

How the Secular Press Discuss Catholic Questions.

(Some observations on clippings received from a Reader.)

It is not customary with us to devote space to the answering of questions—especially of a controversial nature—that come to us from subscribers and correspondence. However, there is an exception to every rule, and when the exception is allowed it is as well that it should receive the entire benefit of whatever space may be at our disposal.

It is no easy matter to so divide our subject as not to confuse the general readers as well as this particular reader. We will, however, attempt to be clear and concise. Before giving the letter that we have on our table, as a text, we will draw the reader's attention to one of the clippings which he sent us.

For reasons that must be obvious we prefer not to mention the names contained in the paragraph headed "Cupid." The persons concerned are too well known in Montreal's Protestant circles, and we do not wish to be guilty of intruding upon their personal and private affairs. Suffice to say that the paragraph speaks of a nun whose charms attracted a leading citizen, a prominent railway employee, and the result of the mutual attachment is a marriage in prospect. The nun has left her community and will soon be united in wedlock with the gentleman in question. Naturally, our western "reader" was under the impression that the lady in question was a member of some Catholic religious community, hence the sending of the paragraph, with the note of inquiry as to its exactness. But the article states that Miss — giving the lady's name—was a member of a Sisterhood. The article should have stated it was a Protestant Sisterhood; and the very names of the lady and gentleman in question would indicate that they are not and never were Catholics.

This one instance will suffice as an illustration; our correspondent may rely that in each of the other articles, which he has sent us, there is an error of some kind, and that they are all calculated to mislead. We will now take the letter; and, having given it, we will do our utmost to satisfy the inquiring writer.

THE LETTER.

Editor "True Witness." Dear Sir,—Among other things, our preacher said last Sunday evening,—who, by the way, has been divorced, also his second wife has been divorced.—"They say the Pope is infallible, but we don't believe it." Please explain the infallibility of the Pope. Does the Bible justify divorce? A READER.

Coupled with the many enclosed clippings, this letter indicates that a "Reader" has a desire for exact information, and the fact of having come to a Catholic newspaper instead of going to a non-Catholic source for instruction makes us feel inclined to give him all that our space will permit concerning the subject of Papal infallibility.

As to the Christian preacher, who claims to be a proponent of those laws and principles laid down for human guidance by Our Lord, and who has not only been divorced, but has re-married, and has taken a divorced woman as his second helpmate, we would be very astonished if he were to have admitted the infallibility of the Pope. Was it not that very same question of divorce that caused Henry VIII. to abandon the Church, of which he had once been the defender, and to reject

the supremacy of the Pope? Not only the Bible does not justify divorce, but, as far as it is the basis of Christianity, it emphatically teaches the opposite doctrine. The most important question, presented to us by this letter, is that of the infallibility of the Pope. It is now some years since the "True Witness" had occasion to treat this subject editorially for the benefit of a prominent Protestant clergyman—since become a member of the Catholic Church. We would refer "A Reader" to those articles, only that he may not have been a subscriber at that time. We will attempt to be brief. We will begin by telling our friend what infallibility is NOT; and then we will tell him what it really is.

WHAT INFALLIBILITY IS NOT.—Let us first see what is the origin of infallibility.

The origin of this dogma is in the express promise of Christ to the Church and to its visible Head. The source of the doctrine is to be found in the recorded words of Christ: (Math. XVI. 18; XXVIII. 18-20, Luke X. 16; XXII. 31-32, John XIV. 16; XVI. 13; XXI. 15-17). The cause of infallibility is the presence and assistance of the Holy Ghost pledged through these to "abide with them forever; to guide them into all truth." (John 14:17) Thus basing ourselves upon the word of Christ we discover that Papal Infallibility did not originate in the Vatican Council, in July, 1870. It dates back to the day of Pentecost. All that the Council did was merely to promulgate the dogma; that is to authenticate the fact by a formal definition. We also see that infallibility is not a natural but a supernatural endowment—it belongs to the order of grace, not of nature. Moreover, we conclude that it does not consist in the learning of man, but in the power of God. (1 Cor. Chap. II. 4, 5, 13.)

The Pope is not infallible, therefore, because he is talented, wise, learned or prudent; simply because he is supernaturally assisted by the Holy Ghost, according to the promise of Christ. Infallibility is entirely independent of the knowledge or ignorance, the wisdom or unwisdom, the virtues or the vices of the individual man, who happens to occupy the Papal throne. There is no more learned man living than Leo XIII.; yet, he is not infallible on that account. Thirty years ago, the Pope was as gifted as he is to-day; he was even fresher, and younger; he was a poet, a writer, a theologian, a statesman—but he was not infallible. And had he never ascended the Throne of Peter he never would have been endowed with infallibility; not even were he ten times as gifted and learned as he actually is. On the other hand there were several Popes whose talents were comparatively limited, and who displayed very little of the dazzling qualities that go to make up the world's "great men;" yet they were none the less infallible for that.

While, then, the Pope, as Vicar of Christ, is infallible, he is not inspired. Cardinal Hergenrother, in his work "Anti-Janus," says: "No Pope has ever attributed to himself inspiration, but Divine assistance only." In Perrone's "De Loelis Theologicis," we find the statement that: "Never have Catholics taught that the gift of infallibility is given by God to the Church, after the manner of inspiration." And Cardinal Newman says: "The inspiration of the Pope or the Church, in the sense in which the Apostles were inspired, is contrary to our received teaching."

What does the gift of inspiration imply? According to Catholic theology, it implies four things. (See Cardinal Franzelin, "De Traditione," and Cardinal Mazzella, "De Virtutibus Infusis.") The first is "A Divine Illumination of the mind of the teacher, in which the truth to be taught is directly and immediately communicated." The second is "a divine impulse to his will which directly and efficaciously determines him to write or speak." The third is "a divine direction," to insure that the inspired agent faithfully teaches all that, and only that, which God wishes him to teach." And the fourth is "a divine assistance to the end, that the truths set forth, correctly expressed," in supernaturally conceived aid, with infallibility only implies divine assistance which guarantees against all il-

ability to err when officially teaching the Universal Church. Thus Infallibility implies only one of the four things necessary to inspiration. While inspiration presupposes and includes infallibility, infallibility does not necessarily presuppose nor include inspiration.

On this Father Knox says: "The infallible teacher, as such, receives no interior revelations or suggestions from God. The Holy Ghost does not dictate to him what to say. It is only his external utterances which are overruled, so that he cannot in his official character teach the faithful anything at variance with truth." Cardinal Manning says: "Some have thought that by the privilege of infallibility was intended a quality inherent in the person, whereby, as an inspired man, he could at any time, and on any subject, declare the truth. Infallibility is not a quality inherent in any person, but an assistance attached to an office; and its operation is not the discovery of the new truths, but the guardianship of the old ones." The word used by the theologians of the Church to express the doctrine is more accurate than the one we employ in English. It is assistentia from ad-sistere, to stand by. Our word assistance implies help or co-operation; but the Latin word and the doctrine that it expresses imply no such meaning. The dogma merely calls for the presence (or standing by) of the Holy Ghost. Thus does the Rev. Daniel Lyons, from whose treatise we quote the above, conclude: "In the case of inspiration the Holy Spirit informs the mind, excites and moves the will, and directs and guards the tongue and pen of the teacher; in the case of infallibility he does not act at all, except by his ordinary grace, on the whole mind. He merely guards the tongue and pen of the teacher, so as to secure him against the possibility of error when officially witnessing, proposing, defining and defending the Christian Revelation. In the case of inspiration the action of the Holy Spirit is positive; in the case of infallibility it is wholly negative; in the case of inspiration the Holy Spirit directly reveals or suggests the truth; in the case of infallibility He directly prevents error; in the case of inspiration there is a question of an inherent quality; in the case of infallibility there is question of an external relationship."

Therefore, infallibility is not, and cannot be inspiration. Consequently, since the Pope is not divinely inspired, his decisions on faith and morals, when committed to writing, do not and cannot form part of Holy Scripture, or be considered as so much more Holy Writ-infallibility does not imply the gift of miracle. The Pope is protected from error by a supernatural, but not a miraculous, assistance. There is nothing extraordinary in it—it is but an ordinary Providence.

Thus we see that Papal Infallibility is derived from Christ, is established upon His promise, is based on Scripture, and that it is an ordinary and natural protection on the part of Providence in favor of the Church of God, the teacher of Divine Truth. It does not imply impeccability, inspiration, nor miracle. It is so self-evident that it seems to us a mere blasphemy to assert that an infallible Christ could leave a fallible teacher to continue the work of salvation, a fallible exponent of truth, a fallible interpreter of His Word.

INFALLIBILITY NOT IMPECCABILITY.—Before turning from what infallibility is not, to what it really is, we will dispel the false idea that prevails amongst many non-Catholics, to the effect that the Church claims that Pope cannot sin.

"The word infallibility means freedom or exemption from liability to err." Freedom from actual error would be inerrancy, but infallibility means freedom from the possibility of erring, from the liability to err. There is an immense difference between infallibility and impeccability. Infallibility excludes the possibility of error in the interpretation of the law; impeccability excludes the possibility of sin in the observance of the law. They differ in meaning and also in purpose. Infallibility is granted for the benefit of the Church; while impeccability would be for the personal benefit of the individual. Thus the Pope may be infallible and not impeccable. That he may commit sin is merely the absence of any special protection or guarantee against sinning. If he were to commit sin the result would primarily affect his own soul, but not the Church of Christ. But if, in his capacity of Pope, or Vicar of Christ, or Head of the Church, he were capable of committing an error in the discharge of his Apostolic Office of Supreme Teacher, the whole of Christianity would be affected, and the influence of that error would be retroactive upon the Church's teaching in

the past, and would be felt in the Church throughout all the future. Therefore, we must completely and entirely separate the ideas of infallibility and impeccability. No Pope was ever impeccable,—for no Pope was other than human; no Pope was ever fallible, in the proper meaning of the term, because no Pope was unprotected by the Holy Ghost—the Spirit of Truth.

WHAT INFALLIBILITY IS.—"The Catholic dogma of infallibility means that the Pope, by virtue of a special supernatural assistance of the Holy Spirit of Truth promised to him, in and through St. Peter, is exempt from all liability to err when, in the discharge of his Apostolic Office of Supreme Teacher of the Universal Church, he defines, or declares in matters of faith or morals, what is to be believed and held, or what is to be rejected and condemned by the faithful throughout the world. This definition substantially embodies the whole Catholic teaching on the subject of infallibility." There is nothing more or less in the dogma of infallibility.

As space is rather short we will, for the benefit of "A Reader," take a few sentences, at random, from Father Fidelis—formerly Professor J. Kent Stone, a most eminent Protestant theologian—and suggest to their correspondent the utility (if it is possible) of procuring and reading the great work of that same author, entitled "The Invocation Heeded." "If there be a Church of God upon earth, that Church must be supernaturally protected against error. If the Church has gone astray, if it can possibly depart from the truth, it does not cease to be divine—which is an absurdity—but it never was divine. Those who assert the fallibility of the Church must end by denying the facts of the Incarnation and the descent of the Holy Ghost." There can be only one infallible Church; and there is only one Church which claims infallibility.

A society which admits fallibility confesses itself human; an organization which assumes its own inerrancy claims to be divine. The very fact of such a claim is proof of its validity. No human society would dare to put forth such a pretension. No human voice could sustain such a tone without faltering. But look at the Catholic Church. Her attitude is the most astounding thing in history. Has she ever flinched or been irresolute? There has never been a tremor in her voice; through the long centuries it has sounded like a ceaseless roll of thunder. She came forth from God, and her supernatural consciousness never failed her. She has carried herself with the lofty instinct of divinity. "Vera incesu patinet dea!" Let us go back to the beginning of the sixteenth century. "Either there was a Church of God then in the world, or there was not. If there was not, then the Reformers certainly could not create such a Church. If there was, they as certainly had neither the right to abandon nor the power to remodel it." They believed in a Church, according to their own profession of faith, and yet they did not wish to allow that Church the attributes of a divinely established institution. "Of what value to me," asks the eminent convert, "is the teaching of a Church which approaches me with words such as these: 'My child, I admit frankly that I may be mistaken. God forbid that I should arrogate to myself what it would be impious madness for a human institution to assert. The Church of Rome has erred. All churches have erred. To err is human. Nevertheless, I represent to you in some way the visible Church. And, somehow or other, I have authority in controversies of faith. Here are my Articles of Religion. You may interpret them, I am happy to say, in any way you please; I do not oblige you to believe them, but only not to contradict them. They are supposed to be in accordance with God's word written, which is also supposed to contain all necessary truth—although I can give no reason for supposing so. If, however, you should be convinced of a discrepancy, but it will be your bounden duty utterly to repudiate them. In which event, nevertheless, it will be my painful duty—theoretically, at least—to eject you from my communion.'" This may seem amusing, but it is none the less a sad truth. Take a glance at Articles VI., XIX., and XX. of the Twenty-nine Articles for an explanation of the above. De Maistre says: "The Anglican Church is the only association in the world which has declared itself null and ridiculous by the very act which constitutes it. The Anglican Church declares to her children that she is, indeed, entitled to command them, but that they are equally entitled

to refuse her obedience. At the same moment, with the same pen and ink, on the same paper, she enunciates dogma, and declares she has no right to do so. I think I may be allowed to entertain the conviction that, of the interminable catalogue of human follies, this is one which will always hold a distinguished rank."

DIVORCE AND OTHER ISSUES.

—Not only are we unable to enter fully into all the details of the question of infallibility, but it would be absolutely impossible to take up those of divorce, of the Catholic clergy in France; of the King's coronation oath; and of Catholic dogma. The field presented to us by our Reader's clippings is far too vast, under the circumstances; but we will have no hesitation in furnishing him with further information on these subjects in subsequent issues. Meanwhile, we advise him to continue in the wise course he has selected, and whenever he is in doubt concerning a question affecting the Catholic faith, if he does not care to apply to a priest, at least to write to a Catholic journal.

The Coming Convention in Boston.

There will be an historic gathering of Irishmen in Boston on Monday and Tuesday, October 20 and 21. It will be the first national convention of the United Irish League of America, and the event cannot fail to exert an important influence over the Irish National movement, in the vanguard of which the United Irish League holds the foremost place. Faneuil Hall, where the convention will be held, was the scene of a similar assembly of prominent Irishmen eighteen years ago, when the Irish Land League of America held a great convention within its walls.

Mr. John E. Redmond, M.P., chairman of the Irish Parliamentary Party and President of the United Irish League at home, will be present, accompanied by Mr. John Dillon, M.P., and Mr. Michael Davitt, Mr. William O'Brien, M.P., would be present too, if the state of his health permitted; but the interdict founder of the League, has been ailing for a long time, and has not yet recovered sufficiently to risk a trip across the Atlantic. Mr. Patrick Egan, that veteran patriot, who was the United States minister to Chili during an important period, and who was present at the great meeting of the Land League in 1884, will be present on this important occasion. The three delegates from Ireland will lay before their kindred in America the present position and the future prospects of the Irish national movement, and will give a strong impetus to the organization of the United Irish League on this side of the Atlantic.

The principles on which the United Irish League is founded are practically identical with those that lay at the base of the Land League. They are embodied in the words: "Ireland for the Irish, and the land for the people." The application of the Coercion Act to half of the total area of Ireland, at a time when profound peace reigns throughout the land; the suppression of free speech and of a free press; the imprisonment of Irish members of Parliament for making speeches on the questions of the day; the cruel work of the eviction garrison—these events have instilled new life into the movement, provoking as was only natural, a spirit of opposition to such a regime; and the result is that in Ireland to-day every Nationalist who sincerely loves his country and who is determined to lend a helping hand to an organization founded for the purpose of furthering the cause of justice and freedom, is a member of the United Irish League.

Montreal will be well and worthily represented at the Boston Convention. Since its establishment in this city the League has attracted a large number of recruits from every class, and the membership is increasing every month.

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Higher Rents In Montreal.

After the first day of May next Montreal householders will have to pay higher rents than they are now paying.

That is the conclusion at which a representative of the "True Witness" has arrived after making an investigation in the early part of this week into the condition of the real estate market at the present time and its prospect in the immediate future.

Owing to the temporary excitement which prevails in the American money market, money advanced on mortgages upon real estate is bringing a higher rate of interest now than formerly. Loans on real estate in Montreal which could recently be obtained at 4 and 4½ per cent. interest cannot now be had under a rate of 5 and 5½ per cent.

We have long felt that the city of Montreal was progressing at a faster rate than the official census statistics indicated. Our opinion is based upon two important facts—first, the vast number of persons to be seen thronging our leading thoroughfares at morning and evening going to and returning from business; secondly, the reduction in the number of vacant houses, the large number of new residences that are being built, and the increasing demand for dwellings. The demand for houses in the city on the part of people living in the surrounding districts, is so great that it cannot be fully supplied, the result being that many people who had counted upon being able to take up their residence in Montreal for the coming winter will be obliged to remain in the country.

These facts go to show that real estate offers a profitable field for investment. Some have held aloof from this sort of investment because of the trouble which tenants give in formulating repeated requests for repairs, and in not being overpunctual in the payment of their rent. If the conditions which prevail in the real estate market to-day continue for any length of time big profits will be made by those who have money invested in it.

The demand for modern houses, fitted with up-to-date accommodations, and supplied with open plumbing, at rentals ranging from thirty to eighty dollars a month, is surprisingly strong. The old-fashioned three and four storey houses meet with no favor at the hands of the new house-seekers, who comprise well-to-do mechanics and clerks, as well as men engaged in business for themselves or for others. They desire houses of only two and a half storeys in height, with extension kitchen and open plumbing. They are so accustomed to elevators where they work, and in every large building to which they may be called in the transaction of their daily work, that they are no longer willing to mount several flights of stairs in their own homes. The modern "flats" or apartment houses are in high favor with tenants now-a-days, especially those which are supplied with heat and which give the tenants the benefit of a janitor service.

The opinion is widespread amongst Montreal's householders that the water rate is far too high. This is borne out by the fact that they pay twice as much for their water as citizens in other towns, and three times as much as householders in many other cities do. The idea of a city making over a half million dollars net profit out of its water rates is absurd. Other cities are content to make the water rates pay for the expenses connected with the supply of water and the administration of the water department. It is generally contended, too, that the water rates should be collected from the landlords, and not from the tenants. The City Treasurer has for several years advocated the adoption of this plan.

But for those who occupy houses in Montreal now, and for those who intend to be occupiers next year, the great, central fact of the real estate situation is this—that, unless something extraordinary should happen in the meantime rents will go up after the first of May next.

Only he who has sorrowed most deeply can know the real worth of words of sympathy in sorrow; but the testimony of such souls ought to incite us to the free expression of our sympathy with the sorrowing, without any fear of intrusion thereby.

OUR CURBSTONE OBSERVER.

O long have I been imagining that I must lead pencil in hand, instead of a spoon, of a bib in hand, and in all that time a specialty to observe writers and to study up on them that are classed as journalists, and that is not, as some people say, one of importance. I was thought that I was in journalism, and that is not, as some people say, one of importance. I was thought that I was in journalism, and that is not, as some people say, one of importance. I was thought that I was in journalism, and that is not, as some people say, one of importance.

"TRUTH IS TRUTH" "truth is truth the world may not be considered as wrong to write and send it to a foreign land it would be to tell the truth to the first man on the street. But the fact is a million times more deceiving than numbers read under to deceive dual. Yet I have known a person who prided his capacity for lying; he stories of a personal, nature that would starve who read them, and we sit down next day to read the "slight mistake," of the pen" in his form this means he succeeded quite a pile of money. ple of New York daily estimated in proportion city for inventing the stable, and for creating startling sensations. final outcome of all this. Simply that no person line that appeared in from the pen of this respondent. And so flagrant errors, that after a time began to distrust every appeared in those organs came from him, or from correspondent, or even editor. Thus it is the able correspondent is cause of great loss to

THE PROPER ESTIMATE.

have been asked, on two occasions, by eminent Analysts what course I

Missionary

Preaching at the rectory Patrick's Church, Wildfire, which has been extensive repairs and has been solemnly decorated, Bishop Achonry, Ireland, said: "Go forth out of thy father's house, and land which I will show thee. This was given by God to the world. Amidst the gloom of gloaming, in the dawn of hoariest history, loo little form of Abraham flower of his homeland,