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CHURCH AND STATE.

The following admirable Lecture on "Church and State" was delivered the other day in St. Louis, U.S., by R. A. Bakewell, Esq., a gentleman well known to the Catholics of this Continent...

Gentlemen and ladies—There is one consideration that must occasion more or less embarrassment to the man of average delicacy of sentiment on arising to fulfil an appointment of this kind, unless indeed he is a lecturer by profession...

Of course, I have no pretensions of this sort. If we go back far enough, we shall perhaps find in the constitution of modern society the reason, the excuse, for my appearance before you to-night.

It has been discovered by some one—I think it was Lord Byron who first brought the discovery to the attention of Europe—that the object for which man was created, is to get rich; that his interests are wholly material interests; that the soul was made for the sake of the body, and that nothing is worth anything which does not tend to gratify the five senses, or some, or some one of them.

But the ages of a St. Francis and a St. Louis, of Faith and of Chivalry, are gone, and that of sophisters, economists and calculators has succeeded. There are no longer revenues, the offerings of faith, the accumulation of ages, devoted to the wants of the deserving poor; and those who, under our altered circumstances, snatch a few moments from absorbing occupations to devote to the claims of charity, are often at their wits' end to devise means to remedy the pressing wants forced upon their attention, and which they are personally unable to relieve.

Times were, when men saw in the poor the Members of our Lord, and gave for the love of God. Now, they must be trapped into contribution. Hence our fairs, balls, lotteries, and other pious frauds. Hence the present lecture, to be delivered at the request of some charitable gentlemen engaged in visiting the poor in certain districts in this city. It is for the benefit of those poor. Let us hope that the excellence of the end will prove an apology for whatever may be deficient in the means.

The noble and gallant Joinville, who shared the friendship and captivity of that great King—that great Saint—from whom our city takes its name, reports him on one occasion as having spoken, in his own French, thus: 'L'homme lay, quand il oit medire de la loi Crestienne, ne doit pas defendre la loi Crestienne ne mais que de l'espee, de quoi il doit donner parmi le ventre dedans tant comme elle y peut entrer,' which, being interpreted, means—The lay, when he hears Christ's law attacked, should defend it only with the sword, of which he should give his adversary as deep into the bowels as he can thrust.

Now, I suppose, by the light of certain uncharitable and false traditions, these words of the stout soldier of Christ would be interpreted to mean St. Bartholomew massacres, the thumb-screw and the rack, gag-law, the new principle, the New Constitution principle, of allowing no one to teach until you are sure he is on your side; the doctrine that rebels have no rights.

But the great Christian King lived before the brood was hatched of Cromwells and of Drakes; before State-craft had produced its Medicis and Louis Quatorzes; when Christendom was united on one faith; when certain principles were so well established that they were taken for granted, all speech was interpreted accordingly, and it was not necessary, as now, so carefully to weigh one's words.

In interpreting all speech, we should regard

the speaker, those spoken to, the circumstances, and the times. King St. Louis was a crusader, engaged in protecting the outposts of Christendom from the onset of the followers of Mahound. But for him and those like him, men with both brains and heart, Cœur-de-Lion, Louis of France, Godfrey, stout Earl Douglas, the Bruce, whose heart won victories when it had ceased to beat, but for those Bayards of an earlier age, stainless, fearless, blameless cavaliers, but for those brave knights, those gallant gentlemen, to whose stainless escutcheons, to whose old battle-cries, we go yet for those maxims, those mottoes, which, after the lapse of centuries, stir our hearts as the blast of a clarion, but for them, Christendom would not have been, or would have ceased to be. Modern civilisation is their work, for they have preserved from destruction its germs and seminal principles, and kept back the flood. All of fair Europe, but for them, would have become what once fairer Northern Africa, what Asia and Egypt have become and are; for the Christian family, we should have the harem of the Turk; the shriek of the Muezzin for the church-bell; the Koran for our Bible; the doctrine of immutable fate in place of our glorious creed;—and for our dogology, the cry, 'There is no God but one, and Mahomet is the prophet of God.'

What had he and his soldiery to do with argument? They were seculars protecting Christian civilization from the Turk. He meant this:—"Use your proper weapon, and do your best with it in your day." The armor of Saul for him that has essayed, and can wield it; the sling of David and the pebble of the brook for him who has no cunning beyond these. But whatever your weapon, do your best. Sword to the hilt, or stone crushing through head-piece and skull defenses to the core of the brain of Goliath of Gath.

It is not for the Layman to approach the discussion of sacred themes; nor is this the time or place for religious controversy. The rule of St. Louis will not, perhaps, be violated, however, by the choice of a subject which, properly handled, must involve the assertion and development of certain fundamental religious principles, if those principles be regarded from the secular stand point, and the line of argument necessarily adopted by one unsuited to the dignity of the sacred desk.

The relation between Church and State is the subject of my lecture. The title is somewhat vague. I presume, though, that at least a portion of my audience anticipate that I am likely to treat the subject with a certain reference to the conflict between the temporal and spiritual order which has arisen in our State.

For there is, in our State, a collision between the two orders. The State and Church are at variance;

Si rixa est, ubi tu pulsas, ego vapulo tantum.

I use the word 'Church' here, and no Christian in the audience can object to it. The State has not attacked any particular form or profession of Christianity: it has been careful to so frame its enactment as to attack Christianity itself, and has done it thus: it has prescribed a certain oath to be taken by every person before he can preach the Gospel in this State. Preach the Gospel. The framers of the law were prudent; they do not attempt to define what the Gospel is: they specify no religious teachers in particular; the thing they attack is preaching the Gospel. You may preach Judaism, preach that Jesus Christ is an impostor, preach Mormonism, preach Mahometism, preach Spiritism, preach politics, no oath, no conditions whatever, are required for that; but you shall not preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ until you have taken a certain oath of allegiance to the State. For all those who believe it to be wrong to take the oath under such circumstances (amongst whom are the whole body of the Catholic clergy) this amounts to saying to them, you shall not preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ here at all. The clergy do what St. Peter and St. Paul did under similar circumstances; having received from God a mission to preach His eternal Gospel, they preach it in spite of the prohibition of the State. They nullify that law, and, of course, when arrested, suffer the punishment imposed.

I may remark here, by the way, that it would be foreign to my subject to discuss the character of this oath, and the various objections to which it is open, for the reason that the clergy do not refuse to take oath on the ground that it is objectionable in itself, self-contradictory, or for any of the many reasons which may well arise in the case of layty. They object not to this oath, but to any oath whatever, when imposed by the State as a qualification for preaching the Gospel. The oath might be most innocent in its character,—an oath, say, to support the Constitution of the United States and faithfully to demean one's self as a Minister of God—still no Catholic Priest could take it when imposed by the State as a necessary qualification for discharging the duties of a Priest; because the Church cannot admit the right of the State to

commission or pass upon the qualification of Gospel ministers. She alone is authorised by God to pronounce upon qualification for the ministry. She calls this an interference with her Liberty. She says that the State, in this, steps out of its sphere, and trenches upon the rights of the Church, upon the rights of God. She, therefore, disregards such laws; she tramples upon them, as she did upon the edicts of the Cæsars, and does now upon the exclusive laws of the Chinese Empire.

Now, it cannot be denied that there are many persons, and some Catholics, and intelligent Catholics, too, that entirely overlook the principle upon which this action of the clergy is based, and, if not disposed to censure ecclesiastical authority, for the position it has taken, are, at least, at a loss as to what way to defend its course, or to reconcile it with that obedience to the Government which is, according to Catholic morals, one of the first of duties; a duty, too, for the performance of which, no class of the community is more exemplary than Catholics themselves.

There is, there can be, no such thing as a Catholic rebel. Obedience, strict obedience, to all the commands of lawful authority, this is the grand principle that lies at the foundation of Catholic morality. When there is a conflict between two authorities, both claiming allegiance, both claiming to be supreme, the Catholic may, of course, hesitate as to the object to which his allegiance is due, but as to the principle itself, he can never doubt. The Catholic, for instance, under the Federal Union which existed before this war, might well choose, and, indeed, as a thinking man, was bound to choose between the interpretations of two recognized political schools, one claiming the first allegiance of the citizen as due to the United States, the other claiming the first allegiance as due to the State, and the civil war breaking out between the authorities of his State and the Federal Government, he might be compelled by the rude summons "Under which King, Bezonian; speak or die!" to take sides and to give "aid, comfort, countenance, or support;" to one of the two contending powers; but the Catholic would hardly claim that his allegiance was due to either, that he could lawfully oppose both, much less would he be willing to exact from his fellow-citizens at the close of the war an oath that they had throughout been on both sides at once, and had never given aid, comfort, countenance or support to the enemies of either the Federal Union or State. It was not from the brain of a Catholic that emanated the magnificent idea of requiring an oath that the citizen, during a death struggle between the only powers claiming supreme temporal authority over him had been as neutral as was the Arkansas lady during the struggle between her husband and the bear.

But, though no Catholic can be a rebel, the Catholic learns from his religion the dignity of his nature. He obeys lawful authority as the minister of God, and, in this, he finds true freedom, and he insists that he will be free. He says that there are found in Society three elements, the Individual, the State, the Church.—The Individual has certain inalienable rights, given to him by God, not derived from the State; which he does not surrender to the State, which the State has no right to touch, which can only be forfeited by crime. These rights the State is instituted to protect; and both the State and the Church were instituted for the Individual, and not the Individual for them. The Individual, the State and the Church; the Liberty of these three is necessary to the well being of society, which can only be attained by preserving strictly the rights of each.

As to the relations of Church and State there are three theories.

- 1st. That Church and State are equal and independent, each supreme in its sphere.
2d. That the State is supreme.
3d. That the Church is supreme.

The first theory is really no theory at all.—The second is the Pagan theory. The third is the Christian theory, the theory which I propose to explain and maintain.

The first theory is the popular one of the day. It is that of politicians, of men of the world.—Like most modern theories, out of the purely material order, it will not stand the test of examination. Count Joseph de Maistre says, that you may take it for an axiom to hold false whatever in our day is popularly believed; and the more indisputably true the theory is supposed to be, the more absolutely and stupidly false it will be found. This popular idea that the whole question of Church and State is settled by saying that each has its own sphere, each is supreme certainly seems to bear him out. My objection to the theory is, that it shirks the question altogether, and leave us where we were. For which of these two supreme and independent powers is to determine for the other the limits of its sphere, and when those bounds are overstepped? If you leave the decision of this all-important question to the State, then is the Church her slave;

for the State may usurp the whole field of morals, prohibit the Church from condemning as immoral certain acts, determine what shall be the relation of the sexes, and what forms of worship are in accordance with, and what opposed to, the material progress of the age and the good order of society. If you say the Church, then you make the Church supreme; she then assumes as her domain the whole field of rights and duties, prescribes to civil authority its limits, beyond which its acts are void, and cease to bind the conscience of mankind, rules the rulers of men with "a rod of iron, and breaks them in pieces like a potter's vessel." Your theory works well enough as long as no theory is needed. But some day these spheres, which you claim to be revolving side by side, do actually clash; there is no mistake about it; State and Church are brought face to face? It is to be the war of Giants; but which should yield? One or the other is supreme. Which is it? That is what we have got to settle, after all.

The second theory is that of the supremacy of the State. It is the old Pagan doctrine of those who hold that man was created for the State.—It is the denial of the individual, the denial of the family; the doctrine of those who claim the right of the State to take the child from the cradle, from the family, and educate it from infancy for the greater glory of the State: who recognizing no supernatural destiny for man, despising the weakness of the individual, at whatever sacrifice of private rights, of individual happiness, determined to build up and keep up a great and glorious State. Those who conceived this idea were statesmen, and so far as organizing the State for its own protection goes, the ancient Greeks and Romans did well; were there no God, no hereafter, no supernatural destiny for man, perhaps they did the best that could be done; for what would such vermin as individual men, on that theory, be worth? If combined they can erect something worthy of honor, of respect, of admiration; why not sacrifice the paltry happiness of each atom to the common glory of the whole? Such was the theory of the worship of the State; of the State-God. It reached its full development in Cæsarism under the Roman Empire. The Emperor was chief magistrate, Chief Pontiff, God. Altars were erected to him, colleges of priests maintained to do him homage with the proper rites, men swore by, and sacrificed to, the Genius of the Emperor. Quod principi placuit illi legis habet vigorem. The will of the Emperor is the supreme law; that was the maxim; and what came of it all?

"We will have no King but Cæsar!" shrieked the multitude when Religion, represented by the Man-God, was presented for their acceptance.—"Away with this fellow, we have no King but Cæsar!" Awful cry! and awful answer to that cry. Read Tacitus, and consider the horror of Cæsarism:

"Tiberius," says Tacitus, "was much esteemed as long as he held office under Augustus; he was artful in feigning virtue in the beginning of his own reign, till the death of Germanicus, his actions were a mixture of good and evil during the life of his mother, Livia, but on the death of Sejanus, freed from all restraints of fear and shame, he abandoned himself to every sort of cruelty and profligacy, and followed his abominable inclinations as his only guide." Sejanus, bad as he was, was to Tiberius what Wolsey was to Henry VIII: a restraint. It was not until his death that the Romans began their terrible experience of Cæsarism in all its horrors. Now it is a fact that the death of Sejanus corresponds in date with that rejection of Jesus Christ for Cæsar. Then it was that the gloomy hypocrite threw off all restraint, and showed the trembling world for what a King they had rejected the Prince of peace, the Son of Mary the Virgin, Him that came to them "meek, and riding upon an ass and upon a colt the foal of her that was subject to the yoke."

Yes, read Tacitus; the pages of the philosophic historian, those terrible pages, those wonderful pages, brief, obscure, but not impenetrable, glimmering with a doubtful, fearful light, fitly snow forth the horrors of those years. It is really as if God had raised him up, and bestowed the divine gift of genius upon that wonderful Analyst, and endowed him with that inimitable style of his that he might well show forth to future generations the image of those Cæsars to whom the civilised world, which would have no King but Cæsar, was compelled to sacrifice as to Gods.

Of them, there are no words in which to speak. We cannot paint them in our modern tongues.—The things that they did, we may not, say the Apostle, so much as name. Such is the change of manners effected by the Christian Church, that you would stop your ears, you would rise up and drive me from this stand, did I but hint at the vices in which these stans of manhood wallowed, together with the trembling nobility of Rome, of every age and sex, the witnesses and instruments and companions of their lust.

Tiberius, Caligula, Claudian, Nero, Domitian. When Tacitus fails you, take up Gibbon, and from Commodus down, and back again, you may make a Devil's litany of Cæsars, and see what is Cæsarism pure. "Hell from beneath was moved at their coming," as, one after another, these monsters descended to the pit. We can fancy that the imps of the abyss gathered together in curiosity to see these souls, and shrank abashed from the presence of more than satanic malice. "Devil with devil damned firm concord holds," the poet says, but these scourges of humanity rejoiced only in the miseries of their kind.—Caligula, who removed by murder successively all those who attended on his person, his thirst for blood unslaked by his butcherly Gladiatoria shows, in which slaves were massacred before him by wholesale for the sport, complained bitterly that no signal calamity would mark his reign. "The destruction of the Legions under Varus," he said, "will recall Augustus' reign; the fall of Fidenes' Amphitheatre upon fifty thousand souls at once will mark that of Tiberius, but no catastrophe happens under mine." His favorite amusement was to throw money, mixed with knives and daggers, out of the window to the crowd below, and to watch the deadly struggle which ensued. In one of these bloody scrambles, two hundred and forty-seven men killed each other in one day. Remember that the people over whose hearts these monsters rode, had inherited the ideas of a tree-born ancestry; that the history of Rome itself taught them to revere a free, virtuous and victorious commonwealth; that the yoke under which they groaned forced them daily to the most abject flattery of monsters whom they loathed; that each senator and gentleman was conscious of the base servility of his neighbor; that their whole lives became a lie; that this tyranny filled the world; that there was no escape; that the habitable universe of those days was but a safe and dreary prison for the enemies of the Empire; that the basest compliance often failed to purchase life, and was awarded with a cruel death, and picture to yourself what, to sufferers of such exquisite sensibility, was the torture of Cæsarism after the crucifixion of our Lord.

Cæsarism, Statolatry, the supremacy of the State in both orders, the temporal and spiritual, is hopeless despotism under every form of government.

The theory was effectually and practically revived at the time of the Reformation, at that time in favor of Henry the VIII, and other Kings who wished to become absolute monarchs, from constitutional rulers which they were before; the revival of it under any form of Government is the inauguration of despotism, for whether it be a King or a popular majority, it matters but little to the victim of tyranny by what name this absolute supreme ruler, from whose edicts there is no appeal to a higher law, is called.

But the doctrine of the supremacy of the temporal order over the spiritual, of the State over the Church, is a doctrine not only historically Pagan, but necessarily so. What Christian, who but an Atheist, can declare the State superior to the Church, the temporal to the eternal, this world to the next, the body to the soul, man to God? If what we are accustomed to boast of as American Institutions mean anything at all, we should think they should at least mean Liberty of Conscience, freedom of the Church, freedom to worship God. We have been used to hear that our first settlers fled here to seek in the wilderness liberty to work out the promptings of their better nature, or to follow the impulses of the Divine Spirit, unchecked by the enactments of the State; that New England was settled by Puritans flying from a State that would enslave the Church; that South Carolina received the Huguenots, a small remnant fleeing for conscience' sake from Cæsarism in France; that Maryland was the refuge of European Catholics driven from home by cruel laws which denied freedom of worship to their ancient Faith. And is it in this land, and at this day, after the experience of three centuries of futile persecutions, that the State is to raise again a sacrilegious hand to touch the vessel of the altar and the ark of God? When the State thus advances beyond her sphere, and the spiritual power resists, the State has but one alternative; she must persecute or yield; and whichever she does, the result, as to her pretensions, will be the same. The statesmen of our day—we do not mean such modern lawgivers as those who under dictation, adopted for this State a New Constitution, which one or two partisan members of their body made to their hands, but the statesmen—have learned from history this lesson at least; that, though persecution may destroy individuals, it propagates the principle attacked. The friends of Religion are not afraid:

Mentes profundo, pulchrior evenit;
Lucente, multa promittit integram
Cum laude virtutem; gresq;
Prælia conjugibus loquenda.
The third theory, the Christian theory, is that—