

The Life and Catholic Journalism

OF THE LATE

JAMES A. McMASTER,

Editor of the New York Freeman's Journal and
Catholic Register.

Edited by VERY REV. MARK S. GROSS.

For the Carmelite Review.

CHAPTER VIII.—(CONTINUED.)



N the *Freeman's Journal* issued on March 29, 1879, we find the following editorial:

THE RIGHT REV. BISHOP BALTES AND THE
FREEMAN'S JOURNAL.

"I have received from Alton, undoubtedly with the approbation of its pious and venerable Bishop, an *Appendix* to his 'Pastoral Instruction,' which instruction, dated January 23rd, was promulgated in the first days of February. According to its terms, no Catholic journal, published in Rome—or in Italy—no Catholic journal published in France, Germany, Belgium, Holland, or in the British Dominions, and very few published in America, can be read in Alton Diocese after the first days of April. The good and pious, and excellent, Bishop of Alton, Rt. Rev. Dr. Baltes, never meant that! But he said it! His *Appendix* to his *Pastoral Instruction*, indirectly, but not directly, lifts his interdict from Catholic journals, Italian, French, German, of Holland, Belgium, of the British possessions; but, as the Rt. Rev. Bishop Baltes, on false information, put the *Freeman's Journal*, by name, on his interdict, it is, and we will consider it, under his ban, till he is graciously pleased to raise it. Therefore, after one more issue following the present, all copies going to Catholics in Alton Diocese, of their dear old *Freeman's Journal*, will be stopped! We do not believe this pain will be given them.

"The matter in question is not what the excellent Bishop of Alton supposed it. We read, and rejoice, in No. 506, of the published 'Decrees of the Second Plenary Council of Baltimore.' It said: 'It may happen that journals (*Folia publica*), may be written, or managed, by Catholic gentlemen, (*viris Catholicis*), that may tend, indirectly, to the good of the Catholic Faith. But lest what these may write, in the interest of political parties, may be attributed to the Catholic Religion, or to Catholic Authority, as is sometimes done by bad-minded adversaries, we wish it to be known, and declared, that no paper is recognized, by us (Bishops), as Catholic,

except such as carry on their face the approbation of the Ordinary.'

"That is in complete accord with our late Holy Father's (Pius IX.) grand *Encyclical 'Inter Multiplices.'*

"That grants to Catholic gentlemen—('Catholicis viris') all the elbow room they need to work! Not the Catholic Church, nor local Prelates, are responsible for journalists' political opinions, or other opinions, on open questions, of human dispute. Every Bishop that has taken his oath of office is bound to hunt out, and guard his flock, against false, wrong, dangerous, and, surely, against heretical doctrines, spread among his people!

"Bishop Baltes, in an incidental remark, did not intend to wound me; but he did. Why did he say my conduct 'so far,' has been what a Catholic owes to a Bishop? I do not know Dr. Baltes! But I know he is a Bishop, in Communion and grace with the Holy Roman Church. I know I am a Catholic, and, by the grace of our Lord, and help of His Immaculate Mother, I know there are not Prelates enough in all America to exasperate me into forgetting why I became a Catholic, or what I am living for!

"That, in an abridged form, is what I said to the unhappy John Murray Forbes, on the day he published his apostasy from the Catholic Church; when he, most foolishly, said I could never stay in the Catholic Church! Foolish man!

"Only in the Catholic Church can a man say, and believe, the Christian *Credo*, be a worshipper of God, and of His Christ, and be freer than any wild ass's colt that thinks himself free, because he is without discipline!

"It is because I am free, that I know how to respect authority—to obey where obedience is due; to show respect, where respect is due; and to wait, with patience, now and then, till authority has time to take a second thought, and to understand what duties it owes its own dignity, and estimation in face of the best regulated public.

"I publish of the 'Appendix, to the Pastoral,' of the Rt. Rev. Bishop of Alton, all that relates, especially to the New York *Freeman's Journal*. I carefully omit his arguments, on other points, with other Bishops. Also his arguments with the learned Dr. Mahar, of Cleveland, and others. In fact, as a very strict Catholic, I am some little embarrassed. I am put, in my *Journal*, at a disadvantage. I am condemned, first—for Alton Diocese—and then the Bishop of Alton almost compliments me! Almost raises his interdict of my *Journal*, for the Diocese of Alton, and argues with me! I cannot argue, under an Interdict, with the interdicting Bishop! My Catholic training has been too thorough for that!

"Will it be disrespectful to the dignity