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New Thought.

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"We are not of the earth, earthy, but gods from heaven, for we have always been in heaven and can never get out of heaven. . . . My democracy is the democracy of divinity, for I recognize each human being as a fellow-god. . . . And, my beloved gods and goddesses, we were all there before the earth and before matter, for we are the creators and the originators and operators of this mental universe."

This is New Thought speaking through one of its prophets in *The Nautilus* of December, 1917. (pp. 23—25.) New Thought does many things. It cures a baby of constipation when you say to it, for three days, "You are no longer constipated — you are a perfect being." (p. 37.) It overcomes appendicitis without recourse to the knife. (p. 38.) By speaking "helpful little phrases" before falling into slumber at night, one devotee has become successful in business. (p. 47.) New Thought is just the thing to help one become a successful poultry-raiser (p. 49), and by "investing in an annual subscription to this unparalleled monthly" (*The Nautilus*), the mind is renewed along the line of St. Paul's counsel to "be transformed by the renewing of mind." (p. 52.) But, above all, it assures its believers of their essential identity with the God-head; not union, but identity. "We are not of the earth, earthy, but gods from heaven." Ralph Waldo Trine, one of its high priests, writes: "Man is god incarnate."

At present there are, if their statistics can be relied upon, about five million gods and goddesses in the world. Of these the greater number are said to live in what has been called the "pay-streak of our civilization," — the band of population stretching along the forty-first degree of latitude. From New York City the cult reports 700,000 adherents, from Pittsburgh 350,000, from

THE THEOLOGICAL OBSERVER.

“Providentissimus Deus.”

The American Catholic Quarterly Review (July, 1920), just out, reports: “Nine cardinals, many bishops, superiors-general of religious orders, abbots, and rectors of colleges attended the celebration of the silver jubilee of *Providentissimus Deus* by the Biblical Institute, Rome, on November 24, 1919. Father Aloysius G. da Fonseca, S. J., presented the history of events that led up to the encyclical; its content and effects—especially in the matter of Biblical inerrancy. Father J. B. Frey, S. Sp., a consulter of the Biblical Commission, spoke in the name of that legislative body on the principal doctrines propounded by the papal document.”—The encyclical in question at the time of its publication dispelled the notion of the “liberalism” of Leo XIII. The “oppression” of Pius X, of which Catholic Modernists complain, is nothing but the application of the principles of Leo XIII, and the latter Pope, basing on the decisions of Trent and the Vatican that “God is the Author of Sacred Scripture,” has simply “pressed this definition to its logical conclusion” when he said in *Providentissimus Deus* (November 18, 1893): “Hence it matters not at all that the Spirit chose men to be instruments with which to write; as it would matter if these inspired writers, though not the principal Author of Scripture, could fall into any error. For He by a supernatural energy so aroused and impelled them to write, and so aided them in writing, that they correctly thought out, and willed faithfully to write up, and fittingly set forth with infallible truth everything, and only that, which He ordained. Else He would not be the Author of all Scripture.” The Roman Church seeks to crush every tendency to higher criticism in its midst. Its advocates have formed *l'école large*, in which Father Lagrange has been a leader whose writings have been prohibited in Roman seminaries. A number of Jesuit exegetes have “failed to measure up to all the later requirements of the Biblical Commission,” appointed by the Pope for fighting higher criticism. Father Hummelauer, S. J., has been declared in error because he has distinguished in Old Testament history “popular tradition, primitive history, and history.” Pope Benedict XV, on June 18, 1915, ratified the following decision of the Biblical Commission: “Bearing in mind the true idea of the apostolic office and St. Paul’s undoubted fidelity to the teaching of the Master, likewise the Catholic dogma of the inspiration and inerrancy of Sacred Scripture (whereby all that the sacred writer asserts, enunciates, insinuates, must be held to be asserted, enunciated, insinuated by the Holy Spirit); and weighing well the texts of the Apostle, considered in themselves, fully in agreement with the way of speaking of the Lord Himself, must one affirm that the Apostle Paul, in his writings, said nothing at all that does not perfectly agree with that ignorance of the time of the Parousia which Christ Himself said was to be found in men? Reply: Yes.” (*Acta Apostol. Sed.*, July 20, 1915.) The decrees of the Biblical Commission are found in the 11th edition of Denzinger-Bannwart’s

Enchiridion (Freiburg i. Br., Herder, 1911) and in Leopold Fonck's (S. J.) *Documenta ad Pontificam Commissionem de Re Biblica Spectantia* (Rome, Biblical Institute, 1915). They have been published in an English translation by Father Cyril Gaul, O. S. B., in *Rome and the Study of Scripture; a Collection of Papal Enactments on the Study of Holy Scripture, together with the Decisions of the Biblical Commission*. (St. Meinrad, Indiana: Abbey Press, 1919.) Rome's fight against higher criticism is interesting; it seems to defend the orthodox position, and speaks the language of orthodoxy, *e. g.*, on inspiration; but it is not our fight; for it fights for a Bible which men have wantonly decreed shall be God's Word (the Latin Vulgate, with the heretical Apocrypha); it fights with weapons of human authority (papal decisions) and for a secular purpose (the maintenance of papal absolutism).
D.

Oxford's Olive Branch.

"To the Professors of the Arts and Sciences and to Members of the Universities and Learned Societies in Germany and Austria.

"Since there will be many of you who fully share our heartfelt sorrow and regret for the breach that the war has occasioned in our friendly intercourse, and since you cannot doubt the sincerity of the feeling which engendered and cherished that old friendliness, you must, we believe, be sharing our hope for its speedy reestablishment.

"We, therefore, the undersigned Doctors, Heads of Houses, Professors, and other Officers and Teachers in the University of Oxford, now personally approach you with the desire to dispel the embitterment of animosities that under the impulse of loyal patriotism may have passed between us.

"In the field where our arms are one, our enthusiasm the same, our rivalry and ambition generous, we can surely look to be reconciled; and the fellowship of learning offers a road which may — and if our spiritual ideals be alive, must — lead to a wider sympathy and better understanding between our kindred nations.

"While political dissensions are threatening to extinguish the honorable comity of the great European states, we pray that we may help to hasten that amicable reunion which civilization demands. *Impetret Ratio, Quod Dies Impetratura Est.*"

Dr. Titius of Goettingen publishes this communication in *Theologische Literaturzeitung* (December 4), and says that it has been signed by 55 men of literary fame. He calls attention to the fact that the "amicable relations" were not broken off by the learned men of Germany; that the *Theologische Literaturzeitung* continued even during the war to report impartially the literary products in enemy countries, and declares that this policy will be "adhered to despite the defamation of our people by foreign powers." Dr. Titius thinks he may assume that because of the wish that has been frequently expressed for an amicable reunion, "a juster estimation of our people will gradually assert itself." This is, indeed, a matter devoutly to be wished, but it can hardly be hoped for. As long as "the impulse of

loyal patriotism" embraces the telling of lies, patriots will continue to lie to bolster up the original falsehoods. What is wanted for a proper readjustment is not renewal of courtesies, but justice, and, above all, the merciless exposure of all the patriotic liars that were so prominent during the war, and, in the case of Christians, sincere repentance.

D.

More Bigots.

The Ku Klux Klan proposes to invade the North, not merely to terrorize the Northern Negro as it has the Southern, but to spread "one hundred per cent. Americanism," that is, of the K. K. K. brand. Its "Imperial Wizard," Col. W. J. Simmons, informs the public that membership in his triple K organization is restricted to "only native-born American citizens who believe in the tenets of the Christian religion and owe no allegiance to any foreign country, political institution, sect, or persons." This Krowd of Kontemptible Kowards should take a course in United States Constitution and go to a Christian Sunday-school. They know neither the basic law of our country nor the abc of the Christian religion. Their organization is mainly anti-Catholic and anti-Jew. The *Nation* (January 19) says: "No right-thinking American can regard the Klan as aught but the antithesis of everything decent for which this country stands." Correct!

D.

German Religious Schools Guaranteed by the Constitution.

Disregarding protests from the American Legion, Governor Russell of Mississippi has declared that he will permit 162,000 Mennonites from Canada to settle in his State, although they are conscientious objectors to war on religious grounds, and do not send their children to the public schools, but to their own private schools, where only German is taught and spoken. "I have guaranteed," says the Governor, "religious and educational freedom to the Mennonites. I am giving them a guarantee only of what the Constitution of the United States guarantees to every one who enters its doors." (The *Nation*, January 19.) This Governor is one hundred per cent. American.

D.

President Harding a Freemason.

In one evening President-elect Harding was, by special process, passed through thirty-one degrees of Freemasonry, and made a full-fledged Mason. His advancement in the lodge had been blocked years ago after the first degree by objectors. If he had not been elected President of the United States, he would most likely still be kept in the first degree. As chief executive of our country he has become valuable to the Masons, and they have secured him for themselves. A record of the proceedings in this instance is found in the *American Tyler-Keystone* for November, 1920, p. 169, and in the *Christian Cynosure* for November, 1920, p. 196. The *Ohio-Waisenfreund* remarks suggestively: "We wonder what Harding would say if some one were to ask him to turn Catholic." The *Lutherische Kirchen-*

zeitung (January 22), from which we have gleaned these facts, remarks editorially: "In recent times the (Freemasons') Lodge has become so strong that it dares to force every person who is elected President to become a member of its organization. According to the Constitution of our country no religious qualification is to be required of the incumbent of an office (of our Government). The Freemasons, however, set up the selfish claim that the President of our country must be a Freemason. They act as if membership in their lodge were an indispensable requisite for an efficient discharge of his office. This is infinite arrogance, to say no more. It is pertinent to ask: Why must the President be a member of this lodge? What compelling reason is there in this secret organization, and its secret doings and practises? Has Freemasonry become a dark, secret power that can dictate to the officers of our Government? This lodge makes it necessary for the President to take two oaths: one behind closed doors by which he becomes pledged to Freemasonry, the other at Washington. However, that is the very thing for which this mother of the brood 'of lodges is striving,—it wants to rule. The lodge rules in France, in England, in Italy, and wherever English and French influence asserts itself. Who can tell what part was acted by this dark, secret power during the late war? This chapter, too, will some day be lighted up. —Harding submitted; that is small honor for him. His action may show political prudence, and may secure him certain advantages among lodge people, but it is, in itself, simply contemptible. His submission reveals a weakness for which we have only profound regret. Religious considerations did not influence Harding. In a religious respect it is likely that he has lost little by his action. But there are other considerations, such as liberty, independence, genuine Americanism. These, too, are of great value. But Harding has set aside these considerations and sold himself to the Freemasons. His precedent will exert an evil influence on the Church: it will draw many into the lodge. The Church is being weakened, and there is an effort made to force her to surrender to the lodge. Enough churches have already taken up a position beneath this secret tree. The process continues until the lodge has eaten out the heart of true religion from the Church. All other lodges aid in this endeavor, but the Freemasons lead in it."

D.

Sunday Blue Laws.

The Dearborn Independent (January 15, 1921) offers some interesting data concerning the so-called "blue laws," the proposed reenactment of which has so recently stirred our nation. It says in part:—

"To Connecticut belongs the honor of being the home and originating point, in our country, of the blue laws. These were contained in what is known as the New Haven Statutes, framed from the strictest English and Scotch models.

"The casual student of history is more or less familiar with

these old Puritan Sunday laws. A man, for example, was forbidden to kiss his wife on the Lord's Day, nor could a woman kiss her child; he could not shave himself; run, or even saunter about in his own garden; no work could be done; even the cooking of the Sunday meals had to be performed on Saturday. The Puritan Sunday was a day of almost continuous religious exercises, reverent behavior, and sober conduct. The punishment meted out to the violators of the sundry Sunday laws was severe—flogging, the stocks, imprisonment, fine, and so on.

“And now to-day, as in olden times, a group of citizens of the United States has become suddenly appalled at the wickedness of our nation. A great reform wave is gathering head to make the world better. And the first action of the new Puritans is a plan to return to the Puritan Sunday, and we find ourselves in the midst of a great discussion, *pro* and *con*.

“The crusaders are hard at work at the nation's capital, where they are framing drastic legislation which they hope to get enacted. They are not entirely unpractical or unbusinesslike in their methods at Washington—neither do they boast that they expect to be victorious at once. This is to be their initial drive, and if they are able even to bring about the passage of laws restricting the Sunday amusements of the District of Columbia, they will be quite satisfied. Other reforms will come later. Supporting their organization in the Senate is Senator Jones of Washington, while in the House, Representative Temple of Pennsylvania is the champion of their viewpoint. Eventually they hope to pass an amendment to the Constitution, including a code for Sunday and for divorces. Prominent in the movement at Washington are Dr. E. C. Dinwiddie and Miss Laura B. Church, both noted for their aggressive work with the Anti-Saloon League.”

In opposition to the proposed Sunday laws the article quotes Dr. Manning, rector of New York's famous old Trinity Church, as follows:—

“First, such a method would be an unwarranted invasion of proper individual liberty. We have no right to attempt to compel the observance of particular religious customs. It is right for the law to restrain needless business on Sunday so as to secure Sunday as a day of rest for all. As far as possible the law should give to all a day of freedom from ordinary occupations, a day which they may devote to religious observance, if they so desire. Further than this the law may not rightly go.

“Secondly, I object to any revival of the Puritan Sabbath in the interest of Sunday observance and in the very name of religion itself. A great deal of the present-day laxity is a reaction against the exaggerated severity of those times. The Puritan idea of Sunday was always a mistaken one, and it never represented a consensus of the opinion of the Church. It never represented more than the peculiar views of a relatively small class of Christians. There is

not a word in the New Testament which supports such an idea of the Sabbath. On the contrary, our Lord rebuked the Puritans of His day and told them that the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." MUELLER.

The Pope and the Iednota.

Concerning the recent movement in Czecho-Slovakia, centered in the clerical society called "Iednota," the *Biblical Review* (January, 1921), quoting Mr. Sherwood Eddy in the *Congregationalist*, writes: "In five months about 200,000 have joined the movement. The whole nation is now in a state of transition. A national Church like that of England may be formed. I have just met the national leader of this new movement. They have adopted for their services the national language; they stand for a married priesthood, an open Bible, and the whole position maintained by Hus at the beginning of the Reformation five centuries ago."

The attitude of the Roman Pontiff towards this new movement is clearly defined in an address held before the College of Cardinals, convened in secret session in the Vatican on December 16, 1920. In this address, which is published in the *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* (December, 1920), the Pope declares: 1) That having in vain tried to bring back the Czecho-Slovak priests to duty and sanity (*ad officium sanitatemque revocare*, p. 585), he most vehemently declares himself in favor of the decision of the bishops that the Iednota be dissolved (*ut generalis consociatio Cleri Czeci, Iednota quae dicitur, dissolveretur*, p. 586), and that in its place diocesan societies be organized under the jurisdiction of the bishops; 2) that where the Iednota have injured the discipline of the Church by preaching in the vernacular (*et ea in vulgus praedicando attulisset detrimentum ecclesiasticae disciplinae*, p. 586), the integrity of the Church, where it has been violated, be restored (*integritatem, ubi violatam vidissent, restituerent*, p. 586); 3) that, since to a large extent the power and glory of the Latin Church depends upon the celibacy of the priests (*Constat enim, si Latina viget floretque Ecclesia, magnam partem roboris gloriaeque eius ab ipso clericorum caelibatu manare*, p. 587), it should for this reason be carefully preserved; because "*fore numquam, ut haec Apostolica Sedes sanctissimam eam maximeque salutarem legem caelibatus ecclesiastici aliqua ex parte extenuando mitiget, nedum aboleat*," p. 587; 4) that the innovations, which some have tried to introduce into the discipline of the Church, pertaining to the vernacular, shall never be approved by the Holy See (*Negamus eas, quas nonnulli contendunt inducere in Ecclesiae disciplinam, exactas ad popularem rationem, rerum novitates, unquam ab Apostolica Sede approbari posse*), p. 587. — This attitude of the Pope reminds one of the words of Luther, in which he says that because of the decrees of men there is to-day a greater bondage than has ever been under the Law. (St. L. IV, 670.) MUELLER.