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THURSDAY, JUNE 8, 1893.

## Calendar for the Week.

June 8—Octave of Corpus Christi.  
9—The Most Sacred Heart of Jesus.  
10—S. Margaret of Scotland, Widow.  
11—Third Sunday after Pentecost, S. Barnabas, Apostle.  
12—S. Leo III., Pope and Confessor.  
13—S. Anthony of Padua, Confessor.  
14—S. Basil the Great, Bishop, Confessor and Doctor.

## Immortality of the Soul.

Some of the Catholic Colleges in the United States, and most notably St. Francis Xavier's College, New York, are making very praiseworthy efforts to advance Catholic principles in philosophy and explain them to others than their own students. A couple of weeks ago a public disputation was held by the students of St. Francis Xavier's College, when Archbishop Corrigan presided. The language in which the discussion was conducted was Latin, and the questions debated were, first the Simplicity and Spirituality of the Soul, and secondly the Immortality of the Soul. The New York Sun comments thus upon the whole proceedings:

The disputation conducted in Latin on Wednesday evening at the Hotel de Logerot was accordingly a valuable practical exercise for the young men, and is highly creditable to their instruction that they acquitted themselves so well in the difficult task. We question whether there is another college in the Union which would have dared to submit its students to such a test, but the example thus offered by St. Francis Xavier's is likely to stir up the emulation of the rest, with the result, perhaps, that hereafter we may have intercollegiate disputations in Latin.

No theme for debate of profounder interest than the immortality of the soul could have been chosen. It is really doubt as to this immortality which lies at the bottom of the current religious disturbance. If there were no such doubt, the General Assembly of the Presbyterians would not now be discussing the revision of the Westminster Confession, and the infallibility of the Bible. If there be a personal God, if the soul of man be immortal, if there be eternal rewards and punishments, man can only know of them as facts through inspiration coming from God Himself. He must be told of them by Divine authority, for of himself he cannot find them out. They are questions which human science is powerless to solve. If then, the Bible be of human and not Divine authorship, man is left in the dark as to his future state, he is ignorant whether he has any future state at all. He becomes, perforce, an agnostic; for when the inspiration of the Bible is denied, the main pillar on which supernaturalism rests is rejected. All theology must rely upon inspiration as its foundation, whether it accepts only the Bible as the inspired source, or includes also Church tradition and declaration. At the bottom is the Bible.

The debate on the doctrines of Dr. Briggs respecting the Bible, which will proceed in the General Assembly at Washington, will involve substantially the same question as that discussed by the students of St. Francis Xavier's College at the Hotel de Logerot. If there be no Biblical inspiration, if the Bible is a merely human production, faulty and in parts absolutely fictitious and spurious, the theory of the immortality of the soul is baseless, except as a mere philosophic speculation.

By leaving this question in doubt the Presbyterian Church, which has no other foundation than the Bible, is making itself a party to the current scepticism touching the immortality of the soul. By paltering with the question whether the Bible is of God or man, it is stimulating the question whether there is a personal God, which means whether there is any God at all.

In essence, Dr. Briggs and all his school are agnostics, yet they remain in the Presbyterian Church. Why? Is it not because agnosticism has become so powerful in

Presbyterianism, and more particularly in its pulpits and theological seminaries, that it is enabled to command consideration? If doubt of the immortality of the soul, and consequently of the personality of God, were not pervasive, would the New York Presbytery have tolerated the teachings of Dr. Briggs as an innocent exercise of individual liberty of opinion? How would it have been twenty years ago, when the Presbyterians of New York really believed in the Bible, in God, and in the immortality of the soul?

Although the general tenor of these remarks is sound, still they are based upon an entire misapprehension. When the writer tells us that man can only know of a personal Deity, the immortality of the soul, and eternal reward and punishment, through inspiration, he has a wrong idea of how Catholic philosophy treats such questions, and furthermore he falls into the error of the majority of sceptics upon the subject itself. To suppose that these grave questions even in their initiative lie beyond the pale of reason; that divine revelation has no more ground to rest upon than its own supernatural footing; to suppose that between faith and reason, religious belief and intellectual judgment, there is an impassable gulf, is one of the fundamental errors of modern philosophy. It had its origin in Des Cartes who doubting everything strove to remedy the defect by teaching that we had an innate idea of God. Its popularity in English speaking schools has a double source—one, German; the other, English. The first is Kant who taught that reason could not teach us the existence of God or any other being in itself. The only way that we can learn such things was through the practical reason which is equivalent to belief. One of Kant's immediate followers was Hegel—the ablest, the brightest, but also the most erratic and dangerous of all German sceptics. Taking an entirely different position he denied a personal Deity and the immortality of the soul; he became mystical and mythical, and paved the way for Strauss and Schopenhauer. One was the bitterest enemy Christianity ever had, the other the worst pessimist of the nineteenth century. The English branch of this philosophical school finds its chief exponents in Mill—both father and son, in Bain and Spencer. It is a materialism more or less refined, and thus stands in contrast to the idealism of Germany. To be logical a materialist ought to deny the immortality of the soul, and so these teachers do, or they explain it away so that it has no personality or individual subsistence. Belief they consider to be mere sentiment having no past history unless the myths of poetry, and no future hopes save those which self-love and utility will give it. And as for God they either look upon Him as the Unknowable, or speak of Him as the great Cause. Nothing else will they admit.

How differently does Catholic philosophy act. It rightly claims that faith and reason must go hand in hand. It does not come to philosophical questions with the torch of revelation; it comes with the light of natural reason. So far from rejecting the supernatural it bows its intelligence, its freedom, its affections to the brighter light, the higher law and the purer love which are ushered in with faith and hope divine. At the same time it justly exercises a certain

power of judgment. Without pretending that reason is autonomous or supreme it does not accept unchallenged every dogma that is advanced. It is too logical to quote the Bible to an atheist, and too sure of its arguments to quote articles of faith to those who do not believe the Teacher. Let us take the immortality of the soul as an example. That is a question which is a particular application of the great law of thought that everything is its own nature. But every nature has an operation peculiar to itself; and by the operation we judge the nature. It is therefore by the act of man that we judge his nature. Now the essential act of man is thought, by which he conceives of the universal; by which he abstracts; by which he judges and draws conclusions. Because man can do all this, because he can think of abstract things such as virtue and God, then the power by which he thinks must be as simple, immaterial and incorruptible as these objects themselves. This is the intrinsic reason upon which the Catholic philosopher bases the proof of the immortality of the soul. Bring the Deity into the question and immediately we see how opposed to God's wisdom, goodness and justice is the destruction of the human soul. But it rests primarily upon the basis of nature; and resting there feels the deep need of the higher light for the healing of its wounds; for the fulfilment of its destiny, the crown of glory which is to be placed upon nature's brow. "Thou hast made man a little less than the Angels, but Thou hast crowned him with honor and glory."

## St. Michael's Hospital.

The City Council of Toronto, meeting in committee last week upon the Estimates, came to a harsh and unjust decision of cutting off a grant of \$7,000 which had been given to hospitals other than the General Hospital. The committee advised the giving of \$20,000 to the last named institution, where alone city patients would be sent. The blow was aimed directly at St. Michael's Hospital, against which Dr. Orr, who was the prime mover on the subject, made serious charges. The following letter appeared in the daily papers answering these charges. To our surprise the *Globe* relegates it to a corner column amongst the advertisements, away from all the other correspondence, which contains four long letters on various questions:

ST. MICHAEL'S HOSPITAL.

To the Editor of the *Globe*:

Sir—In Friday's issue of your paper certain statements were made by Ald. Orr concerning St. Michael's hospital. These statements were made during a committee meeting of the city council, and are as follows:

First, that I am not a qualified physician.  
Second, that the nursing is defective.

Third, that no advantages are given to students.

Fourth, that patients are kept after being cured and given work to do.

Fifth, that patients are not properly attended.

To all of these charges I give an absolute denial, as follows:

First: I am a graduate of Toronto university, and a licensed practitioner, and am, and have been, the resident medical superintendent of St. Michael's hospital, dating from its inception.

Second: We have a competent staff of nurses, while of their faithfulness and efficiency the staff and I are best judges; and they are fully up to the standard.

Third: The students of the Women's Medical college have had clinics all winter,

and the same liberty has been given to Toronto university, a privilege which has been taken advantage of, as will be seen by the curriculum.

Fourth: Patients are not given work to do after being cured any more than at the General hospital, where one of the printed rules is that convalescent patients must assist the nurses.

The fifth charge may be characterized as entirely untrue.

It is also insinuated that St. Michael's is a sectarian institution. Since the opening 169 Protestant patients have been treated, and no distinction has ever been made between denominations. This does not savor of sectarianism.

Dr. Orr further states that Dr. Sheard substantiated the above statements. From my knowledge of Dr. Sheard I will take the liberty of doubting this.

Kindly insert the above in your valuable paper, and oblige

R. J. DWYER, M.B., M.C.P.S.O.,  
Medical Supt. St. Michael's Hospital.

On Monday last the Hon. Frank Smith headed a deputation to the Mayor to object to the assertion that St. Michael's is a sectarian hospital. The others present were J. J. Foy, Q.C., G. W. Kiely, Esq., Hugh Ryan, Esq., T. Flynn, Esq., and B. Hughes, Esq.

The letter above quoted answers very satisfactorily the charges under cover of which this young, struggling Hospital is so severely attacked. And the deputation of the above named gentlemen represents so well the Catholic protest, wish and mind throughout the city, that we hope for a more satisfactory result.

It is in thorough keeping with the arguments of the age that our sick, children, our poor must be looked after by those who neither understand their wants nor sympathize with them. Non-sectarian institutions are in reality non-Catholic; and even when they do their best they fall far short of what similar institutions, under complete Catholic management, effect. Toronto General Hospital is an example: it is well conducted, and a chaplain visits it regularly. But all the surroundings are so many forces silently but powerfully working against the spiritual welfare of many who, even when in good health, have not the courage of their faith. These weak members, fostered by the milder atmosphere of Catholic surroundings, are frequently spared, and obtain, by the piety and religious attention of those around them, the grace of a happy death. Now, aldermen and mayors ought to remember that they are stewards; they hold hospital funds, in trust, to be disposed of to the best interests of the community. And certainly Catholics can never feel satisfied that proper attention has been paid to their interests if their religion is rudely thrust into the background, as it was by the Committee of the Toronto City Council. There never will be peace in the community as long as proper respect is not paid to our religious feelings. The battle will be fought out, and over again, until it is won.

And this Committee threatened to cut off Sunnyside of one hundred dollars, reducing its grant from five to four hundred. The City Council has strange notions about economy. Let them put their own house in order. It would be well to examine the question between themselves and the Street Railway Company, and see if such economy cannot be practised there as will enable them to spare a few dollars upon the sick and the poor. We do not propose to let them