

precept only, but by circumstance, such as the civil power, parental rule, social traditions, the weakness of childhood, the limitations of knowledge, the need of joint action, and therefore of subordination. Private judgment excludes the corresponding discipline in the spiritual sphere, and leaves room, on the largest supposition, for no more than an implicit faith in the Bible itself. Now, apart from the consideration that the same will which accepts the Bible rejects other gifts authenticated as divine by the same authority, it must be remembered that a book, though divine, is a book still, and can discharge that office only in the covenant of grace which God has assigned to it. When questioned a book must answer with the voice of the questioner himself. It cannot prevent him from mistaking for a divine voice the echo of his own. It cannot correct his misapprehensions, divine between the dross and the sterling metal in his interpretations; abash his presumption, restrain his precipitation, disclose the tenor of the whole before he has mastered the parts, prevent him from selecting texts according to the law of a false theory, and from distributing the subject-matter of inquiry by the method of an erroneous tradition. It cannot prevent him from finding in it what he brought to it, and trampling under foot the truths or the admonitions he most needs. It cannot enable him to distinguish between the Written Word and his own version of it, between the "mind of the Spirit" and his own mind; and therefore it cannot authenticate his own convictions, even when most firmly held, with that seal of Divine teaching, through which alone they become the subject of faith. The loss thus sustained is not less than infinite. The strength of the chain is the strength of its weakest link; and a divine book, with but a human interpreter, is not a Divine revelation.—The principle of private judgment thus intercepts, by the interposition of a fallible medium, the direct communication between God and the spiritual mind of man.

Still more fatally does the same principle affect the Will. If a country, without judges or rulers, possessed laws, together with a vast legal literature for the interpretation of them, a literature submitted to the private judgment of individuals, habits of loyalty could never be trained, though every citizen became as learned in the intricacies of the statute book as village attorneys are now. Through the instrumentality, on the other hand, of the Church, the mind of the Christian is made subject to a regenerate will, and that again to the will of God unequivocally expressed through an interpreter, speaking "with authority." Every fresh accession of knowledge is a fresh act of submission; and, literally, "every thought" is thus "brought into the obedience of Christ." The faith thus generated is seasoned and vivified by all the affections of the regenerate heart, which are addressed by the Church as by a mother, and trained for their proper functions—that of being the handmaids of faith. The apostle addresses his converts as "my little children, of whom I travail again till Christ be found within you." Thus are now addressed the children of her only who claims apostolic authority, and who does not fear to command them in Christ's name. A book cannot thus address us, nor an institute, however venerable, if founded on private judgment, or human authority, and one that denounces as blasphemous the claims to infallibility. In the Church obedience rises to a sacramental dignity, by being directed to God, through an external Representative, His symbol, and His organ. Through such obedience the spiritual insight of faith is exercised without danger of human or demoniacal delusions. Through such authority the Church is able to show love toward her children by imparting to them safety and peace, not by discarding her own sacred prerogatives, and surrendering to them seeming privileges, which are not hers to give. Therefore it is that her children love her; and that those who have ever loved her most, and most prized her authority, are those recognized even beyond her pale as her greatest saints—those who have had the deepest insight into the "glorious liberty" of the Gospel.

The rule of private judgment divests faith likewise of its vitality, and its power, by chilling the ardor of strong minds. In such minds the freezing sense of insecurity, produced by the impossibility of discriminating between faith and imaginative illusions, will reduce the religious sentiment to a low and sordid tone, mistaken for the golden mean. Enthusiasm will, in such circumstances, commonly be the attribute only of the light and injudicious; and as such it will do as much harm as good, for in religion, as in all things, no substitute can be found for good sense. A community which cannot eliminate doubt from its theological creed has its vulnerable point, and feels it. Heroic virtue would be but a peril or a hindrance to it. It has admitted the formula of nature into the region of supernatural truth, and substituted "Peradventure" for "Amen." It becomes at once reduced and transposed; and its very truths lose their substance while they retain their name. Its raptures are but poetry, its dogma but theory, its antiquity but pedantry, its forms but formality, its freedom but licence, its authority but convention, its zeal but faction, its sobriety but sloth. Such a faith must needs instal reason in the supreme place. Such a Church may not rule; for it cannot rule by serving.

The rule of private judgment has lost sight, not only of the vastness and depth of Holy Scripture, and the objectivity of revelation, but of the vast and multiform nature of that Christian virtue of which faith is the root. Faith has not only a special function with reference to the justification of the individual, but is also the universal bond between the redeemed race and God. It must therefore affect the whole soul, and be the health of every part, penetrating all the virtues, and imparting to them its own unity and stability. It is an adamant which God diffuses through our whole being. It must enlighten the mind, erect the will, warm and purify the heart, live

in every affection, kneel in our humility, endure in our patience. It must from the first contain the element of the infinite, yet admit of infinite increase.—Such cannot be its character if it boasts that it needs not the brethren, that it is entitled to its own inheritance, and that it can act for itself.

The existence of a cycle of supernatural virtues, all founded upon faith, and constituting the Christian life, still maintains, indeed, a traditional place in Protestant theology, however little belief is reposed in that Heroic Sanctity which is their practical embodiment. Except, however, as correlative portions of one vast system, they have little meaning, and when deprived of their solid foundation they totter to their fall. The various elements of the supernatural world, as of the natural, correspond with each other, and must exist in harmony and due subordination, or not at all. Faith is the immovable axis of that world; and the light that illumines it is the knowledge of God. Having lost the true idea of faith, Protestantism has too generally lost also the idea of the supernatural world which it supports, and of the divine knowledge by which that world is irradiated. Insensibly men have drifted away from a true estimate of divine Knowledge, as something supernatural, hallowing, elevating the source and the health of all the Christian virtues. This is one reason why theology is now disparaged even by the devout. Men who would hardly avow as much, regard all such knowledge as but a series of logical positions, at most subjectively true, or relatively useful, the result of much idle curiosity, and the cause of much mischievous contention.—Such an estimate would not be unjust, if our knowledge of divine things came indeed from beneath, not from above. Speculations which had been useful as an intellectual exercise, might well, if of merely human origin, become a spiritual tyranny, when hardened into dogma. Such an estimate of divine knowledge proceeds from that philosophy which regards belief, in religious matters, as a something less certain than knowledge, instead of a something greater—a knowledge in which the will, as well as the mind, bears its part. It is, however, of the highest importance to observe, that according to our estimate of Christian knowledge, must be our estimate of Christianity as a whole. It is the instinct, and all but the necessity of a half-materialist age to invert the process through which the mutual relations of spiritual and of sensuous things are regarded, interpreting the higher by the lower, not the lower by the higher.—If this spurious method of interpretation be adopted, it must be used consistently. If faith mean no more than opinion, the whole Christian scheme must shrink into but a complex piece of intellectual mechanism. The idea of God must dwindle proportionately. His love can be but benevolence; His paternity but a metaphor; His justice but an arbitrary formula; to impute jealousy or wrath to Him will seem but a dream of the envious, or the angry; to believe that He works for His glory, will be stigmatized as imputing to Him human littleness. In short, according to this scheme of inverted thought, God Himself would be but Man, flung to a distance, and magnified by an optic glass; and all our knowledge of divine things would consist but of human knowledge misapplied. The same fatal error depraves our estimate of religious knowledge in its moral and in its intellectual relations. The same misconception which prevents our regarding divine knowledge as certain, and, therefore, considering faith as an organ of certainty, hinders us also from recognizing such knowledge as spiritual and vital. A few words will suffice to indicate this truth, though to illustrate it adequately a volume would be required.

If man were to find out God by his proper strength, then, indeed, as man is frail and imperfect, his knowledge of God would by necessity share that imperfection, and would remain (1st) doubtful, (2nd) subjective, (3rd) barren. If, on the other hand, man's knowledge of divine things comes from God, it must share the character of God, and be (1st) certain, (2nd) objective, (3rd) fruitful. Probable knowledge on matters that belong to the supernatural order is not knowledge, but conjecture; and that such knowledge can never add a cubit to our spiritual stature, is a fact which reason asserts, and which faith does not care to deny. Yet there is something in man's lower nature which sometimes makes him prefer the lower to the higher knowledge, and found a boast upon what is, in reality, but the poverty and nakedness of unassisted humanity. His pride prefers the position of a discoverer to that of a recipient. The propensity is indicated by the predilection in modern times for that supposed discovery, natural theology, which spins volumes of pseudo-science out of a single analogy between a world and a watch. It is the same instinct in a less developed form, which, assuming the truth of the bible, seeks a key to its interpretation in private judgment, rather than in the divine witness of the Church. The very boast of this false method is its confutation. An inductive method in religion must needs be a hybrid and a monster, for the same reason as a theological method in natural philosophy would be such, namely, from want of conformity between the method and the subject-matter submitted to it. Knowledge which, either in its origin, or in our mode of deducing it from its original fount, is merely human, for that very reason is not divine; and if it claims to be religion, it has the fatal defect of not being revelation, just in proportion as it is discovery. It is not difficult to see that the same circumstance which makes such knowledge inconsistent with the essence, makes it likewise incompatible with the end of religion. If our religious knowledge reached us by the method of empirical science, its results would be empirical; if it were accorded to us through a series of intuitions, like those of abstract science, it would master the will, and so annihilate probation. In all such cases alike the knowledge which comes from below must be shorn of its moral and spiritual relations, and must prove incapable of lifting up the

soul, even more than of irradiating the mind of man.

But far different is it with that Knowledge which comes from above, of which Christ is the source, and the Church of Christ the channel. Such knowledge of God is an effluence from God, a light sent forth into the face of human kind, from Him the Father of Lights, and from that perfect Manhood which reigns in heaven. Our sunrise is His glory manifested; and this is the reason that it comes "with healing on its wings." It has a spiritual efficacy because it comes from Him who is a Spirit, and must be worshipped, not only "in Spirit," but "in truth." It is deiform in character, and therefore it is deific. Its nature corresponds with the Divine attributes, and transfigures that human intelligence, which is capable of receiving it only because it was itself originally formed after the Divine Image. If it does not include a quality corresponding with the Divine attributes of certainty and fixedness, it must fall equally short of the Divine character in all other respects. It cannot be spiritual, or pure, or eternal, or absolute, like Him, if it be dubious like us. If, on the other hand, our knowledge be certain, as coming from God, then indeed it must also be sanctifying.

The knowledge which comes from on high includes properties distinct from those that address the intelligence, as light possesses other qualities, chemical, magnetic, and vital, beside those that address the eye. Such knowledge is therefore capable of constituting an instrument of genuine communication between the Creator and the creature. This is the reason why it is commonly spoken of in Holy Writ, as the characteristic type of religion. The knowledge that comes from man; on the other hand, even though it related to divine things, could no more ripen the spiritual harvests than lamps and torches could mature the fruits of the earth. Such knowledge may be a literature or a philosophy; but it lacks the differentia of religion, properly so called. It constitutes no living bond between the Creator and His creature. It is a devout literature with the sects whose knowledge of divine things is founded on human and fallible criticism; among establishments it adds a religious sanction to social order; and it lives as a mystic philosophy among psychologists who look for God only in their own souls, and who know not that what is deepest within us is described only thro' the light that comes from above. A Religion it is not, except so far as it contradicts its own rule of faith, and as an under-current of ancient and divine tradition, flowing beneath the brittle ice of human speculations, enriches dead opinions with somewhat of the character of faith.

That knowledge of God, then, alone, is sacred and sanctifying, which is authentic, and comes from God. It alone is supernatural, and therefore stands on the level of Christianity; is vital, and therefore capable of realizing the Christian aim. It elevates and exercises all the virtues. Coming from the heights it sounds the depths, and therefore presupposes submission in the very act of reciprocity. It carries God with it in every ray. He it is who exists in those beams, and in each of them, sacramentally in light.—This is the knowledge capable of expanding into that higher knowledge, which is called the beatific vision. Such is the reward reserved for faith, and for the obedience included in faith. Opinion, on the other hand, has no such latent property; for mere nature includes no principle through which man is capable of conversing with spiritual realities. Its "little systems have their day," and amuse us while here below; but they cease where "knowledge," that is, human forms of perception, cease. The world has played with them till it is tired of its plaything; it is now sick of their petty restraints, and peevish inconsistency. It suspects the existence of a world mightier than itself, deeper, loftier, more lasting—the supernatural world. It knows that if such a world exists, the way of access to it can neither be found in the statute book, nor in the volumes of the scribes, nor amid the eddies of public opinion.

IRISH INTELLIGENCE.

The Catholics of Roscrea have replaced by subscription the sacred vessels of the altar, and the other articles which were destroyed at the late horrible sacrilege.

The Sisters of Mercy have opened a temporary establishment in Belfast.

The Sisters of Mercy, lately established at Cappoquin, county Waterford, appeal to the Catholic public for assistance to enable them to erect a convent.

A correspondent from Cahirciveen writes, dating Jan. 30:—"On this day Andrew McCarthy, Esq., formerly of this town, died at the workhouse, and was three hours previous to his death, received into the bosom of the Catholic Church by the Rev. W. Egan, R.C.C."

THE IRISH COURT.—The Lord Lieutenant held his first Levee for the season on Wednesday, at Dublin Castle. The attendance was respectable, and comprised a fair sprinkling of lords, spiritual and temporal. None of the Catholic Prelates attended. Dean Meyler was the only member of the Catholic clergy present on the occasion.

Alderman Roe states that Mr. Dargan has lost £20,000 by the Dublin Exhibition.

SLEGO ELECTION PETITION.—The recognizances for this petition have been approved of. It is expected that the committee will be immediately named.

Mr. Michael Skehan, who emigrated to Australia a few years since with his wife, a farmer's daughter from the neighborhood of Killaloe, county Clare, and returned a lucky gold finder, is now the proprietor of Drew Court House and demesne, near Scariff, which he purchased in the Encumbered Estates Court.

THE PORT OF WATERFORD.—Mr. Brunel, the engineer of the Great Western Railway, was expected in Waterford this week for the purpose of ascertaining its eligibility for a large class of steamers.

The price of grain has fallen in nearly all the country markets, even where the supplies were short.

THE LORD MAYOR'S BANQUET.

When, with shame and indignation, we read of the conduct of the Catholic Lord Mayor of Dublin in proposing the healths of Parson Whately and of his Grace the Lord Archbishop of Dublin, we must confess that we can thoroughly understand the contempt with which the Protestant oppressors look down upon those Catholics, who have been thoroughly tamed and subdued by them. Here was a Catholic in a position, if ever Catholic was, calculated to raise his spirit, and make him feel a high self-respect and dignity, and a consciousness of what was due to himself, to his fellow-citizens, to that august and holy religion which, in common with them, he professed. The labor, perseverance, and courage of generations of the oppressed Catholics of this land had been expended to give him and others the power of holding those offices to which they are as rightfully entitled as the Protestants. Ten years ago perhaps there would not have been half a dozen Catholics at the board. He now saw around him Catholics who had raised themselves by their honorable exertions and their probity to be more than a match in wealth and station for the Protestants on whose ranks they are now pressing more and more every year. It was a most significant fact, an index of our social progress, that, of the five hundred guests on that occasion, the Catholics constituted three to one. No one but a craven and a coward could have helped his heart beating with exultation and satisfaction at the sight.

Under these circumstances, what did our Lord Mayor do? In a speech of the most fawning and sickening toadyism it has been our lot to read for many years, he proposed the health of "The Archbishop of Dublin," meaning the Protestant Minister to whom that title is given by law. He informed the assembled Catholics that "that distinguished scholar and Divine had resided so many years in Ireland that he almost forged one of themselves;" stated that "there had been no one so remarkable as his Grace for boundless and unostentatious charity, and his anxious desire to promote good-will and kind feeling among all classes." This was the testimony of a Catholic official to the heretical author condemned by the Holy See, to the writer of a pamphlet advising his Ministers not to visit in cases where there was danger of infection, to the slanderer of our convents, to the active and powerful enemy of the Catholic Church in this land, whom, with mental prostration, with that Eastern servility for which the English language affords no adequate term, but for which in Greek there is a word signifying literally "fawning after the manner of a dog," he styled "his Grace the Archbishop of Dublin."

Parson Whately responded, in terms in which he scarcely took the pains to disguise his feelings of contempt, and forthwith walked out of the room. It was not very dignified, but he knew what was coming, and doubtless would let off many a keen-witted sarcasm at the expense of the humbled and degraded Catholics.

The Lord Mayor again rose to propose another toast. He regretted Archbishop Cullen was not there. Archbishop Cullen, we doubt not, knew his man a great deal too well for that. And why did this high-spirited and most magnanimous Catholic citizen regret that "Archbishop Cullen" was not there? "Because then," said he, "the room would just present the picture he would like to see—the heads of the different persuasions sitting together at the social board, and each drinking each other's healths in the spirit of harmony and good will." Yes, with souls like that of the Lord Mayor of Dublin, the Catholic Church is but "a persuasion;" just like Methodism, Anglicanism, or Jansenism; not a faith for which Confessors have borne witness before magistrates and kings, Martyrs have been torn in pieces by wild beasts, and rather than abandon which thousands on thousands of the people of this island have perished of famine and fever in the ditches when the bowl of soup and the warm blanket were tendered by Parson Whately's brethren as the price of their apostasy. Yes, with the remembrance of the agonies and deaths endured for the Catholic faith, which are Ireland's plea to the favor of Heaven, and the gage and pledge of her fidelity, this Catholic gentleman dared to babble his nonsense and flattery to the pleased but contemptuous ears of his masters, and to insult the Catholics who heard him, and the Catholics of this island, by proposing the health of Archbishop Cullen.

Let us hope such an exhibition may never happen again. If on public occasions like this, in the presence of those who represent laws which, however replete with injustice, are for the present in operation—if we say, on full consideration, it appears impossible to propose the health of the real Archbishop of Dublin with his proper title, then don't propose it at all. Don't insult him and the Catholics of the country with first denying your faith and then insulting him. If Parson Whately is rightly styled "Archbishop of Dublin," then you are in a false position. There can only be one Archbishop of a see. Either it is he or his Grace the Delegate Apostolic. Let it be seen by the manner in which the toast is proposed by a Catholic that we are not disposed to ignore our faith to please the rulers of this world. Or else, if the speaker feels himself too nervous, too stupid, too imbecile to see his way through the difficulty which a man of courage and sense could have dealt with and not offended either the Lord Lieutenant or anybody else, let him hold his tongue and say nothing at all about it—the truest wisdom for such people.—Tablet.

REPORTED PROHIBITION OF DISTILLATION FROM GRAIN.—The Limerick Chronicle says, a letter has been received in that city, "from an influential member of the present Ministry, stating it is the intention of Government temporarily to prohibit the distillation of whisky from grain in England, Ireland, and Scotland, owing to the high prices of bread stuffs."

RECRUITING IN DUBLIN.—We understand the Quarter-Master-General has applied to the Lord Mayor for permission to suffer recruiting parties to traverse the city, which was at once granted. It appears to have been an ancient custom to ask the permission of the chief magistrate for leave to enrol her Majesty's lieges within the city walls—a custom founded on the separate sovereignties, though under one crown, of Great Britain and Ireland. The custom has been observed in the present instance—the military authorities undertaking that the recruiting parties shall not obstruct the free circulation of the Queen's subjects, and that order shall otherwise be well observed.—Freeman.

Accommodation is being provided in Cork barracks for the reception of troops destined for foreign service. This port is selected for the embarkation of troops from the facilities it affords in shipping the men, baggage, &c., and providing everything needful for voyage.