

exemplified." Oh! if we could only learn to put this calm and tranquil trust in God, how very happy many lives would become that are now marred with fretfulness, discontent and care. May we not, brothers and sisters, ponder over Canon Gore's words. Business cares are so exacting and overpowering, professional labours are so full of responsibility and often so little appreciated; a mother's toil never ceases and her household anxieties are ever pressing. Shall we not stop and think, and lovingly accept this gracious gift of freedom. Our great Master bids us, the Lord whom we worship commands, "Be not, therefore, anxious for the morrow, for the morrow shall be anxious for itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."

#### THE FAITH.

Prof. Mozley tells us, "A cloudy unsteadiness in regard to faith is one of the surest ways to let in the devil. It is the Person, the Divine Person of Jesus Christ, which renders the faith supreme and unalterable. He is the object and centre of belief. It is not surprising that the Church's voice maintains its utterance, a voice in which there is no break, a voice in which there is nothing indistinct, a voice whose accents all men, the simple, the unlearned, can hear and understand." He speaks in graphic manner of the Nicene Fathers, who opposed the Arian heresy which denied the divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, and who gave us the Nicene Creed. "Their argument on every occasion of heresy arising was one and the same thing, viz., that they had received a certain doctrine from the first, and that this heresy was contrary to it. They said, 'This is the old doctrine we have, the old doctrine which the Apostles delivered, which has been the doctrine of the Church ever since, which we have received from our predecessors, as they received it from theirs, and which we now maintain as we received it.' The same, the very same, they repeated. They professed to hold it because it was the same and for that reason only. They would not receive or listen to any other for the simple reason that the other was not the same. They shut their ears in horror, the very sound of novelty shocked them, they seemed polluted by the very contact of their ears with it. Who ever heard of such things? was the universal cry of the orthodox on Arianism appearing." Such was the spirit of the ancient teachers of the Church, and we who inherit the enduring work of such men after fifteen hundred years have passed away, need not fear that our labour and sufferings to maintain their doctrine and hand it on to future generations, are likely to be in vain, or fail in gaining the blessing and the help of God.

#### LEAVING HOME.

"Not many days after, the younger son gathered all together and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance in riotous living."—St. Luke xv. 13.

The first downward step in the prodigal's progress is taken when he grows tired of his father's house and his father's words. It is the same in the case of the disobedient child of an earthly father or the sinner against our Father in Heaven. In the one case the son is tired of home and impatient of home restraint. In the other, the sinner wants his own way instead of God's way, and so the Church and its holy teachings are no more for him. They tell us that in crossing the great Sea of Ice, which forms the largest and most dangerous glacier in Switzerland, the traveller comes to a place called the "*Mauvais Pas*"—

the dangerous step. It is a narrow way, scarcely a foot in width, running along the side of the mountain. Above it is a wall of rock, below it, at a depth of some hundred feet, lies the glacier, a frozen sea, with its sharp points of ice and rock. If the traveller slips on that narrow path, he is dashed below on the cruel Sea of Ice and killed. Yet no one need fall there. The guides have fixed a strong rope along the mountain-side, and as long as the traveller holds on firmly to that rope he cannot fall. As we journey on through life there is for every one of us a *Mauvais Pas*—a dangerous bit of road. Frequently we come to it in youth, when the fire of manhood springs up within us and "the fever called living" waxes strong. The young man or woman entering life, quitting the restraints of school or home, comes to this dangerous road. The boy exchanging a quiet, godly home for a great public school; the young man passing from the homely village life to the rush, and roar, and temptation of a great city; the girl going from a mother's care and counsel to a place of business and the companionship of other girls—each has his *Mauvais Pas*, his bit of dangerous travelling. If he falls, it means the injury, perhaps the ruin, of his soul. The fall on the Sea of Ice—the frozen glacier—would be certain death. The fall from right to wrong, from purity to sin, always kills something good in us. No man or woman is the same after sinning as before. The man who slips off the path when he comes to the dangerous road of temptation, will certainly knock some of the manhood out of him. He may repent and be cured of his sin, but he carries a scar upon him through life. God does not forget, and the sinner cannot forget. Do you suppose that Esau in the after years ever forgot how he sold his birthright? Do you think that David in his last hours did not remember the sin which had spoiled his life? When we fall into sin, though true repentance and God's mercy may restore us, we have lost what nothing can give back; we have bruised "the white flower of a blameless life"; we have soiled the pure robe; we have lost the bloom of innocency. I said that along that dangerous path in Switzerland there was a strong rope fixed, and that those who held fast to it were safe. We have a like protection along the hard, perilous path of temptation. The love of God, as shown to us in our holy religion, is our safeguard. As long as we hold fast to that we cannot fall. The man who loves God, who clings to Him by prayer, by the sacraments and ordinances of the Church, by the reading of His Word, will pass safely over the dangerous path. Let him hold fast to the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, and he shall go on uninjured, like the traveller grasping the protecting rope. Let the young man, sorely tempted to lose his purity, his virtue, to defile the body which Jesus died to redeem, hold fast to God's hand. If he quits his religion, he is letting go the only rope that can save him. If he but holds fast, if he but clings to prayer, if he holds on to his Bible, if he clasps his Saviour in the Sacrament of the Altar, his footsteps shall not slip, the voice of the tempter shall not prevail; God shall keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Him, and deliver him from his strongest enemy. O, young men and maidens, and you, my older brothers, when you come to the dangerous path and the way of temptation, hold fast to the rope, "hold fast that thou hast, that no man take thy crown." The prodigal son in the parable came to the dangerous path, but he let go the rope. He cut himself off from his father's

house and his father's counsel, and he fell. And now his great desire [was to get away from his father's presence. The once happy home—happy as long as it was innocent—was spoiled by the prodigal's sin. Everything seemed changed to him, just as things seem changed to the diseased fancy of a sick man. His father's smile, his mother's gentle voice, "the old familiar faces," the scenes of home, were no longer what they had been. As Eden seemed a different place to Adam after he had sinned and lost his innocency, so the home of the prodigal was no longer the same as it had been to the innocent boy. All the music of his life was "out of tune and harsh." Many a prodigal has echoed the poet's words:

"No skies so blue or so serene  
As then; no leaves looked half so green  
As clothed the playground tree!  
All things I loved are altered so,  
Nor does it ease my heart to know  
The change resides in me!"

The sure beginning of the downward road is when a child loses love for home and parents; when he is ashamed to look his father in the face, or whisper his secrets in his mother's ear. The same sin which draws him away from his earthly home leads him away from God and God's House. The old, old words of the Bible, the unchanging promises of the Gospel, lose their meaning for the prodigal; the music of chant and psalm lose their melody; the voice of the church-going bell no longer sounds like the message of a friend; selfishness, the root of all sin, has changed him and spoiled his taste for all that is pure and holy. And now the prodigal desires to get as far as possible from his father; the sinner longs to hide himself from God. He determines to go away from the sights and sounds of home; "he gathers all together, and takes his journey into a far country." Over and over again we see this in the case of the wilful sinner. He shrinks from the doors of the church; he hides away his Bible, or pretends to sneer at it; he forsakes his prayers; he looks on God's minister as his enemy. He is trying to get into the far country away from God. Notice that the father of the prodigal did not force his son to remain at home. God, our Heavenly Father, does not compel us to do right. He has given us a free will. We can sin if we desire it. If we love darkness better than light, we can abide in the darkness. God will not keep us in His family if we deliberately choose to stay outside. We can go into the far country if we prefer it to home. The lost sheep in the parable was lost through weakness or want of sense. The piece of silver was lost by accident, but the prodigal son was lost by his own deliberate act. God raises no miraculous barrier to stop those who sin of malicious wickedness. The prodigal goes into a far country, that is to say, a life of sin, where God is not in all his thoughts. The son who has left home with his father's blessing, and is seeking his fortune in the colonies, or on the sea, or in some great city, and who carries the love of his parents with him, is at home in heart, though parted by many a weary mile from those he loves. So the man who loves God, and is dwelling in some vast wilderness, far from the sound of church bells, is still at home. He can look up to God's sky above him and know that wherever he is, his Father's loving eye is upon him. There, in that lonely land, he can draw near to God in prayer, he can read the story of his Saviour's love, and so he is not alone, for his Father is with him. Not so with the prodigal. He may live beneath the shadow of cathedra towers, within sight of home, and yet, if love be