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THE REV. DR. CAHILL  
AND THE  
CATHOLIC PERIODICAL THE RAMBLER.  
SECOND LETTER  
TO THE EDITORS OF CATHOLIC JOURNALS.

New Brighton, Feb. 21, 1854.

Gentlemen—Within the last two years, an opinion and a feeling have been extending through almost every rank of Catholic society, that some few converts have been erecting themselves into a sort of inquisitorial tribunal; in these coteries the habits of the old clergy have been rather too freely criticised, and an unbecoming assumption and an ill-concerted dictation gave much pain to numerous Catholics, who were too respectful to check and too confiding to notice this now almost universal impression.—When the heart is full of anything, the mouth cannot long keep the secret enclosed within the gushing bosom; and hence our new critics are not ashamed to tell the public, that they themselves are henceforth the infallible guides and the sole teachers of Catholicity in Great Britain and Ireland. Let us hear them in page 176:—

“There is no foundation whatever for the prevalent Protestant notion that he (Dr. Cahill) is to be taken as a chosen champion of the faith.”

It is the first time during my three years' residence in England, I have heard of the championship of England in Theology even talked of; it is to me quite a new idea; and it appears to me to be a phrase, rather borrowed from the old London Ring than from any modern rumor. I have never heard that phrase applied to my humble labors; I have asked several clergymen if they had heard it; and all have declared the idea, to be quite a new thing lately promulgated from Portman street. But, although the public have never conceived the bright topping idea referred to, not so the three Parsons of Portman street: their indignation at any one occupying any place, however humble, becomes so irresistibly consuming that they cannot avoid telling all whom it may concern, that Dr. Cahill, or any other priest, or the most eminent ecclesiastic in England is not to dare to light a farthing candle in the Church without their kind permission; that Portman street is the great ecclesiastical gasometer of the nation; that no lamp can be fed from any other source; and that they, not Dr. Cahill, (or any other priest, not having undergone the double-milled training of Portman street), are the sole importers of theology into this country and the redoubted champions of England.—Let any candid reader review the page quoted from their malicious article, and it is impossible not to see the absurd affectation and the killing self-sufficiency of these blind half-bred zealots.

But the public will be much surprised at the next quotation from these models of Christian teaching.—In page 176 they say:—

“Why do the Bishops and Clergy permit him to write and lecture as he does?”

What will the reader think of the constant, the unbroken falsehood of these men, when I now tell them, that, since I came to England, I have written only four letters on religious subjects; and these letters were answers to challenges, repeated challenges from Protestant clergymen.—Hear me.—Up to March, 1853, I never even acknowledged the receipt of the numerous offensive and insulting letters of challenge which I received from all quarters.—Having made a rule to give no offence in my duties as a Priest to any human being in his conscientious belief, I did not even reply to these challenges.—But, an English Bishop, second to none in his lofty position, having heard me utter these sentiments at his own table, where I had the honor of being invited, suggested and requested that in future I should reply to all these letters of challenge. Accordingly I sent my first reply to a clergyman in Glasgow.—My second reply was made in Letterkenny, in the house of the venerated and beloved father of the Irish Bishops. My third reply, at Birkenhead, was written in the house, and with the cordial sanction of an English Canon and Dean, a gentleman most decidedly equal to any clergyman in England of his years and station, and who, I fondly hope, will yet add an expected ornament to the English Hierarchy. And my fourth and last letter was penned while travelling in the company of the Bishop of that diocese, whose consent (on my own responsibility) I had previously obtained to answer any one of the numerous challenges I had received in his diocese.

Gentlemen, I have here explained an important point in the letter of the voracious Parsons of Portman street. Their language is an immitigated falsehood; and affords an irritating instance, that while these parsons have changed their faith they cannot change their logic; and that in furthering an ungenerous and an ill-founded feeling, they can have recourse to the self-same barefaced misstatements as their former companions—the calumniating mountebanks of

the Protestant Alliance. But this is not all: let any one read pages 176 and 177 of (what I am now justified in calling) their lying article, and he will read about as impertinent a lecture to the Bishops and Priests of England as could scarcely be penned by any man, outside of Bedlam—read it, gentlemen.—The Bishops are there taught what their rights are, and what they are not. They are informed to temper their authority with prudence; that much of their authority is a mere moral influence, not a right: and, of course, as the superior always teaches the inferior, the English Hierarchy must in future learn Canon law, and above all they must learn to behave themselves well while under the ecumenical tuition of “the three tailors from Tooley street.” Nor is this all, on this long homily, “ex sermonibus sanctorum Redactorum.” Not at all; the English Priests are also informed that the only reason why Bishops do not more frequently reduce them to the proper sense of their duty, is for fear they would “recalcitrate hopelessly.” The English clergy are, therefore, placed in the position of eternal gratitude to these sleepless sentinels, for putting them on their guard under their perilous circumstances, and warning them with such timely prudence, in their “conciliating” periodical, of the fate that must await them, if they trespass too far on the endurance of their Bishops. While on this point, I gladly here seize the opportunity of expressing in an enduring public letter, what I have so often said in Ireland with undying gratitude, in reference to the English Priesthood. As I am leaving England in a few weeks, perhaps never again to return; and as I have made a final engagement to visit America in some months hence, I can now freely indulge my own heart in giving utterance to feelings which just now, at my departure, cannot be liable even to a suspicion of flattery or selfishness. During the three years I have been in England, I have lived exclusively with the clergy; and from the moment I entered under their roof, I was placed entirely under their control. I never delivered a lecture or moved one step without their command or sanction; and their courtesy, their kindness, their affection to me cannot be expressed in any one form of words which I can here employ. They all, without even one exception, received me, as their nearest friend; I made their houses my own; and if I were to add any one thing more remarkable than another, in their unceasing attention to me, it is, that I always felt they accumulated on me distinguished compliments because I was an Irishman. I wish to repeat this idea over again, that my countrymen may read this letter in Ireland: and that whenever they shall have an opportunity (when I am far away from them) they will ever and ever express to an English Priest, wherever they meet him, for my sake, some token of the vast amount of the gratitude which I owe them, which I shall carry with me to the grave, but which I can never hope to repay.

In reference to the article of the Reviewer, therefore, where they ask: “Why do the Bishops and Priests permit me to lecture?” it furnishes a sad instance of the folly, the pitiful exasperating folly—and I will be excused now, when I add the lies, of these three self-sufficient inquisitors; and on this point I would venture to offer one remark to the Bishops, whom they presume to lecture; and this is, that these prelates would, in common charity, take their mad lying pens out of their unsteady hands and close the new shop in Portman street, where they have erected their forge, for manufacturing culpable falsehood and public scandal.—Their remarks in reference to the clergy, in the extract quoted above, do not press on me so much as on the gentlemen who have invited me to their churches; and before the expiration of a month hence, it may be, that they shall find it necessary to retract their foolish offensiveness. I have said, in my last letter, that I should surprise the Catholic public with the rampant Protestantism of these writers; and hence I proceed to fulfil my most unwilling promise; at the same time believing that my remarks on this part of their article will give an additional warning to Catholics against the Protestant Bible.

These half-converted gentlemen are so unconscious of their want of biblical and theological knowledge that they undisguisedly, but disdisingly utter sentiments in reference to the Protestant Bible which are the appropriate expressions of the sowers of Connemara—misstatements, genteel Protestantism, and rank heresy are contained in almost every word they have written on this subject.

In page 170 they say, “The Protestant Bible has abundance of errors, and some of them of very serious importance.” and in a few lines further on in the same page, they call these errors “mistranslation.” Here we learn from our superiors at Portman street, that clear, decided additions, substractions, suppression of whole books, denial of the inspiration of the whole books, alterations, in facts,

in words, in tenses, and consequently in doctrine, are things of rather “serious importance:” that is to say, they are things not to be laughed at. Has any one ever heard of a serious heresy?—a term, which I suppose, these teachers employ by way of contrasting it with “jocose heresy.” And has any Catholic work ever described sins, as sins of “importance?” this word so inoffensive to “ears polite” makes the crime of heresy look rather a respectable thing. The old Priests who have not had the advantage of being brought up and educated at Portman street would call these wilful perversions of the Bible, according to the example of St. Paul, by the names of grievous, soul-killing, damnable, subversive of authority, and giving the lie to the Holy Ghost: but now, the Lord be praised, we are informed that these mistakes, are merely like the fluctuation in the funds or the cotton-market: or like an increased duty on tea, they are rather serious, and important: and they are to be described in the same language, as when we speak of the improvements in our shipping interests or of the casualties of commerce: they are things not quite a joke, and therefore are matters of importance. The very phrase proves that our Reviewers, do not really know the ordinary language of our ancient Catechism. But they go farther, where they call these heretical declarations of false doctrine by the genteel name of “mistranslations.” Indeed! Upon my word we have a right to be proud of our masters of the Rambler, when the omission in the Protestant Bible of two books of the Maccabees, containing thirty-one chapters, is only a “mistranslation!” We have splendid teachers indeed, when we learn from our superiors in Portman street, that six books of the Old Testament, declared apocryphal by the Protestant Bible, against the supreme authority of the Church, is a fault merely amounting to a mistranslation, and is just a sort of a thing that a man ought to think of before dinner, when he is disposed to be serious. And when any of the old-fashioned priests (who have not read the genteel Theology of our new masters) charge the old Protestant Bible (still adopted by the Lutherans) with throwing out of the Canon, the epistle of St. Paul to the Hebrews, the epistle of St. James, the second epistle of St. Peter, the second and third of St. John, and the epistle of St. Jude, the Lutherans and all Protestants can quote the Theologians of Portman street, as superiors, and the champions of all England and Wales and the colonies, by observing, that these trifling things are indeed rather “serious” and are “mistranslations!”—And when any poor persecuted Catholic from Dingle, Kells, Achill, or Connemara will ask our infallible Theologians of the unfortunate Rambler if there be any harm, in purchasing, keeping, and reading a Bible which throws out books declared canonical by the authority of the Church, which despises therefore that authority, which substitutes facts, which adds prepositions, and in fine which changes the word of God at pleasure, how happy must that poor Catholic feel, when he has the superior advantage of learning (the Lord be praised) that this kind of a thing, is indeed rather a “serious” consideration: that the thing is of some “importance,” and that the whole weight of the thing, may be classed under the head of a “mistranslation.” Only think of the accomplished and respected Parish Priest of Connemara, Rev. Mr. Kavanagh, exhorting his flock against the Sowers and Bible-readers, telling them that the danger of receiving Bibles from these wolves, was rather a “serious” thing, but that the guilt of their receiving these Bibles amounted to an important literary fault, namely, “mistranslation.”

But as these gentlemen are so finished in Greek and Hebrew, I shall take the great liberty of daring to ask them some few questions, touching this case of “mistranslation,” and concluding this section of my observations by calling their learned attention to the view taken of the point at issue, by the Council of Trent in its serious declarations, called, “Anathemas.”

I shall now proceed to examine the facts of the case, to see if our masters of the Rambler have critically told the truth, in calling the errors of the Protestant Bible by the name of “mistranslations.” One of our proofs of the doctrine on the official right of the Church to impose temporal punishment, or penance for sin, is taken from the first epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians, chapter the 5th: “Ede kekrika os Paron, ton outo touto, katergasamenon.” Our translation is: “I have already judged as though I were present, him that hath done so.” The Protestant version is: “I have already judged concerning him” &c. Our translation, which any one can see, gives St. Paul the power to judge the man—“ton katergasamenon:” while the Protestant translation makes St. Paul only judge the case, not the man: and this palpable corruption is done, not by a mistranslation, but by the introduction of a preposition not contained in the original text.

In Matthew, chapter 3rd, the Church translates the word “metanoeite,” “do penance;” whereas the Protestant Bible has it, “repent ye.” Their meaning is founded on the philosophical derivation, “metanoeite,” change of mind. On the same principle might they translate our word “collation” (viz., our fasting meal) into the word “conference.” And, hence, if they use the words “repent ye” in the case before us, with philological accuracy, it can be said with the same propriety, that on fasting days the Catholics at their breakfast eat a conference; as every scholar knows that the philosophical meaning of the word “collation,” is “a conference.” But there is more mischief in the two cases adduced than the general fault of “mistranslation.” These two gross additions and perversions involve a greater crime than this delicate Protestant phrase: they go to invalidate the Sacrament of Penance: they not only insinuate, but palpably deny the existence of penitential works; and they ascribe the justification of the sinner to mere internal sorrow, to the exclusion of the works of penance. Now, in order to convince the readers of the Rambler of the false guidance of the three Parsons of Portman street, I shall quote the Canons of the Council of Trent on this point, which will show these readers that these mistranslations are not quite so jocose as our masters have stated them.

Canon the Twelfth: “If any one saith, that God always remits the whole punishment, together with the guilt: and that the satisfaction of the penitents is no other than the faith, whereby they apprehend that Christ has satisfied for them, let him be Anathema.”

Canon the Thirteenth: “If any one saith, that satisfaction for sins is nowise made to God by the punishments inflicted by Him, or patiently borne, or by those enjoined by the priest, let him be Anathema.”

Canon the Fifteenth: “If any one saith, that the satisfactions by which penitents, redeem their sins, are not a worship of God, but traditions of men, let him be Anathema.”

I undertake to say, gentlemen, that before I shall have concluded the genteel doctrine of “mistranslations,” the public will learn the curses upon curses, Anathemas heaped on Anathemas, will fall upon the unfortunate dupes who may be induced to follow the palpable ignorance, the undisguised Protestantism, and the heretical teaching of the Parson's hornbook. But I proceed:—

In the Epistle of St. James, where the sick are commanded, in the Imperative mood, to bring in the Priests of the Church to anoint the sick man and to forgive him his sins, the Church translates the words, “Proskalesastho tous Presbuteros tes Ekklesias;” “Let him bring in the Priests of the Church;” whereas the Protestant Bible has it, “Let him call for the Elders of the Church.” Now, in reading Cicero, if any schoolboy, meeting with the words, “Patres conscripti,” translated them, “O conscript married men having children;” the world would laugh at the stupidity of the boy; and his master would tell (not the Paragons of Portman street) that the word “fathers” did not critically mean married men with children, but men of official, senatorial, legislative, governing dignity. And precisely on the same principle and historical fact (independently of the authority of the Church), the word “Presbuteros” does not mean any old man in the Church, but it means the men invested with official, judicial, governing dignity: it means authority, not years; and hence the Protestant mistranslation substitutes one fact for another in this case, and is a clear, decided, obvious declaration of a heretical doctrine.

But let us examine the Council of Trent on this thing, which is not a joke, or a thing rather serious: vide Homilium de Portman street.

Canon the Fourth—on Extreme Unction: “If any one saith, that the Presbyters of the Church are not the Priests who have been ordained by a Bishop, but Elders in each community,.....let him be Anathema.”—Now it is clear from these Canons, that the Anathemas of the Church are pronounced on any one who saith the doctrines referred to; but our Protestant Bible expresses these doctrines as clearly as words can express them; and hence, I feel, their own imprudence has placed them in a difficulty from which not all their stratagem can extricate them.

But I shall proceed: In Genesis, chapter 14th, “Melchisedech, king of Salem, bringing forth bread and wine, for he was a priest of the Most High God, blessed Abraham.” In this text, the casual Hebrew particle, “for,” is introduced, in order to show that Melchisedech brought forth bread and wine because he was a priest: and that therefore his office was to offer bread and wine. But the Protestant Bible takes away the particle “for,” and substitutes the propositional copulative conjunction “and,” in order to make the words “bread and wine” be a mere casual occurrence, and not a thing necessary to be