

Jesus said to his disciples. Whom do you say that I am!

Simon Peter answered and said: Thou art Christ the Son of the living God.

And Jesus answering, said to him: Blessed art thou Simon Bar Jona, because flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but my father who is in heaven. And I say to thee that thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

And I shall give to thee the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven. And whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed also in heaven. S. Matthew xvi. 15-19.



"Was anything concealed from Peter, who was styled the Rock on which the Church was built, who received the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, and the power of loosing and binding in Heaven and on earth?" —TERTULLIAN Prescrip. xii.

"There is one God, and one Church, and one Chair founded by the voice of the Lord upon Peter. That any other Altar be erected, or a new Priesthood established, besides that one Altar, and one Priesthood, is imposs. Whosoever gathers elsewhere, scatters. Whatsoever is devised by human frenzy, in violation of the Divine Ordinance, is adulterous, impious, sacrilegious." —St. Cyprian Ep. 43 ad plebem.

"All of them remaining silent, for the doctrine was beyond the reach of man, Peter the Prince of the Apostles and the supreme herald of the Church, not following his own inventions, nor persuaded by human reasoning, but enlightened by the Father, says to him: Thou art Christ, and not this alone, but the Son of the living God. —St. Cyril of Jorusal. Cat. xi. 1.

Calendar.

- Sept. 17—Sunday—XIV. after Pentecost, III. Sept. Seven Dolours of B. V. M. G. Doub. com. &c.
- " 18—Monday—S. Joseph Cupertino C. Doub.
- " 19—Tuesday—S. Januarius &c. MM. Doub.
- " 20—Wednesday—S. Agapitus I P. C. Doub. com. &c. Vig. (Ember Day.)
- " 21—Thursday—S. Mathew Apost. and Evan. Doub. II. class.
- " 22—Friday—S. Thomas Villanova B.C. and Doct. Doub. com. &c. (E Day)
- " 23—Saturday—S. Linus P. M. Doub. com. &c. (Ember Day)

[From the N. York Freeman's Journal.]  
BISHOP HUGHES' LETTERS  
In reply to "Kirwan," alias the Rev. Nicholas Murray, D. D., of Elizabethtown, New Jersey.  
LETTER VI.

DEAR SIR—

The task which I imposed on myself at the commencement of these letters is nearly accomplished. I wished to investigate the alleged reasons which induced you to forsake the Church—and which forbid your return. The result is before the public, and may be briefly summed up.

You will observe that I have not pretended to defend a single Catholic doctrine from your coarse and profane invective,—that I have not raised the question with you as to whether those doctrines are true or false; that I have confined myself to watching narrowly the state of your mind, your motives and movements, as described by yourself, until I saw you clearly beyond the bounds of the Catholic church and landed in the cold, dark regions of infidelity. If your own statements as to the utter ignorance of your mind in regard to any and all religion when you became an infidel, are to be relied on, it follows that in assigning the reasons for your change, as set forth in your letters, you have been attempting a gross imposition on the credulity of your Protestant readers. You give a double certificate of the process of your conversion. One side attests considerable religious information: the other certifies bluntly that "your mind was a perfect blank as to all religious instructions."—Both are from your own pen. It remains for you to reconcile the contradiction as well as you can.

Allow me, in the mean time, to suggest the only plausible, natural, and satisfactory reason for the important event in regard to which you have taken such superfluous pains to enlighten the public.

It is understood that you arrived in this country a poor Irish orphan boy. This was not your fault. It might have been your merit. Whether you were then an infidel or a Catholic is best known to yourself. At all events you attracted the charitable notice of certain Presbyterian patrons. In the intentions of their benevolence towards you, your renunciation of Popery was a condition either already accomplished or necessarily implied as a *sine qua non* of your education.

Now what could be more natural, under these circumstances, than that you should become a Protestant, after the fashion of training provided, and the creed professed by your patrons? If in all this your conscience approved of what your friends recommended, so much the better for you. I only mention the circumstances to supply a hiatus in your narrative. They are quite sufficient to explain your conversion, and the public would not be so unreasonable, had you made them acquainted with all this, as to ask for any other. It is now nearly thirty years since these

things took place. You begin to be well stricken in years—you are approaching the confines of old age; and the same indulgent public would have dispensed with your reasons for not returning now to the Communion which you thus forsook in your boyhood. It is admitted on all hands that, in cases like yours, a wife and children are substantial objections to such a step. When the husband and father is, moreover, a Protestant clergyman, it requires an extraordinary grace to overcome them.

I now leave it to yourself to say, whether it was not unwise on your part, after having appeared with your natural countenance so long, to put on the mask in the fiftieth year of your age? Whether it was worthy of your rank and station among the men of our age, to weave a narrative of your conversion, with materials derived from imagination, while the plain history of the case lay open before your consciousness and memory? Yet when I regard the profane spirit of your letters; when I consider that you imitate closely infidel tactics against Christianity in your mode of assault—that you ridicule where you cannot reason—that where you pretend to reason it is not against the Catholic doctrine, as Catholics hold it, but against such doctrine misrepresented, turned into burlesque, and thus fitted for your purpose—when I reflect on all this, I am not surprised that you constructed your laboratory in the "camera obscura," and shunned the open day—that you insulted the memory of a fallen but not otherwise dishonorable priest, by affixing his name to your letters rather than your own.

You wish me to dispute with you on matters of general controversy. I must beg leave to decline the proposed honor. I cannot consent to dispute with any man for whom I feel no respect, and therefore I can enter into no controversy with you, especially until you have extricated yourself from the inconsistencies and self-contradictions pointed out in this review. You suggest "the inference that I am a devil."—(p. 64.) You proclaim "your high respect for me"—(p. 75.) Now, sir, I entertain no respect for any man, and especially a Minister of the Gospel, who can cherish and avow "his high respect" for "a devil," even by inference.

You wrote your letters in the midst of the awful famine which strewed the highways and ditches of your unhappy country with dead bodies, last year. Among them may have been some of those for whom, Mr. Prime says, you wrote your letters, viz: "your kinsmen, according to the flesh." Now, it was not uncommon for persons, whose Irish heart had not become withered by hostile seasoning, to become insane, during that awful crisis—turned into maniacs by the news of an hour. Sectarianism was forgotten—humanity was stirred to its depths in the bosom of the entire American people—Jews, Christians, Catholics, Protestants, Presbyterians, believers and unbelievers of every name, were vying with each other in their efforts to send bread to the dying. And they did send bread; they constructed an historical monument of charity, glorious as the land which reared it, and sufficient to atone, in some measure, for the atrocities of a thousand years. It was in the midst of this death-struggle of your native land, that you had the impiety to invent, and the inhumanity to apply, the following profane and horrible pun, on the words of our Saviour:—"He that eats this bread will never hunger. All that you (Catholics) have to do, if your principle be true, is to give your wafer to the poor, starving Irish, and they hunger no more."—(page 77.) How well this sustains Mr. Prime's statement, that in

writing your Kirwan's letters, you were actuated by "a sense of duty to your kinsmen, according to the flesh, your countrymen and brethren!"

But supposing I were to enter into controversy with you on general topics, it is manifest that besides being a party, you claim to be a witness, an advocate, and what is more, a judge, in your own cause! You profess to teach me what the Catholic religion is, although you had "forgotten your catechism at eighteen years of age," and I take it for granted you have never looked into it since, except in the same spirit and for the same purposes which induce the infidel to read the scriptures. If I pretend to know anything of my religion, you politely tell me that "you will have none of my nonsense." Why then do you ask me to enter into controversy with you? Besides, who would be the judge? "Common sense," you reply. But whose common sense, yours or mine? If you would not submit to mine, what right have you to suppose that I should submit to yours? To what tribunal do you appeal? That of history? But its authority with you is not worth a penny! To the Bible? But the Bible by itself will give no decision. It requires an interpreter, as much as the constitution and laws of the country. Who shall be the interpreter? Methinks I hear you speaking of your "common sense" again for that office—so that we come round the Protestant circle to the starting point.

If you say the appeal is to the "common sense" of mankind in general, (restricting the term to those who profess Christianity,) the verdict will not be unanimous; but it will be in my favor by a majority of three to one. To what tribunal, then, would you be willing to submit, in case I were disposed to join issue with you in a controversy on the great questions on which Catholics and Protestants are divided? But the inquiry is purely hypothetical; for although I reserve to myself the right of reviewing your letters, when I think proper, depend upon it there will not, there cannot be, any dogmatical controversy between us. If your genius and inclination lie in the direction of profanity, you can continue to insult the mysteries of the Catholic faith as you have done. For this you have but to copy from Protestant writers of your own class, who have gone before you. But I see no reason why I should undertake to discuss the reprint of their opinions, found in your book, rather than in the original text as found in their own. As far as either come in the way of my subject, I shall do this at my own convenience, in the sequel of those letters which I have addressed to my "Dear Reader," and not to you. In the present review I purposed only to consider those little incidents of waning faith, accumulated misgivings, and autobiography which preceded, or were connected with, your transition from the Catholic faith to a Protestant denomination.—This portion of your letters was your own, and was (what cannot be always said of works of imagination) perfectly original. Having done this, it only remains for me to assure you of my sincere good wishes, and to say for the present, farewell.

And now I will take the liberty of addressing a few words to the general reader in connection with this subject. What advantage does religion, of any name, derive from such books as Kirwan's letters? Do they promote piety? Is charity increased by them? Do they convert Catholics? Is the faith of Protestants so weak that it requires the support of such buttresses? The questions on which Catholics and Protestants are so unhappily divided have been discussed

by able men on both sides, until the argument has been exhausted. These are considerations which address themselves to sincere minds of all parties. Those who will reflect a moment will perceive that that the Catholic religion has withstood and now withstands such attacks, just as the pyramid does the assaults of the wandering Arab. If it were the system which such writers as Kirwan represents, it could not subsist a single year. Good men from within, who know what it really is, would not stay; good men from without would not come to it. Now a whole volume might be filled with the names of illustrious converts from the different denominations of Protestantism, who, after mature deliberation, have joined the Church within this last quarter of a century, many of them at the sacrifice of their worldly interests and prospects. How could this have come to pass if Catholicity were what these writers allege?

Does not this single fact outweigh a ton of such theory-books as the Key of Popery, or Kirwan's Letters!—What are these books generally made up of? Assertion, party invective, charges, sometimes entirely false, and always grossly exaggerated.

Thus, such writers as I speak of will tell you that the Catholic Clergy are a vast corporation of swindlers.—But how will any man of even moderate judgement reconcile this with the fact that no other clergymen are so ready to encounter danger in the discharge of their ministry, whether in the cholera-hospitals, the fever-shed, or wherever it becomes a martyr of charity to meet death? They will tell you that the Catholic religion is the deadly enemy of liberty. But then how comes it that all the elements and principles of social right and civil liberty are of Catholic origin, and that the best lawyer among us would be somewhat puzzled if requested to point out a single addition made to them by Protestantism? This is fact in opposition to theory.—When Protestantism came it found several Republics, and did not find one absolute monarchy in Christendom, except Russia, which was not in communion with the Pope. They will tell you that the Catholic religion is an enemy to knowledge. But the fact is that if you remove from the map of Christendom, all the great institutions of knowledge, in every department, founded and endowed by Catholics alone, very little will be left remaining. They will tell you that the Church is the enemy of happiness. But the fact is that nations appear to have been much more happy, if apparent contentment be any symptom, before the reformation, than since. Religious and civil, not to speak of general wars, have followed each other in almost constant succession in most of the countries of Europe since that event; and if these be signs of happiness, I am much mistaken. They will tell you that poverty is a certain companion and consequence of the Catholic religion. This, even if it were true, amounts to little; for the Divine Author of Christianity did not intend his religion for the special advantage of bankers and stock-jobbers, as these writers would lead us to suppose. And if the "Gospel was preached to the poor," it follows that poverty would be, if anything, a sign in favor of the true religion, rather than the contrary. Italy and Spain may be called poor nations, but yet I am not aware that any one is allowed in those Catholic countries to die by the road-sides of starvation: Protestant England, on the other hand, is a country of great wealth and great pauperism. But in England and Ireland, such writers point to the contrast between the Catholics and Protestants. They seem