

CAN'T TELL THE PRIEST.

Archbishop Janssens' Experience With the Knights of Pythias.

The June number of The American Ecclesiastical Review contains an article by Archbishop Janssens, of New Orleans, on the secret society question.

As respects the Old Follows the Archbishop is in precise agreement with Archbishop Katzer's position.

The larger portion of the article deals with the Pythians.

The third Plenary Council of Baltimore, says Archbishop Janssens, has laid down general rules, according to which it is to be determined whether a society be lawful or unlawful, forbidden or dangerous.

It is in the light of these laws that we shall have to consider the Knights of Pythias.

1st. The Council No. 247 decrees "a society, if it enjoins a secret to be kept, as not to allow that it be made manifest to the authority of the Church, is to be numbered among the forbidden societies, and the members are to be deprived of sacramental absolution until they recede from it, or at least seriously promise to do so at once."

And as the right to absolve every society which refuses its secrets to be made known to the Ordinary lawfully enquiring therein, may be supposed to refuse such knowledge to the authority of the Church. Let us apply this rule.

The following is a compendium of the ceremonial at the reception of a candidate.

The members in masks are clothed in black robes; loud talk or heavy walking must be avoided; the candidate is dressed in a white robe and his eyes are blindfolded; the outer guard is commanded not to converse with him in a frivolous manner.

He is asked whether he believes in a Supreme Being; absolute obedience is expected of him and he takes the oath to keep secret forever all he may hear or be instructed in hereafter regarding the mysteries of the order.

He is made to kneel down by the side of a coffin, containing sometimes a skeleton; he places his hand on the Bible, members cover him with their lances as a warning of what may happen should he fail to keep the oath.

The oath of secrecy to the future and is as follows: "I, in the presence of these true and tried brethren, do most solemnly promise, declare and swear that I will never reveal to the day of my death and will keep secret all the mysteries which I have been, or may be hereafter, instructed in."

He declares the same about passwords, etc., and finishes "so help me God," and in token of sincerity he must kiss the Bible.

Some members pretend that the ceremonies of the order mean nothing; if this be so, then the ceremonies are simply a blasphemous mockery of God, abusing the sacredness of an oath, and of the Holy Bible.

over them but that which he assumes. In the initiation of the third rank the candidate calls God as witness that he may suffer all the anguish and torments possible for man to suffer, if ever by word or sign he expose the secret work or ceremonies of the order."

What an imprecation, degradation and slavery! The oath of secrecy, moreover, is absolute, without reserve or restriction; the promise of obedience is conditional, and the candidate "promises to obey all orders that may be given, emanating from the Supreme etc., Lodge."

He promises obedience to things unknown, to commands of the future, to all orders that may be given, with the only proviso, a weak one, "so long as they do not conflict with my political or religious liberty."

This is the formula of the third rank. I call it a weak proviso, for politics in these days seem to have thrown off the shackles of conscience, and it may be safely assumed that religion has no longer any restraining power over Catholics who have proceeded to this third initiation, and who, as some have declared, would rather leave the Church than their Pythian Lodge.

There is a controlling power in this dark and dangerous society, called the Council of Ten, consisting of the King and his nine Counsellors. This Council is the Supreme Court "from whose decision there is no appeal, whose edicts once sent forth are established law."

There is much talk of secret work, whatever it may be, and the ceremonies according to the ritual repeatedly mention Pluto, the pagan god of the infernal regions.

I leave it to others to judge whether the promise of obedience is one of blind obedience, and as such condemned by section 247 of the Plenary Council. I believe it is.

The Plenary Council, section 249, also condemns any society that has its own chaplain and its own rites and ceremonies. The Knights of Pythias are not satisfied with a chaplain, they aim higher; they have a prelate. He leads in prayer, and so might a father in his family.

But he is the expounder of the Pythian religion and its mysteries, the expounder of the emblem, symbol or skeleton of the emblem, honours and revered Patron Saint Pythias. Mark the title "Patron Saint!" and placed, too, before the candidate as a model of charity (there is no mention, of course, of the charity of our Blessed Lord); he administers the Pythian oath and explains it; he presides at the ceremonies of this religion, and the order so insists on the services of its prelate at the death of members, that it threatens poor widows or relatives not to pay death-benefits unless the deceased member be buried with the prayers and ceremonies of this Pythian prelate.

Some members pretend that the ceremonies of the order mean nothing; if this be so, then the ceremonies are simply a blasphemous mockery of God, abusing the sacredness of an oath, and of the Holy Bible. But all the ceremonies, preceding and following, clearly show that the order is in real earnest when it imposes this oath on the candidate.

These quotations I have made from a ritual of the order lying before me. The secrets are not allowed to be made manifest "except it be in a regular lodge or to an authorized officer of the order."

DRUNKENNESS.

FROM A LECTURE BY FATHER CALMER, S. J., CINCINNATI, 24TH ULT.

My dear friends, I wish to present to your attentive meditation what I consider the most terrible feature of this sin of drunkenness. I told you before that Father Faber had said that a man in a state of mortal sin, if he lost the use of reason, was a living hell. Now, a drunkard, having lost the use of his reason, should be in that state, is already in hell. Having disgraced his own manhood, having dishonored the humanity of Jesus Christ, which the Son of the living God took upon Himself in order that He might redeem the sinner, and purchase for him thus the consecration necessary for heaven, the drunkard has placed himself out of the pale of the mercy of Almighty God.

The sacraments were instituted for the drunkard, who has put himself on a level with the irrational brute, and they were never made for the brute.

Nay, more: He is incapable of making an act of contrition, because he has deprived himself of reason; while in every other sin, the sinner may strike his breast and cry out for pardon of God, and the mercy of God is above all His work; yet the drunkard, because he has deprived himself of reason, is in a state of unconsciousness, and, therefore, can not do so, and, consequently, he can not share in God's mercy; he must reap the dire vengeance of an angry and just God.

This, I repeat, is the most terrible thought about the sin of drunkenness. And yet, how many are there not who are struck down by the thunderbolts of God's justice when they are crazed with drink, and they wake up from their drunken stupor in hell. This, I must say again, is the most terrible thought about the sin of drunkenness.

You read of facts of this kind every day in your daily papers, how the drunkard is either murdered, or is lost somewhere or other, and dies in the state of his sin. And what an awful thought, is it not, to the mind, when it thinks that that soul wakes up in hell. Besides, there is added the sin of impotence to that of drunkenness. One that is addicted to drink can promise you to give up everything except the habit of drink.

I heard, some time ago, a very pathetic story—a true story—illustrative of this. The story runneth thus: A bare room lighted only by the moon beams; a woman lay dying; a man kneeling by the bedside, he said: "Let me light the lamp;" but the woman replied, "No, don't; let us remain with the holy light which comes from heaven, and in that holy light I want you to make a promise. You know I am dying." "For God's sake, Grace, don't say that; you know you are not dying. Let me light the lamp." And she laid her ice-cold hands upon him and said, "Please don't drive away the holy light. I want you to make me a promise. You know that I have been a faithful, uncomplaining wife."

"I know it," he said. "Then, yes, I will make you any promise but one, and that I know you will ask. 'Yes, and it is that you will never need drink again.' Grace, I cannot make that promise. I am weak; I am ruined; I have lost control over myself; ask for anything but this, and I will swear to keep the promise." Then putting her shrivelled hands upon his head, she said, Maurice, then promise me that you will never take a drink, except when sitting beside my grave.

"Oh Grace, this is unreasonable. What a request; it is so awful!" "But you promised," she said, "that you would keep any promise except not to drink any more." And putting her dying lips about his neck, she pleaded and asked him to make that promise, and he finally said, "I will."

And do you wish to know the sequel? A nervous man walked about the streets; the cold wind howled; the winter storm was raging; he heeded it not. He went into a saloon, stood a moment as if struggling, then went out again into the streets. He walked and walked for hours; and the snow storm ceased, and the clouds passed away, and the sunbeams fell upon a snow of the saloon, shuddering, and said, "Give me a quart of whisky." He then went out to the cemetery and found a grave apart from the others, and sat down beside it in the snow, and took from his pocket the bottle. "Strange place to freeze to death," said the old sexton next morning, as the sunshine fell upon the grave of that faithful wife and upon the dead body of her drunkard husband.

If such, then, are the terrible effects of the sin of drunkenness, will you see that you heed it; will you not see that you loathe and abhor the very first cup that leads to the ruin of your reason, the ruin of your freedom, the ruin of your love, the ruin of your manhood, the ruin of your family, the ruin of your soul and body, that leads to final impotence, and in the end must reap the just vengeance of an angry and avenging God.

"My father, at about the age of fifty, lost all the hair from the top of his head. After one month's trial of Ayer's Hair Vigor, the hair began coming, and, in three months, he had a fine growth of hair of the natural color."—P. J. Cullen, Saratoga Springs, N. Y.

THE WONDERS OF NATURE.

The Mysteries of Life and the Weirder Mysteries of Pain and Death.

Catholic Columbian.

We have been communing with nature—nature that lends up to nature—nature. We have been for days and nights a denizen of the wide, sunny fields, the willow-fringed brooks, the deep, solemn woods. We have looked upon those stars of earth, the wild flowers that grow in beauty and sweet perfume and boundless profusion, with no other hand to plant, guard and train but God's. We have listened to the song of wild birds, that in their melody defy human imitation. And we have said: They are for us. And yet in all the years of absence since early youth the trees have whistled, the brook has babbled, the flowers have blossomed and the birds sung. Where we shall have passed away, be forgotten by men, these delicate, beautiful things will live on as if we had never existed.

This is an old, old thought, and yet, in our selfish egotism, never to be realized. For us the sun rises in its dewy freshness of morn and sets in its golden garniture of clouds. To us the moon and stars make the night beautiful in its calm sublimity. The flowers bloom and the birds sing for us, wonderful, precious creatures that we are.

And who returns, as we returned, to the scene of childhood, to find how life has continued without change in our absence, but is forced to repeat with the poet:

"I will not say my eyes are dim, That's wrought upon my soul within, The sadness that no little bird, Not here, by flower and tree and stream, Repeat the well-worn lay, How we the fleeting shadows seem, Immortal substance they?"

Who goes from the desolated home, where death has left a black midnight of despair brooding by the hearthstone, bereft of all that makes life endurable, to find the sun shining upon that outer world of life, and not feel, after all our self-lamentation, that we are but part, a sad, insignificant part, of this creation, that goes on and on, through all the ages, without us, and utterly indifferent to our existence?

Who under this dark shadow but remembers the sad plight of the Scottish poet, when, from death in the hovel of all that was fair and dear to him, he sang:

"Ye banks and braes o' bonnie Doon, How can ye bloom so fresh and fair; How can ye sing to me, my dear, And I see weary, fu' o' care?"

Little reck they in their joyous existence, of the broken heart that makes its despairing plaint in their sunny presence.

It is in time only that the balm sweet nature holds which it cure and aids to heal our wounds. How pleasant it is to have one's life wedded, as it were, to these sweet innocent things; to have one's memory mingled with all that is beautiful on earth; to go back in recollection to the long wintry nights, when one's dwelling, or window-sill like the whitened face of a forgotten friend; or when one, in the deep, somber woods of June, saw the sunlight sifted through the wind-shifted leaves, when the whispers seem those of forms long since mouldered to dust in neglected graves!

And how sweet it is to return, after years of absence, and find the stately trees one planted offering a friendly shade to welcome the tired denizen of a peopled earth, to greet and be greeted by the human animals we may have forgotten, but who have not forgotten us. Those shrubs and trees we planted and trained, those animals we cared for, have no ingratitude. They do not repay our love with the unkindness of our fellow-men; and the very ills of the rough life seem small by the side of those that have, making our hearts ache, turned us to bitterness and wrath.

"Freeze, freeze, thou bitter sky; That dost not bite so nigh; As benefits forgot; Though thou the waters warp Thy sting is not so sharp; As friends remembering not."

Alas! this is not the only lesson taught us by the country. We enter upon the scene, and how sweetly, harmonious and peaceful it all appears! From the deep-green meadows, the fields of waving grain and rustling corn, through the purple noon's transparent light to the distant, softly-rounded, wooded hills, that seem to melt into heaven's blue, all seem one grand, harmonious whole. But we look closer. In this quiet stream is the murderous pike, living upon the more helpless fish. Above sits the keen-eyed, lightning-like king-fisher. And yet above the wild hawk, like a censor, swung circles in heaven's blue, with cruel beak, watching for its prey. And in the still watches of the moonless nights the owl, on the downy wings of death, unseen, all-seeing, floats, noiselessly, the assassin of the gloomy woods. The wild beasts have fled before the approach of man, but cruelly and sorrow remain, feeding on all things fair.

Ah! God, what are these mighty ills, pain and sin and death, that hold their own in the presence of their Creator, meaning, as were, all His works? All about us is mystery. The blade of grass, the little insect with its golden coat and gauzy wings, whose delicate mechanism fills us with admiration, that seems to be tossed out upon boundless creation without care; the delicate flower; the tiny weeds about our feet—all cease to be wonders only in being common. But the mysteries of all mystery are pain and death. These hideous phantoms loom up, black and dense, between our terror-stricken sight of God. From them we turn to our loved Saviour, who, passing through both, returns to say: I am the

resurrection and the life. In charity I came to you; in love I return. Poor, helpless children of men, wandering and groping in blind despair, listen to the Son of David, for He speaks from beyond the grave, where death is not, where pain is not, where the wicked cease to trouble and the weary are at rest. DONN PIATT.

Irish Speakers.

Irishmen, hereditary possessors of eloquence, sometimes discordingly termed "the gift of gab," are vastly better speakers than Englishmen, writes Willie Wilde in the New York Recorder. They never "hem" or "halt," and when properly inspired by the true spirit, rank high among the kings of oratory. True that the rushing river of their own volubility sometimes sweeps them off their legs, and that they perpetrate the exquisite "bull"—a thing of beauty, rarely appraised at its own unique value—but what of that? The thought is there, shining like an emerald, albeit the setting of the gem is not strictly syllogistic.

I was present in the reporters' gallery of the House of Commons one famous fighting night, when a famous fighting Irish member rose to denounce a speech delivered from the treasury benches. He desired to say that the statements made by the Government's representatives were not altogether accurate, but his impetuosity led him on to phrase the Ananias accusation somewhat too concisely.

"Order, order," said the speaker of the House, as he rose in all the majesty of full-bottomed wig and silk gown. Again and again did the dautless son of Erin return to his charge of willful misstatement. Again was he cooled severely to "order." It was a critical moment. His Irish colleagues did not wish him to be "suspended" for the rest of the debate, and they hinted so by vigorously tugging at his coat tails.

Now, it is a very dangerous matter to trifle with the tail of an Irishman's coat, saving in the cause of friendship. Nevertheless, the indignant, yet good-humored, honorable member recognized the command of his patriotic party and sat down, declaring this beautiful Parthian dart: "Very well, sir; I obey your ruling, and I beg to retract what I was about to observe."

That one touch of Irish oratory took the House by storm.

WHY CAN'T THEY MARRY?

A young lady and gentleman are in love with each other, but will not marry because the lady's mother's brother's brother-in-law is the young man's father. What relationship exists between the young lady and gentleman?

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Ed. L. Willits, of Mrs. Jas. W. Kirk, Alma, Neb. I give it Daughters' College, to my children when Harrodsburg, Ky., troubled with Croup have depended upon and never saw any it in attacks of Croup preparation act like with my little daughter. It is simply matter, and it is an irrefragable remedy.

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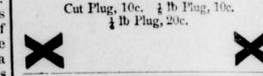


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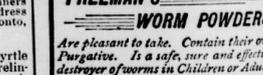
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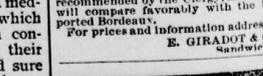
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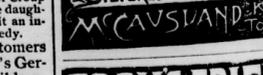
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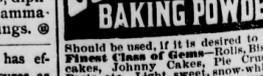
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FIVE-MINUTE

Second Sunday after Sunday Within Christ.

A certain man had visited many. (St. Luke I suppose every C except some young or many times in h "Great Supper," a of Life" which is those little ones of Catholic family are the bright day, to wards the day of when they, too, sh and happiness—the Communion.

If such be the ca of the Church pre year the threat in those who made for causes for staying those men that we of my supper?" We have answer that enough? T does not apply to I have two thing about. In the fir to the Great Supp about is a standin By this I mean Catholic Church receive Holy Com that is, during th is then, first of al tion: is going swering the call Every one who h chism ought to second place, wh a near relative w to be present at venary dinner, reply that he ha you on the Four like what people if they make t or "Oh! no, I King makes for we are invited neither Christin Forty Hours, n will do, unless, the Forty Hou Paschal season.

The second think about is partake of the Holy Communi or at any other what is known ion; that is, yo sin and thus be is requisite. There are some fancy that they do beforehand it is intended to it that prepar the Lord? If that is asked of leaving to the Lo doing His part, should also be thing to the s should not be formance, which communion in to it. And no each and eve upon what the All make it. give. The m from Commu means for gett ing other sac Prayer before prayer after want and th more worthy Suppose our I the sacramen ask a commu "What do should answe never though he would not li Now, I hope holy table ar If you come justly supp deal, and th that about o Much as, I a are worth to about makin In a word, y what you n ready. Ha by heart, so you what would come enough. O in this worl ion is, indec ives to bos enve our o brings to u name and oth others, who ion, or at b you like to and one of take you r thou, how come as Spir as the Spi re you.

It is con, yet be fou hair to, certainly diseases of parilla, a from impu A HAPPY keeping a and for this recommend any form, h Betton's I remedy in short a vas ence, Sen Brown Brou your drug.