

The Catholic Record.

"Christianus alibi nomen est, Catholicus vero Cognomen."—(Christian is my Name, but Catholic my Surname.)—St. Pacian, 4th Century.

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For the CATHOLIC RECORD. LUCIFERIAN PLAN OF CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

CONTINUED FROM LAST WEEK.

"This is in general the plan to be followed in regard to countries belonging to the Christian group.

"Now let us cast a glance at Italy. There Freemasonry, while following this plan to the letter, must labor hard and incessantly to abrogate the law of guarantees to political action directed our attention. Begin by attacking furiously the system of two sovereignties in one country, in one capital. Show the inconvenience of a double diplomatic corps, half of whom are accredited to an Italian crowned with the tiara and in continual conspiracy against his own country. This attack must be supported by Freemasonry of countries that have an ambassador at the court of the pontifical superstition.

Then attack the inviolability of the ecclesiastical congregations so imprudently conceded. Create conflicts between the political authority and any pontifical authorities. Use every occasion to excite the people against the occupant of that accursed See, so that troubles will be caused if he should leave the Vatican. Accustom the people of Italy to consider the Pope's presence as a dangerous embarrassment.

"As soon as public opinion is ripe for the expulsion of the Pope, one of us must be ready with a measure to the following effect:

"Art. 1.—Italy recognizes no State religion.

"Art. 2.—The Christian Church, formerly called Catholic, must be exclusively Italian in order to have a right to the free exercise of religion.

"Art. 3.—Its Bishops may convene in general national council to name one of their number as Patriarch for the Peninsula, Sardinia and Sicily.

"Art. 4.—The actual Pope is eligible to this dignity, if he renounces all superior Christian direction outside of Italy.

"Art. 5.—The Christian Patriarch of Italy, not having any character of a sovereign, can have no ambassadors accredited to him.

"Art. 6.—The Sacred College of Cardinals ceases to exist, as well as the Congregations of the Holy Office, of the Council, of the Propaganda, of Rites, and of the Index and Indulgences, and, in a word, every superior ecclesiastical committee formed for universal administration, be it spiritual or financial.

"Art. 7.—The titles of Cardinal and Archbishop are abolished. Before the civil power all Bishops are equal, except the Patriarch, who is the first Italian Bishop, and who in official ceremonies of state will take his place between the presidents of the courts of cassation and the president of the court of accounts.

"Art. 8.—Each Bishop administers his diocese under the direction of the State, and the Bishops recur to the Patriarch only in questions of the purely spiritual or liturgical order.

"Art. 9.—Every act of the Patriarch, in violation of this law, involves his immediate deposition and banishment.

"Art. 10.—Every Bishop found guilty, as accomplice of the Patriarch in the violation of this law, shall be imprisoned in a fortress for from five to ten years; and shall, moreover, be degraded in presence of the people in public assembly before the cathedral of his diocese.

"Art. 11.—A central commission of worship, composed of as many lay members as there are dioceses, and appointed by parliament, shall receive all reports of the civil authorities regarding acts of administration or other diocesan affairs, and shall form a permanent superior council, deciding all differences between the Bishops and their subordinate ecclesiastics, with the exception of matters regarding purely spiritual or liturgical affairs, which remain subject to the supreme jurisdiction of the Patriarch.

"Art. 12.—The curates shall be elected by ballot by the faithful, and shall be irremovable from their parishes; actual curates, declared eligible by this law, but not imposed on the people, shall be subject, within six months from the date of this, to be confirmed in their functions and title by the free suffrage of their parishioners.

"Art. 13.—The Bishops shall be appointed by the Patriarch, the Government naming three candidates. However, actual Bishops, submitting to the present law, shall remain in office. Every Bishop not accepting this law shall become simple priest, and shall be appointed to a rural vicariate by his successor, and shall forever be ineligible as a parish priest.

"When this bill is presented before parliament, a copy of which will have been sent to every country infected with Roman Catholicism, it shall be at once published everywhere and freely praised by the press. The wisdom of the Italian liberals must be universally commended for having found so excellent a solution of the religious question hitherto existing. Show in its proper light the absurdity of the former situation; how evil it is for Italy to have

one of its citizens conspiring against his country; how evil it is for other states to have a real state within the state, having its functionaries (the priests) depending from a sovereign stranger. The papers shall request the progressive members of their parliaments to submit a similar measure in their own country, freeing the national clergy from the foreign yoke.

Thus a great agitation will be set on foot in all the countries where Roman Catholics are numerous; and by legal means and by means of a common understanding, emanating from Freemasonry, a great division of this disastrous religion will be brought about. These results will not be brought about in twenty or thirty years. They will come when Roman Catholicism shall have been entirely discredited, when only women and a few incurables will be its partisans and when a large number of its priests will be secretly on our side.

"The favorable circumstances, if one country or another, having worked better than others, shall have entirely done away with State support of the Church and reduced the priests of superstition to depend on offerings of the faithful, now diminished in numbers; it will be useful to be generous to priests who accept the new conditions and to again give them state aid. Proclaim with all your might that the State will magnificently endow the clergy, and thus promote the interests of religion as soon as it is no more the pretext of conspiring with foreigners against the State. Neglect nothing that will help to parcel out the religion of Adonai and deprive it of its international character. Then its complete destruction will be easy.

"Act then unceasingly with the view of obtaining this important result, and do not allow any difficulties to discourage you.

"Moreover, nourish in your hearts not only the hope, but the certitude that this division of Adonai is not an idle fancy; because it is revealed to us in the book of the Redemption in *Apoc.*

There it is also said that the Pope of Superstition, sitting in Rome, will refuse to submit to these new conditions at the time of a moment, nor of a year, nor of a century. The work that endures is that which is accomplished by slow steps. The nineteenth century has seen the conception of true Catholicism; the twentieth will be the century of gestation to bring on the term of its birth, fixed by the book of heaven (September 29, 1896.)

"Written and given in Solemn Arch, and signed at the foot of the Sacred Palladium, by the Sovereign Pontiff of Universal Freemasonry, by the Ten Ancients composing the Most Serene Grand College of Emerited Masons, at the Supreme Orient of Charleston, in the Valley loved by the Divine Master, the 29th and last day of the moon, A. C. of the year 000871 of the True Light (15 August, 1871.)

Such is the secret plan of the sect—worthy, indeed, of Lucifer and his worshippers. It deserves careful study by all who have their own welfare and that of their fellows at heart.

Some time ago *The Monitor de Rome* had a notice of the reconciliation with the mother Church of Mr. Dominic Margiotta, 33, General ex Inspector of the Masonic sect. Now the same paper publishes a letter from Mr. Margiotta to Miss Diana Vaughan, a Lucifera, giving a detailed account of his conversion. In another letter to Mr. Julius Ossia, Grand Orient of the Masonic Order of Mesraim, Mr. Margiotta gives notice of his renunciation of the order, and exposes the horrible sacrifices of an apostate priest, John Baptist Pessina, Secretary of the Grand Orient. Among other things he says, "That Pessina, a free, consecrated Hosts necessary for the profanations carried on in the Triangles of the Palladians. At Paris, whither Pessina was sent, he, doubtless, continues these infamous practices, although he pretended to have regretted his apostasy and to have had himself reconciled with the Church in order to have free access to ecclesiastics as well as to the lodges."

Convent Schools.

Why do some Protestant and Hebrew parents send their daughters to convent schools? In order that their innocence may be safeguarded while their mind is being educated. That is the answer. The parents know well the dangers that surround their girls in secular schools and fashionable boarding colleges; they know also that in the Sisters' care their darlings will be kept from evils. Forbidden knowledge will be closed to them. Dangerous books will not be allowed in their hands. Improper amusements will be prohibited. The love of virtue will be inculcated. Purity will be revered. Obedience will be made a habit. Truthfulness will be deemed indispensable. Industry will be honored in the practice. By example as well as precept, goodness, gentleness and grace will be taught.—Catholic Union and Times.

THE MORALITY OF SUICIDE.

A Sin as Bad Even as is the Murder of Another.

Rev. George M. Searle, the distinguished Paullist Father, delivered the following sermon Sunday, Sept. 2, in the church of St. Paul the Apostle New York.

"See ye that I alone am, and there is no other God besides Me; I will kill, and I will make to live."—Deut. xxxii, 39.

Many, perhaps most of you, my dear friends, have recently had your attention called to a discussion, which has been admitted into the public prints, about a very important matter of morals. Arguments, or at least opinions, pro and con, from one person or another, have been freely admitted, and the reader has been supposed, and we may say invited, to take his choice. The consequence has probably been that some, under the influence of the more or less specious ideas presented, together with the temptations under which they were previously laboring, have been induced to lay violent hands on the life which God had given them. For this matter thus rashly presented for discussion was no less than this: It was whether, indeed, suicide is really the sin which Christians have always considered it to be; whether the Christian teaching concerning it, which has become the belief of the civilized world, is right or wrong, correct or needing correction.

Now this is a moral question, of course, and therefore a question of science; but, strange to say, the world of to-day, outside the Catholic Church at any rate, does not seem to realize that morals are a science at all. It is even commonly said, and said so often that indeed one gets actually sick at the absurdity of the remark, that it makes no difference what a man believes as long as he does what is right. Here, of course, you see the calm assumption is made that every man knows what is right to do; that moral questions offer no difficulty whatever; to say nothing of the palpable and obvious fact that what is called belief is largely concerned with precisely these questions as to what is right and what is not, and that therefore the actions of two men with contradictory beliefs on some moral point cannot both be in accordance with the absolute standard of moral rectitude.

One good, then, arising from the discussion of a question like this of which we are speaking, certainly ought to be to show that morality is not in all points simply self-evident. It is hard to see how any one with any respect for his neighbor's judgment can fail, if he enters on a question like this, to get rid of that delusion.

The fact is that a scientific question like this cannot be settled except by scientific methods. Morals are a science; a Divine science, certainly, but a science all the same.

Hence a fixed, firm and rational religious belief is necessary to the construction, or perhaps better, to the elucidation and development of a fixed and definite system of morals. No progress can be made, no certain conclusions reached, if first principles are constantly to be called in doubt. Now such a belief, fixed, firm and rational, the Catholic Church has always had; consequently its doctors and theologians have been able to reason on morals and to arrive at accordant and satisfactory conclusions. Some fine points, of course, may remain undecided; and especially doubts may arise as to the application of principles, however clear in themselves, to cases complicated by a multitude of circumstances. Absolute certainty in every point requires, not only fixed principles and scientific methods, but also in some instances an individual power of analysis which comparatively few can have. The game of chess is a strict science, from which chance is excluded; all can learn its general principles; still, in any individual position, one man will apply them better than another. But the difference between the Catholic and the Protestant moralist is like that between an instructed chess player and one who does not know the moves.

Of the many profound ignorances under which the mass of Protestants labor concerning the Catholic Church, one of the most striking is their absolute want of information as to the immensely numerous and thoroughly scientific writings of Catholic moralists, compared with the professional accuracy of which their own amateur efforts are simply insignificant.

But it is time we should come to the point which we have now specially to consider. I need perhaps hardly say that the question as to the morality of suicide is not an open one to Catholics. We all know, or should know, that suicide is considered by us not only as a sin, but as a mortal or grievous sin; and not only that but as specially great and grievous among mortal sins, self-murder being of the same nature as the murder of some one else; and yet more, as in one sense the most deadly of all mortal sins, since it ordinarily implies dying in the very act of sin, and therefore shuts out the hope of repentance or pardon.

Of course, however, we allow it to be quite possible that this most fatal of all

acts may be committed in a state of temporary insanity, which may greatly reduce or even entirely remove its criminality; or it may be committed by one who, though sane, is not aware of the teaching of the Church and of right reason on the matter, or without fault on his own part, does not believe in that teaching.

Also it is quite possible that even though death should seem to follow immediately, there may yet be time for enlightenment by God's grace and repentance for the act. So in no case can we absolutely assume as a certainty that the soul of a suicide is indeed lost, or even that the act was in itself mortally culpable, as it appeared in the mind of the one committing it. Indeed, our experience is that "formal" mortal sins, as we call them, that is, mortal sins which the sinner recognizes as such, are usually committed with the hope or expectation of repenting at some future time in this life; and as there can be no such hope in the case of suicide, it would seem probable that as a rule it is not regarded as a mortal sin by the one committing it, and that therefore he is not held to a strict account for it, though he may well be for other sins which he has committed and not repented of.

One thing more. It should of course be understood that we do not class as suicide acts which are really heroic, such as the exposing of one's self to death in order to accomplish some good work for the sake of God or our neighbor; least of all is it suicide to allow one's life to be taken rather than to commit a sin, as the martyrs of faith and charity have done. Other more obscure questions have been raised on similar points, and have been discussed and answered by the thorough and precise theology of the Church; but we need not consider them now, for the question actually now proposed is whether, after all, a man may not commit suicide for the express purpose of taking his life; which really means whether he has not a right to his life, to dispose of it, as he may of his property, according to his own will, it being understood that no one else's rights are violated by his act; as for example they would plainly be if he owed service to any one for money received, and was working out that service. Or, to put it more briefly still, the question is, whether a man's life when free from special obligations to others or to the public, does not belong to himself, to be disposed of as he will?

According to the ideas generally prevalent in the non-Christian world, the answer would probably be that it does so belong. Take the case, for instance, of a man who has no wife or children depending on him, who is out of work, and whose services are not, as it would seem, required in justice by any one; many, perhaps most people who are not Christians, would say that he was as free to dispose of it as he would be to throw away an old coat, or a new one, for the matter of that, if he should choose to do so.

The idea of crime, and indeed of sin itself, where positive religious teaching does not correct it, is very apt to be restricted to an injury done to one's neighbor. People say,—"and some even say so who are Christians and Catholics, and ought to know better"—people say, "I do not steal; I do not injure any one's character; I do not trespass on any one's marital rights; what sin, then, do I commit? If I get drunk now and then, what harm is it to any one but myself? If I am not always pure, where is the wrong, so long as no one is involved in my act without their own free consent?"

Now it ought not to be necessary, and I think it hardly can be, to tell you, my friends, well instructed Catholics as you are, that all this sort of talk is utterly abhorrent to Christian faith and morality. We know, if we know anything of our religion,—and even an unperverted conscience will tell us as much,—that all sins, even those against our neighbor, are primarily sins against God, and chiefly culpable on that account. Sin is essentially a rebellion against God, an attack made on Him, an injury done to Him. Sometimes it is merely the breaking of some law that He has made for good and wise purposes, but which is revocable at His will; in this case it is simply an act of disobedience; this is bad enough. But sometimes it takes a worse character: it is a direct violation of His essential rights, and of the relations which necessarily exist between the Creator and His creature. Such, for example, is blasphemy; which God Himself could not make lawful for us.

Understanding now what sin is, what shall we say with regard to suicide? We must say that it is, according to Catholic teaching and right reason, clearly a direct attack on God, a clear violation of His rights. It is, in fact, stealing something which belongs to Him. Let us see how this is.

We should remember that naturally the whole creation belongs to Him who created it. We may acquire a right to some part of it as against other men, but we can never, by any act or exertion of our own, make anything our own as against Him by whom it was drawn from nothing. He has the right to claim all we have at any moment, for it fundamentally belongs

to Him. Common sense, as well as religion, sanctions the words of holy Job in his affliction: "The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away; as it hath pleased the Lord, so is it done; blessed be the name of the Lord." This is not merely a blind submission to an irresistible power; no, it is the confession of an indubitable right.

Nevertheless, though all belong to God, He has been pleased to give us a real ownership of some things, in the sense that we can not only use them in any way which does not involve a transgression of His laws, but that we can also throw them away or destroy them if we choose to do so. We do not have to get a special Divine permission to dispose of them, though of course God could, by virtue of His eminent domain, revoke our right in any particular case, or in general, if He should so choose. But it has stood from the creation of man; it was given in His words to Adam and Eve. He said to them: "Rule," or more precisely, be masters of the earth; "over the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the air, and all living creatures that move on the earth"; (Gen. i, 28.) the human race itself being obviously excepted. And if this ownership extends over animate nature, still more does it over the inanimate; as we read in the Psalms: "The heaven of heaven is the Lord's; but the earth He has given to the children of men." (Ps. cxiii, 16.)

We can, then, kill animals as we will if we do not violate the rights of our neighbor in doing so. The brute creation is subject to us; and common sense has always recognized this.

But over human life we have no such power. The natural ownership of God over us remains; He has never parted with it. He can, indeed, commission us, or makes us His agents or ministers to take over human life. Such a right is recognized by the common sense of mankind, and sanctioned in the Scriptures, as inherent in the State; but even by the State it can only be exercised in God's name, as the minister of God's justice. Even the State never acquires an ownership over man.

Still less can one individual man acquire ownership over another, in the absolute sense of the word. It is, of course, plain that he can acquire a right to the service or work of another; such a right exists in any contract of employment for a definite time, which contract can undoubtedly be made irrevocable on the part of the employee, as well as on that of the employer. And such a contract can be made for life, if natural obligations do not interfere.

But that man should acquire complete ownership over man, to dispose of him as he pleases; that he should entirely possess him, body and soul, the law of God has never allowed. Slavery, in this sense, has always undoubtedly been a crime or a sin against God's law, an infringement of His rights.

What, then, follows from this? It follows, of course, that in this sense, no man can own himself. No man has the right to absolutely dispose of his own life, any more than that of another man. He is here infringing on the right of God, expressed in the words I have taken as a text: "See ye that I alone am, and there is no other God besides Me; I will kill and I will make alive."

The suicide, then, directly puts himself in the place of God; he arrogates to himself the right which belongs to God alone, and which has always remained reserved, and never communicated to any creature in general terms. It may indeed be so given by special permission; and in that sense the law forbidding suicide is not like that which forbids blasphemy or the disbelief of God's word or revelation, for this latter law cannot as has been said, be revoked or dispensed in any case whatever, since it inheres in the very nature of things, and of God Himself.

But still, practically, there is no difference. The prohibition is in possession; the presumption reserving the life of each and every one of us as God's untransferred property, remains till it is overthrown by an express statement on His part, in general or in the particular case. The suicide, then, is always a thief; and, moreover, a sacrilegious one, laying hands on what is the exclusive possession of the Almighty.

Such, my brethren, is the plain, logical and reasonable teaching of the Catholic theology on this point. I have omitted various technical terms which might have been brought in, if my object had been simply to show that I am speaking by the book; but I think they would hardly have made matters really clearer. I trust that what I have said will help you to answer the specious pretences of those who would persuade you that self-destruction is one of the rights of man, and at any rate that you will be convinced that the prohibition of it by the Church is not an arbitrary law, but one firmly based on natural reason, and the revelation which all Christians admit; and that if any difficulties should perhaps still remain on account of this necessarily concise presentation on the subject, you will seek those who can develop more fully the Catholic doctrine regarding it.

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S. of diphtheria, after doctors
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