BY A PROTESTANT THEOLOGIAN. CCXCII.

The Springfield Republican prints a Boston letter, dated Jan. 19, which I think would be the better for some considerable modifications.

The letter is a comment on a book or article of a French Catholic, M. Henri Bremond, treating in part of the witty canon of St. Paul's, Sydney Smith.

The Republican writer refers to Smith's Plymley letters, "which," says he, "Bremond somehow connects with the Catholic emancipation bill of Paul Lorg afterward." Surely there Peel, long afterward." Surely there Peel, long afterward." Surely there is nothing forced in the connection.

Sydney Smith's comical but cogent writings are simply a part, but a leading part, of the continuous Liberal effort for Catholic enfranchisement which at last, in 1829, resulted in suc-

The correspondent says that Bremond treats the Oxford accessions to Catholic Church with some appreciation Oatholic Church with some appreciation of their causes, but without impartiality, "for he is blind to the real nature of his infallible Church." In other words, being a Catholic, he is a Catholic, and therefore as of course is pleased with accessions to his Church, and dis-satisfied with defections from her. In matisfied with defections from her. In this he is precisely like every other man, from an Anglo-Catholic to a Re-formed Presbyterian. Therefore to impute this to him as a fault is to im-pute his being a Catholic as itself a fault. Probably this is what the writer means. The whole tone of his letter appears to me to border on that of the pagans towards the early Christians. appears to me to border on that of the pagens towards the early Christians: non licet esse vos: "You have no right to be."

He speaks of Bremond's "infallible with the speaks of Bremond's "infallible with the little lines."

Now he either knows or he does not know that the Catholic Church expressly disclaims infallibility in life, in policy, in administration, even in doctrine, so far as this is not magisterially taught or unanimously received as revealed. The Swiss Pastoral of 1871, papally approved, is express as to the statement of lord, papally approved, is express as to the statement of the statement o loes not, he is wading beyond his

He refers to what he views as " the fact that the French government and people seem determined to control the astic orders, rather than to be controlled by them, as so much of the secular world has been since they be-

gan their career in Egypt."

That the present French government is determined to control, or more properly to suppress, the monastic orders, seems beyond dispute. M. Waldeck-Rousseau, the author of the Associations Law, has declared that he meant it for regulation, but that M. meant it for regulation, but that M. Combes is applying it for destruction. But that the French people are so determined, remains to be proved. The stolid indifference of the bulk of French voters to all public interests is matter of general note. As the Spectator says in substance, if the peasantry only have their living, and the ministrations of their parish priests, they care the least in the world how either Church or world goes at large. The French system seems far more ingeniously contrived than even our own to baffle the will of the people, if it is at variance with that of the managers, of the royal, imperial, or republican despotism for the time being. A sudden popular impulse may overthrow it, but so it

may the Sultan, or even the Czar.

How have the French prople been hitherto controlled by the Orders? In no other way than that they have been greatly influenced by them, which, in the very nature of free society, they have a perfect right to be, just as any man, or any body of men, has a perfect right, within the limits of Christian morals, to influence men, has a perfect right, within the limits of Christian morals, to influence other men as deeply as they may. The genius, but it is not consonant with the other people to agree with itself.

M. Combes, however, does not accuse

the orders of having controlled the crime.

nation. What angers him is, that the Greater than the Greater th orders teach their pupils a religion that rests on definite statements. He declares that he too is in favor of teaching religion, but a religion of reason, which he explains as meaning a religion without dogmas. In other words, he without dogmas. In other words, he favors religion, provided it has no definite principles of belief. Even Buddhism, although it is atheistic, would not suit him, for it is dogmatic to the last degree. Religion, or politics, or science, without dogmas, would be very curious things. There is one comfort about them, however, they would be such bodiless ghosts, that it is hard to see how they could propagate them-selves. Doubtless, however, M. Combes would rather see absolute irreligion prevailing throughout France than any form of Christianity. From all I read, I should think that immorality has al-ready reached a height which ought to

be satisfactory even to him.

A point which Combes mentions as particularly exasperating is that the orders teach their pupils to dislike divorce. Now as every school of Chriseven the loosest, urges inviola ble fidelity in marriage until death as the very foundation of worthy society, Combes is self-consistent in his resolution to make education thoroughly secular, which in France means thoroughly atheistic. There will then be no impediment to the speedy extinction of Christian marriage, which M.Combes' Socialist allies for the most part cordi-

ally detest. Note, that the Congregation teach no seditious resistance to the divorce laws. They acknowledge, doubtless, that the judges, though Catholics, must decide all questions of dower and inheritance according to them, as indeed institutions of higher learning.

Pope Benedict XIV. declares that all such matters apportain wholly to the State. What despotism is it then for the French Government to constitute itself supreme, not only in civil admin-istration, which no one disputes, but in the court of conscience!

Of course, as all French pastors teach precisely the same thing concern ing divorce as the orders, Combes' de-nunciation of the latter is a veiled menace to the whole Church. "To-day the monk, to-morrow the priest." The impending abrogation of the Concordat is likely to be followed by an active persecution. No people are quicker than the French to take in the lesson that repression amounts to little if it stops short of extermination. Herr if it stops short of extermination. Herr Ibsen's pious aspiration for the return of the merry days when heads were fall-ing thick may perhaps not remain so very long unfulfilled.

This correspondent, we have seen, expresses an indirect, but tolerably distinct, disapprobation of Monasticism

distinct, disapprobation of Monasticism throughout all ages. He seems, at least, to make it pretty clear that he would be glad if the "secular world," by which he means the Christian laity—perhaps including the secular priest-hood—had strangled it in the birth, and so escaped being "so largely controlled" by it. Here again control means simply influence. It seems to be, I will not say intolerable, but decidedly disagreeable to this gentleman—for a gentleman he certainly is—that human nature should be what it is, for it is only by answering certain profound inonly by answering certain profound instincts of humanity that Monasticism has been able to prevail so powerfully. It is not peculiar to Christianity, but is very influential in Mohammednnism, still more so in Hinduism, and is the very essence of Buddhism. Senor Sal-meron's declaration in the Independent Senor Salthat the Orders are contrary to human nature, has a slightly comical sound in view of the myriads on myriads wh almost from the birth of the world, have entered the eremitic life. However, Ifully agree with Salmeron,

that the Orders ought to have in our time no franchises above civil associa-

This gentleman's attitude towards Monasticism seems to deserve still fur-

ther remark.
CHARLES C. STARBUCK.

#### THOU SHALL NOT KILL.

All who understand the reciprocal relations established by the fourth commandment must concede the fact that its proper observance leads to man's happiness. It teaches us the lesson that we must live for one another, not wholly for self. Having laid down this law, how natural that God in the next should prohibit us from disturbing that

Both in the old and the new law to love God above all things is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like unto the first: thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. This means that we should wish him the same good as ourselves, and further, that we should do him no harm. the greatest harm we can do him is to deprive him of life. Hence the purpose of the fifth commandment, "thou shalt not kill."

To take the life of our neighbor, we say, is to do him the very greatest harm. In the first place, it terminates the duration of life fixed by God for the working out of his salvation. Hence murder is a heinous offence, because it is a usurpation of His authority as the Lord of life and the Master of death. Moreover, it does our neighbor an irreparable injury, because it deprives him of that which he prizes most, namely life. This injury is further increased by depriving him of the enjoyment of all that he holds most dear, such as wife, children and worldly possessions. Murder, therefore, is a crime both against God and man.

Nor is this all that is forbidden by We have seen that God is the Lord of both life and death. orders have had no jurisdiction over the laity or over the secular clergy, and to meet their influence with the violence of penal law may well be consonant with the French law of God as laid down in this com-mandment. Where justice demands the death of another, it must be through Temps also says, the present French government has no other notion of liberty than as meaning the liberty of other people to agree with itself.

death of another, it must be through that source commissioned by God. Plainly, therefore, it is not the province of individuals to take justice in their own hands. Hence the one-time tends of the contract avenging injury was clearly a great

Great are the offenses here enumerated, there is one still greater, for-bidden by the fourth commandment, and that is the giving of scandal. This is any word or act which causes others to offend God. Its effect is to murder the soul of our neighbor. To appreciate the penalty attaching to need only recall the words of our Lord Vet how many are concerning it. Yet how many are guilty of leading their neighbor to spiritual ruin by their profane speech and scandalous conduct! It is well for them if they have sought and found forgiveness.-Church Progress.

#### THE DANGER OF NON-CATHOLIC COLLEGES.

A Protestant minister, the Rev. A. C. Dixon, D. D., writing in a Protest-ant contemporary, says:

"A young man in a New York town,

after two years in a college where there is a learned professor who has written theological books, informed his mothe that he no longer believed in her Bible or her Christ. He informed her that three-fourths of the students in the college had been turned from faith to infidelity by the teaching of the learned professor, whose personality was so winsome that they could hardly refuse to believe all he said. In another institution of learning a reformed Jew, who flately denies the Deity of Christ,

and has not hesitated to slander the Virgin Mary, conducts the devotional services in the chapel for a week." So it seems that Catholics are not the only ones who see the danger of entrust-

#### FIVE-MINUTES SERMON.

Fourth Sunday in Lent.

CONSTANT PRAYER.

"Watch ye and pray, that ye enter not into temptation; the spirit, indeed, is willing, but the flesh is weak." (St. Matt xxvi. 41).

Not unfrequently, my dear brethren, a priest is told when he asks his penitents about their prayers, that they have been too much put out to say them; that they have had so much trouble, so many anxieties and disappointments that they have had no satisfaction in praying. Something or other has gone wrong, and, as a consequence, their prayers have been omitted. In their prayers have been omitted. In not a few cases matters go farther than this, and on account of some reverse or trisl a man will leave off going to church altogether. Now, I wish this morning to point out the mistaken notion persons who act in this way must have of the necessity and purpose

Some people think, or at all events act, as if they thought that prayer is a act, as if they thought that prayer is a kind of spiritual luxury, a thing to practise as long as things go well and pleasantly, but to leave off when the times are dark. Others do not go so far as this, but look upon prayer as a duty to be done, a command to be obeyed, and if they grow careless about their other duties and obligations, this must share the same fate. I wish to point out, however, that prayer and its necessity stand in an entirely different position. While it is perfectly true that prayer is a duty, yet the necessity of prayer is greater even than the duty of observing God's commands. To understand this you must remember the difference which exists between those things which must be done because God commands us to do them, and those things which must be done, or which we must have, because God has made them means to obtain our salvation. Perhaps the best way to make this

clear is by a few examples.

Now, we all know that to tell a lie is sin; that Almighty God has commanded us not to depart from the truth. Yet there are many persons so dull, and possessed of so little sense and intelligence, as to think that in some difficult circumstance it is right to tell a lie; for example, to save a friend from death or even from getting into small troubles. Well, suppose a man were to act in this way, thinking he was doing right, would he commit a sin and offend God? By no means, if he did it in good faith. His ignorance would excuse him; it His ignorance would excuse him; it would not be a sin in such a case.

Take another example, and a more important one. All Catholics know, owing to the advantages of their birth and education, that God has founded His Holy Catholic Church and that He preserves it in the world in order to teach His truths and to administer the sacraments which He has instituted as the means of grace and sanctification. He has commanded all men to enter this Church, and that they may be able to know that it is His Church He has given to it certain notes of which no other body of men is in possession. But now, let us suppose that there are some men who, owing to their dullness of apprehension, their bad education, their prejudice or any other reason, are unable to see that the Catholic Church unable to see that the Catholic Charles is really and in truth the Church of God; would they commit a sin on ac-count of the mere fact that they do not do that which they did not know they are bound to do? By no means.

Ignorance in this case also excuses.

It brings with it many disadvantages and entails many evils, but it is not sinful in itself.

But when we come to those things which are necessary, not merely be-cause God has commanded or forbidden them, but because they are made by cause God has commanded or forbidden them, but because they are made by Him means to the end, then the omission of such things involves more serious consequences. If a thing is a means to the end, the end cannot be attained unless the means is made use of; and if we could suppose a case in which a person where even in upblawable ignorance. we could suppose a case in which a person were even in unblamable ignorance of such a means, that ignorance would not excuse him; he would not not excuse him; he would not, and could not, without the means, get the end.

Now, there are some things which are necessary to salvation, not merely because God has commanded them, but as means to attain it, and among these things is prayer. If we wish to be saved, prayer is so necessary that even ignorance will not excuse us from it. How foolishly, then, do those people act who leave off their prayers for every little misfortune or contradiction, when our Lord bids them pray at such times!

#### LENTEN THOUGHTS.

Church Progress.

Men who are hunting a strong sup-port for the good resolutions formed during the holy season of Lent are advised to speedily apply for membership in the St. Vincent de Paul Society. A Vincentian is always a Catholic, a good citizen and a safe companion.

Men who desert their haunts of sin leave off their evil habits during the Lenten season only emphasize their wilfully wicked natures should they return to either when the holy season is passed.

All the virtue of a well spent season of penance is lost the moment that mortal sin again stains the soul. And the evidence that it has been well spent found in one's triumph over some favorite sin.

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#### THEY THAT SUFFER-

REV. JOHN TALBOT SMITH IN "CHRIST'S POOR.

A friend of St. Catharine of Siena once enjoyed a moving experience in her presence. They were conversing together in her oratory, where she usu-ally received her friends and clients, visitors were coming and going at in-tervals, and there was all about the steady movement which marks human activity towards the middle of the day. Catharine was looking at him pose, her eloquent eyes placid, when suddenly he became aware that her expression had changed, that the familiar features had given place to new ones. Before he could make up his mind about the phenomenon, he recognized with terror that another face was looking directly at him where hers had been, the pallid suffering face of Christ Himself. The vision lasted only for an instant, and when it passed, leaving him in a sweat of terror, Catharine was still speaking calmly, and her face alone was before his eyes. The friend said nothing of the matter, and went his way; but he had had the one experience of his life, indelible, wonderful, bearing fruit for-ever in an exalted and ever-increasing

Touching and beautiful as was this experience, it finds a parallel to the common experience of human suffering. One has only to look closely into the face of a hospital patient, wasted by disease, marked by the deeper suffer-ing of the mind, pitiful in its exhaustion, to see the face of Christ in His divine agony. This is not merely a sentimental statement. The human face is in fact the most perfect physical expression of the immortal soul patience, the face of the poor sufferer becomes more and more like the Face of Him Who suffered for us all.

For suffering in the end destroys utterly our selfishness by destroying us. We are no longer a force in the little world, only objects of pity, often of dis gust, until the grave closes upon us. That confidence and pride which built themselves upon the health and vigor of body are gone. We have no refuge left upon earth except in God. No one can cure, no one relieve us, and no one can delay one instant the death hour The process which is to make us like God has begun. Passion and sin and meanness are drained out of by pain, and desolation and lonely nightwatches; and then suddenly to the eyes of the faithful nurse the face of Christ is made visible where our poor faces had been, and the eternal life shines out from eyes that once reflected only the light of human folly. Herein lies the sweetness of the last sickness, the honey in the bitterness of death. We are becoming bitterness of death. We are becoming like Him, although we know it not; and they who watch beside us become daily more tender and loving as they see with the eyes of faith Christ becoming visible through the very mask of our decay.

### IMITATION OF CHRIST.

OF THE GOOD GOVERNMENT OF OUR-SELVES IN OUTWARD THINGS, AND OF HAVING RECOURSE TO GOD IN DANGER.

My son, thou must diligently make it thine aim that in every place, and in every action or outward employment, thou be inwardly free and master of thyself; and that all things be under thee, and not thou under them.

That thou mayest be lord and ruler of thine actions, not a slave or bond-

But rather a freeman and a true Hebrew, transferred to the lot and to the liberty of the children of God: Who stand above the things present and contemplate those which are eter-

with the left eye, and with the right

the things of heaven:
Who suffer not themselves to be



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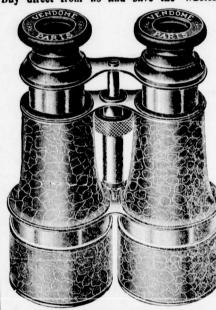
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