

their example. The only reason that can be given why these ignore this virtue is that humility, in the Christian acceptance of the term, is utterly beyond their understanding. One might just as well ask a man of short vision to name the autumn tints on the distant mountain-side as to ask men imbued with the spirit of the world to understand and practically define humility.

How could it be otherwise? The kind of education they receive; the false ideals of virtue that are held up; the infiltrating of pride under the guise of self-respect, honor, and such like, into their thinking and doing; and, more than all, perhaps, the utter absence of self-knowledge, are obstacles not merely to the acquisition of the virtue of humility by such men, but even to the speculative grasp of what it is or what its influence should be among them.

The world has felt the need of a substitute for Christian humility, and it has found one. Mr. Lecky tells us that "the feeling of self-respect is the most remarkable characteristic that distinguishes Protestant from most Catholic populations, and which has proved among the former an invaluable moral agent, forming frank, independent natures, and checking every servile habit, and all mean, degrading vice." Why, then, should worldlings go to the trouble of acquiring the virtue of Christian humility, with its obligations, when a simple feeling of self-respect will suffice to keep them virtuous?

Unfortunately, too many Catholics, who should know better, are actuated by motives of this kind. Expediency, self-respect — which is another name for pride — mistaken views of honor, etc., are very often the only foundations for whatever virtue is in them.

This, however, is not what Christ taught. His doctrine, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven," (Matt. v., 3), and His example, "Learn of Me, because I am meek and humble of heart," (Ib. xi., 29), are the standards of both belief and action in a Christian life.