

that her one prayer would be his conversion to the Faith. She did not expect to see him again on earth, but it was due to him to know what her life would be henceforth. She did not give her address, but it was in the city he had so vainly explored when she left him. There was no time to try again; his vessel was to sail, and he embarked. Over and over again he read the letter. The thought that she must belong to a colored community struck him with a pang. He shuddered when he thought of her beauty, her grace, her education; and yet, he felt that her sacrifice would not have been complete otherwise.

As time went on, and he made the contents of the book his own, grace and the prayers of that hidden Nun did their work. On the other side of the ocean he met a priest who won his confidence. The story of his life was soon told. He placed himself under instruction, was baptized in the Catholic Church, and made his First Communion with deepest devotion. After weeks of thought and prayer he entered a Seminary, and began his study for the priesthood. Pray for him, reader, and we may persevere, for this is a true story in every particular. It tells how wonderful are the ways of God, which indeed surpass our understanding. An heroic sacrifice, a noble example, fervent prayer, won these pure young souls, and laid them as an acceptable sacrifice at the Feet of the Master.

COBBLING THE CATHOLIC RELIGION

This seems to be an age for religious fads and new religions. Thanks to the elastic principle of Protestantism that everybody may choose his own religion out of the Bible not only have the Protestant sects been divided and multiplied, but the trend seems to be to substitute something else for the Christ of the ages that would satisfy the increasing demands and growing unrest of the present generation. Charles W. Eliot champions the cause of a moral code, the basis of which is the Golden Rule. As though Christ's teachings did not embody this rule and everything else that is worth having or teaching or practicing. Because theology is complex it is to be discarded, and yet theology is but the explanation of Christ's teachings and their application to the different situations and conditions in our lives. Eliot's new religion is to dispense with the idea of a God Head in Christ—save only as He reflects more admirably than any other human being a divine mission and image.

And now comes another cult builder—no less than the novelist Winston Churchill, who, after having gained some literary fame is spreading his sails to the tempests of religious unrest and uncertainty. He ventilates himself thus in the December number of the Century:

"Most of us are like boys with cold hands looking on at a game. We are sick of eating candy but we don't understand the game. Perhaps it appears ridiculous to some of us. Yet we have the feeling of being at cross-purposes with life of being at the mercy of any misfortune which may strike us and bowl us over; of having no anchorage of love in anything permanent and abiding. We want a religion. Perhaps we are waiting for a new one. We'd plunge into life, into usefulness, if only we knew what life were; but we don't know. It may be, as is often the case to day, that the conception of Christianity given us in our youth has failed to satisfy us, to give us an effective sanction. We are unable to say, with the conviction of our fathers, 'This is the absolute truth.' For one thing, it may seem to us that the science and the agnostic critics of the age just past have riddled that religion."

It is no wonder that the conception of Christianity given to youthful minds outside the pale of the Catholic Church has failed to satisfy them. And it fails to satisfy any reasonable human being, young or old. As long as we cannot assure ourselves that we hold the truth—and that this truth cannot be successfully assailed by science or agnostic critics—we shall be on the waves of doubt and dissatisfaction with ourselves. With the contradictions of Protestant sects creeds before us, we may well plan for some new religion as a substitute for Christianity. If all the Protestant sects are right, then, indeed, was Christ's mission on earth a failure. He was neither the God-man nor even an ordinary teacher of the truth.

Mr. Churchill, in a covert manner, makes the following fling at the Catholic Church—by which he betrays either his ignorance or his rank prejudice:

It is a curious fact that there are some who look with longing eyes at the Church which still stands for external, or what may be called supernatural, authority. 'What a comfort,' such weary souls exclaim, 'to be able to have life solved for one in this simple fashion, to accept the teachings of a Church which still claims in a special sense to be the guardian of the keys of heaven itself, to stop this buzzing in our heads, this attempting to think for our selves!' But we find we can't enter such a Church. Perhaps we do not grasp at once the significance of this fact. It is only after a little that the reason becomes plain. We look around us, and we perceive at length that every institution in our modern government, every discovery in our modern science from the telegraph

which encircles the globe to the cure and prevention of disease, has been accomplished against the principle for which that Church still stands, the principle of having our thinking done for us."

A falsehood it is to say that the Catholic Church does the thinking for her members. On the contrary it is by correct thinking that anyone may reach the conclusion of the Catholic Church being the Church established by Jesus Christ. The Catholic Church does not do the thinking for the many thousands of converts who annually join her communion. They are convinced before they enter her portals. "Nor does she do the thinking for them afterwards nor for the many millions who were born and reared in her faith. They accept a few articles of faith—fundamental doctrines (you can count them on your fingers)—after they are convinced that the Church has authority to teach them on the testimony of the Scriptures and tradition—and outside of this one act of obedience to the faith they have as large a liberty in the interpretation of God's word as any Protestant believer, provided such interpretation does not contradict her fundamental teachings. She does not fetter the human mind. Her eminent commentators have different interpretations of the same Scriptural text, and so they always will have without let or hindrance on the part of the Church. To say that the eternal truths must be changed to accommodate them to the altered conditions of the present age is as ridiculous as to say that twice two, which was four in the days of Aristotle and Christ, should now be six. If there was but one Church established by Christ, authoritative and infallible, a living, continuous embodiment of Himself on earth till the end of time, then in the twentieth century we know where to find it. It is not hidden under a bushel, but its light is high on the mountain top. There need not be religious unrest if those who are still seeking after truth will use their reasoning faculties properly. There is no Church that encourages Christian liberty more, within the limitations of common sense, than does the Roman Catholic Church—which, from the days of the apostles, was always Catholic, and always Roman in the succession of her Supreme Pontiffs in the See of Peter."

Churchill's fad which he calls "the new religion of Patriotism" would be a sorry substitute for the Christian religion. The social service, which is to be its keynote has been the foundation stone of Christianity from the beginning. "Love thy neighbor as thyself." Does Mr. Churchill presume to improve upon the fabric of the divine Founder? As a novelist he ought to be mindful of the saw: "Cobbler stick to thy last."—Intermountain Catholic.

SLAVERY IN ENGLAND

The attitude of the Church and her influence in the question of slavery are often misrepresented in modern literature. Historic materialism, the fundamental theory of Socialism, even necessitates such preconceived views. It will be interesting therefore to study the actual historic position of the Church, as we find it illustrated in the Anglo-Saxon documents of England which have survived more than a thousand years.

Slavery was still the universal custom of the land, and Catholicity achieved its triumphs. The condition of the serf, attached to the soil, differed but little from that of the slave, since both were completely at the mercy of their masters. To abolish this system by the mere stroke of a pen was evidently impossible. Like Christ Himself and His apostles, the Church exerted her great mission of charity and liberation by preaching in all its purity the divine doctrine committed to her.

To the master she applied her teaching of the essential equality of man before God; of the common creation, the common judgment, the common destiny of mankind; and lastly of the common membership in Christ of bond and free. As in apostolic days she insisted upon the precept of charity towards all, and in particular upon the reward of mercy to be accorded to him who freed a brother from his bonds. How quickly her lessons bore fruit is evident from the constant emancipation of slaves and serfs, often in great numbers, which instantly followed.

"That such actions were prompted by the faith which she had preached is clear from the purely spiritual reasons assigned in the ancient documents of manumission. Gentrified freed for God's sake and for her soul's need," reads a characteristic record of the times, "Eccard the smith and Aelfstan and his wife, and all their offspring born and unborn; and Arcil and Cole, and Egceford Eadlun's daughter, etc., etc." (Codex Diplomaticus, No. 925.)

In like manner Aelfred manumitted all his unfree dependents "in the Name of God and of His Saints," and prayed that they might not be oppressed by any of his heirs or kinsmen. "But for God's love and my own soul's need will I that they shall enjoy the freedom and their choice; and I command in the name of the living God that no one disquiet them, either by demand of money or in any other way." (Cod. Dipl. Thorpe, Kemble, I, 504.)

Often dreadful curses are pronounced upon any one who would dare to set aside such dispositions, especially when made in a last will:

"Christ blind him that setteth this aside." And again: "Whoso unthinkingly may have the wrath of Almighty God and St. Cuthbert." Such testators had often during life been very kind to their serfs, so that doubtless in many cases it had been preferable to remain under their care and protection. It is sufficiently common to find that such masters at their death not only freed their serfs but provided for them as a father would for his children. So Durycel for his soul's benefit bequeathed a great part of his landed possessions to the church of St. Edmund, and part likewise to the Bishop, "and let all my serfs be free, and let each have his toft, and his meadow and his meatorn." (Cod. Dipl. No. 959.)

The spiritual benefits asked were both for this life and for the next, and often for the soul of relative or friend: "This book witnesseth that Aelfwold freed Hwatu at St. Peter's for his soul both during and after life." (Register, St. Peter's Church.) "And I (Loogfy) will that all my serfs be free, both in manor and farm, for my sake and the sake of them that begot me (the souls of his parents)." (Cod. Dipl. No. 981.)

It was moreover in the church and in the presence of the priest that manumission took place. "Here witnesseth on this book of the monastery of Bath, that Aelfric the Scot and Aethelric the Abbot Aelfsig, that they may be free forever. This is done by witness of all the monastery." (Cod. Dipl. No. 1851.) So we read of Bishop Wulfseig freeing a number of serfs, "for Eadgar the King and for his own soul, at St. Peter's altar." (Cod. Dipl. No. 981.) The register of this church is preserved for us, and similar books of manumission were evidently kept in every church, like the registers of baptisms and marriages.

Throughout the Scriptures and in the apostolic days, slavery established by the law was never accounted a crime in itself, but the entire spirit of the Gospel, and therefore of the Church, was to prompt men to do all in their power towards its abolition. It is not the slightest exaggeration to say that if the Catholic Church had not existed, slavery would be as common and as dreadful an institution to-day as it was in the days of Egypt, Greece and Rome. Mere civilization, as the world's history abundantly shows, could never even have annihilated the lot of the slave. Labor would hold a position no better than that which it was doomed to occupy under the Pharaohs and the Caesars. Had a second Spartacus arisen, more successful than the first, he would have followed the law of all barbarian conquerors. Slavery would have continued as before with only a change of masters and of subjects. Such was the whole history of the barbarian conquests. The savage invaders did not come to give freedom to the slaves but to give them new masters, and to enslave the populations that had been free.

It was the doctrine of the Church alone which could make an impression upon the Roman masters of the world, and which in course of time was to accomplish in the progeny of those wild hordes that later overran Europe and England, what it had been able to achieve only partially under the preceding civilization.

Everywhere restrictions were at once set by the Church upon the system of slavery. Certain abuses were necessarily tolerated for a time; but they give only the merest suggestions of the abominations which had existed at earlier periods. There is no need of recalling the details of this time of transition. To the great glory of the Church the serf in England was soon freed from the arbitrary power of his master and placed under the protection of the Bishop to whom he could appeal if excessive burdens were placed upon him.

The first duty of the Church, it must be borne in mind, was not to free the slave or serf, but to save his soul. Her chief effort, which was to be carried out in the face of all resistance, was to procure for him conditions under which ample leisure and opportunity might be afforded him to serve God becomingly and even perfectly. Equally with lord and king, he, too, was her spiritual child, sanctified in holy baptism and by the reception of her sacraments, partaker of the same Body and Blood of Christ, destined to be a fellow citizen with the angels and saints, already emancipated by the grace of God from the one slavery which alone is terrible, the bondage of sin and Satan.

We are not, therefore, surprised to find the statement made by one of the most thorough students of this period, the Protestant historian Kemble (I, 213, 214), that the lot of the serf "was not necessarily or generally one of great hardship. It seems doubtful whether the labor exacted was practically more severe, or his remuneration much less than that of an agricultural laborer in this country (England) at this day (A. D. 1876)." The Rev. J. Malet Lambert expresses a similar opinion of conditions of servitude at a later date. The spiritual and even the temporal provisions made for the serf, attached, according to the custom of the day, to the land of some conscientious Catholic master, might well be envied by countless laborers in our paganized civilization.

Faith, indeed, was living and active in Anglo-Saxon days. We behold the spectacle of kings at the



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height of their glory renouncing all their temporal possessions and laying aside their crowns to devote themselves entirely to lives of self-renunciation; of noble ladies and princesses retiring from the world to live for God alone in the seclusion of the cloister; of men of influence and power with all the temptations of the world before them, thirsting only to suffer and die for Christ. Such a spirit of necessity reflected upon the economic conditions of the age. Though the time had not yet come for the universal emancipation of the serf, he was not unfrequently freed from bondage, as have seen, and always treated with far greater consideration than could have been shown him otherwise. An undeniable hardness which still remained in certain customs of the day must be explained by the life of constant war and danger to which the country was exposed.

"It was especially the honor and glory of Christianity," writes Kemble, "that while it broke the spiritual bonds of sin, it ever actively labored to relieve the heavy burden of social servitude. We are distinctly told that Bishop Wilfrid, on receiving the grant of Selsey from Caedwalla, of Wessex, immediately manumitted two hundred and fifty unfortunates whom he found there attached to the soil, that those whom by baptism he had rescued from servitude to devils might by the grant of liberty be rescued from servitude to man. In this spirit of charity the clergy obtained respite from labor for the serf on the Sabbath, on certain high festivals and on the days which preceded or followed them. The lord who compelled his serf to labor between the sunset on Saturday and the sunset on Sunday forfeited him altogether; probably first to the king or the gentry; but in the time of Cnut, the serf thus forfeited was to become folkfree. To their merciful intervention it must also be ascribed that the will of a Saxon proprietor, laid as well as clerical, so constantly directed the manumission of a number of serfs for the soul's health of the testator." (The Saxons in England, II, pp. 211, 212.)

We see, therefore, how completely the Historic Materialism of Socialism has misread history. Not economic conditions have dictated the doctrines of faith and morality taught by the Church, nor changed them ever so little; but at all times and everywhere the Church has instead changed and perfected the economic conditions of the nations which accepted her teaching. The measure of her success has always been the measure of influence she was permitted to exert over the passions of individuals or the customs and laws of the time.—Joseph Hulsein, S. J., in America.

NEARING THE CATHOLIC IDEALS

While at the last general convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church there was nothing definitely done which would lead one to hope for a realization of church unity in the sense that all the Protestant sects should become one in the Catholic Church, in one fold and under one Shepherd, there was not altogether an absence of moving closer to the ideals which make a unification of Christianity the more possible and desirable.

Perhaps the summary of all that was accomplished, or rather what was desired to be accomplished, is best learned from the message in a pastoral letter, which was issued at the close of the convention by the so-called House of Bishops. A writer in the January number of the Catholic World presents a digest of this document:

"It is a beautiful, and in some respects, a strong document. In these days, when the most earnest prayer of Christians is for reunion, it is good for us to hear from the official leaders of another church an utterance with almost every word of which we can heartily agree. Its aim is the aim of Our Holy Father, Pius X. to restore all things in Christ. Catholicism will note with more than sympathy its unequivocal assertion of Our Lord's divinity; its vivid realization of His unceasing work in the world, enlightening, purifying and strengthening mankind; the personal devotion to Our Saviour which the latter breathes the longing for a united Church; the condemnation of godless education, the insistence on the necessity of religious education for the preservation of the nation; the recognition of eternal truth, dogma, as the foundation of religion; and finally, the high doctrine of the Church as the custodian of truth, the representative of Christ on earth,

and His protagonist in the unending conflict with the wickedness and ignorance of the world."

There is nothing in this message that would not be endorsed by the bishops and priests of the Catholic Church so far as its face value is concerned, and we have no reason to doubt its sincerity. There should be joy in every Christian heart that the cardinal principles of our holy religion are so clearly and courageously set forth even by a body of churchmen who, although they may be drifting back to the bark of St. Peter, are still on the highways of shipwreck, which they suffered several centuries ago.

In the proceedings of the Episcopal convention its mainly stand for the necessity of Christian education is particularly prominent and commendable.

It was agreed that the American system of education is fixed and pronounced, and that the religious instruction by way of creed would neither be possible nor desirable in connection with it, and yet without debate the resolution was passed:

"To take up the whole question of moral and ethical education in the Public schools, and to effect, if possible, through co-operation with other religious bodies, a system of instruction commensurate with the needs of our youth, together with such forms and exercises as will conduce to the freest and most intelligent sense of personal integrity and purity of life, and that is one means of furthering this object, the general board of religious education be instructed to take prompt action to promote the daily reading of a portion of the Holy Scriptures in the Public schools."

The Catholic Church would certainly approve every honest effort towards giving our children moral and religious training, but this cannot be accomplished by the mere daily reading of a Protestant translation of the bible. That is sectarianism beyond a doubt, and is against the spirit of our free institutions. Even though the King James version, for instance, were used in daily readings for its literary value only, these could not fail to tilt the young Catholic mind adversely to the cardinal teachings of Holy Mother Churches. The Protestant doctrine of the right of private interpretation on essentials as well as non-essentials would percolate through and threaten danger to the faith of an impressionable child.

Mr. George Wharton Pepper, one of the lay delegates at the convention, put forth this cardinal idea in connection with the subject:

"Education without religion is no education at all. There cannot possibly be a religious education and a secular education. There is only one education, and these two elements must enter into it. This being so, if you neglect the religious part of education you make a mess of the whole matter. Education consists in drawing out of a man all that is noblest and best in him, and the very noblest and best thing is for a man to find God and know that he has found Him."

Nothing could be more Catholic than such a statement.

Bishop Brent, who proved himself a champion in the cause of religious training for the child in the schools, emphasized:

"The noblest faculty of the human soul is the capacity of knowing and realizing the presence of God; and a system for the training of youth which should make no provision at all for the development of this faculty would be a travesty of education and a menace to civilization."

He earnestly pleaded for the establishment of parochial schools for Episcopal churches, where their children might be given a religious training as an essential part of their general education.

In regard to Socialism and the becoming sociological and economic questions of the day the general convention created a permanent joint commission and sent it forth with this courageous resolution:

"Resolved, the House of Bishops concurring. That we, the members of the general convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church, do hereby affirm that the church stands for the ideal of social justice, and that it demands the achievement of a social order in which there shall be a more equitable distribution of wealth; in which the social cause of poverty and the gross human waste of the present order shall be eliminated; and in which every worker shall have a just return for that which he produces, a fair opportunity for self-development, and a fair share in all the gains of progress. And since such a social order can only be achieved progressively by the effort of men and women, who, in the spirit of Christ, put the common welfare above private gain, the Church calls upon every communicant, clerical and lay, seriously to take part, and to study the complex conditions under which we are called upon to live, and so to act that the present prejudice, hate and injustice may be supplanted by mutual understanding, sympathy and just dealings, and the ideal of thorough-going democracy may be finally realized in our land."

Something was also done in the convention by way of encouraging the anointing of the dangerously sick and giving them the Communion. The enlargement of the calendar was approved—at least there was no objection raised against the veneration which is being paid latterly by the extreme High Church party to great apostles of the nations, such as St. Patrick, St. Boniface, St. Will-

brod, and such noble representatives of the faith as St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Jeanne d'Arc and St. Catharine of Sierra.

In going over the proceedings of this Convention one is almost forced to exclaim: "What a pity that the Episcopal Church is not one and the same with the Catholic Church—in one fold, and under the shepherd—and that it is still necessary to say, 'Oh, so near, and yet so far.'"—Intermountain Catholic.

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