PASTORAL OF THE BISHOP OF ST. JOHN, N. B., ON FAITH

TIMOTHY, BY THE GRACE OF GOD AND FAVOUR OF THE APOSTOLIC SEE, BISHOP OF ST. JOHN

To the Clergy, Religious Orders and Laity of the Diocese: Health and Benediction in the Lord.

Dearly Beloved.—The Lenten Pastoral Letter of His Lordship Bishop Casey was read recently in the Cathedral, and in all the churches, in which the pastors officiated throughout this diocese. This letter is on Faith and the consequent good morals which must result from a just observance of this theological virtue. The text of the letter is as follows:

No one can read the New Testament, thoughtfully, without being struck by the importance which the sacred writers attach to Faith, and by the emphasis with which they declare it necessary to salvation. There are frequently found such unqualified assertions as these: "This is the victory which overcometh the world, our faith: (I. John v. 4:) "My just man liveth by faith. . . But we are not the children of withdrawing unto perdition, but of faith to the saving of the soul:" (Hebr. x. 38,39;) "He that believeth not shall be condemned; (Mark xvi. 16.) These and numberless other such texts manifest the importance and necessity of faith without any ambiguity; and yet there is confusion almost without measure in the world in regard to faith, as is evidenced by above two hundred sects of professing Christians outside the Church, and the attempted inroads of Modernism within her pale. To be forewarned is to be forearmed; and it behooveth us to be on our guard lest we be overwhelmed in the widespread confusion of religious indifference, naturalism, rationalism, socialism, agnosticism and atheism, and thereby suffer shipwreck of the faith.

It will be of much advantage and edification to have a clear idea of what faith was in the time of the Apostles, for it cannot be different now without abandoning its principles. It is not to be forgotten that the New Testament was not yet written in the early years of apostolic teaching, and the Bible, as we have it in our day, was a future work for the Church's zeal. Now look at the Apostles preaching to the people, and making converts without number, before one word of the gospel is written. What are they teaching? They teach that Christ is the Son of God, that He was born of the Virgin Mary, that He died to redeem the world, arose, commissioned His Church to complete His work, ascended into Heaven, will come again to judge mankind, and to reward the good and punish the wicked. Now, it is worthy of observation, the world could not see or prove these things either with the eye or reason; but as many as were converted gave assent, decided and irrevocable, to the truths thus revealed on the living authority of an Apostle, as a messenger from God. No one questions, no one can question this; as the true expression of Christian faith in the days of primitive Christianity—faith was the submission of reason to a living authority. Men were attracted somewhat by a ostolic fame; and as Moses, when he saw the burning bush, turned aside to see "that great sight," they remained to believe and adore. If they hesitated, waited for more light or further proof, it was a sign that they did not think the Apostles were sent from God to reveal His will, that, consequently, they had no true faith at all.

That great luminary, the Teacher of the nations and the vessel of election to our Divine Lord, St. Paul, tells us this same truth in his inimitable and inspired language: "We give thanks to God without ceasing, because that when you had received of us the word of the hearing of God, you received it, not as the word of men, but (as it is indeed) the word of God." (Thess. ii. 13) Christ Himself said the same thing in terms different but just as direct: "He that heareth you, heareth Me, and He that despiseth you, despiseth Me; and he that despiseth Me, despiseth Him that sent Me." (Luke x. 16) Many other passages could be adduced which, with these, all go to prove that God sent, and will continue to send, messengers or ambassadors unto the end of the world; that He commits His word to them to be spoken by them, but wills the world to receive it not as the word of man, but as the word of God; that consequently, faith was, in primitive Christianity, and is to-day, a decided and unwavering assent to revealed truth as proposed by a living authority. Hear again the Apostles of the nations: "Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach a gospel to you besides that which we have preached to you, let him be anathema." (Gal. i. 8.) Did not St. Paul anticipate all variations from true apostolic faith, and stamp them with a malediction that would seem reactionary in modern times, even if uttered by an inspired Apostle?

Our first quotation from the Bible was from the most exalted of the sacred writers, and it predicted wonderful works for the faith as understood in apostolic times: "This is the victory which overcometh the world, our faith." (I. John v. 4.) It would not be hard to adduce many instances to show how truly prophetic was St. John in this sublime announcement, and how marvellous was the progress of the faith as shown in Christian civilization, upreared on the crumbling paganism of ancient Rome and the barbarism of northern Europe. The late distinguished English statesman, Mr. Gladstone, speaking of Christianity, and therefore of the faith that inspires it, says, "it has marched for fifteen hundred years at the head of human civilization, and has driven, harnessed to its chariot as the horses of a triumphal car, the chief intellectual and material forces of the world." All history testifies to the truth of this profound reflection of the great statesman. Christianity is a tremendous, though mysterious, fact in human history; and, from its inception, has not ceased to exercise an incalculable influence on religion, science, art, literature, social life, politics, human joys, sorrows and progress. The unbeliever may deny this: his denial but shows his incapacity to grasp the philosophy of history. Instances might easily be multiplied illustrating how Christianity formed not only the Christian saint but the Christian citizens, the Christian statesmen, the Christian soldier, and the Christian philanthropist; and all this it has done by making its doctrines and dogmas the basis and motives, upon which the superstructure of Christian civilization was built; but the limits of this letter confine us to one or two, to which the conditions of our times demand more urgent attention.

Our legislation for the protection of child-life in this country in contrast with that of ancient classical Greece, or Rome, affords a striking illustration of the difference between Christian and Pagan civilization. We protect the life of the child as any other human life; for, according to Christian doctrine, that life is a soul that came from the hands of the eternal God, and will return to Him to live forever. Though the body be deformed, coming from parents perhaps deformed, the spirit that animates it is the handwork of the Most High, and therefore to kill the child is a capital offence, the crime of murder in the sight of God, whether the crime be committed before, or after, the child's birth; for, there, was present a soul of priceless value. The unbeliever may deny this, and will try to make good his denial. Should he succeed, his success would be a tremendous stride back to pagan civilization. Now, let us see what value the pagans put on the life of a child.

From their very best men and authorities, we learn facts that make us shudder at their worse than the brute's treatment of its young. They were confreres in our humanity, human hearts just like ours beat in their bosoms; yet so confined and tender have ours become, through the principle of faith, that we shudder at the mere narration of their horrible treatment of children. From no less an authority than Aristotle, we learn that is was a common practice of his day, is was a public, legalized act, for parents to expose their children to death. Lycurgus claimed the children as the property of the state; and one of his laws commanded that all children born with any deformity should immediately be put to death. The result of such laws and customs was, that parents treated their children just as men do their new-born whelps; they kept as many as they pleased, and sold or killed the others. In this state of the world, a voice is heard in an unsignificant village of a newly-conquered province in the far distant East. The sound is faint, it is the plaintive cry of the Babe of Bethlehem; but it is not to be stilled until, penetrating the highest heaven, it has uttered its undying protest before the throne of eternal Justice against the barbarous murder of children. It was the Divinity clothed with childhood, to proclaim its sanctity and to protect children from ruthless slaughter. That the divine protest still obtains, is shown by our own Christian legislation against infanticide.

From the child, it is but a natural step to the consideration of the state of woman under similar influences. To recognize what Faith has done for her emancipation and elevation, how it has overcome the world for her, we have but to recall her condition in pagan times, or to look at it to-day among the nations little influenced by Christianity. In those times and among those nations, the condition of women was and is such as to make us shudder who so love and respect our mothers, and our sisters, and our wives. We have their own philosophers and historians bearing witness that, even in their most cultured times, divorces were of frequent, in larger cities of almost daily, occurrence; and they attracted no attention. One woman is mentioned in a reliable history (Juvenal), who divorced eight husbands in five months! One of the most illustrious of the pagan philosophers, sometimes called the "divine Plato, actually and shamelessly advocated a community of wives that the children might belong exclusively to the State. Polygamy, simultaneous or successive, was a matter of course, and excited no comment. To what state of degradation had woman, created purer than man, fallen! Thus was the world at its worst, and woman's slavery at its perfection, where there stood, in the stable at Bethlehem a woman whose arms became the throne of the eternal God, the new-born King, come to introduce a new civilization—to free and exalt womanhood.

The first among the redeemed was His spotless Mother. Mary could stand in the lowly stable, the representative of emancipated womanhood, and proclaim in her sublime Canticle the great things God did for her, and through her for the rest of her sex: "My soul doth magnify the Lord. . . Because He that is mighty hath done great things to me: and holy is His name." (Luke i, 46, 49.) The Church at once attacked polygamy, both simultaneous and, equally criminal, successive; and she has never ceased, and never will cease, to wage war upon it as the destroyer of woman's dignity and freedom. This freedom was won, and can be retained only by adhesion to that principle of faith which, for woman, is the greatest principle of Christian civilization—that the marriage tie is indissoluble: "What therefore God hath joined together, let no man put asunder." (Matt. xix. 6) By submitting to modern paganism which ignores the Christian religion, woman must in time lose the dignity and freedom she now possesses, and return to the condition from which she was emancipated. Human nature has not changed, human passions have not been extinguished. Their entire suppression is the only wise course; and the Church, speaking and acting for Christ, has never sanctioned their partial indulgence by contenancing marriage after divorce, but has always legislated against the very possibility of such an evil. May the world soon recognize the wisdom of the old Church in her struggle for the indissolubility of the marriage tie, in her efforts to save woman from a relapse into her moral degradation under paganism!

What Faith has done for childhood and womanhood, Christianity has done in quite an equal degree for two other great classes of suffering humanity—prisoners and slaves. It is painful to rehearse the tortures of the common dungeons of pagan civilization even at its highest culture, the gladiatorial contests in which even brother was forced to slaughter brother for the amusement of cultured men and society women, and the scourgings unto death of poor slaves at the hands of inhuman masters. These were common features of prevailing civilization, when a Prisoner stood before Pilate in his judgment hall at Jerusalem. He was bound, and He was scourged; but, by His death, He introduced the new civilization that has ever since demanded fair treatment for prisoners and the abolition of slavery. He taught that the prisoner, and the slave, and the outcast, are possessed of souls that will live on after the last echoes of the world, crumbling to dissolution, shall have died out—souls that will live forever. Again, Christianity teaches that all these unfortunates partake of the nature that the Deity assumed in the Incarnation, and are therefore brothers to the Son of God. As these Christian principles gradually permeated the nations the new civilization began its beneficent influence for the comfort of these afflicted members of the human family. Many other instances might be adduced; but enough has been said to show that St. John spoke truly as a prophet, when he declared: "This is the victory which overcometh the world, our faith."

It is worth while to recall now what we have said of the nature of faith, to try to understand it better; since we see its importance, nay, even its necessity, to civilization, and consequently, to human happiness as well as to eternal salvation. We have defined it as an assent of the mind, firm, decided and irrevocable, to revealed truth, on a living authority. That is what it was in the apostles' time, and it cannot be anything else now, and still be faith. It is not fancy, imagination, sentiment, or opinion; but, to be faith, it must be a firm belief or unwavering acceptance of truth on authority. Everyone knows we can be just as sure of a thing on authority as by personal investigation. Our ordinary citizen is as sure that there is such a place as London, as if he had the advantage of a visit to that great metropolis of the world. We also accept the demonstrations of the astronomers and mathematicians, that have gone before us with the same assurance as if we had gone through the process ourselves. These are two legitimite ways of ascertaining facts—personal investigation and authority.

Nothing is further from the truth, than to suppose that we believe without sufficient or reasonable grounds. It is not enough to have sentiment and feeling favorable to the doctrines taught. While these may accompany and follow faith, they are so far from constituting it, that they are not even necessary for it. Human intelligence must be brought into action to ascertain that God has spoken; then without pretending to understand all about the truth divinely revealed, the will is brought to bear upon the mind, and obliges it to accept the truth, because God has made it known. This brings our attention to a fact not always recognized,—faith is a moral, as well as an intellectual act. One's experience need not be very large to note that there are persons who believe with all their mind, but refuse to accept and embrace the truth with their will. Here may be noted a striking point of differenee between human knowledge and divine faith. In the former, the mind simply believes and accepts the truth demonstrated; in the case of faith, it is not only the mind that acts in accepting the truth revealed, but the will takes it as a favor from God, that such a doctrine was revealed for its advantage as well as for the benefit of the world; and therefore accepting it as a duty, it loves and embraces it.

It is not hard to see that grace from God is necessary to perform an act, such as we have been describing. Both the gift of faith and its exercise in act and habit, are the effects of divine grace. This grace, however, is never refused to any man, who makes use of the means to obtain it. These means are fidelity in conscience to the light that he has and to the duty of prayer to God to know His truth and will. By the honest practice of these means, within the reach of every man, sooner or later grace will come; and the faithful soul, grasping the fulness of divine revelation, makes its perfect act of faith in prophecy and in its fulfillment, "I believe;" and then, "a flood of light bursts around it not less, but greater, than that which flashed into existence when the flat of omnipotence first broke the silence of eternity.

This is the light of faith—the result of the grace of God enlightening the mind and moving the heart, and the good will of man co-operating with the divine action. It is this faith, "by which my just man liveth," which renders all the individual's efforts worthy of reward, and which supplies the motive for all the great works of Christian civilization. We have seen its doctrines underlying the two greatest features of our civilization—our treatment of children and women, the very essence of family life, and therefore the very synthesis of national life—and, if we choose to continue our analysis, we will find like dogmas under its every other great work.

As we desire our personal sanctification, and as we desire with almost equal ardor a continuance of our Christian civilization, it behooveth us above all things to cultivate our faith, to increase it; for, "without faith," says St. Paul, "it is impossible to please God." By thus increasing and practising our faith, we will save our souls, and leave the world the better because we have lived in it.

Attention is again invited to the late fervent exhortation of the Holy Father to the practice of daily Communion, by which we partake of the mystery of faith," eat the Bread, to which the Divine Master attaches everlasting life: "I am the living bread. . . If any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever; and the bread, that I will give, is My flesh for the life of the world."—(John vi., 51, 52).

As you are aware, the Pontiff has recently settled all doubts with regard to the age at which children are to be admitted to their First Communion, and the knowledge required for so great an occasion. They are to know intelligently the existence of God, their Creator and last end, His Unity and Trinity, the Incarnation, Death and Resurrection of our Lord and Saviour. Then it is necessary that the little ones be able to distinguish the Blessed Sacrament from common bread. All this is a simpler process than, perhaps, we have been accustomed to believe. Parents and guardians are exhorted to co-operate with the Reverend Clergy in so preparing the children by instruction and prayer, that all may be able to make their First Communion by Trinity Sunday. The strong words of Cardinal Gennari are worthy of attention: "This decree is not one of counsel, but of precept; not indeed a precept binding under venial, but under mortal sin."

You are likewise, doubtless, aware of the very great strain put upon our coreligionists in the North-West through the influx of a hundred and fifty thousand Ruthenian Catholics, without priest or physician to attend to their spiritual or corporal wants. The Archbishop of St. Boniface and his suffragan Bishops of the neighboring dioceses, had burdens heavy enough already in serving their own people; we can easily imagine how this new and vast multitude of strangers makes their burdens greater than they can bear alone. It was, therefore, the ardent desire of the Fathers of the First Plenary Council of Quebec, that we should all lend a helping hand. Your charity is so well known that it seems unnecessary to dwell longer on the matter now; but the Reverend Clergy are requested to make a fervent appeal for this crying need the second Sunday of May next, and take up a collection the following Sunday, May 21; and as soon as convenient afterwards to forward it here, that it may all be sent to the aid of our severely tried brethren in the West. The hope is cherished that the offerings will be generous for so worthy an object.

The regulations for Lent will be the same as last year.

A spirit of generosity in self-denial and fervent prayer, should animate us all during the Holy Season; and all are earnestly exhorted to abstain in a spirit of penance from unnecessary pleasures and intoxicating liquor.

The Grace of our Lord Jesus be with you all, Brethren.

This Pastoral shall be read in every Church of the diocese on the first Sunday after its reception that the Pastor shall officiate therein.

T. CASEY, Bishop of St. John.
A. W. MEAHAN, Secretary.

Given at St. John, the Feast of Saint Cyril, February 20, 1911.

SUNDAY IN IRELAND

[From John Bull, an English paper:]

One Saturday evening in August, 1908, I found myself stranded in a little village in the south of Ireland. Careening into a donkey cart, I broke the pedal of my bike, at the same time gave a nasty wrench to my ankle. There was no help for it—I had to spend Sunday at Bally (I shall call it that—it's quite Irish, you know.)

Now it was my first week in the Emerald Isle, and I was utterly ignorant of the Irish Sunday, but I had a strong notion that it would be sad and gloomy. My spirits did not ascend when the landlady of the public house where I put up declared that they never got Sunday papers. Some of her spirits descended, though, and proved "grateful and comforting." Sunday morning, about 6, I was awakened by the gentle tolling of a bell. I groaned in spirit, but did not stir till 9:30. At breakfast the good lady asked me if I wanted to go to "the Protestan' church." She said it was four Irish miles away, but the So-and-So's would "give me a lift there and back." I declined, but for the want of anything to do asked if there would be any objection to my going to the Roman Catholic church.

She told me I should be "as welkim as the flowers in May" there, and offered me a share of her pew, but I preferred to go alone. I limped out into the street, and after a somewhat painful seven minutes, found myself outside the chapel railings amid a fine, sturdy body of men who were calmly watching the other sex as they passed into the church.

But what is this? Down the narrow street dashed two or three farmers' carts and a brake. They stopped right opposite the church and deposited their passengers—close on twenty dashing looking sun-browned young fellows.

"What is this about?" I feebly asked an onlooker.

"They're goin' to a hurlin'," he replied; "these boys are the Cahirmona team and they'll hurl to-day over at Knock. They're only stopping here for Mass."

"Are they going into church like that?" I asked.

"To be sure, 'tisn't to lose Mass on account of a hurlin' they would," he said.

"It hardly seems a fit dress for a church," said I.

"Arrah, 'tisn't at their clothes, but their hearts th' Almighty will be lookin'," said my friend, and I felt rebuked.

The clergyman was a middle-aged and rather worn man, who spoke with more than a touch of the brogue.

"I would ask the boys who are going to this hurling match to-day," he said, "to behave as becomes Irishmen and Catholics. Let there be no desecration of the Lord's Day. Do your best for your side and enjoy yourselves but don't disgrace yourselves and your country either by quarrels or by drunkenness." The priest did not think harmless enjoyment a desecration of Sunday. I ventured to ask my landlady if the priests allowed secular music on Sundays.

"Why not? What harm is it?" was the reply.

"They don't like it in England and Scotland," said I.

"Maybe they like worse things," she retorted.

Evening came, and the sound of lively music again drew me from the house. Led by it, I arrived at some crossroads.

About twenty-four young men and maidens were dancing on the white limestone road, while, seated on the fence, an old man was evoking wondrous music from a violin, whose age apparently rivalled his. Other couples were waiting their turn, laughter rang out, badinage was lightly tossed from one to the other. A horseman came galloping along the road, and the dancers moved aside as a clergyman came near. He was evidently well known.

"Are you having a dance, young people?" he called out, cheerily. "That's right; that's right; but be home before dark now, girls, or your mothers will be looking for you."

I watched fascinated—so would any one to whom the vim and life of Irish dancing is a new thing. Six o'clock came, and the church bell tolled again. The couples paused in the middle of the wild jig; the young men bared their heads, the old fiddler and others seated on the fence stood up. I saw them make the sign of the cross, saw their lips move in prayer for a few minutes; then the men dancers covered their heads again, and dancing was in full swing.

When I want a continental Sunday again I shall go westward to the Green Isle, where the simple people seem to enjoy themselves on the day of rest and yet always find time to attend to their religious duties.

Missionaries and Missionaries

Richard Barry, the war correspondent, in Pearson's Magazine, makes this comparison, drawn from actual life as he witnessed it himself.

"Although I am not a Catholic, and was raised in a Protestant church, I must confess that when I travelled down the Yang Tse Kiang my allegiance instinctively went out to three Jesuits, who were travelling in the steerage, wearing Oriental garb, making themselves as inconspicuous as possible and acting to all outward semblance, like Chinamen, holding faith with their triple vow to silence, poverty and obedience.

"At the same time, there were at table with me in the first saloon, three Protestant missionaries, of different denominations, each with his chinese servant, and each explaining to me, at different times, how he really ought to have more money to get along properly in that heathen country. Had it come to a spiritual show down, I fear I should have cast my lot with the Jesuits. Their conduct accorded more closely with my interpretation of the New Testament."

Goodness and honesty and sincerity and truth are the basis of all true character. To be not what we seem is a lie cast in the face of our friends.

Snobbishness has no place in the make-up of a gentleman. It is only weaklings lacking the stamp of heaven that assume such a role.

A good deed is never lost. He who sows courtesy reaps friendship, and he who plans kindness gathers love.

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Financial Statement

OF THE

Mutual Life of Canada

HEAD OFFICE - WATERLOO, ONTARIO

For Year Ending December 31st, 1910

CASH ACCOUNT

INCOME		DISBURSEMENTS		
Net Ledger Assets, December 31st, 1909	$13 809,737.02	To Policyholders:		
Premiums (net)	2,245 264 25	Death claims	$347,764.42	
Interest	775,732.14	Matured Endowments	258 319 00	
		Surrendered Policies	87,246 25	
		Surplus	101 523.60	
		Annuities	9,905.91	$ 804,759.18
		Expenses, Taxes, etc.		502,780.60
		Balance Net Ledger Assets, December 31st, 1910		15,523,193.63
	$16 830 733.41			$16 830,733.41

BALANCE SHEET

ASSETS		LIABILITIES	
Mortgages	$8,296,184.57	Reserve, 4%, 3½% and 3%	$13,307,984.13
Debentures and Bonds	4,994,077 00	Reserve on lapsed policies on which surrender values are claimable	2 624 97
Loans on Policies	2,027,133 70	Death claims unadjusted	38,950.00
Premium Obligations	14,722.05	Present value of amounts not yet due on matured instalment policies	104 424.26
Real Estate	86,853 11	Matured Endowments, unadjusted	2,400.00
Cash in Banks	119,186.39	Premiums paid in advance	14,890.28
Cash at Head Office	5 651 34	Due for medical fees and sundry accounts	11,420.26
Due and Deferred Premiums (net)	389 068 81	Credit Ledger Balances	20,614 53
Interest Due and accrued	346,684 61	Surplus, December 31st, 1910	2,776,253.15
		(Surplus on Government Standard of Valuation, $3,042,427.29)	
	$16,279,561.58		$16,279 561 58

Audited and found correct.
J. M. SCULLY, F.C.A., Auditor.
Waterloo, January 24th, 1911.

GEO. WEGENAST,
Managing Director.

New Business (Canadian) written in 1910	$ 9,332,774 ;	Increase over 1909	$1,207,196
Assurance in force, December 31st, 1910	64,855,279 ,	Increase over 1909	5,593,320
Assets, all solid, December 31st, 1910	16,279,562 ;	Increase over 1909	1,761,120
Surplus, December 31st, 1910	2,776,253 ;	Surplus earned in 1910	615,083

The general results for the year have been most gratifying, showing:—(a) Decrease in Death Losses; (b) Increase in Rate of Interest earned on investments; (c) A Low Expense Rate.

The interest Income for 1910 exceeded the Death Losses by $427,967.72 a sum almost sufficient to pay all the expenses of the Company for the year.