

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor of BLACKFRIARS.

SIR,

Your non-Catholic correspondent in the November issue, though his letter seems only indirectly connected with the Catholic press, emphasises a point which is too easily lost sight of, namely, the apologetic value of 'good conduct.'

Nevertheless, the idea must be properly understood. The writer of the letter appears to base his opinions on two assumptions: (i) that however much Catholics and Protestants disagree about Faith, they are agreed about Morals; and (ii) that there is a thing above and greater than Catholicity, called Christianity. These assumptions are held by probably the majority of sincere and practising Protestants in these days, but no Catholic can possibly accept either of them.

Catholics should beware how they accept the moral judgments of non-Catholics. Protestants are very fond of adversely judging the conduct of individual Catholics as Catholics; often they have *prima facie* good reason: but, on the other hand, an enquiry sometimes discloses that what the Protestant thinks is wrong, the Church says is not wrong. Your correspondent refers to 'showing forth . . . the spirit of Christianity.' If he gave his explanation of what he meant by this 'spirit,' would it be entirely acceptable to Catholic teaching? I trow not.

I repeat, the truth in that letter must not be lost sight of. But, in spite of the backslidings and shortcomings of Catholics, increasing numbers of Protestants yearly succumb to 'theological discussions' and 'verbal efforts'; for they realise that, though every living Catholic was an active candidate for Hell, the truth of Catholicism would remain and claim their allegiance; truth in that case obscured and compromised, no doubt, but still truth whole and entire, and therefore to be believed without reference to any other consideration.

I am, yours, etc.,

LONG WILL