

THE TRUTH ABOUT THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

ON A PROTESTANT THEOLOGIAN.

CCXXIV.

On page 85 of Lansing's book there is a ridiculous parody of Edmund Burke's magnificent oration against Warren Hastings. Under eight or ten heads the author impeaches the Pope of this, that and the other, with that cloudy confusion of fact and falsehood, of ignorance and malevolence, which is characteristic of him and of all his kind.

One of his clauses is: "I impeach him in the name of the marriage-bond of the majority of the happy households of the Christian world, which he has stigmatized as 'filthy concubinage,' because not contracted in the Romish Church."

We will consider this indictment presently, and will make thorough work of this horrible calumny, which is continually going the rounds of Protestant papers that are about on the same low level, morally and intellectually, as the Lansings and the John Christians. However, let me first come to the man's help by adding another impeachment, which he has forgotten.

This is just in his line as an American Protestant. Besides, I have quite as good a right as he to make a fool of myself by laying my poor patchwork alongside of Burke's cloth of gold.

Here goes, then. "I impeach the Pope of showing himself the enemy of American freedom and progress by doing his best to impede the happy celerity with which our various states are driving on to extinguish concubinage by abolishing all distinction between concubinage and marriage, as desired by the elder Henry James."

"Married to-day; parted to-morrow"; that is the grand ideal goal towards which our legislation has long been moving. Now comes the Pope, and helps to check this auspicious development by re-inforcing the scruples of old-fashioned Protestants, and emboldening them to say that Caesar's word is the court of the Christian conscience, in void when it contradicts the word of Christ. Against this pernicious and seditious doctrine an eloquent Baptist brother of the West has raised his voice and has been re-echoed, although in more indignant tones, by a famous Episcopalian brother of the East.

"I impeach him in the name of the great orthodox religious newspaper of our country which informs us that we are not to bother ourselves over what Christ has said in the matter. Christ, it instructs us, was all very well in His day, but His day is not ours. It is for us not for Him, to determine now, at our discretion and comfortable convenience, the terms on which the marriage contract is to be formed, maintained, or pleasantly dissolved.

What excuse could there be for uncharitably, when once the State in the progress now making in our land, shall have brought down the legal definition of chastity below even what is expected of a temperate patron of the brothel? And is this blessed advance towards conjugal purity—which certainly ought to be easily maintainable when marriage need not hold beyond a day—to be obstructed because an old-fashioned Roman priest is trying to dam up the exuberance of our frolicsome Anglo-Saxon freedom, in these unincumbered fields of the West? Perish the thought and perish the Pope that has conceived it! If it were not that the squeamishness of modern manners is a little against it, I would exclaim with Father Luther: Let us march upon Rome, and seize the Pope in his company, and hang them up on gibbets, having first cut out their tongues.

There now, I make Mr. Lansing a free present of this incomparable outburst, for his next edition. It will go hard but that our united eloquence will sweep the Pope into the Bay of Bengal. Let us now come back to his actual impeachment. And let us for the moment, accept his lie for a truth, and declare with this villainous slanderer, that the Pope has pronounced all Protestant marriages "filthy concubinage." How would that dishonor a majority of the households of Christendom?

THE SACRAMENTS, though irregular, is valid."

This won't work at all. The Church anathematizes all who maintain the presence of a priest is intrinsically necessary to a Christian marriage. And Pius IX. declares that wherever a Christian marriage is valid, it is also sacramental. This, say Archbishop Heiss and the Catholic Dictionary, finally extinguishes the opinion that the priest is the minister of the sacrament. The consenting parties are the ministers, and the priest—in some cases needed to ratify the contract, and thereby the sacrament, if the Church requires it, not otherwise.

Lansing will have to shift his ground again. Perhaps somebody—for I once found, by his own admission, that he knew nothing about the action of Trent in the matter might suggest to him: "Since Trent the presence of a Catholic priest is required for every Christian marriage." Indeed, Lansing, universal and unailing blunderhead as he is, declares it, in Roman view, necessary for every marriage whatever.

Here, let me inform any Protestant reader, the man, as almost invariably, blends a lie and a blunder into one extricable mess. It is amusing to see him, like a person so incomparably his superior as Froude, always blundering because he wishes to lie, and always lying because he is perfectly willing to blunder.

Now, as Lansing confessedly knows nothing about the decree Tametsi, which controls this whole matter, course he does not know that the Church forbids any pastor to act on the Lex Claustralitatis where it has not been formally published in his parish, and that as it has not been published in Protestant countries, even Catholic marriages there, however censurable, are valid without it. Still less—if we can talk of more or less in the blankness of absolute ignorance—is he aware that mixed marriages are dispensed from in Malta, in doubt whether this is true of Malta, Rhenish Prussia, Belgium, Ireland, Quebec, and some other Catholic regions, and in the strip, once Catholic, from Georgia to California.

"Of course it is more than certain that he is wholly unaware that were a Protestant husband and wife, canonically competent, and both baptized, become Catholics, it is forbidden to repeat the marriage, even if the validity of one baptism is doubtful. Here is a fact that alone would be enough to lay all the Lansings and Christians flat on their backs, but that their absolutely inviolable effrontery would boy them up against a thousand decisions of the Holy See."

Has not Pope Pius then spoken about "filthy concubinage"? Certainly, twice, once concerning New Granada and once concerning Piedmont, both being countries governed by the decree Tametsi in which, therefore, the neglect of it annuls their marriages in the eyes of the Church. In neither address, therefore, is there the remotest reference to Protestant marriages, or to Catholic marriages in Protestant countries.

Andover, Mass.
DEVOTION TO THE HOLY SOULS IN PURGATORY.
St. Joseph's Society Staff.

The practice of recommending to God the souls in Purgatory, that He may mitigate the great pains which they suffer, and that He may soon bring them to His glory, is most pleasing to us. For these blessed souls are His eternal spouses, and most grateful are they to those who obtain their deliverance from prison, or even a mitigation of their torments. When, therefore, they arrive in heaven, they will be sure to remember all who have prayed for them.

St. Ignace's devotion to the souls in Purgatory, and her prayers were heard immediately. She declared that by praying to those holy souls she obtained many favors which she had sought through the intercession of the saints without obtaining them. The graces which devout persons are said to have received through these holy souls are innumerable. But if we wish for the aid of their prayers, it is just, it is even a duty, to relieve them by our suffrages. I say it is even a duty; for Christian charity commands us to relieve our neighbors who stand in need of our assistance. But who among all our neighbors have so great need of our help as these holy prisoners? They are continually in that fire which torments more severely than any earthly fire. They are deprived of the sight of God, a torment far more excruciating than all other pains. Let us reflect that among these suffering souls are parents or brothers, or relations and friends, who look to us for savior. Let us remember, moreover, that, being in the condition of debtors for their sins they cannot assist themselves. This thought should urge us forward to relieve them to the best of our ability. By assisting them we shall not only give great pleasure to God, but will acquire also great merit for ourselves. And in return for our suffrages these blessed souls will not neglect to obtain for us many graces from God, but particularly the graces of eternal life. I hold for certain that a soul delivered from Purgatory by the suffrages of a Christian, when she enters Paradise, will not fail to say to God: "Lord, do not suffer to be lost that person who has liberated me from the prison of Purgatory, and has brought me to the enjoyment of thy glory sooner than I had deserved!"

FIVE-MINUTE SERMON.

Second Sunday After the Epiphany.

CURSING.
"His name was called Jesus" (Gospel of the day).

The feast of the Holy Name of Jesus, dear brethren, is one which suggests to many thoughts. It recalls to our mind the sweetness of our Saviour. It speaks of His tenderness for sinners and of His mercy to the penitent. It tells us, too, of His power—the infinite power of God, and of His awful majesty. It is a day that fills us with joy and with sadness. It brings us joy because the Holy Name is a precious treasure enriching each of us, and a mighty shield defending us against the attacks of our spiritual enemies.

And we are sad, too, to-day, because we are reminded how much the Blessed Name of God our Saviour is reviled and used irreverently. And to-day the Church protests with all her power against blasphemy and cursing. To-day we call upon God to aid us in praising and loving Him, and to aid us in praising and loving His Name in an especial manner the Holy Name of Jesus. Not that she would have Christians confine their praises to to-day alone, but she would impress upon us by this day's feast the constant duty of giving reverence to the Holy Names of God and of Jesus.

The wicked habit of cursing, which the Church lifts her voice to try out against, is an evil of a very serious kind. And it is something that unfortunately is too common among Christians of every age and walk in life. Young children and gray-haired men and women are guilty of this irreverence towards sacred names. Rich men and poor men, men who say they have faith and men who have no faith, all are addicted to the impious habit of cursing. Think how shocking it is to hear the name of Him who so loved us that He gave the last drop of His blood for us; who literally poured out His life for us; think of His name brought into the gutter! Think of that Name, "which was called by the angel" with awe, introduced into the lead speech of the bar-room, or called upon in witness of the ritual jest! Think of grating women varying the monotony of their answers with ejaculations filled with irreverence towards God and our Saviour!

Go to the shops, to the mills, to the gave the last drop of His blood for us; houses, and have your ears offended and your soul grieved by the injury done to the Holy Name. And go to the homes of Catholic men and women. If you stand before the judgment seat of Christ, you will learn how many sins you have been the occasion of by your neglect of duty and your bad example. The home, the street, the work-place, are each and all the scenes, and often the stronghold, of this rampant vice of bad language. And the men and women and children who debase themselves and scandalize others by the use of such language, are more numerous than we like to acknowledge.

Our duty is plain enough. If we have the misfortune to be of those who have contracted this vice of foul speaking, let us resolve now upon amendment, and impose upon ourselves some suitable penance for our crime, and study to discover and apply the proper remedies. If we are not ourselves the victims of this evil habit, let us help others by our example. Let us show our displeasure on every occasion when bad language is used. Let parents bring up their children strictly, teaching them respect for sacred names and the duty of reverent prayer. And let us always, by internal acts of praise, give honor to God whenever we hear His Name dishonored among men, and thus do something to abate the evil of this horrible vice.

SUFFERING, GOD'S GIFT TO THOSE HE LOVES.
English Messenger of the Sacred Heart.

You are in pain and trouble. What should I say to you, were I near you, poor suffering soul? I should try to console you, and behold—God wills it not. He wills that you should be attached wholly to the Cross, as was Jesus once for us. He wills that you should remain long upon the Cross, and because He chose to leave it only when dead. He desires that you should remain there, resignedly, as long as He has chosen for you. If God has given you bitterness, it was the portion of His own Divine Son.

CONSCIENCE.

Whether a man be born in pagan darkness or in some corruption of revealed religion, whether he be the slave of some superstition, or is in possession of some portions of Scripture, in any case, he has within his breast, a sensation commonly called conscience. It is not a mere opinion or impression or view of things, but a law, an authoritative voice, bidding him to do certain things, and avoid others. It is more than a man's self. The man himself has not power over it or only with extreme difficulty. He did not make it; he cannot destroy it. He may silence it in particular cases or directions, he may distort its enunciations, but he cannot—of it is quite the exception if he can—he cannot emancipate himself from it. He can disobey it, he may refuse to use it, but it remains. To those who use it they have, more is given. At the same time the more a person tries to obey his conscience the more he gets alarmed at himself for obeying it so imperfectly.

His sense of duty will become more keen, and his perceptions of personal consciousness more delicate, and he will understand more and more how many things he has to be forgiven. And the voice of conscience has nothing gentle, nothing of mercy, in its tone. It is severe, and even stern.

PRaise FOR THE CHURCH.
Mr. W. H. Mallock, in his recent work, Doctrine and Doctrines Disruption, which the Paulist Father Wyman, in the August Catholic World, deems the most remarkable book on religious controversy since Newman's Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine—says beautifully: "The net results of the Roman theory of the Church, is to endow that vast body with a single undying personality—an unbroken personal consciousness. The result which its possession of this complete organic character has on the Church of Rome, as a teaching body, is obvious. Being thus endowed with a single brain, it is endowed also with a continuous historic memory, is constantly able to explain and restate doctrine, and to attest, as though from personal experience, the facts of its early history. Is doubt thrown on the resurrection, and ascension of Christ? The Church of Rome replies: 'I was at the door of the sepulchre myself. My eyes saw the cloud receive Him.'"

Is doubt thrown on Christ's miraculous birth? The Church of Rome replies: 'I can attest the fact even if no other witnesses can; for the angel said, Halli in my ear as well as in Mary's.'" This is but one of Mr. Mallock's many splendid pleas in favor of Catholicism. Meanwhile Catholics wonder why he has remained, for a quarter of a century, a luminous sign-post pointing the way to the Church and entering not.

DAILY MASS.
If there is one blessing above another which may be received by the devout Catholic, it is the hearing of daily Mass. For the priest, the celebration of daily Mass is his salvation; and for the faithful, they can perform no action which will more advantageously bring down the blessing of Almighty God than the daily assistance at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. The wondrous blessings are beyond our comprehension and the only way they can be fully understood is to partake of them. How often we hear of persons living near the Church where the most Holy Sacrifice is offered each morning, yet who excuse themselves from giving one little half hour to our Lord on the plea of want of time! And these same persons will spend hours, even days, in useless conversation and gossip and not consider the time lost!

The Venerable Bede, says E. R. Chase in Church Bulletin, whom the Protestants now claim was not a Catholic, speaking of daily Mass, said: "If the priest neglects Mass, it is not only a loss to himself, but also a loss to Almighty God, the Blessed in heaven and the faithful; it deprives the Holy Trinity of the honor which is due; deprives the angels of a source of joy; the sinner of assistance; the departed of relief; the Holy Church of spiritual benefits, and himself of a salutary medicine. See how much harm results from the indifference of one

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A MOTHER'S CARE.
Every mother knows the constant care a little child requires, and to the young and inexperienced mother who is caring for her first baby there is no period in her life more trying. In the little bills that are certain to come to all infants and young children, the mother—especially the young and inexperienced mother—scarcely knows what to do. It is to meet emergencies of this kind that Baby's Own Tablets are offered to all mothers. These Tablets are an absolute cure for all the minor ailments of little ones, and should constantly be kept in every home where there are young children. Sickens comes quickly—with Baby's Own Tablets at hand the emergency is promptly met. Mrs. R. H. LaRue, Mountain, Ont., says: "I can recommend Baby's Own Tablets to all mothers who have cross or delicate babies, and to the young and inexperienced mother who is caring for her first baby there is no period in her life more trying. 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