

COMPLETE IN THREE VOLUMES

RADIO REPLIES

First Volume

Given from the Catholic Broadcasting Station 2SM
Sydney, Australia

by

THE REV. DR. LESLIE RUMBLE, M.S.C.

Edited in Collaboration with

REV. CHARLES MORTIMER CARTY

Diocesan Missionary

With a Preface by

RT. REV. MSGR. FULTON J. SHEEN, D.D.

1,588 QUESTIONS and ANSWERS

on

CATHOLICISM AND PROTESTANTISM

These books are now widely used as texts and reference books in Study Clubs, High Schools, Colleges, Universities, Newman Clubs, Novitiates and Seminaries.

Invaluable for the uninformed Catholic—the educated and uneducated lapsed Catholic and Prospective Convert.

WIDE CIRCULATION AT MISSIONS AND RETREATS

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INTRODUCTION TO THE AMERICAN EDITION OF "RADIO REPLIES"

"Radio Replies" by Rev. Dr. Rumble, M.S.C., is the result of five years of answering questions during a one-hour Question Box Program over Radio Station 2SM Sydney, N.S.W. The revision of "Radio Replies" for American readers was prompted by the widespread interest the Australian edition created among Protestants and Catholics during the summer of 1937, when I was carrying on as a Catholic Campaigner for Christ, the Apostolate to the man in the street through the medium of my trailer and loud-speaking system. In the distribution of pamphlets and books on Catholicism "Radio Replies" proved the most talked of book carried in my trailer display of Catholic literature. The clergy and laymen engaged in Street Preaching agree that it is not so much what you say over the microphone in answer to questions from open air listeners but what you **GET INTO THEIR HANDS TO READ.**

My many converts of the highways and parks throughout the Archdiocese of St. Paul have embraced the faith as a result of studying this book. Whole families have come into the Church through reading the book by this renowned convert from Anglicanism. The delay in getting copies from Sydney and the prohibitive cost of the book on this side of the universe led me to petition the author to have published a **CHEAP AMERICAN EDITION** in order to get this encyclopedia of Catholic Doctrine into the hands of fellow citizens. Because of the author's genius for brevity, preciseness, fearlessness and keen logic that avoids the usually long Scriptural and Traditional arguments of the average question and answer book, which is beyond the capacity of the man in the street, this manual of 1,588 questions and replies has already attracted readers throughout Australia, New Zealand, Africa, India, England, Ireland, Canada and now the United States.

The questions he answers are the questions I had to answer before friendly and hostile audiences throughout my summer campaign. The piquant and provocative subject matter of this book makes it a fascinating assembly of 300 or more worth-while pamphlet tracts, a dictionary of doctrine for the desk of the **FAMILY**, the **STUDENT**, the **SHOP HAND**, the **OFFICE WORKER**, the **ATTORNEY**, the **DOCTOR**, the **TEACHER**, and the **PREACHER**. It is a handy standard reference book of excellence for popular questions which are more than ever being asked by restless and bewildered multitudes. It is a textbook for the Confraternities of Christian Doctrine Classes and Study Clubs.

A non-Catholic Professor after reading the book stated that, "If the Catholic Church could defend herself so logically as 'Radio Replies' demonstrates, then I do not see why you don't get more converts." Members of the Knights of Columbus, the Holy Name Societies and numerous women's societies have written in that they no longer have to apologetically say, "I can't answer that one." Catholic students in non-sectarian colleges and universities write in that they now walk the campus

with this book under their arms, ready for all challenges and that this manual of ready reference has cured their INFERIORITY COMPLEX ON EXPOSITION OF CATHOLIC CLAIMS. Lapsed Catholics have come into my trailer-office to confess that the reading of "Radio Replies" has brought them back to the Church.

I am grateful to His Excellency Archbishop John G. Murray, D.D. for his approval of this compendium of dogmatic and moral theology for readers of the American Commonwealth and I am deeply appreciative to Rt. Rev. Msgr. Fulton J. Sheen, D.D. for writing the Preface to this American edition.

From my experience on the Catholic Radio Hour, on the lecture platform, and in the pulpit, I do not hesitate to say that HERE AT LAST is the book that has something for everybody, the book for the UNINFORMED CATHOLIC, THE UNEDUCATED AND EDUCATED LAPSED CATHOLIC, and the PROSPECTIVE CONVERT.

REV. CHARLES MORTIMER CARTY

PREFACE

There are not over a hundred people in the United States who hate the Catholic Church. There are millions, however, who hate what they wrongly believe to be the Catholic Church—which is, of course, quite a different thing. These millions can hardly be blamed for hating Catholics because Catholics “adore statues”; because they “put the Blessed Mother on the same level with God”; because they say “indulgence is a permission to commit sin”; because the Pope “is a Fascist”; because the “Church is the defender of Capitalism.” If the Church taught or believed any one of these things it should be hated, but the fact is that the Church does not believe nor teach any one of them. It follows then that the hatred of the millions is directed against *error* and not against *truth*. As a matter of fact, if we Catholics believed all of the untruths and lies which were said against the Church, we probably would hate the Church a thousand times more than they do.

If I were not a Catholic, and were looking for the true Church in the world today, I would look for the one Church which did not get along well with the world; in other words, I would look for the Church which the world hates. My reason for doing this would be, that if Christ is in any one of the churches of the world today, He must still be hated as He was when He was on earth in the flesh. If you would find Christ today, then find the Church that does not get along with the world. Look for the Church that is hated by the world, as Christ was hated by the world. Look for the Church which is accused of being behind the times, as Our Lord was accused of being ignorant and never having learned. Look for the Church which men sneer at as socially inferior, as they sneered at Our Lord because He came from Nazareth. Look for the Church which is accused of having a devil, as Our Lord was accused of being possessed by Beelzebub, the Prince of Devils. Look for the Church which, in seasons of bigotry, men say must be destroyed in the name of God as men crucified Christ and thought they had done a service to God. Look for the Church which the world rejects because it claims it is infallible, as Pilate rejected Christ because He called Himself the Truth. Look for the Church which is rejected by the world as Our Lord was rejected by men. Look for the Church which amid the confusion of conflicting opinions, its members love as they love Christ, and respect its Voice as the very voice of its Founder, and the suspicion will grow, that if the Church is unpopular with the spirit of the world, then it is unworldly, and if it is unworldly, it is other-worldly. Since it is other-worldly it is infinitely loved and infinitely hated as was Christ Himself. But only that which is Divine can be infinitely hated and infinitely loved. Therefore the Church is Divine.

If then, the hatred of the Church is founded on erroneous beliefs, it follows that basic need of the day is instruction. Love depends on knowledge for we cannot aspire nor desire the unknown. Our great country is filled with what might be called *marginal Christians*, i. e., those who live on the fringe of religion and who are descendants of Christian living parents, but who now are Christians only in name. They retain a few of its ideals out of indolence and force of habit; they know the glorious history of Christianity only through certain emasculated forms of it, which

have married the spirit of the age and are now dying with it. Of Catholicism and its sacraments, its pardon, its grace, its certitude and its peace, they know nothing except a few inherited prejudices. And yet they are good people who want to do the right thing, but who have no definite philosophy concerning it. They educate their children without religion, and yet they resent the compromising morals of their children. They would be angry if you told them they were not Christian, and yet they do not believe that Christ is God. They resent being called pagans and yet they never take a practical cognizance of the existence of God. There is only one thing of which they are certain and that is that things are not right as they are. It is just that single certitude which makes them what might be called the great "potentials," for they are ready to be pulled in either of two directions. Within a short time they must take sides; they must either gather with Christ or they must scatter; they must either be with Him or against Him; they must either be on the cross as other Christs, or under it as other executioners. Which way will these *marginal Christians* tend? The answer depends upon those who have the faith. Like the multitudes who followed Our Lord into the desert, they are as sheep without a shepherd. They are waiting to be shepherded either with the sheep or goats. Only this much is certain. Being human and having hearts they want more than class struggle and economics; they want Life, they want Truth, and they want Love. In a word, they want Christ.

It is to these millions who believe wrong things about the Church and to these *marginal Christians*, that this little book is sent. It is not to prove that they are "wrong"; it is not to prove that we are "right"; it is merely to present the truth in order that the truth may conquer through the grace of God. When men are starving, one need not go to them and tell them to avoid poison; nor to eat bread because there are vitamins in bread. One need only go to them and tell them that they are starving and here is bread, and the laws of nature will do the rest. This book of "Radio Replies" with 1,588 questions and answers goes out on a similar mission. Its primary task is not to humble the erroneous; not to glorify the Catholic Church as intellectual and self-righteous, but to present the truth in a calm, clear manner in order that with the grace of God souls may come to the blessed embrace of Christ.

It is not only the point of "Radio Replies" to prove that the Church is the only completely soul-satisfying Church in existence at the present day; it is also to suggest that the Catholic Church is the only Church existing today which goes back to the time of Christ. History is so very clear on this point, it is curious how many minds miss its obviousness. When therefore you, the readers of "Radio Replies" in the twentieth century, wish to know about Christ and about His early Church, and about His mysteries, we ask you to go not only to the written records but to the living Church which began with Christ Himself. That Church or that Mystical Person which has been living all these centuries is the basis of our faith and to us Catholics it speaks this way: "I live with Christ. I saw His Mother and I know her to be a Virgin and the loveliest and purest of all women in heaven or on earth; I saw Christ at Caesarea-Philippi, when after changing Simon's name to Rock He told him he was the rock upon which the Church would be built and that it would endure unto the consummation of the world. I saw Christ hanging on a cross and I saw Him

rise from His tomb; I saw Magdalene rush to His feet; I saw the angels clad in white beside the great stone; I was in the Cenacle room when doubting Thomas put fingers into His hands; I was on Olivet when He ascended into heaven and promised to send His Spirit to the apostles to make them the foundation of His new Mystical Body on earth. I was at the stoning of Stephen, saw Saul hold the garments of those who slew him, and later I heard Saul, as Paul, preach Christ and Him crucified; I witnessed the beheading of Peter and Paul in Rome, and with my very eyes saw tens of thousands of martyrs crimson the sands with their blood, rather than deny the faith Peter and Paul had preached unto them; I was living when Boniface was sent to Germany, when Augustine when to England, Cyril and Methodius to the Poles, and Patrick to Ireland; at the beginning of the ninth century I recall seeing Charlemagne crowned as king in matters temporal as Peter's vicar was recognized as supreme in matters spiritual; in the thirteenth century I saw the great stones cry out in tribute to me, and burst into Gothic Cathedrals; in the shadows of those same walls I saw great Cathedrals of thought arise in the prose of Aquinas and Bonaventure, and in the poetry of Dante; in the sixteenth century I saw my children softened by the spirit of the world leave the Father's house and reform the faith instead of reforming discipline which would have brought them back again into my embrace; in the last century and at the beginning of this I heard the world say it could not accept me because I was behind the times. I am not behind the times, I am only behind the scenes. I have adapted myself to every form of government the world has ever known; I have lived with Caesars and kings, tyrants and dictators, parliaments and presidents, monarchies and republics. I have welcomed every advance of science, and were it not for me the great records of the pagan world would not have been preserved. It is true I have not changed my doctrine, but that is because the 'doctrine is not mine but His who sent Me.' I change my garments which belong to time, but not my Spirit which belongs to eternity. In the course of my long life I have seen so many modern ideas become unmodern, that I know I shall live to chant a requiem over the modern ideas of this day, as I chanted it over the modern ideas of the last century. I celebrated the nineteen-hundredth anniversary of the death of my Redeemer and yet I am no older now than then, for my Spirit is Eternal, and the Eternal never ages. I am the abiding Personage of the centuries. I am the contemporary of all civilizations. I am never out of date, because the dateless; never out of time, because the timeless. I have four great marks: I am One, because I have the same Soul I had in the beginning; I am Holy, because that Soul is the Spirit of Holiness; I am Catholic, because that Spirit pervades every living cell of my Body; I am Apostolic, because my origin is identical with Nazareth, Galilee and Jerusalem. I shall grow weak when my members become rich and cease to pray, but *I shall never die*. I shall be persecuted as I am persecuted now in Mexico and Russia; I shall be crucified as I was on Calvary, but I shall rise again, and finally when time shall be no more, and I shall have grown to my full stature, then shall I be taken into heaven as the bride of my Head, Christ, where the celestial nuptials shall be celebrated, and God shall be all in all, because His Spirit is Love and Love is Heaven."

AUTHOR'S FOREWORD

THE matter contained in this book is the result of a "Question and Answer" Session conducted by the writer during a continuous period of five years by Radio in Sydney, N.S.W. The Session, given from the Catholic Station 2SM on Sunday evenings, averages one hour in duration, from 7 to 8 p.m., and so great has been the interest awakened that letters have poured in from all the States of Australia, as well as from New Zealand. The work still continues with unabated appeal, apparently because, even though the same difficulties recur at times, they are proposed from so many varying aspects by different inquirers that no sense of sameness is experienced. Certainly no questions have ever had to be improvised to keep the Session fully occupied. The results of the work have more than justified the labor it has entailed. Constant expressions of gratitude are received from Catholics, who appreciate the deeper instruction in their faith the Sessions have afforded them; from careless Catholics who have returned to the fervent practice of their religion; and, above all, from non-Catholics, whether to acknowledge the dispelling of their prejudices, or to announce their actual conversion to the Catholic Church. As many as thirty notifications of conversion have been received from distant places in a month. And by no means all, of course, think to write in of God's goodness to them.

That a personal element has been unavoidable will be evident from these few typical questions and answers due to people who found it utterly incredible that anyone in his senses could become a Catholic. Such questions varied through all the grades of suspicion, grudging concession, accusation, prediction, and compassion.

Q. Are you a Catholic born, or were you converted to the Catholic Church in later life?

A. I was born of Protestant parents and brought up as a Protestant, joining the Catholic Church in later life.

Q. It is so unbelievable that one who has tasted the open, free, and sincere worship of a Protestant Church could change to the Catholic religion.

A. If it be a fact, and it is a fact, it is not unbelievable. You face so many things that are not facts, that you ought to feel no difficulty in facing things that are facts. As for the open, free, and sincere worship of a Protestant Church, I did taste it, but for me it proved in the end to be not only open, but empty; it was altogether too free from God's prescriptions; and whilst I admit that many Protestants are quite sincere, I would not have been sincere had I remained a Protestant against my convictions. So I followed the grace God gave me, and became a Catholic. In doing so, not for a moment have I lost my respect for good Protestants.

As for your finding it unbelievable that I should change to the *Catholic* religion, that is inevitable when you entertain such notions of that Catholic religion. Whilst I entertained similar notions I was as opposed to it as you are. But I can assure you that you have not a true idea of the Catholic Church, your notions being based upon lack of information, or even upon wrong information.

Q. Your answers seem to show culture and refinement.

A. That is a very candid admission. Apparently you never dreamed that a Catholic could be cultured or refined. The dispelling of this prejudice is one good result of these talks.

Q. *You are a Catholic with a Protestant broad mind, fashioned at home when your mind was plastic, before you became subservient to the Catholic Church.*

A. I am a Catholic, I hope with a broad mind, though I hope still more, not with a Protestant mind. As for the plastic period, my broad-minded Protestant teachers taught me to dislike the Catholic Church intensely, whilst my subserviency to the Church is but submission to the Will of God, Whom only "Thou shalt serve."

Q. *You have a good knowledge of the Bible, but you must have acquired it when you were a Protestant, not since you became a Catholic and a Priest.*

A. I have constantly read the Bible since the age of ten. In my Protestant days I knew the Authorized Version fairly well, and if the moment a man begins to read the Bible it leads him out of the Catholic Church, you will find it difficult to explain how this did not keep me out. Yet I can assure you that not until I did become a Catholic did my real study and understanding of the Bible begin. Before becoming a Priest I had to study Sacred Scripture daily for many years, and far from shaking my faith, this has but confirmed my decision to live and die a member of the Catholic Church.

Q. *If you really knew Catholicism, you would not advocate it.*

A. You are convinced that you have a right idea of Catholicism, and cannot see how I could accept it, if *that* be Catholicism. But *that* is not Catholicism. And since our ideas conflict as to what Catholicism really is like, the only thing to do is to ask whose ideas are more likely to be correct. I have given many years to the study of Catholicism, and am, at present, professor of theology in a Catholic Seminary. The authorities of the Catholic Church at least give me credit for knowing the Catholicism that must be taught to future Priests. How much time have you devoted to the study of Catholicism?

Q. *You can be mistaken, even though sincere.*

A. That is quite true, and I have often been mistaken, as most men at times. And it is precisely to make sure that I will not be mistaken in the supremely important matter of religion that I cling to a Church which cannot be mistaken, but must be right where I might be wrong. God knew that so many sincere men would make mistakes that He deliberately established an infallible Church to preserve them from error where it was most important that they should not go wrong.

Q. *You once quoted an Anglican clergyman, who said that ex-Catholics in Anglicanism were weeds thrown out of the Catholic Church by the Pope. Are you not a weed thrown out of Protestantism and taking root in the Catholic garden?*

A. No. I was not thrown out of Protestantism. A Priest, ex-communicated because he will not live up to Catholic ideals, can often find a home in some Protestant Church. He has gone lower, and he knows it. I was attracted by the higher ideals of the Catholic Church, and begged as a favor to be allowed to share in Catholic privileges. After twenty years of Catholic life, that is still my happiest memory, notwithstanding the fact that the Catholic Church demands a far higher standard than any other Church.

Q. *What do you hope to gain by deserting, and then publicly denouncing, the faith of your forefathers?*

A. By deserting the faith of my immediate forefathers, I went back to the faith of their forefathers, and to the true religion they should never have deserted. They

deserted truth for error; I deserted error for truth. That was what I hoped to gain, and I have gained it.

As for publicly denouncing the faith of my forefathers, that is not the object of these talks. My purpose is to explain the Catholic position to those who desire such information, for I know that a clear explanation of the truth will carry its own weight with unprejudiced people. If inquirers ask me why the Catholic Church condemns their religion, I tell them sincerely and frankly, and I presume that this is what they wish.

Q. You questioned what you were taught and changed, though you did not change entirely. You will further question the doctrines of the Catholic Church, and perhaps change your religion again.

A. It is true that I changed, and that I did not change entirely. I changed to Catholicism, but still preserve traces of my original lineaments, am still the son of the same human father and mother, and still have a tendency to some of the same faults which grew up with me from my youth.

Also I shall certainly ask further questions about Catholic teaching, since its depths are almost inexhaustible, even though I am too sure that God speaks through the Catholic Church to dream of questioning those teachings. It is one thing to ask questions about a doctrine revealed by God; quite another thing to question it.

Q. You are a Protestant tool used by the Catholic Church, but you have not been made to realize that yet.

A. I have long ago realized that I am but an instrument in God's work. I did not redeem the world. But I am not a Protestant tool, for I renounced Protestantism long ago.

Q. When you have done your all for Rome in public, you will be put into a Monastery to learn the beauty of humiliation and starvation.

A. I am already a member of a Religious Order, and live in a Monastery, although I have never been invited to starve myself. As for the beauty of humility, I hope to learn that some day, being invited to do so by the Christ who said, "Learn of Me, because I am meek and humble of heart."

Q. Then you will be sent to the Confessional to hear secret sins of women which will appal your senses, weakened already by your so-called purifications.

A. I have been in the Confessional very, very often, and have heard thousands of confessions. You have never been there, and conclude that what you imagine to be true must be true. Also, you seem to have a shockingly low estimate of your own sex. Let me tell you a few things from experience. A Priest in the Confessional does not want material descriptions, but facts, and he is in a far happier position than the average medical man. As for being appalled, I have never heard confessions without being edified by the wonderful dispositions of sorrow in the penitents, and without a deeper sympathy for the frailties of human nature, whether through mental darkness or weakness of will.

Q. When you realize it all, mental torment will be your lot, and your soul will be plunged in gloom.

A. Not a bit of it. I do not believe in gloom-religions, and am the sworn enemy of mental torment. I fully realize everything, and am bubbling over with happi-

ness all the day long. You will at least allow me to be the judge of my own interior dispositions.

Q. I shall pray for you that you may become free, and not tied down by the doctrines of a Church.

A. If God hears your prayers, I shall become even a better Catholic. I shall be set free more and more from all error by the teachings of the Catholic Church, and liberated from my faults and defects by her wonderful Sacraments and other means of grace.

The foregoing Questions and Answers are already an indication of the spirit in which these Sessions have been conducted. But perhaps I could not do better than reproduce the general opening talk itself, setting out the objects of the undertaking. In substance, it was as follows:

"Good-evening, listeners all. For some time I have been promising to give a Session dealing with questions of religion and morality, in which the listeners themselves should decide what is of interest to them. Such a Session will commence next Sunday evening, and I invite you to send in any questions you wish on these subjects. To-night, however, let us see what I can promise you in regard to this Session.

"Will it be of interest? Why, religion has ever been one of the most interesting things under the sun. Men get excited about few other things as they do about religion. Something or other is likely to upset a man sometimes, but religion alone seems to be able to do so almost always. Dispute with him about ordinary events, he is quite undisturbed; dispute his policies, and more often than not he will laugh; but start on religion, and you find it a very different matter. This is because religion is fundamentally one of the deepest things in man. He is a religious animal. It is part of his human nature which finds a religion of some sort as natural to it as breathing.

"Now by listening-in to other people's difficulties, you will find many of your own problems solved, apart from your interest in what fellow men are actually thinking themselves. We are curious beings. We would not turn up the last pages of a novel as soon as we begin it if we were not. And we like novels because they deal with human life. We are so interested in other people's experiences that we have to invent them. But the truth that is stranger than fiction is usually a bit shy. It is in such a Session as this that you will hear it. And many of the questions will express just your own difficulties, for it is a fact that if you set twenty men thinking you can be sure that they will more or less think along much the same lines, according to the information at their disposal.

"So now I invite you, non-Catholics above all, to send in any questions you wish on religion, or morality, or the Catholic Church, and I shall explain exactly the Catholic position, and give the reasons for it. In fact, I almost demand those questions. Many hard things have been said, and are still being said, about the Catholic Church, and too often she has been condemned without a hearing. She has the right to ask a fair trial, and to be allowed to state her case. We insist that even the worst criminal should have the chance to say what he can for himself. And the Catholic Church, though no criminal, has been so abused, that she has a right to be heard. I do not ask that you give your name and address. A *nom de plume* will do. Call yourself Voltaire, Confucius, X.Y.Z., what you like, so long as you give indication enough to recognize your answer.

"My own promises are legion. Every letter sent in will be certainly acknowledged. If it is worth writing and mailing, it is worth answering. I will evade no

serious question on the subject of religion. All credit will be given for sincerity. No matter what others may think of it, I will take it for granted that it is your own personal difficulty, the result of much thought, perhaps the voice of years of distress and doubt. Or the question may be the result of a talk with others, or of things you have heard at work, or that you have read in the papers. All I ask is that you submit it for explanation. That some hard things are bound to be implied I know quite well. If I had the idea some people have of the Catholic Church, I would be far more indignant than they are, and would do all possible to force it out of the country. But I have not that idea, because I happen to know the Catholic Church as she really is. 'Oh,' you may reply, 'but you do not know any other Church.' I do. I became a Catholic only after having tried Protestantism in various forms. So at least the replies will come from one who has seen both sides.

"At times you will find yourself in complete agreement with things which you thought Catholics rejected. With all good faith, a lot of people misunderstand the Catholic Church, basing their ideas upon what other non-Catholics say of her. But there's nothing like asking a Catholic himself, and if you are shy of meeting a Priest personally, here is your opportunity. Send in your inquiry to this Session.

"At other times, even after the explanation given, you will find yourself only in partial agreement with Catholic teaching. Well, the information will be of value, and you will at least appreciate the fact that we prefer to say what we know to be true, rather than consult your feelings. To say what one believes to be false for the sake of pleasing others is sheer hypocrisy, and it appeals to no one with a spark of manhood in him.

"Finally, some Catholic doctrines will be a flat contradiction of what you have hitherto believed. Then I can but ask you to weigh the force of the reasons for the Catholic doctrine. And even if you are not convinced, it is good to know not only that other people do think differently, but in what way they differ from you. At the same time remember that one can dislike another man's doctrines without disliking the man. If a reply seems rather hard on your pet beliefs, do not regard it as being hard upon you. It is not meant to be. Not one word is intended to hurt anybody personally.

"In conclusion, then, I predict that you will all find this a fascinating Session, whether you are hearing replies to your own questions, or noticing what other listeners think on the subject, or simply listening to the actual teachings of the Catholic Church."

Since the broadcasting of that first invitation, as I have remarked, questions have never been lacking from all the Australian States and New Zealand. And from the thousands of questions sent in, a selection is given in this book, space being allotted to each subject relatively to the interest shown in it by inquirers. The replies appear just as they were given over the air, though not with any semblance of the order in which they were received. The necessity of classification in book form is evident. Each question is numbered, so that, with the help of the full index to be found at the end of the volume, readers may find the book useful as a manual of ready reference concerning the various topics with which it deals.

One final duty confronts the author which it is most pleasant to fulfill. I wish to acknowledge my great debt to the Rt. Rev. Monsignor James Meany, P.P., Director of Station 2SM. I owe very much to his sympathy and encouragement from the very inception of the Question Box Sessions. And now he has not only granted my request by contributing the preface to this work, but has generously attended to all the technical details involved in the printing and publishing of the book. Any attractive qualities in presentation and appearance are due to his taste and discernment, and I gladly express my gratitude to him for his valued co-operation in its production.



CHAPTER ONE

GOD

1. *Please give me evidence that God exists. I have never had any such evidence, for I do not accept the Bible.*

What do you mean by evidence? Some people think that evidence must be seen and touched, as an animal sees a patch of grass and eats it. But men are not mere animals. They have reason, and can appreciate intellectual evidence. For example, the evidence of beauty in music or in painting is perceived by man's mind, not by his senses. An animal could hear the same sounds, or see the same colors, without being impressed by their harmony and proportion. Apart from the Bible altogether, reason can detect sufficient evidence to guarantee the existence of God.

2. *What is this evidence for God's existence, apart from the Bible?*

There are many indications, the chief of which I shall give you very briefly:

The first is from causality. The universe, limited in all its details, could not be its own cause. It could no more come together with all its regulating laws than the San Francisco Harbor Bridge could just happen, or a clock could assemble itself and keep perfect time without a clock-maker. On the same principle, if there were no God, there would be no you to dispute His existence. A second indication is drawn from the universal reasoning, or if you wish, intuition of men. The universal judgment of mankind can no more be wrong on this vital point than the intuition of an infant that food must be conveyed to the mouth. The stamp of God's handiwork is so clearly impressed upon creation, and, above all, upon man, that all nations instinctively believe that there is a God. The truth is in possession. Men do not have to persuade themselves that there is a God. They have to try to persuade themselves that there is no God. And no one yet, who has attained to such a temporary persuasion, has been able to find a valid reason for it. Men do not grow into the idea of a God; they endeavor to grow out of it.

The sense of moral obligation confirms these reasons. In every man there is a sense of right and wrong. A man knows interiorly when he is doing wrong. Something rebukes his conduct. He knows that he is going against an inward voice. It is the voice of conscience, dictating to us a law we did not make, and which no man could have made, for this voice protests whether other men know our conduct or not. This voice is often quite against what we wish to do, warning us beforehand, condemning us after its violation. The law dictated by this voice of conscience supposes a lawgiver who has written his law in our hearts. And as God alone could do this, it is certain that He exists.

Finally, justice demands that there be a God. The very sense of justice among men, resulting in law-courts, supposes a just God. We did not give ourselves our sense of justice. It comes from whoever made us, and no one can give what he does not possess himself. Yet justice cannot always be done by men in this world. Here the good often suffer, and the wicked prosper. And, even though human justice does not always succeed in balancing the scales, they will be balanced **some** day by a just God, who most certainly must exist.

3. *You, as a Priest, argue to a clock-maker. I, as a rationalist, ask, "Who created your uncreated clock-maker?"*

That is not a rational question. I say that the universe is obviously created, and that what is created supposes a Creator who is uncreated, or the problem goes on forever, the whole endless chain of dependent beings as unable to explain itself as each of its links. It is rational to argue to an uncreated clock-maker. It is not rational to ask, "Who created this uncreated clock-maker?" God was not created. If He were, He would be a creature and would have a creator. His creator would then be God, and not He Himself. God always existed. He never began, and will never cease to be. He is eternal.

4. *You talk of universal persuasion. Men used to believe that the world was flat!*

A sufficient reason for that error is evident, *viz.*, lack of data, and the fact that men followed their senses, which seemed to say that the earth was flat. That was not a judgment of the pure reason. The senses supplied no immediate manifestations that there might be a God as they indicated that the world might be flat. The cases are not parallel, and the transition from a judgment based upon the senses to one based upon pure reason is not valid. In any case, the scientific and metaphysical proofs justify belief in God quite independently of this psychological reason. They would be valid supposing that only one man in a million believed in God's existence. This latter supposition, however, will never be verified, for the common rational judgment of the vast majority will always intuitively perceive this truth.

5. *There is no need to talk of future balancing of the Scales. Virtue is its own reward in this life, even as the wicked endure remorse.*

That will not do. Consciousness of virtue is not much good to a man about to be wrongfully hanged and who cannot live to enjoy it. Nor does vice always bring proportionate remorse. Many are too hardened to experience deep remorse. There will be a levelling-up some day, after this life, and by God.

6. *Joseph McCabe believed in God, but he renounced bigotry and became an Agnostic.*

There are many men such as Joseph McCabe who have given up their profession of a belief in God. But, they do not give up that belief because Agnosticism offers them a higher and holier life. They find Agnosticism less irksome, whether it be by emancipation from moral laws, or from the restraints of truth and logic. Nor should you talk of bigotry. Many Agnostics have a far worse bias than that which they attribute to believers, garbling facts and distorting evidence without any of the scruples which one who really believes in God would certainly experience.

7. *If I sincerely believe that there is no God, and there be a God, would not invincible ignorance save me?*

Such ignorance is not invincible. You can overcome it. You violated your reason in suppressing its spontaneous concept of God, and by persuading yourself that religion is false. If you took the pressure off your reason and let it swing back to the Supreme Cause of its very being, it would do so as the needle to the pole. Pascal rightly says that there are two types of men, those who are afraid to lose God, and those who are afraid that they might find Him.

8. *What do you mean by the term God?*

God is a spiritual, substantial, personal being, infinite in intelligence, in will, and in all perfection, absolutely simple or lacking composition, immutable, happy

in Himself and by Himself, and infinitely superior to all that is or can be conceived apart from Himself. He is incomprehensible in His infinite perfection by all lesser intelligences, although knowable as to the fact of His existence as Living Creator and Lord of heaven and earth, almighty, eternal, immense, and distinct from all that He has created. That is what I mean by God.

9. *How do you know that God is eternal, or always was, is, and will be?*

Because if God ever had a beginning, then before He began there was nothing. Now nothing, with nothing to work upon, and no faculties with which to work, could never turn its non-existent self into something. But there is obviously something, and there can never have been a time when there was nothing. God at least must always have existed, and if no one is responsible for His beginning, there is no one who could possibly bring His existence to an end. He always will be. God rightly declared Himself the eternally existent Being when He said to Moses, "I am Who am."

10. *Spinoza said that if God created the world for an object, He desires something He lacks, which denies His infinite perfection.*

Spinoza's objection is not valid. He fails to distinguish between God's essential constitution, which is necessary to His being, and His free operations resulting in created things. If God's creating operations were necessary, Spinoza would be right. But God did not create in order to acquire perfection necessary to Himself. He created to bestow perfections upon others. If I am laboring to acquire, I lack something I want. If I give to others, that proves not my lack, but my superabundance.

11. *Can men whilst earth-bound understand the working of the Divine Mind?*

The Divine Mind does not "work." God does not have to reason slowly and painfully to conclusions, as do men. His Divine Intelligence is a permanent and simultaneous act of perfect knowledge embracing all things, past, present, and future. We cannot fully understand God's being, knowledge, and plans. However, St. Paul rightly said that the pagan Romans were inexcusable for not noting the power and divinity of the true God in visible things, and for not having glorified Him, nor given Him thanks. If it were beyond the power of man to know this much of God, they would not have been inexcusable.

12. *Have we attained to a full knowledge of God, or are we advancing towards the fulness of truth?*

The fullest revelation of those things of God which man is intended to know has been made as far as this life goes. It has been given by Christ, as we shall see later on. No man yet has sounded the full depths of the truth revealed by Christ, and as we progress in the knowledge of His doctrines we get nearer and nearer to that fulness of truth which is possible on this earth. I am speaking of the knowledge to be attained by individuals. The fulness of truth is contained in the deposit of faith confided to the Catholic Church. The perfect fulness of knowledge is possible only in the heavenly vision of God.

13. *What becomes of God when you think of the misery and starvation in the world?*

We have already seen that there is a God. Inability to comprehend every detail in the universe does not prove that there is no God, but merely the limited capacity of the finite human mind. However, the human mind can propose certain principles which go a long way towards the removal of difficulties.

Firstly, evil is really the negation or privation of good, and if there is evil in the world, there is also much good which can be accounted for only by the existence of God.

Secondly, the fluctuations of this mutable life cannot affect God's existence. I mean that you cannot have God when things seem to be all right, and annihilate Him when things seem to go wrong. If God exists before things go wrong, He still exists despite the unhappiness of an individual. And note that word individual. Viewing the race as a whole, we find that life is a mixture of comfortable and uncomfortable things. When we are happy, others are suffering. When we are suffering, others are happy. And we cannot say that God is existing for the happy ones, and simultaneously not existing for the unhappy ones. We must not take local and individual views only, but a universal outlook.

Thirdly, and particularly as regards the uneven distribution of this world's goods with consequent starvation for some, God's providence has not failed. Man's administration is at fault. Whilst individuals suffer want, we know that the world has produced enough wheat, fruit, meat, and wool to feed and clothe everyone. God has not failed to provide enough to fill every mouth. But He has given this world over to the administration of men, and it is their bad management they must correct rather than blame God. At least their incapable administration should teach them the saving grace of humility.

14. *Where is the justice of God, in permitting this uneven distribution?*

A satisfactory explanation could scarcely be given, were this life all. But it is not. God permits these things only because He knows that there is a future life where He will rectify and compensate all inequalities. In the meantime He draws good out of these miseries, for they teach men not to set their hopes entirely upon this world as if there were no other, and help to expiate the sins of mankind. If we cannot be entirely happy here, let us at least make sure of being happy in the next life.

15. *If God is almighty He could prevent volcanoes, earthquakes, etc., which kill innocent and wicked people alike.*

If He were not almighty there would be no volcanoes to erupt, and no human beings to be injured or killed. These physical events happen according to natural laws established by God, with the operations of which He is not obliged to interfere because the finite minds of men are surprised by them. Nor does the death of such people terminate their real existence. The transition from earthly conditions to our future state is as normal as the transition from infancy to adolescence. Death is a natural law for all, and God permits it to come in various ways to various people.

16. *If God is loving, just, and all-powerful, why does He permit moral evil, or sin?*

Because God is Love, He asks the freely given love of man, and not a compelled love. Because He is just, He will not deprive man of the free will which is in accordance with his rational nature. Nor is this against the omnipotence of God, for even His power does not extend to contradictory things. Man cannot be free to love and serve God, without being free to reject Him and rebel against Him. We cannot have it both ways. Even God, if He wants men to be free, cannot take from them the power to choose evil. If He enforces goodness, He takes away freedom. If He leaves freedom, He must permit evil, even though He forbids it. It is man's dignity that he is master of his own destiny instead of having to develop just like a tree which necessarily obeys natural law. Men, as a matter of fact, misused their freedom, and sin and brutality resulted. But it was impossible to give

man the gift of freedom and the dignity of being master of his own destiny without risking the permission of such failures.

17. *At least, being all-powerful, just, and loving, He ought to give everyone a fair chance of obtaining the good things of this world.*

Being all-powerful, there is no reason why He ought to do our bidding as if we were all-powerful.

Being just, He is not going to give us a tin trumpet and let us think that to be our real good when it is not.

Being loving, He will not usually allow man to have those riches which may cause difficulties in the way of salvation. I do not want Him to say to me, "Amen, I say to you, you have had your reward." We are Christians, and Christians are disciples of a crucified Master. We have no right to complain if we also must tread the path of suffering.

18. *Do you tell me that a good God permits deformed children, with a lifetime of misery before them?*

God is certainly good, and if He permits evil of any kind it is only because He knows that He can draw greater good from it in the end. The human race misused its freedom, abandoned God, and found not happiness but misery. It is good to be just, and God's justice permitted this misery. Also, in His wisdom, He may permit a child to be born deformed who with health and strength would fling itself into pleasures which would end in eternal loss. Again, an imbecile is incapable of sin, and it would often seem to us a mercy had some apparently sane people been born imbeciles. Poor people, whether mentally or bodily deformed, do not spend the whole of their lives in misery and suffering. We must not judge them by our own experiences. Likewise, we must remember that what we call "the whole of their lives" is not confined to this earth. There is a continuance of existence in eternity, where all will be rectified.

We might say, "If God be good, why did He allow His Son to go through excruciating torture?" Sin is the real evil, not suffering. Christ found happiness in proving His love by suffering, a greater good than mere health. And the miseries of this world have driven thousands to God who would have been self-sufficient and independent only for the naturally insoluble problem of suffering. If only for this reason we can discern an indication of God's goodness in it.

19. *Is it, then, God's will that people should suffer from such terrible diseases as Cancer or Consumption?*

We must distinguish between God's positive will, and His permissive will. He positively wills all the good that happens. Suffering He permits to occur, and this only when he foresees that good can result from it. He positively wills that I should be holy. If He foresees that I will make use of good health to sin and to lose my soul, He may mercifully permit my health to be ruined, and thus lead me to Him where He would otherwise lose me. There would have been no diseases had men not sinned. God did not will sin, but having made men free, He permitted it and its consequences. This permission was a less serious thing than would have been the depriving us of our freedom.

20. *My poverty is due to the oppression of capitalism, not to the loving will of God.*

God has permitted it, but it has come about firstly, by mistaken conduct, with all good will, on the part of man; secondly, by faults both on the side of some capitalists and of some workers; thirdly, through mere force of circumstances. It

is not against God's positive will to try to remedy these things. But, meantime, the present state of affairs would not exist, were it not for His permissive will.

21. *Could not God at least have made life much easier, instead of making everything hard?*

Everything is not hard. Some things are. The things that are difficult are made easier by the grace of which so many people deliberately deprive themselves. *All* difficulty cannot be removed, for God has a right to ask us to overcome at personal cost our self-inflicted bad habits, sins, and other injuries. Men's complaints are often about as reasonable as those of a man who cuts his throat, and then blames the doctor because it hurts to have it stitched up again.

22. *But life seems to be becoming harder and more painful.*

There has been a succession of world depressions and world recoveries through history. In any case temporal trials do not mean that life is becoming worse. It may be a means of great good. It is easy to follow all our lower instincts; difficult to battle against them. If your policy is to do only that which is easy and pleasant in life, you will never be much of a man. Christ came to make men better, and offers His grace and assistance whenever virtue demands what is difficult and painful to our lower nature and sensitiveness. He offers His special grace to those who have the good sense to pray for it.

23. *Why does He permit those who do serve Him to live in poverty, whilst the godless have a smooth path through life?*

This is not always the case. However, when this does occur, it is not difficult to understand. The godless do not deserve to be invited to share with Christ in a life of suffering. Also, all men do some good in life sometimes. No one is entirely evil. God's justice rewards natural good, therefore, by natural prosperity, and that may be all that such men will receive. "You have had the reward of such good as you did," may be said at their judgment, "and now answer for the evil of your irreligious lives." On the other hand, those who love God are not given worthless and perishable rewards, but will receive a full return of supernatural happiness, the only kind that really matters. If Christ promised us happiness in this world, then let us murmur when we see the infidel prosper. But what did He promise? He promised what He Himself received, suffering here, and happiness hereafter. The disciple is not above his Master.

24. *In all these replies to difficulties you are postulating free will, the sinful state of man, redemption by Christ, grace, and the eternal destiny of man!*

That is so. These things are facts, and no problem can be fully solved except in the light of all the facts. I am quite prepared to justify these facts. Meantime, without them, no reasonable solution of the problems of God's providence can be found at all; with them, the solution, even though inadequate, is at least rational and intelligible. The world with its miseries may be a problem difficult to reconcile with the existence of God; but that same world without God is a far greater problem, leaving exactly the same miseries to be endured in hopeless despair. Christianity does not deny the existence of suffering, but it can give happiness in the midst of suffering, and this practical solution is the true solution God gives to men of good will.

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THE REV. DR. LESLIE RUMBLE, M.S.C.

Edited in Collaboration with

REV. CHARLES MORTIMER CARTY

Diocesan Missionary

With a Preface by

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Social influence of the Church, 1090-1091; The education question, 1092-1095; The Church and world distress, 1096-1112; Catholic attitude towards Capitalism, 1113-1130; The remedy for social ills, 1131-1138; Communism condemned, 1139-1162; The Fascist State, 1163-1177; Morality of war, 1178-1183; May individuals become soldiers?, 1184-1203; The Church and peace, 1204-1230; Capital punishment, 1231-1236; Catholic Action, 1237-1242.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN—COMPARATIVE STUDY OF NON-CATHOLIC DENOMINATIONS

Defections from the Catholic Church, 1243-1244; Gnosticism, 1245; Manichaeism, 1246; Arianism, 1247; Nestorianism, 1248; Eutychianism, 1249; Coptic Church, 1251-1253; Greek Orthodox Church, 1254-1268; Anglican Episcopal Church, 1269-1288; The "Free" or "Nonconformist" Churches, 1289-1290; Presbyterianism, 1291; Methodism, 1292; "Church of Christ," 1293-1296; Baptists, 1297-1300; Seventh Day Adventists, 1301-1304; Plymouth Brethren, 1305-1307; "Catholic Apostolic Church" or Irvingites, 1308-1311; Salvation Army, 1312-1317; Spiritualism, 1318-1327; Christian Science, 1328-1334; Christadelphians, 1335; British Israelism, 1336-1345; "Liberal Catholics," 1346-1350; Witnesses of Jehovah, 1351-1374; Buchmanism or the "Oxford Group Movement," 1375-1387; From Protestantism to Catholicism, 1388-1390.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN—TO AND FROM ROME

Conversion of Cardinal Newman, 1391; Why Gladstone refrained, 1392; The peculiar case of Lord Halifax, 1393-1395; Gibbon the historian, 1396-1398; Secession of Father Chiniquy, 1399-1401; Father Tyrrell, the modernist, 1402-1406; Bishop Garrett's departure, 1407-1409; Judgment on lapsed Catholics, 1410-1413; Protestant apathy towards conversion of Catholics, 1414-1416; Principles for converts to Catholicism, 1417-1421; God's will that all should become Catholics, 1422.

INTRODUCTION TO SECOND VOLUME

The avalanche of letters pouring into my office from every nook and corner of the United States speak in high praise of the valuable and much needed book, *Radio Replies*, which has been the medium of bringing lapsed Catholics back to the Church and of enlightening those who still remain out of the Church or those who have become converts to Catholicism. Many Protestant Publishing Houses have written in for copies for distribution to Protestant Seminaries.

ITS VALUE FOR MIXED MARRIAGE CASES

The **First Volume** of *Radio Replies* has cleared away many misconceptions of Catholic claims, especially in so many cases of Mixed Marriages, where the non-Catholic party holds strong grievances against living up to the signed promises. Where religious animosity reigned in the home of the Catholic and non-Catholic parties, many have written in stating that the accidental picking up of a copy of *Radio Replies* lying around the house and the reading of but a few questions and answers changed the atmosphere of misunderstanding and prejudice towards things Catholic. Wherever religious discussions became nigh intolerable in some Mixed Marriage cases the silent use of the printed word brought about the desired conversion. Converts are made today more through what they **read** than through what they **hear**.

TEACHERS AND PROFESSORS

Teachers and Professors throughout the nation have found this volume of apologetics invaluable as a stimulus to religious study on the part of the high school or university student in the classroom where *Radio Replies* has been used to divert the student from the monotony of the usually dry Christian Doctrine textbook. In order to equip Seminarians with an understanding of the Protestant mind, many Seminaries have adopted *Radio Replies* as an official textbook for apologetics. The reading interest of the student or the man in the street in many cases was so aroused that the book was read in one sitting because of the startling sharpness of the quizzes and the clear-cut logical brevity of the replies.

ITS POPULARITY ENCOURAGES PUBLISHING A SECOND AND THIRD VOLUME

The widespread use of the **First Volume** in hospitals, study clubs, novitiates, retreat houses, seminaries, high schools, academies, colleges and homes throughout the nation has encouraged us to give to the public a **Second Volume** which amplifies the **First Volume** by another thousand new and more instructive replies. In **Street Preaching** for the past three summers throughout Minnesota and Wisconsin I have found very few inquiries which are not contained in this handy text and source book. The material presented to me and not found in the **First Volume** has been embodied in this **Second Volume** of Replies, which will **soon** be followed by a **Third Volume**. These Three Volumes of five thousand and more replies will serve as a ready encyclopedia for Catholic Apologetics.

IMITATING OUR ENEMIES

I have been campaigning in the spreading of literature in the parish churches through the Archdiocese of St. Paul, speaking at all the Sunday Masses wherever

I go. Getting apologetic literature into the hands of our own Catholic people has reaped great spiritual benefits in bringing many back to the Sacraments and into the Church. This campaign has brought more results for good than I have observed in the years spent in Radio work, Street Preaching and in preaching missions to Catholics and non-Catholics. The printed word has been the weapon of those attacking Catholic claims and it is my conviction that the Apostolate of **Spreading Literature** in imitation of our enemies is very vital today more than ever in brushing aside the false notions about Catholicism and in stimulating Catholics to equip themselves with the proper literature to reply to the questions and charges proposed in the Office, the Shop, the Club, the Street and the Home.

NON-CATHOLIC TRIBUTES

Professors, rabbis, and ministers have personally discussed with me points brought forth in Radio Replies and they after careful perusal of the book confided to me before leaving their locality after a week of street preaching that Radio Replies was the strongest and clearest presentation of Catholic claims they ever studied. It is strange that in spite of open air campaigning in the cause of Catholicism no noteworthy intellectual charge or refutation of any statement in the First Volume has been made by anyone of its readers within or without the Church, and this observation shows that the Catholic Church the world over is suffering most from the great lack of intellectual opposition, and is facing the growing, gnawing cancer of Religious Indifference rather than Differences of Religion.

BEING BOUGHT OVER

Were Dr. Rumble and I offered funds beyond counting to go out and deny the content of these books, we would both be acting against our own consciences in a most dishonest way, did we accept. Only by indulging in a campaign of deliberate lies could we undertake to refute what we have written; and in conscience, therefore, we could take no step but defend the position upheld by these books.

GRATEFUL CONVERTS

Since many readers of Radio Replies who have not even heard Dr. Rumble or myself in the pulpit or on the public platform have come into the Church as a result of studying and debating this work in apologetics, it would be greatly appreciated if these converts would join the long list of those who are sending in a few words of acknowledgment to my office.

WE MEET AT LAST

For many months Dr. Rumble and myself have been corresponding from the extreme ends of the earth concerning the American publication of the First Volume. It is a deeply appreciated privilege to meet at last and to be associated in person with him in getting before the public this Second Volume, and the Third Volume which will be published in the nigh future to complete the series on apologetics.

REV. CHARLES MORTIMER CARTY

PREFACE



THE present volume is a continuation of the fascinating study of problems in religion that engage the attention of all thinking men. Those who have had the privilege of reading the first volume of *Radio Replies*, which proved so stimulating to Catholic and non-Catholic alike, will find in the present book a more comprehensive study and explanation of subjects that were presented in essential outline in the first volume.

The high motive that has dominated the author is the desire to share with others the treasure of truth that he himself has discovered from personal experience in the process of research in finding his way to the source of truth. Having sought to develop within himself those principles of religion that he had cherished in youth outside the Catholic Church, and finding them inadequate to satisfy all the promptings of his soul, he went through the bypaths that finally led him to the full vision of the personality, the truth and the love of the God-Man, a full vision to be found only in the Catholic Church.

While the topics discussed in his work are necessarily controversial because they were suggested by inquiries from millions of radio listeners all over the world during a period of more than ten years, the method of treatment is not controversial but expository with a view to presenting truth and principle in that objective and inherent value that will bring conviction to an open mind.

Only when men know all the truth that is to be known will they attain that consummate freedom that is based on the possession of all that the mind of man can and should know. While the soul of man instinctively longs for liberty he can never possess it unless he first acquires the knowledge that will enable him to recognize and cherish liberty. The limitation of the human mind that makes it possible

for man to indulge in a thousand and one hypotheses concerning essential scientific facts does not permit him to doubt, and continue speculating as to the facts when they are already well established beyond question. When man has developed his knowledge to the point where he is conscious of the possession of truth he experiences a sense of achievement and security in the attainment of the objective that he has sought, and he is no longer disposed to wander afield in the futile adventure of learning whether there may be an order in which the contrary to truth may be acceptable.

In the field of religion the uncertainty and consequent liberty to speculate is due to the limitation of the knowledge of established facts; and only when man has sincerely considered the established facts will he cease from speculation and, by the elimination of his hypotheses in face of scientific facts, accept and enjoy the possession of the truth. There is nothing unscientific in the process by which a man adheres with profound conviction to the truth revealed by the Son of God and preserved in His Church for the temporal and eternal welfare of all humanity.

The exposition of the fundamentals that were involved in the inquiries sent to the author of this volume appeals to the sincerity of all who may find similar problems in their own soul. If the statement of facts may seem to hurt it cannot be attributed to any cause other than the sentiment of those who, in all sincerity, have continued to cherish the conviction that all was well until the physician announces the need of a major operation to save not the body but the soul of the patient.

The unity of the world in the field of human welfare will come only through the unity of the world in the recognition of truth that is basic in the development of human welfare, not only in terms of terrestrial happiness but in the intellectual and spiritual development that is essential to eternal happiness.

JOHN GREGORY MURRAY,
Archbishop of Saint Paul

FOREWORD

This second volume of Radio Replies is new, complete in itself, and quite different in its contents from the first volume which is already so well known and widely distributed. And it has been published in response to innumerable appeals from readers of the first book.

THE FIRST VOLUME

From those readers of the first collection of Radio Replies, bishops, priests, and members of the laity, many of these latter grateful converts, have come very remarkable tributes to the value of the book, both as regards the matters dealt with, and the manner of their presentation. The advantages of such a work of reference should be obvious. When, in 1928, on the occasion of the Eucharistic Congress in Sydney, I commenced a Question Box Radio Session for the purpose of explaining Catholic teaching to non-Catholics, I began by stating two basic principles. Firstly, since God is the Author of all truth, nothing that is definitely true can ever really contradict anything else that is definitely true. Secondly, the Catholic Church is definitely true. It therefore follows that no objection or difficulty, whether drawn from history, Scripture, science, or philosophy, can provide a valid argument against the truth of the Catholic religion.

Stimulated by this clear-cut issue, non-Catholic listeners at once began to submit their difficulties from all points of view. And the fact that the questions are from non-Catholics themselves, and not merely Catholic suppositions as to what they might be expected to think, cannot but prove most useful to all who are called upon to enter into discussion with them.

As to the value of the replies which the Catholic Church can offer to all difficulties proposed against herself or her doctrines, I will let one prominent convert speak. After reading the first volume of Radio Replies he declared: "There is but one answer to the book—to become a Catholic. The only alternative is silence, and the dismissal of the problem of God and of religion altogether from one's thoughts."

The first book, however, summed up the results of my answering over Radio Station 2SM, Sydney, N.S.W., questions from non-Catholic listeners throughout Australia and New Zealand during the first five years only. Since then, seven further years have elapsed, with an increasing interest amongst listeners, and a continued series of inquiries opening up ever new lines of approach to the problem of religion.

A MORE SEARCHING CHALLENGE

In the first five years I had to deal chiefly with the difficulties of the average man, many of them based on misconceptions of Catholic doctrine and, as often as not, inspired by prejudice. But interest was intensified. Wrong notions were cleared away. The contrast between the actual teachings of the Church and the prevailing sentiments of the secularists, above all in modern non-Catholic Colleges and Universities, became increasingly evident. This was noted by professional men who had sat under the professors in those Colleges and Universities. And there resulted a flood of challenging inquiries, probing far more deeply into the nature, foundations, and consequences of Catholic doctrine.

THIS PRESENT BOOK

From this new material the present volume of Radio Replies has been compiled. For its production, at the invitation of His Excellency the Most Rev. John Gregory Murray, D.D., Archbishop of St. Paul, Minn., U. S. A., I came to America in order to have the personal co-operation of the Rev. Charles Mortimer Carty, Diocesan Missioner, who is so well known throughout the United States as a Catholic Campaigner for Christ, engaging in Street Preaching and a nation-wide distribution of Catholic literature.

As a member of the Australian Province of the Society of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart—the American Province of which has its headquarters at Geneva, Illinois, U. S. A.—I have for years been engaged throughout Australia in work somewhat similar to that of Father Carty in America. By Radio, by missions in Public Halls, and by instruction classes for converts, my interest has been almost entirely centered in the conversion of non-Catholics whose outlook is very similar to that prevailing amongst the non-Catholics here in America. My being a convert myself of its very nature seemed to indicate such a field of activity.

The selection of the questions and answers in this book, therefore, is the fruit of Father Carty's and my own experience of the needs of today with its denial of the supernatural, its driftage from religion, its adoption of a purely secular basis of life, and its widespread repudiation of those Christian standards of morality which, if not always observed in practice, have at least not hitherto been seriously challenged and denied.

FOR STUDY CLUBS

As far as possible the division of the matter in this second book has been made to correspond with that of the first volume for purposes of reference and comparison. Although this book is complete in itself, it will be found complementary to the first, throwing new light on problems there introduced, and meeting the further angles of approach adopted by those outside the Church who have sought more detailed explanations of her teachings, or have wished to dispute their validity.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

It remains for me to thank His Excellency Archbishop Murray for his interest, encouragement, and hospitality during my stay in America; and Father Carty for his valued advice, and a generous co-operation which amounts to blending our labors into a mutual apostolate of the printed word on behalf of the Catholic Faith to those who have not yet attained this greatest of God's blessings. Nor must I forget to thank the many readers of the first volume of Radio Replies who have written gratefully of their indebtedness to it—readers writing, not only from America, Australia, and New Zealand, but from England and Ireland, from India, and Africa, and Canada—and wherever the English language is spoken.

If this second volume accomplishes half the good that has already resulted from the first, it will more than justify its publication, together with the time and labor we have devoted to it.

LESLIE RUMBLE, M.S.C.



CHAPTER ONE

GOD

1. *I am an atheist who wants his difficulties answered without being accused of moral depravity.*

I believe, in the ultimate analysis, with Pascal, that there are two classes of men, those who are afraid to find God, and those who are afraid to lose God. But, to spare you, I will admit that your fear that there might be a God may be perhaps unconscious. Of those who say that they are atheists some are merely unintelligent and do not think; others do think, but merely reject false ideas of God, without knowing how to replace them with the right idea. Since you are not unintelligent I rank you amongst the latter class. Will I accuse you of being morally evil? Of course, I maintain that atheism cannot exist without sin of some kind. If you do not deny God in order to be free from moral restraints, I would have to accuse you at least of a guilty neglect to examine the question as you should. That God exists is certain for everyone with a right conscience.

2. *I have been told that the universe itself is proof of God, on the score that it must have had a Creator.*

That is a sound argument, for as no individual thing in this universe is self-sufficient, the whole collection of individual things cannot be self-sufficient. If each separate atom is unable to explain itself, all together will be as inexplicable as each. Multiplication does not change the nature of things.

3. *Is it not possible that matter itself is eternal?*

I admit that it would be possible for an Eternal Cause to produce eternally some basic created reality. We know from revelation that God did not create from eternity. But it would have been possible for Him to do so. However, you must note this. The appeal to the eternity of matter, which cannot be proved, does not exclude the necessity of an outside Cause. The mere duration of a thing does not explain its existence. You cannot explain a running train by saying innocently, "Why it was always running." In the universe we see a succession of causal mutations, each succeeding stage being caused by a preceding stage, and in turn causing a subsequent stage. Every element is dependent, and no one element can explain itself independently of the rest. And if each link in a chain is dependent, the whole chain is dependent. An eternal series of dependent and caused things can be reasonably explained only by One who is independent and uncaused, who exists with a complete self-sufficiency not to be found in finite things.

In passing, let me call your attention to the problem of life. Even if matter be eternal, there was certainly a time when life did not exist on this earth, and certainly a time when it began to exist. Any belief that it began spontaneously, and without the creative power of God, is credulity, and unworthy of a reasonable man.

4. *Were you to request God to put in an appearance, or manifest His presence beyond doubt to the satisfaction of experimental science, the result would be nil.*

Such a request would be absurd. God, as He is in Himself, is immaterial, and experimental science deals with material things. You might as well offer to believe in the Archangel Gabriel provided I dig up his bones. Experimental science does

not cover the whole field of reality. It abstracts from the spiritual field altogether, save indirectly at most.

5. *People may believe that there is a God, but they cannot know it.*

By the use of their reason they can attain to a certain knowledge that God exists. The Vatican Council rightly defined as a dogma of Catholic Faith that natural human reason can know with certainty from the things which He has made that God exists.

6. *Unlike intrinsic evidence, extrinsic evidence is not conclusive.*

Extrinsic evidence is certainly conclusive. I have no intrinsic evidence that Napoleon ever lived. I have the extrinsic evidence of a multitude of documents, and I am historically certain that he did live. Again, if I see the last car of a train disappearing into a tunnel, I have only extrinsic evidence of the existence of an engine at the other end of the train. Meantime, it is intrinsically evident that a thing which does not contain the ultimate reason of its existence within itself, has that ultimate reason in an outside being. That principle is self-evident, and cannot be refuted. On that principle, a being which obviously is not self-caused is evidence of a cause outside itself, and gives sound and certain knowledge of the fact.

7. *The variety of philosophies now extant shows that your conclusion as to the existence of God is not beyond all argument.*

That is true, but it is not to the point. I maintain that the conclusion is beyond all valid and reasonable argument, a very different thing. There is not a single argument against the existence of God which cannot be proved fallacious.

8. *Is not nature itself divine?*

Nature is the effect of a divine creative activity, but it is not itself divine. The word "nature" comes from the Latin "nasci," to be born. It is applied, therefore, to the original character or constitution of some object—a constitution which is the radical principle of all that it is and of all that it does. Thus, by its very "nature" a horse is not a human being. It is not natural to a horse to compose music. That is "natural" which is in accordance with some particular being's nature or constitution. Now we speak of the whole created universe as "Nature" itself. But since it is created—and we speak of it as "Creation"—it cannot be divine in its essential character and constitution.

9. *You insist, then, that God is distinct from nature?*

Yes. The natural world is full of contradictions, and there can be no contradictions in God. The true and the false, good and evil, all manner of imperfections, ignorance, and knowledge, the conscious and the unconscious, constant movement and change—all these cannot possibly be synthesized into one Being called God. We know how different men desire different things and will different things. Men are obviously distinct from one another. They cannot, therefore, be identical with one and the same God. So if you are God, I am not. If I am God, you are not. And it is impossible to say that all is God. Yet if all is not God, all nature is not divine. The whole of creation may be the effect of divine activity, but the effect certainly is distinct from God.

10. *If God is present everywhere in the world, is not creation so inseparable from God as to be part of Him?*

God does exist everywhere. He, therefore, co-exists with all created being. Yet He cannot be identified with created beings. He is in a totally different order of existence. The concept is not difficult. Thought and matter are in different orders of being, yet both co-exist in the same head. A man's material brains could

be weighed on a pair of scales; but that would not be weighing the thoughts produced by his soul with the help of those brains. So, too, a current of electricity occupies the same space as solid copper wire; but that mutual presence does not make the copper wire part of the electricity. God's presence everywhere does not make created things part of God. As a matter of fact, God is a purely spiritual Being who cannot have parts. Also, created things are finite or limited, and God is infinite. The finite cannot be part of the infinite. Whilst the universe has its very being "in" God because God is everywhere, God infinitely transcends the universe, differing from it in substance, nature, power, and perfection, and constituting a world of mysterious reality in Himself.

11. *What definition accurately conveys to the human mind an idea of the Deity?*

Many human words convey accurately as far as they go, but not adequately, a notion of some aspect of God's perfections. But for a definition, not of an aspect of God, but simply of God, the most accurate of all human expressions, though still inadequate, is "The Self-existent Being." Thus, God described Himself to Moses in the words, "I am who am." Exod. III., 14. There is an immense depth of meaning in those few words.

God alone exists in His own right. Nothing else "is" of itself and apart from God's causality. All else is but a reflection—a shadow of being; and God is the Author of it. God alone "is"; all else "is dependent."

"I am He who is. Do not seek anywhere else," He may be interpreted to say, "to find the cause of My existence. By this I differ from everything else. This Name is proper to Myself, and I cannot give My glory to another."

God, then, is essential Being. And since every perfection must "be" in order to be a perfection, the plenitude of His Being is the plenitude of perfection. He is. He does not become, progressing from less to greater perfection. Eternal, He never ceases to be what He was, nor does He change to what He was not. He alone is undivided, infinite, identical, essential, and eternal Being; uncaused, yet causing all else to receive being and such degrees of perfection as He chooses to bestow.

God, then, is perfection of Being. He is Truth, for truth is that which is. He is Justice, for justice is the conformity of the will to truth. He is omnipotent, for all else is by Him; good, for evil is the destruction of the true; love, giving benefits to others. He has nothing to fear from any greater than Himself; nothing to envy in any better than Himself. He is Beauty, for beauty is but the splendor of Being, and Truth, and Goodness. All this, and much more, is contained in the simple expression, "I am He who is" as distinguishing God from every other being.

12. *You insist on the existence of God. Do you believe that He is a benevolent God, and that His providence extends to all things?*

Yes, though I admit that you now introduce a problem which has baffled the keenest intelligences of all the centuries, and one the solution of which goes beyond the limits attainable by limited human reason. However, if reason cannot attain to a full and comprehensive explanation of this problem, it can go a certain distance towards a solution, and it can certainly refute objections against God proposed by human reason in view of the evils in this world.

13. *Is everything that happens to man God's will?*

From the negative point of view we can certainly say that those things which happen to men would not happen did God will that they should not happen. But, from the positive point of view, the question arises, "Though nothing can happen against God's will, does God positively will all that does happen?" The answer is—not necessarily.

14. *When a person dies, is it God's will that he should do so?*

In some cases a death, and all its circumstances, are God's positive will. In other cases, it may be merely God's permissive will. There is a difference between God's positive and God's permissive will. For example, if an employer orders a representative to go from London to Colombo, when the latter goes, he fulfills the positive will of his employer. On the other hand, the employer might express a preference that the representative should go via Capetown rather than via Suez, yet add, "I leave it to yourself to go via Suez if you prefer." If the representative goes via Suez, it is not against the will of his employer. It is at least with the permissive will of that employer, though not a formal command of his positive will. This is merely to show that there is a difference between a positive will and a permissive will; and it is an example which must be kept in mind when dealing with the question of moral and physical evil.

15. *If a man is murdered, is it God's will that he should die in that manner?*

Since God forbids murder, it cannot be God's positive will that anyone should commit murder. At the same time, whilst people are morally obliged by the commandment, "Thou shalt not kill," they are no more physically compelled to keep that commandment than any other. For God has positively willed that man should be capable of a free choice between good and evil. And God's positive will that man should be free to choose the good must carry with it His permissive will of the evil should man abuse his liberty. If, then, a man commits murder, somebody will be murdered, and that also must be included in God's permissive will. So at least we must say that it was God's permissive will that the murdered man should die in that manner. But I could conceive a case where it would even be God's positive will. If a man were bent on murdering somebody despite God's prohibition, God could positively will that his victim should be one man rather than another. Then it would not be His positive will that the murderer should violate the law, yet it would be His positive will that the victim should meet with such a manner of death rather than another.

16. *In the latter case the murderer would be merely the instrument of God's will. How could he be held responsible?*

The murderer is responsible because he is doing what God forbids, and what he is not in any way compelled to do. Granted that he insists on his guilty action, God will not prevent it because He cannot do so without depriving him of that free will which God will not take back. But he is not the instrument of God's positive will in his violation of the moral law. From the moral point of view he violates God's positive will, and he is responsible for it. On the other hand, whilst there is moral guilt in committing murder, there is no moral guilt in being murdered against one's will. That is why, if God sees a man bent on committing murder, He could positively will that this man rather than that should be the victim. I have personal knowledge of a case in which the wrong man was certainly chosen by a murderer whose vengeance was as ill directed as it was unlawful. And of all the men I have ever met personally, few would be as well prepared to meet God as the innocent victim, and few as quick to express complete forgiveness of his assailant. He immediately accepted it as God's will that he should die then, and that he should die in such a way. But that did not exempt the murderer from guilt.

17. *Why did God put us in a world whose natural disasters, such as earthquakes, can destroy us?*

St. Paul replied to this difficulty simply by saying, "Shall the thing formed say to Him that formed it, why hast Thou made me thus?" He stressed the supreme dominion of the Creator, and the limited rights of the creature.

Reason tells us that every created thing by virtue of being created must fall short of infinite perfection. It is bound to be a mixture of perfection and lack of perfection. This world has good features, and bad. We should thank God for the good, and leave to God, without any complaints, the fact that imperfection exists. That is better than forgetting the good, and spending one's life complaining that we do not possess still greater immunity from trials and difficulties.

Let us remember, also, that this life is not all for us. A perfect destiny awaits us after our probation in this world of opportunity.

18. *The sight of the evils in this world makes me doubt the existence of God.*

Such a doubt is not reasonable. It is because you concentrate on some particular evils, failing to advert to the good, and above all failing to grasp the universal aspect of all creation. The positive evidence for God's existence and of His goodness is certain and solid. If we fail to understand all God's ways, that is evidence, not that God does not exist, but that our human intelligence is finite and limited. To say that we must fully comprehend all God's ways or deny that there is a God is to hold that the human mind is the infinite, ultimate, and infallible criterion of all truth. That is not reasonable.

19. *I cannot believe in a God who creates human beings only to know all kinds of physical pain and suffering.*

You are not expected to believe in such a God. God did not create men for such a purpose. Two things are certain. There is a God. Pain and suffering are realities. It is foolish to abandon belief in either of these things because we have difficulty in reconciling them. If we find ourselves baffled, the only thing to do is to go on serving God, content to leave the final solution of the problem to Him.

20. *I get so indignant when I see suffering that I agree with the axiom, "The only excuse for God is that He does not exist."*

Firstly, if there be no God, indignation is absurd. For then suffering is a necessary result of blind material forces. You might just as well get indignant with the sun for rising later in wintertime.

Secondly, the absurdity of the axiom you quote should be evident from the fact that any excusing supposes someone at fault: and if God is at fault, He exists. But let me add that, if He does exist, He cannot be at fault.

Meantime, the only explanation of evil is that God does exist. Evil cannot exist apart from positive beings to experience it. God did not create evil, but He did create all positive beings, permitting them to lack normal perfection at times.

Again, if you say that there is evil, therefore, there is no God; I reply, "There is good, therefore, there is a God." And my reason is stronger than yours, because the good certainly outweighs the evil in this world. And the good cannot be explained without God, whilst the evil can be explained with God. He permitted it only because He was good and powerful enough to draw from it a benefit greater than any harm it can effect.

21. *The sight of war, so utterly evil, would make any man indignant. I myself have fallen back on reason, and have become an atheist.*

If there be no God, as you now maintain, there would be no men to be at war. And even if there were men, the result of a purely mechanical and necessary evolution, it would not be wrong for them to be at war. If a cog in a machine gets out of place, you are not morally indignant with that cog for its behavior. If there be no God, blind force produced men and produces their conduct. It is as foolish to blame them as to blame an oak tree for not growing straight.

As for the use of reason, take this principle. We must neither belittle nor exaggerate the powers of reason. Reason is powerful enough to prove that there is a God; but it is not powerful enough to understand all God's ways. That reason is not capable of understanding all God's ways does not mean that it is incapable of proving His existence. We cannot argue that, because we neither like nor understand what a fellow human being does, he does not, therefore, exist. You discredit reason even whilst professing to be guided by it.

22. *Christian Science tells us that you are trying to solve a problem which does not exist, for pain and suffering are not realities at all.*

Both the existence of a good God and of pain and suffering are facts. And since both are facts they are not incompatible. That their complete reconciliation is not possible to the human mind I admit. We, therefore, speak of the mystery of suffering. But it is to behave like a school child to take an answer that pleases one, and then go back and tamper with the facts, adjusting them to fit one's conclusion.

Some people set out with the principle that human reason must be capable of understanding all things. They accept this principle despite the fact that history shows the almost infinite capacity of the human mind to go astray. Working on this unjustified principle they say, "We don't see how to reconcile a good God and suffering." So they go off into two camps, one section with the enthusiastic credulity of atheism, denying that any good God exists, the other section with equally enthusiastic credulity, denying that suffering exists.

The sensible man refuses to deny God or to deny suffering. He has the humility which admits the limitations of human reason, and the faith and trust which continue to serve God in the midst of adversity without tearful protests and moans of despair.

23. *If pain and suffering are real, God created them; if they are unreal, they are illusory.*

God did not create evil, for evil is the negation of the good. Privations of perfection are not the objective of creative activity. God did create a free will in man capable of failing to do the good dictated by conscience, and positive sense-faculties capable of experiencing pain. Yet pain and moral evil are actual phenomena in this world, and not merely illusions. We do experience an absence of normal health in our bodies, and of moral rectitude in our will. And neither experience is pleasant.

24. *Does it not seem strange that God, knowing that would happen, should create man free to please or offend Him? If He could not foresee the future it could be more easily understood.*

If God could not foresee the future, instead of being more easily understood, things would be absolutely inexplicable. It is precisely because He foresaw the future, and the greater good He will draw out of these present evils, that He has permitted them.

But, apart from this, why did God, knowing what would happen, create men free to please Him or offend Him?

Firstly, because His foreknowledge in no way makes anyone offend Him. Knowledge does not cause things to happen. Things which happen give rise to the knowledge of them.

Secondly, God gave us free will so that we might have the nobler dignity of being masters of our own destiny, not having to serve Him necessarily and blindly as do trees and inanimate planets and stars. God did not want a forced love from beings capable of an intelligent appreciation of the good. But once God makes man free, man is free either to love God or to reject God; to serve Him, or to rebel

against Him. That is, physically. No man is morally free to reject God. God, therefore, forbids that, warning us of its disastrous results.

At any rate, there is a God, and we are free. If we cannot see a satisfactory explanation of the difficulties that occur to us, then we trust God in such matters. Many speculative questions which human curiosity would like to have solved have been left mysteries, either because our minds could not grasp the solution even if they were explained, or simply because God does not choose to justify Himself to His own creatures yet.

See also Radio Replies, Vol. I, Nos. 1-24 for further questions on Existence, Nature, Providence of God and Problem of Evil.

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Edited in Collaboration with

REV. CHARLES MORTIMER CARTY

Diocesan Missionary

With a Preface by

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PREFACE



ONCE there were lost islands, but most of them have been found; once there were lost causes, but many of them have been retrieved; but there is one lost art that has not been definitely recovered, and without which no civilization can long survive, and that is the art of controversy. The hardest thing to find in the world today is an argument. Because so few are thinking, naturally there are found but few to argue. Prejudice there is in abundance and sentiment too, for these things are born of enthusiasms without the pain of labor. Thinking, on the contrary, is a difficult task; it is the hardest work a man can do—that is perhaps why so few indulge in it. Thought-saving devices have been invented that rival labor-saving devices in their ingenuity. Fine-sounding phrases like “Life is bigger than logic,” or “Progress is the spirit of the age,” go rattling by us like express trains, carrying the burden of those who are too lazy to think for themselves.

NOT even philosophers argue today; they only explain away. A book full of bad logic, advocating all manner of moral laxity, is not refuted by critics; it is merely called “bold, honest, and fearless.” Even those periodicals which pride themselves upon their open-mindedness on all questions are far from practising the lost art of controversy. Their pages contain no controversies, but only presentations of points of view; these never rise to the level of abstract thought in which argument clashes with argument like steel with steel, but rather they content themselves with the personal reflections of one who has lost his faith, writing against the sanctity of marriage, and of another who has kept his faith, writing in favor of it. Both sides are shooting off firecrackers, making all the noise of an intellectual warfare and creating the illusion of conflict, but it is only a sham battle in which there are no casualties; there are plenty of explosions, but never an exploded argument.

THE causes underlying this decline in the art of controversy are twofold: religious and philosophical. Modern religion has enunciated one great and fundamental dogma that is at the basis of all the other dogmas, and that is, that religion must be freed from dogmas. Creeds and confessions of faith are no longer the fashion; religious leaders have agreed not to disagree and those beliefs for which some of our ancestors would have died they have melted into a spineless Humanism. Like other Pilates they have turned their backs on the uniqueness of truth and have opened their arms wide to all the moods and fancies

the hour might dictate. The passing of creeds and dogmas means the passing of controversies. Creeds and dogmas are social; prejudices are private. Believers bump into one another at a thousand different angles, but bigots keep out of one another's way, because prejudice is anti-social. I can imagine an old-fashioned Calvinist who holds that the word "damn" has a tremendous dogmatic significance, coming to intellectual blows with an old-fashioned Methodist who holds that it is only a curse word; but I cannot imagine a controversy if both decide to damn damnation, like our Modernists who no longer believe in Hell.

THE second cause, which is philosophical, bases itself on that peculiar American philosophy called "Pragmatism," the aim of which is to prove that all proofs are useless. Hegel, of Germany, rationalized error; James, of America, derationalized truth. As a result, there has sprung up a disturbing indifference to truth, and a tendency to regard the useful as the true, and the impractical as the false. The man who can make up his mind when proofs are presented to him is looked upon as a bigot, and the man who ignores proofs and the search for truth is looked upon as broad-minded and tolerant.

Another evidence of this same disrespect for rational foundations is the general readiness of the modern mind to accept a statement because of the literary way in which it is couched, or because of the popularity of the one who says it, rather than for the reasons behind the statement. In this sense, it is unfortunate that some men who think poorly can write so well. Bergson has written a philosophy grounded on the assumption that the greater comes from the less, but he has so camouflaged that intellectual monstrosity with mellifluous French that he has been credited with being a great and original thinker. To some minds, of course, the startling will always appear to be the profound. It is easier to get the attention of the press when one says, as Ibsen did, that "two and two make five," than to be orthodox and say that two and two make four.

THE Catholic Church perhaps more than the other forms of Christianity notices the decline in the art of controversy. Never before, perhaps, in the whole history of Christianity has she been so intellectually impoverished for want of good, sound intellectual opposition as she is at the present time. Today there are no foe-men worthy of her steel. And if the Church today is not producing great chunks of thought, or what might be called "thinkage," it is because she has not been challenged to do so. The best in everything comes from the throwing down of a gauntlet—even the best in thought.

THE Church loves controversy, and loves it for two reasons: because intellectual conflict is informing, and because she is madly in love with rationalism. The great structure of the Catholic Church has

been built up through controversy. It was the attacks of the Docetists and the Monophysites in the early centuries of the Church that made her clear on the doctrine concerning the nature of Christ; it was the controversy with the Reformers that clarified her teaching on justification. And if today there are not nearly so many dogmas defined as in the early ages of the Church, it is because there is less controversy—and less thinking. One must think to be a heretic, even though it be wrong thinking.

Even though one did not accept the infallible authority of the Church, he would still have to admit that the Church in the course of centuries has had her finger on the pulse of the world, ever defining those dogmas which needed definition at the moment. In the light of this fact, it would be interesting to inquire if our boasted theory of intellectual progress is true. What was the Christian world thinking about in the early centuries? What doctrines had to be clarified when controversy was keen? In the early centuries, controversy centered on such lofty and delicate problems as the Trinity, the Incarnation, the union of Natures in the person of the Son of God. What was the last doctrine to be defined in 1870? It was the capability of man to use his brain and come to a knowledge of God. Now, if the world is progressing intellectually, should not the existence of God have been defined in the first century, and the nature of the Trinity have been defined in the nineteenth? In the order of mathematics this is like defining the complexities of logarithms in the year 42, and the simplification of the addition table in the year 1942. The fact is that there is now less intellectual opposition to the Church and more prejudice, which, being interpreted, means less thinking, even less bad thinking.

Not only does the Church love controversy because it helps her sharpen her wits; she loves it also for its own sake. The Church is accused of being the enemy of reason; as a matter of fact, she is the only one who believes in it. Using her reason in the Council of the Vatican, she officially went on record in favor of Rationalism, and declared, against the mock humility of the Agnostics and the sentimental faith of the Fideists, that human reason by its own power can know something besides the contents of test tubes and retorts, and that working on mere sensible phenomena it can soar even to the "hid battlements of eternity," there to discover the Timeless beyond time and the Spaceless beyond space which is God, the Alpha and Omega of all things.

THE Church asks her children to think hard and think clean. Then she asks them to do two things with their thoughts: First, she asks them to externalize them in the concrete world of economics, government, commerce, and education, and by this externalization of beautiful, clean thoughts to produce a beautiful and clean civilization.

The quality of any civilization depends upon the nature of the thoughts its great minds bequeath to it. If the thoughts that are externalized in the press, in the senate chamber, on the public platform, are base, civilization itself will take on their base character with the same readiness with which a chameleon takes on the color of the object upon which it is placed. But if the thoughts that are vocalized and articulated are high and lofty, civilization will be filled, like a crucible, with the gold of the things worth while.

THE Church asks her children not only to externalize their thoughts and thus produce culture, but also to internalize their thoughts and thus produce spirituality. The constant giving would be dissipation unless new energy was supplied from within. In fact, before a thought can be bequeathed to the outside, it must have been born on the inside. But no thought is born without silence and contemplation. It is in the stillness and quiet of one's own intellectual pastures, wherein man meditates on the purpose of life and its goal, that real and true character is developed. A character is made by the kind of thoughts a man thinks when alone, and a civilization is made by the kind of thoughts a man speaks to his neighbor.

ON the other hand, the Church discourages bad thinking, for a bad thought set loose is more dangerous than a wild man. Thinkers live; toilers die in a day. When society finds it is too late to electrocute a thought, it electrocutes the man. There was once a time when Christian society burned the thought in order to save society, and after all, something can be said in favor of this practice. To kill one bad thought may mean the salvation of ten thousand thinkers. The Roman emperors were alive to this fact; they killed the Christians not because they wanted their hearts, but because they wanted their heads, or better, their brains—brains that were thinking out the death of Paganism.

It is to this task of thinking out the death of New Paganism that these chapters of the third volume of *Radio Replies by Fathers Rumble and Carty* are published.

Monsignor Fulton J. Sheen, Ph.D., D.D., L.L.D.

Foreword

THIS third volume of questions submitted to us concerning the Catholic Church and her teachings, together with the answers to them, is intended to complete our series of RADIO REPLIES offered to the public in book form. For the sake of reference and comparison this third volume also has been made to correspond as closely as possible with the two volumes previously published so far as the division of its contents is concerned.

Our three volumes of RADIO REPLIES do not claim to *An Inexhaustible* have exhausted all possible problems where religion *Subject* is involved. Far from it. According to their various fields of study men could go on almost forever proposing difficulties suggested by their readings in history, philosophy, theology, science, ethics, psychology, or comparative religion. Indeed the Catholic Church, for nearly two thousand years, has been listening to the difficulties proposed by all types of men through all the ages. And to every individual who comes to her today with the request that she first solve his own little collection of viewpoints which seem to militate against the truth of Catholicism she can say, "Tell me all you have against the Catholic religion, and when you have done, I will tell you ten thousand further difficulties you have neither heard of, nor could think of for yourself." It would be a vast mistake, therefore, to imagine that the Catholic Church is unaware of the difficulties which can arise in any human mind where religion is concerned. I say this because many a man has come to me with a difficulty under the impression that it is insoluble, and that no one before him has ever adverted to it. And he has found it rather disconcerting to learn that it is an old objection; one, perhaps, which has been proposed and demolished a thousand times in each recurring age.

Our three volumes, then, do not pretend to exhaust all *Scope of* possible problems in the field of religion. They contain *RADIO REPLIES* but a classified selection of typical questions and answers chosen from a vast mass of material accumulated during twelve years of radio work and public lectures in which non-Catholics were invited to express their difficulties in the way of accepting Catholicism. And we maintain that these three volumes, or any one of them, will at least solve the particular difficulties listed, establish the truth of the Catholic Church, and provide the principles which will prove valid in the solution of all other possible submissions.

Of course the man who sincerely desires the truth, and *The* is earnestly seeking it, soon learns that if he waits until *True Approach* all possible difficulties which could invade his mind are solved he will never attain to the true religion in this life. Life is too short

for that. He would arrive at his deathbed still with a host of difficulties unsolved, having ignored what is certain because of the tangle of his uncertainties. What every man needs to do is to ponder over the certainties, make them his positive conviction, and act according to them, trusting that more and more of his uncertainties will be clarified in due course. A track through a jungle to the mountaintop is not non-existent because the man entangled by difficulties in the jungle is unaware of it. And when such a man is informed that he will find the track if he but turns in another direction, he does not ignore the advice in favor of triumphing over all the difficulties along the wrong way of approach. That is, if he really does want to get to the mountaintop. The uncertainty as to whether he can get through that way he is content to leave unsolved whilst he makes use of the certain path that has been brought to his notice. So, too, the man too entangled in religious difficulties to see anything else will make no progress until he learns to abstract from them and consider the certain and positive aspects of Catholic truth. There he will find more than enough to justify unwavering confidence in the Catholic Church, and a practical way of life calculated to secure his spiritual welfare both in this world and the next.

The three volumes of **RADIO REPLIES** are not primarily intended as reference books. Their full force will be perceived only by reading each of them from cover to cover, for thus only will the logic and consistency of the Catholic position be fully apprehended. Truth is consistent; error almost infinite in its variations. Often enough, indeed, the objections to the Catholic Church, if set side by side, would cancel each other out of existence. But in dealing with everything that can be urged against her the Catholic Church never finds herself compelled to unsay anything. In answering difficulties from the most diverse points of view, even the most contradictory, she never contradicts herself, having to unsay to one opponent what she has maintained in her replies to another. And it is this consistency, the hallmark of truth, which has appealed to the intelligence of thousands of converts who, by further study, prayer, and the grace of God, have completed their journey towards the truth, and have happily sought admission to the Catholic Church. Primarily, therefore, the books are intended for such continuous and consecutive reading that their full import may thus be grasped.

But after such use as above advocated, the books retain their value as works of reference, and this for Catholics and non-Catholics alike. It is for this purpose that each volume has been so thoroughly indexed. As for study-clubs, testimonies to the value of these apologetic works are being constantly received. In many study-circles the questions only are put to the members, and the replies they themselves jot down on paper are then checked with those given in the books. Converts under instruction have told me that they, too, have adopted this method, with great profit to themselves, and an immense clarification of their ideas on the subject of religion.

And now, with this third and last series of RADIO *A Personal Note* REPLIES, I would like to offer our readers a final personal remark. I was brought up as a Protestant, probably with more inherited prejudices than most non-Catholics of these days. It is some thirty years since, in God's providence, I became a Catholic. Not content with that, I have also become a priest. I cannot therefore be charged with not knowing the Catholic Church thoroughly from within. And all I can say is this: had I found the Catholic Church as evil as I had been led to believe it was, had I found out that I had made a tragic mistake in becoming a Catholic, it is perhaps conceivable that pride might keep me from admitting my error. It would be possible to adopt the attitude of desperate obstinacy which says, "I have made my bed, and will lie upon it." But I am not entirely inhuman. And I would be man enough to advise other prospective converts against making the same fatal mistake. Privately, at least, I would say to inquirers, "I have made wreckage of my own life, and I am going to continue doing so. But there's no need for two of us to do so. You are still outside the Catholic Church, and I advise you to stay outside. If you have any love for your own soul, remain as you are." Yet, did I give such advice, incalculable would be my guilt before God. For the Catholic Church is not evil. She is the one true Church of Christ in this world, the very "pillar and ground of truth." And instead of saving people from it, I am constrained to labor to bring as many people as possible to it, knowing that I am thus bringing the greatest of God's blessings into their lives. Nor is there one of the hundreds of converts I have received into the Catholic Church who has not gratefully acknowledged the fact. What can I wish to the non-Catholic reader, then, except this same great happiness and blessing? It is in this wish that Father Carty joins with me as we offer this third series of RADIO REPLIES to a public that has already shown such appreciation of the previous volumes.

—LESLIE RUMBLE, M.S.C.



CHAPTER ONE

GOD

1. Does not scientific opinion tend to be agnostic, and to regard the existence of a Supreme Being as incapable of verification?

Some scientists who are proficient in certain limited experimental spheres may profess to be agnostics. But when they do so they are not speaking in virtue of any scientific knowledge they possess. They have gone outside the field in which they are proficient into a field in which they are not proficient. Often they have given so much attention to their own little field of inquiry that they have paid no attention to the rational explanation of the universe as a whole. They study the thing caused, but do not reflect upon the ultimate cause of all reality. And knowing little of the subject, they foolishly think nothing is to be known, forgetting their own limitations. Some do this. Not all. And thousands of great scientists have not been agnostic. They have devoted some thought to the subject instead of uttering hasty opinions. Thus Lord Kelvin said that science positively confirms creative power. Marconi recently spoke as follows: "It is a mistake to think that science and faith cannot exist together. There is too much atheism today. There are too many people just drifting along without any aim or ideal or belief. Faith in the Supreme Being whose rule we must obey can alone give us the courage and strength to face the great mystery of life." One cannot go through an endless stream of quotations. No one, of course, believes that the existence of the Supreme Being is capable of verification by methods proper to experimental science. But His existence is capable of verification by reason; and science does not tend to the denial of this in properly instructed and well-balanced minds.

2. People argue from the order prevailing in the universe to the existence of an intelligent God.

They do; and rightly so.

3. How do we know that it is not in the nature of things themselves to act in an orderly way, according to a plan?

We know that it is not in the nature of created things of themselves to act in an orderly way according to a plan, for if they are working towards the fulfillment of a plan, there is a constant adaption of means to an end, which supposes an intelligence which has both formulated the plan, and perceived the fitting relationship between given means and the given end to be attained. Now blind matter is not endowed with intelligence. Nor can mere chance produce order. Scatter indiscriminately over the ground thousands of letters written on slips of paper, they will never by mere chance fall together in such a way as to make, say, an oration of Cicero. Now the only intelligent beings in the world are men. But prior to the advent of men to this world, order prevailed. It can be accounted for only by an extra-mundane Intelligence. As surely as it needs intelligence to understand the order prevailing in the universe, it needed intelligence to produce it. Employing all the resources of his intelligence, a genius may devote the whole of his life to a study of the orderly arrangement of crystals. Will he ascribe the whole of the universe to an intelligence so much less than his own that he calls it a blind force? The moment one speaks of the laws of the universe, he speaks of a legislator. And all legislation supposes intelligence, even though human legislation indicates often

enough how badly employed human intelligence can be. If it be in the very nature of certain things to tend in an orderly way towards the realization of a plan, that tendency was implanted in their nature by the Supreme Intelligence responsible for the plan; and that Supreme Intelligence is God.

4. *Did not humanity originally begin with polytheism, and gradually evolve towards monotheism?*

No. Humanity began with monotheism, and multitudes degenerated into polytheism. At first sight the most primitive traditions found in the Vedic books seem polytheistic; but a deeper scrutiny shows an individual Deity, and indicates that the plurality of gods is really a plurality of effects or created manifestations. This ancient tradition was a survival of the primitive convictions of our first parents. But even as the Jews were always prone to fall into polytheism despite the special protection of God, so the Gentile nations degenerated in their religious notions, and the idea of a plurality of gods became quite common among the rank and file of peoples. The great Greek philosophers, Aristotle and Plato, though in general practice conforming to popular notions, discerned, however, by reason that polytheism was absurd, and theoretically maintained that there could be but one Deity. They saw that polytheism was an error, and that error supposes a truth of which it is the corruption. They both allude to ancient traditions confirming their views. Philologically, also, no plural terms existed prior to singular terms precisely because multitude is subsequent to unity; and the notion of a plurality of gods presupposed a notion of the one God.

5. *You do not believe that the universe can be explained in terms of the material only.*

Most certainly I do not. The mere materialist offers explanations which do not even deserve a place in the catalog of errors. They are too puerile. Of visible things materialism gives explanations one would expect from a prattling baby or from a lunatic. Of invisible things and spiritual things it gives no explanation at all. It constructs bodies with smaller bodies, like a child playing with a set of blocks, and it gets quite out of breath by the time it gets to things of the mind. It contradicts itself by speaking of laws of matter, for a law is a decree formulated by reason, and reason is not material. Materialists are inconsequent people who prove God every time they speak in order to deny Him. For at the back of every denial of God there is the idea of God. No man can believe in truth, or appreciate goodness, or seek happiness, without tending towards the Author of these things. Yet each of these ideas leads to God. Materialism is not rational; and its only real appeal lies in the fact that it makes the universe the magnificent plaything of man's pride, and gives him a free field for his passions.

6. *Is it not reasonable to suppose a purely physical cause of which we as yet know nothing?*

I must ask you what you mean by a "purely physical" cause. God is a physical, though not a material Being. If you intend a material cause, I say that the supposition is not reasonable; for the material cannot produce the spiritual. Thought itself is in the spiritual order, and so is the soul which produces thought. You would scorn the idea that a telegraph pole spontaneously began to produce peaches. Yet the proportion between a telegraph pole and peaches is much less than that between matter and spirit.

Again, if we as yet know nothing of the cause of all things, why is it reasonable to suppose that cause to be "purely physical"—whatever you mean by that—yet not reasonable to suppose it to be the Personal God we Christians accept? As a matter of fact, I maintain that a Personal God is the only reasonable explanation.

7. *Because we do not yet know of such a purely physical cause, is that in itself sufficient reason to assert a Divine Cause?*

Apparently, by "purely physical" cause you mean some blind force. Now I admit that because we do not know of such a purely physical cause we would not be justified in asserting a Divine Cause. But what if, instead of merely "not" knowing of a purely physical cause which could produce this universe, we "know" that no such blind force could do so? And we do know that. The order and obvious design so evident in the universe insist that the Cause be intelligent and personal. And the very supremacy of that Cause supposes Divinity, or a Cause which is itself not an effect, but uncaused, and above all created limitations. Divinity is but a term reserved for an uncreated Being outside and above the created order, and rejoicing in limitless perfections.

8. *Despite all your arguments, I refuse to believe in a God we can't understand.*

That is unreasonable. In any case, you can understand that there is a God, even though you cannot fully understand the nature of God. God must surpass the capacity of the human mind or He would not be God at all. You must not confuse mystery with absurdity. Tell me that blind matter produced the universe, and I admit the absurdity. But mystery is the very opposite of absurdity. The absurd is false, contradictory, incoherent. But mystery is a truth whose immensity surpasses us. When we speak of God, what we say is true as far as it goes. But human ideas will never go far enough to express God completely. We must express God as best we can, though we shall never fully succeed in expressing God as He is. And I, for one, would not believe in God unless He did surpass my own limited concepts.

9. *Since God is infinite, and the finite human mind cannot conceive the infinite, God must be thoroughly incomprehensible to us.*

God is not thoroughly incomprehensible to us. We can attain to a certain degree of knowledge concerning Him, even though we cannot form an adequate concept of Him. The finite human mind can conceive the fact that there is a Being not finite as are the things that Being has made. It can affirm perfections of God, denying the imperfections associated with limited creatures, and attributing the purified perfections to Him in an altogether higher and nobler order of being. Any perfections affirmed of God must be with the proviso that God transcends created nature and that we intend them as they must be in an order above that of nature. In other words, we intend them as they are in the supernatural order and as known to God Himself. Even as an animal can know that a human being has certain knowledge, without comprehending the precise quality of that knowledge, so human beings can know that God possesses certain perfections without fully comprehending their precise quality as they are in God.

10. *I have heard God spoken of as Elohim, Jehovah, Yahweh, Eternal Father, the Infinite King, Divine Providence, and in many other ways. Is any one of these names capable of defining God completely?*

No one word can define the whole of the significance of God. Our concepts or thoughts are derived from created things; and there can be as many diverse thoughts in our minds as there are varying perfections in created things. The infinite plentitude of God's perfection is too great to be comprehended in any single human concept, and our small intelligence has to speak of God in partial and inadequate concepts. Thus even in the one concept of the Pope we have many implied and different aspects. The same person is Bishop of Rome, Head of the Church, Chief Shepherd, Supreme Teacher, Holy Father, etc. If I allude to him under one of these titles, all the rest is implied. And whether I speak of God as Eternal Father, or King, or Divine Providence, or Jehovah, or under any other accepted term, I

successfully call attention to the Being I intend; and all that that Being implies in Himself is included, even though I neither express nor fully grasp it.

11. *You constantly allude to God as if God were a person. Can God be truly a personal Being?*

God is truly personal. We know that the being and vitality of man is conscious and personal, and that by life, consciousness, and personality, man is higher than inanimate things. Therefore God, infinitely higher than man in the scale of perfection, is living, conscious, and personal.

12. *Is the term person capable of being used to define an infinite entity?*

It is capable of being applied to an infinite entity, though its significance from our point of view falls short of the reality as it is in God. For example, a stone is a being and a man is a being. The word "being" is equally true of each, though one who knew only stones would not know of its full implication in man. So, too, man is personal, and God is personal. Person is true of each. But we, who have experimental knowledge only of human persons, do not know its full implication in God. Yet, though there is not absolute identity of concept, there is a true analogy of concept; and in revealing that He is personal, God has conveyed the real truth to us in a way adapted to our lesser capacity.

13. *When you call God "Father" do you not imply that there is sex in God, and that He is masculine?*

No. The word "Father" is used of God, not to imply that He is of the masculine gender, a quality proper to material bodies, but merely to denote our production by God; and this, not as by some blind mechanical force, but by an intelligent and loving Principle of Being. The word "Father" is the nearest human expression suitable for the proportionate truth to be declared. As directly drawn from human beings, of course, the word implies procreation by mutual cooperation between the sexes, and that supposes masculine and feminine. But when applied to God abstraction is made from the mode or process of production, and the sense is restricted to the fact of our production by God, and to the parental dispositions of God towards us. We thus express in our human way a characteristic which is really in God, though not precisely as it is in man. God is truly a Father to us.

14. *If God's providence rules all things, is it not an insult to Him to put lightning conductors on Churches?*

No. It would be an insult and a sin of presumption to expect God to do immediately those things which we ourselves are capable of doing with such powers as He has bestowed upon us. He does not give us our natural intelligence for nothing, but expects us to use it. We are expected always to do all that we are capable of doing, and then we ask God to supply for our incapacity in things beyond our ability.

15. *Face the dilemma. God could either prevent evils or not. If He can but will not, He is not good; if He cannot, He is not all powerful.*

That dilemma is invalid. If a dilemma is to be valid, the disjunction must be complete, exhausting all possibilities. There must be no room for the reply, "Datur tertium"—there is a third possibility. Your dilemma fails, if evil and pain and suffering be useful. What if the evils we see in this world are the necessary condition of a higher good? What if, still more, they be indispensable to the progress of man and the realization of his destiny—if some day they are to be compensated by an eternity of happiness? In any case, for a dilemma to be valid, the inference from each alternative in itself must be certain and indisputable. Neither of your alternatives is even reasonable.

16. Do you say that even God cannot prevent these evils?

Absolutely speaking, God could annihilate the whole of creation, and then, of course, there would be no problem of evils in the universe. But granted that God wants this type of world, then pain and suffering are a necessary condition; and it was certainly better to permit them than not to create a universe in which it was possible for them to occur.

As it is, your very terms involve a contradiction. In practice, the assertion that if God cannot remove all pain He is not all powerful means, where physical pain is concerned, that if God cannot have sensitive beings without their being sensitive, He is not all powerful! For, granted the power of sensation, our sensations will be pleasant and unpleasant even with the variations of the weather! Where moral evil is concerned, your assertion means, "If God cannot have free and morally responsible beings who are not really free and morally responsible, He is not all powerful." For granted freedom of will, moral evil is a necessary possibility.

17. Since you cannot appeal to sin, free will, and a future life in the case of animals, why do they have to suffer pain?

I would have to be God to give you a completely satisfactory answer to that question. To a certain extent, therefore, the problem must be left amongst the thousand and one mysteries which defy human solution. However, I can suggest certain points which may help to some understanding of the problem.

Firstly, it is better to be a vegetable than a mineral. A vegetable at least has life and growth, and is admittedly a more perfect thing than a stone.

Secondly, it is better to be a dog than a dandelion. The dog is not only living; it has sensitive life, and is able to enjoy many pleasant sensations denied to dandelions. But the price of additional sensitive perfection is pain. If a being is endowed with the power of sensation, it will endure sensations both pleasant and painful. And as even God could not create a sensitive being which would have no sensations, He must have seen that the pleasant ones would compensate for the painful ones. If you concentrate on the capacity for pain, and forget the capacity for pleasure, you might think it better not to have created such beings, and that life is not worth living for them. But no animal feels that. If a cat eats a mouse, the very protests of the mouse show how it likes being alive. You yourself would pity the mouse for being deprived of its life rather than the cat for the misery of being fed and compelled to live longer.

18. But there are individual cases where the compensations seem entirely inadequate.

There are, and they necessarily baffle us. But even so, we must beware of reading human attributes into the merely animal world, interpreting the sufferings of animals in terms of our own experiences. It would be a grave error to think that animals suffer in the way we do: for they lack our power of reflex thought. Then, too, we must not endow them with personal moral rights which they do not possess.

19. That doesn't alter the fact that animals suffer.

I agree. We cannot do more than appeal to the greater good. And it is a question of the general good as opposed to the individual good. The sum-total of pleasure in the animal world more than compensates for the sum-total of unavoidable pain. There is also the good of man to be considered. There is no violation of reason in the thought that God should permit physical pain, which does not involve moral evil, in order to procure the good of a higher order. Granted that God wished to create just such a universe as this, the unpleasant sensations of sensitive beings are absolutely necessary for the universal good. If all physical pain were eliminated, inferior beings would no longer be the means of existence to superior beings.

Many beautiful fauna would never exist. Also, if animals did not live on animals, they would multiply beyond all proportion, and then earth would be littered with rotting carcasses. The general good presupposes such physical evils in such a world as this.

20. *It seems to me that you folk who believe in God are the most forebearing folk in the world.*

I suppose you feel that if you believed in God you would tell Him what to do. But only one who does not believe in God can think like that. Did you believe in God you would realize that He is not subject to you, but that you are subject to Him. He is not answerable to us for His conduct. We are answerable to Him for ours. Meantime, it is because we believe in God that we have a solution for the troubles of this life which makes them bearable, however serious they may seem. Dissatisfaction is proper to those who do not believe in God. Their rejection of God does not diminish their trials. It merely deprives them of the consolation which good Christians experience in the midst of them.

21. *You should not seek your God's forgiveness; He should seek yours.*

Such a remark illustrates a great truth. As men cease to believe in and esteem God, they begin to believe in and esteem themselves. They lose the sense of sin, and become more and more unconscious of their moral failings. Thus, it is quite common for unbelievers to assert that they do not believe in religion, and at once to catalog their own virtues. Almost instinctively they add, "I don't pray, but I'm as good as those who do. I live a good clean life, owe no man anything, help my fellow men, etc." Conscious of their rectitude they feel that they deserve only the best; and naturally they resent misfortune. They smart under suffering and trial with a sense of injured innocence. And they cry out that, if there be a God, He is greatly to be blamed. Conscious only of their own virtue, they do not dream that they need any forgiveness. But believing their sufferings undeserved, they talk of God begging their pardon.

On the other hand, the more one believes in and esteems God, the less he believes in and esteems himself. Any good that is in him he attributes to God; and he is keenly conscious of his own shortcomings as being his own work. Aware of his sins, he is not astonished that suffering and trial should be his lot. Instead of thinking that he deserves only the best, he knows that he deserves only the worst. He therefore asks God to forgive him his sins; and is grateful to God for treating him so much more gently than justice would demand.

22. *Where you define pain as something negative, millions of tortured creatures give the strongest evidence that it is something decidedly positive.*

The fact that creatures positively experience pain does not alter the fact that evil as such is not a positive entity owing its creation to God.

23. *Do you believe literally in God as Creator of all things, visible and invisible?*

Yes. But remember that things, whether visible or invisible, are things insofar as they have positive being. Now try to follow carefully this treatment of the subject.

Evil, as such, whether physical or moral, is not a positive entity, but is a privation of due perfection. God has created every positive entity, but He does not directly produce those privations of perfection which are called evils.

Take the physical evil of a decayed tooth. God is the cause of all the positive being involved. That part of the tooth which is not yet decayed, but which is still good, owes its existence to God. The existent nerves owe their being to God, and

are good nerves. Their perfectly good registrations letting us know that the tooth is out of order are due to God's causality. But the real evil is the absence of healthy tooth and of right order in the nerves. Even the germs which consumed the tooth are quite good germs so far as their being goes. Even the process of consuming the tooth was excellent as a process.

But the evil element is reduced to absence of order and absence of healthy tooth; and absences of perfection are not caused by any positive action of God. God permits them, if you wish, insofar as He does not choose to prevent corrosive processes, or to produce good tooth as fast as it is eaten away.

In all this I do not deny that pain is a positive experience. Owing to the absence of healthy tooth, there is quite a positive vibration of the exposed nerve giving positively painful registrations. But the positive action is a good activity; the evil is merely lack of due order. And whilst God is the Creator of all positive entity, He is not the Creator of a lack of what should be there.

The same principle applies to moral evil. The will, and the action by which I choose are good in themselves. The evil is the lack of moral rectitude—again an absence of something which should normally be there. And God does not cause the absence of what should be present.

Why He permits the nonexistence or the privation of due order in created things is another question. We are dealing with the causality of God. God is not the cause of evil as such.

24. *How can you admit that evil is positively experienced by us, yet deny its very existence?*

I do not admit that we positively experience evil. We positively experience good registrations telling us that perfection is wanting. The registrations are positive, but they tell us of an absence of perfection. Positive entities alone really exist—good thus far—which lack the full measure of goodness which they ought to have. The evil is the privation or limitation of entity, not an entity itself.

25. *Why did not God create a different type of world, and not this one?*

That question is not yours to ask. God would not be God if He had to depend on the future approval of your judgment before He dared to act. If you reply, "Then I don't believe there is a God," you violate reason. And you will find the universe a much greater problem without God than any I have to face. If you say, "God does exist, but He is not good, or not entirely good," you contradict yourself, for once you introduce any limitation of perfection in God, then He is no longer God at all. The only reasonable position is to say, "God is a fact. Suffering is a fact. I do not fully comprehend why God should have permitted suffering, nor how He adjusts compensations which seem to me to be required if justice is to prevail. But that I do not fully comprehend these things does not surprise me, since there are thousands of lesser problems than this which I have failed to solve. Therefore, I can only conclude that, if I do not understand things, I do not understand them. But I am not going to deny what is certain, and maintain that my finite intelligence ought to be able to comprehend everything—a comprehension the possibility of which experience absolutely denies."

26. *These difficulties have caused thousands of men to abandon religion.*

Their own dispositions have caused men to abandon religion. Some men have made this problem the excuse even as other men have advanced other excuses. But any man who would neglect those religious and moral obligations which he can clearly understand merely because he cannot understand mysteries which he cannot be expected to understand is as foolish, and more so, than a man who would rather sit in darkness than switch on the electric light on the score that he doesn't understand just what electricity is!

See also Vols. I and II