

GOETHE ON THE SEVEN SACRAMENTS

In moral and religious, as well as in physical and civil matters, man does not like to do anything on the spur of the moment; he needs a sequence from which results habit; what he is to love and to perform he can not represent to himself as single or isolated; and, if he is to repeat anything willingly, it must not have become strange to him. If the Protestant worship lacks fullness in general, so let it be investigated in detail, and it will be found that the Protestant has too few sacraments—nay, indeed, he has only one in which he is himself an actor—the Lord's Supper; for baptism he sees only when it is performed on others, and is not greatly edified by it. The sacraments are the highest part of religion, the symbols to our senses of an extraordinary divine favor and grace. In the Lord's Supper earthly lips are to receive a divine Being, embodied, and partake of a heavenly, under the form of an earthly nourishment. This import is the same in all kinds of Christian churches: whether the sacrament is taken with more or less submission to the mystery, with more or less accommodation as to that which is intelligible, it remains a great, holy thing, which in reality takes the place of the possible or the impossible, the place of that which man can neither attain nor do without. But such a sacrament should not stand alone; no Christian can partake of it with the true joy for which it is given, if the symbolical or sacramental sense is not fostered within him. He must be accustomed to regard the inner religion of the heart and that of the external church as perfectly one, as the great universal sacrament, which again divides itself into so many others, and communicates to these parts its holiness, indestructibility, and eternity.

Here a youthful pair join hands, not for a passing salutation or for the dance: the priest pronounces his blessing upon them, and the bond is indissoluble. It is not long before this wedded pair brings a likeness to the threshold of the altar; it is purified with holy water, and so incorporated into the Church, that it can not forfeit this benefit but through the most monstrous apostasy.

The child in the course of life goes on progressing in earthly things of his own accord, in heavenly things he must be instructed. Does it prove an examination, that this has been fully done, he is now received into the bosom of the Church as an actual citizen, as a true and voluntary professor, not without outward tokens of the weightiness of this act. Now, only, he is decidedly a Christian, now for the first time he knows his advantages and also his duties. But in the meantime a great deal that is strange has happened to him as a man; through instruction and affliction he has come to know how critical appears the state of his inner self, and there will constantly be a question of doctrines and of transgressions; but punishment shall no longer take place. For here, in the infinite confusion in which he must entangle himself, amid the conflict of natural and religious claims, an admirable expedient is given him, in confiding his deeds and misdeeds, his infirmities and doubts, to a worthy man, appointed expressly for that purpose, who knows how to listen, to warn, to strengthen him, to chastise him likewise by symbolical punishments, and at last, by a complete washing away of his guilt, to render him happy and to give him back, pure and cleansed, the tablet of his manhood. Thus prepared, and purely set at rest by several sacramental acts, which once again into minister sacramental traits, he kneels down to receive the Host; and, that the mystery of this high act may still be enhanced, he sees the chalice only in the distance: it is no common eating and drinking that satisfies, it is a heavenly feast, which makes him thirst after heavenly drink.

Yet let not the youth believe that this is all he has to do; let not even the man believe it. In earthly relations we are at last accustomed to depend on ourselves; and even there, knowledge, understanding, and character will not always suffice; in heavenly things, on the contrary, we have never finished learning. The feeling within us, which often finds itself not even truly a home, is, besides, oppressed by so much from without, that our own power hardly administers all that is necessary for counsel, consolation and help. But, to this end, that remedy is instituted for our whole life; and an intelligent pious man is continually waiting to show the right way to the wanderers and to relieve the distressed.

And what has been so well tried through the whole life, is now to show forth all its healing power with tenfold activity at the gate of death. According to a trustful custom, inculcated from youth, upwards, the dying man receives with fervor those symbolical, significant assurances; and there, where earthly warranty fails, he is assured, by a heavenly one of a blessed existence for all eternity. He feels perfectly convinced that neither a hostile element nor a malignant spirit can hinder him from clothing himself with a glorified body, so that, in immediate relation with the Godhead, he may partake of the boundless happiness which flows forth from Him.

Then, in conclusion, that the whole man may be made holy, the feet also are anointed and blessed. They are to feel, even in the event of possible

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recovery, a repugnance to touching this earthly, hard, impenetrable soil. A wonderful elasticity is to be imparted to them, by which they spurn from under them the clod of earth which hitherto attracted them. And so, through a brilliant cycle of equally holy acts, the beauty of which we have only briefly hinted at, the cradle and the grave, however far asunder they may chance to be, are joined in one continuous circle.

But all these spiritual wonders spring not, like other fruits from the natural soil, where they can neither be sown or planted nor cherished. We must supplicate for them from another region—a thing which can not be done by all persons nor at all times. Here we meet the highest of these symbols, derived from pious tradition. We are told that one man may be more favored, blessed, and sanctified from above than another. But, that this may not appear as a natural gift, this great boon, bound up with a heavy duty, must be communicated to others by one authorized person to another; and the greatest good that a man can attain, without his having to obtain it by his own wrestling or grasping must be preserved and perpetuated on earth by spiritual inheritance. In the very ordination of the priest is comprehended all that is necessary for the effectual solemnizing of these holy acts, by which the multitudes receive grace, without any other activity being needed on their part than that of faith and implicit confidence. And thus the priest joins the line of his predecessors and successors, in the circle of those anointed with him representing the highest source of blessings, so much the more gloriously, as it is not the priest, whom we reverence, but his office; it is not his nod to which we bow the knee, but the blessing which he imparts, and which seems the more holy, and to come more immediately from heaven, because the earthly instrument can not at all weaken or invalidate it by its own sinful, nay, wicked nature.

How is this truly spiritual connection shattered to pieces in Protestantism, by part of the above-mentioned symbols being declared apocryphal, and only a few canonical—and how, by their indifference to one of these, will they prepare us for the high dignity of the others?—The Caskest.

WHAT PRIESTS ARE GOOD FOR

A gentleman and a workman entered a travelling compartment together at the railway station at Bordeaux, France. They were the only occupants of the carriage. On the platform beneath a priest walked back and forth. Turning to his companion the gentleman said, with a wave of his hand in the priest's direction. "Will you tell me what such men are good for?" Then as the train fled into the expatiated at length on the good for nothing lives led by priests, to the disgust of his companion.

Some hours later, when they were crossing a lonely stretch of country, the workman's turn came. He turned to his now silent companion.

"I think I will strangle you and throw you out," he said. "But why?" said the astonished and somewhat frightened priest-bater. "What good would that do you? I have nothing that you could steal, so it would be of no possible advantage to you to kill me."

"Excuse me, but I happen to know that you drew 30,000 francs from your banker at Bordeaux and that you have the money now in your travelling bag."

The gentleman was terrified. "Oh you need not fear," laughed the workman. "I was brought up by priests. They taught me to fear God and do no injury to my neighbor. That six, is what priests are good for.—Intermountain Catholic.

restlessness of the sinner: "A congressman not long ago told an incident of a negro who had been indulging too much in liquor. He imagined he was pursued by a horrible spectre. He ran with the swift speed of the wind, thinking he had outstripped his pursuer, but just as he passed he heard a mocking voice over his shoulder. 'Ha, you ran pretty fast then.' There was a man behind him carrying his head on his hands! The hard drinker made off again, shouting: 'That is nothing to the way I am going to run now.' And so the sinner rushes on, trying to escape from himself, and never succeeding in his quest of happiness. He has lost the kingdom of God and he cannot find that kingdom except within himself.

"This is an age of commercialism—everybody chasing the almighty dollar. But if money may be made the means of happiness, if rightly used, it does not constitute it, and generally speaking it preserves its reputation of being the root of all evil. There is a spirit of restlessness abroad which does not make for happiness. One of the results of this unrest is seen in the horrible European war.

The unrest in the United States has been fittingly described by a Jesuit writer: "America has the largest scrap-heap of any nation. There is always some new kind of building which necessitates tearing down the old, some new kind of equipment which obliges a man to tear out the old, some new kind of transportation which means tearing up the old. Perhaps it is this spirit of restlessness which has gone into matrimony and has given America, that is, the United States of the same, the largest matrimonial scrap-heap of the world. Certainly it is that spirit which has filled the tingling nerves and brimming veins of modern men and promises to give America the record for the largest scrap-heap of discarded men. To get away from one's thoughts, a million swift desires are unloosed and jampeted and satisfied. Old thought, the snail, is indeed a slow traveler. He may crawl after the swift vehicle of desire, but he will finally overtake it and sit down face to face with the owner of the car as he sadly surveys its shattered fragments."

Let us not be like the man described by St. James, who when he had looked at himself in the glass immediately forgot what sort of countenance he had. It is very profitable for each one of us to put the searchlight upon his soul and examine what sort of man he is. If he find the Kingdom of God established there he may well rejoice, for he will not turn away or flee from himself, but rest contented with the peace which the world cannot give, nor take away.—Intermountain Catholic.

The virtues are never the stronger for giving them a vacation. An unalloyed contentment of mind cannot be bought by man, it is the golden gift of heaven. But it is within reach of all to soften himself to the rough shocks of life in this world. He may receive them courageously, sustain them patiently and by his prudence alleviate or turn them aside.

DIED

O'MEARA.—In Wallaceburg, Ont., on Nov. 6th, 1914, Michael O'Meara, May his soul rest in peace!

NEVILLE.—At his late residence 727 1/2 Richmond St., this city, on Tuesday, November 10, 1914, Mr. John Neville, aged seventy-two years. May his soul rest in peace!

DRAWING OF PRIZES

IN AID OF ST. PETER'S CHURCH GODERICH

The following gentlemen officiated at the drawing of prizes, which was held on November 6, in aid of St. Peter's Church, Goderich: Mr. Dalton, chairman; Mr. Conlithurst, secretary; Messrs. Dean and Bowler, scrutineers.

The Pastor, Rev. D. McRae, wishes to thank each and everyone who so kindly assisted him by their generous contributions.

Drawing 1 Series B, 11643, Wm. McIntosh, Park Hill.

Drawing 2 Series B, 11330, Betty Feltz, Goderich.

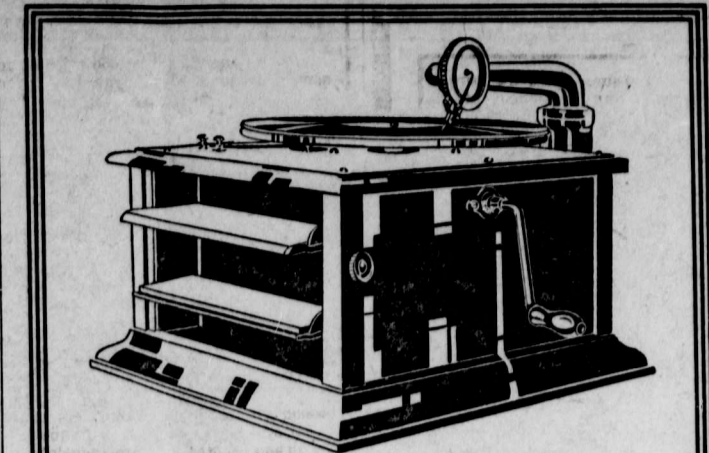
Drawing 3 Series A, 5766 D, Alexander, Goderich.

Drawing 4 Series A, 5323, Uglia, Wilton, 239 Kent St., Ottawa.

Drawing 5 Series A, 2527, W. McDonald, Chapeau, Que.

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