

A CATHOLIC PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY

THE spirit of an epoch or even of a civilization is often concentrated in one artistic production, be it a work of art or of literature. Such works offer us short and direct roads into the heart of that epoch or civilization. This representative character may belong to a book as the sovereign achievement of its spiritual environment, the crown of a long development of thought and feeling. Such books were the *Divine Comedy* and the *Summa* of St. Thomas. But a book may also be representative as containing and summarizing precisely the average attainment and outlook. Such is the collection of short lives of the Saints made by an Italian Bishop, Petrus de Natalibus. It is true that his *Catalogus Sanctorum* did not appear till 1493. My edition, a black letter folio copiously illustrated by the quaintest woodcuts, was printed by Petit and Penet of Lyons, in 1534. Nevertheless the book is entirely mediæval. No breath of the Renaissance has reached it. It is a compilation of utmost industry and equal lack of criticism from all the accepted hagiographic sources. In its pages, therefore, will be found in a manageably condensed form the legends popular with the mediæval reader. If you would know what legend made a particular saint interesting to our ancestors, the *Catalogus* is almost sure to contain it. It is a key to mediæval art. Its illustrations are one in spirit and treatment with the images and pictures of the northern Gothic church. Its virgins are sisters of the thin-lipped maidens, somewhat prim, but always stately, of Norfolk rood-screens. Its Apostles might have been copied from a window or parclose. Hence the *Catalogus* mirrors the mediæval mind, the spirituality, and there-

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fore the greatness, the unity and wholeness of its understanding of the world, and its often childish limitations of application and embodiment. We might, indeed, be tempted to dismiss the book and the religious world it depicts with annoyance or amusement at its naive credulity, the unbounded appetite for marvels, the puerile delight in crude horrors. Dragons are of frequent occurrence, as the dragon which St. Amos breaks into two and another who slew over three hundred with its breath, and whose mouth Pope St. Silvester binds with a thread. A governor's wife is left for dead in a cave, lies there entranced two years, visits in spirit the holy places in company of the Magdalene, and wakes to life on her husband's return to her apparent corpse. All the while she has fed her infant. A shepherd points out to her angry father the direction of St. Barbara's flight. He and his flock are turned to stone. St. Brendan and his companions voyage strange seas in search of the earthly paradise. They disembark on a large fish called "a Jaso," mistaking it for an island. When they kindle a fire the fish moves, and plunges into the sea as they regain their ship. At Easter they reach an island where white birds speak with human voice and tell the saint they are the fallen angels whose sin was least. From hell's gate demons shoot fiery arrows at the travellers. Judas is found refreshing himself on a boulder which he had placed in a muddy street to assist the passers-by. "Belial, the son of Beelzebub" appears to St. Juliana in prison to tempt her to apostasy. She binds him, flogs him with her chain and drags him after her through the city. At North Elmham on the rood-screen we see him thus bound at her feet like a pet dog. Inevitably we read of Constantine refusing a bath of infant's blood for cure of his leprosy, of his subsequent baptism by Silvester and donation to him of the Roman territory; of St. Christopher passing in search of the

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strongest master from the service of the king to the service of Satan and from Satan to Christ; of St. Dorothy sending apples and roses from the paradise of her spouse to the lawyer who had asked for them in mockery. It is a child's wonderland where the marvellous has become the natural. The most extraordinary torments leave the martyrs unhurt, and idols fall to pieces at their prayers. Sometimes there is a ludicrous touch in the catalogue of horrors: for example, the mixture of mustard and vinegar, French mustard in fact, poured down the nostrils of St. Eulalia. Even the episodes of the New Testament are retold with marvellous embellishments. The Magi in prayer on a mountain top beheld a star "having in the midst the likeness of a most lovely child." A palm tree bows in worship of the Divine Infant. The vineyard of Engeddi, transplanted by the legend to Egypt, is said to bear balsam when watered from the fountain in which Our Lady washed the clothes of Jesus. While Our Lord ascends, the angels sing the Office hymn of the feast, tune and all, as it stands in the Breviary or rather stood till Pope Urban, either ignorant or incredulous of its supernatural origin, ventured to alter the words. It is easy to laugh at all this, easy to dismiss it with contempt as a mass of lies. But this Christian mythology deserves that title no more than the pagan, and if it is far less artistic, for it was never moulded by Hellenic imagination, it is far more moral. And whereas the pagan mythology expressed a religion of human error, this Christian mythology adorns and symbolizes a religion of Divine truth. Perhaps the nearest approach to a lie is the author's statement that he has proved by personal experiment (*experimento probavi*) that a bunch of pennyroyal gathered at dawn on the feast of St. John the Baptist, dried, and placed on the altar during the midnight Mass of Christmas turns green again. But we may allow for the effect of innocent

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self-suggestion. No doubt there is a free gratification in this hagiology of popular tastes now supplied by novelette and cinema. But throughout there dominates a deeply religious and moral standpoint absent in these pagan substitutes. If scenes of lurid temptation are common, a supernatural standard of chastity is always maintained. If the saint accomplishes the feats of the magician, his magic is his personal holiness. These tales of incredible or impossible miracles witness to a profound belief that the natural order is essentially subservient to the supernatural, matter the servant of spirit. Though evidence of this subordination was sought too hastily, too uncritically, this view of the world possesses a substantial truth as against the naturalism which sees nature as a machine, indifferent if not hostile, to the life and needs of the soul. Certainly there is a defective sense both of the complexity of the universe, and of the Divine manifestation in the phenomena of normal experience.

If the mediæval presentation of Catholicism had been true to its own principles, it would have resisted the naturalism of the Renaissance. But the existence of such limitations does not invalidate the principles thus unduly limited in their expression. Hence amid much that is merely quaint though possessed of a pleasing simplicity and steeped in deeply religious feeling there are passages in the *Catalogus* which come upon the reader with a sense of sublimity, as statements of principles in application so wide, in penetration so deep, as still to possess a wealth of instruction and suggestion. Pre-eminently is this true of the prologue. Its first reading was wonder and delight at so sublime a philosophy of history thus stated as the basis of an obviously popular and quite average book. A second reading deepened admiration. To be sure, the teaching of this prologue is not original. It is a statement of fundamental Catholic doctrine.

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Most probably even the treatment is taken from some earlier work. But to myself who came to it for the first time the exposition possessed such a freshness and force that I think it will be of interest to others if I invite them to study it with me.

The author explains the Christian Year and incidentally the plan of his work as a presentation of the supernatural history of mankind. He gathers up the whole of human history and presents it as the accomplishment, still incomplete, of one supreme fact—the marriage of the Word with humanity. “Since by the witness both of Holy Scripture and the Fathers the union between Christ Our Lord and the Church of His saints is compared to human marriage, as Very Truth testifies in His parable, ‘the Kingdom of Heaven is likened to a king that made a marriage for his son,’ a parable explained by doctors of the intercourse between the Word of God and our humanity, it is evident that after the example of temporal nuptials the wedding of the Lamb must contain these five properties: the negotiation of the contract, the mutual promise of the parties, the espousal of the bride by a ring, her solemn translation to the house of her husband, and the consummation of the marriage by bodily conjunction, from which ensues a sixth property, namely, the procreation of children. . . . Wherefore the course of human history from the beginning of the world to its end is divided into five parts, in which we can discover the five afore-said properties comprised in the Divine Marriage, all which are represented by holy mother church in five divisions of the cycle of the year.” The author does not even devote a complete sentence to the statement of his fundamental idea, a marriage of the Word and humanity. He begins by using it as a presupposition on which to base his scheme of the five elements or moments of that union. It is for him a commonplace of Scripture and the Fathers. But this commonplace

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is the most magnificent and inexhaustibly rich philosophy of history that has been or could be conceived. Our human history, so full apparently of pettiness and failure, and at best a flux of impermanent persons and movements determined by no rational or moral law, destined to no final goal, is conceived as no less than the expression and incarnation in the body of mankind of the Absolute Reason of God. The Eternal Word, the reflex of the inaccessible light of the Godhead whose least ray is a beauty of nature or art, the self-expression of Godhead is itself manifest in man immediately in Jesus Christ, the Word made Flesh, mediately since the bride is one flesh with the bridegroom, in His Church-Body, the community of all souls united to that Word Incarnate by the reception of His spirit. The entire historical order is thus directed to an end in which redeemed mankind shall be a revelation of the Divine Truth, one Truth in all, harmonious and self-consistent, yet diversely mirrored in every soul according to its unique capacity and work. Thus is the historical process itself no meaningless flux but a revelation of absolute truth and rationality. Nor is this a barren truth of the intellect alone a Hegelian idea. For union with the Word is reception of His Spirit, and that Spirit is the Absolute Love or Good Will which necessarily and indivisibly proceeds from the Truth. No truth is really apprehended save by the entire soul and as a living force moving the will. Otherwise we have but an abstract and therefore dead "notional" apprehension, to employ Newman's distinction, not a "real" perception. Nor can we obtain this real apprehension without a previous willing of truth. We must love truth before we can find it. Thus bare faith is worthless. It is faith operative through love, or energized by love (Gal. 5) that unites us with God. In so far as any human work expresses a loving apprehension of truth it is constituted a work of art.

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Great or small, according to the scope of its truth, it is an organic whole, the living body of a truth dynamic throughout in the love of that truth. There is nothing superfluous, nothing inharmonious. Each part is what it is because it serves the total expression of the truth of the whole and is animated by love of this truth. Redeemed humanity is thus one work of Divine human art in which every soul expresses in its degree and place the Truth-Word of God, and is moved and moulded in the fulfilment of this function by God's Spirit-Love of His Truth-Word. As in the work of art its beauty is the harmonious because organic expression of its truth by its love, so this humanity is resplendent with the beauty of its harmonious organic expression of the Truth-Word through the Love-Spirit, a beauty itself a reflection of the Divine Beauty constituted by the inner harmony of the triune Godhead. This is that beauty of the king's daughter which is from within, as indeed all beauty must be in its measure. Human history is the preparation and working out by Divine Truth and Love of this manifestation in mankind. Its achievement is so slow and so imperfect because it is effected in our free co-operation with God's Truth and Love. But as a Divine work its accomplishment is infallible, though purgatory must unite with earth life to achieve it.

All partial philosophies reveal their imperfection; that is their error when confronted with this philosophy of supernature. The economic view of history which regards it as determined solely by material forces, the kindred naturalism which explains it as a biological struggle for existence, or in more sublimated form as the manifestation of a "will to power," the conception of a purely humanist progress with its irrational faith that mankind must improve itself from its own resources by mere continuance, the barren intellectualism of many idealist systems, the metaphysics of pure will

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or of its instinctive form, the Bergsonian élan that lacks finality, Nietzsche's "everlasting return" of all things, these broken lights, these onesided or unbalanced and therefore inadequate interpretations of experience display their defectiveness by juxtaposition with the Catholic philosophy taken so simply for granted by our almost forgotten hagiographer. Of further vistas that it opens, as the ideal conception of marriage implicit in it, or the functional organization of society for the satisfaction of the human spirit there is no space to speak. Only be it remarked that this philosophy *is* essentially social, a mysticism which supplements the union of the individual soul in its marriage with the Word through the Spirit by the marriage of the entire supernatural humanity of which that soul is an organic part, its union an organic function. Moreover, this conception of history harmonizes eternity, the Timeless Word, with temporal progress, its historic manifestation, so that the cycle of the year with its changes of fast and festival is the compendium of a world history in which past and future are united in the revelation of timeless Reality. A value is truly effected in and by man because it already exists in God, and His will for man. Progress is possible because it is grounded in a timeless present whose infinite worth has already been revealed in the past in the historic Incarnation and Redemption celebrated by the ecclesiastical cycle.

"The first period was that in which was effected the negotiation of the Lamb's wedding. It extended from Adam to the advent of Christ. As in a human marriage, many preparatory discussions of the wedding between the Word and His Church were now accomplished by the mediation of the Fathers and Prophets of the Old Testament, who both desired with extreme longing Christ's incarnation yet to come, and in a continuous stream of prophecy foretold His coming.

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This period is represented from the beginning of Advent till Christmas in the person of Fathers and Prophets demanding in those days the future Christ and prophesying His advent." We may regard this time as still present among non-Christian people as their highest hopes and deepest intuitions witness to some aspect of Christian truth. "These matrimonial negotiations took place in four forms by the inspiration of the natural law from Adam to Abraham, by circumcision imposed upon the Fathers from Abraham to Moses, by the promulgation of the written law from Moses to David, by the inspired witness of the prophets from David to Christ." These modes are represented by the four weeks of Advent, and of each respectively Petrus interprets the Sunday epistles. With the Dominican use he inverts the Roman order for the third and fourth Sundays. But he finds it difficult to discover an allusion to the written law in these epistles. The underlying idea is, however, sound and valuable. If historical criticism raises difficulties about the exact chronological division, on the other hand it is easy to give a wider extension to these four modes of the *præparatio evangelica*. Natural law even in the most ill-informed individual or tribal conscience points toward the two-fold law of charity. Circumcision, which is spread among widely diverse races and tribes, like other similar rites of initiation, however crudely conceived, prefigures and indicates a consecration and elevation of our natural forces and instincts to a higher order of divine subordination and service—a "sublimation of *libido*" the psycho-analyst might term it—a sanctification of concupiscence, the life instinct and will of human nature by and in charity. The Mosaic law crowns all codes of positive legislation, and shews them as prophetic of the inner and spiritual law of the Truth in the Incarnate Word, operative as love throughout

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redeemed and supernaturalized humanity. The inspired Jewish prophets crown and illuminate the Christian and supernatural witness, implicit in every intuition of spiritual truth granted to philosopher, poet or artist. Thus Advent presents the preparation in pagan humanity and in the imperfect revelation of Judaism for man's supernatural elevation and union with God in Christ.

"The second period, in which was effected the stipulation and contract of mutual consent between the Word and man, was from the Incarnation of Christ to His Baptism when the Word was made Flesh, dwelt among us and, by His growth and education to maturity, was manifest as one of ourselves. This period the church represents from Christmas to Septuagesima." The liturgy divides the period into three to represent in this three-fold division three moments of this union between the Word Incarnate and mankind. The first of these represents the marriage contract between the Word and the Jews in the revelation to the Shepherds (Christmas to the Epiphany). The second represents the accomplishment of the same contract between the Word and the Gentiles, in the Epiphany to the wise men. The third period represents the conjunction of Jew and Gentile in the one fold of the church in virtue of their common union with Christ. It is the period between the Epiphany and Septuagesima when St. Paul's epistles, whose leading thought is this union of redeemed humanity in the one body of Christ, are read in the lessons of the Breviary. The reconciliation of mankind on a supernatural basis as the complete and mutually interdependent expression of God in man beyond all division of race or epoch, is the Christmas peace to men of good will which human society must accept or destroy itself by its dissensions.

"The third period in which was effected the espousal by God of the church by gift of a ring was from the

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baptism of Christ to the resurrection. In this time Christ espoused the Church His queen and bride by a gold ring set with three incomparable gems." The first-gem is a sapphire, "the colour of heavenly faith." Faith is a transcendence of the clear knowledge of discursive reason by apprehension of the incomprehensible self-revelation of the Unlimited Godhead. It is, therefore, aptly symbolized by blue, which is the colour of the most unlimited natural objects. The sea is blue, the sky is bluer than the sea, the blue of heaven symbolizing and expressing heavenly faith. Blue is also the colour of dim distance over a vast horizon-stretching landscape. Our Lord reveals Himself to faith by the preaching of His Gospel, and this, Petrus tells us, is represented by the liturgy from Septuagesima to Lent. On Septuagesima Sunday the parable of the labourers in the vineyard denotes the apostolic preaching preparing the way for Christ. On Sexagesima the parable of the Sower depicts the Word preaching to us in person, historically in the teaching of Christ, spiritually, it may be added, in the gift of faith which is the inhabitation of the Word in our minds. On Quinquagesima we hear of the miraculous cure of the blind man. This signifies the confirmation of the Gospel by miracles and in particular the illumination of the spiritual blindness of humanity. For Christian Truth is dynamic, a living and powerful force. How often St. Paul and his disciple, St. Luke, speak of the "force" (*δυναμις*) of the Gospel revelation of the Divine Word. The epistle for Quinquagesima, the song of charity, the motive principle of Christian work, confirms and emphasizes this dynamic.

The second gem is the emerald "of verdant hope."* It denotes penance practised by Christ for our example and set before us during Lent. This connection

* I read *spei* for the *speciei* of my text. The context seems to require this rendering.

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between penance and hope is not arbitrary. Penance, which is the rejection of natural satisfactions and the repression of a merely natural life for the sake of the supernatural life only to be consummated in eternity, is clearly the exercise of hope. And the green of spring fields and woods is the colour of growing life as it struggles against and overcomes the limits of inert matter and subordinates that matter to its purpose. Ultimately indeed there can be no life without the chlorophyll or leaf-green which alone can transmute inorganic matter into organic.

Green is thus a manifestation on the natural plane, and therefore a symbol of the penance struggle of the growing super-natural life to subdue *to itself our natural life* in hope of the final attainment of the soul's supernatural vital end, as the life of the plant aims in its growth at the attainment of its natural vital end. Of the four forms of penance two are fasting, set forth in Our Lord's fast in the desert (1st Sunday of Lent), and prayer, exemplified by his prayer on Tabor (the gospel of the second Sunday). That prayer is a difficult, often a painful struggle* to transcend the limits of nature by supernatural union with God, leading, indeed, to an illumination which is, however, transitory and intermittent is a further thought implicit in this gospel. The third Sunday depicts ~~alms-giving~~ by Our Lord's cure of the demoniac. The natural life struggle is by competition, by co-operation only within narrow limits. The supernatural life struggle is a co-operation and mutual self-donation between all the members of Christ. Petrus's fourth mode of penance is pilgrimage, exemplified in the Gospel of Our Lord's passage of the Lake of Galilee. This application, it must be admitted, is quaint and far fetched. But

* In us, not in Christ. Altogether Christ's penance, since He was without sin, can only be analagous to ours, who are sinners.

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it stresses the active character of the Christian life and combat.

The third gem in the wedding ring is a "fiery carbuncle." (I believe the ruby is intended), and is charity exemplified in Our Lord's passion. Beyond the obvious symbolism of blood, fire, the red symbol of charity, is a state of combustion, a state in which the burning object is consuming itself. This self-sacrifice of combustion is the source of all natural life. The sun by its incessant self-donation supplies the life and energy of all living things on earth. In this it is the symbol of Christ's death, the source of supernatural life. To this self-sacrifice of the fire of love are devoted for the two-fold precept of charity the two passion weeks. The first of these recalls the mental passion of Christ in His rejection by the Jews, "His own received Him not." Hence the Gospel of His rejection in the temple. We may extend this to the entire mental passion of Our Lord. Finally, in Holy Week we celebrate the crucifixion, in which Our Lord's body shared the sacrifice of His soul.

Neither the individual soul nor the Church as a body can effect its supernatural union with the Word and life by His Spirit rendered possible by Christ's historic redemption except by sharing individually and corporately in His life of penance, in His supernatural virtues, and in His passion and death in soul and body. This death to live, this night of sense and spirit, in which the body and each member shares the passion of the Head, is the bride's acceptance of the Bridegroom's ring.

"The fourth period, in which was effected the solemn home-bringing of the bride by the bridegroom, was from the resurrection of the Lord until Pentecost. In this time the Lord delivered from hell, in the person of the holy Fathers, the Church which He had espoused with His precious blood, and after a certain fashion

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took her from her father's house, this evil world, dowered her wondrously in soul and body, and in His Ascension introduced her along with Himself into her true and heavenly fatherland." Paschal week, according to Petrus, signifies the deliverance of the Church in the person of the Fathers from the bondage of Limbo, that is from the limits of the merely natural order and destiny within which fallen mankind was held captive. Low Sunday, with its white-robed neophytes, represents the endowment of the bridal humanity of the Word with the resurrection body, that body which perfectly obeys and reflects the Spirit-indwelt-soul, that body which more than fulfils the artist's ideal of the human form. In the second and third weeks the lessons from the Apocalypse represent the endowment of souls with the beatific vision. The fourth and fifth weeks, when lessons from the Catholic epistles insist on love, tell of the perfect love union consequent on the perfect vision of the understanding. From the Ascension to Pentecost we are told of the transference of redeemed humanity in the person of the Head to that heavenly state constituted by this beatific vision and love.*

This supernatural endowment and liberation of our humanity was, however, then accomplished only in **Christ**. In His members it is still in process of accomplishment. Therefore there is a fifth moment in the marriage of man and the Word—namely, this process of union as it is being effected through the ages. This, Petrus terms the consummation of the marriage. Perhaps it may be thought that he should have treated of this before the final endowment and perfect union of heaven. But our transference from earth to heaven as members of Christ's body and bride begins with the first reception of sanctifying grace which transfers us from the state of pure nature to the state of super-

* In the persons also of the pre-Christian saints.

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nature whose perfection is heaven. So it is also with the endowments of the bride. In earthly marriage the wife receives in the marriage contract the right to enjoy her husband's possessions, not their actual enjoyment. Similarly when we are wedded to the Word by incorporation into His Spouse, the Church, we receive in principle and right the supernatural endowments of Christ. Our grace is the principle of our future glory. In faith we possess the principle of beatific vision, in charity the principle of the perfect love union of heaven, both alike receptions of God's own life. Even the glorious bodily immortality of the Resurrection is in right and in germ bestowed upon us. The home-bringing and endowment of the bride and the consummation of the bridal are thus inseparably concomitant. But in the historic life and resurrection of Christ the perfect home-coming and endowment of humanity in the Head preceded the consummation of the marriage in the humanity of the members. Therefore it is necessarily presented first by the liturgy and Petrus.

“The fifth and final period in which was effected the consummation of the Divine Marriage from which ensues the procreation of children began on the Day of Pentecost and shall last until the second Advent of Christ. In this time Christ our Lord ” (the Person, therefore, of the Word) “is spiritually joined to His Bride, the Church, by the infusion of the Spirit, and also after a certain fashion corporally by reception of the Holy Eucharist. Thenceforward He ceases not to propagate the sons of adoption, born not of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God and the Spirit.” “Thus is the wedding between Christ and the Church consummated in the beginning of this season. This consummation is effected first by union of spirits which is of necessity principal.” If in human marriages union of soul were thus primary, and the bodily union secondary and sacramental to

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the "marriage of true minds," marriages would be happier than they often are, and we should hear less demand for easier divorce. "This spiritual consummation the Church represents on the feast of Pentecost and during its octave, at which time, by the outpouring of the promised Holy Spirit on the sons of adoption, the members are joined in a peculiar bond with the Head." "The consummation of this marriage is effected secondarily by bodily conjunction which the Church represents on the feast of Corpus Christi and during its octave, in which we celebrate that holy sacrament by whose reception the faithful are united with Christ even corporally." That the Blessed Sacrament is the bodily expression of the spiritual union between Christ and His members is a doctrine of the Fathers, supplementary to the Pauline teaching of the spiritual marriage. Modern psychology stresses the intimacy of union and co-operation between the psychical and the material. The scheme of redemption has never disjoined them. Whatever is effected in the soul or in its spiritual environment is expressed also in the body and in its material environment. Everywhere matter is elevated and glorified as the sacrament of spirit. The spiritual union of Pentecost, when our souls receive the Spirit of the Word, is completed by the bodily union of Corpus Christi, when our bodies receive the body of the Word. Art is the material embodiment of Truth perceived by love. The perfect marriage is the expression in physical union of a spiritual union constituted by a mutual love grounded in mutual understanding. These things are figures of the supernatural art and marriage, in which Truth, operative by love, is revealed even in the bodies and material environment of supernaturalized humanity.

"From Corpus Christi to Advent the children of the church are propagated." For the remainder of the ecclesiastical year the emphasis is transferred from

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the cycle of Our Lord's life and death to the feasts of the saints culminating in the feast of All Saints. These are the children of the wedding between the Word and mankind effected in Christ, His Spirit and His Sacraments. Petrus divides the saints into five categories—the apostles, the founders of the church ; the doctors, her master-builders ; the confessors, her keepers ; the martyrs, her defenders ; the virgins, who augment her. To each he assigns a period between Corpus Christi and Advent, basing his choice on analogies drawn from the books of Scripture read in each. These, however, are extremely fanciful, and would scarcely repay a detailed description. But it is worth our notice that to the virgins is assigned the function of increasing the church, an apparent paradox which teaches that virginity is no mere negation of natural fruitfulness, but its transcendence and inclusion in a less limited supernatural fertility. The conception of a unified yet functionally differentiated supernatural life at work in mankind uniting humanity with God in soul, body, and environment and revealing God in humanity throughout the course of history sums up the world-philosophy presented by Petrus. If the expression or the detailed application is occasionally quaint and naive, the perception is deeper, the scope wider, the wealth of possible application greater than are possessed by the most ambitious natural philosophies, even when framed by men of genius who lack the light of revelation to remove their individual or social limitations. Let this Catholic world-philosophy be applied to any branch of human thought or endeavour. Always will it be verified anew by the light received and given. Always will it provide for our human experience, whether personal or racial, that principle of unity which harmonizes and explains. Certainly the explanation and the harmony are imperfect, for our knowledge is as incomplete as is the growth of the

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supernatural life in humanity. But in proportion as the love-life of the Spirit with its corresponding faith-knowledge of Truth is accomplished in man, its philosophy will be proportionately more complete, and further spheres of experience will be brought within its explanation. This work is a progressive task for the future which is a conservation of past achievement, an activity in time which is a rest in the Eternal, a realization of humanity which is the revelation of God.

EDWARD INGRAM WATKIN.

