



# CATHOLIC CHRONICLE.

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THE REV. F. W. FABER IN LIMERICK.  
CHARITY SERMON ON BEHALF OF THE BROTHERS  
OF THE CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS.

(Abridged from the Limerick Reporter.)

At half-past two o'clock on Sunday, pursuant to public announcement, the eminently distinguished convert to the Catholic faith, the Rev. F. W. Faber, formerly Fellow of the University College, Oxford, and Rector of Elton, Huntingdonshire, now a priest of the Oratory, London, came forward in Saint Michael's Catholic church, to preach a charity sermon on behalf of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, in aid of the appeal for funds to enable them to liquidate the debt incurred by the enlargement of their monastery in Sexton street, as rendered necessary by the considerable increase in the number of the valuable community. The high fame of the Rev. Mr. Faber as a preacher, and the peculiar estimation in which he is held as a convert, had their natural effect in rendering the attendance much more numerous than it otherwise might have been; and it was not merely numerous, but respectable in a high degree. The Right Rev. Dr. Ryan, Catholic Bishop of Limerick, and the clergy of the different parishes of the city, as well as some from Tipperary, Clare, and Limerick, were present. Among the laymen of distinguished position in attendance were the Earl of Dunraven, Wm. Monsell, Esq., M.P.; Sir Vere De Vere, Bart., Lady De Vere, Aubrey De Vere, Esq., Mr. Hardiman, the eminent Catholic architect; the Mayor; Mr. Lyons, D.L.; Mr. Howley, D.L., &c.

Before the commencement of the sermon some sacred services were solemnly chanted, with delightful organ accompaniment.

The Rev. Mr. Faber then, after the sacred invocation, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, gave as the words of his text the following, from the concluding portion of the 10th chapter of St. Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews:—"Do not, therefore, lose your confidence, which hath a great reward. For patience is necessary for you; that, doing the will of God, you may receive the promise. For yet a little while, and he that is to come, will come, and will not delay. But my just one liveth by faith; but if he withdraw himself, he shall not please my soul. But we are not the children of withdrawing into perdition, but of faith to the salvation of the soul." It is impossible, he then observed, to read the history of God's chosen people, as given in the books of the Old Testament, without observing how far it exceeds in interest, and transcends in beauty, the history of any other people. Even without considering its character of inspiration, and viewing it merely as an authentic record of facts, the history of the children of Israel, as given in the Old Testament, must be regarded as more delightful, more moving, and more instructive than the history of all the nations that attained to more earthly greatness since the beginning. In the history of the people of God, we find more of heroism, more of grandeur, more of sublimity, in the true sense of the terms, than can be found in the history of the nations most distinguished by the qualities which to mere human wisdom appeared the highest and most estimable. Even on what we may consider the dark pages of that history, on those which bear the record of humiliation and suffering, we meet the evidence of virtues exceeding those of other nations, of fidelity, patience, constancy, fortitude, heroism, unconquered and unconquerable, beyond all example, commanding admiration in the highest degree. And then any one who has read the history of this country, the annals of the Irish nation, after reading the history of the chosen people of God given in the Old Testament, must feel it impossible to avoid observing the close resemblance they bear to each other. In prosperity or in adversity, in weal or in woe, in peace or in war, under indulgence or under persecution, in the bright hour or in the hour of gloom, the people of Ireland through a long series of ages have evinced the same fidelity, the same patience, the same constancy, the same fortitude, the same unconquered and unconquerable spirit of heroism as did the children of Israel.—Like the history of this people, the chosen people of God, has been the history of the people of Ireland. The eyes and hearts, the hopes and affections, the thanksgivings and supplications, of the children of Israel were ever directed to the ark of the Lord, the sanctuary in which He had promised to dwell among them for their comfort and protection. In like manner the eyes and hearts, the hopes and affections, the thanksgiving and supplications of the people of Ireland were directed to the Church of Christ during the many ages since they received her faith. Through all changes, through all trials, through all persecutions, through all sufferings, they placed their trust, their reliance, their confidence in that faith, in the Church from which they had received it, and in

their Divine Redeemer, by whom the Church and the faith were established. This was wonderful.—It would be wonderful in the case of any people.—But it was particularly wonderful in the case of the Irish people. The reception of the Christian faith by any people is a wonder, a miracle, as viewed by the dim eye of nature, under the weak light of human reason. It is wonderful, miraculous, that any people should receive as articles of belief a body of supernatural doctrines transcending their reason, or even appearing contrary to it. It is still more wonderful, more miraculous, that their belief in such doctrines should be perpetuated through a long series of ages, and become strengthened rather than weakened by time. But the establishment and perpetuation of the Christian faith have been altogether miraculous. To the eye of faith the hand of God appears to have been visible throughout. Supernatural effects must always be referred to supernatural causes. The Christian faith is not merely a collection of doctrines, but also a rule of life. The rule, like the doctrines, is supernatural; and it not merely rises above nature, but is contrary to nature in its state of corruption. Without violence to nature, and to our natural propensities, we cannot observe the rule of life prescribed by the Christian faith. It is the more wonderful, the more miraculous, that whole nations should embrace that faith, and adopt the rule of life prescribed by it; and it is peculiarly wonderful, miraculous in the most striking degree, that through all changes, through all trials, through all persecutions, through all sufferings and sacrifices, even to the loss of all things earthly, and the loss of life itself, any nation should adhere, as the people of Ireland have so tenaciously adhered, to that faith, and to the severe rule of life prescribed by it. The hand of God alone could have effected anything so wonderful. The hand of God alone could have imparted the strength necessary to the exhibition of so much constancy, so much fortitude, so much heroism, exceeding all that has been designated as heroism in the profane annals of nations. Throughout many ages Ireland stood united with the other nations of Europe, and nations in different parts of the world, in attachment to the Catholic Church. During those ages she contributed, by sending forth her zealous and enlightened sons as apostles and teachers, more than any other nation in the world to the extension of the true faith among different nations. Such was her glory, and such her triumph, during her ages of freedom and prosperity. And even when those ages had passed away, and ages of darkness and of sorrow succeeded, a still higher glory, a still more signal triumph awaited her. Ireland became at length cut off, separated from the other nations of Europe, standing firm in their attachment to the Catholic faith, the faith of Peter received from Rome. When England committed her awful crime, and crucified Christ anew, by expelling the Catholic Church from its ancient settlement within her limits, Ireland became isolated, cut off, severed from the other nations that remained steadfast in adhering to that Church. Everything was done to weaken, to destroy, to deaden the faith she cherished. But she did not follow the foul example of England in abandoning the true Church. On the contrary, her people, through all classes, became still more than ever fondly attached to the faith of their fathers, and to the Church from which they had received that faith. The princes and nobles of this people gave up their inheritance, shed their blood, and lost their lives, rather than turn away from their Church, or abandon their faith. The humbler classes followed the example of the more elevated. All classes of the magnanimous Irish people incurred all sacrifices, bore all sufferings, in the true spirit of heroism, sooner than yield the sacred treasure of faith which they prized above all earthly treasures. And their sacrifices and sufferings were not to be brief in duration, or limited in extent. War, slaughter, and confiscation did their own work. But this was not considered sufficient. Penal laws were afterwards enacted, and a fearful system of persecution brought into operation. The priests of the Catholic Church were proscribed, and hunted for their lives. They were obliged to hide themselves amongst the mountains and deserts of their country. The grass of the fields and moss of the valleys were reddened with their blood. Still they shed their blood, and yielded their lives, rather than ensure safety or favor by apostasy from the religion of which they were the anointed ministers. And the example of those heroic priests was followed by the heroic people, whom no earthly danger, no earthly suffering, no amount of earthly sacrifice, could impel to abandon the faith in which they placed their last and highest hope. The enemies of that faith, followed in successive efforts to root it from the hearts of the Irish people, were not yet wearied. They attempted to effect their purpose by other means. As in the persecution of the apostate Julian, they attempted to effect by corruption what they were unable to effect by violence.

They first sought to make the people powerless and pliant by mental abasement, degrading ignorance.—They proscribed education, made it penal, sought to banish it from the land, and reduce the people, as nearly as possible, to the level of brutes. When this project failed, like all the preceding, they conceived the design of reversing it. They next endeavored to tempt the people by their love of education. They offered them a mixed education, a false education, intended to poison their minds, or the minds of their children, and prepare them for the growth of pestilential error. This scheme failed, as all the foregoing had failed. War, bloodshed, confiscation, penal laws, disabilities, the hunting and slaughter of priests, the proscription of education, the attempt to sink the people in degrading ignorance and leave them as powerless as brutes, had all proved unavailing; and the attempt to seduce them by a corrupting education proved unavailing in like manner. Instead of being either terrified or allured to abandon their faith, they clung to it with unconquerable tenacity. Still more, as soon as the first relaxation of the penal laws was obtained, and the Catholic people of Ireland came again to enjoy liberty in the slightest degree, they began to afford renewed proofs of their ancient fervor in the exercise of their religion; and these proofs have multiplied to an extent that is no less wonderful than it is gratifying. The renewed extension of religious orders over the land has, alone, afforded such proofs in abundance. Not only have the old orders been re-established, but new ones have been established in aid. First, there is the order of the Sisters of Mercy, which has been productive of such immense good, in imparting relief to the suffering, and in affording the blessings of a sound religious education to the female children of the poor; and this is an Irish order, which had its origin in their fair city of Dublin. Next, there is the order of the Sisters of Charity, which is also an Irish order, and has, like the kindred order of the Sisters of Mercy, been productive of a vast amount of good. Then, there is the order, on behalf of which he was to make his appeal this day. This is the order of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, which, like the others he had mentioned, had its origin in Ireland, and has been productive of incalculable good in diffusing an education rendered safe and perfect by the inculcation of the sacred truths of religion.—Reverting to the orders of nuns, he should mention the order of the Presentation, which is another Irish order, and is specially devoted to the purpose of promoting the growth of virtue and religion by a suitable education. In addition to all, he might mention the Irish province of the Jesuits, which dates only from 1814. It was a delightful instance of retribution, that that fair city of Palermo, the beautiful capital of Sicily, that once sent her sons to Ireland, to learn wisdom and piety in the schools of Giendalough, should, as she did, repay the debt by sending to this country, in the present age, not pupils but instructors in earthly sciences and in the sublime doctrines of faith, and these instructors of an order pre-eminently distinguished by the services it has rendered to religion with the aid of human learning. And nothing could be more appropriate, nothing better calculated to assist this country in fulfilling the glorious destiny which yet awaits her. In earlier ages her glory, her triumph, appeared in the diffusion of the light of the true religion, through the instrumentality of her sons sent forth for the enlightenment and conversion of nations. At this day the glory, the triumph of those earlier ages is renewed to her. The glory of England is earthly. Her triumphs are earthly. The glory of Ireland, now as of old, is heavenly; and now, as of old, her triumphs are heavenly. The wide extension of the Roman empire contributed, even while the rulers of that empire were Pagans and persecutors of their Christian subjects, to the wide and speedy extension of the Christian faith from Rome. In like manner, the wide extension of the empire of England at this day contributes to the wide extension of the Catholic faith, even though the rulers of England and of the empire subject to her be the bitter and unrelenting enemies of that faith. And who are they by whom, principally, the knowledge of the Catholic faith is borne to the utmost limits of the nations subject to the dominion of England? They are the faithful, zealous, fearless, devoted sons of Ireland. Thus is the ancient glory of Ireland renewed. Thus is she enabled to acquire fresh triumphs of the same pure and exalted character as her ancient triumphs. The Saxon conqueror is borne in his car of conquest to the ends of the earth. He has his triumphs, his earthly triumph. But who enjoys the higher and purer triumph, which is not earthly but heavenly?—One who sits by the side of the earthly conqueror, passes with him as far as he is borne, and passes on a mission more glorious as it is more sanctified than his. The false and evanescent glory arises to the Saxon. The true and enduring glory accrues to the

accompanying Celt. The car of conquest of the Saxon conqueror is the triumphal chariot of the Celtic missionary. Wherever the one passes, the other passes with him. Wherever the one achieves a triumph that shall pass away, the other achieves a triumph that shall last for ever. The triumph of the Celtic missionary, the triumph of Ireland, is the greater. The glory of the Celtic missionary, the glory of Ireland is the greater. And to the greater triumph, the triumph, in extension of true religion, the sons of Ireland are borne by those who, so far from favoring the extension of the Catholic religion, would root it out from the soil of Ireland if they could. The will of God prevails over the will of man. Those who hate the Catholic religion wherever it is professed and exercised, and would if they could destroy it, not merely in Ireland but all over the world, become the unwilling instruments in preparing the way for its extension from Ireland to nations in every division of the globe. And has not Ireland the better part assigned to her? Is not her glory the greater glory, and her triumph the greater triumph? Those who look to the material prosperity of England that became Protestant, and look, on the other hand, to the misery and suffering of Ireland that has remained Catholic, will naturally inquire, if adhesion to one religion in preference to another has not prevented such misery and suffering in this country, and the change in England from the old religion to a new has been followed by increased wealth and power, why should not the Irish people have followed the example of the English? This is the natural inquiry, because corrupt nature looks to temporary and not to eternal advantages. But grace, given for the correction of nature, will supply the proper answer, which is, that the Irish people have chosen the better part, and their reward shall be for ever. The people of Ireland have proved themselves faithful through trial, through persecution, through suffering, through calamity. God knows how much they have suffered, how much of calamity they have borne, and how much patience and fortitude they have evinced in bearing all. And surely they are entitled to the higher regard, the higher admiration. No man with proper feeling can withhold his admiration from the virtues of patience, resignation, constancy, fortitude, inspired by religion, and exhibited even to the last extremity, by a famine-stricken people. The sufferings of the Irish people have been great. But the glory they have acquired by their constancy and fortitude under these sufferings is great. Further than this, the glory they have yet acquired is but as the earnest of that which awaits them hereafter. Their destiny hitherto, even though it was through sufferings, has been a glorious one. Their future destiny shall be more glorious. The conquests made by England have been but material conquests. Those made by Ireland have been spiritual conquests, conquests of souls. Her future conquests shall be of the same kind with the past, and they shall be more extensive. Ireland has sent forth her missionaries to preach in every division of the world the true faith of Christ, the faith received from Rome. But she has done more. She has sent forth into the countries of different divisions of the world her people to bear with them the Catholic faith, to form the foundation of new churches, and afford support to the bishops and priests appointed to take charge of those churches. For whom are archbishops and bishops appointed on the great southern continent of Australia? For the Irish. For whom are the vicars apostolic appointed in India? For the Irish. Above all, for whom are archbishops, and bishops, and priests appointed in such numbers in the United States of America?—For the Irish, principally, if not entirely. And finally, he only spoke from his own experience, when he said that it was principally for the Irish, as they are scattered through the cities, towns, and villages of England, the new Catholic hierarchy for that country was appointed by the successor of St. Peter. Such is the destiny of Ireland. It is, by sending forth her missionaries and her people to the east, the west, and the south, and hereafter, perhaps, to the north, as of old, to spread the knowledge of the true faith through all countries, even to the farthest part of the earth. What would appear from this? That God would still manifest His power by making use of the weak things of the world to confound and subdue the strong. Any one who saw Peter mending his fishing barque, or mending his nets, in his coarse clothing, with his face embrowned by the weather, and his hands hardened by his toil on the blue waters of the Lake of Genesareth, would little imagine that humble, illiterate fisherman should become the Prince of the Apostles sent forth to establish a new covenant between God and mankind; and would found in the imperial-billed city of Rome the see from which the apostles and preachers of the faith of Christ were to receive their commission thro' all succeeding ages. Yet such was the will of God. His will was accomplished. In like manner the poor,