

tenars. He is not like the generosity of men too engrossed by their own affairs to pay much attention to your sufferings and your wants. He is not cold or indifferent as are some times even our nearest and dearest. Tell Him all as to your Master and He will answer as to His child, for He is tender as a Father toward us, or to express myself more fittingly, as a Mother. He Himself having said: "Even if a mother forget the first fruit of her womb I will not forget you."—The Sentinel of the Blessed Sacrament.

THE BEST WAY TO REFUTE ERROR

The best way to refute error is to teach truth.

We are told to overcome evil by good, and so must we overcome untruth by truth. Cardinal Newman says: "As in baptism the corrupter Adam is removed by the coming of divine grace, so in like manner the reign of heresy is put to flight, not by merely attacking it, but by the manifestation of the pure gospel instead. Let us be far more bent on preaching our own doctrine than on refuting the adversary's—rather bent on alluring souls into the right way than on forbidding them the wrong."

St. Francis de Sales spoke to Bishop Camus of his long experience in making converts, extending over thirty years. His success was remarkable; he won all kinds of souls, from learned Protestant divines to unlettered peasants. And he affirmed that the controversial method of assailing error was never successful. "In place of reclaiming our separated brethren," he said, "this method scares them away. When they see that we are of set purpose attacking them, they instantly put themselves on their guard; when we bring the lamp too close to their eyes, they start back from the light. Nor have I ever observed that any of my fellow laborers in this work of the Lord were more successful. I may justly call this plan a sort of fencing bout. It failed to convince, even though our missionaries engaged in it with the utmost enthusiasm, and in a place where much confusion prevailed among the Protestants. But in truth this sword play was what St. Paul calls 'beating the air' (I Cor. ix, 26). I do not mean that we must not prove Catholic truths, and refute the contrary errors; for the weapons of the spiritual armory and of the word of God are powerful to destroy all false teaching which rears itself up against the truth, and to condemn disobedience to God. But we must not slash about us with words as desperate fencers do with swords, but rather manage these holy weapons dexterously, acting rather like the surgeon using his lancet, skillfully cutting and probing so as to cause the patient as little pain as possible." (Spirit of St. Francis de Sales, p. 488). Bishop Camus adds that the saint stated the truths of the faith of his Calvinist hearers very plainly and simply, and then with much gentleness of tone and manner brought the Church home to their understanding and heart by example, illustrations and explanations, as convincing as they were beautiful.

We cannot forbear quoting another model convert maker to the same effect, namely, St. Francis Xavier. Writing to a brother missionary in India he says: "Believe me, the best hope of success in preaching is not to be placed in exquisite learning, or elegant diction, or in display, or in a sort of scenic exhibition of eloquence. The head and sum of the art lies in being approved of by those whom you address, in pleasing them, and in gaining the key of their hearts before you knock at the doors of their minds. If your audience love you, you will persuade them to do what ever you will; and you will easily win a great many souls to God if you never alienate any one from yourself." (Life of St. Francis Xavier, Coleridge, Vol. II, p. 140).

Every mission sermon should be a soul stirring discourse, the burning words of a man enraptured with the divine goodness, overwhelmed with the divine majesty. We know, indeed, that there are effective mission bands with no such grand preachers; but they are not the ideal bands, and being made up of just earnest men delivering carefully framed sermons, they may easily become commonplace and ineffectual. Just to talk to people calmly, however sensibly, about the crisis of their everlasting destiny, is not going to sweep obdurate worldlings into the humble service of the Crucified, nor bring sensualists to their knees or heart-broken penitents.

The discourses of our convert-making parish priest must be of another sort to succeed well. These must be gently spoken and simply framed. They should be energetic but quiet expositions of Catholic doctrine; the statement of practical evidences of the divine inner and outer marks of the Church. Parishes are often renovated by such preaching, giving to the people an intelligent and earnest message Sunday after Sunday. Parish works of charity, devotional life are intensified by the well directed activity of the pastor. The most fruitful source of parish activity is the preaching and instructing by a priest whose life is worthy of his doctrine—"A workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth" (II Tim. ii, 15). We have thousands and thousands of such parish priests in America.

When such a priest's zeal for souls is integral, his labors for the conversion of the non Catholics of his parish are as wisely planned and as earnestly expended as those for the sanctification of the Catholics. And they are just as successful, the difference of the end in view and of the means to be used being considered. We are only insisting that the ideal pastor for the Catholics is the ideal convert making pastor.

What! Do you dream I hear some one exclaim of converting America? Impossible: so vast a nation, so obstinate in error. But we answer that America is no vaster than the ancient heathen world, which yielded to Christ's apostles and their successors. As to obstinate error, we answer that many of our converts once were the bitterest sort of Protestants. What has been done once can be done again whether for men or nations—must be done again.

A close acquaintance with the more religious-minded Protestants reveals the fact that many a non-Catholic has a Catholic conscience. That conscience we must awaken from its slumber. The attractiveness of our Catholic doctrine must win a hearing from conscientious men and women. The holiness of Catholic marriage, the heavenly boon of a good confession, the divine union of the soul with our Lord in the Blessed Eucharist, the essential need of the Church's teaching for the stability of belief in Christ's teaching, are all subjects which awaken men's hearts to the consciousness of the reality and worth of religious truth and discourses or conversations on such subjects, move intelligent persons to set about a systematic examination of Catholicity. How simple is all this! How free from the heat of controversy! How beneficent indeed is that sermon or lecture, or private talk, which enlightens the hearer's own conscience as a divine ally of Catholic truth.—The Missionary.

THE LOURDES MEDICAL BUREAU

Rose Lynch in America

Dr. Cox, the well-known English doctor, came to Lourdes twenty-four years ago with his wife and daughter to spend a short time here. After he had been there a few days, Dr. Boissarie asked him to take his place at the Bureau, as he was called away on business. By the time Dr. Boissarie had returned, Dr. Cox was so interested in the work that he gave up his London practice and remained in Lourdes working together with his friend until the latter died, nearly two years ago. Dr. Cox has taken sole charge since then. Over a hundred cases of cures have been registered each year at the Bureau, and over 5,000 doctors have visited the Bureau since Dr. Cox has been there. The doors of the Bureau are open to every doctor in the world, irrespective of creed or race. Often there are thirty or forty together from Europe, Asia and America.

Very little attention is paid to nervous cases or such as might be helped by suggestion. Some form of organic disease or physical injury, such as cancer, tuberculosis, broken bones, loss of sight, must be well established as the starting point of the investigation. Dr. Cox has described to me case after case of people cured here. He has himself written almost twenty volumes dealing with cases that have passed through his hands during the last twenty-three years.

Every day at four o'clock, in time of pilgrimage, there is the Blessed Sacrament procession, when the invalids are laid in a semi-circular arc, at each side of the great space in front of the Rosary Church. At the annual national French pilgrimage, which takes place during the octave of the Assumption, over 1,000 invalids are brought to Lourdes, and up to 40,000 people are present at the procession. The priest carrying the Monstrance makes the Sign of the Cross over every individual invalid.

One of the most wonderful cures that took place on such an occasion was that of Gabriel Garian. He was brought to Lourdes by his mother. He had given up the practice of his religion and did not even make the Sign of the Cross when he came. He had been in a terrible railway accident in which the lower part of his body had been crushed to pulp. So severe were his injuries that the railway company awarded him compensation of £2,400 down and £240 a year for life, the court declaring, "He is a human wreck." He was paralyzed from the waist down and had to be artificially fed. His feet were mortifying. He had been carried on a stretcher in front of the Rosary Church for Benediction, when his condition grew so serious that he became unconscious and was at the point of death. The assistants would have carried him away had he not been hemmed in by crowds on every side. When the priest stood over him and made the Sign of the Cross with the Monstrance in his hands, Garian arose from the stretcher, stood on those feet which a second before had been lifeless and mortifying, and walked after the Blessed Sacrament praising God. He said that the same moment in which he was cured his faith also came back. Ten doctors had examined him at home and fifty were waiting for him in the Bureau in Lourdes. Gangrene, paralysis all had gone. Every year since then he comes to attend the invalids at Lourdes.

Our Lady of Lourdes seems to take a special delight in obtaining the cure of consumptives. From an hospital at Villepinte, near Paris, sixteen patients in the last stage of the disease came to Lourdes. Eight were cured, and the other eight who went back died during the ensuing months. The next year another sixteen came, and again eight were cured, the others dying during the year. The following year the same thing happened. This caused great interest and excitement in Lourdes, as it was quite without parallel in the history of cures to have so large a number as 56% from one institution cured, in three consecutive years. Now people began to look upon it as a certainty that some of the patients coming from there would be cured. The fourth year the same number came, but none was cured. All were astonished and among the various conjectures were asked, was Our Lady tired of doing this work from Villepinte? Later it transpired that the sixteen heroic sufferers had voluntarily given up the hope of cure and had offered their lives that their nuns might be left to tend the sick and dying. And it would appear that their sacrifice was accepted. They all went to their reward a few months later, but the hospital remained open, and the Sisters were left, when so many hospitals and convents were closed and the nuns hunted out of France.

One might continue endlessly describing the different cures at Lourdes, but still Dr. Cox meets many people who say, with such a deprecating air, that they do not believe in the cures at Lourdes, as much as to say that these stories are for non intelligent people or for children, but not for them. "I could not bring myself to swallow all these tales," they will assert, but, as a rule, he finds that the people who say such things know absolutely nothing about Lourdes, nor have ever taken the trouble to inquire. Men like Huxley and the higher German critics, while posing as free-thinkers, start out by saying that the supernatural is impossible, and that, therefore, they will not discuss it, while we Catholics are in fact the real free-thinkers, for we are free to believe or reject the miracles at Lourdes.

There was a conference of 200 doctors of different nationalities and creeds that met to examine and go into the question of cures at Lourdes. They signed a declaration stating that the cures they had investigated at Lourdes and followed up afterwards could not be accounted for by any means known to science. Dr. Bernheim, one of the great specialists of the present day in psycho-therapeutic suggestion treatment, said: "All these observations down yonder [meaning Lourdes] have been made by honorable men, they have collected and tested them in the most complete sincerity. The facts are right enough, it is only the explanation that is in fault." Bernheim employs suggestion in treating tuberculosis patients, trying with it to arrest coughing and to induce sleep. He says, "By means of this I strengthen the patient's power of resistance against the microbes and check, if not arrest, the development of the disease." But he continues: "One can only heal that which is capable of being healed. Suggestion cannot restore that which has been destroyed."

The most striking example of how small a part suggestion really plays in Lourdes was during the national pilgrimage when over 800 past miracles (those who had been cured at Lourdes) walked in procession. There were 1,500 patients lying in a double row in front of the Rosary Church, but not a single cure took place during the procession. Then the 350 who had been cured in former years assembled on the platform in front of the church. Never in the history of Lourdes had the enthusiasm been so intense. It was like an electric current running through the multitude. It seemed as if all the invalids should rise from their stretchers. The highest human emotion had been reached, religious suggestion had said its last word and several invalids really did stand up and walked towards the Rosary Church. There was great rejoicing. As a result eight or ten of those whom Dr. Cox had seen getting up from the stretchers the day before reported themselves cured next day at the Bureau. They were a conspicuous woman, two patients with tubercular abdominal inflammation, a woman with spinal tuberculosis, a man suffering from the same disease, and one with chronic bronchitis and emphysema, and finally three with nervous ailments—three! And there were 300 nerve patients waiting that day to be cured in front of the Rosary Church. No stronger refutation could be offered those who say that most of the cures at Lourdes are nerve cases, cured by suggestion.

Dr. Cox often meets with amusing experiences at the Bureau. One afternoon he was told someone wanted him urgently. Coming to the door, he found a smart American, with a very keen face and bright eyes peering at him through his glasses. The stranger held his watch in his hand and told Dr. Cox that he had just arrived in Lourdes and was leaving by the night train. Evidently bent on getting full value for his visit, he immediately added: "Please tell me at what hour I can see a miracle." He seemed to think Dr. Cox was in direct communication with the "Great Healer."

God by good desires, rubs off from the soul the rust of sin.—Wilberforce.

OUR LORD'S PASSION

WHERE SACRED RELICS HAVE BEEN TREASURED

In connection with the forthcoming International Palestine Congress, which meets in Einsiedeln, Switzerland, July 19-23, to formulate plans for protecting the holy places of Palestine, it is of interest to know the whereabouts of the sacred relics of Christ's life, passion and Crucifixion.

The largest portions of the wood of the wood of the Cross are in the basilicas of the Holy Cross of Jerusalem at Rome, and in Notre Dame Cathedral, Paris. A relic of the Cross is also in the United States—in the Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Boston.

The "title" which Pilate wrote and ordered to be placed on the Cross—"I. N. R. I." (Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews)—is preserved in the basilica of the Holy Cross of Jerusalem at Rome.

The Crown of Thorns, now lacking in the thorns, which have been distributed to a number of churches, is a part of the treasure of Notre Dame in Paris. A fragment of the Crown is in the Church of St. Serin, Toulouse, France.

One of the nails is said to be in the crown of the ancient Lombard Kings used by Napoleon I. at his coronation; one is in the Cathedral of Notre Dame at Paris, and another, whose authenticity is reported to have been established by Pope Benedict XV., is at Monza, near Milan.

The sponge, it is stated, is in the basilica of St. John Lateran, Rome. The point of the lance is in Paris, and the remainder in Rome.

The robe, known as the Holy Coat, is in a church at Treves.

The tunic is reported to have been given by the Sister of Charlemagne to the monastery of Argenteuil, where she was a nun, and it is still there.

The largest piece of the winding sheet is at Turin.

The cloth with which the sacred head was wrapped is reported to be in the Church of Cadoun, Department of Dordogne, France.

The linen with which Veronica wiped Christ's face on the way to Calvary is in Rome.

The upper portion of the pillar of the scourging has been in the Church of St. Praxedes since 1223, and the lower section is in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Jerusalem.—Catholic Standard and Times.

THE PATRONESS OF AIR NAVIGATION

According to a request of several bishops, Pope Benedict XV. appointed, by decree, March 24, 1920, Our Lady of Loretto as patroness of air navigation.

It has been the custom of the Church, which discerns a good purpose in every discovery and invention as well as in every forward movement of science, to implore the blessings of heaven on these mundane things. For if "to those who love God, all things work together unto good," there is no terrestrial achievement that may not become a factor in the salvation of souls. This broad view of the Church has induced her to provide a special blessing for and place air navigation, one of the latest triumphs of science, under the special protection of Our Lady of Loretto.

The reason why just this particular patroness has been selected is not difficult to guess. According to a trustworthy legend, the Holy House of Nazareth was transported through the air by angelic hands from Palestine to Loretto, a town near Ancona in Italy. This being, as it were, the first air navigation, it seems appropriate to link all air navigation with that supernatural event and place it under the special protection of the patroness of the famous shrine of Loretto.

It will be interesting to study the prayers which the Church uses in blessing airships. If you want to learn one side of the genius of the



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Church, you must go to her ritual and pore over the formularies of her benedictions. They are a regular gold mine of religious thought. We will, therefore, translate the pertinent prayers from the Acta Apostolicae Sedis of May 1.

First oration: "O, God, who hast wrought all things for Thy sake, and who has destined all the elements of this world to the use of the human race: bless we beseech Thee this machine intended for air voyagers, that without damage or danger of any kind it may both serve to carry the praise and glory of Thy name into further regions, and to expedite human affairs with greater dispatch and foster heavenly desires in all the faithful who use this same machine. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen."

Notice the beautiful sentiment in this prayer. The aeronaut is ascending from the earth to higher regions. Let this be a reminder to him that, as his body ascends, so his soul may be lifted to heavenly desires. The blessing of the Church is to be a supernatural aid toward this end.

Second oration: "O, God, who hast mercifully consecrated the house of the Blessed Virgin Mary by the mystery of the Incarnate Word, and hast miraculously placed it in the bosom of Thy Church: pour forth, we beseech Thee, Thy benediction upon this machine that those who, under the protection of the Blessed Virgin, enter in it upon an air voyage may prosperously reach the destination of their journey and safely return to their own. Through the same Christ our Lord. Amen."

The allusion to the Holy House of Nazareth is plain in this prayer. "Placing it in the bosom of the Church" has reference to the reason for which the miracle is supposed to have occurred, viz.: to remove this great sanctuary from the possible desecration by the infidel Turks, and to place it where the love of the faithful would pay it proper homage.

Third oration: "O, God, salvation of those who hope in Thee, graciously assign to Thy servants who are making a voyage through the air and invoking Thy aid, a good angel from heaven as their companion: that by him they may be guarded on all their ways and happily be guided to their contemplated goal. Through Christ our Lord. Amen."

In this last prayer there is probably an allusion to the holy angels who are supposed to have presided at the first air navigation mentioned above.

Considering the dangers that attend air navigation what Catholic aeronaut would not feel comforted after his airship had been blessed in the above manner. And who—even though not a believer—can deny the beauty and tenderness of this consecration of air navigation?—S. in The Guardian.

Today the spirit of independence has invaded all minds and leads them to rebellion. Today there is no shame in seeking amusements, and the griefs and sorrows of others, and there is no limit to the dissipation of wealth and the drying up of the sources thereof. All this shows that modern society has attempted to set itself above God, passing from liberty to tolerance, from tolerance to division, to conflict, to ostracism of God.—Pope Benedict.

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