

THE REASONABLENESS OF THE CEREMONIES OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

By Rev. J. J. Burke.

(CONTINUED FROM LAST WEEK.)

The Mass is the great sacrifice of the New Law. It was foreshadowed by all the sacrifices ordained by God in the Old Law. They were shadows; it is the substance.

We learn from Genesis of the fall of man. Universal tradition, as well as Scripture, informs us that the creature formerly became guilty in the eyes of the Creator. All nations, all peoples, endeavored to appease the anger of Heaven and believed that a victim was necessary for this purpose. Hence sacrifices have been offered from the beginning of the human race.

Cain and Abel offered victims; the one the first fruits of the earth, the other the firstlings of the flock. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Melchisedech worshipped this way, and their worship was acceptable to God. Everywhere, even among the heathen, you find the altar, the priest and the sacrifice. As we learn from Leviticus and other portions of the Old Testament, God Himself carefully prescribed the manner, number and place of the various sacrifices which He was pleased to accept from the hands of His chosen people. From this fact that sacrifice has ever formed a prominent feature in the worship of all people, we conclude that it belongs to the essentials of religion, and that Christians to-day should have an altar of which, as St. Paul says, "they cannot eat who serve the tabernacle."

The sacrifices of the Old Law were provisional and prefigured the great sacrifice of the New Law foretold by the prophet Malachi. "From the rising of the sun even to the going down My name is great among the Gentiles; in every place there is sacrifice, and it is offered to my name a clean offering; for My name is great among the Gentiles, saith the Lord of Hosts." This glorious prophecy is fulfilled only by the great sacrifice of the Catholic Church. We alone can say with St. Paul, "Habemus altare." ("We have an altar" and a true sacrifice). Of all the blessings bequeathed by Jesus Christ to His Church, there is none better, none greater, none holier than the holy sacrifice of the Mass. It is the sacrifice of His own Body and Blood offered to the Heavenly Father under the appearances of bread and wine. It was instituted by our Lord at the Last Supper, when He took bread and wine in His sacred hands and blessed them, saying, "This is My Body. . . . This is My Blood. . . . Do this for a remembrance of Me."

He instituted the Holy Mass in order to represent and continue the sacrifice of Calvary. St. Paul says, in his first epistle to the Corinthians, xi., 26, that it was instituted to show the death of the Lord until His second coming. After the consecration, which the priest effects by saying over the bread and wine the same words which Jesus Christ said at the Last Supper, there is no longer bread and wine, but the true and living Jesus Christ, God and man, hidden under the appearances of bread and wine, just as in the manger He was hidden under the appearance of an infant. The priest offers Him up to His Heavenly Father in the name of the Catholic Church, or rather He offers Himself up, and we can confidently hope that we will obtain more through prayers at the holy Mass than through our own unaided prayers. In order to have part in the holy sacrifice of the Mass a person should follow the actions and prayers of the priest, especially at the offertory, consecration, and Communion; meditate on the passion of Christ; say the rosary or the prayers in the prayer book, at the same time uniting his intention with the intention of the sacrificing priest.

The sacrifice of the Mass is a true sacrifice, because it is the oblation of a victim to God to represent by its destruction or change His supreme dominion over life and death. It is offered to satisfy our four great debts and wants in adoration to God on account of His omnipotence, in thanksgiving for His benefits, in atonement for our sins, and to obtain His assistance in difficulties and temptations. The holy Mass obtains for us all graces and blessings, temporal and spiritual.

Since the Mass is the highest act of public worship, it is proper that it should be celebrated with fitting sacred ceremonies. Every ceremony which the Church prescribes has its deep significance. All tend to bring before our minds the mystery of the passion.

The altar, which is reached by means of steps, represents Mount Calvary, upon which Christ died with His arms extended as if to enfold all men as brothers. The crucifix recalls Jesus dying on the cross. The lighted candles are symbols of the faith and devotion which ought to burn in the hearts of the faithful when present at Mass. The sacred vestments, embroidered with the sign of the cross, indicate that the priest is the minister and visible representative of Jesus Christ, the invisible priest. The sign of the cross made many times by the priest over the host and chalice reminds us that we offer to God the Divine Victim of the cross, and that we ought to unite ourselves to Him by loving the cross, by patience and Christian penance. We genuflect because our Lord is really present. If we know He is not present on the altar we bow in honor of the place where He sometimes reposes. Holy water is used to signify that our souls must be pure if we wish God to answer

our prayers. Incense is used at solemn High Mass and at Vespers. It is symbolic of prayer, agreeably to the words of the 140th psalm: "Let my prayer, O Lord, be directed as incense in Thy sight." And St. John, describing the heavenly Jerusalem in the 8th chapter of the Apocalypse, says: "Another angel came, and stood before the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given him much incense, that he should offer of the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar, which is before the throne of God."

The sacrifice of the Mass, then, is the sacrifice of Calvary, since the same Victim is offered up and by the same High Priest, Jesus Christ. The Emmanuel, the God with us, the thought of Whom made the prophets tremble centuries before He came, that Divine Teacher Who loves to dwell with the children of men, the Catholic Church beholds dwelling in the midst of us on our altars. If you have visited some of our ancient cathedrals, or any of our magnificent modern churches, and admired the varied ornaments or artistic wonders therein; if you have ever been present at our religious solemnities and witnessed the gravity of our ceremonies, the beauty of the chants, the piety of the adorners; if you have reflected upon the spirit of sacrifice and self-forgetfulness so common to Catholicism and so unknown elsewhere—that spirit which moves thousands of the young of both sexes to forsake the world and devote themselves to the care of the sick, the education of the young, and to other works of charity—if you have witnessed these things and reflected upon them, you cannot but have asked yourself why are such gorgeous temples built; why such magnificent works of art as displayed on the altar, the sacred vessels, paintings, and other things in the church? What prompts such sacrifices? And the answer will be, because the church is the edifice where God in the holy Mass daily renews the prodigies of His mercy, and it can never be worthy of His love; because God, Who sacrificed Himself for us, is ever with us in the Blessed Sacrament of the altar, to soothe our cares and answer our prayers. Yes, the grand feature of the Catholic church is the holy altar. On the altar is the tabernacle for the residence of the Lord of Hosts.

There our "hidden God," Jesus in the Eucharist dwells night and day in the midst of His people, saying to them with words of love, "Come to me all you that are burdened and heavy laden, and I will refresh you."

The Mass, independent of its sacrificial aspect, consists of the best prayers ever uttered. The priest begins by making the sign of the cross, "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." This sign is an epitome of the Christian's belief in the unity and trinity of God and in the incarnation and death of Jesus Christ. After making the sign of the cross he repeats the 42nd psalm, "Judge me, O God," and then makes a humble confession of his sins to God. He ascends the altar and nine times asks God to have mercy on him, Kyrie Eleison; then follows the beautiful hymn the shepherds heard the angels singing at the birth of the Saviour, Gloria in Excelsis Deo.

The prayer of the feast, the epistle and gospel follow, and then the sermon in the vernacular is usually preached. After the Nicene Creed, Credo in Unum Deum, the priest makes the offering of bread and wine. He then washes the tips of his fingers, saying: "I will wash my hands among the innocent," by which he is reminded to be free from stain to offer worthily the holy sacrifice.

The preface, canon, and solemn words of consecration follow, during which the bread and wine are changed by the power of Jesus Christ into His body and blood. In a short time he comes to the best of all prayers, the prayer taught us by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the Our Father, Pater Noster. The Agnus Dei follows then the communion, when he partakes of the consecrated bread and wine, and afterward gives Holy Communion to the faithful. He then continues the Mass, gives his blessing, and finishes the Mass with the beginning of the Gospel of St. John. Hence you see that, besides the great sacrifice which makes it an act worthy of God, the Mass consists of the best of all prayers.

From what has been said it is evident that ceremonies in the worship of God are reasonable, being sanctioned by God in the Old and New Testament; that the holy sacrifice of the Mass is the greatest of all acts of worship; and that the Catholic Church in using ceremonies is but following the example of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and His apostles. St. John, in the book of Revelation, tells us that before the throne of God angels stand with golden censers, multitudes from all nations follow and adore the Lamb, while virgins sing the new song which they alone can utter. So, too, before the throne of God on earth we swing our censers, multitudes from all nations prostrate themselves in adoration, the sweet incense of their praise and prayer ascends to the throne of grace, while their hearts are raised to God by the grandeur of our ceremonies.

The Son of God, after having taught us by His word, shown us by His example, and merited for us by His grace the virtues necessary for salvation, wished to institute the holy sacrifice of the Mass, that He might come Himself in the Holy Sacrament and imprint them upon us. Of these virtues, the most important are humility, purity, obedience, patience and charity.

Let us always ask God when present

at the holy Mass for a lively faith in His Real Presence, an ardent love for Him in the Blessed Sacrament of the altar, and the grace to imitate His humility, His purity, His meekness, obedience, patience and charity here, and enjoy His presence forever hereafter.

The following beautiful words of Cardinal Newman show that the Mass is something more than a mere form of words, and that ceremonies are reasonable as well as necessary in its celebration:

"To me nothing is so consoling, so piercing, so thrilling, so overcoming as the Mass said as it is among us. I could attend Masses forever and not be tired. It is not a mere form of words—it is a great action, the greatest action that can be on earth. It is not the invocation merely, but, if I may use the word, the evocation of the Eternal. He becomes present on the altar in flesh and blood, before Whom angels bow and devils tremble. This is that awful event which is the scope and the interpretation of every part of the solemnity. Words are necessary, but as means, not as ends; they are not mere addresses to the throne of grace, they are instruments of what is far higher, of consecration, of sacrifice.

"They hurry on as if impatient to fulfil their mission. Quickly they go, for they are awful words of sacrifice; they are a work too great to delay upon, as when it was said in the beginning, 'What thou dost do quickly.' Quickly they pass, for the Lord Jesus goes with them, as He passed along the lake in the days of His flesh, quickly calling first one and then another; quickly they pass, because as the lightning which shineth from one part of the heaven unto the other, so is the coming of the Son of man.

"Quickly they pass, for they are as the words of Moses, when the Lord came down in the cloud, calling on the name of the Lord as he passed by, 'The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and generous, long suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth.' And as Moses on the mountain, so we, too, make haste and bow our heads to the earth and adore.

"So we, all around, each in his place, look for the great Advent waiting for the moving of the water, each in his place, with his own heart, with his own wants, with his own thoughts, with his own intentions, with his own prayers, separate but concordant, watching what is going on, watching its progress, uniting in its consummation; not painfully, and hopelessly following a hard form of prayer from beginning to end, but like a concert of musical instruments each differently, but concurring in sweet harmony, we take our part with God's priest, supporting him, yet guided by him. There are little children there, and old men, and simple laborers, and students in seminaries, priests preparing for Mass, priests making their thanksgiving, there innocent maidens, and there are penitent sinners; but out of these many minds rises one Eucharistic hymn, and the great action is the measure and the scope of it."

THE END.

SECTS AND RELIGIONS.

In Cardinal Gibbons' book, "Faith of Our Fathers," he sums up the various religions and religious sects as follows:

Anabaptists, originated in Germany, Nicholas Stork, 1521.

Baptists, Rhode Island, Roger Williams, 1639.

Free Will Baptists, New Hampshire, Benjamin Randall, 1780.

Free Communion Baptists, N. Y., Benajah Corp, close of eighteenth century.

Seventh Day Baptists, United States general conference, 1833.

Campbellites, or Christians, Virginia, Alexander Campbell, 1813.

Methodist Episcopal, England, John Wesley, 1739.

Reformed Methodist, Vermont, a branch of the Methodist Episcopal church, 1814.

Methodist Protestant, Baltimore, branch of the Methodist Episcopal church, 1830.

Methodist Society, New York, a branch of the Methodist Episcopal church, 1820.

True Wesleyan Methodist, New York, delegates from Methodist denominations, 1843.

Presbyterians (old school), Scotland, general assembly, 1560.

Presbyterians (new school), Philadelphia, general assembly, 1840.

Episcopalian, England, Henry VIII., 1534.

Lutherans, Martin Luther, Germany, 1521.

Unitarian Congregationalists, Germany, Celarius, about 1540.

Congregationalists, England, Robert Browne, 1583.

Quakers, England, George Fox, 1647.

Quakers, America, William Penn, 1681.

Catholic Church (not a sect) Jerusalem, Jesus Christ, 83.

THE CHURCH IN SCOTLAND.

The large number of the Catholics of our Diocese who are of Scotch descent, children of those who braved persecution and clung to the ancient Faith amid the mountain fastnesses of the North and the islands of the West of Scotland, will, we are sure, welcome tidings of the progress the Church is making in the land of their sires. We speak of "The Church in Scotland," for the "Church of Scotland" is and has been for more than three centuries the Presbyterian Kirk.

Toward the end of the last century and the beginning of the present, when the first emigrants from the Church in Scotland on our shores, of a few straggling missions. A century earlier there was not a Catholic Bishop in all the land, and the few priests who went from place to place to break the Bread of Life to the faithful, had to move about with caution, often like the men of old time, "wandering in deserts, in mountains, and in dens and in caves of the earth."

Those were dark and evil days, when the light of faith which once illumined the whole of Scotland was all but quenched. Our age, however, has witnessed the dawning of better days, and the Church, which then was forced to hide herself among the mountains and in the sea-girt isles, has since emerged from her obscurity and now pursues her peaceful mission unmolested in the broad light of day.

In the March number of the *Ouel*, a monthly journal published by the students of Ottawa University, we find an interesting article on the growth of Catholicity in Scotland, by the Very Rev. Anas McDonnell Dawson, LL. D. In the Archdiocese of Glasgow, which contains the great bulk of the Catholic population of Scotland, there are, or rather there were in 1892, according to statistics since published, 155 priests, 187 departments of mission schools, several colleges and academies, 11 conventual houses, and 10 charitable institutions, including hospitals, orphanages and asylums. The Catholics number 240,000, just two-fifths of the whole population of Glasgow.

"The figures," says the Rev. Dr. McDonnell Dawson, "contrast remarkably with the state of matters towards the close of the last century, 1878. At that time all the Catholics of the whole population of Glasgow could hear Mass in the comparatively small house of a comb manufacturer, by name Donald McDonald, and in that obscure place were not safe from molestation. On occasion of the excitement caused by the passing in Parliament of a certain measure of relief in favor of Catholics, the Presbyterian synod of Glasgow issued most wicked resolutions against 'Popery,' and the fanatical populace took it upon itself to execute them. Mr. McDonald's house was attacked, and the priest who was celebrating Mass there had barely time on the approach of the mob to conceal the vestments and other things connected with the Mass. He then escaped into the midst of the mob and escaped louder than any one else, 'Where is the priest?' Mr. McDonald's wife, though a Protestant, was badly used by the demented rabble—so severely bruised that she was obliged to take refuge in a friend's house."

At that time there was but one priest, who visited the Catholics of Glasgow only at rare intervals, and not without risk to himself.

The Catholic population of the other dioceses is less considerable. In the Archdiocese of Edinburgh there are 52,000 Catholics, 68 churches, chapels, and stations, and 62 priests; in Dunkeld the Catholic population is 30,000; in Galloway, 17,000; in Argyle and the isles, 12,000; and in Aberdeen, about the same number. In the last mentioned diocese are two celebrated institutions of learning, St. Benedict's Monastery and College, at Fort Augustus, and St. Mary's College, Blair. It will be observed that this diocese and that of Argyle and the Isles have the least number of Catholics. It was from the districts covered by these two dioceses, from the Highlands and the Islands, that the sons of the Gael who had remained true to the faith of their fathers went forth in successive bands, or rather were driven forth, to find a home beyond the western wave. Their descendants are to be found to-day in large numbers in Australia, in Canada, and the United States. In our diocese alone they number more than twice the combined population of the two distinctively Celtic dioceses of the motherland.

There is probably no country on the face of the earth where the feeling against Catholics was so bitter and violent, so deep and widespread, as it was at one time in Scotland. To-day there are few Protestant countries where Catholics enjoy fuller freedom or a larger measure of respect than they do there. Only a few months ago it was announced that the Marquis of Bute, a Catholic and a convert besides, had been chosen rector of the ancient University of St. Andrews by a unanimous vote of the faculty. The writer in the *Ouel* cites another instance of broad minded liberality on the part of Scottish Presbyterians. On the 30th of April last, the degree of LL. D. was conferred on His Grace, Archbishop Eyre, by the University of Glasgow. Professor Moodie Stewart introduced him at the University, in the words that follow: "The Most Rev. Archbishop Eyre, Doctor of Divinity, Knight of the Grand Cross of Isabella the Catholic, the Chaplain of the Order of Malta, member of the Archaeological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, of the Surtees Society, and of the Society of Antiquarians of Scotland, Vice-President of the Archaeological

Society of Glasgow, author of a life of St. Cuthbert, now in the third edition, and of many valuable contributions to current archaeological literature. Archbishop Eyre has recently been received the congratulations of his many personal friends, and of the members of the religious community of which he is the recognized head, on the occurrence of the fiftieth anniversary of his ordination, and the Senate have deemed it fitting to testify their regard for a public-spirited citizen, a scholarly writer, and an eminent archaeologist, by adding his name to the roll of the honorary Graduates of the University."

Under a reorganized hierarchy, with able and zealous prelates to guide her, and amid favorable surroundings, the Church in Scotland is destined to renew her youth and regain, at least in some measure, her old-time prestige and splendor.—*Antagonist Casket.*

What the Imbeciles Smoke.

Rev. Father Boorman, S. J., of Detroit College, has a great abhorrence to that ever constant companion of the genus *homo*—the foul smelling cigarette. The writer was offered one of these paper killers by a friend just as he was ascending the steps of the college to gather in his weekly allotment of new items. There was nothing to do but accept it; and not knowing just where to put such a useless article, he stuck it in between his fingers and entered. "My dear friend," said Father Boorman, pointing to the opium-stuffed death machine, shortly after, "I thought you looked too healthy to indulge in that kind of thing." We were abashed for a moment, but, recovering our composure, made explanations proper, while we tossed the cause of discussion far from the stoop to the asphalt. "Speaking of cigarettes," said Father Boorman afterwards, "some days since a gentleman described to us the real process of cigarette making as employed by a factory in Rochester, N. Y. Large purchases are made of cast-away tobacco, cigar stubs, and floor sweepings. Several tons being gathered the whole mass is mixed with Spanish moss taken from the trees of Southern swamps. Machines are employed to cut the mixture into fine particles. The stuff is now spread out upon the floor and heavily saturated with solutions of opium, Indian hemp and belladonna. The material being dried is rolled into scented paper and sold to indiscreet children and weak-kneed grown people, who rapidly acquire a jaundiced complexion, a weak heart and a worthless constitution. Now you don't wonder that I detest the thing."

No, we didn't, and we immediately decided that we wouldn't in the future as much as touch one of these imbecile delights with a forty-foot pole.

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