

Archbishop Quigley

A Tribute

Francis General Kelley

25

Archbishop Quigley

A TRIBUTE



FRANCIS CLEMENT KELLEY



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2010 with funding from
CARLI: Consortium of Academic and Research Libraries in Illinois

Archbishop Quigley

A PERSONAL TRIBUTE TO OUR FIRST CHANCELLOR



THIS, I have called a personal tribute; for no man has ever written anything of another, either in prose or verse, under stress of emotions of joy or of sorrow, who has not written himself into every line. To do otherwise is to destroy the very heart of a tribute—to take the soul out of an eulogy. And it is a common mistake to suppose that this is something to be apologized for; under such circumstances, there should be an apology for doing anything else. But when there is weight on the heart and there are tears in the eyes for a dead friend, the very soul of the writer must cry out through every sad sentence. And when the weight and the tears are for more than a friend—for some one who had approached the dignity of a father—a still stronger reason prevails why the writer should weave himself into the very texture of his words.



I shall never forget my first meeting with Archbishop Quigley. It was on the piazza of the Presbytery at Notre Dame University. I was tired; for I had been trying to find some one to put his love back of the home missions, and powerful enough to give the work I had been dreaming of an effective support. It was too dark that evening for me to see very much of the face of Archbishop Quigley; but the outline of his head gave me the impression of having my own father before me; and he had been a stern man.

Perhaps I talked for twenty minutes—bolder than I thought I ever could be, gaining confidence from the silence of the listener. When I had finished, the Archbishop did not speak for a few moments. After that he did not need to speak; for, without his having said a word, I knew that the

day was won. Here at last, after years of weary waiting, I had been given a hearing. Without being told, I knew that the work was about to begin; and that this man before me, sitting silent but all intent, had weighed the thing WITH HIMSELF LEFT OUT. I could then almost see my own father in front of me, studying the right and the wrong — the good and the evil of my petition — and coming to the decision that his reason rather than his heart dictated. The impressions of that evening at Notre Dame are as vivid with me to-day, after ten years, as they were then. They will always be as vivid.



Ten long and happy years we worked for the Society together. He had a double interest; I but a single one. The great archdiocese of Chicago was his to govern; I had nothing to do but build up, with his encouragement, though rarely under his direct orders, the interests of the work. With most men the two separate interests would have clashed. They did not clash with Archbishop Quigley, because to him they were not separate interests. It would have been only natural, perhaps, had he not been so much of a spiritual character, that the large sums of money given to the Society for work outside his diocese would have caused a slight pang of jealousy; but the jealousy never appeared. He knew what every other good man knows — only in his case he was willing to carry principle into practice — that generosity inspires generosity.



So the Archbishop was glad and proud of every step in advance; ever ready with an encouraging word; careful never to hamper with unnecessary criticisms, but lavish in counsel when counsel was sought; kind in his treatment of appeals; regretful when he could not do more than his best; considerate in his dealings; so that even his faults — but there is no memory now for the unusual in him — had the virtue of a sane conservatism. Without Archbishop Quigley Church Extension would not have been born; without him it could not have lived: he died only when its success was won, and he knew that his work was safe. It would be the basest and deepest ingratitude if I, whom he trusted through the darkest as well as the brightest days of the struggle, should take one

jot or tittle of the credit that was his for myself; or should fail to pay his memory the just tribute he always refused to allow me to pay him in life. Under God, the protector and the father, the friend and the saviour of this movement was James Edward Quigley, its First Chancellor.



Years ago I read a book, whose author, if my memory serves me, was the Blessed John Baptist de la Salle. It was called "The Virtues of a Good Master." In Archbishop Quigley I saw the kind of Master the book spoke of—the kind who grows in your mind and heart, as he himself grows older and as your own youth grows wiser; the kind of Superior in whose hand the pruning-knife fits, and whose stroke is as gentle as it is decisive; the kind whose reason is so admirable that the very immutable logic of its conclusions becomes poetic in its well-ordered consistency.

What then were the traits of character that drew such admiration and love, from those who were privileged to catch a glimpse of the man Archbishop Quigley tried so hard to hide under the purple of duty and authority?

The first and most marked characteristic of our dead Chancellor was his constant striving to be just; but just to his duty before all else. He knew that the cause of the Church, in which he was a ruler, was the cause of God and of souls; therefore he strove to render first to God what belonged to God. So his justice, being well founded, was applied in the proper way to those whom he had to govern. To question that justice was to reopen the case. There was always an appeal to the supreme court of his own sense of right.

But the Archbishop's justice usually stopped short of the praise that killeth. He was not a builder; but he knew how to handle men and make builders out of them. He was essentially a director and manager. He could dream dreams and, somehow, let others catch a glimpse of them. Then he did not need to command. When the work was done he seemed to weigh in the balance the men who did it, to see if, perchance, it could not be improved upon. If it could, the commendation that indicated the finish, or that encouraged a laying-down of the burden, was withheld.

The virtue that "seasons justice," in spite of the popular verdict of Portia, is really not mercy, but charity; that

Archbishop Quigley had to a wonderful degree. He was generous to a fault with every good cause, but very ungenerous to himself. He had an absolute disregard for money, so far as he was concerned; yet no one was more careful about money than he. No bishop in the United States could possibly have troubled himself more in going through reports, studying accounts, striking at extravagances and wisely directing expenditures, as Archbishop Quigley; but of his own income he took no account whatever. He might have been a rich man, but what use did he have for riches? The money he legitimately might have claimed for himself, went, outside of his actual living expenses, which were small, to his students and his orphans.



The same trait was manifested in his dealings with the Society. He was generous with the poor missions, but parsimonious with those who were not in need. He would haggle over the salary of a priest-officer of the Society and cut him down, just as he had cut himself down, to bare necessities; but five minutes after, his vote would be recorded for a fifteen thousand dollar gift to the missions in the Philippine Islands.

His sense of responsibility was wonderful. We never knew when to expect his visits to the office. They were few, but each one was long. He never missed a meeting of the Executive Committee or the Board of Governors. He was first in his chair—always on time. When, in the intervals between meetings, the Archbishop visited the office, he sat down as if he intended to stay. He never asked for the books, but it was understood that he wanted them; and, hour after hour I have seen him pore over them, so that he could truthfully say that he knew to the last detail the affairs of the work he was superintending.



In this connection, I remember an interesting case. Some one of undoubted authority in the Church had forwarded gossip to Rome—gossip which any good work is likely to have buzzing about it; but this time the matter was somewhat serious, for a statement had been made that the Society's financial affairs were not in good condition. As was its duty,

the Holy See made inquiries of the Archbishop. The next morning he came to the office, and handed me the Roman letter, saying: "I think I know all about this Society, and therefore I am sure these charges are false. Do you know any more than I do? Have you any reason to believe that there is the slightest foundation for them?"

I answered: "Your Grace is as much acquainted with the affairs of this Society, except in the minor details of its management, as I am myself."

"Very well," he answered, "we will do this thing right and settle it for all time. Secure certified public accountants. Give them control of your books and let them report for themselves unhampered. I will send their report to Rome."

It took months to do it, but when the report was received the charges were fairly met, and no one has dared since to impugn to Rome the carefulness of an organization which had Archbishop Quigley as its responsible head. It was his way of doing things that counted in a crisis.

To all appearances Archbishop Quigley had no heart, and again the likeness to my own father always struck me when I met him. As a matter of fact no one could say that he was Archbishop Quigley's confidant. The Archbishop would talk to everybody. He would listen to everybody.

"I let everybody talk as much as they want to," he said. "If they have complaints it helps get them out of their systems, and the business is finished."

Those, however, who thought His Grace had no heart were mistaken. It is true that he stood as Archbishop against having friends, but in that he was wise. He had many friends; but they never knew that he thought anything of them. Acknowledged friends are not always good for Superiors. They invite confidences, when it is often dangerous to give them.

The Archbishop had a fund of reminiscences of his student days in Rome and Innsbruck that gave testimony of his old friendships. He could entertain by the hour with the stories. His memory for the old days was remarkably keen, and the friends he made before he was placed in authority he always kept. At the time of the Portsmouth Convention, at the close of the Russian-Japanese War, few knew that the Archbishop had passed a week and more in the hotel at Portsmouth where

the Convention was held; not because he had any interest in the Convention, but because the confidential secretary of Count Witte was Dr. Dillon, an old school friend of Innsbruck. Years after, the Archbishop told me how keenly he enjoyed the short evenings he spent with his classmate. It was only then that I realized how much he valued friendship — before he made his friendships with all mankind and refused to discriminate.



It is a fact that the Archbishop had a mortal horror of allowing any one to influence him. If even some one in his household suggested that the time had come to change his winter for a summer hat, it was practically certain that he would not change it immediately. He would wait until all suggestion of influence had probably been forgotten. Then he would make the change himself. It was two years before he accepted a suggestion which I once foolishly volunteered. Later he carried out the suggestion, but he did it in a way that made me feel that I had not influenced him in the action. Does this appear like a weakness to you? It was not a weakness; it was subtle strength, for the Archbishop's attitude was felt by every priest in his diocese just as he hoped it should; and they thus realized better than if he had asserted it a thousand times, that, to the best of his ability, every man would get from him a square deal.



The Archbishop had a wonderful love for the home missions, and he manifested it in unusual ways. I remember one incident in particular. He had been traveling in the West and, on his walks around the country near the hotel, he ran across a poor mission, without a chapel or anything that goes with it. He said little to the priest in charge. Perhaps, the good Father did not even suspect that he had been talking to the Archbishop of Chicago when he told his story to the man he supposed was just a simple priest like himself. The Archbishop wrote to me on his return, calling attention to that poor place and to its needs, instructing me to buy everything that was necessary to put the mission in good condition — and send him the bill. Even the pastor of the little parish himself does not know to this day who his benefactor was,

and, by instruction of the Archbishop, he never will know. I went to His Grace one evening with a very pathetic letter from a missionary bishop, who was in financial difficulties. He needed five thousand dollars. Now, five thousand dollars was more money than we usually give in response to any appeal, but the case was an extraordinary one. The Archbishop read the appeal carefully, and a look of pain crossed his face, as he said: "This man should be helped."

"What will I do?" I asked; "I am willing to follow your suggestion if you will take half the risk with the Board of Governors."

He said: "I will take ALL the risk. I will assume FULL responsibility; and, if the Board does not approve, I will pay the money myself. Send him five thousand dollars."



But the case of the Mexican refugees stands out alone. A priest came from San Antonio to tell me the story of the black misery of the whole thing. I knew that I was powerless to act, yet action should be taken at once; but I knew the sort of Chancellor we had. "Come with me to the Archbishop to-night," I said, "and talk to him as you have talked to me." He did as I requested. The Archbishop sat listening, not uttering a word; but when the story was over, he looked at me as much as to say: "It is your turn to talk now." I understood, and said to him: "Well, Your Grace, you took a risk once, and the only way out of this is to take one again. We have the money, but I can not draw it without the consent of the Board. You are the Chancellor, I am the President. If we stick together, the Board will stand by us." He laughed—and he had a jolly, hearty laugh—and said at once: "Well, we'll stick together. This is God's work. He needs us now, so in His Name put five thousand dollars in your pocket to-morrow morning and go down there and take care of these poor people. Draw to the limit of the treasury, if necessary, and don't worry, because you may be sure God will fill it up again." And God did.

But the Archbishop did not stop at his first step; for he never lost his interest. It was he who directed the efforts the Society made for Mexico. It was he who kept us pleading. It was he who directed the campaign which culminated

in letters from the Department of State, promising that all the influence of the United States Government should be used in securing liberty of conscience for Mexico. Before he died he knew the history of Mexico and her needs as well as any Mexican. I remember an interesting incident in this connection. After one of my trips to San Antonio, I brought back to the Archbishop a souvenir medal of the dedication of the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe, as a present from the exiled bishops. It was very beautiful but not rare. It happened that the Abbot-Bishop of the Shrine had brought three to the United States with him, and he gave me one for Archbishop Quigley, one for Archbishop Blenk and one for myself, all to be presented in the name of the Mexican Hierarchy. I presented Archbishop Blenk with his on my way home; but when I arrived in Chicago I took Archbishop Quigley's to a jewelry store, had it put into a pretty case, with a silver plate indicating from whom the gift had come. It was sent to him on Christmas morning. That afternoon I was assisting the editor of the "New World," who is pastor of a parish in the suburbs of Chicago. He was called to the telephone. I heard him say "Yes, Your Grace," once or twice, and then: "I will attend to it at once." He turned around to me with a smile, and said: "There is another phase of the Archbishop's character that you never noticed. He has just directed me to send a separate telegram to each of the exiled Mexican bishops in his name, and wish them all a Merry Christmas." It was characteristic of the Archbishop that he didn't ask me to send those telegrams. You see, he never would have let me know how pleased he was with the little gift. But he valued it more than anything the exiles might give him later out of their prosperity. The poor little medal was a sign of their love, their appreciation, and a mark of their thoughtfulness; all the more valuable that it came out of their suffering and poverty.

But one of the greatest things about Archbishop Quigley was his vision. I suppose I have no right to judge bishops; but like every other simple priest, I have had my thought as to what ideal bishops should be like. Archbishop Quigley came very close to that ideal; and therefore I have some reason to think that perhaps it is not a bad one. Keats in his "Letters" speaks of his poetic habit of trying to put himself

into the place of everything he saw. "If a sparrow comes before my window," he wrote, "I take part in its existence, and pick about the gravel." It was by thus making his sympathy wide that Keats perfected his poetry. Most priests are poets, though the great majority of them have written no verse. Their sympathy for their people develops as they develop the Keats habit. It would be strange if they did not "pick about the gravel" with their ecclesiastical superiors — their fathers in God — who are certainly of more interest to them than the sparrows. So, by thus trying to get into sympathy with those who are appointed to direct my work, I have come to think that a bishop should be more than an Ordinary. A bishop belongs to his diocese in a special manner; but in another way he belongs to the country, and he belongs to the whole Church. I can not conceive of an ideal bishop of whom it could only be said: "He ruled his own diocese well and paid no attention to anything outside of it." Yet, strange to say, this was the sort of bishop Doctor Quigley resolved to be when he was consecrated Bishop of Buffalo. He made up his mind to pay attention to his own diocese and no attention to anything else. But later he confessed that he was wrong; and it was in recognition of his changed viewpoint that he took up the work of Church Extension. Archbishop Quigley believed that he had a duty beyond the limits of his own diocese; not a duty of interference with the business of others, but a duty of helpfulness. Interference he abhorred, but helpfulness he loved; and his ideas as to how he could help were wonderfully broad. For example: the First Missionary Congress idea was Archbishop Quigley's. He planned it to the last detail, then turned it over to others to carry out; but promptly forgot that he had planned it, and never took the slightest credit to himself for it. He was satisfied that some one had done the work.



No one could truthfully charge the Archbishop with being ambitious, except in doing good. He was never ambitious to shine, or to rise to heights of ecclesiastical dignity. How easy it would be to show this, were I to speak now of incidents, well known to me, that show the humility of this man who had been called to rule one of the greatest dioceses in the world. His humility made him shy and could easily be mistaken for excessive reserve; but it was true humility.

Archbishop Quigley was not a fighter, yet, when something in which he was interested was attacked, the Archbishop not only could fight, but even invited the chance. Knowing that, I never was afraid for the Society as long as he lived; and the only reason I am not afraid now, is because he remained long enough with it to see that the foundation was well built. Persistent reports once came to him of criticisms in high places. He spoke of them to me during one of the little evening chats upon which I depended so much for securing his ideas as to the direction of the work. I suggested that I might make a call on a certain dignitary to explain the misunderstanding. He answered: "Don't do it. I have allowed this thing to run along because I thought it would die out, but it has now gotten to the danger point. The people who are responsible for these rumors are acting in good faith. They have simply taken their information from the wrong source — those who did not know; and it is my duty to set them right. Next week I will go and do the talking myself." He kept his promise and did the talking very effectively. It was the end of the difficulties from that particular quarter, and it is only justice to say that the person to whom the Archbishop did talk, not only changed his opinion of the Society, but also as to the character of the Archbishop of Chicago. From that day on, the two men became warm personal admirers, which admiration lasted till the day of the Archbishop's death. "What I object to," His Grace used to say, in speaking of criticisms against the Society, "is not that we are being talked about, or even that we are criticized. It is not a bad thing to be advertised when we depend on advertising for success, and criticism is usually helpful, but I object to people getting their information from those who do not know."



Two things were very close to the Archbishop's heart: St. Mary's Training School, where he had gathered his orphans and waifs together into what was not an orphan asylum but a perfect home; and The Catholic Church Extension Society. One represented his diocesan interests, and the other his contribution to the general work of the Church. He felt that both would bring blessings upon his administration and upon himself. When I saw him for the last time, I said

to him, never believing that his illness would prove fatal: "This is a good time for Your Grace to rest. Dr. Hoban told you that everything is running along perfectly smooth in the diocese, and I can tell you that the same thing is true about the Society. We have closed our second quarter with the best showing yet." His kindly smile expanded at once, as he answered: "That's good. You need not worry about success as long as you are kind to others. God blesses kindness, and the Church Extension Society has always been kind. We have followed right lines, and it is a great consolation to me."

Next morning I called on the Archbishop again, for I was going back to Chicago. He was sitting up, but he did not look so well; and I detected something in him that I had not previously noticed. Before I left I felt certain that the Archbishop was going to die. I mentioned already that he avoided praising those who were under his authority, with the idea, I am sure, that praise should come only when the task was done. Now, the task he had taken up in Church Extension could never be done, so he avoided praising any of those who helped him. But he said something before I left that made me feel as if he thought the task was done for him; and again before me rose the picture of my own father, who never said a word of praise for his children till, dying, it could do them only good. "Good-by, Your Grace," I said, "I must go back to Chicago this afternoon. It will be necessary to call a meeting of the Executive Committee. For the first time we will not have you with us; but I promise you that, since your hand will not be on the wheel for a little while, I will be more prudent than usual." What sounded like a joke was meant to be earnest, and the Archbishop took it as it was meant. Putting out his hand, he said: "You have always been prudent, and you have always pleased me." Then a sad look passed over his face and the smile left mine. It was a real good-by — so real that, though I never till then suspected myself of sentiment, the mist in my eyes half blinded me as I walked out of the hospital.

In the years to come the Church Extension Society will have to deal with many Chancellors. We have every reason to trust that the inspiration of the Holy Ghost and the wisdom of the Holy See will choose them well. It might be expected,

after this poor tribute to the memory of the First Chancellor, that I should say we need all others to be just like him; but I am not saying that. Archbishop Quigley admirably fitted in the most important place as First Chancellor. He had all the qualities that proclaimed him great there: prudence combined with generosity, carefulness combined with sympathy, conservatism combined with well-balanced liberality, humility combined with vision. These were the things necessary to guide the ship through the river and the harbor until it reached the seas. But Archbishop Quigley was a pilot, not a navigation officer — though it has been known that pilots have made the best of navigation officers. His genius was for the silent, careful, difficult task. He depended for the carrying out of his plans upon other men; but he knew how to make them understand him, and, better still, to understand their responsibilities. He guided the ship safely to the outer harbor light, and then his tired hand weakened on the wheel; and he who had been vigilant in the darkness, keen of sight in the watches, he — he fell asleep forever.



O, great friend of God, who was just a little my own friend, too, because I was privileged to serve with you; never would I have dared during your lifetime to offer you one word of gratitude or appreciation, fearing to wound your modesty, or make you think that some part of your eternal reward was being stolen from you by such a miserable thing as an earthly tribute; but you are dead now and there is no reason why I should be silent. What I have said may serve to join thousands of those who followed you as leader, in a prayer for the peaceful repose that you scorned for yourself in life. The judgment of the world that you cared nothing about, will not be untrue to the brief that your deeds have written. Your warmest eulogy will come, perhaps, from those who knew you only at the end; but the most heartfelt, from those who had learned by coöperating with you, all that was in your heart. Your sense of duty would never allow you to look into their hearts; but the knife that cut the bonds which bound them to you has also cut their hearts wide open, so that your spiritual eyes may look into them now — and you need not be afraid of what you shall see. Is it anything to you now to know, for you can know, that all your priests and people suffered while you

suffered, though you were far from them when you died? Is it anything to you to know, and you do know, the sublimely simple tribute they paid you, when the sad news of your approaching death was made known to them? On your heraldic arms you bore the lily of St. Joseph, and in your motto you carried his name, because you looked to him as a light to your footsteps, and knew him as an exemplar of the virtues you tried so hard to cultivate in yourself. Holy Writ rendered to him a tribute as unequalled in its simplicity as it is unexcelled in its greatness and nobility. The inspired writer said of the foster father of our Lord, only that he was "a just man." Your children, O foster father and friend of us all, linked you in death to the Joseph to whose example you linked yourself in life; for the common tribute to you is as simple as that of the inspired writer to Joseph, the noblest tribute that can be paid, for of you they say: "He was a just man."

FRANCIS C. KELLEY.

BX
4705
Q54
K45
1915
RARE
BK RM

