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HARMURA.

A PRELUDARY VISTA.

Upon an evening, many centuries ago, two aged priests of Brama sat conversing in the shadowy vestibule of one of those vast rock temples which a primal people in a long past epoch had shaped amid the mountains of Northern Hindostan...

The panorama which the eye commanded from that elevated position was one of vast and strange magnificence. To the south and west an immense brow plain extended, undulating in the dizzy haze, through which several, ramified like arteries of fire in the glow of sunset which now falling on the golden domes of some mighty city, potently thronged above their waters...

From the conversation of the Bramins, it appeared that one of them had just returned from a mission or pilgrimage to this city, which was renowned as the residence of the most powerful tribe of magicians in Hindostan.

'Yes, terrible and strange, oh Elman, are the events which have occurred in Murthra yonder, and he stretched his black bony arm toward the mountain range.'

'About a year since, as I learned, a stranger visited the city—a youth whose aspect and language, though he had become possessed of ours, testified that he belonged to a race inhabiting a country a vast distance away—a country of snow and gloom, in a northern ocean, near to the setting sun. This youth whose name was Harmura, was possessed of great intelligence, and though a prince in his own land, preferred to encounter danger and subject himself to want and suffering while travelling over the earth in search of knowledge.'

'How changed the prince has grown,' one exclaims. 'When he left Norway, five years ago, a youth more handsome and gay could hardly be seen; but from the glimpse I gained of him as he came through the court yonder, he seems to bear in his aspect a settled melancholy.'

'Paha!' said an elderly lady, 'he is wearied with his voyage; his gaiety will return when he has been awhile among us.'

love animated their beings, and that the Prince, already inspired with the deepest passion demanded the hand of Arava's beautiful daughter, whom he promised should one day become the queen of the western land, over which his father then held sovereignty.

'To conclude my narrative. Some days after the Prince had listened to the denials and threats of Arava, the latter was found dead in the garden. Before Ulupa heard the dread intelligence she received a visit from Harmura, who pleaded passionately, entreating her to fly with him to his own land; but while half consenting one of the ministers of the place entering informed her of the catastrophe which had befallen her father.'

The short autumn day has sunk leaden-bued and black over a dismal district of a northern land washed by the wild grey ocean. Inland from the bay, on whose stretching promontory a turret city rises, great plains extend eastward already to the whitened hills, from which the broad dim wind comes moaning, bearing with it, in drifts mingled with snow, the leaves of the beech and oak woods—whitening the deprecating boughs of the dark pines in the ravines and on the wastes, where the torrent foams coldly, and the rivers roll their torrents toward the shore, along whose black granite barriers of rock and fantastic cliffs the great waves mount with incessant crests of spray.

A still brighter object, however, is the palace of the King Haskeld, illuminated as it is tonight in honor of the arrival of his son, the Prince Harmura returned after an absence of many years of travel. Every casement in the great yellow pile flames with lamp and torch, casting a yellow glare far along the rocky promontory, in whose creeks the black vessels ride at anchor, and over the breezy sea where here and there a barge comes stemming from the dead yellow line of the distant sky.

Within the palace, meanwhile all the bustle and excitement; for the prince who has just arrived, is about to enter the royal chamber, where the aged monarch, restless, and anxious, awaits him. Near the entrance a number of the maids and ladies of the court, clustered in the lamp-lit hall, are conversing the event and gossiping in whispers together.

'Yes,' returned another, 'and the expression of his countenance is still darker than the color which foreign suns have burned upon it. Trust me, there is something awful and mysterious in his aspect.'

'Paha!' said an elderly lady, 'he is wearied with his voyage; his gaiety will return when he has been awhile among us.'

What a strange collection of things he has brought from the East,' said a lively girl; 'such curious instruments and manuscripts as they have been unpacking. I'm sure he has been studying sorcery. And did you remark that iron chest which he ordered to be carried to the east chamber. I think—but hush!'

All turned, as a distant door opened, and an indefinite feeling of awe passed through the fair group as the tall figure of Prince Harmura was seen approaching. As he advanced, and hurriedly passing, bowed to the fair bery—then disappeared beneath the curtain of the dais—they again fell to interchange remarks on his appearance, the pale darkness of his face, the great brow, the strange light of his eyes, his gloomy dress, the light of a flashing jewel, worn near his heart, which his departed robe displayed, and such like particulars—then fled away to their chambers to dress for the entertainment, at which the inmates of the court were to be present that night.

As the prince entered the royal chamber, the old monarch rose trembling, and the tears started from his hollow eyes, and trickled on his white beard, as clasping his son to his heart he sobbed forth in inarticulate accents the passionate joy which he felt in seeing him once more.

FOURTH LECTURE OF HIS LORDSHIP BISHOP LYNCH ON THE POPE'S ENCYCLICAL.

The subject of this evening's lecture which I will despatch as quickly as possible, will be on the right of the Church to possess property.

In the 26th proposition, 'the church has not the natural and legitimate right of acquisition and possession,' and again, in the 30th proposition says, 'the immunity of the church and ecclesiastical persons derives its origin from the law.' The ministers of the church should not possess temporal affairs.' That is not true. The church requires besides liberty to develop its action, a sphere to act upon—a track to run on. The church has a body to support. Her ministers are men, not angels. Her churches are built of materials; these require support. The growth of the church is steadily progressing where there is liberty, and every new development originates a new want, which must be supplied.

Whence all those wants be supplied? There must be a revenue, and that revenue must needs be at the disposal of the church, which must have dominion over it—must consequently possess it. The church cannot be compared to any other organic body, possessed of life and matter for life to act on. Nourishment is required to sustain matter connected with life, and thus our body has motion, and existence. To persons of common sense it appears absurd to take the trouble of proving that the church can possess and administer property, but in this great age of development and enlightenment and progress, we must prove that bodies exist, that water is wetting, that the snow appears white and that circles are round.

In treating of the various errors condemned by our Holy Father, we have used arguments taken principally from the Holy Bible and from reason. We shall continue to use the same weapons. We find that the ministers of God in the Old Testament were possessed of immense wealth, when they administered by the appointment of God Himself, for the Almighty gave to His church a perfect dispensation of goods and possessions. Why may not His Son Jesus Christ also give to the ministers of His church the right of possession and of administering property? To go back to the old dispensation; in the general corruption of the world God made choice of one man in whose family and nation was to be preserved the idea of a true God and the true model of worshipping that God. In Moses the kingly and sacerdotal authority were vested; but the kingly and sacerdotal function was to be divided, and by the command of Himself, Aaron was chosen as High Priest to perform the sacerdotal functions, and the tribe of Levi was associated to him in order to perform worthily and honorably the functions of the temple. When the Israelites entered the land of promise, the tribe of Levi had no part in the land. But were they left to the voluntary charity of their brethren? No. By the express command of the Almighty, whose dominion is supreme over earth and sea and all that they contain, the other tribes were made tributary to that tribe of Levi, and they were obliged to pay that tribe a tenth of all the possessions besides the first fruits of the earth. We read in the 25th chapter of the Book of Numbers that the Lord said to Moses, 'Command the children of Israel that they give to the Levites all of their possessions, cities to live in and their suburbs round about; that they may abide in towns and the suburbs may be for their cattle and beasts; and besides this, there shall be forty-two other cities, that is in all forty-eight, with their sub-

urbs; and those cities shall be given out of the possessions of the children of Israel. From them that have more, more shall be taken, and from them that have less, fewer, that each shall give towns to the Levites according to the extent of their inheritance; and again in Joshua, 21st chapter, we read when the princes of the families of Levi came to Alenza, the priest and Joshua, they spoke to them and said: 'The Lord commanded by the hand of Moses that cities should be given us to dwell and their suburbs to feed our cattle, and the children of Israel gave out of their possessions according to the command of the Lord, cities and their suburbs.'

The ancient church had need of property—of wealth—for the sustenance of His ministers and the solemnities of His worship, and their wants were supplied by the order of Almighty God.—Christ founded a Church. It requires material temples, and mortal men to minister in them.—He, too, by a divine law written in the hearts of the faithful, gave to it all necessary for the sustenance and maintenance of ministers, and the splendor of His Apostles to go and preach without. They had neither scrip nor staff, and when they returned from their sacred mission, He asked them did they want for anything; they said 'No.' The piety of the faithful had supplied all. But the college of the Apostles with Christ at their head, were not without some riches, for one was appointed to carry the purse. We read in the Gospel of St. John, 13th chapter, 29th verse, 'While Jesus was at table, He said that there was one that would betray Him. The disciples spoke amongst themselves; they did not understand what Christ meant, for St. John says that some thought that because Judas had the purse, that Jesus had said to him, to buy these things which we have need of for the festival day, or that he should give something to the poor. It is therefore evident from these expressions that Judas acted as agent for the Apostles and supplied their wants, and also that he gave to the poor, when it was necessary, from the common purse; otherwise the Apostles could not have thought that Jesus told them to give to the poor, or to buy something for the festival.—As the church increased under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, the Christians knew that the wants of the Apostles were increasing, and they gave generously to them, and those who joined the church. We read in the fourth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles that 'for as many as were owners of lands or houses sold them and brought the price of the things they sold and laid them at the feet of the Apostles, and distribution was made to every man according as he had need.' The early Christians had all things in common. But there must be certain persons to administer the common property; and it must have been considerable, for in two sermons (twelve thousand people were added to the church; and God, by an awful chastisement of sudden death of Ananias and Sapphira, announced his indignation towards those who, by fraud, kept back part of what they promised and vowed to the Lord. For, he said before in the book of Ecclesiastes, fifth chapter and third verse, 'If thou hast vowed anything to God, defer not to pay it, for an unfaithful and foolish promise displeases Him, but whatsoever thou hast vowed pay it.'

As the possessions and the poor of the early church increased, we find the Apostles ordaining deacons to take care of the temporalities of the church, and the poor and the widows. Christ foretold in His Gospel, the poor you will always have with you. He preached it to the poor.—Again, St. Paul, who labored with his own hands first and those who were with him—should be a burden to any of the new converts, declared to the Christians that it was their duty to support the ministers of the Gospel, for he says, 'Have we not power to eat and drink? If we have shown to you heavenly things, is it a great matter your carnal things?'—1st Cor., 9th chap., 4th verse. And again, 'Know you not that they who work in the holy place eat the things that are of the holy place, and they who serve the altar partake of the altar, so also the Lord ordained that they who preach the Gospel should live by the Gospel.'—1st Cor., 9th chapter, 13th verse. And St. Paul, acting on the principle, ordered collections to be taken up in the churches, as we read in the 16th chapter 1st Cor.: 8th and 9th chapters 2nd Cor. He received once and again donations from the Philippians, and he ordered collections to be made in the churches of Galatia. Our Lord also ordained that they who preach the Gospel should live by the Gospel, for the laborer is worthy of his hire.—Matthew 10th chapter, eighth verse. And the Apostle understood these words of his master. He did not hesitate, as we have seen, to receive moneys. St. Paul tells us of the Church which was in the house of Prisca and Aquilla. A person of the present day who would give up his house, especially for the Catholic Church would be considered as a mad man, or a defrauder or a hypocrite, and the laws of this country, as well as

of other countries, would declare the donation invalid if the donor died within the expiration of a year from the time of the donation, and the law is called mormain. Against the law the church protests, for we read of Zachaus, a publican, who was converted by our Lord Jesus Christ, that after his conversion he said to our Lord, 'The half of my goods I give to the poor, and if I have defrauded any one I will give him four fold.' Did Zachaus do right?—Did our Lord reprove him for doing wrong? So Zachaus did right. Supposing that Zachaus lived now here, or a man like him, a usurer—a man that got a good deal of money by defrauding his neighbor, and that he was touched with repentance; he had large landed estates that he got by fraud, he could not sell them, and all he could was to make a will to restore them to the poor; if that man happened to die within a year the law will step in and say that it is invalid, that property must go the State. We say that is not a law. The law to be a law, must be a just law, must have justice on its side, must be according to God, must be upright, otherwise it is no law.

The law steps in between the dying repentant sinner that wants to offer something for his soul, that takes the advice of the sacred Scriptures which tells him to redeem his sins by alms-deeds. He finds himself incapable of doing so in the hour of death; for law forbids him and tells him he cannot do it. Our Holy Father the Pope raises his voice against such iniquity. We cannot help it; but still we can protest against it. The possessions of the church have always excited the cupidity of the avaricious, and of the great ones of this world, and they began to confiscate the property of the church very early, to take it from the apostles and their successors what is termed the price of sin. For instance a poor girl in her misfortune, like Thimas, the penitent, comes and offers up the price of her sins to the poor and the orphan to make restitution. Is that property to be taken from the orphan, from the church? Is it fair to step in between the poor sinner and his God? It is not.

The generosity of the early christians was proverbial. It excited the wonder of the pagans and also their cupidity. They exaggerated in fine, their wealth, for when they had supported so many orphans, and so many poor, made by persecutions, dragged into the catacombs, they had but little after all. But still the Roman Emperors, Maximilian and Dioclesian, not satisfied with putting thousands of Christians to death also confiscated the property. In 302, Constantine and Licinius restored that property to them; but it was soon after confiscated by Julian, the apostate, who sacrilegiously plundered the church of her possessions, and his example has been followed by many since. The rights of the church must have been certainly considerable to supply their great want, and we see evidence of this wealth, now in the catacombs of Rome. A church that is now above the earth, the church of St. Clement, at Rome, is an example.

It was not suspected that there was a church underneath. The church above is magnificent with marble columns and mosaics. But they have discovered that there was another church beneath of equal dimensions and equal splendour. It was covered up with earth, under ground.—This grand church in the catacombs was abandoned by the christians when they dare to worship in the light of day, and they did not think that they were losing much, when they made out the foundation of another. Another argument, Clement, the third Pope, after St. Peter and who is mentioned in the Epistle of St. Paul to the Philippians, divided the immense city of Rome into seven regions, and appointed notaries to write the history of the martyrs, and this of course must have required a considerable outlay.

When the christians enjoyed a little respite, they naturally were anxious to build churches and monasteries; but from hour to hour they were afraid of losing them. And to-day, it is sad to trace the various methods resorted to in order to hide from the wicked world those possessions. St. Lawrence in 257 Archbishop of Rome, was ordered by the Prefect to give up all the riches of the church, because the emperor had need of them to support his army—which must have required a considerable sum. Saint Lawrence quickly went and distributed the ready money that he had among the poor. He was to bring his riches upon a certain day, and he brought before the Prefect of Rome the poor, the lame, and the blind, for then, there was an immense number of these in Rome, for you must know, that at this time there were far more slaves in Rome than freemen. These slaves were treated wretchedly, and when they were old, and worn down in the service, they were driven out upon the open streets to procure subsistence from charity, or perish.—But, the early Christians were taught by our Lord Jesus Christ, 'whatever ye do to the poor, ye do it unto me.'