint out of her communion. She only put on a new and perfect form when her Divine Founder put on the form of man; she was the Church of God from the beginning, as she will be to the end. The next historical writer was a monk of Bangor, Nennius or Ninian.

Now of all writers who do not treat *ex professo* of language, the historian does most for the language of that people for whom he writes, in its earliest stage. He writes for the whole people, and therefore must adopt a style at once plain and simple, yet sufficiently dignified and diversified to meet the requirements of his subject. His object being to convey the truth of facts (we are not including our inventors of facts for scientific histories), his main point is to attach plain, intelligible signs to clear and fixed ideas, precluding the possibility of doubt or equivocation, the one thing most wanted in the first development of a language.

Aldhelm, abbot of Malmesbury, and first Bishop of Sherborn, who died in 709, who "could write and speak Greek like a native of Greece," is the most ancient of the Latin writers among the Angles and Saxons whose works remain. But it may be asked, What have Latin and Greek, which the Catholic Church has in some sort made her own, to do with the English language? Let G. P. Marsh answer: "The Latin Grammar has become a general standard, wherewith to compare that of all other languages, the medium through which all the nations of Christendom have become acquainted with the structure and philosophy of their own; and technical grammar, the mechanical combinations of language, can be nowhere else so advantageously studied," except, of course, at Harvard!

Hear Mr. Marsh again: "I do but echo the universal opinion of all persons competent to pronounce on the subject, in expressing my own conviction that the language and literature of ancient Greece constitute the most efficient instrument of mental training ever enjoyed by man; and that a familiarity with that wonderful speech, its poetry, its philosophy, its eloquence, and the history it embalms, is incomparably the most valuable of intellectual possessions. The Grammar of the Greek language is much more flexible, more tolerant of aberration, less rigid in its requirements, than the Latin." Remark here that, as intellectuality is the measure of language, great indeed must be the gain to all our modern languages from the Greek, and great, too, should be our gratitude to the Catholic Church for having handed it down to us replete with a new and transcending importance, its being made the vehicle of the written word of God.

Venerable Bede greatly enriched the English language. He

wrote treatises on Grammar, the Logic of Aristotle, Orthography and Versification, all which bear directly on language. For logic, in fixing the thought, fixes also the expression, giving precision, cogency and clearness to the language. The accomplished author of *Christian Schools and Scholars*, speaking of Bede's numerous works (forty-five), makes these remarks: "There is one subject which engaged his attention that deserves a more particular notice; I mean the labors he directed to the grammatical formation of his native language, a work of vast importance, which, in every country where the barbarous nations had established themselves, had to be undertaken by the monastic scholars. Rohrbacher observes that St. Bede did much by his treatises on grammar and orthography to impress a character of regularity on the modern languages which in the eighth and ninth centuries were beginning to be formed out of the Latin and Germanic dialects. Much more was his influence felt on the Anglo-Saxon dialect, in which he both preached and wrote. . . . Besides commenting on nearly the whole Bible, Bede is known to have translated both the Psalter and the Four Gospels. . . . Before their conversion to Christianity the Anglo-Saxons possessed no literature, that is to say, no *written* compositions of any kind, and their language had not therefore assumed a regular grammatical form. In this they resembled most of the other barbarous nations, of whom St. Irenæus observes that they held the faith by tradition, 'without the help of pen and ink;' meaning, as he himself explains, that for want of letters they could have no use of the Scriptures."

Ex uno disce omnes. Thus the nations of Europe to-day use the very languages that were, with themselves, snatched from barbarism by the Catholic Church, to vilify their common benefactress. But "the servant is not above his master." Glorious sign of the Spouse of Christ! "Blessed are you when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake." It is unnecessary to mention Wilfrid, Boniface, Alfred, and other names of early renown in English literature. We have seen what Bishop Ulphilas did for the Moeso-Gothic, and, therefore, for all the later Teutonic dialects, and consequently for the largest element in the English language. We have seen what Bede did for the Anglo-Saxon, and accordingly for our modern English.

The next largest element in the English language, Latin, is altogether the language of the Church. Latin is one of the three languages that had been, in a manner, sanctified by touching the sacred emblem of redemption, whose privilege it was to proclaim the kingship of the Incarnate Word, and must not, therefore, perish. Like the Cross, to which it was fastened, it was destined to

be enshrined with honor, and to live a glorious life in the magnificent ritual and awe-inspiring services of the Catholic Church. It is a dead language to the worldling and to those who are not of the household of the Faith; but to the fervent Catholic, who instinctively recognizes the sweet accents of his beautiful mother-tongue, it has a charm that speaks to his heart of heaven and heavenly things. It was too near the adorable Head of the Man-God in His supreme ignominy, not to share in the halo of glory with which it was crowned in the resurrection. Now without the Latin there was no Italian, no French, no Spanish language. Without the Catholic Church, as everybody admits, there was no Latin, no Greek, no Hebrew worth mentioning, centuries ago. A few fragmentary fossil remains might possibly be casually dug up here and there from some buried archives or discovered in the vaults beneath a library cremation. But the Catholic Church touched them, and, behold, they live! The word of life has been committed to them, and she guards them as the apple of her eye. Hebrew or Syro-Chaldaic and Greek had already been consecrated to the sacred purpose of transmitting the Old Testament from generation to generation; and now Latin receives its hallowed contents augmented by the New, and carries them beyond the limits of the Roman Empire into regions over which her victorious eagle had never ventured his daring flight.

“The introduction of Christianity among the Anglo-Saxons at the opening of the seventh” (close of the sixth) “century,” writes Noah Webster, “brought with it the study of the Latin. The cultivation of learning and letters belonged almost exclusively to ecclesiastics, with whom Latin was the professional language. Hence quite a number of Latin or Latinized Greek words passed into the Anglo-Saxon.” So true is it that learning and culture have been introduced into the nations of Enrope, aye, and wherever they are found out of Europe, together with Christianity and civilization, by the Catholic Church, that in several languages a learned man and clergyman are synonymous. *Cleric* in Anglo-Saxon, *clerk* in English, and *clerc* in French, are instances, a fact which the *Kultur-kampf* in Prussia and the anti-clericals in France seem sublimely to ignore.

If Latin and her daughter French have, according to Webster, given four-fifths of its borrowed words to the English language, and if we take his word for it, as I think we may, that “if all the words in a large English dictionary were classed according to their origin, it would appear that the foreign or non-Saxon words make a decided majority of the whole number,” we can easily calculate the indebtedness of the English language to Latin and the indebtedness of all who use it to the Catholic Church. In Milton's poet-

ical works about two-thirds of the vocabulary are foreign, which shows how much we owe both for matter and form to that Church which he so heartily berated with his bitterest invective. But this is not so strange for one who shone in the golden age of the "Reformation," when in this, its last age,

" *Cui non invenit ipsa*
Nomen, et a nullo posuit Natura metallo,"

"Nature cannot frame
A metal base enough to give it name,"

we hear G. P. Marsh lecture to post-graduates in Columbia College, N. Y., in this strain: "The Romish Church, too, in England, as everywhere else, was hostile to all intellectual effort which in any degree diverged from the path marked out by ecclesiastical habit and tradition, and very many important English benefices were filled by foreign priests quite ignorant of the English tongue." Indeed! Why, without just such foreign influence the English tongue had remained the barbarous jargon the Catholic Church first found it, and the English people the savages Cæsar and Tacitus describe them. If by "intellectual effort" is meant the attempt to palm off some counterfeit article for genuine truth, whether in the natural or supernatural order, in philosophy or theology, science or history, the Church has always set her face against it, is professedly, irreconcilably, necessarily hostile to it, because she is the "pillar and ground of truth." For "what fellowship hath light with darkness?" Chameleon-like or Proteus-like, error may assume a new color or a new form at every new moon, may defend itself behind the rampart of power and fashion and talent, may lurk in the labyrinths of pretended science, the Catholic Church pursues it, dismantles it, exposes and throttles it. To every "Eirenicon" her answer is "Peace through the Truth." From Gnosticism to Agnosticism, from Arianism to the last phase of Protestantism, Rationalism, there is not a single error of any note that has not felt her implacable hostility.

And yet Mr. Marsh is frank enough to make the following statement in another lecture of the same series: "The missionary who goes armed with the cross, not with the sword, must use a speech intelligible to those whom he would convert. . . . The Gothic tribes generally were brought to Christianity by arguments and persuasions addressed to them by ministers speaking to every man in his own tongue." Every word of this is luminous with truth, if *all* be substituted for "generally," and if the interference of miracles on some occasions, and of supernatural divine grace on all occasions, be superadded to the "arguments and persua-

sions" as prime factors in Christianizing and civilizing not alone the Gothic tribes, but all the nations that have yet been civilized. To call Pagan enlightenment, with its revolting ritual and low moral status, civilization, shocks all sense. "Corrumpere et corrumpi sæculum vocatur," is the vouchment of Tacitus regarding Roman virtue and propriety in his day.

But if the lecturer means that the Catholic Church has ever been hostile to any department of genuine science, arts, or letters, the history of the literature of every country, and of the intellectual development of every people, gives him the lie. Roger Bacon is a fair specimen of the circumscribed limits imposed upon "intellectual effort" in schools established by the Catholic Church in those benighted Middle Ages. His writings that are still preserved, of which the principal is that entitled his "Opus Majus" (or "Great Work"), show that the range of his investigations included theology, grammar, the ancient languages, geometry, astronomy, chronology, geography, music, optics, mechanics, chemistry, and most of the other branches of experimental philosophy. "In all these sciences," writes Mr. Craik, "he had mastered whatever was then known; and his knowledge, though necessarily mixed with much error, extended in various directions considerably farther than, but for the evidence of his writings, we should have been warranted in believing that scientific researches had been carried in that age." It is well known that his writings anticipate the discovery of the telescope, and that he was acquainted with the effects and composition of gunpowder; but it may not be equally well known that it was at the suggestion of Pope Clement IV. that he gave to the world his "Opus Majus," so hostile was the Church from head to foot, then as now, to liberal education, to freedom of intellect.

We will now take an example of the extent of learning on the Continent in those days, and this from the Dominicans, as our last was from the Franciscans, two of the teaching orders of the Catholic Church. "Albertus Magnus," says Humboldt, "was equally active and influential in promoting the study of natural science and of the Aristotelian philosophy. . . . His works contain exceedingly acute remarks on the organic structure and physiology of plants. One of his works, bearing the title of *Liber Cosmographicus de Natura Locorum*, is a species of physical geography. I have found in it considerations on the dependence of temperature concurrently on latitude and elevation, and on the effect of different angles of incidence of the sun's rays in heating the ground, which have excited my surprise."

Jourdain says of him: "Whether we consider him as a theologian or a philosopher, Albert was undoubtedly one of the most

extraordinary men of his age; I might say, one of the most wonderful men of genius that have appeared in past time." The Church has reared a goodly number of such men in every age, and still rears them, and will continue to rear them; for she is to-day as radiant in youth and beauty and vigor as when she came forth, with the Pentecostal blessing on her brow, to regenerate the world, the fruitful Mother of heroic virtue and profound learning, of saints and savants.

Thus again speaks M. Meyer of Albertus: "No botanist who lived before Albert can be compared to him, unless it be Theophrastus, with whom he was not acquainted; and after him none has painted nature in such living colors, or studied it so profoundly, until the time of Conrad, Gesner, and Cesalpini. All honor, then, to the man who made such astonishing progress in the science of nature as to find no one, I will not say to surpass, but even to equal him for the space of three hundred years."

Albert himself says of his book on botany: "All that is here set down is the result of our own experience, or has been borrowed from authors whom we know to have written what their personal experience has confirmed; for in these matters experience alone can give certainty." This shows that Albert was not alone in his devotion to the natural sciences, and that experimental sciences did not originate with Francis Bacon. It also shows that, if such was the proficiency, under the fostering care of the Church, of intellectual effort in departments most remote from sciences that have direct relation to mental operations, and consequently from immediate bearing upon language, the Church must have exerted on language a cumulative influence that can be calculated only by estimating the immense impetus she gave and continues to give to the arts and sciences individually.

It is well known that all the great schools and universities of Europe between the 2d and 17th centuries were the creation of the Catholic Church. In the famous school of Alexandria, founded by St. Mark the Evangelist, we find, as early as 231, Origen, pupil and successor of Clement, teaching St. Gregory and his brother Athenodorus "logic, in order to exercise their minds and enable them to discover true reasoning from sophistry; physics, that they might understand and admire the works of God; geometry, which by its clear and indisputable demonstrations serves as a basis to the science of thought; astronomy, to lift their hearts from earth to heaven; and finally, philosophy, which was not limited, like that taught in the pagan schools, to empty speculations, but was conveyed in such a way as to lead to practical results. All these were but steps to ascend to that higher science which teaches us the existence and nature of God. He permitted

his pupils freely to read whatever the poets and philosophers had written on this subject, himself watching and directing their studies, and opening their eyes to distinguish those sparks of truth which are to be found scattered in the writings of the pagans, however overlaid by a mass of fable."

There does not appear much circumscribing of "intellectual effort" here. It was encouraged, like the bee, to gather the honey of truth from every flower in every art and science. Well does Augusta T. Drane remark on this: "The real point worth observing is, that every branch of human knowledge, in so far as it had been cultivated at that time, was included in the studies of the Christian schools; and, considering that this had been the work of scarcely more than two centuries, and those centuries of bloody persecution, it must be acknowledged to have been a tolerably expansive growth."

Yes, "growth" was stamped on every feature of human learning under the generous patronage of the Catholic Church, until it established its great centres in the universities of Paris, Oxford, Cambridge, Bologna, Padua, Pisa, Louvain, etc. Of the "growth" of one of these, Oxford, from the day it was plundered by the "Reformation" to our own day, Sir William Hamilton writes: "Oxford is, of all academical institutions, at once the most imperfect and the most perfectible. '*Stat magni nominis umbra.*'"

We grant that the Catholic Church prescribes limits to thought, and says to the most towering genius or daring intellect, Thus far and no farther; but it is such check as reason herself imposes on such trespassers upon her domain as Mill, Fiske, and other agnostics, who claim that two and two may possibly make five, that truth is relative, that all that is unknowable which they cannot or do not comprehend, and such like absurdities. The Church has ever encouraged free thought until it has ceased to be reasonable, has rewarded intellectual effort so long as it has not become suicidal. Who has investigated the most abstruse problems within the range of human thought more freely, fearlessly, or profoundly than St. Augustine and St. Thomas? That Copernicus and Secchi were priests, did not hinder them from attaining their prominent place in science. The divinely-appointed infallible teacher of nations had too strong, too passionate a love for truth to allow any counterfeit impostor to usurp its honored place in the minds of men, under the specious name of philosophy or science. She knew beforehand the tough combat she had to enter with proud intellect wedded to cherished error, both in the service of a host of passions, and flattered by wealth, power, pomp and fashion. But, conscious of her strength, aided from on high, defended by

truth while defending it, her motto has ever been, *Magna est veritas, et prævalebit*. From Gnosticism and Neoplatonism in the Second and following centuries, to Agnosticism and Evolutionism in the 19th, her career has been one of conflict and of triumph. As Dr. Molloy tells us that he studied geology profoundly, in order to meet objections to revealed truth from that quarter, so St. Thomas studied Aristotle to meet Averroes on his own ground, proving as plain as two and two make four the absurdity of holding that all men have but one common intellect, the grand doctrine of the Arabian, whom his free-thinking contemporaries styled "the Commentator." This is the secret of the Church's devotedness to learning of every kind, always inculcating by word and example what one of her brightest ornaments has laid down in his world-wide wondrous little book: "Learning is not to be blamed, nor the mere knowledge of anything, which is good in itself, and ordained by God; but a good conscience and a virtuous life are always to be preferred before it."

Not alone must the *Ecclesia docens* be learned, the *Ecclesia credens*, all the faithful, are exhorted to be "always ready to satisfy every one that asketh you a reason of that hope which is in you." "Join with your faith, virtue; and with virtue, knowledge." Hence a good Catholic will be ashamed not to be able to give a reasonable answer to any reasonable question about his faith. Unreasonable questions deserve no answer; but may be shown to be unreasonable, or met with a smile of pity. Even *illiterate*, earnest Catholics have been found learned enough to give ample satisfaction to sincere inquirers, from their diligence in attending all the instructions of their pastors, whether in catechism or in sermons, missions, etc.

Now, general culture of the arts and sciences, which the Church has always encouraged and promoted, and in which her children have always excelled, must necessarily tend to improve the several languages. There is so close a connection between thought and its expression, the idea and the word, the signified and the sign, that the expansion, refinement, and elevation of the former are invariably attended, or followed, by a corresponding effect upon the latter. The enlightened mind ever finds a fluent tongue or ready pen, verifying the saying attributed to Socrates: "He is eloquent enough who knows his subject well enough." This is also a convincing proof that, with the gift of high intelligence, language was originally given to man directly by his bountiful Creator. Thinking cannot go far, nor deep, nor high, without its natural helpmate, language, as any one may find by experiment. Neither can language travel alone without intelligence, which called it into being, and which preserves its being by recognizing its significance. Lan-

guage is for intelligence, not intelligence for language ; and hence language may be dispensed with in certain cases, intelligence never. Language is necessary, because society is necessary. The Creator founded society by creating the family : He also gave it what it absolutely wants, language. Humboldt says that, if we accept not this, he knows of no explanation of the origin of that which is coeval and co-extensive with society. Upon this necessary connection between intelligence and language have I rested the above statement, that, but for the superior intelligence of the members of the Catholic Church, both lay and clerical, especially her Religious Orders, the three learned languages, Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, had long since lain buried in oblivion. How could the barbarian hordes from the North, Vandals, Goths, Huns, etc., appreciate what they could not understand? Their inutility had been their death-warrant. All had shared the fate of the Alexandrian library had it not been for the monks and churchmen of the Middle Ages, whose unwearied toil some are too enlightened to recognize.

The influence of the Church upon the various languages has been exercised in yet another way, which we are apt to overlook ; we mean the nice precision and wonderful exactness of her official statements in all her doctrines. Like her Divine Founder, the Church never has "It is and it is not" in her teaching. She has never need of issuing a *revised edition* of her former pronouncements. The Pillar and Ground of Truth, she stamps the pure gold of truth with her infallible signet, and there it remains truth for aye, unchangeable and imperishable as its Infinite Source. The word that is to be admitted as the sign of this truth, the silver casket for the golden gem, is also nicely weighed, adjusted with all accuracy, and sent forth on its errand under no mistakable colors. It is the same word for the same idea, and the same idea for the same truth, thenceforth ever after as long as there are people to use that language. So precious is truth in her estimation that she condescends to examine in minutest detail every word, and every letter and accent in every word, as in *homoöusios* and *homoiousios* (*ὁμοούσιος* and *ὁμοιούσιος*), *theótokos* and *theotókos* (*θεῶτοκος* and *θεοτόκος*), marking the notable difference a letter or an accent may make in the truth conveyed.

Now this carefulness and exactness in the use of words extend through the whole domain of theology and philosophy. Words are not allowed to run slipshod under a haze of indefiniteness. Every pastor of souls, every priest empowered by her authority to preach the divine word, every writer who touches upon subjects connected with the sacred deposit committed to her keeping, must be severely on his guard in the use of words, that he may not come under her merciless censures. Hence the various

languages throughout the civilized world are made the special study of a large number of close students in the most perfect languages of all times. The result is a habit of exact thinking and apt expression, than which no greater gain can accrue to language. It was the want of this that Socrates charged so pointedly against the Sophists of his day. Indefiniteness of expression is always the shuffling contrivance of sophistry. Some, too, that abhor sophistry are under the mistaken notion that repeating the same word in the same sentence, or, if it can possibly be avoided, even in the same paragraph, argues a dearth in one's vocabulary, lack of skill in arrangement, or of taste to appreciate the charms of novelty. Such persons should never wear a second time, during the same month or year, the same coat, or hat, or shoes, lest they be convicted of poverty; nor drink coffee again till they have gone the rounds of all possible beverages.

If the idea is good, *i.e.*, exactly represents its object, and the word exactly fits the idea, no other word should be allowed to take its place. The surpassing beauty of truth shines forth through every word that is an exact counterpart of the idea, when this idea is in perfect conformity with its object. This conformity is found in infinite perfection in the Verbum Æternum, a conformity so unutterably perfect that all the beauty, goodness, and excellence of the Father is seen expressed in the "Figure of His Substance and the Splendor of His Glory," an absolute oneness of nature and perfections being common to the three Adorable Persons of the August Trinity.

And here, again, the Fathers and Doctors of the Catholic Church, in expounding to the extent of human capacity the grand mysteries of our holy faith, have poured a sea of light upon many important and abstruse questions connected with the philosophy of the human mind, its faculties, and their operations. For, as the soul of man is made to the image of God, there must be an analogy, faint though it necessarily be, between the eternal simple operation in the Trinity, which operation our complex nature must contemplate as multiple, and the manifold operations of our several faculties. Thus the light of faith, enlightening instead of extinguishing the light of reason, enables man to see the similitude between the Divine Word and our *verbum mentale*, which mental word true philosophy discovers in every act of intellection, in the completion of every idea. Every idea implies an intellect knowing and an object known. The Divine Intellect, as being infinite, must necessarily be active, and consequently must have an infinite object, which object is the Divine Nature or Essence, infinite being, infinite reality. Faith tells us that this Infinite Nature,

one and indivisible, is equally possessed by three Divine Persons, perfectly distinct and perfectly equal, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Reason, also, shows us in our own minds in every act of intellection an image of this trinity in unity. The object known is one and the same to the intellect that knows, the idea through which it knows, and the affection or emotion consequent upon this knowledge. It is the same soul that knows as intellect, that is modified as idea, that is affected or moved by such knowledge and such modification. The intellect that knows, in the idea through which it knows, knows also itself; for the idea is the intellect modified. Known thus, the intellect knows itself in act, which knowledge is often expressed by the formula, We know that we know. This is properly an act of consciousness, the vaguest of vague terms in the hands of many recent writers, especially Agnostics, which, however, is nothing else than intellect cognizing itself and its own and the mind's present state. Knowing that it knows, the intellect affirms or expresses to itself this knowledge, which expression is called mental word, *verbum mentale*, in relation to the mind, idea in relation to the object it represents. This idea or mental word is begotten of the intellect in conjunction with the object known or mentally conceived, and, hence, is sometimes called concept. It may also be called the offspring of the intellect, though not of it alone, man being essentially dependent not alone on his Creator, but on creatures also, for every act of every faculty. This offspring exists as soon as intellect is called into act or exists in act.

These facts, which a moment's reflection upon our own mental activity makes evident, will enable us to understand a little, very little, to be sure, but still some little, of what faith teaches us with absolute certainty regarding the first and greatest of mysteries. The Father, Infinite Intelligence, knowing Himself, expresses this knowledge to Himself, and thus begets His Eternal Son, the Verbum Divinum, who, because of the infinite perfection of that knowledge, is a subsisting personality, the very "figure of the Father's substance and the splendor of His glory," at once infinitely known and infinitely knowing. This Verbum was conceived or begotten of the Father before all ages, *i.e.* eternally, because from eternity as necessarily existing as the Father is necessarily knowing; and, because so generated and so existing, is called the Eternal Son of God. The Son is necessary as the Father is necessary. Even so is our mental word necessary to every act of intellection, and exists as soon as intellect exists in act. Our oral word is but the outward manifestation of the mental word. This we are free to utter or not, as we please. God, too, was free to create or not to create the universe and all it contains, which may be called His eternal

word, "*Cæli enarrant gloriam Dei*," as also to utter his revealed word. But all that he has outwardly expressed, whether by creation or by revelation, He eternally expressed in the Uncreated Word, the Coëternal Son; "and without Him was made nothing that was made."

It is a mistake to suppose, as some do, that the oral word expresses the object directly and immediately. It is by expressing the mental word or idea, which represents the object, that the oral word expresses also the object.

In thus tracing the analogy between the Divine Mind and our mind, besides the incomparable distance between the infinite and the finite, in every particular, the following are noteworthy points of difference. Created entities depend for their existence upon their prototypes or the exemplar ideas of them in the Divine Mind, which are the measure of existences. Our ideas depend for their existence upon created entities, and are measured by them. Created entities exist in consequence of the Divine ideas of them. Our ideas exist in consequence of created entities existing. In conforming our ideas to existing created entities, which are all conformed to their prototypes in the Divine Mind, we are so far being conformed to the Divine Mind. But as everything in the Divine Mind is perfection, we are by the same conformity tending to perfection, at least intellectually. Therefore the proper use of our faculties in attaining truth leads to God, the Fountain of all truth, being led through creatures "from Nature up to Nature's God." Hence the pursuit of learning is a laudable one. Every entity is at once true and good, reminding us of the infinite Ocean of Truth and Goodness whence it issued. If, therefore, our will follows right reason in loving the good, every act of knowing is accompanied or followed by an act of loving the Infinite Good, and "to them that love God all things work together unto good."

Since words are arbitrary signs, having no natural connection with the ideas signified, it is a strange whim that has led certain parties to claim a vast superiority for words of Saxon origin over other derivatives in the English language. It is of a piece with "There is no spot on earth like the land of *my* birth." That there is more force or terseness in Anglo-Saxon than in Anglo-Latin words is negated by the fact that, in some of the choicest and most vigorous writings in the English language, such as *Junius's Letters*, *Johnson's Letter to Lord Chesterfield*, Burke's masterpiece, the Latin element largely predominates; and that they possess more sweetness, harmony or beauty, some of the best poetry in the language, such as *Milton's* and *Lord Byron's*, equally denies. We do not stop at the sign; we go to what it signifies. It would take a Herbert Spencer to see "the greater forcibleness of Saxon-Eng-

lish, or rather non-Latin English," or the economy of using "original words used in childhood," making it preferable to "have" than to "possess," to "wish" than to "desire," to "think" than to "reflect," to have "play" than "amusement," etc. No matter whence, or how, or when a word came into reputable use, if it expresses the idea clearly and fully, it is ridiculous childishness to put it aside in deference to any other. Give us the writer or speaker that has clear thoughts, something worth communicating, and holds out to us unmistakable signs through which we can at once grasp his whole meaning, and we care not if they are monosyllabic or sesquipedalian, indigenous or exotic, idiomatic or imported, old or new. Refusing a well-fitting word because of its origin, is like refusing to be clothed in an excellent garment on the plea that the material of which it is made is the product of a foreign soil. The writer or speaker should choose that word which, by common consent, has become the recognized sign of his idea, on receipt of which the hearer or reader forms in his own mind the corresponding idea. Thus the two minds are so far at one, being conformed to the same sign, the one matching the sign to his idea, the other matching his idea to the sign, and consequently represent to themselves the same identical object.

We are too near the utmost limits of a review article to even touch upon some of the many philological vagaries put forth as theories regarding the progressive development of words from the original inarticulate chattering of the autochthonous pre-human *mutum pecus*, Darwin's progenitors, to our inimitable *nonpareil*, "the well of English undefiled." Their first principle, that savagery was man's primeval state, then barbarism, enlightenment, and finally *culture*, culminating in science, is one of those assumptions of *Necessary Progressionism* which laughs at the idea of verification by anything in the past or present, its all-sufficiency being sufficiently guaranteed by its adoption by the Evolutionists. It counts nothing that the best poet, the best orator, one of the best philosophers, the best sculptor, and the best painter, ever trumpeted by fame, flourished from twenty-eight to twenty-two centuries ago. A thousand years are as one day to Progress! Their second principle, that all words have come from monosyllabic roots, is rebuked by nearly every word in the American Indian's vocabulary. Monosyllabic words being first in use, and men being first savages, according to these wise men, it follows that the language of savages should be monosyllabic. Therefore, Minnesota, Minnehaha, Mississippi, Missouri and Chicago are monosyllables. Philology! How wonderfully prolific!