

The Reasonableness of the Practices of the Catholic Church.

By REV. J. J. BURKE.

Respect Shown to Ecclesiastical Superiors.

XVI.

"We are ambassadors for Christ; God, as it were, exhorting us by us" (2 Cor. v. 20). "As the Father sent me, I also send you" (John xix. 21). "Go ye into the whole world and preach the Gospel to every creature" (St. Mark xvi. 15).

The respect Catholics have for the bishops and priests of the Church is often a matter of surprise to those not of the faith. They do not understand, as Catholics do, that the priests are "ambassadors for Christ" sent to "preach the Gospel to every creature." For Christ instituted the priesthood to carry on divine worship, to govern the Church, to preach His doctrine, and to administer the sacraments.

As in the Old Law God chose His priests from among the family of Aaron, so in the New Law He chooses them from among those whom His apostles and their successors see fit to ordain. Priests and other ministers of the Church receive in the sacrament of holy orders the power and grace to perform their sacred duties. If we would but consider seriously for a moment the importance of these duties and the great dignity of the minister of God, we would have no difficulty in understanding the reasonableness of the Catholic practice of showing profound respect to God's priesthood.

The priest is the minister of Jesus Christ, Who chose him that he might obtain for himself the greatest good and in return bestow this good upon his fellow-man. Jesus Christ chose him that he might aid him in the work for which He came on earth. What a noble mission! What important duties! What a great dignity! To aid Jesus Christ in saving souls, to teach them the truths of salvation, to loose them from their sins, to offer the Eucharistic Sacrifice for them, to pray for them, to administer unto them, and to fill them with Heaven's choice blessings: for such a high mission, for such important duties, did Jesus Christ choose the priest.

His duties are so important, his dignity must be correspondingly great. On the banks of the lake of Genesareth the Great Teacher chose Peter as His Vicar and head of His Church. As the Pontiff could not be everywhere, Peter and the other apostles imposed hands on others as the needs of the Church demanded. They understood that it was by a living, teaching ministry this work of salvation was to be carried on. For we find it recorded in the 14th chapter of the Acts that Paul and Barnabas ordained priests in Lystra and Iconium.

Paul also consecrated Titus Bishop of Crete, for the express purpose of ordaining others. Thus we see that as Christ was sent by the Father, the apostles by Christ, so, too, is the priest invested with the same power "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, and for the edification of the body of Christ" (Eph. iv. 12), and that no one but a priest divinely called, rightly ordained, and legitimately sent has power from God to teach God's words to the faithful. He is the ambassador of God, commissioned to do His work with His authority; the vicar of Christ continuing the work He commenced; and the organ of the Holy Ghost for the sanctification of souls. He is ever imitating His Model, going "about doing good." He devotes his life to alleviate the sufferings of men. To spend one's life instructing man is but second in importance to alleviating his sufferings. This the priest is ever doing. He rescues us from barbarism; saved for us at the risk of his life the Holy Scriptures, the classics of Greece and Rome, and the writings of the fathers; founded the great universities of Europe; and is to day, as in the past, the greatest educator in the world. He does all this for the love of God. Do you wonder, then, that Catholics love and revere their priests?

Nowhere can there be found a body of men or a series of rulers so venerable, so renowned for wisdom, justice, charity and holiness, as the popes, bishops and priests of the Catholic Church in every age, from the time of Christ to the present.

Celibacy.

"He who is unmarried careth about the things of the Lord, how he may please God" (1 Cor. vii. 35).

The Catholic Church recognizes matrimony as a holy state. She recommends celibacy to those desiring greater perfection, and enjoins it on her priests because, as St. Paul says, "He who is unmarried careth about the things of the Lord."

It is said that the life of the priest is a hard, lonely one, and that it is unsocial. Let us see. That his life is one of hardships is certain. His path is by no means one of roses; it is rather one covered with thorns. The young man knows this well before he enters it. With a full knowledge of its duties and responsibilities, he willingly enters the priesthood. He knows well that it is a life full of trials and crosses. He knows, too, that the whole life of Jesus Christ, from the stable of Bethlehem to the Cross on Calvary's heights, was one continuous trial, cross, mortification; and that the life of every follower, especially every minister, of Jesus Christ should be fashioned after that of His divine Model. "If any man will come after Me," He says in the 16th chapter of St. Matthew, "let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow Me." The disciple, the minister of Christ, is not

above his Master; and it is not becoming that the path of the disciple or minister should be covered with flowers while that of the Master was strewn with thorns and sprinkled with His own precious blood.

Yes, the priest's life is one of trials, crosses and hardships. But the more trials he has to bear, the more crosses he has to carry, the greater is his resemblance to his model, Jesus Christ; and if he bears those trials, crosses, and hardships, which he shares with his Master here, with a proper spirit, the more certain he is of sharing with Him a happy eternity hereafter. But is the life of celibacy unsocial? No. In fact, few questions are more clearly defined in Holy Scripture than that of religious celibacy. St. Paul, in the 7th chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, says: "I would have you without solicitude. He who is unmarried careth for the things of the Lord, how he may please God; but he who is married careth about the things of the world, how he may please his wife, and is divided. And the unmarried woman and virgin thinketh about the things of the Lord, how she may be holy in body and spirit. But she that is married thinketh about the things of the world, how she may please her husband. Therefore," he concludes, "he that giveth his virgin in marriage doth well; and he who giveth her not doth better. Could language be clearer? Marriage is good; celibacy is better."

He that is unmarried careth about the things of the Lord, how he may please God. This teaching of St. Paul is the teaching of the Church—marriage is honorable, is good, but that there is a better, a holier state for those who are called by the grace of God to embrace it.

Religious celibacy is one of the principal reasons why the Catholic priest and missionary will risk all dangers, overcome all obstacles, face all terrors, and in time of plague expose himself to death in its most disgusting forms for the good of his fellow-man.

All are acquainted with the noble examples of numbers of priests and Sisters of Charity who, at the risk of their own lives, voluntarily nursed the sick and dying during the yellow-fever scourge in the South a few years ago. Do you think they would have done so had they families depending upon them? No; they would have cared for the things of this world. Jesus Christ has said: "Greater love than this no man hath, that a man give up his life for his fellow-man." This the good priest is ever doing, ever ready to do. Although death stares him in the face, he never shrinks from his post of duty, never abandons his flock while there is a wound to heal, a soul to save.

When his duty calls him, he is not afraid of death, because St. Paul says: "He who is without a wife is solicitous about the things of the Lord."

CONCLUSION NEXT WEEK.

A NOVEL COMBINATION.

People's Praise Services by a Priest and a Protestant Minister.

The pastor of the wealthiest Protestant church in Pittsburgh and the most prominent Roman Catholic priest there were promoters of a worthy enterprise which they have just abandoned, with the announcement that it will be revived next summer. They are Rev. Father Morgan M. Sheedy and Rev. George Hodges.

Twenty thousand were the net profits of a fair held in the Pittsburgh Exhibition Building for the joint benefit of the Roman Catholic Rosalia Foundling Asylum and the Protestant Bethesda Home for Fallen Women. The women in charge of the booths were both Protestant and Roman Catholic. The rich and poor, society leaders and the obscure patronized the fair.

In this same exhibition hall the Rev. Hodges and Father Sheedy held people's praise services for three Sunday afternoons, the total attendance being about 16,000. These Sunday concerts, fine orchestra and volunteer chorus of several hundred voices have been abandoned until next summer. They were a financial failure. The collections for the three concerts aggregated a little more than \$300, while the expenses footed up nearly \$1,000. A great many attendants did not contribute at all because they were too poor. A great many merely dropped a penny into the baskets. In some of the collections there were seven or eight hundred pennies, representing nearly as many contributors.

However, Father Sheedy and the Rev. Mr. Hodges believe this year's experiment will pave the way to greater popularity next summer, and they also hope for popular support financially. Father Sheedy, in response to criticisms, advises church-going people to stick to their churches, at the same time reminding the critics that the people's praise services were given to reach the thousands of people who are familiar with the outward aspect of church edifices alone. The people of this class were softened by the music, and the few words of spiritual advice which they heard may yet bring them within the fold.

They do not despair. An utter loss of hope is not characteristic of consumptives, though no other form of disease is so fatal, unless its progress is arrested by use of Scott's Emulsion, which is Cod Liver Oil made as palatable as cream.

Money saved and pain relieved by the leading household remedy, Dr. Thomas' ELECTRIC OIL—a small quantity of which usually suffices to cure a cough, heal a sore, cut, bruise or sprain, relieve lumbago, rheumatism, neuralgia, excoriated nipples, or inflamed breast.

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FUTURE OF THE PAPACY.

Prophectic Truths From Macaulay's Review of Barke's History.

The following extract from Lord Macaulay's review of Barke's "History of the Popes" is so often referred to and contains so much truth, so much prophetic truth, indeed, that we deem it advisable to lay it before our readers, though it must be well known to many of them:

"There is not, and there never will be on this earth, a work of human policy as well deserving of examination as the Catholic Church. The history of that Church joins together the two great ages of human civilization. No other institution is left standing which carries the mind back to the time when the smoke of sacrifice rose from the Pantheon and when camels, parvards and tigers bounded in the Flavian Amphitheatre. The proudest royal houses are of but yesterday when compared with the line of the Supreme Pontiffs. That line we trace back in an unbroken series from the Pope who crowned Napoleon in the nineteenth to the Pope who crowned Pepin in the eighth century, and far beyond the line of Pepin the august dynasty extends till it is lost in the twilight of fable. The republic of Venice came next in antiquity. But the republic of Venice was modern when compared with the Papacy, and the republic of Venice is gone and the Papacy remains."

"The Papacy remains, not in decay, not a mere antique, but full of life and useful vigor. The Catholic Church is still sending forth to the farthest ends of the world missionaries as zealous as those who landed in Kent with Augustine, and still confronting hostile kings with the same spirit with which she confronted Attila. The number of her children is greater than in any former age. Her acquisitions in the new world have more than compensated for what she has lost in the old. Her spiritual ascendancy extended over the vast countries which lie between the plains of Missouri and Cape Horn countries which a century hence may not improbably contain a population as large as that which now inhabits Europe. The members of her communion are certainly no fewer than 150,000,000 and it would be difficult to show that all other Christian sects would amount to 120,000,000. Nor do we see any sign that the term of her long dominion is approaching. She saw the commencement of all the governments that have existed in the world, and we feel no assurance that she is not destined to see the end of them all. She was great and respected before the Saxon had set his foot in Britain, before the Frank crossed the Rhine, when Grecian eloquence still flourished in Antioch, when idols were still worshipped in the temple of Mecca. And she may still exist in undiminished vigor when some traveler from New Zealand shall, in the midst of a vast solitude, take his stand on a broken arch of London bridge to sketch the ruins of St. Paul's."

THE SILENT PROCESSION OF CONVERTS.

There is nothing especially remarkable about the conversion of the Episcopal ministers, Revs. Messrs. Adam and Russell, announced recently. As quiet procession of converts from the sects is constantly pouring into the Church in all parts of the world. Now and then, as in the case of the two gentlemen noted above, the facts get into the papers, and a great ado is made over the matter, but as a rule, converts are more successful in avoiding publicity which to sincere and cultured minds is repugnant.

It is noteworthy that those who enter the true fold from the various divisions of Protestantism belong to the more intelligent adherents of that system—really religious persons whose search for a stable anchorage of faith leads them inevitably into the peaceful and safe port of Catholicity. In our own diocese there are thousands of devout Catholics who were once among the flower of the denominational brethren in their respective localities. Honest men and women, whose intellectual gropings after a logical and unchangeable system of belief and practice brought them gradually within the benign influence of Catholic truth. The grace of God supplementing the right use of reason and conviction crowned their quest with the peace and certainty of true faith. During his recent Episcopal tour of the diocese, our Right Rev. Bishop confirmed with the sacramental chrism more than one hundred of these newly-recruited soldiers of the cross.

That is the story of the Church in all parts of our great country. Annually, thousands enter the true fold from the best informed and best disposed among non-Catholic Christians. The mission of religion is to win all souls to God through the medium of the Church founded by Jesus Christ. The fulfillment of that supreme office proceeds necessarily for the most part without clamor or clangor.—Cleveland Catholic Universe.

Don't You Know

That to have perfect health you must have pure blood, and the best way to have pure blood, is to take Hood's Sarsaparilla, the best blood purifier and strength builder. It expels all taint of scrofula, salt rheum and all other humors, and at the same time builds up the whole system and gives nerve strength.

Hood's Pills may be had by mail for 25c. of C. I. Hood & Co., Lowell, Mass. Dr. J. McCormack, Macaulay, Man, writes: "Dr. Williams' Pink Pills cured me of dyspepsia after doctors had failed. They are a grand remedy." Sold by all dealers or by mail at five boxes for \$2.50. Dr. Williams' Med. Co., Brockville, Ont., and Schenectady, N. Y. Beware of imitations. Ask for Minard's and take no other.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE ONTARIO MUTUAL LIFE.

Excellent Year's Record—Steady and Substantial Progress.

The twenty-third Annual Meeting of this company was held in the Town Hall, Waterloo, Ont., on Thursday, May 25th, 1898, at one of the clock, p. m. The meeting was fairly well attended by a number of influential and representative policy-holders from various parts of the Dominion and the leading agents of the Company as well as the sister towns of Berlin and Waterloo.

The President, Mr. I. E. Bowman, M. P., having taken the chair, supported by the Manager, Mr. Wm. Hendry; on motion Mr. W. H. Riddell, the Secretary of the Company, acted as secretary of the meeting. Having read the notice calling the Annual Meeting, on motion the minutes of last annual meeting were taken as read and adopted, whereupon the President read:

THE DIRECTORS' REPORT: To the Policyholders of the Ontario Mutual Life Assurance Company: GENTLEMEN,—In submitting the following statements as their twenty-third Annual Report, your directors have great pleasure in being able to inform you that during the past year your company has made very substantial and satisfactory progress.

The total number of policies in force at the close of the year was 12,445, covering assurance amounting to \$16,122,195.38 on 11,220 lives.

During the past year 1,968 policies were issued for assurance, amounting to \$2,676,250, and 82 applications for \$121,500 were declined.

The net premium income for the year was \$503,389.13, and we received for interest on our investments the sum of \$111,562.13, making our total income \$614,951.26.

The total assets of the company at the close of the year were \$2,253,984.20, and the surplus, after deducting the liberal amount distributed among the policyholders, was \$176,301.30.

The amount paid for death claims during the past year was \$96,000 on 75 lives, which indicates a very low rate of mortality.

The ratio of expense to income was again reduced below that of the previous year.

The executive committee has carefully examined the securities held by the company and found them correct, as reported by your auditors.

The depreciation in the value of real estate has not impaired our mortgage investments, the margin on our valuations being sufficiently large to meet all probable reductions.

During the past few years there has been a material decline in the rate of interest, and present indications point towards a still further reduction, and we think that it is quite probable that before long all life assurance companies in Canada may have to hold a larger reserve than that which is required to be held at present.

These two contingencies will to some extent reduce the surplus of all the companies available for distribution among the policyholders. We confidently expect, however, to maintain in the future the liberal distribution of last year.

You will be called on to elect four directors in the place of I. E. Bowman, M. P., Alfred Hodson, Q. C., E. P. Clement and Hon. Wilfrid Laurier, all of whom are eligible for re-election.

The detailed statements prepared and duly certified to by your auditors are herewith submitted for your consideration. On behalf of the board,

I. E. BOWMAN, President.

NOW THE BUSINESS HAS INCREASED.

In commenting upon the report Mr. Bowman said that the amount of new insurance granted was in excess of the previous year and that the number of policies issued since Jan. 1 to May 25, 1898, was very considerably in excess of the amount issued during the corresponding period of last year. During that period in 1897 the insurance issued amounted to \$869,800, while during the same period this year it amounted to \$1,180,000, an increase of \$310,200.

The controllable part of the expenditure of the company had, owing to economical management of the directors, been somewhat decreased; the risks of the company had been carefully scrutinized before being taken, as shown by the death rate, and the funds were well and carefully invested, as shown by the rate of interest that had been realized. Notwithstanding the fact, common to all companies which had funds to invest, that the rate of interest had declined during the past year, the income derived from investments was a very handsome amount, exceeding the death losses for the year by no less a sum than \$15,000. He moved the adoption of the report.

STEADY AND SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS.

Mr. Robert Melvin, of Guelph, the second Vice-President, said that the report read by the President had shown the affairs of the company to be in a most satisfactory condition. A fair comparison between this and other companies showed that its standing was equal to the best. The record of the Ontario Mutual had been one of steady, substantial progress. In the year 1892 the assets amounted to \$127,420, while in 1897 they had increased to \$2,253,984. These were solid, substantial assets. They were in securities available at any time for the purpose for which they were intended. They were in securities that he believed to be of the safest

character. Because of the scarcity of investments that would yield a reasonably fair return, based

on the requirements of the government reserve, it was so hard to find favorable investments that some companies were compelled to place their money in one particular line of security.

This company was extending its operations to almost every safe kind of investment in Ontario, and some outside of Ontario. In 1892 the Ontario Mutual had \$5,504,478 of insurance in force, while in 1897 it had reached the sum of \$16,122,195. He thought all would admit that fair and reasonable progress had been made. Some other companies might have a larger amount of insurance in force, but in the earlier years of the Mutual the directors had felt, and he thought wisely so, that it would be well not to have too much business and not to accept the larger class of policies. Mr. Melvin seconded the motion for the adoption of the report.

Mr. B. M. Britton, Q. C., in supporting the motion regarded the absence of a large number of policyholders from the meeting as an indication that the great majority were satisfied with the management of the affairs of the company. He announced that the directors were considering the advisability of shortly extending the operations of the company to the province of Quebec, and stated that at each a commodious suite of offices had been secured in the new board of trade building in Montreal. An influential friend of the company had interested himself in insurance in that province so as to be a source of strength and profit to the company. He felt that the policyholders of the Ontario Mutual had good reason for boasting of the position which the company occupied at the present time and reason to anticipate still greater success in the future.

Mr. Wm. Hendry, the manager, did not agree with those who thought a change to a higher reserve necessary or advisable, inasmuch as no necessity for it existed nor would exist so long as the net rate of interest earned on investments, as it has done so far, exceeds 11 per cent. An unnecessarily large reserve imposed a serious burden on a company in the cost of its investments and also in the enhanced difficulty of obtaining desirable securities. Surplus distributions under a lower interest rate must necessarily range lower, but as this company holds a large surplus, with the view of being prepared to fill the higher reserve, if required, and considering besides as a safeguard to contingencies, the surplus to existing members would not be for the present decreased.

Some companies doing business in this country have materially reduced the dividends to their policyholders as compared with the previous year; but by rigid economy in every department and owing to the low ratio of mortality experienced, this company has not been and he hoped would not be compelled to follow their example in this respect.

Other members having spoken in terms of gratification of the excellent standing and satisfactory progress of the company, the report was unanimously adopted.

On motion of Mr. Henderson, seconded by Mr. F. C. Bruce of Hamilton, Messrs. H. F. J. Jackson and J. M. Scully were re-appointed auditors.

Mr. E. M. Sipprell of St. John, N. B., moved, seconded by Mr. J. A. McKay of Woodstock, that the thanks of this meeting be tendered to the President, Vice-Presidents and Directors for the care and attention devoted by them to the affairs of the company during the past year. Mr. Sipprell strongly commended the course pursued by the directorate and spoke in warm terms of the past progress and present position of the company. The resolutions were unanimously adopted.

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