

which he belonged; and he resolved to save himself on the instant by escape. He got up in the night, dressed himself, easily took possession of all that was his own, and stole noiselessly out of the place. As the few sick now remaining in the hospital were all on the way to recovery, the night watch was not very strict, and no one observed that the man was gone till the morning dawned. Then Marcella, coming in to look to the needs of her patient, found the bed empty, and the criminal whom she sought to have secured and given up to justice fled.

The discovery caused a sensation in the hospital, and Marcella's dismay passed unnoted in the general surprise. The ingenuity of the creature in thus disappearing without saying "thank you" to any one disgusted other patients and angered the nurses. All agreed that if he died of the sudden change from the comforts that had surrounded him to the freezing hardship of foot travel through the October night, nobody could pity him much. There was every reason to suppose that such sudden exposure might be the cause of his immediate death. Oh, yes, they would go in search of him if "Herself" commanded them to do so, but the ungrateful creature had done nothing to deserve it. Why make such a fuss about his good-for-nothing troublesome life?

Marcella had little hope that they would be able to recover him alive, and as she went out on the wild moor in the chill misty morning she felt as if she must have been living in a state of madness during the past month, an unhappy madness that had lost her a chance which could certainly never return to her. The hope, the expectation, the fancy, the impossible. She ought to have denied her enemy her personal ministrations and placed him under the watch of the police. Now, he would die in some obscure corner—

While her mind thus writhed in its perplexity and her heart smote her with passionate self-reproach, her thoughts were interrupted by the sight of a group of figures approaching slowly out of the distance. As they drew nearer, a little new hope sprang up in her. Here were the messengers returning, and they were carrying—was it merely the body of the missing patient, or was he returning to her to die? And yet, what did it matter, if at the last he should refuse to speak? He was brought into the hospital and laid again in his bed. The doctor was hastily summoned, and the sufferer was restored to consciousness. He had broken a blood vessel, and had swooned, but he was not dead. He had days, perhaps weeks, to live, thanks to those who had found him where he had fallen upon the waste.

"You have been very hard on yourself, my man," said the doctor, when the patient feebly questioned him. "Why were you so mad as to run away and bring on this attack?"

"I thought I was well enough to go, and that it was time. I had given trouble enough. I suppose I am not going to give much more. What is the matter with me now?"

"I am sorry to tell you that you have been in consumption for months past. It is possible that you did not know it? By exposing yourself as you have done you have hastened the end."

The patient reflected for some minutes and then said:

"You are sure you are telling me the truth?"

"Certainly. I should have told you before, only I wanted to give you a chance. I am sorry you have taken the matter out of my hands. You cannot now live more than a week, I fear—though it is possible—"

When the doctor's ministrations were over and he was turning to go away, the patient stopped him, saying:

"Look here, doctor, I suppose this is all as it ought to be. If you tell me I'm bound to go, why I don't see much to say against it. But there are one or two little matters I would like to put straight. Will you be good enough to send me a magistrate, and anybody else who ought to be present at an important confession? It's a matter for the public, and I mean to have everything fair and square, so that the law can pick no holes in it when I'm gone."

Marcella, who had been approaching the bed with something needed by the doctor, paused and stood looking steadily at the patient. Had he really spoken, or was it a delusion that brought sounds to her ears which they had been straining to hear?

"Ah, lady," he said, "I'm going to do it for you. You have been good to me, that I will say, and for once in my life I'll do an honest turn for somebody."

TO BE CONTINUED.

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TO THE RITUALISTS.

The Primate of England Invites His Wandering Sheep Back to the Fold of Christ.

By the Apostolic Bull *Apostolica Curæ* the Holy Father, as supreme and final judge in matters of faith and controversy, has solemnly declared that Anglican Orders are "null and void." I am not undervaluing the importance of this judgment when I say that its direct and personal interest is limited to an extremely small minority of the English people—to a minority even among Anglicans.

This minority holds, in common with ourselves, that the Divine Founder of Christianity established His religion as a sacramental and sacrificial system, absolutely dependent upon a Sacramental Order instituted by Christ Himself.

Its earnest and devout members believe, with us, that the supernatural life of the soul is created, nourished, and perfected through the sacraments; and that the priests administering them possess miraculous powers, whereby they daily offer the true Sacrifice of Jesus Christ upon the altar, forgive the sins of men, and teach the truths of salvation with a Divine authority. This priesthood is nothing less than the priesthood of Jesus Christ. The perpetuation and the application to souls of this Divine sacramental and sacramental economy is dependent upon a true and valid succession to the priesthood of Christ. Hence arises a question of dogmatic fact—Has this priesthood been secured and perpetuated in the Church of England?

I know how warmly and fondly thousands among our Anglican friends have clung to the hope that they may possess a valid priesthood and the grace of true sacraments. And I hasten to say how deeply I sympathize with them in the pain and consternation which some of them feel in consequence of their Orders by the Catholic Church. They may rest assured that nothing could have induced Leo XIII. to have pronounced his final judgment short of overwhelming evidence, urgent charity, and imperative duty. But he is the chief guardian of the sacraments, and he is a debtor to God and to souls for the due discharge of his supreme office as judge in these matters. No choice was, therefore, left to him in a matter so deeply affecting God's honor and the salvation of souls.

The great mass of the Church of England, which is Erastian and Latitudinarian, is in no way affected by the declaration that Anglican Orders confer no power to offer sacrifice and to forgive sins. But it is very different with those among whom the belief has been steadily and rapidly spreading that they possess a priesthood with all the blessings of a Divine, sacramental, and sacrificial system.

NARRATIVE OF THE CASE.

They have, of course, known all along that the whole sacerdotal and sacrificial system depends upon the validity of the Holy Orders. They have known enough of Cramer, and of his dealing with the Ordinal and the altar, to dread what might be the permanent results of his handiwork. They know that the Erastian and Protestant Church of England as a body rejects all ideas of a sacrificial priesthood. They did not believe, that the Holy See had on several occasions pronounced judgment on this subject. It is not surprising, therefore, that a deep and reasonable anxiety as to the validity of their Orders should have accompanied what may be called the Romanizing movement in the Church of England from its very beginning.

Years ago efforts were made to obtain a recognition of Anglican Orders from the Greek Church, but without avail. Recently the Anglican case was carefully drawn up and submitted to the Jansenist authorities in Holland, but after much conference and long study the judgment was unfavorable. Since then the question of Anglican Orders has been taken up by certain priests on the Continent; and they, and the learned Anglicans whose cause they had espoused, laid the whole elenchus of their argument before the Holy See this very year. A large and exhaustive work was written in Latin by an Anglican theologian, who subsequently printed a further dissertation in Rome, and distributed it among the Cardinals and their theologians. No effort, no skill or industry were wanting on the part of the Anglicans and their friends to inform and convince the Holy See of the validity of Anglican Orders. Their intelligence and their honest and straightforward conduct have merited the thanks of both English Catholics and Protestants in bringing this matter to a close.

The Holy See, having taken everything into consideration, acted in the only way that was possible—namely, upon the evidence and the merits of the case. It has never had difficulty in recognizing as valid the Orders of the Greek and other Eastern schismatics, because the evidence of their validity is sufficient. And now it has not condemned Anglican Orders because they were Anglican, or given in heresy or schism. It has condemned them simply because the evidence has conclusively proved them to be null and void.

I may say without hesitation that Leo XIII.'s well known large-mindedness and sympathies would have naturally led him to avoid an unfavorable judgment, had it been possible to have done so. His desire would have been to give pleasure and comfort rather than pain to persons for whom he has nothing but good-will. But the facts and the evidence admitted of no doubt.

He, therefore, delivered a clear and definite judgment, tempered by all the consideration and kindness which marked his apostolic character.

Some of our Anglican friends have declared that this denial to them of Apostolic Succession and Orders closed the door against the reunion of Christendom so far as they are concerned. But, if they be true to their former professions, this can only be said under the effect of reasonable irritation and disappointment. The validity of Anglican Orders could never form even a single plank in the platform for either corporate or individual reunion.

Reunion means submission to a Divine Teacher. When men have found the Divine Teacher and determined, at whatever cost, to submit to Him, there will be reunion. And reunion with the Catholic Church can never take place on any other terms. This was well known. The question of Anglican Orders, therefore, was never in it.

Others had always confided to the public, months before judgment was delivered, that they intended not to care for the Papal decision if adverse; that they had quite made up their mind to rest satisfied with such Orders as they have. To this I reply—Be it so. They are responsible to their Judge, not to us, for their words and acts. As usual, in their misfortune they reproach the Apostolic See. But with the mouth full of reproaches, they must face this fact—that neither Jansenist, Russian, Greek, nor any of the eastern sects, who profess valid Orders, have ever been able or willing to recognize the validity of Anglican Orders. These stand alone, shivering in their insular isolation—and worse—for they are doomed within their own Communion as well as by the immense majority of the English people. "*Securus judicabit obstiterrum.*"

But there are grave and earnest men and women, not standing in the front line, who are more independent and weigh matters for themselves. How can they any longer trust in a sacramental system which is condemned as null and void by the Catholic Church? How shocking to adore as valid God elements that are but bread and wine, to bend down after auricular confession in order to receive a mere human and useless Absolution!

But, however painful this awakening from a dream, they will say that it is surely better to know the truth, to face the reality, than to live in a world of religious delusion. For those who can speak thus calmly the close of this controversy will usher in a period of grace and conversion. "God gives His Grace to the humble."

EFFICACY OF ANGLICAN ORDERS.

But many will reply and have replied—We cannot disbelieve in the efficacy of Anglican Orders, because we have experienced sensibly the fruits of the grace which they have wrought in our souls. We cannot disown the fruits which we have nurtured on. Is not the tree known by its fruits? To this I answer—We have no difficulty in believing that you have received these visitations of grace, and that you have received them at the times when you frequented the sacraments that were absolutely null and void. That you, being in perfect good faith and sincerity, should have received grace from God is no more proof of the validity of Anglican Orders than it is of the truth of the Anglican system.

Of course you have received grace while Anglicans. Grace is offered to all men, by whatever name they may be called. The *Spiritus Domini replet orbem terrarum*. It is offered even to those who are born in the deepest darkness, and it goeth on, little by little, where there is good faith and earnestness, like the light coming out of the darkness of night, until it reacheth the perfect day.

God is accustomed to bestow His grace in two ways—through the sacraments, *ex opere operato*, and through the dispositions of the individual, *ex opere operantis*. The sacraments bestow grace *ex opere operato*. For instance, when baptism is administered to an infant, sacramental grace and regeneration are bestowed by virtue of the divine ordinance, or, as we say, *ex opere operato*.

When a soul elicits personal acts of contrition, humility, love of God, Divine grace is bestowed in consequence of these personal acts—that is, *ex opere operantis*. Thus the Church recommends her children to make a spiritual communion when they cannot receive sacramentally, or, in other words, to have recourse to grace obtained *ex opere operantis*, when it cannot be obtained also *ex opere operato*. The eliciting of devout personal acts of preparation and piety is productive of grace—though of a much lesser grade than when Communion is actually and sacramentally received in the same good dispositions.

I am, therefore, quite ready to believe that Anglicans and others outside the Church may receive many graces while in good faith and devout dispositions when they frequent the sacraments administered by men who are equally in delusion as to the validity of their Orders. This is all quite possible, provided there be good faith and perfect sincerity. But I would refer those interested in this subject to Cardinal Newman's third lecture on "*Anglican Difficulties*," in which he brings forward striking instances of piety, not only in Anglicans, but also in Dissenters, unbelievers, and even apostates.

THE HOLY FATHER'S SYMPATHY.

I have already expressed my own sincere sympathy with those Anglicans whose whole position and hopes are shattered by the formal declaration

that their Orders are null and void. The Holy Father himself feels the tenderest concern for the welfare of these worthy and sincere persons, who are with us, in that they believe in a sacramental and sacrificial system, but are separated from us in that they have but the name and the shadow of that system, and are still actually outside the pale of the Church. More than this, he opens out his arms to receive them. And departing altogether from the custom and the formal character of a juridical Bull, winds up his judgment with these words of paternal invitation and affection:—

"We wish to direct Our exhortations and Our desires in a special way to those who are ministers of religion in their respective communities. They are men who from their very office take precedence in learning and authority, and who have at heart the glory of God and the salvation of souls. Let them be the first in joyfully submitting to the Divine call and obey it, and furnish a glorious example to others. Assuredly with an exceeding great joy their Mother, the Church, will welcome them and will cherish with all her love and care those whom the strength of their generous souls has amidst many trials and difficulties led back to her bosom. Nor could words express the recognition which this devoted courage will win for them from the assemblies of the brethren throughout the Catholic world, or what hope or confidence it will merit for them before Christ as their Judge, or what reward it will obtain from Him in the Heavenly Kingdom."

But the Holy Father has shown his gracious sympathy in a still more practical way. He has addressed to us the following most touching and paternal letter:

LEO XIII'S LETTER TO CARDINAL VAUGHAN.

"We need not remind you of Our special affection for England and of Our ardent desire to provide in every way for the spiritual welfare of its sons. The many proofs of this affection already know. One point, however, to the high importance of which you and your brethren in the Episcopate will not fail to give attention, greatly concerns Us at this moment. And it has led Us to form a project which We hasten to recommend to your zeal, and through you to the generous charity of the Catholics of England.

"We cannot without deep emotion contemplate the very painful and sometimes even hopeless condition of converted Anglican clergymen, who, in prompt obedience to the call of the Divine Grace, have entered into the Catholic Church. Withdrawn in many cases, from a position of ease or comfort, they find themselves immediately after their conversion in a state most critical, and sometimes in absolute destitution, with no means of maintaining themselves, or of providing for the urgent needs of their families. By birth, by education and by their habits of life, they are wholly unprepared for such enormous sacrifices; and when these privations are added to the cruel anguish of broken friendships and social isolation, it is hardly a matter for surprise did some find their courage fail them.

"Many, as We well know, have accepted every sacrifice to follow without delay the voice of conscience, and to embrace the truth. These noble examples are known to you, dear son, and they deserve more praise than We can give. They have rightly remembered that, when the welfare of the soul is at stake, no consideration of a temporal nature must be yielded to, however painful it may be. God will one day give them the reward of a hundredfold which only He can give. Nevertheless, to do as they have done is an act almost of heroism, the thought of which may make others of less virtue hesitate and delay the decisive step until it is too late.

"We should wish, therefore, to come to the aid of those who have taken this step, or are ready to take it. For this purpose, what We ourselves have thought of, and now propose to you, would be the formation in England of a considerable fund for the help of converted Anglican clergymen. Our object is not, and could not be, to obtain for them a position superior, or even equal to that which they would still have privations to undergo. But we would wish at least to secure for them the means of providing for their most urgent needs during the first years after their conversion, until they are able to obtain by their own efforts the resources required for a suitable maintenance.

"We desire you, dearest son, to communicate with your brethren in the Episcopate, for the organization of this work; and to invite all who have the means of doing so to join with you for the realization of a project which affects the salvation of so many chosen souls.

"We are too well acquainted with your zeal, and that of the Bishops and clergy of England, and also with the generosity of our Catholic children, to doubt for a moment of the reception that will be given to this proposal which Our own heart has dictated to Us.

"For your encouragement, dearest son, and as a token of Our affection, receive the Apostolic Blessing.

"Pope Leo XIII.

"Rome, St. Peter's, Aug. 23, 1896."

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giving, reverence, and affection, with the Bishops, the priests, and the Catholic laity of England welcome home those who are "come out of great tribulation." They will share their bread with the hungry. They will introduce them to many brethren who, having already crossed the Red Sea and the Desert, are now laboring in the Promised Land. For thousands left behind there are millions to accompany them, rejoicing, along "the narrow way" that leads to the heavenly Jerusalem.

CORPORATE REUNION.

Finally, let me with all affection urge those who piously desire reunion with Rome no longer to temporize with grace. Follow the generous alacrity of the Apostles: "He called them, and they forthwith left their nets and their father and followed Him." (Matt. iv.) Persons desiring to act may communicate with any Bishop or priest, or with myself, for instruction and direction. It is a dream, and a snare of the evil one, to have all to be converted to God individually; to learn of Christ to be meek and humble of heart, individually; to take up our cross and follow Him, individually, each according to his personal grace. The individual may no more wait for Corporate Reunion that he may wait for Corporate Conversion. The obligations of faith and submission to the Church are as pre-emptory and as binding on the individual as are obligations of hope, charity and contrition. And who that waits can promise himself a continuance of time or of grace? "Work while it is day; the night cometh when no man can work" (John ix.). But, on the other hand, no one should offer himself, no one should be received into the Church, until convinced that he has found the Divine Teacher. He must be able to say with the apostle, "We have found the Messiah" (John i. 41). Men have been received into the Church, and presently have gone back, or have drifted into infidelity because they have not laid the solid foundation of faith and religion.

PERSONAL.

Some one may now be tempted to ask this question: Why are you so deeply interested in men outside your own Church? Why not leave them alone? Why not confine yourself to the care of your own followers? To this I reply, "For Christ we are ambassadors, God as it were exhorting by us" (2 Cor. v. 20). We have a command to "preach the Gospel to every creature," and "we is unto me if I preach not the Gospel" (1 Cor. ix. 16).

"*Caritas Dei urget nos*," love for souls redeemed by the most Precious Blood compels us. For their sake "Christ hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation, and many and many a priest among us, and many a consecrated Virgin in her convent, and many a layman, too, can say with perfect truthfulness, "I have great sadness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I wished myself to be an anathema from Christ, for my brethren, who are my kinsmen according to the flesh" (Rom. ix.).

These are the reasons why we never grow weary, never relax our efforts to restore to the English people their priceless inheritance—the inheritance of which they were robbed by the lust and ambition of sovereigns, the avarice and servency and greed of the aristocracy, and the weakness of the Bishops of that day.

In conclusion I speak a personal word to you who are witnesses and fellow workers. We are dealing with no worldly interest, but with the Hand of God, and the Finger of Divine Grace. But remember it has been said, "No man can come unto Me except the Father draw him" (John vi. 44). Our Heavenly Father is moved by prayer and by the sight of the Most Precious Blood of His Son. "It hath well pleased the Father to reconcile all things unto Himself, making peace through the Blood of His Cross" (Col. i. 20). Prayer is better than contrivance, better than eloquence. Ireproachable inform you that a great association of prayer for England is being formed in Catholic France. Father Ignatius

Spencer's work is about to be revised there upon a great scale. You can all pray. Use often, use daily, the *Hail Mary*, and the Prayer to Our Blessed Lady, whose dowry we delight to be called—the prayer dictated for our use by Pope Leo, at the end of his Letter to Anglos. Mary is omnipotent with her Son. And she still bears in her heart a maternal and queenly love for England. It is a pleasing and grateful thought that the feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel fell this year on the famous *Feria Quinta* referred to in the Bull *Apostolica Curæ*, and that the Bull itself is dated on the day on which we were all celebrating the Festival of the Most Holy Name of Mary.

Let us ever place all the interests of England in the hands of that Queen and Mother, "who has overcome all heresies."

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