

dence, that of self, which Holy Writ calls deadly, inasmuch as it will only aid to do evil, and insidiously it is the secret spring of artifice and duplicity.

Supernatural prudence ought to be indeed practised, because it is, as it were, a spiritual salt which gives taste and savor to all other virtues, but it must be practised in such a manner, that the virtue of confidence, (I mean that which is simple and loving) may predominate, and make us abide in peace in the hands of our heavenly Father, quite secure.

What then is the prudence of the serpent? When the serpent is attacked, it exposes its whole body to save its head. So, in like manner ought we to act, exposing everything to danger when it is necessary, in order to preserve within us, unmolested, our Lord and His love; for He is our Head, and we are His members; and it is herein that prudence perfectly accords with simplicity. *Now, McMaster was never guided by human prudence.* He hated and detested it. He tried to act up to supernatural prudence, if he had at times the beak and the pluck of the eagle's talons.

"At the time of the Vatican Council," says Cardinal Manning, "there were some who thought that the Catholic doctrine of the infallibility of the Pope should not be defined, lest schismatics and heretics should be repelled yet further from the Church." But their reason was not good. It arose from human prudence. The reason that prevailed for the definition of the dogma in question was "that Catholics have a right to be taught by the Council what they are to believe in so weighty a matter, lest the pernicious error of the time should in the end infect simple minds and the masses of the people unawares. Hence it was that the Fathers of Lyons and of Trent deemed themselves bound to establish the doctrine of the truth, notwithstanding the offence that might be taken by schismatics and heretics. For if these seek the truth in sincerity, they will not be repelled, but, on the contrary, drawn towards us, when they see on what foundations chiefly repose the truths taught by the Catholic Church. But should any of them feel repelled by stating the truth, they are only such as seek a pretext for not joining the Catholic Church." (See Postulatum of Vat. Council.)

This decision of the Council was an act of supernatural prudence. McMaster acted according to this kind of prudence when, as we have already stated, he proved in the *Freeman's Journal* the opportuneness of the definition of the Infallibility of the Pope

in matters of faith and morals. He never worshipped the idols of human prudence--the idol of *popularity*, the idol of *novelty in doctrine*, the idol of *human respect*, the idol of the *mighty dollar*. With something of the fierceness and energy of a Moses, he beat them to pieces.

One day St. Francis de Sales exclaimed: "My God! but what does popularity mean after all? Why do so many people worship that idol? It is but a song, a shadow, an opinion, a smoke, a praise--the recollection whereof dies with its sound. It is an estimate often so false, that persons wonder at being praised for virtues whereof they know themselves to possess only the opposite vices, and being blamed for faults which they have not." There are many worshippers of this idol of *popularity*. They are those who, considering themselves learned and wise, and true, refined gentlemen, rely too much on their own opinion and judgment in religious matters. They guide themselves only by their lights, and for want of humility care not to rise higher than *human prudence*. Thus they are groveling all their life time in the likeness of their own ideas and sentiments--a littleness incredible in all that regards the great truths of our religion.

Such gentlemen are in the habit of always thinking first how a tenet, or a practice, or a fact is most presentable to the public. This habit soon and almost imperceptibly leads them to profaneness, and easily produces the spirit of liberalism and rationalism in matters of faith.

Their too delicate and fastidious taste has too much regard for the feelings of a certain class of people. We are aware that Christian charity demands of us to have due regard for the feelings of our neighbor. Charity, however, is not only not incompatible with truth, but it ever demands that the whole truth should be told well, especially when its concealment is a cause of error, or of perseverance in error and sin, in matters, too, of the greatest importance.

But McMaster, having never offered the smallest grain of incense to the idol of *popularity*, handled truth religiously and conscientiously, with simplicity, just in the way that God is pleased to give it to us through His Church. There is nothing in which he seemed to glory more than in delivering to his fellow-men the sacred truth