

THE CATHOLIC POSITION AND MISSION OF THE ANGLICAN CHURCHES.

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"THE EVERLASTING GOSPEL."—REV. XIV, 6.

(Continued).

REFLECT, brethren, that the condition precedent of world-wide evangelization is Christian unity. If "the Everlasting Gospel" is to be preached successfully to all kindreds and nations and tongues, then, first of all, Christ has called us to be One—as the Father and He are one—"that the world may believe that the Father hath sent Him." Surely, then, the Church of which an enemy can say such things is, indeed, "most precious." Nor can I forbear to illustrate this truth by the comparative lessons of history. In Holland, see Barnveldt ascending the scaffold, and Grotius forced to flee for his life, because of an inexorable *Code of Belief*. Alike these worthies and their persecutors would have been embraced, as brethren, by the Church of England. It is this breadth of Catholic system that has given her such a calendar of Christians, in the illustrious laity of her communion, statesmen and jurists, philosophers and poets, brilliant authors, and thinkers of unrivaled eminence and worth. But, on the other hand, look at France; look at that Gallican church, so long and so justly renowned. Alas! how deadly her mistake in accepting the definitions and decrees of Trent. Did she gain by it? Did she gain moral force, the masculine energy of truth? Did she gain even a hollow peace? Ah! no; for, repress and despoil the human mind as you may, you cannot imprison conscience, you cannot force it to be a slave. The crown jewels of Messiah have many lustres. The Church reflects the Infinite in many varied types of character among her sons, so long as all are true to Christ. Macaulay reproaches the Church of England because she could not find a place for Wesley. "Rome," he sneeringly remarks, "would have been more wise." Let us see how that is. Look at France! I speak not now of dissenting Huguenots, richly as they deserve to be remembered. I point to her most loyal and loving children, her noblest and most faithful sons and daughters; the brilliant school of Pascal and Arnauld and Nicole and Quesnel, "persecuted to strange cities," condemned in more than a hundred technicalities almost too minute to be understood, anathematized and deprived of the sacraments. Nay, poor nuns of Port Royal, let me rather point to you. Pure and lovely and of good report, your views of grace, learned from St. Augustine, are displeasing to the King's Confessor, and you too must perish. Driven from your chaste cells, your homes unroofed, your walls levelled to the ground, you must forswear your conscience or die, under peril of damnation. You behold the very graves of your sisterhood violated. The dead in Christ must be

cast out of holy ground, because they were Jansenists! Such heretics are pronounced unfit to sleep in a Christian cemetery. Nay, for a like reason, the whole Church of Utrecht is excommunicated and loaded with anathemas. They dare to differ with the Jesuits as to what St. Augustine teaches concerning Grace. In effect, it was St. Augustine himself that was under the ban; for a second time, he was excommunicated by remorseless Rome.

Yes, indeed, in the contrast, "she is most precious"; that dear Church in which all these might have glorified God, living together with us, in all the freedom of the Everlasting Gospel. Somebody may suggest: "This is her shame; she is too broad; it is because she is loose that she reconciles and harmonizes such divers schools in her bosom." But again, behold the contrast. While these saintly men and women are chased "like the partridge upon the mountains," because their flaming piety glorifies, perhaps, too exclusively the grace by which we are saved, observe how broad is Rome. The licentious Dubois, afterward made a cardinal, is consecrated a bishop even at the hands of Massillon, while his friend and fellow-profligate, the diabolical Voltaire, lives and dies and is buried as a faithful son of the Church. A Jansenist might not live in the French Court; but one who repelled that infamy, on the ground that he was an atheist, was good enough for the "most Christian King." "That," said His Majesty, "is quite another affair." Yes, "another affair," till God shall arise to judgment! He considered it comparatively a venial sin, only sowing the wind; and such was, practically, the estimate of French ecclesiastics, till the harvest of atheism came like the whirlwind.

Before Him who tries and knows the heart, I protest that, with sorrow and pain, I have thus pursued an instructive parallel of history for comparison and contrast. The illustrious Bossuet, who maintained that England owed her civil disorders to her reformation, has challenged such a review: he forces us to this overwhelming rejoinder. And alas! so feeble and apologetic has been the temper of our times; such a surrender has been made of that lofty position of truth and fact which used to be sustained by our great divines, more especially by Bishop Bull, in reply to Bossuet himself; that I must be pardoned for trying to wake up minds and consciences to a just sense of our impregnable defences and to becoming emotions of gratitude to Him who has given us the unmerited blessings of our Catholic inheritance. Note, also, the fact that France, by refusing the example of England, escaped nothing that we have suffered, and gained nothing of that moral force which has so distinguished our race. Counting the Jansenists with the Huguenots, for both were Calvinists in effect, two-thirds of France and certainly its noblest and most pious people were Calvinistic. And are the massacres, the dragonnades, the revocations, the anathemas, and all the fiery persecutions with which France was desolated to be preferred to the