



CATHOLIC DOCTRINE

The Vitality of the Church a Manifestation of God.

The Truth and Harmony of Her Teaching—The Catholic Doctrine to the Genius of Our Government.

From a discourse delivered at the inauguration of the Catholic University at Washington, November 14th, 1889, by Father Fidells, C. P.—James Kent Stone.

Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy name give glory; for Thy mercy and Thy truth's sake, lest the Gentiles should say: Where is their God? [Ps. 113; 9, 10]

My Christian Friends and Fellow-Countrymen.

This is a day for us, not so much of effort in the initiation of a great work, but rather of wonder and thanksgiving, whilst we contemplate the things which the omnipotent God has done for us and among us. It is ours to gaze upon the evolution of God's plan, becoming intelligible before our eyes. It is ours to stand still a moment, to stand like the rescued people of old, and behold what God hath wrought. We have been brought out of the land of bondage.

My friends, the only hope for humanity is that there is somewhere in revelation a manifestation of God in time, a coming in of the Infinite into this world of ours.

You believe in a God, do you not? I speak to those here present who may not be Catholics. Yes, I know you do, though sometimes you may have been tempted to doubt Him. Better an infinite personal spirit, directing all things in spite of apparent contradiction and imperfection, than a blind impersonal force, whirling us onward we know not whither. Materialism is too degrading a doctrine, to be held by men conscious of the dignity of their own spiritual powers; it could find an advocacy only in those baser passions of our nature which would rise up to destroy spirit, and with it truth and right and moral responsibility. Yes, you believe in God; you believe in Him rather than know Him; and this belief has been to you a solace in the midst of much that is dark and perplexing. It has gone before you, like a pillar of fire and cloud—of fire by night and cloud by day—brighter, more distinct, in the darkness of silence and sorrow that shuts out the landscape of this world, yet still there amid the activity of active life, an obscure, majestic column, pointing toward heaven. But if you believe in God you cannot doubt that He has given us a revelation—aye, and more than a revelation—that He has come to the rescue of his creatures, and supplied them with a remedy for their ill. Being such as we are, to hold that God made us and then abandoned us would be to increase a hundredfold the intellectual misery of our situation. Plato's "great hope" that a God would come and give us "some surer word" than that of human speculation, is only the lofty expression of that noble instinct wherewith the human race looks upward with agonizing desire for help and for redemption. Either the Catholic Church is God's agency set in operation and maintained by Him for the salvation of mankind or else there is no hope from God—nothing but confusion, and struggle, and blind alarm, and ultimate despair.

Thinking men are everywhere seeing this—this solemn alternative; and nowhere are they seeing this more clearly than in this great country of ours, where, by the sweeping away of the old forms of thought, intellectual activity has been stimulated into a boldness and accuracy hitherto unknown among the multitudes. Nevertheless there are, unfortunately, many whom this alternative is driving off into the blackness of negation, into the darkness and cold. And why? Simply because they started in life with a presumption which rules out the claims of the Catholic Church—a presumption instilled into them inessentially from the first opening of their reason, namely, that the old Church has been tried and found wanting; that she was sighted at the bar of history and human experience and condemned centuries ago. Of Protestantism as such I cannot stop to speak. It has had its day and is passing, as all human systems of philosophy or religion must surely pass. It was an illogical effort of the human mind to put itself in possession of revelation without the aid of any authority, and all such fallacies are exposed in the end by the inexorable logic of time. But these clear-headed men of whom I speak, though not Protestants themselves, are the descendants of Protestants, and they are suffering from the mistakes of their forefathers; they have inherited what has been well called Protestant tradition. And they form a large portion, and, let me most willingly say it, some of the best material of this our republic. To such as these as well as to my Catholic brethren, I would address myself.

The work which the Catholic Church has done in this country during the century which we are here bringing to a close, is the same which she has done in other ages and in other lands; but she does it in a new way, and in her own way. She has taken hold of new conditions of things and adapted herself to them; and the result of her work is a structure distinctive and typical of the age and country in which we live, and differing from anything which has preceded it, as truly as the Church of the Middle Ages differed from the Church of the Fathers. And, mind you—for this is the point of all my discourse—she has done this not by any prudent forethought, not by any unerring adaptation of policy, but simply because she is a living force, capable of acting in all times and in all places, so that she has become American without ceasing to be Catholic; and, on the other hand, in endowing us with all that is truly hers, she has not thwarted or crippled, but rather appropriated and vivified all that is best and noblest in our national character.

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CHRISTMAS TIMES.

Thoughts which Each Passing Year will Always Recall.

We are here again, "Old Father Time" says to us. Yes, we answer, but you are making us older. What if we do? Is the reply, which seems, at first, harsh to us, but we are not given time to think over it. Our good angel, whom God has appointed over us, is guarding our thoughts. He, sweetest friend, though unseen, of our life, is placing before us pictures which so charm our every faculty that we forget the rush of years which are whirling our heads.

We are forgetting everything which may cause a shade of sorrow's disappointment to wrinkle, for even a moment, the lines of our face. The smile of joy with which youth brightened our first days of life is with us, and the hearts and faces of our father and mother, sister and brother, and others—many, so many of whom are now no more. Somehow, though we sigh when we think of these of our own, we are not lonely. Thoughts so sweetly consoling come into our hearts concerning them. Parents, they taught us first of the Infant Jesus, and now comes to our mind an expression, which burst from the lips of a little one so dear to us. She saw, for the first time, a crib and the figure of Mary and her Child, the Infant Jesus, and cried out, "It is God and His mamma." No one could better give voice to our faith's expression to our love, even now, though we have spent a score of years at God's altar, than this innocent, practicing child of a few years ago. It was a volume in one expression, from a soul whose baptismal innocence was yet fresh and untarnished.

OUR FIRST CHRISTMAS MASS.

The first we heard, or among the first. We may so easily and do go back to our parents, and what they said and how we prayed, taught by them, to the Infant Jesus. Oh our hearts were warm then. The world, cold and cruel to innocence was then a dark unknown to our little minds. The one sign which we give now is of sorrow for forgetting the promise we then made to the Infant Jesus. We heard the "Venite Adoremus," and we loved it then and we love it now with the freshness of your first love for it. It broke out from the organ loft, and its strains went all through the church, from point to point, and it was everywhere—now up and now down, now here, now there; and it went out the door and all around and about, and it came in again, and everywhere "Venite Adoremus," and it swelled and grew stronger and all the while sweeter as it came and rested before the very altar.

NALUTING AND ADORING JESUS IN THE MOST BLESSED SACRAMENT.

We thought then all the time of the Crib and the Manger, and the Infant within it, of Mary and Joseph and of angels which were with them. The "Gloria in Excelsis" of that day was a new revelation to us, for we were told of the angels and their song, and we wondered if the angels were with the choir we were hearing, and were wishing, oh, so much, that we could see and hear them. We were waiting for the sermon of the priest, good, kind and beloved by his flock, and were trying to think what he would say to us of the one thing with which our whole self was filled, the Infant Jesus. Would he say things we knew, or would he tell us new things of our love which would make our hearts bigger and greater?

The Gospel was read, and we waited to count the number of times he said things we loved to hear of the Infant Jesus. It almost seemed to us, then, that a good sermon would be to say often and only "Infant Jesus." Oh, how our hearts danced with joy all that day! We hailed with the delight of youth's strong love our parents when they awoke us, and we laughed and talked of the day that was before us. On our way to church we cried out to every one the Christmas salutation, and, coming home, we forgot everything to make merry all whom we met with the "Peace on earth to men of good will." And now we look back, and yet we can see the smiles with which our parents greeted us on that day, and we think of the thoughts which they put into our hearts, and then, looking up to heaven we think our thoughts are with them above, and this is why our recollection of them in these times brings to us joy and not sorrow.

These are some of the thoughts that are with us now, and our minds are with the children about us. We want them to enjoy God's greatest gift to earth, the proof of His love for man, His only-begotten Son, the Infant Jesus. Let us go back to our first love, and regret only the times we have parted from it. Let us go to the Crib, and think, while kneeling in front of it, over the thoughts which came into our minds on the first Christmas we recollect, and this Christmas we will profit us. If the thought for our dead rush into our minds and the tear for their sweet memory begins to moisten our cheek, let the prayer for their soul to the Infant Jesus dry it.—S. S. M., in Catholic Columbian.

THE NATIVITY.

Alluding to the Birth of the Infant Saviour St. Bonaventura, in his Revelations, gives the following brief but beautiful account of that event of greatest importance to the whole human race throughout all time as well as all Eternity. "The expected hour of the Birth of the Son of God having come," says St. Bonaventura, "on Sunday, towards midnight, the Holy Virgin, rising from her seat, went and decently rested herself against a pillar she found there. St. Joseph, in the meantime,

sat, pensive and sorrowful, perhaps because he could not prepare the necessary accommodations for her. But at length he arose and taking what he could find in the manger, he diligently spread it at our Lady's feet, and then modestly retired to another part. Then, the Eternal Son of God, coming forth from His Mother's womb, was without hurt or pain to her, transferred in an instant, from thence to the humble bed of hay, that was prepared for Him at her feet. His Holy Mother hastily stooping down, took Him up in her arms, and tenderly embracing Him, laid Him in her lap. Through instinct of the Holy Ghost, she began to wash and bathe Him with her sacred milk, with which she was most amply supplied from Heaven; this done, she took the veil of her head, and wrapping Him in it, carefully reposed Him in the Manger. Here the Ox and the Ass, kneeling down, and laying their heads over the Manger, gently breathed upon Him, as if endowed with reason. They were sensible, that through the inclemency of the season, and His poor attire, the Blessed Infant stood in need of their assistance to warm and cherish Him. Then the Holy Virgin, throwing herself on her knees, adored Him, and rendering thanks to God, said: "My Lord and Heavenly Father, I return thee most cordial thanks, that thou vouchsafest thy bounty to give me thy only son; and I praise and worship thee, O Eternal God, together with thee, O Son of the Living God, and mine.

"St. Joseph likewise paid Him adoration at the same time; after which he stripped the ass of his saddle, and separating the pillow from it, he placed it near the manger for the Blessed Virgin to sit on, but she, seating herself with her face towards the Crib, made use of that homely cushion only to lean on. In this posture the Queen of Heaven remained some time immovable, keeping her eyes and affections steadily fixed on her Beloved Son.

THE STABLE OF BETHLEHEM.

Written for the San Francisco Monitor.

BY KLEANOR DONNELLY.

There is no ante-chamber in this royal palace, There are no waiting rooms of haughty state— No chamberlain austere, no courtiers puff'd with malice, To shunt us out from where the King doth wait— The newborn King, unseparated and uncrowd'd, In swaddling-bands of lowly linen bound.

Open and wide to all, are these old palace-porches— The very beasts have found their way therein. Amid the thronging Angels, would you seek for mortals? Behold, the Virgin without stain of sin; And Joseph, her chaste spouse!—Thrice blessed pair! They kneel before the Babe in wordless prayer!

The sweetest, fairest Babe e'er seen! Thro' ruined rafters, The happy stars shine in upon His stall; The keen wind blowing from the fields and mountain-pastures, Deepens the rose-tint in His visage small; And bids His hands on Mary's bosom glow! Like soft, pink blossoms on a drift of snow!

Kneel and adore Him! Bring your hearts, like stainless lies, To cast before His darling, dimpled feet; Soon shall the shepherds from the dusty hills and valleys, In simple faith around His manger meet; And stately Kings, on wondrous quest intent, Shall bring their gifts from out the Orient.

O Love, so free so royal, yet so condescending— So unpretentious in your majesty! As your beginning, even so shall be your ending Upon the open heights of Calvary! A fountain, free to all beneath God's heaven, Wherewith all sinners may be cleansed and shriven!

Here is the well-spring of these sparkling, saving waters— Here, in the heart of Mary's Blessed Boy! From out the Saviour's fountains, O earth's sons and daughters, Ye shall draw grace with exceeding joy! And with the Christmas Angels' rapturous, sing: GLORY AND HOMAGE TO THE NEW-BORN KING!

Christmas Proverbs and Predictions.

A green Christmas makes a full graveyard. A white Christmas, a lean graveyard. Other sayings connect Christmas with Easter: A green Christmas indicates a white Easter. A warm Christmas, a cold Easter. Easter in snow, Christmas, in mud. Christmas in snow, Easter in mud. Its influence on the crops during the ensuing year is set forth in other proverbs: If windy on Christmas day, trees will bring forth much fruit. If it snows on Christmas night, we expect a good hop crop next year. Christmas wet gives empty granary and barrel.

"If on Christmas night," says a German proverb, "the wine ferment heavily in the barrels, a good wine year is to follow."

Somewhat uncertain is the prediction that follows: If at Christmas ice hangs on the willow, clover may be out at Easter. The proverb that follows is somewhat obscure: If Christmas finds a bridge, he'll break it; if he finds none, he'll make one. Nor is this one very clearly expressed: Wet causes more damage than frost before that after Christmas.

An English proverb tells us: If ice will bear a man before Christmas it will not bear a mouse afterwards.

A German saying declares that: The shepherd would rather see his wife enter the stable on Christmas day than the sun.—Exchange.

A Policeman's Terrible Death.

WINDSOR, Ont., December 19.—Policeman G. W. Hunt met a sudden and horrible death to-day at Walkerville. He was crossing the Grand Trunk tracks opposite the watch house, near Walker's store, as two freight trains approached from opposite directions. In endeavoring to dodge the train going west, the east-bound train struck him, knocking him down and ground his head into a horrible mess. The unfortunate man was formerly a member of the Windsor fire department. He moved to Walkerville a short time ago and became a member of the police force.

A MINER'S CHRISTMAS.

How the Yule Tide is Celebrated Up in the Rockies.

"Stag" Dances—In the Lonely Cabins Where Two "Fards" Are Shut in for Months by the Snow—Flowers from Loving Letters—"Home Sweet Home."

Imagine a point in midair about two miles above New York city, and you have the elevation at which over 1,000 miners in Colorado spend the holiday season. They are shut in by snow and ice, and for months to come they will know as little about what is going on in the busy world as though they were sailors on some vessel frozen up for the winter amid the icebergs of the Arctic regions. Early in the fall, before the snow flies, they are housed in on some of the lofty peaks of the Rocky mountains, and not until May or June will they again mingle with their fellow men.

It is often the case that some one of the boys is a good fiddler, and Christmas night he will roll the bow, tune up the old fiddle, and with alternate "pards" for girls the boys will dance and make merry.

But there are those who are not so fortunate as the miners who are shut up in the big mine for the winter. There are the lonely cabins, far up on the mountain side, many miles distant from human habitation. Here three or four men are snowbound together for the winter. Often there are just two "pards," and "pard" in the mining camps means almost the same as "comrade" does in the army. Their Christmas meal is a frugal one, and with eager longing their hearts will reach out from that deep gorge or lofty peak to eastern homes, and wonder what the loved ones to the boys out west. One found a rosebud, another a violet, another a daisy, and then another rose was found in a mother's letter. Withered and faded were those tokens from the old homes, but never did men value flowers more than we did that withered bouquet.

A CHARGE REFUTED.

Speedy Backdown by Mr. Meredith.

TORONTO, Dec. 19.—The following open letters explain themselves:

THE PALACE, KINGSTON, Dec. 18th, 1889. To W. R. Meredith, Esq., Q.C., M.P.P.: DEAR SIR,—The public journals of this province report you as having made the following reference in your speech on Monday night in the Grand Opera House in London:

I take from a newspaper published in the city of Kingston, addressed, it is true, to the readers of the paper, but arising out of matters that engage the attention of the province; the words are used by a newspaper, but to some extent, I apprehend, by the gentleman who presides over the Arch-Episcopal See at Kingston: "Holding, as we do, the balance of power between the two factions, we are, if only true to ourselves and to the crisis about to come upon us, independent of either, and can dictate the terms upon which one or other shall receive 'our support.'"

May I take the liberty of requesting you to inform me and my fellow-citizens of Ontario by what authority you publicly attribute to me the authorship of the foregoing extract from a Kingston newspaper, which you were pleased to interpret to your auditors as revealing "A great danger to the State," "One of the dangers of modern civilization," "One of the greatest evils we have to contend with in parliamentary government," and "against which both parties should cry unite, unite against a common enemy."

I have the honour to be, dear Sir, yours very respectfully, JAMES VINCENT O'LEARY, Archbishop-elect of Kingston.

TORONTO, Dec. 19th, 1889.

My Lord Archbishop:

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of yesterday containing a quotation from the *Empire's* report of my recent address to my constituents at London, and requesting me to inform you and your fellow-citizens of Ontario by what authority I "publicly attribute to you the authorship of the extract from a Kingston newspaper," which I read to my audience.

Taking the report as it stands, I do not think it open to the construction you seem to place on it, or fairly read to do more than indicate the speaker's opinion that the newspaper in question from its position and surroundings might not unreasonably be taken to express your sentiments upon the matter in hand, and that certainly was the full extent to which I intended to go, and, as I believe, my words went.

A public man cannot safely, as you know, be held responsible for the verbal accuracy of every line of an extended report of his utterances, however correct, in the main that report may be. Limited as I have pointed out the inference was not, I thought, an unfair one. The newspaper in question is by many understood to be in your confidence at least, and one would hardly have thought that so important a statement would have appeared in it without your approval, or if it had appeared without that approval, would have been permitted to remain before the public without at least some effort on your part to modify it not to withdraw it.

I am very much gratified to find from your letter to me that you do not approve of the sentiments expressed by the writer of the paragraph in question, (for that I take to be your view, else the inquiry you make of me would be an idle one) and I am pleased to find and shall have great pleasure in justice to you as well as in furtherance of the principles for which I am contending, in publicly stating in my future addresses that I have the weight of your great authority with and against me, on the important question which forms the subject of this correspondence.

I have the honour to be, Your Grace's obedient servant, W. R. MEREDITH. The Most Revd. the Archbishop (elect) of Kingston, Kingston, Ont.

PAX.

A happy Christmas tide to every one, A though from the festal board some guests are gone.

And yet, not gone, for to each vacant place There cometh one who hath an angel's face. And there is left a store of life and love, Links which unite us here to those above.

Happy Christmas-tide, and let the poor Turn with a thankful heart from every door. If in our hearts there's strife with kin or friend, For Jesus' sake let the contention end. So, ere the year is hidden 'neath its pall, Thank we the Lord, to be at peace with all.

It is from our own hearts, and not from an outward source, that we draw the lines which color the web of our existence. He is not worthy the name of a poet who would not rather be read a hundred times by one reader than once by a hundred. There are two difficulties in life; men are supposed to spend more than they can afford, and to indulge more than they can endure.

GUILTY, BUT NOT GUILTY.

McDonald, the St. John Poisoner, will spend the Rest of His Days in an Asylum.

St. JOHN, N. B., December 22.—The MacRae murder trial is over and William J. McDonald will spend the remainder of his life in a lunatic asylum. Mr. Weldon's speech in the prisoner's behalf Friday night occupied five hours and was a very powerful argument. But the case against the prisoner proved too strong. Solicitor-General Pugsley's address yesterday morning swept away every vestige of plausible defence and the Judge's charge, while impartial, told heavily against McDonald. Both the counsel for the Crown and the defence touched upon the question of insanity, and Judge King pointed out the law relating to it. The jury went out a little over five hours, and returned a verdict that the prisoner was not guilty of the crime charged, but expressly stating the case not guilty because insane, which being later proved, means that he did the deed but was not responsible. Judge King expressed a full concurrence in the verdict, and the prisoner was remanded to await commitment to an asylum. McDonald manifested no emotion. He slept well last night, ate heartily and talked about the case with the utmost coolness. He will probably be confined in the provincial lunatic asylum, which is located here.

KNEELING AROUND THE CRIB.

The Mission of the Infant Jesus is to Save us From Our Sins.

We are young again, and our thoughts are of the Infant Jesus. We draw a picture in our minds—it is of a lonely little stable and the beasts and their food, and Jesus and Mary and Joseph are in it. It is a sheltering name, but for years cold winters, as now, have blown through it. Perhaps, for seasons, it was thought of only for the time when the first Christmas came, and to-night there is no place on earth that has so much joy in it. A father and a mother and a Babe are there, but the infant is the God of all creation. Before Him, in heaven, the mighty angels tremble in awe, but here on earth who needs the cry of the shivering Babe? He is a King born for the redemption of His people, but they have forgotten the time of His coming. They should know of it, they have of it and been told of it, but because of the world, they will not think of it.

We have, like the children about us thought, yes so often, thoughts all this over. We have wished so often that we could have smiled on the Infant in the manger. So often have we said: "Ah! I would have knelt there with Mary and Joseph, and my thoughts would have been of God and His mother."

We gazed at the crib and the little image in it. We let our eyes wander from one figure to another, but our heart was with the Infant, Mary, and Joseph.

Everything that was there, yet ever so humble, did but teach us a lesson. We looked and loved and looked to love and did not tire, and we sighed, yes, but it was when we left it.

The crib and its sweet little figures are a help to us. We would be lost on Christmas day without them. They seem to history of our life, and our joys and our tears are numbered by them.

As we grow older, the first lessons we learned of the crib grow sweeter. We know so much the better the love of our parents who taught us. The questions we asked and the answers that were given are among the dearest memories we have with us. We live with them over and over again with each Christmas God gives to us. Old! sure these old-told stories are always of our youth, but the children grow old who forget them. We smile and grow happy with the children about us. If a sigh come to us all this day, it is because we have so often forgotten the promises of our youth. But then we chasten the bear of sorrow with the prayer—"Infant Jesus, have mercy."

We think of the shepherds, and the angels from heaven, and we call them to our aid when we hear the *Venite Adoremus*.

When we were young we thought, "What is Christmas in heaven?" and the older we grow the more our hope for it makes us fear to lose it.

We think blessed are the babes who died in their innocence and we almost envy them. But God did not will us to die in our youth, hence vain regrets are not in our minds. He knew how we would fail, yet He loved to let us live and the why is with Him. It is not our duty to pine, we must be up and doing. We do not work alone, God works with us. But my life has been ever evil, and how will I set it right? Just think of the joy that is in heaven when one dies in penance. Remember that David sang: "My iniquities and sins are always before me. A contrite and humble heart O God! Thou wilt not despise."

It is a time of the year for us to think over life. What if the thoughts frighten us? then let it be for the future debt us from transgression, and let our contrition be deep.

No matter what we have done, what we have been, we are still children of God and He loves us with the eye of His mercy. If we have wandered into the desert of life, let the Wise Man bring us home to say: "We have come to adore Him." We have nothing to fear from Jesus, Mary and Joseph.

What if Mary and Joseph? we are the cause of the cries of the Infant. The tears of our contrition will but relieve the sorrow of their hearts.

When we kneel to plead at the crib for mercy and strength, Mary and Joseph will plead with us.

And what of the angels! for on this night they brought glad tidings of joy to men of good will. And we, poor we, we will good, but we do evil. But, even we, may and will be changed. Sure our prayers and our tears for the evil we have done will make the Infant Jesus say through the months of His priests: "Thy sins are forgiven thee."—S.S.M. in Catholic Columbian.

Thomas A. Edison's latest achievement has been the invention of a light by which pictures may be seen at night with nearly all the advantages of daylight. It is so used to illuminate "The Angelus" at the Barys exhibition.

German chemists have discovered in the cocoon a fatty substitute for butter, and it is being produced in large quantities at Mannheim. One factory turns out 6,000 pounds per day, worth fifteen cents a pound.