

THE GREAT QUESTION.

Is the Catholic Religion true, or is it false?

If it be true, then the end of man's creation, and the object which he is to set before himself in all his works is, to serve God here below, and to prepare himself for loving him throughout all eternity.

Then the work and vocation that is before him is, to follow the leadership of Christ, and to unite himself to the life and to enact the conduct of his Divine Captain; but to follow that leadership demands of its adopter to be armed with the same panoply, and union with that life implies abnegation and suffering, and to enact that conduct is to become an object of reviling and of contempt, and to be a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence to a degenerating world.

This, it will not be denied, is the lesson that the Great Master has taught His disciples, and which, if the Catholic Religion be true, is to continue their proper portion till the end of the world.

Is, then, the Catholic Religion true, or is it false?

If true, the pretensions of Socialism, and every other form of infidelity, which have grown so rife, and have trust their hideous visage even within the very sanctuary—their pretensions to re-constituting society on a basis that shall exclude humiliation and the suffering of injustice and wrong, and all the extremes of human miseries, are the reveries of a madman whose author is the devil, and whose aim is to make the followers of the Crucified forget their Master, and their duty.

But if the pretensions of Socialists and other infidels be legitimate; if man may devote himself, primarily, to the advancement of what he supposes to be his temporal ends; if he may disregard the sway of religion, (that is the guidance of the Church which alone teaches true religion,) either habitually, or for a while under the pressure of peculiar inducements, or in certain relations of public life, as in political affairs; and yet escape the judgements of God, then the Catholic Religion is a fable! Bishops and theologians for any use they are of, are the thing of a bygone age! And the sooner the day is gone by that the Church attempts to guide politicians the better!

Yes, if politics can rightly be divorced from religion, and from the controlling influence of religion, that is of the proper teachers of religion, or in other words of Bishops and theologians, then, if Pius IX. be the last of the Popes, as foolish Protestants predict, why, things will go on just as well.

And if the Catholic Church be wiped from the face of the earth to-morrow, men will be none the worse off.

It is then "The Great Question," whether the Catholic Church be necessary to the salvation of mankind here and hereafter, or whether it be not. This is a question that all to whom it is propounded are bound to decide, and to decide too, on the side of truth—that is in favor of the exclusive truth and necessity of the Church.

Those who admit that she is true and necessary, and having admitted it insist upon it, and insisting upon it, carry it out in their daily life and make it the rule of their conduct, are the truth and the faithful of the children of the Church. It matters not how lowly may be the sphere in which such are called to assert their principles. The poorest laborer who rejects for his son, as we have known such to do, the smiling allurements of extensive commerce under the patronage of the rich, and destines him to one of the humblest trades, because in the latter way of life he could find Christian guarantees for the faith and morals of his child, and in the former could not find them—this man, and such as he, are heroes and ornaments of the Church; and in the abodes of their almost squalid poverty we have recognised a greatness and a worth that have inspired awe, such as the highest honors or fortunes, or the most splendid qualities of the world, have failed to awaken in our breast.

We have no difficulty in perceiving that such men do believe the Catholic Religion to be true, and therefore to be absolutely necessary to salvation.

But when we find men schooled in the modern sophistry, which teaches that the end of civil government is independent of, and therefore, (whether they will or no,) contradictory to revealed religion—thus foregoing and rejecting the light that Christianity, that is the Catholic Church, has shed upon civil polity, upon its ends and its powers, and its obligations; when we find men calling themselves Catholics asserting

that there are relations of life, in which men are free from the control of the Church; that there are associations in which the faithful may join with the infidel, and that without so much as a scruple of conscience as to whether such association may bring him a blessing or a curse—then it does seem to us either that the dogmas of the Catholic Church have changed, and she thus been proved false, or else that such men have proved false to her, false to themselves, and have but one safe course left,—viz a speedy recantation of their errors.

If the days of Antichrist are drawing very near, as many learned and pious men are of opinion, that hour of darkness which is to fall upon the whole earth for the trial of men has its sign and character, not in the enforcement of, this or that heresy as the truth that God teaches but it in the spirit of lawlessness, and the claim of independence of all that is taught or demanded in the name of God. This is a solemn thought and should be treated at length rather by pens of a higher authority than by ours. May we, nevertheless, commend it to the reflections of our readers.—*N Y Freeman's Journal.*

A LESSON FOR ALL TIME

Among those habits which adorn and ennoble the rational power of man, and incline him to right action, and which thence have obtained the name of virtues, there are four that have so principal a bearing and importance on the other habits of the soul that they are called cardinal virtues. These are Prudence, Justice, Fortitude, and Temperance.

Fortitude is that virtue which regulates the irascible part of man, as Temperance regulates the concupiscible.

Fortitude is then a virtue, and particularly the virtue whose exercise is needed in periods of adversity. But when we define that its business is to regulate the irascible part of man, we give it an interior, or home direction, that in the use of the word is too often overlooked, for it is indeed true that he who ruleth his own spirit is stronger than he that taketh a city.

In fortitude two species are to be distinguished, *Bellicosity*, and *Patience*. The former, which disposes the soul to resistance, usually claims exclusively the name of fortitude. As a virtue it has certainly its part. It regulates, or moderates, the natural impulses. It disposes, in a man, his resources in the most advantageous way to the gaining of his ends. It checks the despair or precipitancy with which feeble souls risk all on an unequal or uncertain venture. It is moderate and quiet in its measures, because it is strong in its purposes—*omnia proponens fortiter—disponens suaviter*. Such is *bellicosity*, which yet is the lower and more animal part of the virtue of fortitude.

But the higher, the more lovely, the more Godlike, kind of fortitude, is *patience*. *Deus Fortis et Patiens*.—This, in effect, is called by the moralists the *heroic face* of fortitude; and again, "the fortitude of the Saints." A contemptible sophist of the last century called patience "the last resource of the feeble." No doubt there have been many other sophists, before and since, who, never having attempted the practice of it, have been of the same opinion, and count themselves strong. But, on the contrary, *impatience* is the necessity of imbeciles, and in the language of a spirited French writer, whose sentiments sprang from a right Christian heart. *Pour être patient, bon Dieu! qu'il faut d'être bien fort*. Good God, but a man must be strong who is patient!

In age when fancy is preferred to faith, and passion rules instead of principle, these truths are as unpalatable as they are wholesome. They were the subject of our cogitations some months ago, during a short walk; and though the occasion that drew them forth is now past, we will still present them to our readers for what their title professes them.—"A lesson fit for all times."

THE BEST KIND OF EXERCISE.

Of all exercise, walking is that which is the most universally attainable, and at the same time best. Calling so many muscles into action, and especially those of the lower extremities, of which the circulation is apt to be more languidly and imperfectly performed, from the degree of resistance presented by the force of gravity to the return of the blood to the heart, calling, moreover, so much of the moving apparatus of the body into reciprocal and balanced action, flexor and extensor muscles being correspondingly exercised, walking is undoubtedly the best of

all exercises for the purpose of health, independently of its secondary, and by no means un- useful effect, of carrying the respiratory organs into freer and purer air, and exposing the system to the extraordinary, and, at least in the colder and temperate countries of the earth, the healthful influence of the direct rays of the sun. The degree of the exercise must, of course, vary with the age, condition and habits of the individual, but the degree of exercise that is in most cases serviceable, is generally much underrated. Two miles a day is the minimum distance which a person of moderate health and strength ought to walk. If the powers of the system increase, or are stronger to begin with, the minimum ought to be four miles. The object should be, in most cases, to walk the four miles in an hour, and the invalid beginning, perhaps, by walking a mile, or a mile and a half in an hour, might gradually increase his rate of walking until he had accomplished this end. Quick walking calls more muscles into action than slow walking does, and is, therefore, better. The muscles of the back, trunk, neck and arms, are comparatively very little used in walking. A person can hardly walk quick without using them to a very considerable degree. It is a maxim so sound and important as to deserve frequent repetition, that the greater the number of muscles used, the more advantageous will be the exercise. The majority of people are wont to think too much of the other kinds of locomotive exercise, as carriage exercise, riding on horseback, and sailing; too little of walking.—*Robinson on Diet and Exercise.*

CURIOSITIES OF ART.

It is singular how many men have directed their energies of mind to perfecting toys, which, although displaying wonderful inventive power, yet have never conferred any benefit on mankind, nor ever been used for any other purpose than as a piece of amusement—the childish exhibition of masculine mind, the fame of foolery, the foolery of fame.

Thus Jerome Faas, an Italian priest and a native of Calabria, exercised himself in a species of industry, wonderful from its difficulty. He finished a work of box-wood, which represented all the mysteries of the Passion, and which might be put in the shell of a walnut. To him was attributed a coach the size of a grain of wheat, within which there were to be seen a man and a woman, a coachman who drove it, and horses that drew it. These were presented to Francis I. and Charles V.

In China, the tomb of Confucius has been made in small miniature, no larger than a nut, but wonderfully composed of precious metals, and adorned with a profusion of gems, but its value consists of the labor expended on its execution. Its landscapes, dragons, angels, animals, and human figures, would require several pages of description, which would, after all, without a view of the model, prove tedious and unintelligible.

Charles V., of Spain, had a watch which was concealed in the jewel of his ring, and a watchmaker in London presented George III. with one set in the same manner. Its size was something less than a silver two-pence, and it contained one hundred and twenty-five different parts, and weighed altogether no more than five penny-weights and seven grains.

The tomb of Raphael, executed by an Italian named Raccavalva, is indeed a wonder. It is only twelve inches in height, and from an inch to four inches in diameter. It is adorned with various architectural ornaments in the richest style of Gothic, and also figures of the Virgin and child. The work is said to be of unrivalled merit and beauty. The model is contained in a case of wrought gold, and is itself of boxwood. The general design may be regarded as architectural, embellished with several compartments of sculpture or of carving, consisting of various groups of figures. These display different events in the life of Christ. Some of the figures are less than a quarter of an inch in height, and though thus minute, are all finished with the greatest precision and skill; and what renders this execution still more curious and admirable is, the delicacy and beauty with which the back and distant figures are executed.

The Capuchins near Turin have offered to go through all the provinces of Sardinia to rouse up the courage of the people, and in every way to forward the cause of the Italian war. The government of the king has accepted the offer with thanks.

SIR THOMAS MORE.

Let all disunited families study with care this beautiful sketch of a household of love, as given by an eye-witness, Sir Thomas's friend, the great Erasmus. "More built near London upon the Thames side, to wit, at Chelsea, a commodious house, neither mean nor subject to envy, and yet magnificent enough. There he converseth affably with his family, his wife, his son, and daughter-in-law, his three daughters and their husbands with eleven grand children. There is not any man so loving to his children as he, and he loveth his old wife as well as if she was a young maid; and such is the excellency of his temper, that whatsoever happeneth that could not be helped, he loveth it as though nothing could have happened more happily. There were in that place Plato's academy; but I do think house injury in comparing it to Plato's academy, wherein there were only disputations of members of geometrical figures, and sometimes of moral virtues. I should rather call this house a school of Christian religion; their special care is piety and virtue; there is no quarreling, or intemperate words heard, none seen idle; which household discipline that worthy gentleman doth not govern by proud and lofty words, but with all kind and courteous benevolence. Everybody performeth,—yet is there always alacrity, neither is sober with anything wanting. He suffereth none of his servants either to be idle or to give themselves to games, but some of them he allotted to look to the garden, assigning to every one his separate plot; some again he set to sing, some to play on the organs, he suffereth none to touch cards or dice. He used before bed-time to call them all together and say certain prayers to them."

THE JESUITS.

In the days of the Roman emperors when Paganism felt itself failing,—in its desperation and madness it assailed the characters as well as the persons of Christians. They were accused of the most abominable crimes, and even of atheism. They were said to murder infants and then devour them. Plots against the State, inciting men to murder, robberies and assassinations, were but every day charges. And the multitude believed these accusations, and even princes and men of learning believed them, and little children were taught to loath Christians, and to spit at and to insult them in the streets, and to manifest every mark of horror and disgust at the bare mention of the name of Jesus.

Such were the feelings and such the conduct of heathen men during the primitive ages of the Church, towards men who bore the name of Christians. Who could believe that such feelings and conduct should still be manifested at the present day by men who bear the name of Christians, towards those whom they at least ought to consider as their fellow Christians. But such is the fact. Men calling themselves Presbyterians and Congregationalists and Methodists and a thousand other names, are constantly uttering the most malicious invectives and preferring the most extravagant and horrible accusations against a peaceful and inoffensive body of Christians whose sole occupation is to instruct youth in the principles of piety, and to evangelize the heathen amid toils, perils and sufferings. We allude to the Jesuits,—the fathers of the holy Society of Jesus. In several of our exchange papers we find calumnious and bitter articles which accuse them of intrigues and crimes, of plots, rebellions, immoralities and abominable practices, calculated to terrify men and to excite within them no feelings but those of unmitigated hate. Truly the same spirit walketh abroad through the earth, and possesseth the hearts of wicked men, that eighteen centuries ago maddened men against the followers of the cross of Christ. But thanks be to God, the accusations against the Jesuits being as foul and false as those against the primitive Christians, the efforts of the spirits of darkness shall prove as imbecile. The enemies and revilers of the Jesuits are the enemies of God,—and God, who dwelleth in Heaven, shall deride them; the Lord shall laugh them to scorn.—*Catholic Observer.*

Births

September 29—Mrs Barton, of a daughter.
October 3—Mrs Pew, of a daughter.
" 5—Mrs Howard, of a son.
" 5—Mrs Pitz, of a son.

Married.

October 2—Peter Murphy, to Catherine Russell.
" 3—John Mihar to Mary Power.
" 3—Patrick Power, to Joanna Delabarty.
" 5—John Ganey, to Bridget Devlin.