

## INFANT BAPTISM.

A Brief Outline of Catholic Teaching on the Subject.

The following question and answer are taken from the *Monitor*, San Francisco:

**Editor Monitor**—A friend (Protestant) says: "No one can make me believe that God will keep in darkness until judgment day the infant that dies unbaptized, as your Church teaches. An instance: You have a child two years old; I have a child the same age. Your child is baptized; mine is not. Do you mean to say that God loves your child and doesn't love mine, and that, should He call both children out of this world at that age, He would immediately admit yours into heaven's light while mine (unbaptized) would be cast into darkness until the day of judgment? What warrant is there for such a doctrine? Christ has said nothing about infant baptism, and no authority on earth could make me believe in such a cruel doctrine."

SUBSCRIBER.

Your friend's question strikes at the root of the whole supernatural system. The Catholic teaching is briefly as follows:

1. Everything is adjusted to some end. Pens are intended to write, clocks to tell the time. Man, too, is destined to an end. What is it? It is to know God by his natural reason and to love God by his natural will. This is the natural end of man. He can know God naturally by the intelligence which he has; he can love God naturally by the affections with which he is endowed. His natural duty in this world is to know God by his reason and to love God by his will. After death his reward will be a natural love of God and a natural knowledge of God. This love and this knowledge will differ only in degree from the knowledge and love which he has on earth. They will not differ in kind. The mind, freed from the shackles of the senses, will see farther and see clearer and understand more thoroughly the Creator and Sustainer of the universe; the will, delivered from the bondage of the passions, will tend with irresistible force toward the great and only good which the mind apprehends. This is natural happiness; this is natural heaven.

2. But God has done more for man than this. He has not left him on the natural level. He has elevated him to a supernatural, an over-natural level. He has given men a supernatural way of knowing, which is faith. He has given men a supernatural way of loving, which is charity. He has given men a supernatural reward, which is to know him, not merely by the natural way, which is intellect, but by the supernatural way, which is vision. We shall know God, not by reason, but because we shall see Him face to face and know even as we are known. This is the supernatural heaven, or what we call heaven simply.

3. Now, as far as reason goes, as far as our mere natural way of knowing things extends, all any man can hope for is the natural heaven. As long as a man adjusts his natural actions to their natural ends, he will infallibly arrive at their natural happiness which we call natural heaven. Now, your friend's child, being unbaptized, is practically in the natural state. All its natural actions are directed instinctively towards the natural ends, and if it dies, as you say, at the age of two years, it will reach its natural end, which is natural happiness in the world to come. It will know God and God's works more thoroughly and more vividly than the greatest philosopher on earth; it will love God with intense affection and the measure of its natural happiness will be full to the brim. This is Catholic teaching; it says nothing about the child's soul being cast into darkness; it is not only not a cruel doctrine, but it is the only doctrine that natural reason can arrive at. In fact, it is most likely the only conception of heaven which most people have.

4. Now what is the case of the baptized child? As we have said before, our mere reason can tell us only about the natural state. It knows nothing of what is above its ken—the over-natural. Whence do we get our information about the supernatural? Only from revelation. In the present matter we get our information from Christ Himself. He says: "Unless a man be born of water and of the Holy Ghost he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven." The kingdom of heaven is merely another way of saying the over-natural state. The way in which men are introduced into that state is by baptism. This is God's ordinance; we can't quarrel with it. He might have left us to the natural state, and in natural happiness we would have received all that was due to us. But He offered us a supernatural happiness and of course He was justified in making His own terms. These terms are in the first place baptism. The baptized child then is on the over-natural plane, and if it dies, as you say, when two years old, it goes to its supernatural end, which is seeing God face to face.

5. Now we think you can explain things to your friend (a)—Her child is not cast into darkness, as she expresses it, but enjoys a natural heaven. It is true to say that it is shut out of heaven, if you mean by heaven the supernatural heaven. It is true to say her child is in "hell" if you mean by hell every state which it is not the supernatural heaven. But it is not true to connect ideas of pain and darkness

with the condition of child. It is as happy as it can be. This is the teaching of the Church. Is it cruel? (b) When she says, "God loves the baptized child more than the unbaptized," she is using a strange language. In speaking of the love of God we cannot be too careful. When the whole world was unbaptized, was sunk in sin and misery, God so loved it that He sent His only Son to redeem it. What greater love is there than this? Such love at least He has for your friend's child. Does she think it too little?

## CAPEL ON CONSCIENCE.

Its Supremacy Over all the Acts and Affairs of Life.

The Ten Commandments and the precepts of the Gospel constitute the principles of Christian morals. They are the law taking precedence of all others. The codes of human legislators must never be in opposition to these. On them are we to fashion our lives, to them are we to conform our conduct. In other words, the good they command we must do, and the evil they prohibit we must avoid. On the fulfillment of the law depends true lasting peace of mind here on earth, and happiness or misery after death for ever and ever. To no doctrine of the Christian faith does Holy Scripture witness more clearly and explicitly. Of course all this is in strong contrast to the fictitious standard of right and wrong doing set up by the world of fashion or by the emotional fads of society.

## FREE WILL.

To man is granted free will—that is the power or faculty of free choice, of determining it own acts. This free will is of itself blind and receives its sight or vision from knowledge obtained through the intellect. Hence it follows that to obey the commandments of the Lord we must know them. He who in infinite wisdom proclaimed His law to mankind established on earth likewise a body of expositors of such law to whom He promised divine assistance till the end of time. Through these a true knowledge of Christian morals is disseminated in the world to individuals.

## WHAT IS CONSCIENCE?

Over and above this knowledge of general principles, every individual has to apply this law to his own particular acts. This is done by conscience. Conscience of which we speak is not a faculty of the soul; nor is it an acquired habit. It is an act of judgment, a practical dictate of the understanding, which arguing from the law of morals pronounces that something in particular here and now has to be avoided because it is evil, or has to be done inasmuch as it is good. It is the interior voice which pronounces sentence in a particular case, declaring it to be conformable or contrary to law. To all intents and purposes conscience is, to borrow a phrase from logic, the "conclusion of a syllogism." For instance: "It is prohibited to injure my neighbor's reputation" (the major premiss taught by the divine law); to publish a certain secret which I know concerning my neighbor would certainly injure my neighbor (the minor premiss being something I am inclined to do); therefore it would be wrong, sinful for me to divulge such secret (the conclusion constituting conscience). Plainly it is an act of the intellect presented to the will exercised in its freedom of choice is to be exercised.

## DIVERGING INFLUENCES.

Man wishes for happiness; but unhappily since the fall of our first parents we are born in ignorance and liable to error; worse still, there is malice in our will with inclination to all evil rather than to good. Add to these inherited wounds, the further love God with intense affection and the measure of its natural happiness will be full to the brim. This is Catholic teaching; it says nothing about the child's soul being cast into darkness; it is not only not a cruel doctrine, but it is the only doctrine that natural reason can arrive at. In fact, it is most likely the only conception of heaven which most people have.

Conscience has therefore to be formed from the earliest dawn of intellect by instruction and meditation of the divine law and by acts of virtue to strengthen the will. At all times throughout life, we are bound to take all reasonable means to learn accurately our Christian duties. Should reasonable doubt arise for suspecting that our conscience is erroneous there is a strict obligation to become better informed. The ordinary means for this are consultation with the authorized expositors of Christ's teaching as well as with men of known goodness, careful meditation on God's word, and above all earnest prayer for light from above.

Under all circumstances, be it remembered, we are never allowed to act contrary to conscience. But we must not, indeed we cannot, always follow its inspiration. So long as the individual genuinely believes the Roman Catholic Church to be what enemies describe her to be, so long must the individual refuse to submit to her authority. But how such belief can be held in face of the statements of the Gospel of the present facilities of learning her true teaching, of the numerous learned men born in her bosom or who enter her from other communions, is a responsibility which the individual alone can explain. Like "Saul breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord," such a misinformed person will have to be asked "why persecutest thou me."

## CONSCIENCE AND THE SCHOOL QUESTION.

In the last place no power, ecclesiastical or civil, can make it right and

lawful to attempt to force a man to do that which his conscience unhesitatingly condemns as wrong. The whole difficulty about Catholics and the Public School question rests on this. They believe that it is as much the duty of parents to educate their children as it is to feed, clothe and nurture them. They further believe that instruction alone is not education, but that at the child's head and heart, and intellect and will, must both be trained—the heart needing it more than the head. Both, they hold, should go on simultaneously. And while this is necessary to all, it is specially needed for the children of those who have but little time to spare from hard toil. Their religious practices, religious motives, can be added to religious instruction. Believing this, conscience makes them refuse to accept mere secular instruction. They are too desirous to have all the 'ologies demanded by the State taught in their schools. This conscientious conviction leads to the injustice they suffer and feel of paying not only taxes for the Public Schools, but also the further payment of supporting their own.—Milwaukee Citizen.

## English Catacombs.

When we speak of catacombs, we usually refer to the underground tombs of Rome. It may be news to some that there is a catacomb within a short railway journey from London. It is in Cambridgeshire, twenty-eight feet below the level of Melbourne street, in a small town called Royston. The entrance to this curious place is reached by a sloping passage seventy-eight feet long. Over this passage is the famous thoroughfare called the Icknield Way. The catacombs are in the shape of a bell, the roof being about twenty-five feet high. The walls are decorated with quaint sculptures, the characters of the Bible being strangely interwoven with the heroes of history. There is a group of figures representing the Crucifixion; another shows the martyrdom of St. Catherine; indeed St. Catherine seems to be the patroness of this place of ancient burial. She is shown in many scenes—as standing at the entrance of a gloomy prison, or lying upon the prison floor with her head upon a pillow; or holding a wheel, emblematic of her martyrdom. Other pictures upon the wall represent the Holy Family, St. Lawrence, with the gridiron, the conversion of St. Paul, St. John the Baptist, and St. Thomas a Becket.

Archæologists have had many disputes concerning the origin of this wonderful place. And that is not strange; for although certain features indicate that it was used by the Romans when in England, some of the mural decorations are undoubtedly those of a later date. At the time when Henry VIII. worked such devastation among everything holy, this catacomb was filled up, and for a long time forgotten, being only discovered by accident in later years; in this respect repeating the history of the catacombs of Rome.—Ave Maria.

## The Dead.

The admirable rule which bids us speak nothing but good of the dead may well be set aside when the public good and the interest of truth demand it. This is especially true of the historian, whose estimates of men and events, if allowed to pass unchallenged, might work mischief to the memory of the worthy dead, crown infamy with honor, and obscure or falsify the lessons of experience. The protest uttered by the secular as well as the Catholic press on the death of James Anthony Froude illustrates the change that has come over the popular appreciation of Froude's work during the last quarter of a century. Then his fame was fresh and fair, and his "history" was taken seriously; now he is known for a romancer in historical fields, an author whose facts are mostly fiction. He was a hero-worshiper. His heroes were badly chosen, but his loyalty was such that he buried every black spot in his character into brilliance; and he scrupled not to defame good men and women to attain his end. The strictures of Professor Freeman, however, and the exposure of his methods by the eminent Dominican, Father Burke, marked the beginning of his fall. It is hard to believe that the young Anglican novice, who was once nearer the Church than Cardinal Manning, lived to be her relentless enemy. But prejudice and picturesqueness proved stronger than breadth and fidelity, and the world was deprived of the brilliant services of one who seemed to lack no grace of art or quality of scholarship except the love of truth.—Ave Maria.

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## T. D. SULLIVAN'S LECTURE.

The Eloquent M. P. Speaks in the Boston Theatre—"Fourteen Years of the British Parliament."

The Boston Theatre held a large and enthusiastic audience Sunday afternoon to greet T. D. Sullivan, M. P., the famous Nationalist poet and journalist, on his first appearance in Boston on his present tour. Mr. Sullivan delivered a lecture in aid of the building fund of the Church of the Sacred Heart, Roslindale, of which Rev. John F. Cummins is the pastor. The subject of his discourse was "Fourteen Years of the British Parliament." Father Cummins was given an ovation when he appeared on the stage. When the applause ceased, he said:

"I am glad of this opportunity for the first time to come upon the stage of the Boston Theatre as a public speaker. As a sort of overture, by the kindness of James Connor Roach, I have the pleasure of presenting the singers whom he has sent to represent himself.

"People wonder why I come from far-away Roslindale to such a big house as this, and ask the patronage of the public. I will tell you. I appeal to the public because I am a public man; because I was born in this city, and am pastor of a church in one of its districts.

"Last winter, when you were sitting in your comfortable homes, rejoicing that you had escaped the distress of the times, I was for seven months in the pesthouse, and there prepared over one hundred patients for death."

Father Cummins went on to describe the institutions for the unfortunate and for the children which he had planned and for which he was seeking funds.

"Am I not a public man," he said in conclusion, "whether at a lawn party or at a barbecue? (Laughter.) That is why I appeal to the public."

The singers from James Connor Roach's company sang several Irish ballads, and Frederick S. Mosro of the class of '97, Boston College, then recited "The Spring of Green."

Hon. Joseph H. O'Neill introduced the lecturer. Mr. O'Neill said: "It is a pleasure to be permitted to preside and introduce this speaker. It is always a pleasure to do anything for so good a man and so great a worker as Rev. John H. Cummins. He deserves the heartiest praise. It is a double honor to present so distinguished a gentleman as Timothy Daniel Sullivan. He has been here in Boston before to address you on political subjects. You were pleased to hear him then, and you will be pleased to hear him now. One known the wide world over as a patriot should, indeed, receive a warm reception in Massachusetts, where we are all guaranteed civil and religious liberty under the constitution."

Mr. Sullivan spoke as follows: "I may not arouse your enthusiasm or charm you with the melody of words, but I will tell you a plain story which will interest every Irishman, every descendant of an Irishman and all lovers of liberty of whatever race. I shall speak of the British Parliament, which has held in its grasp the lives and the happiness of the people of Ireland."

"There are two legislative Houses: the House of Commons, elected by the people and responsible to the people; and the House of Lords, elected by nobody and responsible to nobody. The House of Lords has never worked satisfactorily, either to the British or the Irish people."

"The House of Lords consists of aristocrats, large landowners and capitalists. It likes not progress, neither does it like reforms. This upper legislative body has often angered the English people, but the Lords have always managed to smooth over the troubles, and the English people have allowed this branch of the Government to live on."

"The House of Lords has been indefensible for years, but the ridicule of all the intelligent and educated men in England. Why, even at the end of the last century, when it was proposed to build a new bridge across the Thames, there was a discussion as to whether the piers ought to be of wood or stone. Samuel Foote, the wit, remarked: 'They ought to be of stone, of course. We have too many wooden peers now.'"

"Imagine the absurdity of the theory that the sons of legislators are fit to be legislators. If that theory is correct, why not carry it into the House of Commons? If that theory is correct, the sons of painters ought to be painters, the sons of sculptors ought to be sculptors, and the sons of grocers ought to be grocers. But nature does not run that way."

"I have said that the House of Lords has often been threatened. I believe now it is in its last years—I might almost say its last year—of existence. 'Again and again have they defeated Irish reforms and discouraged the liberal workers. If measures have passed the Commons they have killed them.'"

"Such great value do the Lords place upon their own wisdom that they think three enough for a quorum. They are modest enough to imagine that three dukes or three earls are equal to forty members of the House of Commons, the latter figure being the number required for a quorum in the lower legislative body of the nation. But the English people are beginning to take these gentlemen at their true value."

"The House of Lords originates hardly a thing; it seems to be their only task to sit in judgment upon the acts of the House of Commons and mar and mangle them, whether they be for

the benefit of the English or the Irish people.

"When the Home Rule bill came up the lords were drummed in from all parts of the world, from the mud baths of Germany, from Monte Carlo, and it has been said that one was brought in to vote direct from an asylum for idiots. That Home Rule bill was defeated by a vote of 10 to 1, but I verily believe that it was the worst night's work for the lords themselves that they have ever done."

"The House of Lords has been called a gilded chamber, but for the Irish people it is a gilded abattoir, for there have been slaughtered the liberties and the just demands of that people. But, as I said, I believe that the end is near. No farther back than yesterday, as I read in your newspapers, the Liberal Minister, Lord Rosebery, sounded the cry to arms."

"The English people move slowly, but when they do move, look out for them. They need only such a call. There will be some fun within the next twenty months, now mark my words. Hear Rosebery declaring that 'the House of Lords is a mockery, and an invitation to revolution.' The Government throws down the gauntlet; it remains for the people to back up the Government. We'll do it, too."

"The Lords have friends in the Commons—sons, cousins—I will not say their aunts (laughter), but the Liberals who passed the Home Rule Bill will be with us in the fight to a man."

"The House of Commons has kept pretty much in touch with the people. In the case of the reform measure of 1832 the Prime Minister went to the sovereign, and demanded the appointment of enough new peers to give the Bill a majority in the upper House. The promise was secured. The Lords thought discretion was the better part of valor, and, as you would say in America, they 'climbed down' (laughter), and the reforms of 1832 went through."

"I do not suppose the same plan will be tried again, but it has been suggested."

"The extension of the franchise by the ballot secured by Gladstone (applause) put Ireland on her feet and gave her the first chance she ever had of sending a large body of representatives on to the floor of the House of Commons—men who understood the needs of and sympathized with that country. From that day to this the battle for freedom has been waged."

"Ireland is freer and more prosperous to-day than she has been within the memory of your fathers or your fathers' fathers. The Irish parliamentary party has accepted all its chances, and is still on guard."

## The Old Church.

The popular notion that the great landlords built the mediæval churches of England is disclaimed against by the Rev. Dr. Jessopp in the *Nineteenth Century*. "I hold that to be an utter and mischievous delusion. Everything goes to show that the immense majority of our old churches were built not by the great men, but by the small people with the clergy at their head. Where some great noble or county magnate did build a church, there you may always find his mark; his coat armor is sure to be carved upon every available stone or beam: it tells its own tale." There is no ground for delusion regarding the magnificent churches built in our own day. The poor, for the most part, contribute to their erection, as they contribute to their support in many cases by paying money at the door for the privilege of a seat.—Ave Maria.

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