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THURSDAY, APRIL 20, 1893.

Calendar for the Week.

April 20—Final office.
21—S. Anselm, Bishop and Doctor.
22—SS. Soter and Calixtus, Popes and Martyrs.
23—Third Sunday after Easter.
Patronage of S. Joseph.
24—S. Fidolus a Sigmaringa, Martyr.
25—S. Mark, Evangelist.
26—SS. Cletus and Marcellinus, Popes and Martyrs.

Philosophical Talks.

THE KINGDOM OF CONSCIENCE.

We have been considered rash and almost irreverent for having attempted to question and contradict Tennyson's principle of love; though we gave divine authority for doing so. At the risk of being condemned as heretical we are now going to improve on Shakespeare! He makes his hero Hamlet say:

"Conscience does make cowards of us all."

We say, conscience does make Kings of many, and conscience should make heroes of us all. The ethical principles of poets are not always the soundest moral proverbs. The words of Shakespeare's hero are too often made the lame and impotent excuse for moral cowardice. Conscience is King in the realm of Ethics, and we are going to say a word of this King's realm and rule.

Horace said that, in trying to be brief, he became obscure. We fear we are sometimes like Horace. In trying to talk little and say much, we have to be occasionally technical, and may not be always clear. This time we shall be somewhat discursive. We will take our hearers on a philosophical walk to the Kingdom of Conscience to see the King in his home. Conscience is always at home, as its home is the head and heart of man. It may seem from this that Conscience has two homes, but we shall find that these two are one. First, then, let us call on Conscience at its home in the head. Here it will receive us kindly, calmly, correctly, dispassionately, for here it holds its court as judge of its lawful subjects.

The conscience of the head considers general principles and universal laws. It has not to go far to look for these laws, it has only to take down its own books, to turn over its own tablets. The writing may be old, it may be somewhat obscured by time; and, like an old palimpsest, it may be buried in other writing that circumstances and surroundings, and prejudice, and early education or life-long action have written upon it—but there it is, written in indelible ink, and written by the hand of God. The first act of conscience is *consciousness*; it reads the record of itself, and of its Maker, and of the relations between both. It sees and knows from this record that man is a

creature, that a creature essentially depends on his Creator; that an intelligent creature who knows this dependence is bound to acknowledge it according to his nature, and that a creature composed of body and soul is bound to submit both to God.

Here comes in the beginning and essence of all *obligation*. The conscience of the head knows not *may*; its word is *ought* or *must*; and the reason is this: The conscience of the head is the intellect, the intelligence: the intellect seeing and knowing the principles and first causes of things. The first causes in the mental and moral order are the efficient and final—the whence and the whither. The intellect can know its origin and its end: it is bound to act according to its nature, and its nature is to know. Knowing its last end it is bound to turn its natural tendency towards that end: its natural tendency is towards truth, for universal truth is its natural object: its nature is immortal; its adequate object must be eternal, and so the conscience of the head naturally and necessarily turn towards universal, external truth and good, and says: I must attain that end; therefore I must use the necessary means to attain it—avoid evil and do good.

But here the conscience of the head must leave its judgment seat and come down to its home in the heart. The conscience of the head sees and knows; the conscience of the heart acts. The conscience of the head gives general principles and universal laws; the conscience of the heart draws conclusions and applies them to practical conduct. The conscience of the head is in itself, and in its own realm, always certain, correct, imperative; the conscience of the heart may be uncertain, erroneous, doubtful, wrong. The conscience of the head is necessitated in its action; the conscience of the heart is free.

We shall understand all these apparent contradictions if we just follow the conscience from its home in the head to its home in the heart. The two homes are one; the two consciences are, of course, also one; but because there is a twofold act we speak of a twofold agent. Well, when the conscience leaves its home in the head, it leaves mere general principles and universal laws that it can easily see, that it must see by simply reading the writing written on itself. But on its way to its home in the heart it has to encounter prejudices and passions; and when it gets to its home in the heart, the first thing it has to do is to come to particular and practical conclusions. There can be no conclusion without a council, so the conscience of the head holds council with the conscience of the heart. The conscience of the head rises and reads from its roll of general principles. It says, for instance: we must attain our end; we must observe order; we must do unto others as we wish others to do unto us. All very well, says the conscience of the heart, jumping to its feet; but the question is: Where is this end; what is this order; and who is this other, and what good has he ever done me? Here begins the warfare that makes

man's life and merit and glory upon earth—the conflict between principle and practice; duty and pleasure, temporal and eternal. The victory is gained only when and where the conscience of the head is King and commander of the heart.

The conscience of the head must be especially careful of those it encounters on its way to the heart; they are, for the most part, enemies. Prejudice is an enemy, passion is an enemy; doubt is not always a friend, and even probability is to be treated cautiously. If conscience would be King, prejudice must be cast out, passion must be conquered, doubt must be brought to terms, and probability is to be taken into council only when it is such as a wise and prudent King would practically accept as a pledge for his crown. When the conscience is thus enthroned in the palace of the heart, we may salute it as King in its lawful Kingdom, and resolve, as we retire, that such shall our conscience be.

One thing more we may do when we get home; we may propose a toast, and our toast shall be what Cardinal Newman suggests—to the King of the head and heart—our conscience. But let us remember, even when drinking this toast, that conscience is King of head and heart only while God, the searcher of hearts, is King of conscience.

Our Politics.

In another column will be found a letter from an esteemed correspondent who thinks that we deserve the stricture passed upon us by *United Canada* in its issue of the 8th instant which we also publish.

That our silence should be interpreted to mean conservatism, cowardice, or liberalism is due to the anxiety of those who would wish us to be more political. That the late episode was not sufficient to move us either to one side or the other need not disappoint our friends or fill our adversaries with surprise. Our articles expressed quite clearly all that we felt upon the subject. When we condemned the speech our condemnation carried with it the condemnation of any party or set of men who, by their vote or otherwise, might condone such language. The men in the whole business that we have most respect for are the men who broke from the Conservative party and condemned, by their vote, the speech of Mr. Wallace. But what political capital is going to be made out of it? We think that both our contemporary and our correspondent had better drop the subject. So far as Catholics are concerned, it ill becomes us to attack one another. Our strength lies not in critical disunion but charitable union—a state of affairs which Catholic journals cannot bring about so well as others.

As to *United Canada*, we decline with thanks the badge it offers; for it was woven in bad temper and presented with bad grace. There is a time to speak and a time to be silent, and our silence as to those who voted with Mr. Foster arises neither from approval of the Conservatives nor from admiration of the Grits.

Mr. McCarthy.

Mr. Dalton McCarthy, the leader of the party of two, the would be saviour of Canada, has spoken at last, and the two million Catholics who comprise nearly half the population of this country have been given to understand that the oracle of Simcoe has decided henceforth their influence in Canadian politics must cease. It was a strange spectacle. A man whom shallow fanaticism has unfitted for a place in either of the great historical parties of his country, strives to sail into a position of prominence on a tidal wave of bigotry. As faithful and peaceful citizens of Canada, we must deplore the fact that a man with the intellectual gifts of Mr. McCarthy should become a brand of dissension in this mixed community, but still we feel that there is nothing for Catholics to fear.

Fear! Wherefore should the Catholic Church in Canada or elsewhere fear the attacks of such men? The Ship of Peter has weathered the storms of the centuries, and in Canada the puny wavelets which such men as McCarthy can conjure up cannot displace a nail in the old bark. We are no strangers here in Canada, as these men strive to show. This country was discovered and settled, yes and maintained as British soil by Catholics, when the Protestants of the continent were throwing off English dominion in the country to the south. In Manitoba and the North west, Catholics were the pioneers. They were living there, good citizens, educating their children according to conscience, when Protestant settlers came to take up land. Did these Catholics attempt to force upon their neighbours a system which their consciences would not allow them to accept? No! that achievement was reserved for those advocates of "British fair play" and "Equal Rights," of which Messrs. McCarthy and O'Brien are the present apostles.

At present we Catholics comprise nearly one half the population of this country. In every station of life, in the councils and ranks of both political parties, Catholics are found working with their fellow-citizens for the advancement of the country. We are told that we possess undue influence; this, too, when statistics show that on account of the liberality of Catholics and the prejudice of many Protestant constituencies we have not by any means our proper proportion of members in the Dominion Parliament. But the example of tolerance set by Montreal and other places has not been lost. Even in Ontario "Third Parties" have not been very successful, and Mr. McCarthy would do well to make a pilgrimage to the quiet grave up "Salt Creek," where lie the bones of the party of "Equal Rights," buried there five years ago. Galvanize these old bones if you will, Mr. McCarthy; dress them up in the flaunting colors of bigotry, and manipulate them before your audiences; some will be amused and others duped for a while, but the public will soon perceive the odor of the grave and bury the old skeleton once more as a public nuisance.

Padre Dazza, the well-known astronomer and chief of the Vatican observatory, has been elected president of the Roman academy known as the Novi di Linea.