

A REAL CONTRACT

Why Stipends Are Given for Celebrating Mass

No Buying or Selling—Theory of Church Support

Do Catholics buy the Mass when they give money to the priest for saying one in their behalf? The very essence of buying and selling, which lies in the exchange (in kind or in lies) of one thing for another as being its equivalent, is lacking to the transaction. This is an essential feature in every commercial bargain. But is there no bargain or contract at all between the layman and the celebrant of the Mass? Certainly there is. But here we must discriminate between different kinds of bargains or contracts. The sale contract is expressed technically by the phrase "do ut des"—i.e., I give you something you want that you may give me in exchange an equivalent which I want. Here evidently there is a comparison instituted between the value of the two things interchanged. In the case of Mass offerings there is none.

A Contract

To show that this is so, let me call attention to another theological point concerning stipends. Catholic theology teaches that the priest accepting the offering is bound by contract, and as a matter of justice, to do his part under pain of mortal sin. Now, it will often happen that the amount offered is not large enough to make the neglect of the Mass a grievous sin merely from the point of view of the Seventh Commandment (Prot. 8th). Hence the gravity of the priest's neglect consists in his depriving the layman of such an immense spiritual boon as Holy Mass is, and not in misappropriating the money, though that, of course, is a sin also, and in certain circumstances might be a grievous one. Clearly, then, there is no comparison instituted in the mind of a Catholic between the value of the money he offers and that of the spiritual service done him.

Professional Fees

The physician has his fees. But the life which he may preserve to me is not bought with them. There is no comparison between my restoration to health and occupation and the few guineas I pay him. Health and power to work may mean thousands to me. Here again what I am paying for is the support of the doctor, whose training may have been costly, and whose attention to patients closes to him for the most part many other openings for making money and gaining a livelihood.

Similarly, the priest claims support. His claims are even stronger. Besides being debarred from commerce and many other ways of self-maintenance by his sacred character and occupation, he is, moreover, expressly forbidden by ecclesiastical law to engage in strictly mercantile transactions, even if he have the time and opportunity.

Moreover, his duties involve great fatigue, loss of health, too, not infrequently, and he is bound, at the risk of his own life, if necessary, to minister the rites of the Church to the dying and to attend a bona fide sick call to a deathbed at any hour of the day or night, no matter what the fatigue or inconvenience. And he has no carriage, and commonly no horses nor motors, even if he can afford and ride a bicycle.

No Buying

Then, surely, "the laborer is worthy his hire." So says Our Lord—He Who is the type par excellence of absolutely disinterested zeal, labor and suffering for the souls of men. It is His ordinance, as St. Paul tells us (E. ix. 14), that they who preach the Gospel should live by the Gospel. When, therefore, a Catholic gives a few shillings for having a Mass said, he is sane enough not to fancy he is "buying a Mass." He merely takes this occasion—one he is by Church law bound to take—for contributing to the support of his pastor, so that while the latter devotes his time, energies and health to the spiritual welfare of his flock, he may not lack the temporal means of life. The priest himself shows no signs of bargaining in the matter. He would sin if he did. The extent of the fee itself is not left to his discretion; it is fixed by his Bishop. And here again, the fee varies in different places and countries, according to the means of the people and the dearth or cheapness of living for the priest. As these varying conditions cannot alter the value of the Mass, we have here a further proof that the money is given as an alms or offering for the maintenance of the priest, and not as an equivalent for the spiritual goods received. And what has been said of Mass offering applies equally to every other kind of priestly stipend.

The use of Mass offerings dates back

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probably no further than the eighth century, if as far. In the primitive Church—when the clergy lived in common—it was the custom for the faithful attending Mass to bring with them supplies of various kinds and money for the support of the ministry and for distribution to the poorer brethren. But when the number of the clergy had greatly augmented, and their common life had ceased, the practice arose among members of the faithful of making an offering to the priest when asking him to celebrate for their special benefit.

Simony and Absolution

The Catholic Church abhors simony in every shape and form, though some of our non-Catholic neighbors might smile incredulously at the statement. The particularly dense or prejudiced non-Catholic, on reading it might shake his head knowingly and refer in tones of pained conviction to the "well-known" abuse of Romanism in exacting payment in the confessional for absolution from sin. Is it worth while repelling such a charge, one which the manifest scarcity of pocket money among the vast majority of Catholic priests might be thought sufficiently to refute? It would be sinful waste, Mr. Editor, to squander your paper and printing ink over an attempt to prove the negative of this preposterous fable. For a Briton, especially of a class whose clothes show little wear about the knees, who has never so much as set foot in a confessional, yet confidently dogmatizes upon the simony there enacted, is not the sort into whose cranium the emphatic denial of those who do confess, and consequently know, is likely to make much headway.

Church Legislation

But, for all that, the Catholic Church abhors simony, as her legislation and practice show. She inflicts her severest spiritual punishment—that of separation from the sacraments and from her fold—on those convicted of this sin in its graver forms, especially in connection with Masses, benefices and indulgences. Even where a proceeding is not truly simoniacal, but might appear so to less discriminating or ill disposed minds, she forbids the transaction. Thus, for example, Rome, in her official capacity, returned an unconditional negative reply to the following question sent up for settlement: "May a person who has bought crosses, medals, etc., for the purpose of distributing them after they have been blessed and had indulgences attached, ask without sin, for the price of them, or do this without incurring the forfeiture of the indulgences?" Let it be noticed that such a person might merely be seeking to recover the cost price of the material of the object mentioned, and not dream of remuneration for the spiritual improvements. And, in fact, such a course is intrinsically free from the stain of simony. But Rome will have none of it, so anxious is she to remove the very semblance of this hideous blemish from her sacred ministry.

Nothing Greater than The Mass

To conclude. There is nothing that the Church provides which is more highly valued by the genuine Catholic

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MR. W. J. GAGE TELLS OF THE GROWTH OF THE CONSUMPTIVE HOSPITALS IN MUSKOKA

Accommodation at Free Hospital Increased by Twenty-five Beds

URGENT CALL FOR FUNDS TO MEET INCREASED BURDEN FOR MAINTENANCE

Dear Friend:—

Contributions from rich and poor, young and old, received by the Free Hospital for Consumptives, tell of the love and charity toward the great work carried on in Muskoka.

Thousands from all parts of Canada not only sent their "God bless the work" but their money also to help to answer their prayers.

The poor widow out of her hard-earned savings, telling how her own heart was made lonely through the dread scourge, as well as the rich insurance companies, have sent their gifts.

2,000 patients have been cared for since the opening of our Homes in Muskoka. 560 of these were treated in the Free Hospital. 150 patients in these two Homes to-day, show how this life-saving work has grown.

Premier Whitney, replying to a large deputation in the interests of the National Sanitarium Association, stated that "personally he thought \$100,000 would not be too much for the Government to set apart for this work."

Seventy-five patients to be cared for in the Muskoka Free Hospital for

Consumptives means a large weekly outlay. The Trustees accept this obligation, believing the needed money will be forthcoming.

The world is full of good and generous people ready to give. But they want to be sure that their money is wisely spent. In no other place can your money do so much good.

The growing knowledge of the contagious character of the disease has made the lot of the consumptive poor a hard one.

The Muskoka Free Hospital is today the only place where a sufferer in the early stages of consumption is admitted free.

Will you not help to save the life of a sick one to whom all other doors are closed?

What greater blessing could crown your giving, than the knowledge that it helps to snatch a fellow-being from the very jaws of death?

\$50,000 is wanted for the coming year. Will you join in this greatest of all charities?

Faithfully yours,
W. J. GAGE

Toronto, Can.

than Holy Mass. In the dark days of Tudor tyranny, our Catholic forefathers lost whole fortunes as a penalty for preferring Mass in a garret to attendance at the mutilated rite, by law established, in desecrated churches. Let us suppose for a moment—though contrary to the fact—that the offering of a Mass stipend involved "buying the Mass." Well, as a son of Erin once wittily retorted, "answering the fool according to his folly," as the Bible has it, "Indade, an' it's dirt, cheap at the price, it is." —Rev. F. M. DeZulueta, S.J., in the Catholic Weekly, London.

PROVED IN MOUNT FOREST

Every doctor in this town tried his best to relieve Mrs. J. Withom of asthma; none succeeded. 'For years,' she states, 'I was a dreadful sufferer; nothing gave relief. At times I found it necessary to have all the doors and windows open to get my breath. When in despair I heard of Catarrh-ozone. I used it and now am perfectly cured. This proves beyond doubt that any case of Asthma is curable with Catarrh-ozone. No remedy so pleasant, none so absolutely certain to thoroughly cure; try "Catarrh-ozone" yourself; it's guaranteed.'

Persons and Facts

(Continued from page 2)

The 24th of June, St. John the Baptist's, Nativity, will be celebrated, as their national feast, next Sunday by the French Canadians of Winnipeg. There will be High Mass and a St. Jean Baptiste sermon at the French Church of the Sacred Heart. In the evening there will be a grand banquet. The St. Boniface celebration, in order not to clash with the Winnipeg one, has been fixed for Wednesday next, the 27th inst. In the morning at 9.30, procession from the Hotel de Ville to the Cathedral, High Mass, special sermon and address to His Grace. In the afternoon pic-nic and athletic sports in the grounds of St. Boniface College. In the evening a dramatic and musical enter the evening a dramatic and musical entertainment by the Union Sainte-Cecile under the auspices of the St. Jean Baptiste Society. On that occasion an original play, "Robert, ou l'Hote de la Foret," written by a citizen of St. Boniface, will be played for the first time in the College Hall.

The Catholic schools of Belgium have won a notable triumph in competition with the government secular schools. A competitive examination was held in which government schools and Catholic schools took part, with the result that each of the eight Catholic schools won twenty-five distinctions, while each of the twenty-nine public schools won less than ten. In Belgium the work of the Catholic schools is appreciated, for the government pays them an annual grant.

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The convention of the National Federation Alumni of Jesuit colleges will be held, it is expected, next June, in Milwaukee. About 100 delegates will assemble from every section of the

United States. The convention will be timed, it is thought, during the week of the silver jubilee celebration of Marquette College in the above-named city.