

THE CHURCH AND CHARITY.

Archbishop Ireland's Powerful Argument on Practical Christianity.

At the cathedral in St. Paul, Minn., last Sunday evening, Archbishop Ireland delivered the following powerful address:

The Encyclical of the Holy Father on the "Condition of Labor" teaches Catholics that it is their solemn religious duty to take deep and abiding interest in social matters and it touches the world at large that social matters depend in their solutions very largely upon the principles of religion, and the active influence of the Church which officially expounds and enforces those principles.

The duty of Christians to interest themselves in social matters the Holy Father illustrates by his own example. From the highest and most authoritative pulpit in Christendom he sends forth his voice, bewailing the evils which press upon modern society, and proclaiming the principles which will lead to its salvation.

The Church primarily exists for the soul; its first and chief aim is the supernatural life and the future world. If a comparison be instituted between heaven and earth she promptly decides in favor of the former, and if there is a menace of conflict between one and the other, she hesitates not to repeat: "What doth it profit a man to gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

How nearer to its gates should be if sin no longer fettered us! How much better and brighter life becomes for man as he develops his talents and energies to their full growth and as he awakens into his service the latent powers of nature!

There was, in the Catholic body, need of the encyclical. Catholics were not entirely silent and inactive as regards social matters. We have had our Catholic social congresses in several European countries; we have noted Catholic social writers; Catholic associations for promotion of social interests have been formed and prosper; illustrious Catholic chieftains on both sides of the Atlantic have been always ready with voice and hand to ward off social tempests and bring calm upon agitated seas.

wonder overmuch that Catholics have held aloof from the social field, and were led to believe that the timely moment had not come for the baring of arm, and the unsheathing of sword. But another reason for their social inactivity I am not so willing to excuse or pardon. It is the pernicious and widespread belief, born of timidity and shortsightedness, that the arena for religious work of priests and people is in the church and church alone, and that the big world outside church walls must be left to itself, to heaven and to sink from its own forces, for life or death, untouched by Christian hand or unstirred by Christian inspiration.

THE BETTERMENT OF THE PRESENT LIFE.

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THE MEANING OF CHARITY.

The evidence of divine life in the Church is charity for God's creatures, the earnest and sincere charity which feeds the hungry, gives drink to the thirsty, clothes the naked and visits the prisoner. Here is a most potent motive for social work. Charity, to be true, to be operative, does not confine itself to alms-giving. This is a momentary relief, and, at best, suggests returning petitions and new doles of pity. What should be given, when possible, is that charity, rational and determined, which seeks out the root of social evils with the design of exterminating them, which opens avenues to personal independence and to freedom from poverty and wretchedness.

JUSTICE AND RIGHTEOUSNESS.

The Church is the guardian and the teacher of the principles of justice and righteousness. These principles observed, social questions are easily solved. The lack of them in one's own

private conduct begets bodily ailments, incapacitates for the struggle of life, and leads to poverty. Purity, sobriety, legitimate self-denial are moral virtues which it is the duty of the Church to inculcate; they are social virtues the practice of which will sweep away a thousand and one of the ills of life. Respect for the manhood of fellow-beings, justice in one's dealing with them, the repression of overweening greed in self, are also duties which the Church must proclaim before the nations of the earth, and those duties observed, the grinding miseries imposed upon humanity by the pride of power and the covetousness of avarice will disappear. Upon those social virtues let Catholics lay to-day special stress; they are virtues most timely. Each age has its needs and its work; the Church, as bidden by the Master, takes from her treasury, things old and new as circumstances demand, and puts forth into bolder relief now one element of her teaching, now another. Social matters compel our attention; let the social power of religion go forth over the land. Let the social virtues be proclaimed with force from the pulpit and the rostrum; let the social practices be commended in newspaper and book. Let there be more than teaching; be there action and co-operation. The Church of Christ is not merely a voice; she is a living active power. Let her speak; let her put her words into practice; let her enforce her teachings; let her teach with effect, not merely repeating principles, but stepping into the arena, grasping the real situation, let her make application of her principles, declaring what is to be done in daily life and what is to be avoided. These duties done, the social work which we demand from the Church shall be done. Loyal to her God-given mission the Church must be no stranger in the hovel of the beggar, who needs comfort and counsel in his battlings with poverty, nor in the palace of the millionaire, who needs warning lest he forget his lowly brethren.

She speak to labor lest it become oblivious of just laws, and to capital lest it oppress and crush labor. She must lend her hand to legitimate methods for the advance of intelligence, liberty and the material well-being of the people. Let her whisper counselings where willing ears are listening, and let her words be thunder- loud when souls are obdurate. Nought that is human can be alien to her; nought that is in the world should escape her influence. This, some will say, is not the Church we have known—the gentle, quiet, unobtrusive Church of sacraments and ascetic devotions, keeping jealously within the lines of the spiritual, leaving secular matters to whomsoever they concern them, the dead burying the dead. Well, let me say to you, you have never known the Church of Christ.

SOCIAL SALVATION THE BASIS OF SPIRITUAL SALVATION.

The business of the Church is to save souls. This first and before all else. Therefore must she take most active interest in social matters. The body is too intimately united with the soul to permit us to care for the one without caring for the other. The Christian who is to be saved lives in the world, and cannot escape the influence of his surroundings; if we would gain him over to grace, those surroundings must be made favorable to the conquest. Something more is needed than to preach truth from pulpit and proffer sacramental favors to those who willingly through around our altars. We must follow them out over the dusty highways of life, and avert the foes that are lying in wait to pluck out from hearts the seeds we are planting in them. We must remember the thousands who do not come near us, and, so far as our ability goes, strike down the fetters that bind them to sin and to hell. The social conditions of legions of souls constrain them to live away from Church and from God, and it is utterly futile to talk to them of a higher life until those conditions are altered.

"THE SUBMERGED TENTH."

In his book on "Darkest England" William Booth tells of the "submerged tenth" of the population of London. They are the "lost," the "outcast," the "disinherited of the world," who have gone under, who have lost their foothold in society, to whom the prayer of Our Heavenly Father, "Give us this day our daily bread," is either unfulfilled or only filled by the devil's agency, by the earnings of vice, the proceeds of crime or the contribution enforced by threat of law. In every city of the world there are the "lost," the "disinherited," in numbers greater or smaller. Is there use in preaching the gospel to those victims of misery until they have been socially lifted up to the plane of normal humanity, where men are masters of mind and heart? Preaching the gospel to them in their degradation and misery is beating idly the air. Calm the cravings of hunger; an empty stomach is an impatient hearer. Let into the garret sunlight and wholesome air before you strive to dispel spiritual gloom, and give freshness to the soul. Look up those kennels of vice, of drunkenness and of moral corruption, into whose yawning gateways the young man and the young woman are being swept as by a fierce torrent, without knowledge or strength on their part to offer resistance; this done, you may offer to them the invitation to be sober and pure, and to turn their eyes toward the sky. There are thousands of human beings damned from their very birth because of the fatid atmosphere they are made to breathe, and the atrocious temptations from which they cannot wrest themselves. Very little

of us know of the fearful straggings and the dismal sorrows of tens of thousands of fellow-beings. Languishing in cosy parlors we sigh over the depravity of the "lost" kneeling in cushioned pews we thank God that we are among the saved, or we offer a prayer for the conversion of the sinner, and we deem our saving work over. Our charity, our zeal, I am afraid, is a mockery. Our vaunted civilization—our Christianity, such as it too frequently comes to the surface—is selfishness, draped it as we may in robes of culture and religion. True zeal for the spiritual good of the masses will bring us outside our homes and our churches into the broad social world, where, with all our might, we shall labor for healthy legislation, bearing upon the ills of the vicious and the poor, for the stirring up of consciences in the high and the lowly, for the protection of the weak, the humanizing of the "disinherited," and the social salvation of the fallen and the falling. The more we believe that our work for spiritual regeneration shall be fruitful, THE ACTION AND REACTION OF CHRISTIANITY WILL BE SOCIAL.

The historic action of the Church was always eminently social. It illustrates and confirms what we are saying. Its manifestations vary in times and places, as necessities and opportunities arise. I refer you to our blessed Lord Himself. His miracles, designed in last analysis to establish His divinity and draw souls to Him, were always ostensibly wrought to alleviate bodily suffering. He restored sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf; He fed the hungry; He cheered desolate households by ordering back loved ones from the jaws of death. "I have pity of the multitude," He said, as His eyes fell upon the thousands in the desert who were unable to find wherewith to appease their hunger. He basel His religion upon social works, and made social charity the test of one's love for Himself, and the standard measure of one's hopes in the future life. "Whoever shall give to drink to one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple; amen, I say to you, he shall not lose his reward." The words of the Judge on the last day will be: "Come, ye blessed of My Father, * * * for 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, * * * Amen, I say to you, as long as you did it to one of these, my least brethren, you did it to me."

SOCIAL INFLUENCE OF THE CHURCH IN THE PAST.

I refer you to the Church in succeeding ages. The care for the poor was a passion with the close followers of Jesus; asylums and hospitals covered the lands over which the cross had been lifted; legions of men and women arose, consecrating by vows their lives to the service of charity. Nor did the action of the Church limit itself to temporary almsgiving and temporary relief of pain. She civilized; she penetrated into avenues of social life; she combated all forms of submission and injustice; she nurtured and developed all impulses for good. Her works taught agriculture, and led Franks and Goths to turn the sword into the ploughshare. She opened schools and universities when none other than she dreamt of dispelling the dark clouds of ignorance. She never ceases her labors for human freedom through whole centuries, until by a decree of one of her councils she was able to proclaim that in all Christendom there was no longer a slave. The violence of feudal wars were checked by her "truce of God"—seasons of the year when under penalty of excommunication all Christians were compelled to be in peace, and by right of sanctuary, which guaranteed life and liberty to all who reached her altars. Her pontiffs and councils interfered when monarchs ruled despotically, when unbridled lust menaced the security of the family. Religious orders were instituted to purchase captives from Mohammedan masters; wherever evil appeared, she went out to meet it. Her destiny was Heaven; her battlefield the world, and all her teaching and practice were that the better we make the world the surer are we of possessing Heaven.

NEW FORMS OF SOCIAL WORK.

New forms of ills have sprung up; new forms of work are open to us. Loyal to duty as the chief shepherd of the Church, loyal to the traditions of the past, Leo XIII. publishes his encyclical on the "Conditions of Labor." It is our duty to study it and carry out its injunctions within range of our power, however restricted the range may be. The Church is at home in social work. She departs from her own lines when she neglects it, in whatever form it comes before her, and in whatever sphere of life, however remote from the sanctuary, however secular in origin it lies. Nor do the children of the Church cease to be citizens of that state and members of the social body, and as such they have their direct obligations to state and to the social body. Their religion emphasizes those obligations and provides motives and forces to fulfill them. They owe to the state and society to make known to them from the house-top the principles of their religion, which will cement together the several parts of the social structure, and bring into co-operation with them the Christian Church, so that in the union of forces and harmony of intent and action all may work toward the solution of the problems that press upon this age, and which, under penalty of ruin and death, we must not pass by unheeded.

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FREEDOM OF CONSCIENCE.

Bishop Keane at the Unveiling of a Statue to Calvert.

The Right Rev. John J. Keane, D. D., rector of the Catholic University of America, was the orator at the recent dedication of the new Calvert Hall—an Academy of the Christian Brothers in Baltimore—and the unveiling of the statue to Leonard Calvert, founder of the Colony of Maryland, and pioneer of religious freedom in America.

The Bishop spoke, among other things, of the change from the old-time policy of developing the good by suppressing error, which led up to a spirit of persecution, the result of which wrong policy was that it could not last, and things have changed. There is no longer persecution to protect the truth; the new policy is to educate and instruct the youth with Christian education, thus giving them the means to resist error. This is the policy of the Church to-day. It is the policy first inaugurated in the New World by George Calvert, the first Lord Baltimore. History shows how Lord Baltimore's policy, through bigotry, was turned against himself. Nevertheless, truth finally prevailed, and when the Colonies, under our Washington, were victorious, the policy of religious toleration inaugurated by Calvert—the policy of Maryland—prevailed and grew, until now the spirit of toleration extends over the whole world.

Bishop Keane said that when he was in Rome, one who is close to Pope Leo XIII. said to him: "I am persuaded that the Church is not to grow by anathemas, or by condemnation, but by the persuasive power of the truth." Bishop Keane then eloquently spoke on behalf of such religious toleration, saying: "Ay, let us see that this policy of George Calvert shall rule in this hall. Every man and woman some time in their life is sure to come in contact with error, hence the importance of being educated to the truth, that all may be strong to meet without danger all error. The homes of America ought to be the most Christian in the world; and over each door ought to be inscribed, 'The demon of impurity, the demon of profanity, the demon of drink shall not enter here, for these demons turn the home into a hell. So, also, the Church in America should take the young and teach them to be good; and the school must supplement the work of the home and the Church. Here, then, is the great problem of the world: 'How are our schools to be made Christian?' This disturbs others, but not Catholics, for such institutions as Calvert Hall demonstrate how Catholics answer the question."

He closed, saying: "We, the alumni of old Calvert Hall, with its dingy walls, rejoice in the erection of this building, so well fitted for nineteenth century progress in education. No narrowness or bigotry will ever be taught here. This school would be unworthy to receive the name of Calvert Hall if any bitterness should rule here. Here shall be taught the motto of the Fathers, 'In essentials, unity; in what is doubtful, liberty, and in all things charity.'"

No irreverent words are to be fit here, and at the same time, no one should go from this school who is ready to sell his religion at half price. From this school shall go forth young men who shall be Christians, not only in name but in reality, as well as good citizens. Others are imitating us. In a Western State I noticed that there are 175 Catholic schools, 285 Lutheran schools, and a number of Protestant Episcopal schools were united in a late contest. Our country will come to understand that our policy of Christian education is its safeguard. Friends, go forward, assured that in this light we will not walk in darkness."

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