

## FATHER PROUT'S FAMOUS SERMON.

*From the text "He who giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord."*

YE are not skilled in logic, nor, indade, anything else that I know of, except playing hurley-burley in the fields, skaming at cards in public houses for half gallons of porter, and defrauding your clargy of their lawful dues, and, what is worse, there is no use in thrying to drive logie into ye'r heads, for indeed, that would be the fulfillin' of another text that spakes of throwing pear's before pigs.

But if ye did know logic—which ye don't—ye would perceive that the passage which I have quoted naturally divides itself into two branches.

The first involves "the giving," that is naturally and syllogistically what ye ought to do; and the second involves "the poor," that is the receivers of the gifts, or the persons to whom ye ought to give it.

First, then, as to the giving. Now it stands to raison that as the Scripture says, "The blind can't lead the blind," because may be the poor things would fall into the bog holes and get drowned. So, though there is wonderful kindness to aich other amongst them, it is not to be expected the "poor can give to the poor." No, the givers must be the people who have something to give, which the poor have not.

Some of ye will thry and get off on this head, and say, "It is glad enough ye'd give, but that really ye can't afford it." Can't ye? If ye make up ye'r minds, any one of ye, to give up a single glass of sperits every day of ye'r lives, see what it will come to in the course of a year, and devote that to the Church—that is to the clargy—and it will be more than some of the well-to-do farmers whom I have in my eye at this blessed moment, have had the heart to give me during the last twelve months, bad luck to them. Why, as little as a penny a day comes to more than thirty shillings a year, and even that magnificent trifle I haven't got from some of ye that have the mains, and ought to have known better. I don't want to mention any names, but Tom Murphy, of the Glen, I'm afraid I shall be compelled to name ye before the howl congregation some day before long, if ye don't pay up ye'r lawful dues. I won't say more now on the subject, as "a nod is as good as a wink to a mare when she's blind."

Now, we have discovered who should be the givers. There's no doubt about that. The next thing we must discover is, "Who is the poor?" The whole matter dipinds on that. I dare say, ignorant as ye are, some of ye will think its the beggars and the cripples, and the blind travellers, who contrive to get through the length and breadth of the counthry, guided by Providence and a little dog tied to their fingers by a bit of string. No, I don't want to say one word about that sort o' cattle, or to injure them in their honest callin', God help them—their trade, their estate, their occupation, their business to beg, just as much as it is Pat McCarthy's to tailor, or Terry Smith's to make carts, or Tom Murphy's to shoe horses, or Dan Cotter's to make potheen, and my business to praich sermons, and save ye'r sowls, ye hathens.

But these are not the poor meant in the Scriptures. They're used to beggin', and I, for one, wouldn't be the man to disturb them in the practice for them and their heirs, for ever and ever. Amen.

May be, ye main sperited creatures, some among ye will say "Its ourselves is the poor." Indade then it isn't. Poor enough and niggardly enough ye are, but ye'r not the poor contemplated by Howly Moses. Shure its ye'r nature to toil, shure its what ye'r accustomed to, therefore if anyone were to give anything to ye, he wouldn't be linding to the Lord in the slightest degree, but be throwing away his money as completly as if he lint it upon the security of the land that's covered by the Lakes of Killarney. Don't flatter yerselves, any of ye, for a moment that ye are the poor, I can tell ye that ye'r nothing of the sort.

Now then we have found out who should be the givers. There's

no mistake about that. Raison and logie unite in declaring every one of ye, man, woman, or child should give, and strain a point to do it liberally. Next, we have ascertained that its the poor who should receive what ye give. Thirdly, we have ascertained who are NOT the poor.

Lastly, we must discover who are the poor. Let aich one of ye put on his considerin' cap and think. Well, I have paused that ye might do it.

Shamus O'Beane is a knowledgeable man compared with the bulk of ye. I wonder whether he has discovered "who are the poor?" He shakes his head, but there isn't much in that. Well, then, ye give it up. Ye laive it to me to enlighten y'all. Shure, then, to ye'r shame, ye shall know it's the Clargy that are the poor. Ah! ye perceive it now, d'ye? the light comes in through ye'r thick skulls, does it? Yes, its me and me brithrin is the poor. We gain our bread, course enough and dry enough it usually is, by fillin' ye with speritual food, and judging now by the congregation before me, its ugly mouths ye have to receive it. We toil not, neither do we spin, but if Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed better than we are, instead of being clothed in ermin and fine liner, its many a time he'd be wearin the thread-bare black coat, white o' the saims and out o' the elbows.

It is the opinion of the most larned scholars and Doctors of Divinity, as laid down before the Council of Trent, that the translation of the words "the poor" is not sufficiently exact in regard to its true maining. They recommend that for the words "the poor" we should put the words "the Clargy." Thus corrected then, the translation would read "He who gives to the Clargy linds to the Lord," which no doubt, is the very proper and undiluted Scripture.

The words of the text being thus settled, and ye having heard the explanation of it, now for the application.

Last Thursday was a week since Bartlemy Fair, and I went down to buy a horse, for this is a large parish, and mortification and fretting and fasting, have puffed me up so that, God help me, it is little able am I to walk about to answer all the sickness, to say nothing of the stations, the weddin's and the chrisnens. Well, I bought the horse, and it cost me more than I expected, so there I stood without a penny in me pocket after I had paid the dailer. It rained cats and dogs, and as I am so poor, that I can't afford to buy a great coat, I got wet to the skin in less than no time. There ye were, scores of ye, in the public houses, with the windows all up that the world might see ye aiting and drinking as if it were for a wager, and the divil o' one of ye had the grace to say "Father Prout, have ye got a mouth on ye'r face?" and there I might have stood in the rain until this blessed nour (that is, supposing it had continued to rain until now) if I had't been picked up by Mr. Mun Roche, of Kildemon, an honest gentleman and a hospitable man, I must say, although he is a Protestant. He took me to his house, and there to ye'r eternal shame and disgrace, ye villins, I got as full as a tick, and Mun had to send me home in his own carriage, which is an everlasting shame to all o' ye who belong to the true Church. Now, I ask ye, which has carried out the text? Ye, who didn't offer me even a poor tumbler o' punch at the fair, or Mr. Roche, who took me home and filled me with the best of aiting and drinking, and thin sent me to me own house in his own illigant carriage—who has fulfilled the Scripture? Who lint to the Lord by giving to his poor clargy?

Remember, the time will come when I must give an account of ye's all—what can I say, then? Won't I have to hang down me head in shame on ye'r accounts? 'Pon me conscience, it won't much surprise me unless ye greatly mind ye'r ways if ye and Mun Roche won't have to change places on that memorable occasion—he to sit alongside o' me, as a friend who always traited the poor well in this world, and ye in a certain place, which I won't particularly mention now, except to hint that its precious little frost and snow ye'll have there, but quite the reverse.

Howiver, its never too late to mind, and I hope that this day week its quite another tale I'll have to tell of ye's all.