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CATHOLIC ORPHAN INSTITUTION.

SERMON BY THE RIGHT REV. DR. GILLIS.

(From the Glasgow Free Press.)

A sermon, in aid of the funds of the above institution, was, on Sunday evening, delivered by the Right Rev. Dr. Gillis, in St. Andrew's Church, Great Clyde Street, Glasgow, to a large and respectable audience, who filled every corner of the spacious edifice.

The Right Rev. gentleman ascended the pulpit about half-past six o'clock, and took his text from the 13th chapter of the Gospel of St. John—"By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if you have love one to another."

It was kind and merciful in the extreme of our blessed Redeemer, beloved brethren, to place the essence and the perfection of our holy religion in the practice of a virtue which is eminently calculated to promote the happiness of society at large, and our own individual felicity. For, what virtue can we possibly imagine more congenial to the generous heart than that of Christian charity and brotherly love? or what disposition of the soul better fitted to enlarge the sphere of our personal enjoyments, as well as to cheer us on in our domestic and social intercourse with the world. And, oh, how wise was not that choice of our Lord, and how wonderful His counsel! for He knew well to what an extent we must on this earth ever depend one upon another for assistance in the midst of our many and mutual wants. He knew, also, the blindness and the infinity of our nature, and the many sad differences of opinion that were likely to arise, even amongst the most upright of his disciples. With the view of providing a remedy against all such evils, He declared before leaving this world, that the whole doctrine which He had come to teach mankind was summed up in that one commandment—"That you love one another as I have loved you." And, hence, that no creed whatsoever should ever establish its claim to His Divine sanction, or to His indulgence, that did not rest upon Divine charity as upon its foundation. I know of no subject, then, on which I could address you this evening more worthy at all times of your most serious attention, or more strictly in unison with the blessed and charitable object which has brought you together, than, in a few short and necessarily imperfect words to speak to you of the practice of Christian charity. Bear with me then, while briefly, and very imperfectly, I endeavor to trace the source as well as the development of that blessed virtue, through the history of that great Church, which is our Mother—the history of that holy religion which it is our pride and glory to profess. Apart, my dear brethren, from that special mission which God had given to His Incarnate Son, to be the victim offered up for the guilt of this fallen world; and apart from those wondrous works of His power, I mean His miracles, intended to establish His claim to teach, Christ received a double mission from his Divine Father. He was found, as he says himself, every day teaching in the synagogue and in the temple; but He was found also, everywhere going about doing good, and healing them that were sick. This was his double mission. And a similar mission he made to devolve on that most wondrous Institution which the world has ever seen, which he established for no other purpose than to continue His own work, and to be the medium through which his merits were to be made available to every individual soul believing in His name. The Church, then, He sent to teach; but to that command He also added another, "to heal the sick, cleanse the leper, cast out devils, raise the dead. Freely you have received, freely give." Such was the noble mission of the Church, twofold in its nature, to teach and to heal. During the three first hundred years of the existence of the Christian Church, she had little in her power, comparatively speaking, at least in as far as history has left us a record of the same, except everywhere to bear testimony to the name of Him that had sent her to be the instructress of all nations, and to seal her divine preaching in the blood of her martyrs. No sooner was her voice raised in this world to teach mankind than, in order to show the work was of God, the whole world rose in opposition to her. Every motive that could induce the most powerful nations of the world to oppose her teaching was made hostile to it, and the most tremendous physical and moral power—the whole power of the Roman empire—was arrayed against her for 300 long years, in order to drown the Christian name in the blood of her children. Nothing that the ingenuity of Hell could invent was spared to crush the very birth of that doctrine which went in direct opposition to all the most cherished tendencies of corrupted human nature. But in vain. For at length the Caesars of Imperial Rome were obliged to lower their sceptre before the emblem of our salvation, and at last were numbered in the

Christian ranks, as the most docile and devoted.— Even during that period, so fraught with perils endangering the existence of the infant Church, the power of its supreme pastors, every one of whom for 300 years, with few exceptions, sealed his faith in his own blood, was such as scarcely to be credited, but for the unmistakeable and innumerable evidences which have handed down to us the records of that period. They were rich even in the goods of this world, in order that they might have, through the influence of Divine Providence, the means of implementing their second mission in this world, that of healing the sick. In proof of this the right reverend gentleman read an extract from "Gibbon's Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," in reference to the pontificate of Gregory the Great—that Pope, who sent over the first Christian Monks to England to preach the Christian faith to our benighted ancestors. Such, he continued, are the remarkable terms in which even the most infidel writer of modern days has been forced to speak of a Bishop of Rome, who was no more in his day than a faithful type of those who had preceded him in his exalted office. Such were from the beginning the attempts of the Catholic Church—such her successful endeavors to fulfil that mission of hers. "Freely you have received, freely give." It would be endless to attempt to enter here upon details of the charities of the Catholic Church during the last eighteen centuries; but let me fix your thoughts on one particular institution in the extract I have just read to you, that is, the institution of hospitals, inasmuch as it is more in harmony with the object in which you are especially interested this evening. Hospitals were generally considered asylums in which the poor, the sick, and the aged—those who had outlived their every friend in this world except the Church, that ever welcomed them to her bosom. And there is no species of human misery that the world has ever heard of for the last 1800 long years for which the Catholic Church has not at one time or another provided a sufficient remedy. The best way I can give you a general idea of the charity of the Church in this respect, will be by attending to some of those more marked of the innumerable monastic orders of the Catholic Church. Let us go back for a moment to that awful day of divine vengeance, when the gigantic power of the Roman empire filled the world, and filled it for no other purpose than to make humanity possible, that is, possible only by Divine power, but through human instruments, the preaching of one and the same faith to the whole world. That power was allowed to stand for 300 years, in order, as it were, to test the nature of that doctrine; to bring to bear down upon it all that perverted ingenuity and human malice could invent. And when it had even thus facilitated the preaching of that same Gospel, the vengeance of the Omnipotent descended upon it, and from that moment the whole of Europe lay in a mass of ruthless ruins, fit for nothing but to be trampled on. Who then saved the world from the horrors of barbarism? It is an illustrious Protestant historian, Guizot, who tells us, it was the Catholic Church, as a Church, that not only saved the world from perpetual barbarism, but laid down the first foundations of that European civilisation the fruits of which we now enjoy. Then it was that that noble Roman, Benedict, forsaking all his great worldly prospects, retired from amidst the busy scenes of this world, and out of whose solitude, in the course of a few years, came that glorious Benedictine order—an order which has disseminated throughout the world the blessings of education, and which alone numbers upwards of 1,500 archbishops and bishops, all elected to their office because of their singular gifts of mind and singular virtue. In course of time we reach another period when society seemed to have entered on a new era—when new wants were created, and new ideas sprung up in men's minds. For several centuries the crescent and the cross had been declared enemies. On both sides, humanly speaking (I speak not here of the divine element of Christianity) there were great chances of victory and defeat—on both sides great and able men—on both sides powerful armies determined to push to the last their chances of success. And there came at last a moment when it was the business of some one to decide the triumph of the crescent or the cross. Who decided that great question? It was the Catholic Church. It was a bishop of Rome who first gave his sanction to that great event in European history from which has flowed the whole of modern civilisation, however many lies may have been invented to the contrary—the great movement of the Crusades, set on foot to free the sepulchre of Him who made the world. At this period, strange as it may seem, the Catholic Church, ever looking with a vigilant eye to the destinies of that world confided to her charge, saw the necessity of blending together two things, which her genius only could have invented—the vows of the monk with the sword of the war-

rior. Then came into existence those glorious military orders which have been of such eminent service in the Church. Then, as new wants arose, came into being those other orders, animated with a charity so heroic, that they sold themselves to reduce the captive; and these, and the many others then called into existence, founded hospitals into which they received the poor, the sick, and the stranger. His lordship then proceeded to enumerate the wondrous events of the thirteenth century, and the glorious career of St. Francis of Assisium, whose mantle of charity covered, as it were, that whole century with a robe of glory; and pursuing his inspiring theme through subsequent centuries, glowingly discoursed on the life of that wonderful impersonation of charity, St. Vincent of Paul. Then came those other orders, he continued, one of which you have in your own city—the Sisters of Mercy, the White Nun, the Order of the Magdalene, the Order of the Good Shepherd. In a word, from the beginning to the present hour, the world has been filled from end to end with the exertions of the Catholic Church in the cause of Christian charity. Who will doubt, then, that it is a sacred and imperative duty to comfort the poor. And if it is our bounden duty to care for them that suffer, what species of human misery is more deserving of our interest than those poor little orphans for whom I have this night come to plead. Oh, my dear brethren, had you any idea of the importance of such a charity, I feel certain that you never would be satisfied with yourselves, whatever offering you may have hitherto given. When we see a poor infant child left in this world without a parent and without any means of subsistence, we would be tigers, not men, if we did not feel within our hearts an imperative command to do everything in our power to satisfy its physical wants. Besides, there is in this charity, beyond all others, a future for the world, for the country which we inhabit, and for the faith which we profess, which is of itself sufficient to induce us to become heroic in our exertions to sustain it. For we have not only their physical wants to satisfy, but we have their minds to instruct and their immortal souls to lead into the narrow paths of virtue. We live in an age which boasts of sickening of the means it possesses of education, while in nine cases out of ten it has shown that it has never understood the meaning of the term. We are complaining daily that notwithstanding all our efforts we are never allowed to put our schools in a proper condition, owing to the withdrawal of the children before it is possible for us to complete their instruction. Now, if you want a model school, to prove to the world that you belong to that church whose special mission it was to instruct the world, as well as to heal its infirmities, here you have the opportunity, where, alas! there are no parents to withdraw the children. If advantage is taken of this opportunity, what words can express the great moral influence these children will one day exert in the future extension of your creed. This, then, is the noble charity for which I now come to appeal to your generosity. Your bishop has not thought it necessary to make any further call upon you this night than the purchase of an admission ticket, which many of you may have done for the gratification of an idle curiosity, though, I trust, no such unworthy motive has been yours; but I have come here for another purpose. I, too, am a bishop of the Christian Church, however unworthily, and I here take upon myself to call upon you all in the name of God, and his orphan poor, as you value the instruction that has been given you, as you value the future of the Christian world, and the honor of belonging to that great Church which you are proud to call your mother, to empty your purses for the moral and physical wants of these poor little children. It is now twenty years since your Orphan Institution began.— It was founded at a time when the curse of God seemed to have fallen on your city, during the ravages of an eastern plague. Who knows but that calamity is again approaching our shores? Who can tell whether the angel of God's vengeance may not be again spreading his dark wing over our country, preparing to strike with that fatal sword of Divine justice the innocent and the guilty, the sickly and the strong, the aged and the young. If you would escape that fatal visitation of an offended God, offer up to Him this evening a generous holocaust, and, perhaps, you will have marked your doors as did the Israelites of old; and when the angel of death shall pass these doors, he will, perchance, acknowledge the mark, and wing his awful course another way, because you have endeavored to provide for the precious existence of the helpless little ones of Jesus Christ.

The above is but a feeble and imperfect outline of the brilliant discourse which the Right Rev. Dr. Gillis addressed to his numerous and attentive audience. It will be needless to remark on the dazzling rhetorical display, the graceful outbursts of impassioned feeling, the mental vigor, scholastic polish, and elegance of manner, which have long ago placed this distinguished champion of Catholicity amongst the first of pulpit orators. Nor will it be necessary to do more than refer our readers to the above outline for a full appreciation of the sacred objects and pre-eminent usefulness of this benevolent institution.

ANCIENT AND MODERN ENGLISH BISHOPS.

(From the Dublin Telegraph.)

Two or three cases seem to provoke comparisons between the bishops of the Established Church, now that it is Protestant, with the bishops and abbots of the Church when it was Catholic. There is now in all large towns in England an acknowledged deficiency of "church accommodation," as it is called by our Protestant friends, who conceive that "spiritual provision" consists very much in church building. In London, of course, the deficiency is tremendous, and the Protestant bishop has been extremely active in promoting what Father Faber calls "the brick and mortar apostolate; getting up public subscriptions, and so forth; of course subscribing himself, and calling on the laity to follow his example. This is better than the way they took fifty years ago, or even thirty, when they went to work by act of Parliament, and our Anglican friends would call the church building subscriptions "signs of life." But they had a better way of doing all this in the olden time. They did these things very differently then. What became of the revenues of the bishops and abbots in those days? There was an abbey at Glastonbury—the lands of which, in 1717, were worth £500,000 a-year. Sir B. Inglis stated this on the Mortmain Committee last year. "Half a million per annum!" exclaimed that excellent Churchman; and immediately thanked God he was not as other men, yea, even as those awful abbots! But what did these abbots of Glastonbury do with their money? Let one specimen suffice. In the thirteenth century one Richard de Bury was abbot, and devoted the surplus revenue to repairing and rebuilding churches in Somersetshire. Conceive the amount of church building which might be done with half a million of money! Why, poor Mr. Pugin would have been glad to build five hundred churches in his best style for the money. Or, again, how many churches could have been endowed for the money!—how many schools erected and endowed!—how many almshouses or hospitals erected and endowed! One may go on tantalising one's self for an hour, conceiving of all the good, and great, and glorious things that might be done with half a million of money! And fancy that annually devoted to the purpose!—and in the west of England alone! In the east there was such another at Peterborough; and another at Croyland. Half a million would build a cathedral; and there are half a hundred towns risen up since the Reformation which want cathedrals, and are likely to want them, so long as Protestantism lasts. In olden times the bishops and abbots dedicated all their surplus income—(that is, all that was not expended on hospitals—for they had no families to provide for, and no domestic establishments to keep up)—in founding and endowing churches and colleges, or erecting and repairing cathedrals. And, of course, the laity emulated and imitated their prelates, and the land was amply and abundantly enriched with magnificent foundations of piety and charity. Now-a-days the case is altered. Protestant bishops have families to provide for, and thus, though they have enormous incomes, somehow they don't build or endow churches or colleges, but get up subscriptions for them; and the laity naturally enough want to know what is done with the church money, which they have a notion ought to go for church purposes; and thus, the other day, Sir B. Hall, one of the London members writes a very cutting letter, in answer to an application for his "subscription" to a church building fund, wanting to know what his bishop does with £33,000 a-year—just £23,000 more than that same bishop, in 1838, as Ecclesiastical Commissioner, declared was an adequate income—just as Lord John Russell's Bishop of Durham was detected, a year or two ago, in having drawn for years some thousands of pounds over and above the income settled as sufficient by those Commissioners. For, be it observed, the Anglican superintendents, beyond an occasional "subscription," had not the grace to devote even their surplus incomes to Church purposes, but applied it all in the accumulation of private fortunes, inasmuch that the late Protestant Primate died worth a million in hard "money!"

And so, some twenty years ago, an Act of Parliament was passed to make the Protestant bishops pay over to "Commissioners" their surplus income over and above such sums as the Parliamentary Commissioners should settle as sufficient (for it is clear that on their own estimate Protestant prelates never would