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LORENZO; OR, THE EMPIRE OF RELIGION. BY A SCOTCH NON-CONFORMIST, A CONVERT TO THE CATHOLIC FAITH. Translated from the French by a Lady of Philadelphia. CHAPTER XVIII.

Meanwhile the condition of Lorenzo became every day more alarming. His suffering was continual, and often so excessive that the alteration of his voice betrayed it, notwithstanding all his efforts to conceal his pain. Yet there was nothing capable of interrupting his assiduity in prayer, his perfect union with God, and his unalterable mildness. The celestial joy which irradiated his countenance, increased in proportion as his physical strength forsook him. The interior of Rosline castle, notwithstanding all the trials which Heaven had sent, presented an aspect of happiness, unclouded as it can be on earth. And this peace was so much the more solid, because, based upon the hopes of eternity, on the love and practice of duty, on the delights of a union formed by Christian charity, it far removed enmity, and all the vicissitudes inseparable from the dearest friendships of which religion is not the bond. We lived to ourselves. No stranger was invited to the castle, and no one came to search for the friends of the queen, in an abode from which mourning and solitude had banished all exterior joy. We were but the happier for it; and often, to recreate the amiable children of our friends, we took part in plays suited to their age, which Lorenzo enlivened by the most attractive gaiety, and at which Mr. Billingham, and Mr. Kennelly, (chaplain of the castle) were present. The duchess' apartment was ordinarily the place of reunion for all the family, and we even for some time (Lorenzo not having strength to descend to the dining room) dined in this room, which was near Lorenzo's. Mr. Billingham also joined us, while Mr. Kennelly remained below with the rest of the family. The duchess, kindly to all, had thus regulated it, in order that the children might not be deprived of the presence of their parents, and not to restrain the somewhat noisy gaiety natural at their age, which might have incommoded Lorenzo. In this way, we only saw Henry, Caroline, or Matilda, after Mr. Kennelly's mass, which he celebrated at seven o'clock, before the children arose, and we joined them again in the evening when the children were asleep. Then we all assembled for prayer, in Lorenzo's room, where we remained until about ten o'clock. It often happened that Lorenzo did not assist at Mr. Kennelly's mass, because his long wakefulness during the night made it necessary for him to sleep towards morning, but he always heard the mass of Mr. Billingham about half past nine o'clock, at which he frequently communicated.

During the time we passed together alone, he conversed with me about my future design; for I had not concealed from the duchess what personally regarded me. Lorenzo spoke freely of his approaching felicity. "The loss of our dearest friends," said he, "is a real happiness and advantage. In proportion to the extent of our love, so is the greatness of the blessing. When these earthly chains are broken, the soul, with less difficulty, elevates itself to God. Is it not evident, Sidney, that he who dies in the midst of his family must arm himself with great courage, and experience heart-rending grief in the separation from those he loves; whilst the man who has lost all, who has seen the objects of his dearest affections fly before him, and precede him to eternal regions, has no longer any sacrifice to make or separation to dread? He would hasten, on the contrary, by his ardent desires, the moment which is to reunite him for ever to those whom in this world he so tenderly loved, and to remove him from a dwelling-place which, since they left it, has been but a vast solitude to him! Thus madam," added Lorenzo, addressing the duchess, "the thought of rejoining your children will gladden your last hour, and remove the bitterness of that final moment." "Not one son remains to close my eyes," said the duchess in a mournful tone. "They have blessed you; they owe to your prayers and virtue the happiness they enjoy; and they will receive you in that bright abode where nothing shall ever separate you. You, my dear Sidney, will long have renounced the world before it abandons you. Remember, in your happy solitude, to pray for me." "Yes," I eagerly replied, "I shall lament you all my life, and I shall become strengthened by the remembrance of your virtues. I feel that I shall console myself for your absence only in thinking of you before God." Lorenzo pressed my hand with an emotion which he vainly endeavored to conceal. A few days after, he became so weak that he could not leave his room. Mr. Billingham, who regarded him with the affection of a parent, came to see him. He was stretched upon his bed, in a state of extreme debility.

signation. "I am not worthy of it; but I pray you, if I continue in the same state to-morrow, to grant me the last favors which God reserves for his children in this world."

Mr. Billingham took his burning hand, and, giving him his blessing, "To-day, if you wish it," said he, "I will offer the holy sacrifice in your room." A heavenly joy beamed upon Lorenzo's face, and caused his paleness for a moment to disappear. Mr. Billingham made arrangements for the celebration of mass. We all assisted at it, and Lorenzo received communion with a fervor which shone upon his countenance. He afterwards asked Mr. Billingham to administer the blessed sacrament to him the next day, and to give him also extreme unction, with all the accustomed prayers, desiring to receive these august sacraments in the full possession of his faculties. We passed the whole day near him. Henry and Matilda never left his room, except during the short intervals when he appeared to sleep. Caroline and her mother did not for a single instant leave him. It was the month of October, and the cold was very great. There were moments when Lorenzo visibly suffered from the rigor of the season, although there was fire in his room. He still wished to pray, kneeling; but, finding himself unable, he remained in bed, with clasped hands, and spent more than an hour absorbed in prayer. He then requested Henry and Caroline to bring their children to him; and, taking in his arms little Silva, his god-son, he blessed him and his sister Mary. Matilda's son, who knew him better, said that he prayed often for his recovery. Lorenzo smiled. "I pray also for you," he said, "that you may be a happiness to your mother.—Pray frequently for the soul of your uncle Hiddala; he has great need of prayers." Edmund assured him that his mother recommended him to do so daily. The children having left him, he conversed some time longer with us, after which we said together the evening prayers. He passed a tranquil night; his union with God was continual; and the fervor of his soul illuminated his face with an extraordinary brilliancy. Towards midnight the physician gave him a spoonful of a very powerful elixir; but, instead of the desired effect, Lorenzo was seized with violent convulsions, which were followed by long fits of fainting. When he came to himself, he exclaimed, "Where am I?" Then, laying his hands on his forehead, he observed a deep silence. He afterwards asked what had happened. He appeared so affected, that I entreated him to compose himself. "I am not troubled," said he, "but I do not merit my happiness; and, however short it may be, it is too great for Lorenzo."

We sought in vain to interpret his meaning. Calling Mr. Billingham, he spoke to him a long time, in a low voice; and the latter pressed him in his arms. Lorenzo then asked for the duchess, who was on her knees, near his bed. "Oh," said he, "I pray you to rise. Come for a moment near me." Then, regarding her with an animated expression, "Ah! I have nothing more to desire upon earth: why so much satisfaction here?" Saying these words, he leaned his face, which was wet with tears, on his mother's hand. The duchess could not restrain hers.

A moment after, casting his eyes towards Matilda, "Angel upon earth!" said he, "afflictions have not changed you; you are still Matilda." I was perfectly amazed at these words, when Mr. Billingham observed, "He sees you; he can look upon all he loves. Heaven grants him this favor in the last moments of his life." I threw myself on my knees, at his side. "Rise, Sidney," said Lorenzo; "come to my arms." He looked earnestly at me, pressed me to his heart, and begged me to respect his secret in regard to the duchess and his sister. Henry and Caroline could not contain themselves for joy; they sent for the children, whom they presented to Lorenzo.

"Oh God," said Henry, "how impenetrable are your designs! I would have given my life to restore to Lorenzo what he has sacrificed for me, were I not to obtain this favor but at the moment of losing him for ever!" "Is it, then, for ever?" I asked. Lorenzo now embraced the children, and, keeping Edmund by him, he observed: "They say that he is the striking image of his father." Having assured him of it, he again embraced the child, calling him Arthur.—The physician insisting that he should remain quiet, the children were removed, after he had given them his blessing. The doctor then explained to us that the nerves of the eye being only paralyzed by the extremely cold application made to them, the revolution in his system, caused by the elixir which he had taken, had revived the action of the nerves, but that he had a very short time to live.

Lorenzo disposed himself for the reception of the sacraments with angelic fervor, and received them towards morning in transports of joy, gratitude and love. Some hours after, he spoke to me of the vanity of earthly things, and the solidity of eternal joys. "My life," said he, "has

passed away as a dream; and I can assure you that the last six years (those years that have flowed on since my abode at —, and my interview with Henry) have been the happiest. I have sometimes suffered in making the sacrifices which Divine Providence required of me; but the consolation and sweetness which succeeded, compensated a hundred-fold the loss I submitted to. Happiness was not made for this life; and that true peace of heart, which of all blessings is the most desirable and precious, cannot be founded except on eternal hopes, and an entire disengagement from all that this world can take from us. Ah! my beloved Sidney," he continued, "you will one day reach that final hour which is about striking for me: remember Lorenzo. You will then regard as most precious the least sacrifices you shall have offered to Jesus Christ. Your only regret will be not to have offered more."

On concluding these words, he kissed his mother's hand, with a celestial smile. I saw into his heart, and refrained from depriving him of the last sacrifice with which he desired to crown those of his past life. He afterwards begged pardon of us all for the bad example he might have given. The domestics present, and above all good Richard, burst into tears. He embraced us all. Then, addressing the duchess, "Madam," said he, "you have treated me as your son, by your kindness and your charitable attentions;—will you now give me your blessing, which shall be a pledge of peace and happiness?"

The duchess, weeping, blessed him. He received her blessing with profound respect. He then said to me: "You, Sidney, have had so much goodness for your poor slave, that I believe it useless to recommend his poor soul to you, that it may soon be delivered from the place of expiation."

"To this I was unable to reply. 'Be at rest, my son,' said Mr. Billingham to Lorenzo; 'you will soon enjoy the God whom you have served with so much love.' 'Oh, yes!' he replied, 'love effaces a multitude of sins.'"

He then began to pray, and we joined him.—He several times pressed the cross to his lips. Then he said to me, in a low voice: "When I shall be no more, take the chain of Arthur's hair, and keep it in memory of my brother and me.—You, Henry," said he, in a lower voice, "never forsake my mother or Matilda. As for Sidney, I think that Providence calls him to Spain or Italy; but if it be not so, watch carefully over him."

He continued his prayers until three o'clock. It was Friday, and the hour of the Saviour's death. He desired so earnestly again to pray on his knees, that he eagerly entreated us to aid him. The physician advised us to yield to his wish, since he had no hope of preserving his life. The duchess and I supported him. He remained two or three seconds on his knees, with hands clasped. Then, crossing them on his breast, he pressed to it Arthur's crucifix, which I had taken from my neck, that he might kiss it. He pronounced the sacred names of Jesus and Mary, and leaned his head on his mother's breast.

Mr. Billingham, seeing Lorenzo excessively pale, again gave him his blessing. Some minutes after, he had ceased to live. We hastened to lay him on the bed, supposing him only to have fainted; but my benefactor, he whom I most loved in the world, had abandoned it for ever!—It seemed that his death had unfettered my grief, and I gave full vent to its emotions.

Henry reproved me with the tenderest charity. "Our friend," said he, "is no longer with us, but we are still within his view. I could not dismiss the conviction which I have of his present happiness, and of the protection he will extend to those whom he called his children. Oh, Sidney! let us prove to him that he still lives in our hearts, by making nature yield to the empire of that faith which he made known to us, and which he strengthened in us, by his word and example, even to the last breath of his life."

I pressed Henry's hand, without being able to reply, and fell upon my knees, near the body of Lorenzo. The duchess, Caroline, Mr. Billingham, and myself, remained there, while Henry and Matilda were engaged in the necessary duties consequent upon this painful bereavement.—We could not cease contemplating the sweetness, serenity and angelic beauty of Lorenzo's face, which even death seemed to respect.

Hiddala was interred, under his true name, in the tomb of Arthur's family; but as under the name of Lorenzo he was so well known and loved at Remember Hill, Henry erected a small marble monument in the village church, with the following simple inscription:

"Repose in peace, good Lorenzo;" for the peasants never spoke of him without adding this epithet to a name which they so much cherished.

I decided, at the earnest request of the duchess, to pass the winter at Rosline castle; but before it had passed, towards the festival of Christ-

mas, her longing sighs were heard; Heaven reunited her to all whom she had lost. Nothing now retarded my design. Henry, Caroline, and Matilda, were resolved not to separate from each other. I left them settled at Rosline castle, with Mr. Billingham and Mr. Kennelly;—the latter, under the direction of Mr. B., whom he loved as a father, aided Henry in the education of Silva and Edmund. Richard remained constantly in their service. I bade an affectionate farewell to those kind and virtuous friends whom I was no more to see in this world, and bent my way towards Spain. I intended to enter the convent of St. Francis, at Bayonne.—Lorenzo had often spoken of it; a brother of Don Silva was one of the religious. I visited, before repairing thither, the tomb of Don Silva; prayed there fervently, and shed abundant tears in thinking of him whose memory was there preserved, and of the friend who had rejoined him in an abode of which I was unworthy.

I was received at the convent of St. Francis with the cordiality, benevolence, and perfect charity, which distinguish the true children of Jesus Christ—that charity which exalts all the other virtues, and the practice of which is the ornament of this order. I took the name of Hida of the Cross. An entire disengagement, and the pure peace and happiness which are the fruits of it, have dwelt in my heart since my abode in this holy place.

Your visit, Lord Seymour, has reminded me that there is still a world less happy than that which we inhabit—a world where troubles, desires, and passions, yet exercise their empire;—but your presence, at the same time, has given me a new proof of the goodness of Divine Providence, who never rejects, but hears soon or late the humble prayers of his children, since you have opened your eyes to truth; and the hope of your salvation dries the tears which I have often shed, in the presence of God alone, for the future fate of him who held the place of a father to me in the first years of my life.

God is all power, goodness, and love: he has proved it in every age, and will continue to manifest it to the end.

He offers again a striking proof of it in his mercies towards the most unworthy of his children, and of your friends,

SIDNEY: At present, HIDA OF THE CROSS. (Concluded.)

REV. DR. CAHILL

ON THE BISHOP OF OXFORD AND THE CONFSSIONAL AGAIN. (From the Dublin Catholic Telegraph.)

The practice of maligning the discipline, the ordinances and the doctrines of the Catholic Church seems to be the first paramount duty of the Anglican Establishment. Catholic writers seldom or never make an aggressive movement against the English creed; they find it even a painful task to defend themselves against palpable misrepresentation. In these countries they have unfortunately too much practice on this point, since the false statement of our adversaries is their daily occupation. And surely falsehood can form no part of divine revelation; and when that falsehood is again rendered more guilty, by the additional crime of engendering public party-hatred, and hurrying one class of the community into social injury, injustice, and revenge against brother christians, it is clear that this oppressive conduct, proceeding from Church teaching, belongs exclusively to the ministry of a galling political persecution; and is a libel on the charity, the justice, and the very name of religion. The entire bearing of the Protestant Church, from the Bishop down to the parish grave-digger, is an unmitigated, an unceasing, a relentless development of the conduct just referred to. And what renders the infliction of this practice so painfully unendurable, is the singular fact, that our episcopal, and clerical, and Biblical misrepresenters claim the unlimited right of charging us with every imaginable falsehood, in every conceivable form of insult that they may think proper; while their indignation boils over, if we attempt, in our own defence, to contradict in the many language of injured feelings, the public injustice of their insolent assaults. The first generation of these people plainly invented these lies against us; but the descendants of those men, have learned them in their catechism, have heard them in the pulpit, have been taught them from the professor's chair: and now they sincerely believe them as an admitted fact of Church history. It is exceedingly difficult to adopt the precise course suited to meet this stereotyped outrage on our feelings, our country, and our creed. The zeal of their misrepresentation, carried on by money, by printing, and preaching, cannot be surpassed; while their efforts to silence our resistance, to cushion our replies, to gag our mouths, is without a parallel in the whole world. They claim the exclusive right to publish, while we are cried down if we speak. They form an image, a statue of Popery, which they carry

through the streets, which they dress in colours of their own choosing, shouting as they go along, "behold the true likeness, size, shape, and dress of Popery." The police are compelled to follow them, to guard the slanderers; and if an indignant Catholic exclaim against the misrepresentation, decries the forgery, throws mud on the drapery, and utters defiance against the public insult of his creed, he is arrested, tried like a felon, fined, confined, and, perhaps, treadmilled for a month.

The Bishop of Oxford, in pursuance of the principle contained in the premises, still persists in misrepresenting Catholicity. How strange to see a Bishop discharging poisoned missiles at what he calls Romanism, while discoursing on Protestantism: and how painful, even in self-defence, to be obliged to speak with disrespect of this exalted character. In this, as in all other cases, he wrings from our reluctant pens, no more than temperate defence against spontaneous misstatement and deliberate insult. He repeats again "That auricular confession is a novelty: that it produces evil in private families by giving undue domination to the priest over the conscience of the community; and hence that confession to God alone is the revealed doctrine of the Bible; and is the recognised creed adopted in the Book of Common Prayer." This is characteristic: as it contains in one short sentence about as much condensed deceit and trick as would fill a volume. I dare say the reader will heartily agree with me in this criticism of his Lordship's letter, before I shall have concluded this article. I shall, therefore, take up the assertions here made in this strange Episcopal statement: but, perhaps, not in the same order in which he has written them; nor shall I, if too much space might be required for the entire discussion, conclude the whole subject in the present number of the Telegraph.

Firstly—I have already argued in the last number of this journal, that the philological meaning of the word, "to confess" is, in the ancient languages in which the Old and New Testaments were written, "to speak, to utter words; to publish in the hearing of one or more persons." And this theological meaning is finally settled by the conventional signification attached to this verb by the language of the inspired writers, and by the words of our Lord Himself. Thus:—

"With the heart we believe unto justice; but with the mouth, confession is made unto salvation."

Again our Lord declares that "whosoever shall confess me before men, I will confess him before my Father, who is heaven."

The conventional meaning, therefore, of the words "to confess sins" agrees perfectly with the philological sense; and proves beyond all contradiction that "the confession of sins" means the audible declaration made by the human voice in the presence of a third person, of the number, and of course, the circumstances, the object, and the end of all transgressions against the law of God. Language, inspiration, history, all combine to place this fact in such a lucid, convincing point of view, that we believe this Gospel legislation, with the very same divine faith as we believe in the words that set forth the very atonement of the cross.

When, with these deep, learned religious impressions we now hear the Bishop of Oxford assert the meaning of all the texts referred to, is a mere secret, silent, confession to God alone we reply with surprise, thus: if this disciple were the intention of the Saviour, why employ phrases which signify "to speak, to utter words, to publish." Surely God does not require audible publication of sins, as he knows them already, better than our own hearts can? The words, therefore, cannot mean God alone; they must mean, besides, the presence of a third person who hears what we say, and listens to our audible publication; that is, auricular confession. If the Protestant confession be a secret internal act, as they admit it to be, why use the words which signify "to speak audibly." They might as well adopt the idea of audible contrition as audible confession; one is just as absurd as the other. And hence, when the penitent is required to utter audible words, it clearly demonstrates the presence of the priest, independently of any other argument. Again, surely God does not require to have an enumeration made of our distinct number of transgressions; and as he knows them all with all their circumstances. Hence, when the word "sins" is used in all the cases referred to, it clearly must mean that a third person must be present who hears the numerical detail, and the aggravating circumstances; and who judges, and decides, and forgives according to the justice of the premises and the visible signs of sorrow of the penitent. Hence the words under debate, if applied to a secret communion with God alone are untenable, foolish, and even wicked; while, when understood of a confessor hearing the confession of a penitent in the presence of the Holy Ghost, they are conformable to the genus of