

JUDGMENT OF SOLOMON

Its Application in the Education Controversy.

WHICH IS THE TRUE MOTHER?

To the Editor of the Catholic Register.

Kindly permit me to place before the readers of your valuable paper, Father Young's "Judgment of Solomon" on the School Question (Catholic and Protestant countries compared, page 200). With a few slight changes, which the reader can easily make, it will apply equally well to our own School Question:

"My readers will recall the Scripture story; how King Solomon the Wise gave a judgment which at once discovered the true mother of the child claimed by two women. 'Divide the child in two, and give a half to each woman' was the decree. 'I am content' said the impostor. 'Nay,' cried out the true mother, 'not so; do not kill the child but give it to her that it may live.' Then said the wise King: 'Give the child to her, and let it not be divided, for she is the true mother thereof.'"

What application has this wise judgment of Solomon to the present contention between Catholics and Protestants as to who shall have the child, all of the child, so as that it may receive proper intellectual, moral and religious education, a whole, true, living education?

That which goes to make up a true education is composed of two elements well distinguished as religious and secular. To day we hear a popular, insincere clamor, all the more self-condemnatory in those who use it, which distinguishes those elements as sectarian and non-sectarian. Given together both these elements combine to unify the educational vitality of the child and they mutually strengthen each other. To divide them is as fatal to the true mental and moral being of a child as it would be its certain death to force a separation between its soul and body, to divide the spiritual from the material element of a living man. This has not only been the constant assertion of the Catholic Church, but until the late rise of Nullifidian (no faith) secularism in politics and education, threatening a violent disruption of the political and social order, such was also the common sentiment of all religious-minded Protestants. . . . Who does not see that the popular Protestant cry to-day is: 'Divide the child in two. We are content!' And what is enough to make one shudder with horror is to hear in effect, the insane clamor from the Protestant multitude: 'Divide all the children in two with the sword of the state; sooner than that the Catholic children shall live, let the sword fall as well upon our own!' But let us look further in order to see even yet more clearly which is the true Mother in this rivalry for possession of the child. As yet the sentence of Solomon, 'Give the living child to Catholic woman for she is the mother thereof,' has not been pronounced, and as the impostor came before Solomon's judgment-seat in possession of the child, so Protestants are now practically in possession of the children, as a body, in this country. Now for the test.

Thus the Catholic woman: 'I pray thee, O just and wise State, to grant unto me thy servant that I may give suck unto my child. Behold how it languishes and faints for want of nourishment, and 'my bowels of compassion are moved upon my child' as I witness its sufferings. Behold my breasts are full, and this other woman's are dry. Therefore, suffer me to come unto the child that I may suckle it."

"Nay, I will not that she come near it!" cries out the Protestant woman. "Keep her off, O King State! Deny her all access to the child. No sectarianism in the public schools! Is not that the law which the Protectors of American Institutions would fain make, O King State, if they could? It is true, I have little or no 'sectarian' milk to give the child, for my breasts are dry, or so nearly dry that the child will not suck. But thou neither shall she suckle it, however full her breasts. Keep her off; for if once she be permitted to nurse the child before thine eyes, O State, and in the sight of all the people, then will her fruitfulness be shown, and the shame of my barrenness be made manifest."

"Then I pray," still pleads the Catholic woman, "that I may, at least, take the child under my own roof-tree and there minister unto its wants." "Forbid her also this," cries the other; and there is a dog in the manger, wrath in her eyes and fury in her hands, "as she looks around for her friends and neighbors, her 'Evangelical Alliance,' her 'National League for the Protection of American Institutions,' her 'A.P.A.'s' and her 'Loyal British Orangemen,' who have come over to help 'protect American Institutions.' 'No foreign domination!' carried by the British Orangemen; 'no Church and State!' carried by the Evangelical Alliance, which labored hard in Congress to establish the Protestant religion, and failed, 'no State aid to sectarian schools!' carried by the National League for P.A.I.s, and, in place of a banner, an old hangman's noose formerly used in Ireland to choke the Catholic woman's brothers who were school-masters, carried by the A.P.A.s, and the United Order of American Mechanics.

And as they all stand face to face round about the king's judgment seat, King State sayeth to his officers: "Bring me a sword!" and the friends of the Protestant woman bring him a sharp sword they have themselves prepared—the sword of the "XVth Amendment to the Constitution." And when they have brought the sword to the king, "Divide," saith he, "the living child in two, and give half to the one and half to the other." And the woman whose child is alive saith to the king (for her bowels yearn upon her child): "I beseech thee, my lord, give her the child alive, and do not kill it, but grant me leave to come unto it, so that it die not; I will stand without her school house all the day, and when she and the child shall be weary of each other, then thy servant craves to be let come near unto the fruit of her own womb for the space of a brief half hour, O King State, and in haste will I suckle it that it die not, and go my way." But the other cries out: "Let it be neither mine nor hers, but Nullifidian, and be divided, though it die."

Shall not the King State answer and say in the words of Solomon the Wise: "Give the living child to the Catholic woman, and let it not be divided, for she is the true mother thereof?" And shall not all America "hear the judgment which King State shall judge and fear the kind, seeing that the wisdom of God is in him to do judgment?" Yours &c., J. F.

The "priest" who figured in that church fight out in Omaha last week is not a regularly ordained clergyman, but claims to have been ordained by "Archbishop" Vilatte, whose own orders are not beyond question. The trouble was another of those senseless ones which newlylanded Poles seem bent upon fomenting in their parishes whenever things do not happen to go to their liking. The "priest" who attempted to hold this church from the regular congregation, to whom even the civil courts had decreed it, seems to blame for this Omaha occurrence however.

CARDINAL GIBBONS.

His Opinion of Former Priests Who Malign the Catholic Church.

Cardinal Gibbons, in a sermon delivered last Sunday at the Baltimore Cathedral, said in part: "How true it is that history repeats. The same calumnies that were uttered against our Lord and Saviour in his day, the same calumnies that were inculcated against the primitive church are ventilated to-day against the Church of God, her clergy and members.

"Let me give one instance out of a thousand that I might bring forward to illustrate the subject. The Catholic Church is jealous of the honor and rectitude of her clergy. It is her constant aim that they should walk in innocence and blamelessness of life. But whenever any of her clergy is known to have contracted any degrading habits incompatible with his sacred calling, he is withdrawn from the active pursuits of the ministry until he has given marks of reformation.

"But we find it very hard to please our enemies. They are very inconsistent. If we were to retain a degenerate clergy in the exercise of the public ministry, they would point the finger of scorn at us and say: 'See how low is the moral standard of the Catholic clergy.' If we dismiss one of them from the service of the altar, they will forthwith pick him up from the gutter and receive this 'fallen angel' with open arms; they will embrace him as a long lost brother and take him to their bosom and lead him about the country like some strange animal and exhibit him to public gaze.

"He is sure, of course, to misrepresent and malign the Church, for what son ever spoke kindly of the mother whom he had insulted and dishonored? His masters are sure to dictate the subjects on which he is to speak, which are popular and attractive for the time being, such as the everlasting inquisition, the confessional and the Pope. They affect to believe this man in his fall, whom they would not hear when he was honored in the sanctuary.

"If it is a sin to tell a jocose lie, if it is a crime to calumniate one's neighbor how shall we characterize the offense of those who malign the largest body of Christians in the world? And the calumny becomes all the more reprehensible when uttered from a Christian pulpit, which ought to be the chair of truth. A slander uttered there is an aggravated offense against truth and justice, charity and religion."

Don't Get Up Early.

It is said to be natural, that is physiological, to rise early and enjoy the beauties of sunrise. If we ask why, we are treated to various transcendental theories about the vivifying influence of the sun, and are told to take example by the birds of the air and the beast of the field, or so many of them as are not nocturnal in their habit. But, as a matter of fact, physiology, so far as it has anything to say on the subject at all, is all against the early rising theory. Physiological experiment appears to show that man does not work best and fastest in the early morning hours but on the contrary, about midday. The desire to rise early, except in those trained from youth to outdoor pursuits, is commonly a sign not of strength of character and vigor of the body, but of advancing age. Thus paterfamilias, who goes to bed at 11 P. M., wants to get up at 5 or 6 A. M., and looks upon his healthy son, who lies till 8, as a sluggard. When this interpretation of a proverb about the health and wealth to be got from early rising is combined with the still more foolish adage which says of sleep: "Six hours for a man, seven for a woman and eight for a fool," then we have a vicious system capable of working great mischief to young people of both sexes.

A Cardinal's Prophecy.

A few years ago, says the New York Sun, the late Cardinal Lavignerie organized his band of White Fathers on the northern border of the Sahara. They were enlisted for the work of extending their faith and the knowledge of civilization among the desert tribes. When the aged Cardinal consecrated the pioneers in this service, on the edge of the desert at Biekra, he pointed over the sandy waste before them and told the devoted band that they or their successors would some day cross those thirsty plains and preach the Gospel in the streets of Timbuctoo.

Less than ten years have since elapsed. Who that read the burning words spoken by the venerable prelate on that day thought of them other than the zealous utterances of a good but visionary old man? Who dreamed then that to-day a party of these White Fathers would be on their way to the forbidden city, certain that no man will stay their progress, and that they will be as safe within the shadow of Timbuctoo's mosques as in the streets of Algiers?

The impossible has happened. There are scores of white men in the famous town, which, up to January, 1894, only four or five disguised Europeans had ever seen, and then at the peril of their lives. There are French forts with guns pointed out over the desert whence the nomad Tuaregs used to come on their fierce raids; and the upper Niger offers an unimpeded highway to the doors of Timbuctoo.

A little later, when Cardinal Lavignerie preached his anti-slavery crusade, and by his eloquence moved several nations to concerted action for the suppression of the export trade and of slave raiding in the interior, he said, on the platform of Exeter Hall, that within a score of years the civilized world would free the remotest parts of Africa from the horrors of the slave chase, and that in half that time this crime must be stifled in its hot-bed, the Congo basin.

Who believed the Cardinal's words would come true? The war he preached seemed the work of a century. The white influences that in a few years, might be brought to bear upon inner Africa seemed contemptible in comparison with the deep rooted and widely spread evil to be fought. Where were the men who could live in that baneful climate and hold in check the rich and arrogant Arab raiders?

Though wholly unforeseen, the opportunity came and the men to meet it. The war, which the Congo State would have averted if it could, was forced upon it by the Arabs. That glorious campaign, led by a handful of Belgian officers with a few thousand native soldiers, lasted two years, until every slave raider in the Congo State had been driven out of the country, and across Tanganyika; and the German flag is now flying at Ujiji and other Arab strongholds east of that lake, once the great centres of the slave raiding powers.

Nothing in the last quarter of this century was so completely unforeseen, or seemed so incredible when predicted, as this wonderful march of events in Africa.

Too Sudden.

Clergyman (showing a lady visitor round the church): "Now, madam, you have seen the organ, the font and the nave; I should next like to conduct you to the altar."

Lady Visitor: "Oh! this is so sudden."—Church Review.

Try to keep clear of prejudice, and be willing to alter any opinion you may hold when further light breaks upon your mind. He is clever beyond precedent, or weak beyond measure, who never sees reason to change his judgment of men and things.