

they not? If they would, then prayer is after all useless; if they would not have happened, then the divine plan would have been frustrated by reason of defect of prayer. The free will of man and the eternal decrees of God seem to be in direct antagonism. If we refuse to pray for that which God decreed to be obtained by prayer, we frustrate the divine disposition; if we may not refuse, it must be because God has taken away our free will. What shall we reply to this objection? We answer that when certain things are to happen in answer to prayer, prayer will infallibly be offered for them. We say infallibly, not necessarily. St. Thomas explains the distinction: "God has prepared necessary causes for certain effects, that they would necessarily follow; for others He has prepared contingent causes, that they would follow contingently, according to the nature of the proximate cause; for, he says, all things happen according to His provision, whether necessarily or contingently. If it be the provision of God that this or that would happen, it will happen, and according to His provision. If He provides that it would happen contingently, it will indeed, infallibly happen, but contingently, not necessarily."—Intermountain Catholic.

**NOBLE TRIBUTE TO THE CHURCH**

Recently a Chicago Congregationalist Rector paid a warm tribute of defense and praise to the Catholic Church. The caption of his address was: "Why I Love the Roman Catholic Church." In view of the disgusting libels of "The Wenner" and other publications, his comment was refreshing, and carried the form of an example that deserves to be imitated. This minister, Rev. Edwin E. Snell, did not mince matters when in the beginning of his discourse he said: "The bitter hatred of some Protestants for all that is Roman Catholic is one of the scandals of the present situation of Christianity." He enumerated the reasons why he loved the Catholic Church. The first was because of what she has been. "She is the old mother Church. Our churches are all the offspring of that Church. A few ultra-Protestants will try to claim that they trace their genealogy through Apostles without touching the Church of Rome, but this is largely imaginary. There were Protestants before Luther, of course; there were independent churches in many of the early and middle ages, but the spiritual succession has come through Rome to us."

Mr. Snell warmed up to the subject when he continued: "To this Mother Church I owe the very existence of that Bible which I love; to her I owe the sacraments which are the symbols of our faith; to her I owe the lives of saints whose footsteps have pressed the earth, making it a holier and happier place because they have lived here. All our spiritual wealth as Protestants is an inherited wealth, inherited through the Roman Catholic Church."

His second reason for loving the Catholic Church was for what she is. He said: "We do not know what beautiful Christians there are among the Catholics, because we do not know them, and they do not know how sincerely Protestants are trying to be followers of the same Christ whom they serve."

In regard to the Catholic clergy he took the position that "the best priests reveal a devotion and purity of life that are beyond praise. He expressed his disbelief in the common slander that the Catholic Church keeps the masses in ignorance. On the contrary, dealing with the common people, he was willing to admit, the Catholic Church admirably adapted her methods of teaching to their capacity with wonderful results."

He became eloquent in speaking of the villainous slander broadcast that the Catholic Church in this country is un-American. He characterized it as a foul and hateful calumny; saying: "Every time the test occurs, when there is a call for men to go to the front and die for their country, the Catholic bears his full share of the load which patriotic men then assigns, and triumphantly and concretely vindicates his loyalty. We must get this miserable slander out of our minds. By every test which can be fairly applied, the Catholic citizen stands on a par with his Protestant brother."

Finally, he said, he loved the Catholic Church for what she is to be. "If ever the world is to be won for Christ, there is need of a united Christendom. At present less than one-third of the population of the earth is even nominally Christian. In union there is strength. Is it not to come? Not at once indeed. We must all grow kinder and more generous in our spirit, but by God's grace that is not impossible. "Perhaps the better days are nearer than we think, and each of us can have some little part in bringing them on by remembering to love each other."

**"HOLY IRELAND"**

"The Irish people are the most profoundly Christian and the most energetically Catholic people on the face of the earth," declared Cardinal Manning, when some one questioned the right of Ireland to the title "Holy Ireland." The words came to mind, on reading an article in the British Review in which the writer, Mr. Richard Fitzwalter, spoke of "the ugly menace that once found no mention in what is still called 'Holy Ireland.'" The menace is drink. In the course of his arraignment of the evil, and of those who foster it, he passes to ask: "It is for all this that you thank God for the permanence in Ireland of the Catholic faith? But the Church, aided by a few devoted laymen, has waged constant warfare against drunkenness, from the dark days when there was little recreation for the Irish save in drink. The evil has had a long start. People, indeed, tell you that the drunkenness to-day is no nothing compared with that of twenty years ago. If that is so, it is the Church's doing. What would it not amount to without her? What indeed, not in Ireland alone, but the wide world over, wherever men drink and teach others to drink? Where would these victims be if the Church did not raise them from their degradation and sin? And how many more places of temptation would be open to lure the young and the weak to destruction, if the Church had not spoken against them?"

Mr. Fitzwalter draws some sordid, wretched pictures of Irish life—possibly over-draws them—and he is needlessly severe on the dress and manners of returned "Americans" but he gives us one scene that helps to explain why Ireland is still "Holy Ireland." It lights his gloomy pages: "I wish thoughtful people in England could see, as I saw it, the scene in a parish church of a south of Ireland town a few weeks ago during the confirmation ceremony. The whole church—not one of those poor bleak little conventicles that still survive in many country districts, but a magnificent edifice of stone and marble, with every detail leading up to the glory of its sanctuary—was packed with men and women. The light of faith shone in their eyes, and they were there obviously in their straining, pushing Southern numbers to witness a supreme event in their children's lives."

The nave of the church was reserved, indeed, for the children, but the aisles, and a portion of the very sanctuary, were crammed with grown up people of every class and condition. It seemed as though that through must include everybody in the town.

**THE MOST CATHOLIC NATION**

Luxemburg is one of the small neutral countries which found itself recently over-run with German troops even as happened to Belgium. We are told by a writer in the New Zealand Tablet that there is not a more devout race in Europe than the people of Luxemburg. They go to Mass at 6 in the morning daily, and sunset Angelus finds serious and devout Catholics. They say that the ranks of them in Church saying their evening prayers. Neither German Protestantism nor French infidelity was able to make the slightest breach in their staunch adherence to the old faith. Even to this day, all other faiths added together total up only at one half per cent. But the glorious title, "The Most Catholic Nation in Europe, which the people proudly claim for themselves, rests not so much on their numbers as on the quality of their faith."

The Tablet's writer quotes from a clergyman of the Church of England, a graduate of Oxford University, the following tribute to the people of the Duchy: "If its effects upon conduct be any test of a religious system, Luxembourg Catholicism comes out brightly, for in the matter of honesty and chastity the people are resplendent. I know something of the drunkenness, the gambling and impurity hidden snugly under the smiling beauty of many an English country side. But here bad conduct of any sort is held by public opinion to be beneath the dignity of ransomed human nature. Self-conscious and windy talk about religion there is none, nor any newspaper religiosity; yet the thing itself is carried as a guiding principle through all the commonest phases of daily life. Illegitimate births are at vanishing point, and a man who has to do with his neighbor's wife is a social pariah. Were not the ill-natured calumny about the moral degeneracy of Catholic races well extinct among intelligent people, such lives would help towards its refutation."

And next to their religion comes love of country in the hearts of the people. It can almost be said to be an infallible rule (continues the Tablet's writer) that the smaller a nation the more intensely patriotic will its inhabitants be. It would certainly be hard to match the passionate attachment which the Luxemburgers bear to his native land and its beautiful young ruler. The Grand Duchess, a fair girl of twenty summers, is adored by her people. She is to them a living symbol of the two things, which, all through their history, they have loyally striven to maintain—their national liberty and their holy Catholic faith. Thus they have lived for a thousand years, never greatly recking what

political thunder storms rolled over their heads, so that their faith and their land remained untouched. Let us hope that when the present storm has blown over and the map has once more been altered, there will still be a place in it for this little fairy land, the last of the world's 'Ruritania.'"

**"GOD'S ANSWER TO MAN'S FOLLY"**

Our Saviour said that He did not come to bring peace, but the sword, and our Lord Jesus Christ never intended that peace should come to every man, but to those who come to God's will. It would be absurd to imagine that peace should be the portion of those who violate God's law. Conscience cries out against all such, and man cannot escape his conscience, for conscience is the voice of God. As with individuals, so with nations. God never intended that the nation that violates His law shall enjoy that peace which is to be the reward of those nations who recognize and bow to Divine authority. The envious nation, the concupiscent nation is as guilty in the sight of God as the individual afflicted with these moral leproses, and God will punish both.

In New York papers and in one local paper we read an article from a Socialist that contains the intimation that Christianity is bankrupt because of the present conditions that prevail outside of the American continent, and when a Socialist attacks Christianity, you may be sure that the particular brand of Christianity he has in mind is Catholicism. Did Christ say that there would be no war? Our Lord came to bring dissonance between those who were to live according to the laws that He gave and those who did not. Civilization provides a code that governs man in relation to his fellow, and the man who violates this code is cast into jail. The laws that govern civilization are founded on the laws which Christ gave and war is God's answer to man's folly. Christ predicted war. Christ said that nations would hate, would make war upon His disciples, and from the first to the twentieth century we have seen the Church persecuted.—Bishop Hoban.

It must be admitted that to those who have endured a great sorrow it is permitted to grasp the lesser consolations of life, to seek peace where joy once reigned. Just as the withered and unskillful leaves trodden into the soil help to form new beauty in the coming spring so even the past we may, if used right, help to form a better and fairer record in the future.

**THE PEASANT POPE**

Writing in the "Illustrated London News," Mr. G. K. Chesterton thus speaks of the "conclusion" regarding the late Pope Pius: "Among the many true and touching expressions of respect for the tragedy of the Vatican, most have commented on the fact that the late Pope was by birth a peasant. Yet few or none, I think, traced that truth to its most interesting and even tremendous conclusion. For the truth is that the old Papacy is practically the only authority in modern Europe in which it could have happened. It is the oldest, immeasurably the oldest, throne in Europe; and it is the only one that a peasant could climb. This is the only real elective monarchy left in the world; and any peasant can still be elected to it. Even in high and heroic republics, like those of France and of Switzerland, can one say that the ruler is really the plain man in power? Now all the evidence, from that of the Vatican, attests that this was really true of the great priest, who lately gave back to God, the most tremendous power in the world. Those who admired him most admired the simplicity and sanity of a peasant. Those who murmured against him most complained of the obstinacy and reluctance of a peasant. For that very reason it was clear that the old representative institution of Europe is working, when all the new ones have broken down."

**LORD NAPIER AND THE SISTERS OF MERCY**

In a speech in Edinburgh in 1881, the well-known non-Catholic diplomatist and official, Lord Napier, said the following tribute to the self-sacrificing devotedness of the Sisters of Mercy. His testimony to the power and ability the members of the religious orders have shown as the instrument of public philanthropy will, it may be hoped, have a salutary effect on those outside the Church who so often misunderstand the work and the spirit of the religious: "At an earlier period in my life I held a diplomatic position in Constantinople, under Lord Stratford de Redcliff. During the distress and the vicissitudes of the Crimean war, the Ambassador called me one morning and said, 'go down to the port. You will find a ship there loaded with Jewish exiles, Russian subjects from the Crimea. It is your duty to disembark them. This Turk will give you a house in which they may be placed. I turn them over entirely to your charge.' I and Ettrick went down to the shore and received about 200, the most miserable objects that could be witnessed, most of them old men, women and children, sunk in the lowest depths of indigence and despair. I placed them in the cold and ruinous lodging which had been allotted to them by the Ottoman authorities. I went back to the Ambassador and said: 'Your Excellency, these people are very old, and I have not fuel and no blankets; they are very hungry, and I have got no food; they are very dirty, and I have got no

soup; their hair is in an indescribable condition, and I have no combs—what am I to do with these people?' "Do," said the Ambassador, 'go down to the convent of Galata, and get a couple of Sisters of Mercy, they will put all rights in a moment.' I went down to the convent, saw the Mother Superior and explained the case, I asked for two Sisters. She ordered two Sisters in her presence, and told them to follow me. These persons were ladies of refinement and intellect, cultured French women and Roman Catholics. I was a stranger, a foreigner and a Protestant, and I invoked their assistance for the benefit of the Jews. Yet these two women made up their bundles, followed me through the rain without a look, a whisper, or a sign of hesitation. From that moment these poor fugitives were saved. No one saw the labor of these Sisters for months but myself, and they never endeavored to make a single convert. And yet they did make one convert. It is true, they did not persuade me of the truth of their religion, but they taught me to believe in the Sisters of Mercy. That was the way the Sisters of Mercy acted, and they always acted alike. They had all taken the holy cross in the war against misery and sin. They were signed with the same sacred symbol, as they worked twenty-five years ago on the shores of the Bosphorus they would work to-morrow in the cloisters of the Camongate."—St. Paul Bulletin.

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