



JESUS CHRIST THE REDEEMER

Encyclical Letter of Our Most Holy Father
LEO XIII.,
By Divine Providence Pope,

To the Patriarchs, Primate, Arch-
bishops, Bishops, and Other Local
Ordinaries in Communion with the
Apostolic See.

(Concluded.)

CHRIST THE TRUTH.

Just as it is the height of misfortune to go astray from the "Way," so is it to abandon the "Truth." Christ Himself is the first, absolute and essential "Truth," inasmuch as He is the Word of God, constitutional and co-eternal with the Father, He and the Father being One. "I am the Way and the Truth." Wherefore if the Truth be sought by the human intellect, it must first of all submit to Jesus Christ, and securely rest upon His teaching, since therein Truth itself speaketh. There are innumerable and extensive fields of thought, properly belonging to the human mind, in which it may have free scope for its investigations and speculations, and that not only agreeably to its nature, but even by a necessity of its nature. But what is unlawful and unnatural is that the human mind should refuse to be restricted within its proper limits, and, throwing aside as becoming modesty, should refuse to acknowledge Christ's teaching. This teaching, upon which our salvation depends, is almost entirely about God and the things of God. No human wisdom has invented it, but the Son of God hath received and drunk it in entirely from His Father: "The words which thou gavest me, I have given to them" (John xvii, 8). Hence this teaching necessarily embraces many subjects which are not indeed contrary to reason—for that would be an impossibility—but so exalted that we can no more attain them by our own reasoning than we can comprehend God as He is in Himself. If there be so many things hidden and veiled which no man in his senses can doubt, it would be an abuse of liberty to refuse to accept those which are entirely above nature, because their essence cannot be discovered. To reject dogma is simply to deny Christianity. Our intellect must bow humbly and reverently "unto the obedience of Christ," so that it be held captive by His divinity, and authority; "bringing into captivity every understanding unto the obedience of Christ" (2 Corinthians x, 5). Such obedience Christ requires, and justly so. For He is God, and as such holds supreme dominion over man's intellect as well as over his will. By obeying Christ with his intellect man by no means acts in a servile manner, but in complete accordance with his reason and his natural dignity. For by his will he yields, not to the authority of any man, but to that of God, the author of his being, and the first principle to Whom he is subject by the very law of his nature. He does not suffer himself to be forced by the theories of any human teacher, but by the eternal and unchangeable truth. Hence he attains at one and the same time the natural good of the intellect and his own liberty. For the truth which proceeds from the teaching of Christ clearly demonstrates the real nature and value of every being; and man, being endowed with the knowledge, if he but obey the truth as perceived, will make all things subject to himself, not himself to them; his appetites to his reason, not his reason to his appetites. Thus the slavery of sin and falsehood will be shaken off, and the most perfect liberty attained. "You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John viii, 32). It is, then, evident that those whose intellect rejects the yoke of Christ are obstinately striving against God. Having shaken off God's authority, they are

by no means freer, for they will fall beneath some human sway. They are sure to choose someone whom they will listen to, obey, and follow as their guide. Moreover, they withdraw their intellect from the communication of divine truths, and thus limit it within a narrower circle of knowledge, so that they are less fitted to succeed in the pursuit even of natural science. For there are in nature very many things whose appreciation or explanation is greatly aided by the light of divine truth. Not infrequently, too, God, in order to chastise their pride, does not permit men to see the truth, and thus they are punished in the things wherein they sin. This is why we often see men of great intellectual power and erudition making the grossest blunders even in natural science.

It must therefore be clearly admitted that, in the life of a Christian, the intellect must be entirely subject to God's authority. And if, in this submission of reason to authority, our self-love, which is so strong, is restrained and made to suffer, this only proves the necessity to a Christian of long-suffering not only in will but also in intellect. We would remind those persons of this truth who desire a kind of Christianity such as they themselves have devised, whose precepts should be very mild, much more indulgent towards human nature, and requiring little if any hardships to be borne. They do not properly understand the meaning of faith and Christian precepts. They do not see that the Cross meets us everywhere, the model of our life, the eternal standard of all who wish to follow Christ in reality and not merely in name.

CHRIST THE LIFE.

God alone is life. All other beings partake of life, but are not life. Christ from all eternity and by His very nature, is "the Life," just as He is the Truth, because He is God of God. From Him, as from its most sacred source, all life pervades and ever will pervade creation. Whatever is, is by Him; whatever lives, lives by Him. For by the Word "all things were made; and without Him was made nothing that was made? This is true of the natural life; but, as We have sufficiently indicated above, we have a much higher and better life, won for us by Christ's mercy, that is to say, "the life of grace," whose happy consummation is "the life of glory," to which all our thoughts and actions ought to be directed. The whole object of Christian doctrine and morality is that "we being dead to sin, should live to justice" (1 Peter ii, 24)—that is, to virtue and holiness. In this consists the moral life, with the certain hope of a happy eternity. This justice, in order to be advantageous to salvation, is nourished by Christian faith. "The just man liveth by faith" (Galatians iii, 11). "Without faith it is impossible to please God" (Hebrews xi, 6). Consequently, Jesus Christ, the creator and preserver of faith, also preserves and nourishes our moral life. This He does chiefly by the ministry of His Church. To Her, in His wise and merciful counsel, He has entrusted certain agencies which engender the supernatural life, protect it, and revive it if it should fail. This generative and conservative power of the virtues that make for salvation is therefore lost, whenever morality is dissociated from divine faith. A system of morality based exclusively on human reason robs man of his highest dignity and lowers him from the supernatural to the merely natural life. Not but that man is able by the right use of reason to know and to obey certain principles of the natural law. But though he should know them all and keep them inviolate through life—and even this is impossible without the aid of the grace of our Redeemer—still it is vain for anyone without faith to promise himself eternal salvation. "If anyone abide not in Me, he shall be cast forth as a branch, and shall wither, and they shall gather him up and cast him into the fire, and he burneth" (John xv, 6). "He that believeth not shall be condemned" (Mark xvi, 16). We have but too much evidence of the value and result of a morality divorced from divine faith. How is it that, in spite of all the zeal for the welfare of

the masses, nations are in such straits and even distress, and that the evil is daily on the increase? We are told that society is quite able to help itself; that it can flourish without the assistance of Christianity, and attain its end by its own unaided efforts. Public administrators prefer a purely secular system of government. All traces of the religion of our forefathers are daily disappearing from political life and administration. What blindness? Once the idea of the authority of God as the Judge of right and wrong is forgotten, law must necessarily lose its primary authority and justice must perish; and these are the two most powerful and most necessary bonds of society. Similarly, once the hope and expectation of eternal happiness is taken away, temporal goods will be greedily sought after. Every man will strive to secure the largest share for himself. Hence arise envy, jealousy, hatred. The consequences are conspiracy, anarchy, nihilism. There is neither peace abroad nor security at home. Public life is stained with crime.

So great is this struggle of the passions and so serious the dangers involved, that we must either anticipate ultimate ruin or seek for an efficient remedy. It is, of course, both right and necessary to punish malefactors, to educate the masses, and by legislation to prevent crime in every possible way; but all this is by no means sufficient. The salvations of the nations must be looked for higher. A power greater than human must be called in to teach men's hearts, awaken in them the sense of duty, and make them better. This is the power which once before saved the world from destruction when groaning under much more terrible evils. Once remove all impediments and allow the Christian spirit to revive and grow strong in a nation, and that nation will be healed. The strife between the classes and the masses will die away; mutual rights will be respected. If Christ be listened to, both rich and poor will do their duty. The former will realize that they must observe justice and charity, the latter self-restraint and moderation, if both are to be saved. Domestic life will be firmly established by the salutary fear of God as the Lawgiver. In the same way the precepts of the natural law, which dictates respect for lawful authority and obedience to the laws, will exercise their influence over the people. Seditions and conspiracies will cease. Wherever Christianity rules over all without let or hindrance, there the order established by Divine Providence is preserved, and both security and prosperity are the happy result. The common welfare, then, urgently demands a return to Him from whom we should never have gone astray; to Him who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life,—and this on the part not only of individuals but of society as a whole. We must restore Christ to this His own rightful possession. All elements of the national life must be made to drink in the Life which proceedeth from Him—legislation, political institutions, education, marriage and family life, capital and labor. Everyone must see that the very growth of civilization which is so ardently desired depends greatly upon this, since it is fed and grows not so much by material wealth and prosperity as by the spiritual qualities of morality and virtue.

It is rather ignorance than ill-will which keeps multitudes away from Jesus Christ. There are many who study humanity and the natural world; few who study the Son of God. The first step, then, is to substitute knowledge for ignorance, so that He may no longer be despised or rejected because He is unknown. We conjure all Christians throughout the world to strive all they can to know their Redeemer as He really is. The more one contemplates Him with sincere and unprejudiced mind, the clearer does it become that there can be nothing more salutary than His law, more divine than His teaching. In this work, your influence, Venerable Brethren, and the zeal of earnestness of the entire Clergy can do wonders. You must look upon it as a chief part of your duty to engrave upon the minds of your people the true knowledge, the very likeness of Jesus Christ

to illustrate His charity, His mercies, His teaching, by your writings and your words, in schools, in universities, from the pulpit; wherever opportunity is offered you. The world has heard enough of the so-called "rights of man." Let it hear something of the rights of God. That the time is suitable is proved by the very general revival of religious feeling already referred to, and especially that devotion towards Our Saviour of which there are so many indications, and which, please God, we shall hand on to the New Century as a pledge of happier times to come. But as this consummation cannot be hoped for except by the aid of divine grace, let us strive in prayer, with united heart and voice, to incline Almighty God unto mercy, that He would not suffer those to perish whom He had redeemed by His Blood. May He look down in mercy upon this world, which has indeed sinned much, but which has also suffered much in expiation! And, embracing in His loving kindness all races and classes of mankind, may He remember His own words: "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all things unto Myself" (John xi, 32).

As a pledge of the Divine favors, and in token of Our fatherly affection, we lovingly impart to You, Venerable Brethren, and to you Clergy and People, the Apostolic Blessing.

Given at St. Peter's in Rome, the 1st day of November, 1900, in the 23d year of Our Pontificate.

LEO XIII., Pope.

TRIBUTE TO JESUITS.

An interesting tribute to Catholic clergy from a non-Catholic source is that paid to Jesuit Fathers of Kentucky by General Roeliff Brinkerhoff in his "Recollections of a Lifetime."

In writing of his experiences in winter quarters at Bardstown, Ky., during the season of 1861-62, the General says: "Among the few pleasurable incidents I remember of my winter in Bardstown was the generosity and Christian courtesy of the Catholic authorities at St. Joseph's College, the famous school of the Jesuit Fathers. Of course, the school was closed, but the faculty, consisting of twelve or fifteen priests, with Father Verdon at their head, remained in charge, and daily attentions to sick soldiers were unremitting, and when the small-pox appeared they never quailed for an instant, whilst the Protestant clergy disappeared.

"One day I received a telegram from the front to make hospital arrangements for six hundred sick and wounded soldiers, who would be forwarded in a few days. The only possible way for me to comply with this order was to take possession of the buildings of St. Joseph's College. I sent for Father Verdon, showed him my telegram, and told him what must be done. He at once assented to the situation, and I arranged to make matters as easy as I could for him. I told him to concentrate his valuables in the stone library building and I would protect it with a guard. I told him, also, we would need all the bedding, and especially the mattresses, and that I would pay him what they were worth or replace them. They also agreed to furnish milk from their farm. The result was that we had a well-equipped hospital very quickly, with the constant ministrations of the Fathers and Sisters of Charity.

"When I was ordered to Nashville later on, I requested Father Verdon to present his bill for property taken. He simply replied: 'We want nothing. Ministrations of mercy in times like these should be without money and without price.' From that time to this I have always had a kindly feeling for our Catholic brethren. If we, as Protestants, would imitate their virtues more and criticize their failings less, it would be better for us all. Charity and not censure is what is needed from Protestants and Catholics alike, for 'we are all miserable sinners.'"

WOMEN AS PROFESSORS.

The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries have some remarkable illustrations of the positions held by Catholic women as professors in the universities. Bologna and Padua were papal universities famous in the history of education. Among the teachers in the University of Bologna we find the names of Prospera di Rossi, who taught Scripture; Elizabeth Serani, painting; Novella d'Andrea taught canon law for ten years; Anna Mozolina, anatomy. Statues are erected in Bologna and Genoa to two famous women who taught botany in the universities. A woman succeeded Cardinal Mezzofanti as teacher of Greek in Bologna. Among other famous women of Italy connected with the universities are Ellen Carnaro Biscopio, a Venetian, and Maria Agnesi, a Milanese, both as remarkable for their piety as for their great learning. The first received the doctorate in philosophy in 1678, while the latter, because of her wonderful mathematical knowledge, was elected by Benedict XIV to succeed her father as professor of mathematics in the University of Bologna, a position which she declined. At the death of her father she entered religion and became prioress of the Celestines. In the eighteenth century women took degrees in jurisprudence and philosophy in the papal universities, among them, and perhaps the most noted, being Laura Bassi, in the University of Bologna.

THE CARDINAL AND THE ARCHBISHOP.

Those who are familiar with the figures of these two dignitaries will enjoy the following as narrated by *The Saturday Evening Post*. The one, it may be stated, is tall and portly, and the other has the appearance of an ascetic.

The story is told of Cardinal Gibbons, of Baltimore and Archbishop Ryan, of Philadelphia, regarding an incident that took place while they were enjoying a day at the seashore together during a recent heated spell. They had run down to Atlantic City, and on arriving made themselves known to none, but went to a bathing-house incog.

Clad in the shapeless bathing suits that are furnished hapless strangers, they soon issued forth, with a shapeless straw hat tied down upon the head of each.

It is needless to say that they did not look as dignified as is their wont when they officiate at some high service, but their enjoyment of the situation was not a whit the less on that account.

By an odd chance the string of the cardinal's hat was red, and the archbishop chuckled at the aptness of it.

"Any one can see you are a cardinal!" he said.

"And any one can tell you are an archbishop, because here you are bathing in an archiepiscopal sea!" retorted the cardinal, finishing the sentence in a splutter, for at that moment a big breaker caught him full in the face.

But not an observer took them for either cardinal or archbishop. In spite of their shapeless costumes, however, there was something *distingue* in the appearance of the two men—something in their faces and manner—that marked them as being persons of standing, and so it happened that some of those in the throng that huddled along the beach gazed at them with mild curiosity.

One homelike countrywoman, evidently on her first seashore visit, was especially interested in watching the two men, who were enjoying themselves with constantly increasing gaudiness.

And at length the dignitaries heard her say critically to her husband, in what she thought a safe aside:

"Well, the old man, *he* looks kinder thin and peaked, but the old woman—seems to me *she's* quite hearty and strong!"