

## "READ THE BIBLE."

This is the Advice Cardinal Gibbons Gives to Catholics.

AN INEXHAUSTIBLE TREASURY OF HEAVENLY SCIENCE.

There seems to be a widespread belief among Protestants that study of the scriptures by Catholic laymen is frowned upon by the church authorities. Indeed the bigots openly make the claim that the Bible is a sealed book to Catholics. These absurd ideas were utterly refuted by the highest ecclesiastical authority in the United States, Cardinal Gibbons, in a recent sermon in the Baltimore cathedral. The Cardinal's text was taken from the gospel for the day, which treated of the feast and temptation of Christ in the desert. The cardinal said that "as our dear Lord on that occasion made several quotations from the scriptures, I deem the time and occasion most opportune for commending to my hearers the sacred duty of hearing and reading devoutly the words of God.

"It is," he continued "a remarkable and significant fact that the Bible is the only book which Christ is known ever to have read or to have quoted in the whole course of his public ministry. He never made any allusion whatever to the classic literature of Greece and Rome, which flourished in his day.

The word of God is an inexhaustible treasury of heavenly science. It is the only oracle that discloses to us the origin and sublime destiny of man and the means of attaining it. It is the key that interprets his relations to his Creator. It is the foundation of our glorious Christian faith and of our heritage. Its moral code is the standard of our lives.

If our Christian civilization is so manifestly superior to all actual and pre-existing social systems, it is indebted for its supremacy to the ethical teachings of holy writ.

Viewed as an historical chronicle, the word of God is the most ancient, the most authentic and the most instructive and interesting record ever presented to mankind. It contains

THE ONLY RELIABLE HISTORY of the human race before the deluge, embracing a period of more than 1500 years from the creation of Adam to the time of Noah. Were it not for the Hebrew annalist, the antediluvian age would be a complete blank to all succeeding generations.

The Decalogue is 700 years older than the jurisprudence of Lycurgus; it is 2000 years older than that of Justinian; it is 2700 years older than the Magna Charta. It is 8300 years older than the Code Napoleon, and almost as many years older than the American constitution—and yet the Decalogue is better known to day and more universally inculcated than any laws ever framed by the hand of man. It is an historical monument that has remained impregnable for thousands of years and has successfully withstood the violent shocks of the most formidable assailants.

There is not a single arch or column or keystone in the sacred edifice that does not show some marks of foreign or domestic assault. But there it stands, as firm as the pyramids, unshaken and unruined by the upheavals and revolutions of centuries.

It gives us the narrative of the most memorable and momentous events and of the most eminent men that have ever figured in the theatre of the world. There is scarcely a notable incident recorded in scripture that may not serve as text for some moral reflections. Bible facts are sermons as well. Read Massillon's discourses

and you will perceive the truth of this assertion. If history is philosophy, teaching by example, this definition is specially applicable to the word of God, for the apostle says that 'what things soever were written, were written for our learning.' There is not a single virtue that is not embellished

BY THE LUMINOUS EXAMPLE

of some patriarch or prophet or apostle or king or matron in the Sacred Book.

If you look for an example of unshaken faith and hope in God, where will you find it more beautifully portrayed than in Abraham? In David you have a conspicuous marvel of tender piety toward God and of magnanimity toward the enemy. Chastity and filial affection shone forth in the patriarch Joseph. Martial heroism are strikingly exhibited in Gideon and the Machabees and the domestic affection by Jacob and Ruth. Susanna is a sublime pattern of conjugal purity and St. Paul of burning zeal and apostolic courage.

Where shall we find a more graphic and impressive picture than that of Paul, with his face emaciated after two years of imprisonment and led in chains to the hall of Felix, the governor of Caesarea. Felix is presiding with his adulterous wife sitting beside him. The apostle, with uplifted manacled hands, preaches to Felix on righteousness and chastity and the judgment to come. Felix trembles before the prisoner and hastily withdraws from the audience chamber, stung by the words of Paul and oppressed by a guilty conscience. What a striking instance is this of the superiority of innocence enclained over guilt enthroned! Well might Felix tremble at those three words, justice, chastity and judgment to come, for justice he trampled upon, chastity he had violated, and the judgment to come he had reason to dread.

While these great luminaries shine forth like stars in the firmament, guiding the wayfarer in the path of rectitude, the lives of others recorded in Holy Writ who had fallen from their high estate

SERVE AS FEARON LIGHTS

warning us to shun the rocks which occasioned their downfall. Paul's disobedience, Samson's and Solomon's licentiousness, the vengeful spirit and cruelty of Jezebel, with the awful retribution that followed; the treachery of Judas, the falsehood and avarice of Ananias and Sapphira, these and other examples of the kind are striking object lessons to the reader to show that no crime can be committed with impunity, and that 'what a man soweth that shall he reap also.'

The Bible is the unfailing fountain from which the theologians, doctors and fathers of the church have copiously drunk. Who have surpassed in pulpit eloquence the fathers of the third, fourth and fifth centuries? There is a freshness and virility in their sermons which have rarely been equalled, and never excelled by modern preachers. Their great strength was the result of the invigorating nourishment on which they fed. The only book of divinity which they consulted was the word of God.

Apart from its inspired character, the Bible is a model of literary excellence. What classic author, ancient or modern, can excel Isaiah or St. John in sublimity of conception, or the books of Samuel or Kings and the gospels in the charm and conciseness of historical narrative, or Jeremiah's Lamentations in pathos and tenderness, or the Apocalypse in descriptive power, or Job in majestic and terrible images, or David in poetic genius pale before the psalmody of the royal prophet? Milton and Dante have borrowed their noblest images from the pages of the sacred writings.

But the Bible should be read for a higher motive than for the sake of the

## "SALADA"

CEYLON TEA IS GOOD,

Because pure,  
Because carefully grown,  
Because deliciously flavored,  
Because experts blend it,  
Because no better can  
Be had in the wide world.

If you don't want the best don't try "SALADA."  
If you do, well—your grocer keeps it.

style. It should be perused for the sake of the light and consolation which it imparts. When you open the portals of this temple of divine knowledge you should not stop to admire the ornaments and decorations of the interior, but you should rather meditate on

THE WORDS OF WISDOM

that are inscribed on its walls and contemplate the hallowed portraits looking down upon you, that you might venerate them and hold them up to your imitation. St. Augustine says that 'he who negligently receives the word of God is not less guilty than he who through his own fault would permit the sacred host to fall on the ground.'

The ark of the covenant was carried by the Hebrew people with great reverence, because it contained the tables of the law, a portion of the manna and other emblems of God's mercy.

With what awe and devotion should not we handle the ark of the Bible which contains the commandments and the spiritual manna of the gospel which has nourished millions of souls for centuries?

Are not the words which Christ spoke nearer to Him, and more profitable to us than the cross on which He lay, and should they not be prized accordingly?

Constantine the Great and his sons, Constantius and Constans, wrote a joint letter to St. Anthony, recommending themselves to his prayers and requesting a reply. St. Anthony, observing the surprise of his monks, said to them without emotion: 'Do not wonder that the Emperor writes to us; rather be filled with admiration that God Himself should have written to us, and that He has spoken to us by His Son.'

When Francis Xavier was in India he was in the habit of reading letters of St. Ignatius, not sitting or standing but on bended knees, so great was his reverence for his superior. With what a profound sense should we not meditate on the holy scriptures which are letters sent to us from our Father in heaven?

Plutarch informs us that it was the habit of Alexander the Great to sleep at night with a copy of Homer and a dagger under his pillow. You who are chosen soldiers of Christ should certainly

HAVE AS MUCH ATTACHMENT

for the book of books as Alexander had for the Greek poet. If you rest on your pillow, armed with 'the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God,' you will find it the best sedative for allaying mental troubles and feverish excitement; you will repose in peace and security; for, in the language of the psalmist, 'God shall overshadow thee with his shoulders and under His wings thou shalt trust. His truth shall be thy shield and buckler. Thou shalt not be afraid of the terror of the night, nor of the arrow that flieth by day.'

Like the children who wept and fasted and prayed before the Lord,

when they heard the words of the law from the lips of Baruch, the prophet, 'you will be filled with compunction of heart, when you receive the words not of man but of God.'

What he thought about it.—She: "I am sorry I married you." He: "You ought to be. You cut some nice girl out of a mighty good husband."

Hotel Clerk: "We give you all the home comforts here." Uncle Abner: "Master, I want more'n that when I come to a city hotel. I kin git home comforts at hum."



Thomas A. Johns.

CURED BY TAKING

**AYER'S Sarsaparilla**

"I was afflicted for eight years with Salt Rheum. During that time, I tried a great many medicines which were highly recommended, but none gave me relief. I was at last advised to try Ayer's Sarsaparilla, and before I had finished the fourth bottle, my hands were as

Free from Eruptions

as ever they were. My business, which is that of a cat-driver, requires me to be out in cold and wet weather, often without gloves, but the trouble has never returned."—THOMAS A. JOHNS, Stratford, Ont.

**Ayer's The Only Sarsaparilla**

Admitted at the World's Fair.

Ayer's Pills Cleanse the Bowels.

**J. A. Langlais & Fils**

IMPORTERS, WHOLESALE AND RETAIL DEALERS IN

**CHURCH GOODS,**

Chalices, Vestments, Ciboriums, Ostensoriums, Missals, Breviaries

**STATIONS OF THE CROSS**

IN OIL OLEOGRAPH AND GRAVURE.

**Standard Works (English and French.**

THEOLOGY, PHILOSOPHY, HISTORY, BELLES LETTRES, ARTICLES OF PIETY.

Books, Curses, Statuary, Prayer Books. Publishers of the Graduate and Vespers Romanum LE PAROISSIEN NOTE and Standard School Books.

Agents for the Leading Bell Foundry

**FINE ALTAR WINES A SPECIALTY,**

Religious houses and country dealers supplied. Write for Catalogues.

**J. A. LANGLAIS & FILS,**

123-5 St. Joseph st. and 10 Notre Dame sq., QUEBEC CITY, QUEBEC.