

Sacred Heart Review. THE TRUTH ABOUT THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

BY A PROTESTANT THEOLOGIAN. CCLXXX.

The Advance makes it the second leading point of the Roman Catholic system, on account of which it thinks we ought not to be interested in a Pope, that he has a right to decide everywhere in the Church what shall be taught and what shall not.

It seems to me that the editor, for his own purposes, might have done better to take the opposite task, and contented that we ought not to be much interested in the Papacy on account of the sharp limitations of his power in the Church, especially over her teaching.

By a formal Brief Pius IX. has approved the statement, that the Pope's teaching power is limited by the Scriptures, by original Tradition, by the Catholic Creeds, by the unanimous consent of the Fathers, wherever this is found, by the unanimous consent of the Episcopate that a certain point is divinely revealed, and by every dogmatical decision of former Popes and oecumenical councils. Certainly all these accumulated limitations do not seem to leave a very dangerous option to the Pope over what may be taught and what not.

It is true, we Protestants maintain that the Church, especially the Pope, has defined some doctrines which we do not find in original Tradition. For instance, it is said (I know nothing about it at first hand) that the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin did not appear in the Church until the eighth century, although it is allowed that Mohammed taught it early in the seventh.

Whatever anyone may think of this, it is certain that the definition of 1854 did not come out of the Pope's own head. No definition was ever less arbitrarily independent of the course of doctrinal development. By a series of disciplinary enactments, the liberty of publicly opposing this opinion had been more and more restrained, until, as I understood, long before 1854 no one was allowed to teach against it except the Dominicans, and they only in scholastic disputations, not from the pulpit.

Therefore the action of Pius IX. in 1854, which moreover was sustained by several hundred bishops present, simply brought to a definite conclusion a matter that had practically been the belief of the Church for many generations, not to say centuries. Nobody, surely, imagines that it was morally competent for Pius IX. to have given an opposite decision, and to have made it a matter of conscience for Catholic pastors throughout the Church to declare from their pulpits that the Blessed Virgin was not immaculately conceived. This would be equal to Dr. Littledale's exquisite absurdity, that since 1870 the Roman Catholic Church never knows, from day to day, what singular crocheted article of faith he has taken at that time to have taken a fancy to it. As if corporate opinion, in a body that has any history, and any historical sense, ever was, or ever could be, dealt with in such a fashion! The strongest contentions of the Old Catholics against Papal Infallibility do not approach such an absurdity. As if, moreover, the abstract possibility—no, the practical probability—was not allowed for in the Canon Law, that a Pope might become a public heretic, and as if provision had not been made, in such a lamentable and extraordinary case, for setting him aside! Besides, how is it conceivable that a sane human mind—and Dr. Dollinger says there has never been any other in the Roman chair—once made the organ of faith, could possibly set itself officially against the traditions of so ancient and vast a body, and one permeated by such a strength of spiritual forces as the Roman Catholic Church?

We may imagine, indeed, a singular case of abdication from interior dissent, but such action as should involve the necessity of declaring the Holy Chair vacant is something over which it is safe to say that Catholic Bishops and priests and laymen are not accustomed to lose a moment's rest.

And austere morality of this admirable Pope, and well agrees with the judgment of Herzog-Plitt, and few more nearly ideal characters have ever sat in the chair of Peter. Yet so little does the Protestant world in general know of this decree, that it has been possible, without fear of exposure, for Lansing to present the twenty-sixth proposition, commending false oaths as innocent if covered with some slight reservations, as being the doctrine of Innocent XI. himself! Here is solemn condemnation openly turned into solemn commendation! Here is not a perversion, but an absolute inversion of the words of a holy man. Setting aside serious and candid controversy on both sides, in the higher ranks of scholarship, and coming down to the innumerable columns to which the naive and voluntary ignorance of average Protestantism subjects the Roman Church, we may fairly surmise that here we have the crown and climax of such calumny.

Yet such Protestant papers as the Advance, in their singular position that we ought not to be interested in the Popes because their power over human belief is so great, have never, I may safely venture to say, once been conscious of their obligation to put down this race of evil slanderers. Do they wish to know enough of papal teaching to be able to put them down? Many of them, doubtless, do not, but I do not think so ill of the Advance. Its curiously combined exaggeration of the papal power to teach and assumption of lofty indifference to an eminent teacher does not come of any wish to give an advantage to destructive slander merely, but from pharisaical contempt of a great Italian who was not so happy as to rejoice in the beneficent illumination of American Congregationalism.

Is this astounding falsehood devised out of Lansing's own brain? I hardly think so. There is not enough of his shallow nature to be capable of so bold a venture of utter wickedness. He has doubtless picked up the lie from somebody worse than himself, taking good care, in his evil delight, to evade a call for verification. And then he may boast that a very much greater man than himself, the eminent Lutheran divine, Chemnitz, at the time of the Council of Trent, circulated among his brethren a list of abominable Anabaptist opinions, which Cardinal Hosius had cited at the Council, as a specimen of the teachings of a Cardinal-Legate!

Really I think, for the clearing of our own skirts, that papal history is worth considerable attention, even from this Congregational Chief Rabbi of Chicago.

CHARLES C. STARBUCK. Andover, Mass.

THE ANGELIC SALUTATION.

Having briefly reviewed the various petitions of the Our Father we next come to the consideration of that other most excellent prayer, the angelic salutation, or as it is most familiarly called, the Hail Mary. From these opening words the prayer derives its name.

They are a part of the salutation addressed to her the angel Gabriel to the Blessed Virgin Mary when announcing to her the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ. By its recital we express our joy over this momentous event to mankind which pleads that the Mother of God might intercede with her Divine Son for us poor sinners.

As will be recalled, the prayer is made up of three parts. The first is, as we have said, the salutation of the angel Gabriel when announcing to the Blessed Virgin the mystery of the incarnation. This is announcing that she was to become the mother of Jesus Christ, the Second Person of the Most Blessed Trinity. These words were, "Hail Mary, full of grace, our Lord is with thee." The second part is that which St. Elizabeth, inspired by the Holy Spirit, addressed to the Blessed Virgin when the latter visited her, namely, "Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb."

The third part, "Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death," is the work of the Church. Nestorius and his followers have denied that the Blessed Virgin Mary was the Mother of God, the Church added this part in commendation of that denial.

FIVE-MINUTE SERMON. Fourth Sunday of Advent. CRITICISING OUR PASTORS.

"Therefore judge not before the time" (I. Cor. IV. 5.)

These words, my dear brethren, were addressed to those who judged and criticised God's ministers. We need them at this day as much if not more than those to whom they were written. It would have been better for many to have kept them in mind at all times. By them we are prohibited from judging and criticising God's ministers.

Why are we prohibited? Because by doing so we offend God, we impede the work of God in our part of the Church, we injure seriously our own souls. How do we offend God when we judge and criticise His ministers? By judging with God's business. Those in authority over us, our rectors and priests, are what they are and where they are by God's appointment. Therefore, to judge and criticise them is to put ourselves in God's place, to assume to ourselves God's authority. God alone and those appointed by Him to judge them are the only persons on earth who have a right to judge the ministers of God. To these alone are they responsible. We offend God, therefore, and frequently lead Him gravely, when we judge His ministers, and thereby practically question the wisdom and providence of God in calling them to their several stations.

How do we impede the work of God in our part of the Church? If the members of our part of the Church do not think, act, and speak alike, they cannot be of one mind, as St. Paul tells us, together in harmony and in peace. If we do not work together in our own parish, the work of God that we have to do by all working together not only cannot advance, but will, through our own fault, cease entirely or drag on but very slowly.

How does the judging and criticising of God's ministers injure our own souls? It makes us discontented, low-spirited, indifferent, unwilling, and finally rebellious. We are commanded by God to do His work in this parish, to do it faithfully and well. If we get into such a state of mind we will not do this, and God's work cannot go on. He who continues in this state of mind separates himself from the unity of the faith, which every one must preserve or lose his soul. We become a scandal to our neighbors, many of whom we make like to ourselves by means of our bad example.

What must we do, therefore, my dear brethren, to keep from offending God in this manner—from impeding His work in our parish, and to keep our souls from so sad a fate? This we must do. Be of one mind with those in authority over us. Stop judging and criticising them. Let our motive be to please God in all we do. God's work in this parish is all arranged for us, those He desires to do it are already appointed for that very purpose. All we have to do is to sustain, encourage, and push that work in the way God wills, evidently, it shall be carried on. There is but one way it can go on. If we push it on in that way success is certain. If we oppose all will fall through our fault. We who encourage and advance God's work in his parish as laid out for him, make a record in this world for himself, and upon the books of God, to be opened on the day of judgment, a record eternal in heaven. He who opposes finds out the work of God here a success, but he that has had no part in it, has nothing to show for himself to God or man. He is left out in the cold through his own fault.

Finally, remove from you the religious tramps who neglect their own business to attend to, criticise, and judge God's ministers and God's affairs. We must regard even the little we can do for God as a great privilege and inestimable. Let us thank God that we are permitted to have a part in what is His glory that we are permitted to serve Him all the time. Therefore judge not before the time. Leave judging and criticising to God, who reserves all judgment to Himself, particularly the judging of His ministers.

IMITATION OF CHRIST. THAT HE WHO LOVETH GOD RELISH HIM ABOVE ALL THINGS AND IN ALL THINGS.

Behold, my God and my All! What would I have more, and what greater happiness can I desire? O savoury and sweet world! but to him who loveth the Word, not the world nor the things that are in the world. My God and my All! If I could be said to him, who understandeth; and it is delightful to him, who loveth to yield often.

For, when Thou art present, all things yield delight; but, when Thou art absent, all things are loathsome. Thou givest tranquillity to the heart, and great peace and pleasant joy. Thou makest us think well of all, and praise Thee in all things; not can anything without Thee afford any lasting pleasure; Thy grace must be present, and it must be seasoned with the seasoning of Thy wisdom.

If you would advance in true holiness, you must aim steadily at perfection in little things.—Abbe Guilloire.



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THE FOUNT OF LIVING WATERS.

How oft the weary traveler, parched and fevered, seeks a spring at which he may quench his burning thirst, but none is found. He wanders on, and overcome by repeated disappointments, he falls at last under his burden and lays him down to die.

How oft the serious, earnest high-minded man seeks the noble generous-hearted ideal that he fain would have as the companion of his travels through life and the philosopher and friend to whom he might submit all his plans and by whose judgment all his efforts would be directed, but vain is his search. These are the aspirations of the soul, and God alone can satisfy them. Life's journey is wearisome and true friendship rare. "Life is a warfare and men are troublesome consoling," says Job and experience proves the truth of both assertions.

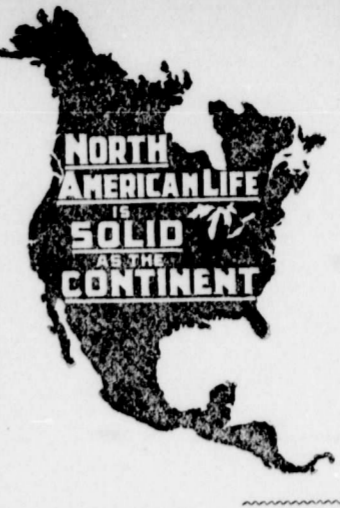
How unwise, not to say ungrateful, to turn a deaf ear to our Lord's loving invitation. He knows that we must be only wretched and miserable without the refreshment He can give us through grace; that we must only faint and die on the wayside unless aided and sustained by Him. He knows that we must be lonely and lost, and go astray and be destroyed unless He be for us and Himself the companion of our exile in the Blessed Sacrament, and He will bless, comfort and console us as often as we go to Him there. "Come to me all ye that labor and are heavy burdened, and I will refresh you." "Take my yoke on you, for my yoke is sweet and my burden light." "Take up your cross and come, follow me, and you will find rest in your souls."

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While it is profound leads us into temptation lead us into all temptation we lead ourselves. Fully makes a choice actions that are honest of himself or the places himself at the mercy of evil. Compromises is no possible security way of God's guidance.

More people fall than from lack of money. A man may or brilliant and yet be a complete failure. A man or woman education, but not out capital, but not

Show a helpful body, and a willing hand. Everyone woman who is always magnanimous soul is always popular. Learn to say others, but never to see the man made, not the unfortunate heredity have made. Do not remember manifest a forebearance. Be cheerful, wanted everyone open to him; fact the consideration others. Never a tion. To listen to as to talk with.

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