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## THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE.

A Sermon by His Grace the Archbishop of Toronto In the Church of Our Lady of Lourdes.

[Reported for The Register.]

At the last Mass, which was said by the rector, Rev. James Walsh, in the Church of Our Lady of Lourdes, on Sunday last, His Grace the Archbishop of Toronto, preached on the Sacrament of Penance. After reading the Gospel of the day (Matt. viii., 1-13) the Archbishop spoke in substance as follows: During the past few weeks the Church was busy in celebrating the mystery of the birth and divine infancy of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Under her guidance we entered the stable of Bethlehem with the shepherds and adored the new-born King. We heard the glad hymn of the angels singing the glory of God. "Glory to God on the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will." We also travelled with the wise men from the East under the guidance of that mysterious star that led them for many weary miles through a strange country until they had found the Infant Jesus and adored Him, offering Him the dearest treasures they possessed. We have seen Jesus when He was twelve years old going up into Jerusalem; and in this day's gospel, when we have missed Him during the long years of His retirement with His Immaculate Mother and foster-father, the Church brings Him forth from His hidden life. To-day the Son of God emerges as the sun from the dark clouds in the heavens. The light of His teaching is now to illuminate the world. We see Him after delivering His sermon on the Mount. The doctrines enunciated in that sermon have changed the whole current of human history. That sermon introduced the new elements of civilization, charity, mercy and justice. He is after delivering that sermon that brought hope to the afflicted, the humble and the obscure ones of earth. Never had they heard such teaching before. The great and the proud were not among those who followed Him down the mountain side. The Pharisees were not there. But the crowd was there, the multitude—the people. And their hearts went out to the teaching of the Son of God. Now it was proper that the new Teacher of mankind should confirm His teaching by a miracle. This is what occurred. Apart from the crowd stood a silent figure. It was the figure of a leper. The leper was under the ban, excommunicated from all intercourse with his fellow-men according to the law of Moses. Not permitted to enter the houses the leper ate the food intended for him in an obscure spot where his breath should not contaminate the air breathed by other men. Such was the leper who saw Jesus coming down the mountainside. The creature that had been born into social excommunication now saw himself in presence of the King of the World. And the leper adored Jesus, saying: "Lord, if thou wilt thou canst make me clean." O my dear brethren, we see the great heart of Jesus at once go out to that man. Touching the leper He said, "I will, be thou made clean." No more shall his breath fester on the very air; it is now as sweet as the fairest in that multitude. Was this act of Jesus no more than a miraculous act? Yes; it had a higher meaning, a higher truth meant for us. Leprosy in all ancient and modern times has been considered as a lively figure of the desolation and loathsomeness of the soul in a state of sin. Leprosy covering the body of the victim with ulcers, paralyzing the limbs, putrifying the flesh is living death. Sin, destroying the beauty and

loveliness of the human soul makes it leprous and loathsome in the sight of God. As bodily leprosy entailed excommunication from the walks and intercourse of men, so the leprosy of the soul paralyzes and enslaves it in sin, and spoils it of the strength and glory of intercourse with God. St. Paul says: He who commits sin becomes the slave of sin. And the soul in that condition becomes an abomination in the sight of God. But sin in the soul goes farther than leprosy. It kills the very life of the soul, whereas the leper is still a living being. The soul has a two-fold life. It has a supernatural life which unites it with God and makes it the child of God; it has also the life that is proper to the spiritual being and that lasts as long as God lasts. By sin the supernatural life in the soul is killed; and when we consider a dead soul we cannot help but be horror struck. It is said that the more noble the living state is the more terrible is the aspect of death. We know it is so with man, as compared with the rest of God's creatures in death. Let us carry the analogy of this law into the spiritual world and consider what the horror of death to the soul must mean. The soul, the source of whose living loveliness is God! The action of death upon the soul must be infinitely more terrible than upon the body. Lazarus dead is a figure of the soul in spiritual death. We know what happened at the grave of Lazarus. The sight moved the Son of God Himself to sorrow. The Son of God shed tears of sorrow at the ravages made by death upon Lazarus, in whom in life there must have been something infinitely loveable. So it is also with the sight of the soul in sin. The sight of the soul in grievous sin would, if it were possible, bring tears to the eyes of God who made it and of Christ who redeemed it, and would be sufficient to dim the glory of heaven. Of the soul in sin we may mourn as did Jeremiah over Jerusalem in her sin and captivity: To what shall I liken thee, to what shall I compare thee O daughter of Zion, great is the sin of thy condition. To what shall we liken the state of the soul in sin? What shall heal the soul? My dearest brethren, the mercy of God is greater than any sin, greater than all the sins by which man has ever abused the infinite mercy of God. God wills not the death of the sinner but that he be converted and live. God is compassion, the tender mercy of the Son of God passes all understanding. Though the sin should be scarlet He will make us white as snow. There shall be joy in heaven over the repentant sinner. These are the promises of God, of Jesus Christ who on earth showed forth the infinite mercy of God. He went about doing good. He cleaned the foul leper and forgave every sinner who showed repentance. And when they accused Him of being the friend of sinners and publicans He spoke to them in the parables of the shepherd and the lost sheep, and the Prodigal Son. He forgave the thief upon the cross, and the last cry that escaped from the agonized Son of God was forgiveness of His crucifiers. The mercy of Jesus is indeed infinite. He came not to the people that then lived on earth; He came to the men of all time, and the ingenuity of His love was such that before He returned to His Father He left behind Him an institution of His mercy. He left to His Church the power of forgiving sin for ever in the institution of the Sacrament of Penance. "Whatever ye shall bind upon earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatever ye shall loose upon earth shall be loosed also in heaven." The power of His Church He made infinite. "As the Father sent me, so I send you." And in order that there should be no doubt about it, that in after times men should not think that what was said had been in a general way, Jesus added: Receive ye the Holy Ghost, whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven, and whose sins you shall retain they are retained. In these words did Jesus institute the sacrament of Penance for ever, by this act are the sins of the repentant forgiven for ever. Under the influence of that divine institution of mercy is the soul raised from the grave of spiritual death into life. Adam the head of the human race communicated to that race the sins of his fall and his death; Jesus the new Adam the head of redeemed mankind communicated to His people

the grace of life in the sacrament of Penance. This creation of regenerated mankind is a more beneficent and more stupendous exercise of power than all the other glories of creation. For this sacrament is all powerful; limited only by the power of God Himself. By it are all sins—even the most grievous—forgiven, save sin against the Holy Ghost. The creative action of the love of God in the sacrament of Penance lifts the soul again into life with God; and dearest brethren the life of God is as necessary to the soul as in the material creation are air, water, light, blessings which God has abundantly supplied to us. In the Catholic Church the sacrament of Penance is as free, as common to all, as the air and the light. The tribunal of penance has been erected wherever men are found within the bounds of the earth. And because it is found everywhere are men to be as indifferent to it as they are to the sunrise, as they are to the abundant provision of God in the material creation of light and air and water for their necessary comfort and sustenance. Were the power of this great sacrament entrusted to one man—say to the Pope—we should see the oceans black with ships hastening the repentant sinner to the place of mercy. But because the sacrament is as common as infinite mercy, because the tribunal of penance is everywhere men pass by the Church door carrying along the burden of their sins and leprosy, and thinking not to enter and find restoration to divine mercy and favor. Infinite indeed is God's love, and infinite the favor of this sacrament which even at the last hour anticipates the judgment of God in final repentance. The Archbishop concluded by bestowing his blessing upon the congregation and wishing that they prepare their hearts and souls for the reception of the infinitely great sacrament of Penance.

## A VOICE FROM THE GRAVE.

Hon. T. D. McGee on Parental Rights in Regard to the School Question.

(Montreal Gazette.)

The following extract from a speech delivered by the great Canadian orator, Thomas D'Arcy McGee, has been sent us by a correspondent. It will be of interest in connection with the present crisis as regards the Manitoba schools. It may be truly called a voice from the dead:

The subject of the relation of the State to the education of youth is by no means so free from difficulty as the honorable mover of this resolution seems to suppose. He rose, uttered a few confident sentences, and sat down as if quite enough had been said to settle the question forever. But if any honorable gentleman who hears me desires to see at a glance how widely the ablest educators—a word I do not like, but it is the best at the moment—have differed from the very starting point of their own doctrine—I will beg of him to pass a forenoon, with that view, in our library. Let him take down those dealers in definitions—the Encyclopedias—let him turn to the article "Education," and he will not find any two of them agreed, either as to the duty of the State, or the object of education. The Britannica, which stands facile princeps of all its kind in our language, says the object of education is the "happiness of the educated, and includes virtues as essential to happiness"; so that education in virtue under this description would be the duty of the State as teacher. The Encyclopedia of Useful Knowledge—written by Lord Brougham and his friends—says it is to fit the child "for after life," and there it stops. Is it possible for any thoughtful man, calling himself a Christian, to stop there, too? "After life"—what is "after life"? Is it the life between the school-house and the churchyard? or does it reach far beyond—away into the limitless prospects of Eternity? I trust we all believe in the immortality of the soul; and that none of us are content to rest on the giddy brink of the Utilitarians' definition of "after life." A third of these definers declares—"That the object of the training to be given by the State can only be determined by the legislature of each country. That in an autocracy

the object should be the preservation of the monarchy, and in a democracy the inculcation of democratic principles." This is intelligible enough; but let us reflect a moment where it must lead. In Prussia it will justify, as it has justified the military and despotic teaching by which the House of Brandenburg has sought to establish its own infallibility; in Russia it will justify, as it has justified, the teaching of the most servile doctrines, such as that the Czar stands to his people in the place of Christ; that he is, in the language of their political catechism—"Our God." It will justify a despotism educating in despotism and a democracy in democracy—for it teaches that conformity to the standard of the State is the highest object of education. This, indeed, is the genesis of the miscellaneous systems, which is equally in harmony with the despotism of the many in America, and the despotism of one man in Russia. Our own system comes to us from Prussia, through France and the United States. It was invented or adopted by Frederick II., a great soldier, a great prince and a great enemy of Christianity. It was introduced into France under the first Republic, by Talleyrand, the apostate Bishop of Autun. It was adopted by the rulers of France on Talleyrand's report, at a time when they madly struck the name of the Creator out of all their ordinances—when they substituted Pagan Decades for the Christian Sabbath—and strove to make God an outlaw in His own creation. With that constant searching for first principles which characterizes the French mind, Talleyrand boldly laid it down that children did not belong to their parents, but were born for the State. He proclaimed the Spartan doctrine that there was no family but one—the Republic. And like the Spartan the French Republic abolished the sacred sanction of marriage, though it did not take the next step of legalizing promiscuous intercourse. This conduct was quite consistent with the whole course of the first Republic; with its conscription, and its solidarite, its universal hatred of all things old, tried and traditional. It would never do to continue in the "Year 1," so obsolete an institution as the Christian Family—an institution older than Bourbon or Brunswick line—older than all Christian kings and constitutions—the well spring and the feeder of our hereditary civilization. Thus it was the French State, in 1791, undertook to educate the youth of France in its own political image and likeness, after the manner of Prussia, though with some variations; and thus the American State, about thirty years ago, began to imitate the experiment. The details and the direction may differ, but the principle of the infallibility of the State is everywhere the same.

Catholic doctrine, like the law of England, much of which comes down to us from Catholic times, maintains that the duty of the Christian parent is twofold—first to provide for the sustenance of the child, and, secondly, for his education. You will find the same doctrine in Blackstone as in the Catechism of the Council of Trent, and almost in the same words. This double responsibility springs from the Christian institution of marriage, and no power on earth, civil or ecclesiastical, can dispense a parent in full possession of his faculties from directing the education of his own child. This, sir, is not a church question, but a parent's question; it is a father and mother's question, and not necessarily a question between different religious denominations. It is, in fact, a question whether the Christian family is to be permitted its free development in Western Canada, or whether the political power is to stand in loco parentis to all children under age. For whom does the common school teacher really represent in our system? Not the parent, but the Act of Parliament that creates his office and defines his district. He is the creature of the political power, and though he may consult and may co-operate with the parents of his pupils, he is not bound to do so; he is independent of them; he is not answerable to them; he must not distinguish between them or between their children. The principle of the common school is, that every child within a certain district, section or ward has an equal right to the advantages of

the school and the time of the teacher. As before the law, I admit all men are equal, and inclusively, all children. But I deny as between each other in social or school intercourse, that either men or boys can be moral equals. The child of the drunkard and swearer is not the child of the virtuous and sober parents and ought never to be confounded with him. Children are great imitators, and what they hear and see at home they bring abroad; hence the teacher who does his duty ought to be always able, from the first, to distinguish the children by the character of their parents. In select schools, there is, I grant, the same danger of evil association, but the parent has a direct influence there. The parent, not the political power, places the child in charge of the teacher; the teacher has his brief from the father or mother; they enter as avowed partners, with a mutual understanding, into the work of education; and the natural law which prescribes the parents' duty, is not abrogated under such a partnership as that. That natural law has been violated in Prussia, in France and in the United States; but it is still respected in England and Ireland. It is respected in the children of paupers, classified in the workhouse by the creed of their parents; and I appeal to my hon. friends who are lawyers, if it is not the ruling principle in the decisions of the Court of Chancery, such as that given by Lord Eldon in the well-known case of Wellesley vs. Wellesley. There the Chancellor, whose solidity was equal to his clearness, lays down most plainly, that the law of England never interferes between parent and child—never assumes to act in loco parentis; except where it is proved that the mind of the child is likely to be debauched by remaining under the control of an immoral parent. I appeal to this ancient and venerable law against the pretensions of the common school system, on behalf of all the parents of Canada West, who are disposed to do their duty to their children. It has been said:—What danger is there in teaching children the multiplication table in common?—what danger in teaching them the alphabet in common? I repeat it is not the teaching, but the association which corrupts, and which is to be guarded against as the worst danger in the indiscriminate grouping of children together. But there is another consideration: teaching that two and two make four, is teaching to reason—it is teaching the use of the mental faculties—and we insist that every lesson in reason shall be accompanied by a lesson in Revelation, as a rider, as a safeguard. I, as a parent, am not willing to risk the experiment of exercising only a Sunday revision over the imbedded errors and false impressions of the week. You might as well propose that the child should eat on Sunday all the salt necessary for the retrospective salting of its six days' food. I believe the lungs of children when inflated, become buoyant; but I am not on that account disposed to bring my child to the pier and throw it into Lake Ontario, to see whether or not it may rise and float. No, sir. These are desperate experiments which I cannot try with my own flesh and blood, and with the immortal spirits, committed during their helplessness, to my charge.

## EXCELSIOR.

The shades of night were not yet drawn,  
When in a mill where wood is sawn,  
A lot of boys were told to haul  
A way the stuff that carvers call  
Excelsior.  
Soon 'neath these curls made into packs,  
They stagger forth with loaded backs.  
Across the way there stands a shop  
Where into bins they softly drop  
Excelsior.  
Next day some skilled mechanics come,  
Sharp needles ply; swift shuttles hum;  
Huge sacks are made with corners square,  
And scheming hands deposit there  
Excelsior.  
Soon after this a great big store  
Hangs out the sign—"For Sale. Some more  
Of those hair mattresses, the kind  
You want." But here again we find  
Excelsior.  
In politics as well as trade  
Reforms are often likewise made,  
Not of the hair and wool they land,  
But of that cheap and shoddy fraud,  
Excelsior.  
And Destiny will sometime puff  
A Prophet with such fulsome stuff  
That in the place of heart and brains  
The Inquest shows in the remains  
Excelsior.  
—N. Y. Sun.