

THE TRUTH ABOUT THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

BY A PROTESTANT THEOLOGIAN. CLXXXIV.

Some time ago, it will be remembered, it was said that Cardinal Gibbons, with other Catholics, was about addressing himself to the government, against the withdrawal of public aid from the Indian schools.

This proposition was not supposed to include Protestant schools, for the very sufficient reason that the various Protestant bodies had formally renounced their share in Federal grants in aid of Indian schools under their care.

What was the ground of this general renunciation? Of course it was all in the name of carrying through more consistently the separation of Church and State. This stereotyped phrase, however, which has become a national cant of ours, means more or less, according to the user.

There are those, and their number, at all events their boldness, waxes, who exclaim against any legislation in support of Christian morality. It is only natural morality, they declare, which law ought to regard. By natural morality they evidently mean merely such a prudent balance of the instinctive appetencies of the purely animal man as shall, by collective action, secure the maximum of earthly enjoyment.

Not only do they rule out the instinctive religious sense, which is descriptive of developed man, but the moral sense, which requires the subordination of mere desire to ideals of the good, the beautiful and the true.

It has been said that Herbert Spencer's morality is a mitigated specimen of this which some are endeavoring to push among us. Some one has described him as believing that the end of human life will have been secured when everybody is reasonably sure of a comfortable meal, of decent clothing, of unadorned liquors, and a good brand of cigars. However, being a man of unexceptionable morals, he pleads for strict monogamy.

I do not know how well this describes Herbert Spencer's system, not having read him much, but it well describes the system of those self-proclaimed advocates of natural morality, except that these are likely to protest against the confinement of a man to one wife or indeed of a woman to one husband. Most of them, I take it, will either plead for simultaneous polygamy or for successive polygamy, in the form of unrestricted divorce, or will plead outright for the abrogation of all marriage laws whatever. The elder Henry James contended for this last, but maintained that only sought it as a transition to a juster order.

These "natural moralists" simply crave the complete slipping of the bridle from uncontrolled appetites. Their wish also, as represented in a Chicago professor, is to let loose murder upon the weak, is something we will consider hereafter.

Now this is not the ideal at the bottom of American law. Even those who pass the loosest divorce laws commonly view them as an unhappy necessity, a concession to a self-willed and self-indulgent public feeling, which will not now accept any severer constraint, but which it would be good to educate up to a stricter standard of married fidelity. The Tablet is right in saying that at present general American feeling seems to be sailing towards legislation that shall decidedly curtail the present license of our married prostitutes.

The vast reform of the careless English marriage laws after 1760 gives us great reason for hope. About that time foreign nations sometimes hesitated to own English marriages at all. They might hesitate, it is true, but they were not to be deterred by that. One leading religious paper, it is true, declares that it was all very well for Christ to nip rather severely rabbinical looseness, and to propose indissoluble marriage as something at least better than this, but that there is no need for us to conceal ourselves particularly with His ideals now. In our enlightened age, it signifies, and among such excellent Christians as we, it is for us, not for Him, to decide the beginning, the maintenance and the dissolution of the marriage contract, according to our views of an enlightened expediency.

Enlightened expediency, we see, prevails with some religious editors to be pleasantly ready for the reign either of Christ or of Antichrist, so we will let such go. We may expect to see them, avoiding Sir Lancelot's rashness, "hide a little till they see which are the stronger, then to hurl into it Against the weaker."

Thus, at least from their own point of view, they will make the best of both worlds, the upper and the under. Setting aside them, these "Walters on Providence," (the providence of God or of Apollon, as it may be) we may pretty securely say that Americans generally, so far as they work towards moral ideals at all, (and they very largely do) wish to be understood as working for Christian morality.

Now Christian morality is indissolubly involved with Christian faith. As Dr. Dornier says, Christ is the One Teacher all whose morality is religion and all whose religion is morality. Therefore, as President Cleveland (I think it is) has said, although with us the state stands apart from supporting or governing the Church, it does not stand apart from the Christian religion. We are a Christian people, and ought not to be ashamed to own ourselves such, either in private or public acts. As President Gilman of Johns Hopkins has said, it is distinctly disgraceful for our young men to be ashamed of the religion of their country.

Then how, it may be asked, is it that we suffer Jews, Mohammedans, heathens and avowed infidels, to vote and hold office? Just as the United Kingdom gives the franchise to Catholics and Nonconformists, although she is by law Episcopal in the South, Presbyterian in the North, and non-conformist only in the West. Spain is not less a Catholic country because she does not disfranchise unbelievers or Protestants, nor Germany less a monarchical country

because she admits republicans into her Parliament. Nor is Ireland any less really a Catholic country because Catholicism has no advantage in law and is at a decided disadvantage in administration. True, Ireland's hands need to be tied by some form of local self-government.

It is plain now that the dominant party in every state may, and must, if it has any energy of conviction, endeavor to carry through its ideals. It only owes such deference to dissentient elements as may be dictated by prudence, humanity, or belief in the educating force of truth, counselling sometimes a wise delay.

That Christianity is the law of the land, in such a sense as that all legislation is to be presumed favorable to its principles, has been again and again, from John Marshall down, set forth by the Supreme Court of the United States. When Daniel Webster disputed the validity of Stephen Girard's will, which shuts out clergymen from his college, holding this to be an insult to Christianity, the Court did not dispute the soundness of his principle, but only pointed out that the will which left the way open for Christian laymen to teach could not well be pronounced hostile to Christianity. Otherwise we should have to say that Quakers and Plymouth Brethren are enemies of Christianity, which no one supposes.

So also the Court, to the intense exasperation of certain leading English haters of Christ, has declared polygamy incapable of being legalized, as being utterly at variance with the morality of a Christian people. These English malignants say that they are not defending polygamy, but that the nine judges ought to be ashamed of themselves for founding their condemnation of it on Christianity. Unhappily for them, the judges do not seem at all ashamed of speaking and deciding as Christian men. They have no lunatic fear that, in doing so, they are contradicting any rational interpretation of the separation of Church and State.

The Court also, in deciding that the law against bringing in contract laborers does not apply to calling clergymen from abroad, is peculiarly explicit. It owns expressly that the terms of the law cover the case of clergymen, but, with contemptuous sarcasm, pronounces it monstrous to suppose that Congress, whatever it may have inadvertently said, can have meant to interfere with the natural right of Christian churches and clergymen to call and be called.

As the voice of the Supreme Court is of vital significance in our land, we will next week consider one or two more of its decisions, and thereupon draw some conclusions.

CHARLES C. STARBUCK. Andover, Mass.

THE EMERALD ISLE.

Atar on the ocean a green Isle is lying, In robes of emerald she smiles across its first smile. And it answers her greeting with bright as the emerald— That star of the ocean—the Emerald Isle.

The sweet songs of Erin in every heart echo, And serve weary hours of pain to beguile; For the sweetest of songsters were nurtured at the bosom Of the fondest of mothers—the Emerald Isle.

As you glide down the streams, or rove through the green valley, 'Mid the scenes of beauty for many a mile, Noble churches, and shrines of more humble devotion Mark the Isle of the saints—the fair Emerald Isle.

Though we're pining in exile, far, far from thy shores, Away from the shores that we wish for the white, Our sweetest of pleasures is rambling in merriment Through the loved haunts of yore in the Emerald Isle.

O Erin! the home of the brave and the faithful! The love of our hearts no new charm can bestow; Though on earth we are parted, we'll all meet in heaven Through the Faith we have brought from the Emerald Isle.

A SAN JOSE.

Facts About Intolerance.

There is no race which claims so strongly to have delivered itself from the trammels of religious intolerance as the Anglo-Saxon; there is no creed which protests so loudly the spirit of toleration and social and religious freedom as Protestantism. Yet what do we find? And what inference should we draw from the facts? No constituency in Ireland where Protestants are in the large majority returns or has returned a Catholic member. Many constituencies in which Catholics are in the majority have returned, and some still return Protestants. Yet the Catholic Irish are branded throughout the Anglo-Saxon world as its typical ignorant and narrow-minded bigots.

Take another fact. No Catholic has ever been made president of the United States. Why? The Sovereign of the Empire is sworn to abjuration and to insult the beliefs of a large number of his subjects. He is the one being in it who, by law, is not permitted the freedom to choose and practice the faith his conscience may commend. Again why? The Lord Lieutenant of Ireland may not be of the same religion as the vast majority of his subjects whose affairs he must administer. Again why? No Catholic has ever been Premier of England since the Revolution of 1832. France has had some non-Catholic Premiers, and at least one who was a Protestant. On whose side does intolerance lie? And the point is that while the fountain-heads are thus leavened, can we wonder that the streams it feeds are less pure?—Sacred Heart Review.

Christian Mercy.

Since the law by which God commands others to love us is like unto the law by which He commands us to love Himself, we should do nothing to give any one just cause of offense or displeasure, or to make it hard for them to see God's image in us, but in all our actions manifest the spirit of mercy and sweetness; the attributes which chiefly draw us to love God will make it easy for others to love us. And we should remember when we are offended with the faults of others, how often

we have offended them with our many failings and yet expect them to forgive us.

FIVE-MINUTE SERMON.

Third Sunday after Easter. PLEASURE IN SERVING GOD.

"Rejoice in the Lord again I say rejoice." (Psalm iv. 4)

It has often been noticed, my dear brethren, and we every day come across example of it, that when things are going well men think very little about God and about the practice of their religious duties. We may almost say that, as things are at present, most men will not perform their duty to God unless they are driven to do so by something unpleasant and hard to bear. It is when a man is taken ill that he sends for a priest and makes his confession and receives the Sacraments; as soon, however, as he gets well it is only too probable that he will return to his old ways.

Now, this shows that the service of God is felt by a great many to be a heavy burden and yoke. And I am sorry to say that this feeling is not confined to those whose passions and low propensities are so strong as to hold them down for a great part of their lives in slavery and subjection to sin and vice. Many are those who have felt this themselves for the most part from this degrading bondage seem from the possession of that spirit of holy joy with which every one trying to serve God should be filled. Many even of these seem to find the yoke of the Lord a heavy one; and if they do not cast it off, it is chiefly because they are afraid to do so.

Now, I am not going to say a word against the service of God which springs from "the fear of the Lord, which is the beginning of wisdom." The fear of God is not merely good—it is necessary for salvation. But it is only the beginning, not the perfection of wisdom. Moreover, it should not be the habitual, dominant and constant motive of our religious life: it should serve as a motive to fall back upon when higher motives are not felt. As St. Ignatius says: "We should ask of God the grace to fear Him, so that if and when through our faults we grow forgetful of God's love, the fear of punishment may hold us back from offending Him. In other words, we ought, as a rule, to be serving God from love and holy joy rather than from fear and dread."

This is teaching of the Holy Scripture, and especially of the great Apostle our patron, St. Paul. The text is but a sample of similar injunctions which might be lawfully made for the Epistles: "Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice." Do not be always looking upon the service of God as a heavy burden and yoke to which you must be driven as a fear of punishment, but let that service fill your souls at all times with delight and satisfaction. This is what St. Paul enjoins. Why is it not so with us? Why should it be so?

Well, there are ten thousand reasons why the service of God should be delightful and satisfactory; but I can refer to one only this morning—one, however, of which I think that we can all feel the force. As a rule, the man who is carrying on a profitable and successful business is, so long as everything goes well, tolerably happy. You don't see him going about with a long face, and although he may grumble a little, as most men do, you can see that he does not mean it. Now, if this is the case in the midst of the uncertainties which are inseparable from all human transactions and contentment of a man who has seriously taken in hand the one necessary business? For how does the case stand with such a man? The man who seriously takes in hand the business of saving his own soul must succeed—for there is no such thing as failure. So long as he is willing he must be prosperous. And why? Because he has Almighty God as his partner. And God is ready to give him what I hope it is not irreverent to call unlimited credit. In this life he pours into his soul His heavenly grace, and this grace gives to all his actions a value which gives him a right to an eternal recompense. No action, from morning to night, and unknown to us, even if by chance we catch a backward glance we fail to recognize our work. Behind us, angels and demons, like gleaners, gather together in sheaves all that belongs to them. Every night their store is increased. They preserve it, and at the last day will present it to their Master. Is not there a thousand things that should make us reflect?—Golden Sands.

"Father Pat" a Convert.

The Western papers have been chronicling the death of "Father Pat" (Rev. Henry Irwin, M. A. Oxon) who was the pioneer minister of the Church of England in the Broadway district. A priest writes the Portland Catholic Sentinel: "On one occasion he walked nearly forty miles to reach a telephone, to call me to the bedside of a dying Catholic miner, though the dying man did not himself ask for the consolations of his religion. After leaving the sick man, I met 'Father Pat' and his joy was almost boundless, when I told him I was in time to give all the last sacraments." So good a man deserved a good ending. Some time before his death he was received into the Church.

The Seeds We Sow.

Each day is like a furrow lying before us; our thoughts, words, and actions go into it, and that each minute we drop into it, without seeming to perceive it. The furrow finished we commence upon another, then another; and again, another; each day presents a fresh one, and so on to the end of life—sowing, ever sowing. And all we have sown must grow, and bear fruit, although we may not see it, until we reach our end. Even if by chance we catch a backward glance we fail to recognize our work. Behind us, angels and demons, like gleaners, gather together in sheaves all that belongs to them. Every night their store is increased. They preserve it, and at the last day will present it to their Master. Is not there a thousand things that should make us reflect?—Golden Sands.

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THE SPIRIT OF PRAYER.

During the present month members of the League of the Sacred Heart gave an intention which should be given common to all Catholics. It is "The Spirit of Prayer." There are none who will fail to be benefited by a consideration of the subject and there are many in need of its salutary lessons. It is a spirit, also, greatly needed at the present time. Not, however, because the people have ceased to pray, but for the reason that many pray too much with the lips and too little with the heart.

Prayer, which is essential to salvation, is an elevation of the mind to God to beg for all necessities of soul and body and our eternal good. God, therefore, the Creator of all things, it is to Whom we address our petitions. How necessary, then, that we should pray with devotion, with attention and with confidence. Prayer brings man in the immediate presence of God, hence we should pray with reverence. Acknowledging our absolute dependence upon Him, we should pray with humility, and knowing the dangers that beset our souls we should pray always with perseverance.

These are some of the elements which should enter into real prayer. Measured by such requirements it is not to be wondered at that so many prayers remain unanswered. Weighed by this standard, what a mockery is the prayer of the giggling girl in the house of God! What an insult do they offer who gad and converse while Our Lord is exposed on the altar! Why hope to have God hear the words our lips utter when our minds are far away and our thoughts on things unworthy the place? Why hope that the tired prayer, the sleepy prayer and the one-legged prayer should ever ascend to Heaven?

These often fall into great temptations and sins through their pride and curiosity, because I stand against them. Fear the judgments of God, dread the anger of the Almighty; presume not, however, to examine the works of the Most High, but search into their own iniquities, how many ways that have offended, and how much good that has neglected.

Some carry their devotions in their books only, some in pictures and some in outward signs and figures. Some have Me in their mouths, but little in their hearts. There are others who, being enlightened in their understanding and purified in their affection, always breathe after earthly things, are unwilling to hear of the necessities of nature; and such as these perceive what the Spirit of Truth speaketh in them.

For it teacheth them to despise the things of the earth and to love heavenly things; to disregard the world, and all the day and night to aspire after heaven.

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