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THE NEW CATECHISM.

FROM THE WESTERN CLARION.

Let us ask ourselves some questions; for that man is truly wise

Who will make a catechism that will really catechise.

All can make a catechism—none can keep it in repair;

Where's the workman can construct one that he'll guarantee will wear?

We are fronted from our birthday onward to the day we die

With a maximum of question and a minimum reply.

So we make our catechism; but our work is never done—

For a father's catechism never fits a father's son.

What are we here for? That's the first we want to know.

We are here, and all born little just because we're here to grow.

What is sin? Why, sin's not growing all that stops the growth within, Plagues the internal upward impulse, stunts the spirit—that is sin.

Who are sinners? All are sinners, but this is no hopeless plaint, For there never was a sinner who was not likewise a saint.

What's the devil? A convenient but superstitious elf

Each man builds to throw his sins on when he won't own up himself.

And where is hell? And where is heaven? In some vague distance dim?

No, they are here and now in you—in me, in her, in him.

When is the judgment Day to dawn? Its true date who can say?

Look in your calendar and see what day it is to-day!

To-day is always Judgment Day; and Conscience throned within

Brings up before its judgment seat each soul to face his sin.

We march to judgment, each along an unaccompanied way—

Stand up, man, and accuse yourself and meet your Judgment Day.

Where shall we get religion? Beneath the open sky,

The sphere of crystal silence surcharged with deity,

The winds blow from a thousand ways and waft their balms abroad,

The winds blow towards a million goals—but all winds blow from God.

The stars the old Chaldeans saw still weave their maze on high

And write a thousand thousand years their Bible on the sky.

The midnight earth sends incense up sweet with the breath of prayer—
Go out beneath the naked night and get religion there.

Where shall we get religion? Beneath the blooming tree,
Beside the hill-encircling brooks that loiter to the sea,

Beside all twilight waters, beneath all noonday shades,

Beneath the dark cathedral pines and through the tangled glades;

Wherever the old urge of life provokes the dumb, 'dead sod

To tell its thoughts in violets, the soul takes hold on God.

So smell the growing clover, and scent the blooming pear,

Go forth to seek religion—and find it anywhere.

What is the church? The church is man when his awed soul goes out
In reverence to the mystery that swathes him all about.

When any living man in awe gropes Godward in his search

Then, in that hour, that living man becomes the living church.

Then, though in wilderness or waste, his soul is swept along

Down naves of prayer, through aisles of praise, up altar stairs of song.

And where man fronts the Mystery with spirit bowed in prayer,

There is the universal church—the church of God is there.

Where are the prophets of the soul? where dwells the sacred clan?

Ah, they live in fields and cities, wherever dwells a man.

Whether he prays in cloistered cell or delves the hillside clod,

Wherever beats the heart of man, there dwells a priest of God.

Who are the apostolic men? the men who hear a voice

Well from the soul within the soul that cries aloud, "Rejoice!"

Who listen to themselves and hear this world-old voice divine—

These are the lineage of seers, the apostolic line.

And what is faith? The anchored trust that at the core of things

Health, goodness, animating strength flow from the exhaustless springs;

That no star rolls unguided down the rings of endless maze,

That no feet tread an aimless path through wastes of empty days;

(Continued on page 8.)