

## LIFE AND CATHOLIC JOURNALISM

—OF THE LATE—

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#### CHAPTER XI—CONTINUED.



#### III.

It was argued that a bishop ought to have a council elected by the priests, and to consult it in all important matters. 1st. It is not impossible that a bishop influenced by prejudice, resentment or misinformation, without counsel may act harshly, even unjustly towards a priest or even towards a congregation. 2nd. None perhaps more than a bishop should beware of the insinuations of the adroit flatterer and the innuendoes of the calumniator lest in an unguarded moment his act may tend to the injury, rather than the benefit, of religion. In such cases the need of counsel is indispensable. 3rd. Acts of a bishop after the counsel of *responsible* advisers bear with them a greater presumption of wisdom and a greater probability of prudence, and command more willing obedience. 4th. A bishop acting by advice of his council elected by the clergy has the moral support of the clergy, and through them, of the laity; and should any priest question such acts he would receive very little sympathy either from clergy or laity. 5th. The awful responsibility of a bishop is such that he never ought to act without serious consultation. 6th. In all well regulated governments the ruler never acts without the advice of his council (cabinet), and autocrat is seldom synonymous with sage. 7th. There is and ought to be but one autocrat—God—and yet he is amenable to prayer. 8th. Rome is too distant, and burdened by too many cares to give a quick ear to cases of appeal,

and therefore such cases ought to be rendered by prudence and counsel as few as possible.

N. B.—It follows as a corollary that a council to be above suspicion ought to be composed of irremovable priests.

IV. It was urged that provision ought to be made for old and infirm priests. 1st. A priest's salary is scarcely equal to that of a mechanic. 2nd. He is obliged to answer the numerous calls of charity. 3rd. He is prohibited from engaging in mercantile pursuits and obliged to devote his time to his flock, and therefore has the correlative right to his maintenance not only while able but even when unable to work. 4th. The temptation of covetousness and the motive and excuse of avarice should be removed from him by generously providing for him in the necessities of old age or infirmity. And yet it has been known that worthy priests—few perhaps, very few—have ended their days in the poor-house.

On these and other questions "Jus" had very decided convictions twenty-three years ago, and experience and observation have not caused him to change them since. It is therefore with pleasure that he has seen some of them germinate into law, and although in an embryonic state they are the promise and prophecy of a better condition of things.

In the discussion of these subjects, though written under a *nom de plume*, I am certain there was not one word offensive to the hierarchy, and if there had been, I am equally certain Mr. McMaster would not allow it to appear in his *Journal*. It was a most delicate and even dangerous subject to touch, and nothing but conscientious duty could induce the writer, incompetent as he was, to handle it. If his treatment of it did no good he sincerely believes it did no harm.