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CARDINAL WISEMAN'S

"RECOLLECTIONS OF THE FOUR LAST POPES."

His Eminence the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster delivered a lecture lately at Middleton Hall, Islington, under the auspices of the Islington Catholic Popular Club, the subject being his own recollections of the four last Popes. His Eminence observed that he was very anxious to explain, at the outset, that the lecture would have nothing of a controversial or political character, but would be restricted to his own personal reminiscences of the Pontiffs he referred to. His recollections embraced the Pontificates of five Popes (including the present one); and the first he remembered was one who had now passed away from the memory of most persons: one who was truly a great, because a good and holy man: great in every sense of the word: even great before the world as he was before those who knew him best—Pope Pius VII. Scarcely had he been re-seated on his throne, when one of his first thoughts was to restore to the English the Catholic College, which they had possessed for 300 years, but of which they had been deprived by the French Revolution.—It was still, however, the property of the Pontiff (never having been alienated entirely), but it was a bare house, stripped of everything, the property having been in every way ill-used and badly administered; yet, such as it was, it was a great gift; and, no sooner had the preparations been made for the reception of students, than it was his (Cardinal Wiseman's) happy lot to be accepted as one of the first volunteers to re-open that once flourishing establishment, forty of whose ancient students had laid down their lives in this country in defence of the Faith. (Cheers.) It was naturally the first thought of every one arriving in Rome, especially one whose errand was his devoting himself to ecclesiastical studies under the shadow of the throne of St. Peter, to seek the feet of the Holy Pontiff, and to receive his blessing. "There was no need (said the Cardinal) asking the privilege; it was prepared for us: orders had been given that so soon as we arrived we should receive his blessing. Accordingly, in December, 1818, so many of the students as could be furnished with their college costume, were led to the Quirinal Palace, where Pius VII. resided; and there we had the honor of kneeling at his feet, kissing his foot, and receiving his blessing, conferred as it was with that fullness of heart with which he always spoke to those who approached him. There could hardly ever have been a Pope dearer to the hearts of Catholics. He had been torn from his States, and exposed to the greatest indignities; he had suffered with meekness; and governed the Church, even while barred up in prison, with wonderful prudence and wisdom. He was a man who had been tried in the furnace of tribulation; who had shown himself equally great in prosperity and adversity; a man to be revered for his many virtues. He was revered, even in England; his calamities had in a great degree, been owing to his refusal to join in an anti-English league, and he had shown an affectionate feeling towards this country, which had shown a noble and generous sympathy for him in his sufferings. He had been a Confessor for the Faith, and reminded us of some hero of the ancient Church. His very appearance struck us at once as that of a man of the deepest virtue and holiness of life. It was impossible to see him engaged in high Ecclesiastical functions without being struck by his peculiar appearance. He was then a very old man, in his eightieth year, bent with age, but at the same time with a cheerful expression of countenance, which had been most happily caught by Sir Thomas Lawrence in his portrait of the Pontiff, now at Windsor.—But in great Ecclesiastical functions, especially on Corpus Christi, no painter's art could ever have realised the ideal of beautiful and venerable devotion which the Pontiff's countenance presented. Though past the age of eighty, there was not a white hair on his head; captivity and disaster had not cast a single flake of snow on that venerable head; and when he (Cardinal Wiseman) saw him borne along—carrying the Blessed Sacrament—kneeling before it in an attitude of prayer, his flowing black hair borne behind him in the wind; his countenance expressive of almost ecstatic adoration; it was something which one who ever beheld, could never forget! There was a charm about the Pontiff: it was impossible to describe. Often the students used to meet him in his daily walk; for regularly at evening he proceeded to the gate nearest his palace, and leaving his carriage used to walk cheerfully along the public road, ready to give his blessing to every passer-by—an opportunity of which many took advantage for the purpose of receiving it—bestowed, as it always was, most affectionately. The Pontiff was accustomed to pass his leisure evenings in the society of four or five intimate friends; men eminent in various departments of literature or art; Canova, the great sculptor, being always among them; and Cardinal Testa, who had known Buffon, and the other great scientific men of France before the Revo-

lution, and had suffered a severe imprisonment rather than take the oath imposed on the Clergy by the Revolutionary Government. Such were the Pontiff's familiar associates, and the Pope had himself told Cardinal Testa that his elevation to the Pontificate had been more than once foretold in early life; on one occasion, by his mother, who died in the odor of sanctity. The Pope, when a simple monk, was highly esteemed by the previous Pope, Pius VI., who on one occasion, while Cardinal, was driving him out, when a man having the appearance of a common workman, put his head in at the carriage window, and said: "Two Popes—first you, then he!" and then vanished. One incident in the life of Pius VII. was most remarkable, in connection with the present Pontiff. A youth of noble birth applied to be admitted into the Pope's body guard, and was at first accepted, but afterwards rejected by Count Barberini, the General, on account of his being subject to epileptic fits. The Pope sympathised with the young man in his sorrow at his rejection, and at last said to him, "Enter the Church: if you do, I promise you that you shall never have a recurrence of the visitation." The youth did so; and Count Barberini lived to command his body guard, for he was Pius IX. (Cheers.) The Cardinal then said he would mention an incident to show the feelings of Pope Pius VII. towards the English Catholics. In 1820, the present church at Moorfields was erected, and Dr. Gradwell, then Rector of the English College, received a drawing of it, and showed it to the Holy Father, who was much delighted, and said, "I must send a present. Bring me the chalice given me by the Chapter of Mexico."—This was a most costly chalice of pure gold, and studded with pearls. It was observed, that owing to the spoliations of the Revolution, this was the only really valuable article of church plate retained by the Holy See. "Never mind that," said the Pope, "nothing is too good for the English Catholics." (Cheers.) His Eminence having alluded to the death of the Pontiff, paid a tribute of respect to his great Minister of State, Cardinal Gonsalvi, whose exertions at the Congress of Vienna had been successful in preserving the Holy See the "Four Legations" (as they were called)—the most beautiful portion of the States of the Church), of which there had been a design to deprive the Papal Government. The Cardinal was a most accomplished man, and of surpassing ability. Lord Castlereagh said of him, at the Congress—"He is our master. We are but scholars compared to him." Yet he was a man as amiable as he was able, and a kindly smile played around his lips, while his eyes were keen and penetrating as though they read the thoughts and searched the hearts of those who addressed him. Notwithstanding the unfavorable circumstances under which Cardinal Gonsalvi resumed the administration of affairs under Pope Pius VII., he brought them into a better state, and restored the revenues by his wise government. He resigned when Pius VII. died, and retired from public life; died not long after, and left all his possessions to purposes of charity, after providing for those who had claims upon him. Cardinal Della Genga succeeded to the Papacy on the 28th September, 1823, and was named Leo XII. Previously to his elevation his health had been deplorable, so that he had been confined to his room, and could not take exercise. The Cardinal described how he had first seen the Pontiff on the occasion of his coronation, and especially how he recollects the expression of his countenance at the simple but significant ceremony of burning a piece of tow before the Papal Throne, accompanied by the repetition of these words, "Sic transit gloria mundi,"—So fades away the glory of the world! "Never," said the Cardinal, "shall I forget the expression of solemn feeling which at that moment marked the countenance of the Pontiff. His face was sickly, but bore a most beautiful expression. His elevation to the Pontificate had been foreshadowed a long time before it occurred, even before he was in Holy Orders. He had suddenly received from Pius VII. a command to prepare for consecration as Archbishop, in order to proceed to Vienna as Papal Nuncio. Overwhelmed with confusion the young man fell at the Pope's feet, and implored him to withhold the dignity, but the Holy Father imposed obedience; and taking his own white cap (which it is the exclusive privilege of the Sovereign Pontiff to wear), placed it solemnly on his head; observing expressively, "See, I place this upon your head." The young man obeyed, and became the pious and exemplary Leo XII. On one occasion, after giving audiences until the evening had arrived, the Pontiff went to the Hospital of the Deaf and Dumb, where he knew an examination was proceeding, presided himself, and distributed medals or prizes among the poor creatures. On other occasions he had gone himself to the hospital, and himself tasted every article of diet, and looked minutely into all the arrangements, and he had himself originated the reforms of the Santo Spirito, the great hospital of Rome. The Holy Father was always ready to undergo any fatigue when good

was to be done; he was a man of extraordinary piety, and of most edifying life, and reminded people of St. Charles Borromeo and other saintly Prelates. On one occasion, the Pontiff came on a visit to the English College, conversed familiarly with the students, and told them his own manner of life. He rose at five, or earlier, performed his devotions, and offered the Adorable Sacrifice; then took a cup of chocolate (without anything to eat), then gave audiences and transacted business until noon, when, for the first time he ate anything—it was usually only a little salt fish—his first daily meal. Such was the ascetic life of this saintly Pontiff, who warmly encouraged learning, and had most kindly promoted the studies of many who remembered him with gratitude, as he (Cardinal Wiseman) himself did, on that account. The Pontiff had foreseen his own death, and written his own epitaph not long before, to this effect:—"Commending myself suppliantly to Leo the Great, my noble Patron, I, Leo XII., his humble client, have chosen to put myself at his sacred feet, the meanest inheritor of his great name." And accordingly he was buried next to the tomb of the great St. Leo. He was succeeded by one who only wanted length of days to be as distinguished as any of his predecessors—Pius VIII.—who had been entrusted with the administration of the Church by Pius VII. during his captivity. He was very learned, having aided Divote in the great work on Canon Law, and he had likewise a great zeal for Scriptural learning. He said to me (observed the Cardinal) at my first audience, "Continue your Biblical studies; they are most important;" and this the Pope repeated with great earnestness; he at that time being aware that Professor Jahr of Vienna had published some most learned works on Biblical literature, but tainted with Rationalism, and the Pontiff had already exerted himself with a view to counteract the mischief, having caused certain of the Professor's works to be excommunicated and republished, and he himself revising the proofs. In 1830, when the late Right Rev. Dr. Baggs held his *thesis* for the diploma of D.D., he (Cardinal Wiseman) had written an Introduction, designed to show that the progress of science, instead of injuring the evidences of Christianity, favored them: the Pope had perused it with great interest, saying—"You have proved that the spoils of the Philistines belong to the people of God! continue in that course of study." So encouraged, he (Cardinal Wiseman) did so, and the result was his Lecture on "The Connection between Science and Revealed Religion" (loud cheers). He mentioned this circumstance to show what a lively interest the Pontiffs took in literature, and especially in sacred learning (cheers). The Cardinal then passed on to Gregory XVI., who, he said, was not at first sight so striking as his predecessors; but when he conversed, his countenance lighted up, and he talked with remarkable intelligence and learning, and a graciousness which made it impossible to love him. He was chosen February 2nd, 1831, and had, when Cardinal Capellane and Prefect of Propaganda, taken a deep interest in a work which he (Cardinal Wiseman) was publishing, on "The Failure of Protestant Missions," a work of which the Cardinal Prefect had himself revised the proofs, until, before its completion, he was chosen Pope; and he had said pleasantly to him at his first audience, "Now, you must revise your own proofs" (a laugh). These incidents showed what a lively attention the Popes paid to the most minute matters regarding religion and learning, and how familiar they were with all who approached them (cheers). They were ever ready to encourage learning; and it moved him (Cardinal Wiseman) to indignation to hear people talk and write of the "arrogance" of the Pontiffs, or of their indifference to ignorance (cheers). Of this particular Pontiff, Gregory XVI., he could not say more, since his feelings towards him were those of such warm and personal gratitude that he could scarcely expect others to share or sympathise with him. He would say, however, that this Pontiff possessed in an eminent degree that which was the prerogative of all St. Peter's successors—that of an unruffled brow and a serene countenance; never moved by irritation nor clouded by depression, even under circumstances the most provoking or unpropitious (cheers). His object in this lecture had been to show the fatherly character of the Papal rule, and the familiar benignity which pervaded it. There were others in all parts of Europe who could, as he had done, narrate acts and incidents in the lives of these Pontiffs evincing how lively an interest they had taken in the pursuits and studies of all who approached them. This fatherly and kindly feeling was characteristic of the Holy See, as all could testify who had ever had the privilege of visiting it. Of the last Pontiff he had spoken briefly, from reasons that would be understood. Of the present occupant of St. Peter's Chair, he would only speak in music and in hymn (cheers).

The Cardinal's "Hymn to the Pope" was then sung, the audience upstanding and uncovered, and the Cardinal retired amidst cordial cheering.

HISTORY OF THE TRACTARIAN MOVEMENT.

BY EDWARD G. KIRWAN BROWNE,
(Late Protestant Curate of Bawdsey, Suffolk.)

(From the Cork Examiner.)

The movement of which Mr. Browne, himself a convert, has become the historian, is one of the most remarkable events of recent times.—The Anglican church has, for many generations, been able to boast of possessing prelates and divines of very distinguished ability, and not a few of great personal worth. The piety of such men as Bishops Ken and Jeremy Taylor in a past age, and Leigh Richmond, and others we could name, in later times, affords a pleasing subject for philanthropic contemplation. Believing themselves possessed of doctrinal truth, many Protestant ecclesiastics, individually estimable, felt desirous of imparting their doctrines to their brethren of the older faith. We ourselves recollect in our own early days, how the country was kept in a sort of chronic fever by incessant controversial skirmishes. "Popery" was looked on by a large class of its adversaries as a system of such hopeless and defenceless absurdity, that a constant fusillade from expert and flippant persons, well made up in the common places of controversy, must infallibly bring it to the dust.—Making every allowance for good intentions on the part of our assailants, it must be owned that their incessant assaults were at once impertinent and tormenting. There was a staff of anti-Catholic preachers who roved from town to town, and whose memories were abundantly stored with all sorts of weapons against the Catholic faith, from the dexterous and insidious argument, which at least was plausible, down to the trashy sophism which excited the hearer's doubt, whether it could really impose on the persons who employed it. The heroes of the crusade were Messieurs Daly and Singer (since made bishops), Pope, Wingfield, Mortimer O'Sullivan, and some others, who unquestionably numbered amongst them men of very remarkable powers of eloquence.

There was, and is, in this crusade, a division of service. The talking part of the affair devolves chiefly on the Irish parsons. The financial part devolves on their credulous allies in England. When the bank of Sir John Dean Paul, Strahan, & Co. became insolvent, in consequence of the dishonesty of the firm, it appeared (we quote from the *Record*, an excellent authority on such a matter), that "the principal sufferer among the societies was the Irish Church Mission." "This society," continued the *Record*, "makes monthly payments to its agents, which payments amount to nearly £3,000 each month." Three thousand pounds a month!—Thirty-six thousand a-year enjoyed by one proselytising society alone! We have seen several of the printed attacks on the Catholic religion which this society circulates; and we can readily believe that the judicious distribution of the £36,000 per annum is far more efficacious as an engine of proselytising than the controversial platitudes, which the "mission" directs against Catholicity.

We have merely glanced at these matters to remind the reader of the incessant and energetic hostility of which the Catholic religion was, and is, the object. All that wealth, all that talent, all that influence could do, was brought to bear against it. Yet, despite the formidable force of this antagonism, the Irish people are unmoved by the voice of the controversial charmer; unless in those comparatively rare instances where the pressure of intolerable want has overcome the sufferer's constancy, and where his birthright has been consequently sold for a mess of pottage.

But whilst every engine of proselytism has thus been put in motion; whilst sincere and worthy men, and insincere traffickers in the honest fanaticism of others, have united for years in a noisy onslaught upon "Popery," what do we find going on all this time in the citadel of Protestantism? Our readers have doubtless seen, from time to time, that the Reverend Mrs So-and-so had deserted the Anglican religion for the Catholic; but until we read Mr. Browne's recent book, we were not aware of the number of the clerical converts. Mr. Browne gives a list of them, by which it appears that since the year 1842 no less than two hundred and fourteen Protestant ministers have become reconciled to the Catholic Church. Of these two hundred and fourteen, England has contributed 128, Ireland 3, Scotland three or four, while the rest (including the Right Rev. Dr. Ives, Protestant Bishop of Ohio) are furnished by America, and by the Continent.

Apart from any sectarian view of the case, such a multitude of clerical converts within a comparatively short period, must be regarded as an extraordinary phenomenon in the history of the human mind. From their clerical status, it must be presumed that they possessed at least average education. Some of them (namely, Newman, Manning, Faber, Ward, &c.,) are men of lofty genius, profound erudition, and the deepest piety. All, so far as worldly interests were con-

cerned, had everything to lose, and nothing to gain, by their change of religion. Some of them incurred the bitterest privations. Mr. Browne mentions the case of a clerical convert in England who was driven to seek workhouse relief.—He mentions another who would have starved, but for the broken meat given him by some charitable Catholics. There were no rich societies with thirty-six thousand a-year to tempt them to exchange Anglicanism for Catholicity, or to alleviate the sufferings they incurred by their conversion. In no point, perhaps, is the contrast between the conversions made on both sides more remarkable than in this. It would be hard to show any person who has exchanged Catholicity for Protestantism in England or Ireland without acquiring some temporal benefit, either in possession or in prospect, by his change of creed.—Whereas the converts from Protestantism to Catholicity had, we repeat, everything temporal to lose, and nothing to gain. They lost social consideration; they lost their professional incomes; they lost, in some instances, the very means of existence. All this betokened sincerity and earnestness. Whereas nothing is more common amongst those persons whom the proselytizers in Ireland have entrapped, than penitent declarations that their conformity was insincere, and only adopted on the pressure of distress, for the purpose of obtaining some temporal relief.

A pious and religious Protestant, warmly attached to the church in which he has been born and educated, cannot easily conceive why this should be so. To the philosophic mind of Dr. Johnson, the solution revealed itself:—"A Protestant," said he, "who embraces Popery may be sincere; he parts with nothing; he only superadds to what he already has. But when a Papist becomes a Protestant, he gives up so much that he had previously considered as sacred as anything that he retains—there is so much laceration of mind in such a conversion—that it can hardly be sincere and lasting." *Boswell's Johnson*. It is even so. To us the evidences that demonstrate the truth of Catholicity appear so strong, that if they could be shaken, the truth of Christianity would be involved in their overthrow. We cannot discover any consistent standing ground between Catholicity at the one extreme, and infidelity at the other.

We would recommend this consideration to the worthy and well-meaning persons who expend their energies in efforts to Protestantize the Irish people. To the frantic zealot, or the jobbing recipient of money extracted from the fanatical credulity of Exeter Hall, we of course make no appeal. But there is another consideration we would earnestly press on the attention of the conscientious portion of our adversaries. It is this—How do they know but that if they could succeed in inveigling the Irish into the religion of England, they might at the same time drag down our people to the level of moral degradation unhappily prevalent in England? We have the Earl of Shaftesbury quoting reports that demonstrate the widely-spread irreligion and immorality of the English masses. "A lady of sixty," says his lordship, "named Charlotte Kirkman, says—Many women now have children at fifteen. I think bastardy almost as common now as a woman being in the family way by her husband."

The same noble lord has stated that in one of the English districts which were disturbed in 1843, a working man's hall was opened on Sundays, in which 300 poor children were initiated into infidel and seditious principles. "A wild and satanic spirit," said his lordship, "is infused into the hearers." From a body of evidence relating to Yorkshire, Durham, Lancashire, North Staffordshire, and Cumberland, Lord Shaftesbury extracts the following replies of children—James Taylor, eleven years old, has never heard of God; but has heard men say in the pit, God d—n them." A girl of eighteen years of age said, "I never heard of Christ at all." This was very common among children and young persons: "I never go to church or chapel;" and again—"I do not know who God is." The following evidence is from Halifax: "You have expressed surprise," says an employer, "at Thomas Mitchell not having heard of God; I judge that there are hereabouts very few colliers that have it!"

It would be easy to multiply evidences. D'Israeli says in his preface to "Sybil," that infanticide is as commonly practised in England as it is on the banks of the Ganges. Dr. Forbes, physician to her Majesty's household, was surprised at the great contrast between the women of Ireland and of England in point of female virtue. The *per centage* of bastards in English workhouses being sixteen times greater than in the Irish.—(Dr. Forbes's Tour in Ireland, 1852.) And whilst the principle of private judgment on the Scripture has developed itself in a numberless fantastic sects—some of which are shockingly immoral and impious—we have the authority of the late Religious Census, drawn up by order of

* Speech of Lord Ashley (now Earl of Shaftesbury) in the House of Commons, 28th Feb., 1843.