

MISCELLANEOUS.

CARDINAL MATHIEU ON THE CELIBACY OF THE CLERGY.

A distant subscriber of *The Open Court*, Mr. J. A. Barretto of the Hong-kong firm Barretto and Company, writes: "As you may not have seen the *Mercure de France* of January 16, I send you herein enclosed an article, or rather memoir, addressed by the late Cardinal Mathieu to the pope on the subject of the marriage of priests. It ought to interest your many readers in connection with the articles on 'Father Hyacinthe' and 'Marriage.'"

The article referred to is a very extensive review in the *Mercure* of the entire communication addressed by Cardinal Mathieu to the pope in 1904 and published last December in the *Nouvelle Revue* under the sponsorship of M. Pierre Harispe.

The reverend author first urges the suitability of permitting priests who have no private incomes to add to their clerical profession also that of either medicine or law. It is possible that there are reasons why such an innovation might be of advantage in certain communities in France, and he goes into detail with regard to the benefits for both the priest and the community if the priest were skilled in medicine. Nevertheless the argument seems most to be designed as the entering wedge of a plea for a more intelligent scientific education: He says: "O, most Holy Father, if you will grant to your priests the permission to study and practise the science of medicine you will restore the authority of that beneficent science of which the ungodly have sought to deprive it."

In his plea against the celibacy of the clergy Cardinal Mathieu recalls the fact that "celibacy is a pagan institution" (at the same time emphasizing the distinction between celibacy and chastity), adding that "pagan Rome instituted the vestal virgins...and the despotism of the Roman empire instituted the celibacy of a whole class of citizens." He expresses himself very vigorously as follows:

"A man without a family is one without a root who can the more easily be controlled. He has no hold on life. He is a moral eunuch whose services seem the more certain and the more disinterested. Do not give people an excuse for saying that in order to assure itself more certainly of its hold on consciences the papacy has tried to renew this bondage and to reestablish this class of citizens who have lost the rights of men, by making them Levites, the eunuchs of the sanctuary.

"Your Holiness is not unaware of the irregularities which this state of things has caused in the ranks of the regular and secular clergy. It is enough to consult the historical annals of the church and the Vatican archives to be

convinced. It is enough to read the Church Fathers who have deplored the clergy's sins against nature throughout the centuries. It is enough to ask your own conscience as priest and confessor. Let not men be able to say that in the church of God all crimes against divine law may obtain pardon, and that one human law alone is not tolerated; that all the sins against nature are permitted by it and that only the naural and divine ordinance of marriage does not find remission nor absolution. Put an end, Most Holy Father, to this antagonism between God and his work, between His law and yours. Let not Rome persist in an absolutism which belies the very acts of those who would proclaim her holy austerity. The most dissolute popes and pontiffs have been the most severe in their decrees against the marriage of priests as if they would fain conceal the corruption of their morals under cover of the strictness of their encyclicals and their pastoral letters. So true is it that saints are indulgent while libertines are implacable and unjust.

"This is why we humbly prostrate ourselves before Your Holiness, and there beseech you to extend the law of pardons to include the marriage of the priest, to give to every confessor the right to absolve and restore him in his own eyes, in order that purified and strong in his rights he may continue to serve the church as a Christian and as a father.

"Why might not the vital and apostolic energy of priests who are in the bonds of matrimony, be utilized even with the church?"

BOOK REVIEWS AND NOTES.

RELIGIOUS SYSTEMS OF THE WORLD. A Contribution to the Study of Comparative Religion. London: Sonnenschein, 1908. Pp. 824. Price \$1.75 net.

This volume is a collection of addresses delivered at the South Place Institute, London, England, the lecturers being among the foremost religious scholars such as the late Prof. C. P. Tiele, Professors James Legge, T. W. Rhys-Davids, L. H. Mills, F. C. Conybeare, also Mr. Frederic Harrison and many others of equal fame. Not only the ancient religions are here discussed such as the religions of Egypt, of the Hittites, of Babylon and Assyria, Judaism, Confucianism, Shintoism, Buddhism, Hinduism, Mohammedanism, Zoroastrianism, Parsecism, Mithraism, the comparison of Greece and Rome and Italy, but also the less important faiths of the Slavonians, the Teutons, etc., and in addition modern sects, such as the faith of the Nonconformists, the Baptists, the Methodists, the Irvingites, Unitarians, Theosophists (discussed by Mrs. Besant), Swedenborgians, Mormons, Modern Judaism, the Religion of Humanity (explained by Frederic Harrison), the Ethical movement and secularism. Each of the historic faiths is treated by a specialist in that line, and each of the modern sects by a representative member. The book will prove useful and it is only to be regretted that the print is so small as to be trying on the eye.

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DIE LOGISCHEN GRUNDLAGEN DER EXAKTEN WISSENSCHAFTEN. Von Dr. Paul Natorp. Leipsic: Teubner, 1910. Pp. 416.

Convinced of the necessity of readjusting the relation between the logical principle of the exact sciences and modern conditions, Prof. Paul Natorp of the University of Marburg discusses modern logic and mathematics in their significance to philosophy and the sciences. This problem is treated in seven