

THE EASTER DUTY.

Antigonish, N.S.

The Blessed Sacrament is pre-eminently the Mystery of Faith; it is also pre-eminently the Sacrament of Love. All the sacraments are proofs of God's love; but this is so in a very special manner, because of its nature and the ends for which it is instituted.

It is a gift, and what kind of a gift? In the Blessed Sacrament the Son of God gives us Himself entirely, body, blood, soul and divinity. Infinitely wise as He is, says St. Augustine, His wisdom could not devise a greater gift; infinitely rich, this gift exhausts His boundless treasures; infinitely powerful, He is not able to give us anything better. He gives us Himself; what else is left to give?

It is a gift, and consider the time at which it was given. It had been when Our Lord was on His lips; if when He had to hang from them because they wished to make Him King; if when they cast their garments before Him and cried "Hosanna to the Son of David;" if at any of these times He had given them this heavenly gift, it would have been an astonishing proof of His love. But it was "the same night in which He was betrayed." The love of Jesus lowers over all the ingratitude of men.

It is a gift, and consider the means by which He has given it. By abasing Himself, by covering His glory with the meanest of veils. "He emptied Himself," as St. Paul says, "as His Incarnation, while His divinity appeared to strike some feeling of reverence into those who beheld it; what is the depth of His humiliation in the Eucharist!"

Such is the marvellous nature of the Blessed Sacrament. Let us consider the ends, the purposes for which it was instituted. First, that Jesus might be the companion of our exile. The Apostles were sad because of the Master's approaching departure. Therefore did He say, "I will not leave you orphans."

He says the same to us. He remains in the Blessed Sacrament to receive our petitions and to answer them. He is constantly giving us audience, admitting us to converse familiarly with Him. From the tabernacle He says to us as to His first disciples, "Behold I am with you all days," not for one day, or for a week or a year, but to the end of the world. What a privilege for us to have Jesus thus really present among us! Do we appreciate this privilege? Do we appear to visit the Blessed Sacrament? Our church doors left open from morning till night that everyone may enter in, but in many cases they might as well be locked. How ungrateful we are and how blind to our own best interests!

For Jesus is prepared to work miracles upon dis-eased souls now, just as readily as he worked them upon diseased bodies when He walked among men. We often think how happy were the first disciples to be able to converse with Jesus. Yet we may converse with Him every day and we will not. We cannot find time to visit the church, but we find time for many useless, perhaps sinful, visits. And Jesus remains abandoned on the cross. This is the way we treat the Companion of our exile.

But He remains in the Blessed Sacrament to be something more than the Companion of our exile: He remains to be the Food of our souls. He is not satisfied with being present with us, listening to us, comforting us, calling us to Him. He wishes to be incorporated into us; "Take ye and eat; take ye and drink." He wishes to dwell not only with us but within us: "He that eateth My Flesh and drinketh My Blood abideth in Me and I in him." Who could ever have imagined such a love as this, that Jesus Christ should permit to nourish our souls with His own Body and Blood? And not only permit but command us under pain of eternal death: "Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you shall not have life in you." Is it possible that such a command, such a threat, was necessary? Yes, without the command a vast number would not receive Holy Communion; and even now how many pay no attention to the command. The six weeks of Lent go by and Easter comes; eight weeks more till Trinity Sunday. Then each pastor takes up his parish register and sadly picks out the names of those who have not made their Easter Duty. He is only too glad to have them, for he knows that those he is inviting to the supper are personally it is nothing to him whether they come or not; but what servant with any devotion to his master but will feel sorrowful when he sees that master despised, when he sees his invitations treated with contempt.

saint that ever trod the earth, if he went to receive Holy Communion would beat his breast and cry *Domine non sum dignus* more earnestly than the sinner. No one realizes his own unworthiness so thoroughly as a saint, but that does not stop him from going to Communion. There is nothing which need hinder a man from going to Communion unless he is in the state of mortal sin.

"But I am in that state," says the poor sinner. "If I went to go now I would make a bad Communion and I would rather stay away forever than do that." What would be said of a man who refused to touch a bite or a sup of food or drink for fear of being poisoned? We would say of him: "He certainly will not die of poison; but he will die of starvation, and that very soon." If a man never goes to Communion, it is certain he will never make a bad Communion; but it is just as certain that he will never go to heaven. "Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood you shall not have life in you." It is well to be afraid of making a bad Communion; a bad Communion is a most horrible sacrifice. St. Paul says: "He that eateth and drinketh unworthily eateth and drinketh his own damnation." But does he advise to stay away? Far from it. He says: "Let a man prove himself, and so let him eat and drink." That is what the sinner is to do: he is to prove himself; he is to appear before the tribunal of penance to accuse himself sorrowfully of his sins and ask pardon. "And so let him eat and drink." But if he will not do this; if he will not use the grace of God to remove those sins which stand between him and Communion; let him not be deceived into thinking and saying that it is respect for the Blessed Sacrament that keeps him away. He is simply making excuses as did the invited guests in the parable. He is refusing the loving invitation of His Lord. He is starving his own soul.

Every Catholic in any degree worthy of the name has resolved that during the Lenten season he will "prove himself" and then approach the Eucharistic Banquet. The Church which has the power of binding as well as of loosing has bound us to receive Holy Communion at least once a year and that within as specified time. Any one who neglects to do so is merely a nominal Catholic. Let us prepare ourselves for our Easter Duty if we have not already fulfilled it. Let us ask Our Lady of the Annunciation to pray for us that we may carry out our good resolution. Let us ask St. Joseph to plead for us. "Ask and you shall receive." Let us ask the grace of being truly devout to the Holy Eucharist during life, and we may be sure that the same Blessed Sacrament will be our greatest consolation at the hour of death.

THE CATHOLIC RELIGION A RELIGION OF LOVE.

In an article on "Some French Novels of the Day" in the Fortnightly Review for February, written by Le Comte de Segur, we come across the following altogether unexpected passage referring to the Catholic Church: "Whatever the faith to which one owes allegiance, one may admit that the Catholic Church has mysterious affinities with the soul. The frequent observances imposed on her adepts, intermingling with the acts of everyday life, become an intimate part of existence. Above all, she addresses herself to the heart in a familiar language, for she speaks to it of love; and wielding this powerful instrument for the governing of souls, she thrusts down her roots the deeper as she finds in the capacity of loving a fresher and more fertile soil. In fact, she has the strongest hold on tenderness. It is impossible," said Joubert, "either to speak against Christianity without anger, or for it without love!" Her greatest saints, her martyrs, were lovers; it suffices merely to open at a venture the pages of the book *par excellence* of Christian asceticism, "The Imitation of Christ," to be convinced that the doctrine it preaches is that of love. Not a mere sentiment, inert and fruitless, . . . but a useful love, nourished by the spectacle of human misery, offered to the service of one's neighbor as to the glory of God, and educated by long practice to the supreme sacrifice of self."

AMERICAN CONSECUTIVE POLYGYAMY.

While we are searching the recesses of our chaste souls for words to express our shuddering horror of simultaneous polygamy as practiced by the Mormons, we might to our consternation find that we have been providing our enemies with words most uncomfortably applicable to consecutive polygamy as practiced by ourselves. Father Sherman said the other day that in the United States during the last twenty years there had been 300,000 divorces. Father Sherman stands against a background which might well lend him an aspect of authority. Fifteen hundred years ago when turbulent barbarians settled within the confines of the Roman empire, it was the Catholic Church that coerced the vagrant lust of the barbarian heart and bound one woman to one man till death did them part. To-day, when the sacrament of marriage is threatened, not so much by savage boisterousness of passion as by the frivoltly and insincerity of men and women to whom unshaken belief has become impossible, it is the Catholic Church that still refuses to make a single concession to legalized promiscuity and that still keeps unblemished the ideal of an indissoluble spiritual union between man and wife. If we cannot subscribe to the theology of the Catholic Church in this matter, neither can we fall to subscribe to its practical morality. The Smeot case ought to give a tremendous impetus to the demand for a uniform federal divorce law. The easy route to consecutive polygamy ought to be beset with more obstacles. The voice of the whole Christian community ought to become as clear and emphatic as the voice of the Catholic Church.

AN EVER-PRESENT TEMPTATION.

"As our Catholic boys and girls grow up," says the Bishop of Newport, England, in a pastoral on the responsibility for intemperance, "they have to make their way in life through an atmosphere of drink, as one walks through the miasma and the deadly peril of an African swamp. There is seldom a christening, or a wedding, or a funeral, without unnecessary drinking, or even without disgraceful excess. There is a public house at every corner, to tempt the working man, and the working man's wife, and the workman's grown sons and his daughters. There he finds light and warmth, and companionship after his work, to induce him to throw away his hard-earned wages, and to starve and shame his family. There, amidst coarse mirth, and treats, and wagers, and jests, and reckless language, he finds the dangerous liquor everywhere, ready to be called for, ready to clinch a bargain, or to honor a bet, to toast good-fellowship, or to drown disappointment in fire. Can this be the career of rational men? Can this be the perpetual fume and reek of alcohol be worthy of Christians who are signed with the Baptism of Christ, and have been admitted to the table of the Lord? Can this stupid quaffing, this insane hilarity, this irrational talking, shouting and quarreling, be the preparation which immortal souls should make for death, judgment and eternity?" - Sacred Heart Review.

THE BLESSED EUCHARIST.

The Blessed Eucharist is the greatest treasure that even God could confer on man, the richest gift that heaven could confer on earth—for it is Jesus Himself personally present under Sacramental veils. St. John the Evangelist, speaking of the institution of this sacrament, made use of these words: "When Jesus loved those who were in the world He loved them until the end," and the Holy Fathers say that meaning of these words is this: that Jesus loved those who were in the world, not only to the end of this mortal life, but to the end and the limit of His omnipotence. That in instituting and giving to mankind this great sacrament of His love, He loved man unto the limits of His omnipotence, unto the boundaries of His boundless love. Though God is omnipotent, He could give His children nothing better than this. Though He is infinitely wise, He could give them nothing more precious than this. Though He is infinitely wise He could devise no means more powerful to enable man to attain to his immortal destiny, than by the means of the Blessed Eucharist. Many a gift has Jesus conferred upon the Church, His spouse, but this is the greater gift of all. - Bishop Walsh.

LENENT THOUGHTS.

No cross, no crown—no Lent, no Easter—no merit, no reward—no patience no Heaven.

The devotion of the Way of the Cross is richly indulged. Now would be suitable time to practice it daily.

Men who desert their haunts of sin and leave of their evil habits during the Lenten season," says Church Progress, "only emphasize their wilfully wicked natures should they return to either when the holy season is passed."

That make grand resolutions, thy ideals are lofty; but the first reproachful word upsets thee, and thou findest thyself weaker than thou hast thought thyself to be. Fleo then to Jesus; and pray Him, more earnestly than ever before, to give thee the virtue of patience.

OUR LADY OF SORROWS.

INFANT DE MARIE. O month of fading beauty! when the trees are tinted with autumnal red and gold. A minor-chord, low breathing like the breeze, is sighing of Our Lady's pale mood. O pure heart, crimsoned with a Passion hue! And golden in thy precious suffering love! More brightly shining to the spirit view! Than silvery harvest moon far above.

O waves of tears that surged within her breast! O sorrow deeper than the boundless sea! To what shall I compare thee, Mother blest? Will thou find comfort in my sympathy? Why didst thou suffer? That the misery Of thy sweet, patient heart before the throne Might ever as a voice of pleading be. When, from the desert, thou fair dove, hadst flown.

And now in this calm evening of the year, When glowing summer-tide has passed We come to watch with thee, our Mother dear, In prayer and patient suffering day by day, We come and gaze with longing, hopeful eyes Upward, O Queen of Dolours, unto thee! There, far beyond these deep blue, sunlit skies, We trust, one day, in peace and joy to be. -Carmelite Review

EASTER BELLS.

BY R. F. DE COSTA. Glad Easter Bells! Glad Easter Bells! We love thy tuneful chiming, The soft breeze swells, The joy it tells, While through the sky 'tis chiming. Sweet Easter Bells! Sweet Easter Bells! The fragrant flowers are tolling Their incense fair On earth's glad hills, Where'er you tones are rolling. True Easter Bells! True Easter Bells! We love thy sacred story; Our glad hearts rise Above thy glory, To Jesus and His glory. Strong Easter Bells! Strong Easter Bells! O'er land and sea proclaiming, That death is dead, And glory shed, Where Christ, our Life, is reigning. Grand Easter Bells! Grand Easter Bells! The Chimes of Heaven are ringing, For Jesus lives, And victory gives, As we His praise are singing. Dear Easter Bells! Dear Easter Bells! Ring on when earth is ending, Till we are loved, In realms above, With Saints our songs are blending. Alleluia!

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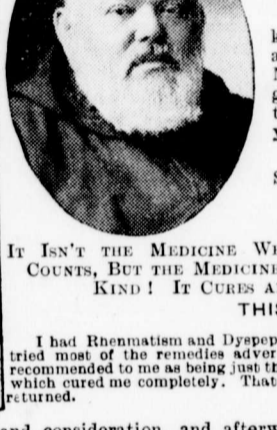
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THEO. NOEL, Geologist, C. R. Dept, Yonge & Temperance Streets, TORONTO, ONT.

He Will Adjust Inequalities.

It is one of the sad things of life that the innocent must sometimes suffer with the guilty. An engineer fails to observe the signal, and a score of lives are lost and many homes plunged into sorrow. Some one blunders and six hundred lives are lost in a burning theater. A ruler is ambitious and nations are plunged into war, and countless thousands mourn, it seems that "each iniquity must be paid for out of the resources of the aace."

IMITATION OF CHRIST.

THAT MAN HATH NO GOOD IN HIMSELF AND THAT HE CANNOT GORY IN ANY THING. Lord, what is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him? (Ps. vii. 5.) What hath man deserved, that thou shouldst give him thy grace? Lord, what cause have I to complain, if thou forsakeme? or what can I justly allege, if thou refuse to grant my petition? This indeed I may truly think and say: I Lord, I am nothing, I can do nothing, I have nothing of myself that is good, but I fail and am defective in all things, and ever tend to nothing. And unless I am supported and interio-riously instructed by Thee, I become quite tepid and dissolute.

FRETFUL CHILDREN.

If children are cross, or fretful, or sleepless, in ninety-nine times out of a hundred the reason can be traced to some little trouble of the stomach or bowels. Remove the cause and the little one will be bright, good-natured, and will sleep soundly and naturally. There is just one always absolutely safe medicine for little ones—Baby's Own Tablets. In homes where this medicine is used there are no sickly, cross, crying children. The Tablets will cure all the minor ills of little ones, and will do it safely and speedily—there is no doubt about this. Give the Tablets a single trial and you will be as enthusiastic about them as other mothers are. As for instance, Mrs. David Duffield, Ponsbury, Ont., says: "Baby's Own Tablets saved my baby's life. They are a wonderful medicine for children and I gladly recommend them to other mothers."

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