

and the most extreme epoch, that we can conceive in the unmeasured future, are both equally present as far as Eternity is concerned. The eye of the Eternal takes in at one glance all that is measurable and all that is immeasurable. The Omnipresence of God applies not only to every place known to the present, but also to all places, all spaces, all periods inside and outside the circle of Time. The mighty span from the dawn of creation to the sunset of time, is merely an undistinguishable dot in the illimitable extent of Eternity. Therefore if Christ is God, He is eternal, omnipresent and omniscient; consequently nineteen centuries ago He knew all that is being done at this moment as he was then as equally present with Leo XIII. as he was with St. Peter. He not only foresaw the future of His Church, but He saw it without foreseeing it. He knew then, as He knows now, and as He knew ages before creation, exactly what is transpiring at this moment upon earth.

"And this would demand a perpetual miracle, or infraction of nature's laws," says Rev. Mr. Harris, D. D. That depends upon how you consider a miracle. Did it ever strike the mind of that learned Doctor that a miracle is really not a violation of nature's laws. A strange and somewhat startling assertion for the editor of a Catholic paper to make! Not half as much so as are the absurd suppositions of Rev. Mr. Harris, D. D. It depends on what nature you mean. A miracle, is decidedly a violation of the laws governing our nature, which belongs to created beings and created things; but it is in strict accordance with the laws governing the divine nature, or the nature which belongs to the Creator of all beings and things. Our finite minds cannot grasp the idea of eternity, nor of an eternal Being, no more, then, can we comprehend the laws of that nature in harmony with which are all these humanly incomprehensible facts that are called miracles. The Omniscience of Christ is no more extraordinary, no more miraculous, no more an infraction of laws governing a nature divine, than is the Omnipotence of the Creator, or the Omnipresence of the Eternal.

Christ compared the Kingdom of Heaven to a mustard seed that is sown by man; it grows, it becomes a plant finally, the birds of the air make their nests in its branches. If the Kingdom of Heaven is such; the Kingdom of God on earth—His Church—is even similar. Christ cast the seed into the earth, when He was amongst men; since His departure it took root, it was watered by the blood of martyrdom, it grew, it expanded, it became what it is to-day. Christ saw all that, and it was part of His eternal plan that it should be so. The seed is an unattractive little object, but beautiful are the flowers and rich the perfume from the tree that it produces. Small the beginning but wonderful the growth of the Church, and all the splendors of ceremony and the pomp of adoration that we now know are merely the natural outcome of the seed sown by the Hand of the Omniscient Christ.

Father Stone, in his beautiful chapter on "The Primacy and Prophecy," puts the matter in a few clear words. Let his remarks serve as an answer to this Doctor of Divinity, who seems to admit the possibility of Christ's knowledge being limited. "Protestants either do not believe what they profess, or do not understand what they profess to believe. I mean that they either have no faith, or a most unintelligent faith in the divinity of Jesus Christ. They have no real apprehension of our Lord's Omnipotence.

They do not truly understand that what He did during His brief earthly ministry He did with the future all before Him, as it had been before Him from all eternity; that every word which fell from His human lips had been predetermined in the councils of the Trinity, and was uttered with the most absolute foreknowledge of its consequences. Neither do they comprehend His Omnipotence. They are not conscious that whatsoever He promised He has Himself performed. To them it is as if Christ gave men a religion, and then left it to push its own way to conquest, or rather left it in the hands of men, to be debated over, and misunderstood, and tampered with, and perverted. They know not that He who laid the first stone has superintended the whole construction; that the Church has been built up, as it was founded, by the power of God."

We would advise the Rev. Dr. Harris to revise his theological studies, if ever he really studied theology; and at the same time to take in a few ordinary lectures upon both profane and sacred history. He might, perhaps, earn a right to the title he has captured and even—if conscientious in his studies—he might be led to understand the nature of the Founder of Christianity and the perfect harmony and unity of the Church that He has given to the world. To enter into a discussion on the question of "pomp" and "new-fangled doctrines" would demand considerable more space than we have at our disposal; suffice to say that Rev. Mr. Harris, D. D. is as far astray on these questions as he is unchristian and illogical in his ideas regarding Our Divine Lord.

#### THE MASS.

The Gospel is read and accompanied with many prayers and ceremonies calculated to inspire us with profound respect for the divine word. In Solemn Masses the priest or deacon sings the Gospel. At High Mass the cross, lighted candles and incense are carried before the Book of the Gospels. The deacon makes the sign of the cross on the sacred book to remind us that the Gospel is the preaching of the Cross. The people answer, *Praise be to Thee, O Christ*—for the Gospel is a great benefit conferred by God. We stand during the Gospel, to show that we are ready to walk in the footsteps of Jesus Christ.

This explanation is taken from the same work by the Abbe Gaume. It is generally the case that members of other denominations believe that Catholics have no faith in the Gospel, and that they refuse to read it. Not a day passes over us that does not find thousands of priests, in all parts of the earth, reading the Gospel of that day in their morning Mass. There is not a Catholic in the world but reads the Gospels. Every Sunday, in thousands of churches, the Gospels are explained to the faithful. None believe more truly than do the Catholics that the Gospels are inspired writings. They are the word of God penned by His servants for the use of His faithful. However, we do not believe that the reading of the Gospel and faith in Christ suffice to open for us the gates of Heaven. The Gospels or Scriptures are the History of our Faith, but not the Explanation of that Faith. They require to be explained to us. We cannot comprehend the great teachings of Christ by our own means. No two men can read an ordinary article in a daily paper and receive therefrom the exact same impression. So no two men can read the Gospels or Scriptures and see in them the exact same meaning. We require some guide that is infallible. We have that guide in the

Father of the Faithful speaking ex cathedra, on questions of dogma.

Generally, after the Gospel comes the instruction to the people. The priest announces the feasts of the week, the marriages to take place, and then preaches the word of God. Therefore is it important to attend the parish Mass every Sunday. On week days, generally, there is no instruction. How little people think of the importance of this point. How many sins are thereby avoided. It is not only the sin of missing Mass, when done without a sufficient reason, but a person living far away from neighbors, or even in a village, who does not attend the Mass, cannot expect to know what days are to be kept holy, or upon what days he is obliged to fast and abstain. Let us name an example: The Ember days come four times in a year, but their dates change with the succeeding years. Suppose a person does not attend Mass the Sunday before Ember days, he does not hear the announcement (and the priest is obliged to announce these things), he does not fast or abstain from flesh meat on those days. Each time he commits a mortal sin. His ignorance of the fact is no excuse; he would not have become ignorant of the existence of that fast had he gone to Mass. Therefore, one sin draws on a load of sins. And all could be avoided by attending the parish Mass.

These little articles are not sermons, yet it is hard to pass over this question without explaining in simple language the laws of the Church, upon the sin of missing Mass. Be it remembered that we refer to missing the Mass without sufficient reason. If one has a sufficient reason—illness, physical impossibility to go, etc.—there is no sin. In missing Mass you may commit either mortal or venial sin: 1st—It is a mortal sin to miss the whole Mass. 2nd—It is a mortal sin to miss any of the important parts—the offertory, consecration or communion. To miss any one of these parts, from the sermon to the communion, is a mortal sin. 3rd—It is a mortal sin to miss the beginning and the end of the Mass. This we wish to be well understood. If you miss that part of the Mass from the Introit to the Offertory, it is a venial sin; if you miss from the Communion to the last Gospel, it is a venial sin; but if you miss both of these parts, the first and the last, it is a mortal sin. Therefore one is not all right if he arrives in time for the Gospel, or if he runs out after the Communion. You must hear the whole Mass.

After the sermon comes the Creed, or Creed. In High Masses it is sung, and in Low Masses recited. In some Masses it is left out; for example, in the Mass for the dead. The Creed was formulated at the Council of Nice, and is styled the Nicene Creed. It contains all that is necessary for a Catholic to believe. It would require hundreds of pages to explain the Creed. When it is over the priest kisses the altar, and turning to the people says, "The Lord be with you." This ends the second part of the Mass. At this point, in older times, the catechumens left the church.

The third part of the Mass extends from the Creed to the Preface. After the Creed the priest turns to the people and says, *The Lord be with you*; to which they answer, and with thy spirit. He then recites a prayer called the Offertory. It was so called because in former times, and still in many Catholic countries, the faithful came at this part of the Mass and offered the bread and wine which they had brought to the sacrifice. The priest then offers to God the bread he is about to consecrate, and the wine which is to become the Sacred Blood.

The priest removes the veil from the

chalice and extends the corporal upon the altar. The corporal is a square piece of linen destined to receive the body of our Lord. It must be linen because it was in linen that the body of Christ was wrapped for sepulture. There is also a square card enclosed in linen which is called the pall. Pall means a covering. The priest offers the bread upon the patena. The offering of the bread and wine is made by the priest, for the persons present, for the faithful both living and dead. He implores the Holy Ghost to descend and consume these offerings by changing them into the body and blood of Jesus Christ.

In the bread, that in some churches is blessed and passed to the faithful, we behold a symbol of the holy communion, and that bread as such should be received with respect, joy and confidence. During the offertory there is generally a collection taken up. That is a custom that dates from the dawn of Christianity and shows us that charity should not consist in words only but also in good actions. St. Paul has told us that "faith without good works is dead." The priest washes his fingers after the offertory. There are two reasons for this ceremony. The first is a natural one, he desires to wipe off from those fingers any spot that might come in contact with the host. The second is a mysterious reason, he desires thereby to remind the faithful of the holiness and purity which all should have when they come to the altar.

After having washed his fingers and recited that prayer "*Livabo*," he returns to the middle of the altar and there begs of the Holy Trinity to accept the sacrifice which he is about to offer. Having kissed the altar he turns to the people for the last time until after the Communion, and says, "brethren, let us pray." This is a special invitation to the faithful to give their whole attention to the coming parts of the Mass. Then is recited the Secret, a prayer so called because recited in an undertone. In this prayer he asks God to bless the offering and bless the faithful. This ends the third part of the Mass. No comments are necessary upon the above. The reader can perceive how perfect the form of the Mass is. There is not a prayer, a sign, a bow, a word, a motion that has not a real meaning, that does not tend towards the great object of the sacrifice, that is not perfectly reasonable. They who scoff at the Mass as a series of strange mummeries and a collection of unintelligible signs, give strong proof of their great ignorance or want of truth. It is consummate ignorance to proclaim that anything is nonsense if you do not understand it or because you have not studied it. And if you do not understand it you are guilty of falsehood when you thus attack it.

We will run over the fourth part of the Mass as quickly as possible, as it is the part upon which we shall have to dwell the most. Thus having occasion to refer to it in many more than one article, we shall first give a sketch of the fourth part. It begins after the Secret and ends at the Pater. The Preface is an introduction to the grand prayer called the Canon. The Church in the Preface invites us to render glory to God for having deigned to accept our offerings, and with the celestial court we sing the glorious canticle of eternity. That canticle is the Sanctus, "holy, holy, holy Lord God of armies, the heavens and the earth are full of thy glory, hosannah in the highest."

The word Canon signifies rule. The Canon consists of the prayers which the Church prescribes for offering the holy sacrifice, and which are not permitted to be changed. The Canon is of great antiquity, and it should be recited with profound respect and great confidence. In the first prayer of the Canon are marked the principal ends for which the sacrifice is offered, the glory of God and the good of the Catholic Church; in the second are named the persons who have a principal share in the Mass; in the third the Church reminds us that we are in communion with the heavenly court. Next week we will refer to the supreme Sacrifice.