

monastery, where there were a few silent and aged monks who filled the ground and prayed constantly. As for the strange manuscript, its contents were not to be made known until after his death, and then the reason of his awful change would be known.

"It is a fearful and terrible thing to look into the world beyond the grave," said he.

The permission to retire was given reluctantly, and the procurator went to his new home to live a life of hard labor, silence and prayer.

He still lives, and although it is twenty years since the event of that night, he has never been known to smile.

The mysterious manuscript remains unopened.

I must confess I felt a chill run over me as my friend concluded his story. It is a strange one, and no one has explained it. When I asked my friend what he thought, he only shrugged his shoulders and made the sign of the cross.

As all the participants of the circumstances are still living, there is a wide margin for thought. I give the story as I got it.

GENERAL INTENTION FOR NOVEMBER

RECOMMENDED AND BLESSED BY HIS HOLINESS PIUS X.

HELPING THE POOR

The Holy Spirit assures us, in the words of Ecclesiasticus, that the Supreme Owner of all things is the author of the unequal distribution of earthly goods. The inspired writer tells us that "Good things and evil, life and death, poverty and riches, are from God" (Eccl. ix. 14). This is a fact that we unhappily may overlook; yet we must accept it as true, and do our best to reconcile ourselves to the consequences resulting therefrom. If worldly prosperity were a sign of God's good will, and poverty a sign of His disfavor, there might be a reason for questioning His Providence. But the rich are not saints, nor are the poor all sinners; on the other hand, the rich are not all enemies of God, nor are the poor all saints. This being the case, surely the Eternal Wisdom has its designs in making some rich and prosperous, while it permits others to live in penury.

Little reasoning is necessary to reveal God's plan. Life does not end with the grave. There is a world beyond greater than this one, where earthly sufferings patiently borne will be turned into joys, and where virtue will receive its hundredfold reward. The road thither must be travelled by both rich and poor. Poverty takes one to the road, wealth another, but the condition imposed on the wayfarers are the same: Fear God and keep His commandments! This is the great precept that rich and poor must obey.

If an advantage on this journey towards heaven be sought for, it will be sought for, it will be the side of the poor who accept their poverty with resignation. The path is easier for them, for they follow Christ more closely. He was poor and His example has a sweet attractiveness that the rich do not experience. Prosperity and pleasure, become stumbling blocks in the upward path for too many of the rich. When everything succeeds with them and all their desires are satisfied, when fortune smiles, and honors come to them, they too often forget God; they find the road to heaven arduous; and they try to build their paradise here on earth. This world is good enough for them. Did not Our Lord tell us that it is easier for a camel to get through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter heaven? He knew that wealth puffs up, that worldly success dazzles, that the joys of living blunt the conscience and harden the heart. On the contrary, adversity, of which poverty is a phase, is very often the earnest return to God. Many who ignore Him in their successes, return to Him when their worldly concerns go wrong. The vanity of human wishes reveals itself to such people, the true value of wealth dawns upon them, remorse over lives that are being wasted seizes them, and they make their peace with God. Who will say that in such cases adversity is not a blessing? Or that of the two classes who are on the road to eternity the poor have not undoubtedly the better of it? All this is elementary, but unfortunately it is forgotten or ignored by many Catholics who hear deploring their lowly state and envying the rich.

And yet the rich have stern duties to perform. The mere accumulation of wealth should not be their end in life, but a means to attain this end. God intends that they should use their wealth to save their souls. None should know better than they that their wealth is not the fruit of their own industry. Our Lord asks them: "What have you that you do not receive?" The strongest reason why He permits the unequal distribution of this world's goods is to give the wealthy opportunities to practise virtue, hoping thereby to move their hearts and win their allegiance. If He wills some to be poor for the greater assurance of their salvation, on the other hand He expects the rich to assure the welfare of their souls by sharing their wealth with the poor. It is here that the divine plan becomes evident. How often and how forcibly the sacred text insists on the duty of almsgiving: "Help the poor because of the commandments and send him not away because of his poverty (Eccl. xxix. 2) "Deal thy bread and harbor to thy needy; when thou shalt see one naked cover him; and despise not thy own flesh." (Is. lviii. 7) By the mouth of the inspired writers, God urges, exhorts, the rich to help the poor.

The meaning of those solemn exhortations cannot escape us. The rich should know that they must not wrap themselves up in aloofness while their poorer brethren are in want. They should know that they are merely the stewards of God, that while human laws can not oblige them to part with their wealth to do charity, for human rights must be respected, the law of God is to

be viewed from a higher level. His rights, which hover over rich and poor alike, are not restricted by human regulations. The stewards of the Overlord are the rich, but they must do their duty to the poor.

Nor are opportunities wanting; we need not go far afield to find this out. The miseries of poverty may be seen around us; the greatest number perhaps being in our largest centers of population. But here again we have the divine plan revealing itself, for it is not also in large centers of population that the greatest amount of wealth is to be found? Evidently God wishes to keep the balance even, and woe to those who fail to cooperate!

It is narrow and worldly to say that there are too many who are unworthy objects of charity. Perhaps there are unworthy poor, but they are not all such. The rich should console themselves with the conviction that when they give alms they give to God; and that whatever they give to the poor in His name is not thrown away; it is well invested. Better be deceived by a dozen impostors than that one worthy person should go hungry.

But how are the rich to give alms? One sometimes wonders what motives inspire the givers of large donations; whether or no the prospect of a marble slab or a bronze monument be not behind the deed. And yet it would be ungenerous to impute ignoble motives; let us leave to God the task of sounding human hearts. There should be no hesitation, however, in setting down the doctrine of true almsgiving. When the rich dole out their alms, whether it be great or small, let their charity be done in secret. Let their right hand not know what the other gives; it is not necessary to take the world into one's confidence, and the task of almsgiving that is accompanied by the blare of trumpets; He sees the deed; He weighs the motives; the angels record them; and that should be enough.

And the advantages of helping the poor? Almsgiving is a spiritual investment which from every point of view, is more advantageous than squandering wealth in luxury or hiding it away in banks, and the reason is because in almsgiving it is God Himself who becomes our debtor. "He who giveth to the poor endeth to the Lord." (Prov. xix. 17). The more God owes the rich—that is to say, the more the rich invest with the poor—the more they merit His favor and good will. How differently does the world look at this kind of business! Here, a debtor is sagittated and without peace in proportion to the amount he owes; in Heaven, God is a debtor whose joy may be measured by the number of His creditors; the greater the number the more intense His pleasure. Again, in worldly affairs, when one speculates with money or put it out at interest, we look for ample security for its return to us some day. Experience of failures, bankruptcies, and so on, obliges us to lend our wealth only on the strength of bonds or mortgages. But things are different when we lend to God. Know that His poor have no earthly credit, no guarantees to fall back upon. He comes to their aid; He offers security for them. We can hear Him crying out to the rich: "You do not trust My poor! Well, then, trust Me and My promises. Know that the investment you have made in helping My poor in this world will yield you a hundredfold in the next!"

Almsgiving brings indeed its own rewards. No practice is recalled oftener in the Scriptures, or more thoroughly prized there, than that of helping the poor. In fact, eloquent passages of the sacred text would lead one to think that almsgiving is a universal means of salvation. Not that sympathy for the poor, or that helping them in their needs, is in itself sufficient to merit Heaven, but because the charitable spirit that moves the almsgiver to act, opens the gates that hold in the torrents of God's grace which are always ready to flow into human souls. A merciful and imaginative is rewarded even in the world. In the first place, almsgiving brings temporal prosperity in its train. The hard-hearted miser will tell you that what you give to the poor is lost; that may be true if it be not given for God's sake. But almsgiving, done in a Christian spirit, imparts a certain blessing to the giver. "The poor," says the Wise Man, "shall not want; but he that despiseth his neighbor shall suffer indignation." (Prov. xxviii. 27). Elsewhere the Royal Prophet confirms these words in assuring us that "he who showeth mercy and lendeth all day long, shall be blessed in his posterity." (Prov. xxi. 29). The other fruit that follows from almsgiving is spiritual in its nature, namely, the gift of graces to overcome temptation and to avoid sin. "Water quenqueth a flaming fire and alms resisteth sins. God will remember the almsgiver, and in the day of his fall he shall find a sure stay." (Eccl. iii. 33) "Alms will deliver from all sin and from death, and will not suffer the soul to go into darkness." (Tob. iv. 12). Mere material alms will not affect all this, but the merciful spirit by which it is given will render God benevolent. The same spirit will help us to make spiritual progress, and in the end assure us the greatest grace that we could ask for, a holy and happy death. "Blessed is he that understandeth concerning the needy and the poor: the Lord will deliver him in the evil day." (Ps. xi. 2) And just as the Lord has threatened punishment to those who are unkind to the needy (Matt. xxv. 41-46), so He has promised eternal life to those who have been prodigal of themselves and of their wealth, in favor of their poorer brethren. "I was hungry and you gave Me to eat; I was thirsty and you gave Me to drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; naked, and you covered Me; sick and you visited Me. . . . As long as you did it to one of these My least brethren you did it to Me. Come ye blessed of My Father possess the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." (Ibid. 34-40)

If these few thoughts were taken hold of and made principles of conduct, what a different world this one would be! Social unrest would disappear; brotherly love would flourish; happiness would dwell in Christian homes; and would be served in a manner befitting His majesty; while the rich who, by the noble exercise of their free will, would be the cause of this happy state of affairs, could consider themselves as children of God and heirs of Heaven.

E. J. DEVINE, S. J.

GREATNESS OF THE CREATOR LITTLENES OF THE CREATURE

AND OTHER LESSONS FROM NATURE BEAUTIFULLY PORTRAYED IN THE SERMON OF ARCHBISHOP GLENNON

St. Louis Church Progress

Preaching at the New Cathedral Chapel on the Gospel of St. Matthew, chapter 6. "At that time Jesus said to His disciples, No man can serve two masters, etc.; text, Consider the lilies of the field, His Grace said:

In this Gospel our Blessed Lord teaches us a beautiful lesson and teaches it in a beautiful way. He says to His apostles: "You cannot serve two masters," a statement which is true in the nature of the supernatural order, and the truth of it is reinforced in reason and logic, as well as in religion.

The masters our Lord meant in this instance were God and Mammon. God the Creator, the Lord, the Master of all, and on the other hand Mammon, primarily one of their heathen gods, but in Christ's and later days, standing for wealth and luxury and the concupiscences of life. As between these our Lord says there must be no divided allegiance, we must serve one or the other. Gently and beautifully does our Lord lead us to our true duty, namely, to serve God and to depend on Him.

He will protect us. He can be for us all in all. At other times our Lord does inveigh against the sins and the pride of life; the frailties and miseries thereof. But to-day it is by gentler means He will lead us from these to the better things, from the frailties of life to the Lord and Master of us all. His words are the words of an appeal. For He tells us that we are to consider the flowers of the field and the birds of the air, and the teeming creation around us. All these are God's. All these depend on Him. And how well He treats them! Who can improve on His work? Who will give an added beauty to the lily or an added perfume to the rose? Who will set more beautiful color on the far off hill crest or tinge with brighter gold the cloud that is cradled by the seething sun? You who struggle, He says, and are solicitous about what you eat and about what you wear, consider these things. The heavenly Father takes care of them. Will He not, also, take care of you?

You can see my brethren, the parallel and how beautifully it is wrought out by Our Blessed Saviour. He would make of the flowers and the birds and the glorias of nature around us the means whereby we would be led up to the throne of God, which proves to us that our dear St. Francis was not so foolish when he made his speeches to his little brothers and sisters, who congregated around him. He, also, considered the lilies of the field and the birds of the air, claiming with them the heritage of a common protection, and that none other than the Blessed Father of all.

Indeed nature would lead us to God, not alone in the beauty of its adorning, but, also, in the majesty and power which it asserts, and which to the thinking mind brings in vivid outline the power and greatness of the Creator, and by contrast, the littleness and weakness of the creature.

Recently this thought vividly before me. Climbing the mountain as you start to reach the mountain crest, your first impression is of your own considerable ability, and of the seeming ease with which the ascent can be made, but as you reach the foothills, you begin to wonder whether the foothills are not the mountain itself, until you are so completely overcome by the mountain looms up in perspective, still threatening its heights, still unattained. You have traveled much, yet far off the mountain crest lies in solitary grandeur. To look up it appears greater than before, whereas to look down, you think that much has been accomplished. You are above the clouds, but you are still beneath the stars. A weariness comes to the mind and even then you begin to see what a pigmy you are. The mountain is very great, but you are small indeed. Onward you go, up beyond the pines to where vegetation is rare, but because of its rarity all the more beautiful. For there the flowers painted by the Great Artist, though born to blush unseen, yet for their Master wear their brightest colors, their blue being the blue of the dome above, their whiteness reflecting the throne of God, while in their crimson glaze is seen the flaming wings of the Cherubim.

Then you can consider the lilies of the field, for the lilies grow there with the mountain rose and varied foliage which only the lofty mountain side is blessed with. And with these as your background, the plain below spreads out before you, a far-off vision filled with light and shadow and with dimly discerned outlines, indicating the cities of the plain. The houses become as the blocks that children play with, and the men and women as mere ant specks on the distant plain, and yet it is such specks as these that even, while you gaze, feel infused with their own greatness. They wonder what they ought to eat and wherewith they shall be clothed, the pettiness, the jealousy, and the misery of their little lives are wrought out with tragic importance. And as you stand by the mountain's crest and carry with you the little tragedies that are being enacted, and look down at the actors there, you begin to see how utterly foolish the lives that have such settings are. For now you see that God alone is great. The mountains and the heavens are telling

you His praises, are proclaiming His greatness, and at the same time, and by contrast, the littleness and cheapness and vanity of His poor creatures.

By this lesson reflects, too, upon the observer. He realizes there in the heights how little, how insignificant he is. The misplaced step, a momentary loss of nerve, or attack of dizziness, and down you go to unimpeded destruction. And still the mountain remains in untroubled calmness, quite unmoved by the tragedy it witnesses. But, though unmoved, teaching us still the lesson that if we place our trust in Him who is mindful even of the sparrow's fall, He will guide us. He will lead us to even greater heights, borne on the wings of His mercy to immortality.

It is a long way from the mountain to the sea. Yet, there, also, the same lesson is brought home. They who travel may think that in festing palaces of the sea they are masters of the deep, and yet it may be, as when the Titanic went down, that in the moment of their greatest trial, at the moment when they boasted their assured victory over the deep, even then the sea was calling, and they, the victors of a few hours, become for all time its victims, and their proudest handicraft is swallowed into its unfathomed depths.

But our Blessed Lord in to-day's gospel does not bring to bear on us the mountain's gleam of glory, or the tragedies of the deep to teach us His power as one might expect to do. For He uses rather those simpler objects which, nearer to our lives, should convey a nearer lesson. It is the lesson still of the birds of the air, the lilies of the field. It is from these He would bring the lesson home to us, a lesson probably needed all through history, but never more needed than to-day. For it's to-day of all others that people take thought only of themselves, and, consequently, are more and more solicitous concerning what they eat and what they wear and less solicitous about their Master who alone is worthy of service and who alone should arouse their solicitude.

Think for a moment of the method of life, the mode of thought, the ambitions that control our average citizens. The morning sees them anxious about their personal appearance, and when they have that attended to, the next chapter is: What shall they wear. And the next chapter is, how they shall prepare for the day of their death. They will make money between the meals, to fill out the program of the worship of Mammon, until the clothes they wear, the things they eat, and the money they make forms the program of their days and years. It is about these they are solicitous, and in their acquisition of them, they will do to give their time and thoughts and souls in the service. God is forgotten.

Now it is from this servile worship of self and selfishness that our Lord, would recall us to worship the true Lord and Master of our souls and to depend on Him.

FRUITS OF "REFORMATION"

One of the characteristic features of the so-called "Reformation" in Great Britain and through that Government in Ireland was the zeal manifested in plundering, confiscating and destroying the temples of religion and charity, which dotted the land since the first planting of the Christian religion throughout the land.

The Protestant historian Cobbett gives in his history of the Reformation a startling presentation of the extent to which the work of plunder and confiscation was carried on. Many of the ancient ruins to be found in different parts of Ireland tell to-day a sad story of ecclesiastical and civil destruction which was not a riot during those years of strife and dissension.

One of these is the ruins of the historic Franciscan Abbey of Donegal, situated on Donegal Bay. It was founded in the year 1474 by Hugh Roe O'Donnell, Prince of Tyrconnell. It had the best library in the kingdom and a large part of the annals of the Four Masters was compiled there, but the value and sacred character of the monastery and its belongings did not save it from destruction at the hands of the anti-Catholic fanatics in 1551.

The historian McGee describes how the British garrisons located near the ancient seats of ecclesiastical power and munificence were authorized to plunder the sanctuaries and storehouses. The garrison of Down sacked the celebrated shrines of St. Patrick, Bridget, and Columbkille.

So it was also in Rathlin Island, Clonmacnoise, and other sacred institutions which had been for centuries revered by the people, and which were centers of learning, charity and religious zeal. The pictured glass was torn from the widow frames and the reversed images from their niches. The altars were overturned and sacred vessels polluted and carried off.

All this in the alleged interest of religion, the spirit of Christ's Gospel of peace, and in obedience to His great command: "Love ye one another." What a mockery of all religion and Christian civilization!

Yet such has ever been the spirit of anti-Catholic fanaticism. Its characteristics have been malevolence and sacrilege and robbery in the most revolting field of civilization over which it passes like that of the deadly simoon of the desert. But the spirit of truth which remains with the Church eternal cannot be crushed forever. It rises again and triumphs over its enemies.

"Truth crushed to earth, will rise again; The eternal years of God are hers; While error, wounded, writhes in pain, And dies among her worshippers.

FIGURATIVE THEOLOGY

Students of logic know the danger of the argument a pari. It is so easy for the things, alike in every other respect, to differ in just that on which the argument depends. Still more dangerous is the argument drawn from figures; which, nevertheless, the Protestant theologian of to-day declines to not a little. It is true that some figures are familiar in Catholic theology. They come to us from the Gospel, they are interpreted by the Church; and therefore within the limits set by authority, they give arguments quite conclusive. But these the Protestant theologian deserts often for the sake of his own invention. We noticed lately the arch, the face-masking and the pyramid figure, by which some would demonstrate their ideas of the Church, or illustrate the usurpations of the papacy. When the Protestant theologian uses the figures of the Gospel he is likely to pervert them as Bishop Boyd-Carpenter has just done in Montreal.

Four Protestant colleges of theology affiliated to McGill University in that city have been united and the union was celebrated by a banquet. Among the distinguished guests were Dr. Boyd-Carpenter, long Bishop of Ripon, but now enjoying repose as a canon of Westminster; and also, a number of men from England to speak, and he did so. Whether the whistle was worth the penny is doubtful. He said that though not in sympathy with Church union, he thought the uniting of the McGill colleges a good thing; and he justified the paradox by remarking that two may sit at the same table, but they do not mean that they must necessarily eat the same food.

Here we have the argument a pari with the similarity falling just on that point on which the argument depends. The likeness of attendance in the schools to that at a banquet is an old story. But like as they are, they differ in this: the variety of dishes offering of choice to the feasters, which is characteristic of the feast, has little place in the schools, least of all in the school of theology, as we shall see. Here is also the argument from a figure, and from a scriptural figure: "A certain man made a great supper; "The kingdom of Heaven is likened to a king who made a marriage for his son; "Labor not for the meat that perisheth, but for that which endureth life everlasting." And the Bishop perverted the figure. The food served in the banquet, the meat for which one must labor, is, in the spiritual sense, the banquet of grace given by God for our salvation, the Redeemer, the Church, the sacraments, grace, the theological virtues, etc., and here there

is no choice. Hence St. Paul says of the fathers of Israel, that they "did all eat the same spiritual food," adding that "these things were done in a figure of us." In the school of theology God's revelation the master of our faith, is the rich banquet served, and there is but one faith as there is but one Lord, and it must be accepted in its entirety. Picking and choosing there comes under the ugly name of heresy. The Bishop's figure, if it is apropos of the McGill united colleges, means that each individual student enjoys in them the privilege of being a heretic, and it is good that he should have this privilege.

Yet Bishop Boyd-Carpenter has a great name among Episcopalians on both sides of the Atlantic.—America.

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